

Joint Crisis Committee

The First Crusade

Christians



Letter from the Chair

Hello, and welcome to the Joint Crisis Committee for the First Crusade on the side of the Christians. We are Lawson and Alex, and we will be your chairs for this committee. Considering that this is a Joint-Crisis-Committee (JCC), our committee will be moving in tandem with (and will be fighting against) the Seljuk Turks and Islamic World committee. It may be helpful to view that committee's briefing paper as well as this.

This committee is meant to be fast paced, with consistent crisis updates and crisis notes, as is standard in a crisis committee. In this briefing paper will be an explanation of what a crisis committee entails and how to write a crisis note.

The First Crusade was a rather chaotic endeavor meant as a religious reprisal meant to stabilize an unstable Christian world. For this reason, this time is ripe with opportunities for delegates to change the course of history to their character/nation's benefit (or demise!). This subject is also rather complicated, especially when considering all the events and context surrounding the actual crusade. For that reason, myself and the chair for the Seljuk Turks and Muslim World side recommend that delegates take some time to prepare notes for this committee, as well as printing out this briefing paper (and perhaps even the other side's) as a resource to use during the committee. Any and all printed paper notes, articles, AI summaries, are fair for use during committee. No electronic devices or electronic notes are allowed to be used for committee.

Given that this subject matter is rather tough to get a grasp on, here are some resources for you to look at to get a jump start on research

- Wikipedia; The First Crusade: Wikipedia is always a good place to begin research, as it allows you to formulate a general happening of events
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Crusade.
- Extra History; The First Crusade Video Series: If you're not looking to read extensively, this is a good series that sums up the events of the crusade from a Christian perspective and includes MANY of the characters in this committee:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIs5B2U7US0&list=PLjLK2cYtt-VBsRVTRjZYBvrzqc0O3fElX>.
- AI is a great tool to gather specific information in the manner you want it in a fast manner. **You are more than welcome to use AI for research**, but do be cautious, as AI is not always 100% correct.

A lot of the happenings during the crusades were motivated due to religious and racial discrimination on all sides. We are conducting business on many sensitive issues and political matters. At SJMUNC, we tolerate all political beliefs, religious traditions, and ideas. We commit to upholding a standard that each delegate should be treated with kindness and respect throughout the entire day. We do not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment. No matter a delegate's position, one is not allowed to put down others for their beliefs just because it is their country/group/character's position. Please remember that you and others may be characters for a day, you are still actual people.

NOTE: We recommend that you print this briefing paper for you to have on hand during your committee

Crisis Committee Overview

A crisis committee is a special type of Model UN committee that deals with an actively developing problem that delegates are able to tackle in multiple ways. Three ways in which a crisis committee is different from a regular committee are that the emphasis is on passing directives (not resolutions), the inclusion of periodical updates in committees called “crisis updates”, and that it includes crisis notes, a way for delegates to individually influence events.

A directive is just like a resolution, but its emphasis is on being fast, concise, and responding to a current problem. Actions done by a directive are going to immediately take place, unlike resolutions in a standard general committee, which are not binding and are merely suggestions. Directives are created, presented, and passed in the same way that a resolution is.

A crisis update is a new development outside what is outlined in a briefing paper. Normally, updates are announced to the entire room and can be of rather minor or major magnitude. These updates are meant as hurdles for delegates to triumph over throughout the day. As soon as they are announced, delegates can (and will be expected to) act on them.

Crisis “notes” are not notes at all. They are letters or messages sent from you to either a personal secretary (for which, you can just invent a name) or to “crisis” (both forms are acceptable). In these letters, you include any action item that you wish to do in your committee. For example, you could hire bodyguards, raise an army, send spies to collect intelligence on foes, or send loquacious love letters to random characters that are to be read in committee (this happens more often than you think). Remember to be appropriate with your actions. The goal of crisis notes is to make effective changes while also being fun and creative. The notes are given to crisis coordinators (Crisis), who will evaluate your note, individual position in the context of events, and resources available to you at the time, and will decide whether or not to grant you the

request. A thing of note about crisis notes is that if they are too general for our crisis coordinators to understand, then they will take the liberty to do as they wish (and more often than not, they can be rather spiteful). For instance, if you were the Eastern Roman Emperor Alexius I in Constantinople, and wrote a note saying:

