



GECMUN X

BACKGROUND GUIDE

Mission Baekdu 2025

Mission Baekdu 2025: International Response to the Potential Baekdu-san Volcanic eruption

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Committee Introduction

Welcome to Mission Baekdu 2025.

This committee encompasses three subcommittees under the entire conference: the national representatives, the scientists, and the influential figures. Rather than confining delegates to communicate only through resolutions, this committee allows delegates to engage actively in moderated and unmoderated caucus discussions. Delegates will draft numerous directives such as private, group private, and public directives to reach a superordinate goal.

The national representatives subcommittee consists of important government officials and even leaders of nations. Their immense range of jurisdiction over their nations and groups will directly influence the flow of the agenda. Some ideas and initiatives proposed during the conference may need such executive's approval through different modes of directives. While discreet surveillance over their behaviors and inclinations and the public opinions their actions might agitate can be a challenging factor for the delegates, it will be the national representatives' responsibility to reach a safe environment for the entire world.

The scientists subcommittee is a group of relative intellectuals that possess profound knowledge of the topic. Many of the scientists are "earthquake/volcano experts" whose insights will be crucial to the success of reaching safety. Although neither their economic power nor political influence are not as big as delegates of other subcommittees, their ability to present scientifically supported evidence to the public and the other delegates plays an important role in the overall path that the committee takes.

The group of influential figures is a collection of miscellaneous members that specialize in many different areas. For example, a successful businessman possesses an economic abundance as well as his/her power to influence the crowd. However, it's never guaranteed that such a material-driven person would give up the immense selfish assets that can be acquired in the mission process over others' safety. Some other members of the subcommittee have their hands over media and organizations that can shift the state of the affair.

Agenda Introduction

It is the year 2025.

Baekdu Mountain (Mt. Baekdu), also known as Paektu Mountain, is an active volcano located on the border between North Korea and China. With an elevation of 2,744 meters, it is the highest mountain in the Korean peninsula. It is currently a popular tourist attraction and a UNESCO world heritage site.

The last recorded explosion of Baekdu Mountain was in 1903 — it is still considered an active volcano that may explode at any time. Scientists have constantly been monitoring the volcanic activity of Mt. Baekdu, including the temperature, volcanic unrest, earthquakes, and other possible external factors. At first, scientists suggested that it would be difficult to predict exactly when Mt. Baekdu will erupt. However, recent data suggest that the eruption of Baekdu Mountain is imminent. The main goal of this committee is to minimize the harms of the eruption and deal with social instability.

The eruption of Mt. Baekdu in 946 CE is considered one of the largest and most devastating eruptions throughout the last 10,000 years of history. This means that the next eruption may wipe out entire populations of near areas. Several factors must be considered when solving this issue, including funds, countries' goals, individuals' goals, public opinion, social instability, and most importantly, time. Considering all of these factors is definitely a difficult task and leads to several crises.

More details about the predicted impact of the explosion are described throughout other sections, but an overview presents smoke and volcanic ash that creates poisonous gases, killing all organisms within a radius of 50 kilometers from the volcano. The 2 billion tons of water in the caldera will overflow and flood nearby regions. The high-magnitude earthquake from the eruption will destroy buildings and lead to extreme casualties. Even after the initial impact, the residual volcanic ash in the atmosphere will block sunlight, decreasing global temperature, and thus making it impossible to breathe without a filter.

Letters from the Chairs

Dear executives, scientists, and giants,

We are Colin Ji (Director), Dylan Wang (Head Chair), and Tommy Jang (Deputy Chair). We will be chairing Crisis #3 during your conference at GECMUN X. The chairs are all very thrilled to serve you for your experience during the two-day conference.

The Crisis Committee, if you are not familiar, is quite different from any other UNA-USA format resolution-drafting committees. The delegates will be allowed to submit different kinds of directives more frequently to keep up with the fast-paced discussion. Although the agenda is provided, decisive steps will be taken by the delegates to make the conference more interesting. The chairs are all looking forward to seeing well-researched position papers, heated debates, and more importantly, a fun and inspiring experience.

