

<b>Forum:</b>	Historical Security Council
<b>Issue:</b>	Question of the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)
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<b>Position:</b>	President, Assitant Presidents

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## Introduction

Cuban missile crisis refers to a series of military confrontation between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) and the United States of America (USA) within the Cuban territory, where the USSR attempted to construct a military base, taking off from the fact that Cuba needed an alliance with a new power to protect themselves from the USA. From October 16th, two massive forces have been confronting each other on Cuban waters and skies, escalating the tension of the Cold War to the highest ever. Indubitable as the apex of the Cold War, the Cuban Missile Crisis is not only the threat of war between two nations but also a threat to the entire humanity which could potentially lead to extinction via world war 3 with Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), represented by nuclear weapons.

The fact that the USA's military base in Turkey and Italy was aiming the Jupiter Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM) at the USSR was enough to make the USSR feel the urgent necessity to have an equivalent threat to the USA to balance the force in the context of Cold War. At the same time, Cuba, led by Fidel Castro who overthrew Fulgencio Batista's government, was actively seeking a powerful ally to protect themselves from American capitalists. Cuba thus proposed USSR to build a military base in Cuba, where nuclear missiles would be deployed, keeping entire USA territory in range. The USSR accepted it with unanimous support from the governing board of the USSR, the Supreme Soviet.

When the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the USA realized the USSR was building a military base in Cuba, the US government considered the option of bombing the base. With deliberation, however, it decided to block Cuban water to stop further construction of the base. The subsequent suspense arose as USSR reacted with corresponding force.

## Definition of Key Terms

### Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

The development of WMD is a byproduct of the Cold War, where the US and USSR attempted to establish military superiority over the other. There are 3 types of WMD: nuclear weapons, chemical weapons, and biological weapons. The Cuban Missile Crisis predominantly involves negotiations and threats over nuclear weapons.

## **Executive Committee of National Security Council (EXCOMM)**

EXCOMM is the highest national security body of government of the USA, comprised of the regular National Security Council of USA as well as several relevant experts who were considered useful during the crisis. The committee was made of up 12 members with varying perspectives on how to respond to the USSR's missile threat on Cuba.

## **Defense Readiness Condition(DEFCON)**

DEFCON refers to the combat readiness system of a nation. The governments announce DEFCON when it believes the circumstances is close to warfare. The lower the DEFCON level, the higher level the threat present. The Cuban Missile Crisis saw the usage of DEFCON 2 for the first time in US history.

## **Supreme Soviet**

The Supreme Soviet is the highest legislative decision-making body of the USSR. The Soviet Supreme made the initial decision to accept Cuba's proposal to build a military base in Cuba and conducted subsequent decisions during the crisis.

## **Background**

Do not change these section titles. Other section titles should not be necessary. Sub-headings and sub-sub headings are optional. You should not use sub-sub-sub headings. This section should be the major part of your Research Report. **It should be from 700-1000 words.** Address the history of the issue, major points to consider, different aspects of the issue...etc.

### **Circumstances of the USA & USSR**

As previously mentioned in the introduction, an apparent imbalance of power existed before the crisis sparked. The General Secretary of the Soviet Union Nikita Khrushchev believed that such imbalance could ultimately lead to mortal resistance or unconditional surrender of the USSR, and decided to put pressure on the newly elected president of USA John F. Kennedy. By threatening nuclear war, Khrushchev aimed to utilize the strategy of brinkmanship to give an advantage to the USSR in negotiation.

On the other hand, the USA overestimated the military and technological capability of the USSR due to mass propaganda campaigns portraying the USSR as technologically advanced. In reality, while the USA had 555 B-52 bomber and 1830 nuclear weapons deployable in the USSR mainland, the USSR only had 66 Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) and Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) to attack the USA mainland: a number very inferior to that of the USA. However, the USA lost the space race to

Sputnik I in 1957, Lunar Moon Probe in 1959, and Gagarin's first manned space travel in 1961, and consequently perceived their capability inferior to that of the USSR. In this context, the USA felt an overwhelming sense of crisis by the USSR's move to deploy nuclear weapons beneath its territory.