“I wish for 3,000 troops to be deployed in my area”

Crisis may respond with:

“3000 troops have been deployed to an unknown location in the Eastern Roman Empire. They are unarmed, have no food or equipment, nor any level of training. Good luck. —Crisis”

The crisis coordinators could respond in a manner of ways, given that there was no specificity on armaments, specific location, food, or logistics. However, the more specific and detailed you are, the less likely the chance is for things to be messed up. Here is a revised note:

“Dear Crisis,

I, Eastern Roman Emperor Alexius I, ask for 3000 well-trained, loyal troops to be immediately deployed to Constantinople to aid me in my campaign through Anatolia. They should be equipped with spears, swords, heavy armor, provisions for such a campaign, as well as horses to aid their efforts. Please use appropriate funds from the treasury. —Alexius I, Eastern Roman Emperor”

Crisis may respond with:

“3000 troops have been deployed to Constantinople and are ready for your use. The appropriate amount has been subtracted from the Eastern Roman treasury. —Crisis”

Actions and items received from crisis notes will either be announced in crisis updates or in individual notes received from Crisis. You can use the information you learn or items you receive in directives or future crisis notes.

A common thing to do in a crisis note is the assassination of other delegates. In these committees, some delegates may “die” after being assassinated, or killed in combat, disease, or any other reason that could be presented in a crisis update. If your character is killed, DO NOT WORRY. We are prepared with replacement characters. Furthermore, it is most likely that little to no people will actually “die” in committee. Assassinations must be very well prepared and should take place over multiple crisis notes, given their impact on committee.

One thing to know about crisis committees is that anything can happen, so be prepared, watch your back, and have fun.

Statement of the Problem

It is the 27th of November, 1095. Pope Urban II, the leader of the Catholic world has just declared a crusade to retake the Holy Land from the Muslim Seljuk Turks. After receiving an envoy from Eastern Roman (also known as “Byzantine”) Emperor Alexius I Comnenus asking for help to reclaim former Eastern Roman lands in Anatolia (modern-day Turkey), the Pope—motivated to find a common enemy for Christian Europe to unite against—decides to help Constantinople. All Christian Kings and Lords are expected to rally their troops to make their way to Jerusalem, conquering all lands that once belonged to the Christians.

The Emperor, however, has demanded that all the lands that once belonged to the Eastern Roman Empire should be returned to him and his nation. While this may sound reasonable, keep in mind that all lands the Christians must conquer once belonged to the Eastern Roman Empire in some capacity or another. While some honorable nobles may honor this request, others are ambitious and desire to add lands to their domains or carve new kingdoms for themselves.



The current occupiers of the land are the Seljuk Turks, a nomadic, Sunni Muslim people who have driven back the Eastern Roman Empire from its former lands. Their threat is so great, in fact, that Pope Urban II is convinced that not dealing with them would be a death sentence to Christianity. The Turks have conquered from across the Central Asian steppes all the way to the edge of Christendom, in part by using large hordes of horse archers and by taking advantage of a constantly infighting Eastern Roman Empire. Their ambitions have not ceased, and they will be looking to expand their borders and the reach of Islam.

However, the threat is not limited to the Turks, but other Muslim nations as well. With a united Christian threat at their world's doorstep, the Muslims are like to respond similarly. The Muslims will attempt to launch a defense of their lands, and may perhaps look to make an offensive on Christian lands, by sea or land. This is something delegates must be careful of.

History of the Problem

Christian and Muslim states had been in conflict since the founding of Islam in the 7th century. In the years following the death of the Islamic prophet Muhammad in 632, Muslim armies made great conquests, creating an empire stretching from the Iberian Peninsula, to North Africa, and the Levant, including Jerusalem. All of these lands had once been under Christian control; more specifically, under the control of the Eastern Roman Empire. By the 11th century, Christians had begun to regain ground from Muslim domination in Iberia during a process known as the Reconquista, but their ties to the Holy Land had waned greatly. Muslims in the Levant often enforced harsh laws against any public manifestation of the Christian religion, putting strict rules on Christian pilgrims in the region, something many Christian kings took very seriously.