We are well aware of the grave responsibility that we hold for your experience – Our past experiences from crisis committees and advice from experienced chairs will help us make sure that you will enjoy the conference and learn a lot from it. Expect shocking and overwhelming crisis updates (including assassinations, spies, and terrorism), as is the case in any good crisis committee. Try to step out of your comfort zone and speak with people you have never met before and cooperate with delegates on completely opposing stances. If you are new to MUN, do not hesitate to ask the chairs or more experienced delegates for help. If you are more experienced, the experts, avoid taking all of the speaking opportunities and instead encourage others to speak.

Please feel free to contact the chairs with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Sincerely,

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Key Terms

Mt. Baekdu

Also known as Baekdusan or Changbai Mountain, it is a large stratovolcano located on the border between North Korea and China.

Volcano

A geological formation where molten rock, ash, and gasses are expelled from the Earth's crust, typically forming a conical mountain-like structure.

Caldera

A large volcanic crater that forms after a volcanic eruption when the summit collapses into the emptied magma chamber.

Yokohama Strategy

a people-centered approach to disaster reduction, prevention, and preparedness that improves risk management, allowing a comprehensive risk assessment and monitoring of forecasts and warnings.

Disaster Risk Reduction

2030 UNESCO agenda that stresses the need to prepare for natural hazards caused by either the rapid or slow onset of events having atmospheric, geologic and hydrologic origins on solar, global, regional, national or local scales.

Interagency Cooperation

Several agencies and governments collaborate in order to solve a conflict or a matter in need.

Civil Society Engagement

They collaborated with governments and civil society organizations to work for a common goal determined by open government partnership.

Natural Disaster

An event that causes great damage and threat to human health, safety, property, infrastructure, and security.

Humanitarian Aid

material and logistic assistance to people in need of support. Victims of natural disasters, wars, and other threats are targeted in aid by international government and institutions.

Emergency Management

managerial function of creating procedures to reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters.

International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP)

A global research effort that studied how the Earth's environment works, including climate, living organisms, and water. It helped understand how nature and humans affect each other. It looked into the impact of climate change on mountains like Mt. Baekdu and their ecosystems, biodiversity, and water resources. Although the IGBP ended in 2015, its findings still contribute to our knowledge of environmental issues worldwide.

Hyesan

A city in North Korea located near the northern base of Mt. Baekdu.

Ashfall

The deposition of fine volcanic ash and dust on the ground and surrounding areas during an eruption.

Seismic Monitoring

The continuous measurement of seismic (earthquake) activity around a volcano to detect any signs of potential eruption.

High-risk Regions

A term that indicates the Jilin Province(China), Liaoning Province(China), Vladivostok(Russia), South Korea, North Korea, and certain regions of Japan.

Historical Background

Mount Baekdu (백두산), also known as Changbai Mountain (长白山) in Chinese, is an active volcano located on the border between North Korea and China. It is the highest mountain in both countries, with an elevation of 2,744 meters (9,003 feet). The mountain is considered sacred by Koreans and Manchus, and it is the birthplace of Dangun, the legendary founder of Gojoseon, the first Korean kingdom.

Mount Baekdu has a long and active volcanic history. The most recent eruption occurred in 1903, and there have been several smaller eruptions since then. The mountain is located in a seismically active region, and there is a risk of a larger eruption in the future.

Mount Baekdu is a stratovolcano, which means that it is composed of alternating layers of ash, lava, and tephra. Stratovolcanoes are known for their explosive eruptions, which can release large amounts of volcanic ash and gas into the atmosphere.

In recent years, there has been an increase in seismic activity around Mount Baekdu. This activity could be a sign that the volcano is preparing to erupt. In 2016, a group of South Korean scientists reported that they had detected an increase in the amount of carbon dioxide gas around the volcano. This gas is produced by magma as it rises towards the surface, and its presence can be a sign that an eruption is imminent. Experts have concluded that Mt. Baekdu has between two to four magma chambers– this means that there can be anywhere between two to four eruptions in a series of eruptions.

In 2023, a group of Chinese scientists published a study that concluded that Mount Baekdu is likely to erupt in 2025. The study was based on an analysis of the volcano's seismic activity, as well as its historical eruption record. The scientists' findings have been met with some skepticism, but they have also raised concerns about the potential risks of an eruption.