### Construction of Military Base and Its Unveiling

After both the government of the USSR and Cuba agreed upon the construction of the military base on May 21st, 1962, the operation named "Anadir Plan", named after 'Anadir River' at Siberia, aimed at diverting suspicion, commenced.

By the end of September, the USA press reported the USSR exportation of ballistic missiles to Cuba, raising concerns about national security, but President Kennedy dismissed it, claiming the missiles were solely for the defense of Cuba, but not for attacking the USA themselves. However, on October 14th, the U-2 reconnaissance plane of CIA detected the construction of the Cuban missile base and reported it shortly to President Kennedy.

### USA Responds to USSR's Plan

On the same day, the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) drew a map of ranges that R12 and R14 could target the USA mainland, which shocked President Kennedy and the USA parliament. The map indicated that R12 missile already could destroy Washington DC and R14 missile could even reach and destroy parts of California. President Kennedy instantly convened EXCOMM, a special committee composed specially for the Cuban crisis, but, could not reach an initial shared consensus. The military urged for the destruction of the missile base via extensive air raid, considering the construction as an apparent challenge to the USA by the USSR, and some even argued for a preemptive nuclear strike at Cuba. However, President Kennedy and political agencies insisted for a standby until the next moves from USSR.

On October 22nd, President Kennedy announced that the USSR was building missile bases in Cuba to the world via radio and television. While the international community shed spotlight on Cuba, President Kennedy officially condemned the USSR's attempt to threaten national security of USA and demanded take down of Cuban missile base under United Nations' supervision, which the USSR formally rejected. On the same day, President Kennedy declared DEFCON 3, a quasi-state of war, to showcase the USA's willingness to engage. US Navy gathered over 90 vessels of ships, including 8 aircraft carriers, to block water of Cuba and censor all ships entering the territory, and the US Air Force deployed 510 aircraft and 40 aerial tankers, ready to launch at all time.

On the other hand, the USA's decision to publicly condemn the USSR tremendously frustrated Supreme Soviet, since the USSR had expected confidential communication between the nations. In

response to the USA's blockade, General Secretariat Khrushchev denounced USA's blockade of Cuba, claiming it as a piracy and an "act of aggression" that prevents freedom of navigation. Khrushchev also commanded the ships with its missile components and engineers on board to penetrate the blockade and enforce the approach to Cuba, though eventually, this ship, which was planned to pass US quarantine in October 25th, would turn back towards Europe. USA, in response, dispatched P-3 maritime patrol aircraft to Alabama, and ordered for standby at all nuclear forces. Warsaw Pact Organization and North Atlantic Treaty Organization went into emergency stand by.

Both the USA and the USSR's decision made the international community extremely anxious, where a single mistake or decision could put the world into nuclear war. Thus, both the USA and the USSR showed firm resolution, aiming to demonstrate their power. However, they strived to avoid any military clashes in order to reduce chances of nuclear annihilation. The USA allowed civil logistics to pass, and most of the USSR ships with missile parts eventually turned back, partly because of fear of potential clash, and partly because it didn't want missile technology to be confiscated by the USA.

On October 24th, USA declared DEFCON 2, the 'fast pace' phase, where armed forces are meant to be on stand-by to be engaged in less than 6 hours. In this case, 1400 bombers, 134 ICBMs, stood by to be launched at any time, and air forces in USA mainland distributed themselves in civilian airports to prevent excessive damage by potential nuclear attack, according to national warfare manual. The circumstances show no evidence of alleviation until October 25th, when the United Nations Security Council on this issue is chaired.

## **Major Parties Involved**

### **United States of America (USA)**

USA is a nation which central to the issue, since her national security is threatened by construction of missile base. With the highest GDP and biggest army in the world, the USA is the leader of North American Treaty Organization (NATO) that promoted capitalism, confronting against Warsaw Pact that promote socialism. Considering the geographical location of Cuba, Soviet missile base in Cuba signified that entire USA would become the subject of Soviet nuclear power which USA believed as highly superior than theirs.

### **Unison of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)**

USSR is a union of socialist nations. She supported Cuba's proposal to build a missile base in Cuba to protect it from American capitalist force, and successfully constructed that it became an actual threat to USA by the time USA discovered it.