The First Crusade was the Christian world's response to the growing Muslim political and military power in the Holy Land and in the former lands of the Eastern Roman Empire. Jerusalem became more penitentially pilgrimage-worthy in Western Europe. Even though the Seljuk grasp on Jerusalem was tenuous, the return of pilgrims who reported hardships and the overall oppression of Christians had a solidifying effect. The Byzantine call for military aid was matched by a greater tendency for military direction from the papacy among the warrior class of Western Europe.

NOTE: Delegates should have some kind of map of 1095

Europe accessible to help them in their committee

Possible Solutions

The Crusaders face a series of difficult decisions as they prepare for their mission to reclaim the Holy Land. Chief among these decisions is whether to march as a united army or divide into smaller, more flexible contingents. A united front would present a formidable force, maximizing the Crusaders' ability to overwhelm Muslim defenses. However, splitting into smaller groups could allow for greater strategic flexibility, enabling different contingents to focus on various targets or respond quickly to unexpected challenges. The risks of fragmentation, including internal disputes and miscommunication, must be carefully weighed against the potential benefits of greater mobility and adaptability.

Training and preparation are also key to the success of the Crusade. Many Crusaders come from diverse backgrounds, with varying degrees of military experience. Ensuring that all forces are well-trained and prepared to fight against the skilled and mobile Turkish horse archers is critical. Logistics will play a central role in sustaining the Crusaders on their long journey. Organizing supply lines, securing access to food and water, and maintaining strong coordination among the different forces will be essential to avoid starvation, disease, and desertion. Without proper planning, the Crusade could fall apart before it even reaches its destination.

Diplomacy and relationship management will be just as important as military strategy. The Crusaders must navigate a delicate web of alliances and rivalries, not only among their own leaders but also between the Western and Eastern branches of Christianity. Byzantine Emperor Alexius I's demand for the return of former Eastern Roman lands must be handled diplomatically. Some Crusader leaders may be willing to honor this request, but others may see it as an opportunity to carve out their own territories in the Middle East. Ensuring cooperation

between the Crusader states and the Byzantine Empire will be key to avoiding infighting and betrayal.

The question of what to do with the conquered lands is another major challenge. While the Crusade's primary goal is to reclaim Christian territories, particularly Jerusalem, many Crusaders have their own ambitions. Some may wish to establish new kingdoms in the Holy Land, while others may see the campaign as an opportunity to enhance their personal prestige. Balancing these competing interests with the need for long-term stability in the region will be critical to the Crusade's success.

Finally, the Crusaders must decide how they will interact with the local populations they encounter. Pillaging and looting may provide short-term resources, but it could alienate potential allies and create long-term hostility. Building positive relations with local Christian and even non-Christian communities could provide the Crusaders with valuable support and help ensure the stability of the territories they hope to reclaim. Balancing military necessity with diplomacy and long-term governance will determine the ultimate success of the Crusade.