If Mount Baekdu does erupt in 2025, it could have devastating consequences for the region. The volcano is located in a densely populated area, and an eruption could displace millions of people. The ash and gas from the eruption could also cause respiratory problems and disrupt air travel. In addition, the eruption could trigger lahars, which are mudflows that can travel at speeds of up to 100 kilometers per hour.

There is also some evidence regarding the correlation between the seismic activities of Mt. Baekdu and North Korea's nuclear experiments. Some have

suggested that these experiments have caused artificial earthquakes, acting as a catalyst for Mt. Baekdu's possible eruption.

The governments of North Korea and China are aware of the risks posed by Mount Baekdu, and they have taken steps to mitigate these risks. However, there is no guarantee that these measures will be effective in the event of a major eruption. It is important to note that there is no way to predict with certainty when or if Mount Baekdu will erupt. However, the potential risks of an eruption are significant, and it is important to be aware of them.

Current State of Affairs

As explained previously, the eruption of Mt. Bakedu is imminent. Different groups of people have been reacting differently.

Citizens/Residents of Nearby Countries

If Mt. Baekdu were to explode, the most impacted regions would be the Jilin Province(China) and most of North Korea. There are approximately 26 million residents in North Korea and 23.5 million residents in the Jilin province, which means that around 49.5 million people would be under direct impact, at the epicenter of the earthquake and from magma and heat.

Jilin, China

The initial panic came from residents in the Jilin and Liaoning regions, when they continuously experienced earthquakes and were exposed to news reports on Mt. Baekdu's volcanic activity. Some started to hoard materials from stores, causing significant social instability in the region. Although global social media is mostly banned in China, some leaked videos have been showing violent conflict— both between citizens and the police and among citizens.

North Korea

Residents in North Korea are reportedly showing no signs of conflict or instability due to their lack of information sources and North Korea's efforts to censor reports centered on Mt. Baekdu. However, information agencies (namely South Korea's NIS and the United States' CIA) are closely monitoring North Korea for signs of social unrest or conflict.

South Korea and Japan

Residents in South Korea and Japan are also panicking, since they would be impacted by volcanic ash, earthquakes, and radiation. Grocery stores are crowded and unruly as people attempt to hoard daily necessities. The scenes at the airports look a lot like Kabul Airport during 2021— both terminals and runways are crowded with people trying to escape. People who are unable to get airplane tickets resort to driving as far as possible from the volcano.

Both South Korea and Japan have divided political factions in the legislative branch— the excessive debate and political conflict have made it difficult for the two countries to take any bold actions, and citizens are demanding actions for evacuation. Protests are growing.

Citizens/Residents of Other Countries

Citizens from countries far away from the volcano are not experiencing any direct impacts of the volcanic eruption yet— however, there is a lot of debate going on regarding issues with overflowing immigrants from the nearby regions. Some countries are more open to refugees while some are not.

The Global Economy

The global economy has been extremely unstable over the past few weeks, especially currency exchange rates and the stock market.

Current Instability

China is the biggest trading partner of more than 120 countries. Investors around the world are concerned that China's production line would be severely damaged by the earthquakes, and that the volcanic ash would make it difficult for major trading hubs like Shanghai to normally function.

South Korea's production lines for semiconductors and its highly developed technological industries are certainly going to be impacted by the earthquake— due to extremely high fluctuations, stock exchanges for major companies have been disabled.

Similar circumstances follow for Japan, as it is the third largest economy in the world (by GDP).

Possible Opportunities?

At the same time, it seems like this is the best time to invest in construction companies— regions directly impacted by the eruption would become undeveloped regions again and the construction industry will flourish. Some of these companies and their investors do not favor efforts to stop the eruption itself.

Officials in the energy industry have been suggesting that the internal heat that is generated before the eruption can be used for geothermal energy— delaying the eruption while keeping the internal heat can provide further opportunities for geothermal energy. The technology is available to be used any time.

Agricultural engineers and botanists agree that the breakdown of volcanic materials after the eruption would provide fertile soil, which may bring benefits for the agriculture industry.