Character Positions

- **Pope Urban II:** Seeing the Crusade as a way to unify the Christian world and extend papal power, the Pope will use all powers available to him, including that of the excommunication and the interdict, to keep the Christians united together. Urban II, having fought with the Holy Roman Empire during the continued investiture dispute and currently at odds with a claimant to the Papacy Clement III (known as an “antipope”), is seeking to heal the schism between the Eastern and Western Churches and solidify his power in the process. He called the crusades to reclaim the Holy Land, and to recruit Crusaders, promised the full absolution of sins for all those who took up the Cross to liberate Jerusalem. He may try to use this great undertaking to deflect the tensions between the Eastern and Catholic Churches and reconcile both into one.
- **Emperor Alexius I Comnenus:** While thankful for the Pope’s help, he is wary of the many Christian lords who are eager to fight in his former lands. For instance, Alexius has a past with Bohemond of Taranto, who previously attempted to invade the Eastern Roman Empire. Alexius will be looking for all of his former lands in the East restored to him, which may be difficult to convince the Crusaders of doing. Furthermore, due to the vast amount of troops going to take back the Holy Land, Alexius is concerned about the possibility of the Crusaders pillaging and causing havoc while passing through his land.
- **Nicholas III of Constantinople:** The Patriarch of Constantinople, and a firm ally of the Emperor. Having previously sided with Alexius on confiscating church funds to pay for his war with Bohemond, he is a formidable ally with unique abilities and influence among the population and Eastern Orthodox Church. He is the head of the Orthodox Christian Faith, and known to be staunch in his ideals. However, he is very open to reuniting with the Church of Rome, and might be open to do so given a fair agreement. He is able to galvanize the Eastern churches to action, and could be the key to an alliance (or even a reunification) between Rome and Constantinople.
- **Raymond IV of Toulouse:** The Count of Toulouse, Raymond IV was one of the first to commit to the Crusade because of his deep religious beliefs. Raymond IV is deeply passionate about the cause, and even claims that he wants to die in the Holy Land. Born sometime around 1041 AD, Raymond spent much of his life reconquering his family’s lands. With around 54 years of experience at his disposal and him commanding the largest force of the Crusade, he believes in his own authority and thinks of himself as a leader of the Crusade.
- **Adhemar of Le Puy:** The Bishop of Le Puy, Adhemar was appointed apostolic legate and leader of the Crusade by Pope Urban II. A strong associate of Raymond of Toulouse, Adhemar was a strong advocate for the Crusade at its announcement at Clermont and was the first to take up the cross. As the official representative of Pope Urban II, he was given full spiritual authority over the Crusade and tasked with carrying out Urban II’s plans.

- **Godfrey of Bouillon:** Lord of Bouillon and Duke of Lower Lorraine, Godfrey spent much of his life fighting for the Holy Roman Emperor. In fact, he even fought for Henry IV for a time in the Investiture Controversy, which ultimately ended with the deposition of Pope Gregory VII, the Pope who later bequeathed his position to Urban II. To finance his journey to the Holy Land and recruit troops, Godfrey sold or mortgaged most of his estates, which gives him considerable stake in the outcome of the Crusade. Godfrey will also be joined in his efforts by his brother, Baldwin of Boulogne.
- **Baldwin of Boulogne:** Born the youngest son of the Count of Boulogne, Baldwin of Boulogne was initially meant to go to the Church. Later in life however, he changed directions and became a knight. He ended up garnering military experience through fighting with his family against Albert III, the Count of Namur. As an heir and brother to Godfrey of Bouillon, Baldwin of Boulogne intends to travel with him and serve each other's best interests.
- **Hugh of Vermandois:** Count of Vermandois, Hugh of Vermandois is the younger brother of King Philip I of France. Because his brother Philip I was excommunicated by Urban II for adultery and because of his own personal ambitions, his loyalty to the Pope is weakened, though he is still motivated to take up the Cross. Additionally, because of his close proximity to the French Royalty, he views himself very highly, which may cause problems down the road with other Crusader forces.
- **Stephen of Blois:** Son of Theobald III and the count of Blois and Chartres, Stephen of Blois commands one of the major crusading forces. His marriage to Adela of Normandy forged strong connections between him, and the royal houses of England and Normandy. However, Stephen of Blois is not as passionate about the Crusade as some of his peers, and may struggle with the hardships of the journey.
- **Robert II of Flanders:** Born in 1065 and son of Robert I, Robert II was made count of Flanders in 1093. His father, Robert I, had previously made a journey to the Holy Land and had formed a bond with Alexius Comnenus in the process. Because of his family's ties with the Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, he is inclined to respect Comnenus's calls for the return of his land, though still pursuing his own ambitions. Robert II is planning to lead his army while traveling with his distant relative, Godfrey of Bouillon. However, despite his relationship with France, Robert II was also connected to the Holy Roman Empire through his mother, Gertrude of Saxony.
- **Robert Curthose:** Son of William the Conqueror, Robert Curthose was born in 1051 AD and was ruler of Normandy. He, as the eldest son, also claimed the throne of England, but he was not recognized and instead, power was given to his brother, William II. When fleeing after a failed insurrection against his father, Curthose ended up taking refuge in Flanders, with his uncle Robert I of Flanders. To finance his journey, Robert Curthose mortgaged his estate, entrenching him firmly in the cause. He also plans on traveling with Stephen of Blois, his brother-in-law.

- **Peter the Hermit:** The priest of Amiens, Peter the Hermit was so inspired by Pope Urban II's call to the Crusade that he began to spread its word from France in the direction of the Holy Roman Empire. He intends to use his garnered followers, mostly peasants with little to no fighting experience, to march toward the Holy Land, whether it be independently or with the other crusader forces. However, Peter the Hermit, though an influential leader, doesn't personally possess the means to keep his following well armed and supplied.
- **Walter Sans Avoir:** The Lord of Boissy-Sans-Avoir, Walter Sans Avoir is a zealot of the Christian faith and . A co-leader with Peter the Hermit in his cause to take back the Holy Land, he hopes to embark on the crusade as soon as possible, with or without the other nobles. However, Walter Sans Avoir, much like Peter the Hermit, lacks the resources to comfortably facilitate the journey of himself and his following.
- **Bohemond of Taranto:** Son of Robert Guiscard and ruler of Taranto, Bohemond lead a very experienced army. Through his war for succession with his brother, and his direct conflict with Emperor Alexius Comnenus under the command of his father, Bohemond has some of the most competent troops out of all crusading forces. Though, because of his earlier invasion into Byzantine lands, his relationship with the Emporer is flimsy at best. Bohemond seeks to secure land and power for himself during the Crusade in an effort to hopefully even carve out his own principality. However, Bohemond may not limit himself to taking only from the Muslims.
- **Tancred:** Nephew of Bohemond of Taranto, Tancred is a Norman Lord from Southern Italy, and, with his uncle, is seeking wealth and fame from the Crusade. Tancred, a member of the Hauteville family and a relatively young Crusader, has gained a fair amount of combat experience from witnessing and participating in the conquests of Robert Guiscard, his grandfather. As Tancred's own agenda largely lines up with that of his uncle's, his relationship with the Byzantine Emporer is similarly unstable.
- **Tatikios:** Tatikios came to knew Alexius Comemnus through his father, who was a slave for Alexius Comemnus's family. Tatikios fought for Comemnus against Nicephorus Basilacius, and later against the invading forces of Rober Guiscard, a close relative of both Bohemond of Taranto and Tancred. Tatikios also has substantial experience fighting the Seljuk Turks, as in 1086, with the assistance of Manuel Boutomites, he defeated Abu'l Qasim. Unfortunately was not able to recapture Nicea as originally planned. Tatikios may prove an invaluable asset the Crusade, but will remain loyal to the Eastern Roman Empire and will prioritize its interests over those of the Crusaders'.
- **Manuel Boutoumites:** A successful military leader, Manuel Boutomites was a close friend and trusted advisor of Alexius Comemnus. As the leader of the Eastern Roman Empire's navy, Boutomites, along with Tatikios, fought against Turkish leader Abu'l Qasim in a semi-successful campaign to retake control of Nicea, though they ultimately failed. Boutoumites, a strong defender of Comemnus's interests, may also prove useful

in diplomacy to pacify the incoming Crusader forces, especially Bohemond of Taranto and Tancred.

- **Coloman the Learned:** The King of Hungary, his nation has previously supplied western pilgrims with food on their journey to the Holy Land. However, this king is pragmatic and cautious. He is in favor of this crusade and is willing to help in any way he can. He is trusting of those of noble heritage, and is likely to be distrustful of peasant bands.
- **Emicho of Flonheim:** A staunch supporter of the faith, Flonheim is willing to put those who do not accept Christ to the sword. He is most focused on converting those who do not adhere to the faith, in Europe or Asia, Muslim or Jew.
- **Vitale I Michiel:** The newly crowned Doge of Venice, this ruler is focused on money and trade. His fleet of ships could be valuable to the crusade, and could give a strategic advantage. However, this ruler is not inspired by the religious rhetoric of the Pope and other leaders, and is motivated by trade, lands, and money