Tensions

Intelligence agencies have reported that the existing tensions between Kim Jong-Un and high-ranked North Korean military officials have been growing. The existing tensions were from influential generals who have been trying to gain power (the most recent confirmed coup attempt was in 1995). According to these agencies, the eruption may give these generals an alibi for possibly overthrowing Kim. Nothing significant has been confirmed yet.

Meanwhile, in the neighboring South Korea, some politicians and military officials have suggested using the eruption as an opportunity to regain North Korean territory and unify the nation. The U.S. disapproves of such a plan, as it has expressed concerns on a possible third world war. (Keep in mind that wartime operational control belongs to the US-Korea joint command.)

List of Responsive Policies (by country)

South Korea

- Due to a divided legislative branch, it is difficult to take quick actions
- Korea Exchange (KRX) paused stock exchanges for major companies (Samsung Electronics, LG, SK Hynix, Hyundai, etc)
- Watch condition (Watchcon) level 2 has been declared after signs of possible political instability in North Korea.
- The South Korean military is ready to declare Defense Readiness Condition (DEFCON) level 3 if there are signs of conflict within North Korea.
- President Yoon is considering declaring martial law.

North Korea

- Generally remains private on actions. The following information is from intelligence agencies.
- News on Mt. Baekdu is highly restricted.
- People who spread words about a possible eruption are treated as “agitators” and are punished as political prisoners.
- Kim Jong-Un has not appeared in public for the past four months.

China

- Police/military forces have been deployed in major cities in the Liaoning and Jilin provinces.
- The government tells panicking citizens that it “would be coming soon with necessary resources and guidelines.”

Japan

- Political debates on possible actions are heated.
- The National Diet of Japan passed a policy to provide citizens in certain regions with water and respirators.

- Japan plans to evacuate citizens in the Kyushu region to Okinawa (and other islands in the south)

United States

- U.S. military aircrafts and ships have been sent to safely evacuate U.S. citizens out of high-risk regions
- Many have suggested that U.S. troops in high-risk regions should return as well. Political debates are becoming heated.

Other countries

- Discussing methods to safely evacuate citizens from high-risk regions
- Many countries have declared travel bans for high-risk regions.

Stances of Parties

President Yoon

President Yoon of the Republic of South Korea is the current leader of the nation, assuming office in 2022. As a former delegate of a conservative party, Yoon likes to focus on traditional strengths and promote steady innovation. He was also a former prosecutor, making him able to build strong ties with lawyers, prosecutors, and judges. As a leader of a country that is very directly affected by the proposed crisis, he serves to make important decisions, especially those involving the use of military force, which, as the president of the country and the executive branch of government, has power over.

Kim Jong Un

Kim Jong Un is the Supreme Leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). He started his autocratic regime in 2011 after the death of his father, Kim Jong Il. As the third generation of the ruling Kim family, he has maintained a tight grip on the isolated nation. He has posed numerous scandals on issues such as unethical government control, human rights concerns, and occasional attempts to build and test nuclear weapons, threatening and provoking neighboring countries. Although he has to prioritize the safety and wellness of the citizens of DPRK, his best interest may be the maintenance of his rule.

Minister of Defense - South Korea

The South Korean Minister of Defense holds the power to serve as a close-to-scene commander for the Korean military. The minister holds extensive military experience, and has held various leadership roles within the South Korea Armed Forces before becoming the Minister.

Xi Jin Ping

Xi Jin Ping is the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the President of the People's Republic of China, and the Chairman of the Central Military Commission. Since Mount Baekdu is located in a shared territory of China and North Korea, international operations would have to go through the approval of both Kim and Xi. Although Xi is also accused of humanitarian crimes, his incredible influence in the global diplomacy and general affairs makes him one of the most important figures in the conference.

Jong Kyong Thae- Director of the Korean People's Army

Jong Kyong Thae, the Director of the Korean People's Army is in charge of the operations of the Korean People's Army. He is also under the command of Kim, but the Director is in a slight dissatisfaction with Kim's regime. He has close bonds with the soldiers in his command, facilitating his plans to dream bigger.

Joe Biden

Joe Biden is the re-elected President of the United States of America. During his regime, he has met some crises but none like the volcanic eruption of Baekdu mountain. Although his nation is located far away from the eruption, it isn't irrelevant at all. Not only he is the leader of one of the most influential powers in the world, being the president of the strongest nation, but also the size of the eruption nonexcludes every nation around the globe. He aims to utilize all his powers to minimize the dangers of the eruption.

Paul Joseph LaCamera-Commander - US Forces Korea

Paul Joseph LaCamera is a United States Army four-star general serving as the Commanding General of the United States Army Pacific (USARPAC). He will be in the actual scenes of operation during the Mountain Baeku Crisis, leading his soldiers with his vast experience of leadership. He has a lot of experience in battles in South America and Central Asia, and was awarded with numbers of medals in his military career.

Prime Minister of Japan

Fumio Kishida is the prime minister of Japan during the crisis. As the practical leader of an island nation near the location of a humongous volcanic eruption, Kishida will be included in the decision-making process of operations in the pacific. In the past years, he was threatened by several occasions of attempts to harm him in public, but he has strengthened his security to the highest level. He aims to be more publicly respected and safe after a smooth resolution of the current crisis.

Citizen Representative of South Korea

The Citizen Representative of South Korea, an arbitrary role assigned for the crisis, is the representative of the point of view of the general opinions of the citizens of South Korea. The stance of the representative is mainly determined by the crisis updates and how the public is actually thinking, not what the council in general is in consensus. The importance of this role is to logically convey the concerns and panics of the citizens. Since such a crisis could cause political and societal agitation, it is the Citizen Representative's task to bring that concern into the discussion.

BBC News Representative

The Representative of BBC News, the head of a globally influential and renown media and news organization, holds great power over the thoughts of the public. By nuancing the media sent around the world, the representative can influence the overall opinions about the ongoing crisis. A genuinely good representative may decide to facilitate the process by supporting nothing but the safety and health of the global community, but an ambitious one could sabotage such tasks to benefit his/herself.

Kim Baekdu (Influencer)

This fictional character is an individual who is a well-known figure within the younger generation of the world due to his/her success in short-form media marketing on huge platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. He/she has tens of millions of followers online and aims to film entertaining and exclusive content during the crisis.

Mads Flarup Christensen

Christensen is the Interim Executive Director of Greenpeace International. He believes the Greenpeace's ability to change and regulate environmental actions without mass political interceptions will bring out the best decisions in a world crisis. He started his work in Greenpeace in 1992 as a young volunteer and from then, worked all around the world focusing on the world environment. As the Interim Executive Director of Greenpeace, Christensen is primarily responsible for Greenpeace's decisions and actions on the Baekdusan eruption. As a deeply environmental organization, Greenpeace's primary objective would be to cooperate with international organizations to mediate environmental chaos caused as a consequence of the Baekdu eruption such as but not limited to: ashes, climate change, and land destruction.

Ajay Banga

As one of the UN's specialized agencies, the World Bank has its duties on the use of finance in matters of world crisis. The lending of money should be strictly limited to governments of poorer members in order to improve their economy and improve the standard of living of their people. Ajay Banga is the president of the World Bank. Representing the World Bank, Banga will be targeted by multiple nations that are damaged, big or small, or influenced by the crisis. This position will have the authority to decide whether or not a certain member of the conference receives the requested financial aid. The decision will be highly dependent on the severity of the damage caused on the nation and its citizens.

Elon Musk

Elon Musk is a co-founder and leads Tesla, SpaceX, Neuralink and The Boring Company. His focus in most of his productions and work is on the world's transition to sustainable energy. Although he is a businessman, his efforts to cause a positive impact on the environment is out of doubt. As a billionaire, he has the wealth to have a large impact on the crisis. Elon Musk will see the eruption as an opportunity to promote his business as well as transform the consequences of the crisis as a chance to use sustainable energy.

CEO Nam

CEO Nam is a business woman who wants the resources from Baekdusan. She sees the crisis as a chance caused by chaos. The Baekdusan eruption will cause world disorder and would allow loopholes and illegal ways to access the resources from the mountain. Her motives are clear, the less order and the more disarray in the solution to the crisis benefits her to her greatest.

Kim Byeong

Kim Byeong is the South Korean National Disaster Management Institute Scientist. As one of the nations with mass impact from the crisis, the research done is at its highest accuracy. With first-hand knowledge of the crisis, Kim Byeong cannot stand the conflict within the conference. He believes that the mass destruction that will be caused will lead to world

damage and cost countless lives. He believes in evacuation of citizens of all the adjacent nations of the damaged areas and puts aside all economic conflicts.

Kim Hyuk - a North Korean Earthquake Lab Scientist

Kim Hyuk is the North Korean Earthquake Lab Scientist. He may be seen as a figure with accurate information and research, but Kim Hyuk has been ordered by the North Korean Government to hide all crucial information on the eruption. He is loyal to the orders and believes that the damage caused by the eruption can make his nation vulnerable to war and the overtaking of the country.

Zhang Tian Ming

Zhang Tian Ming is a Chinese earthquake expert. Zhang Tian Ming persuades members of the conference that believe that the crisis is “no big deal” that it is. Zhang Tian Ming believes that support from neighboring nations of the damaging areas should allow evacuation of the citizens and provide world support. Zhang Tian Ming understands the severity of the crisis and believes that it could lead to world destruction.

General Jang

General Jang is a South Korean general who believes that the crisis is a chance given to the nation to end the war with North Korea. General Jang believes that the world chaos the crisis brings will stop the disruption of the plan to invade North Korea. He believes that this crisis exposes North Korea’s vulnerability and is the perfect timing to attack. He supports everlasting chaos and disorder caused by the crisis.

Agnes Callamard

Agnes Callamard is the Secretary General of Amnesty International. She focuses on human rights and the safety of humans in the potential damage areas. She seeks for support in evacuating citizens of the damaging areas. She believes that human lives are the priority and feels resentment towards organizations and nations that look at the crisis as a chance for economic gain.

Chen Mei Li

Chen Mei Li is a rich landlord who is looking to buy the damaged land from the explosion for future development. She believes that the chaos will bring the damaged land vulnerable to cheap negotiation and lower the value of those lands for purchase. She is looking for long-term business in the damaged areas and looks at the crisis as a chance to multiply her wealth. She supports the chaos and disorder of the conference for her plan.

Vladimir Putin

Vladimir Putin is the president of Russia. He has been invited to this conference because the Eastern district of Primorsky Krai is very likely to be impacted during the eruption of Mt. Baekdu. For him this is urgent news because Vladivostok, a major port city including the headquarters of the pacific fleet of the Russian Navy, is included in the region. For him, the eruption would have strategic harms— for both his military and his political career.

Possible Solutions

Referring to the Baekdu Mountain eruption, members of the committee will have to cooperate with other members to compromise and collaborate for generating an effective response to the crisis. Not only will each member of the committee be willing to fulfill their own selfish needs, international cooperation on the volcanic crisis is crucial.

Delegates must find ways to accurately assess and monitor the volcano's activity, coordinate with each other, evacuate and ensure safety of people, provide humanitarian aid, conduct research on the impact, mobilize resources for recovery, consider environmental consequences, assist rehabilitation, and communicate relevant information.

With the limited time and resources, a potential solution is to provide funds from all UN countries to research and pin-point the damaged areas for an effective evacuation for human safety. Then compromise on the loss of economy from those evacuation and regulate assets for mitigating the financial damage.

However, on this matter, self-needs will continue to conflict with the compromise. Members will have to consider fees needed from the refugees and migrants. Cooperation and sacrifices are needed for generating a response satisfactory to all.

Questions to Consider

1. What is my role in this committee? What powers/influences does my character hold in this committee?
2. To what extent should the committee prepare for the eruption of Mt. Baekdu? Do we have enough precautions? After all, should your character care about “prevention” of eruption?
 - a. Risk Assessment is crucial for all delegates - what will be the economic (agricultural, trade, tourism, etc) and societal consequences of eruption? How does it impact you or your group of people?
3. How can the committee create an effective method for different nations (especially Japan, North Korea, China, and South Korea) to collaborate when an eruption occurs? Which nation/organization will take the lead?
4. If the eruption happens, then how are we going to continue on with the essential services such as healthcare, education, or even just basic things like providing safe shelter and adequate food? How and where can we get the necessary aid?

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