## Republic of Cuba

In January of 1959, Fidel Castro overthrows Fulgencio Batista's dictatorship and establishes a socialist government. After he came into office, he began to nationalize territory and infrastructure, a conduct that conforms closely to socialism. This was a significant nuisance to the USA who promoted capitalism and thus, constantly sought to find the nominal cause for an invasion to eliminate what they perceived as a communist threat close to their borders. Cuba, thus, requested aid from the USSR. USA finally executed the Bay of Pigs Invasion in April 15th, 1961, aiming to overthrow Castro with CIA trained agents, which turned out as complete failure. After the assault, Cuba felt desperate need for a powerful protection and suggested to USSR the aforementioned plan for building the missile base.

## Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
<b>January 9th, 1959</b>	Fidel Castro seizes control of Cuba
<b>May, 1960</b>	Nikita Khrushchev promises to defend Cuba with Soviet arms
<b>April 17th – 20th, 1961</b>	Bay of Pigs Invasion fails to remove Castro from power, increases US-Cuban tensions
<b>August 29th, 1962</b>	Military construction and soviet presence in Cuba observed by US reconnaissance planes
<b>October 14th, 1962</b>	USA U-2 spy plane captures photograph of USSR medium-rang missiles being assembled in Cuba
<b>October 16th, 1962</b>	John F. Kenndy informed of missles, convenes EXCOMM
<b>October 22nd, 1962</b>	Kennedy announces presence of missiles in Cuba, announcing his decision to enact a naval "quarantine"
<b>October 27th, 1962</b>	American reconnaissance plane shot down over Cuba, tensions escalate and the US prepares invasion force in Florida

## Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Soon after the identification of Soviet missiles in Cuba, the US government discussed the following options as potential courses of actions. First, since the US and Soviet both had missiles capable of landing a devastating attack on the other, one option was to not take any direct action against the Soviet Union or Cuba under the principle of mutually assured destruction, where any physical attack by either side would guarantee mutual annihilation. However, with this, there would be little to no possibility to alleviate the high level of tension between the two superpowers. Moreover, the US desired nuclear dominance over the Soviet Union—that is to say, a situation where they could attack the Soviet Union, but the Soviet Union would not have any missiles in range to attack the US. The US also contemplated taking action within

Cuba, either directly invading Cuba and terminating the development of the missile base by force and blockading Cuba to deter the arrival of the missiles, or making Castro an offer in order to split him from the collaboration with the Soviet Union. Bearing in mind the alliance between Cuba and the Soviet Union, an invasion of Cuba may lead to physical confrontation with the Soviet Union, which would further heighten the tension rather than resolving the issue. On the other hand, given the previous tensions and confrontations between the US and Cuba, it seemed unlikely that Castro would willingly pull out of his collaboration with the Soviet Union.

The final option was approaching this issue through diplomacy, and resolving this crisis through negotiations to persuade the Soviet Union to remove the missiles. Although Kennedy, with the support of the Organization of American States, announced a quarantine on Cuba, the US and the Soviet Union entered a period of negotiation with the hope to prevent the current levels of tension and the situation overall from escalating. Through sending letters to each other, Kennedy and Khrushchev negotiated conditions for the Soviet Union to remove its missiles from Cuba. Subsequently, in order to facilitate more efficient communication, the Moscow-Washington hotline, or the Moscow-Washington direct communication link was established. This system would allow direct communication between the two leaders in cases of emergencies such that no delays and miscommunications would occur.

## **Possible Solutions**

The Cuban Missile Crisis stands as a period of unprecedented levels of tension as the two global powers verge on nuclear war. Thus, all solutions must alleviate existing tensions, regardless of method or other steps taken.

### **Encouraging diplomacy**

Diplomacy should be facilitated between major parties including the USA, USSR, and Cuba. With the common interests of peace and prosperity, dialogue must be promoted between the nations for the situation to de-escalate and transition to peace and security. This is necessary as the USA and USSR profoundly misunderstood each other's goals and intentions, the miscommunication leading to a war neither of the nations wished for.

### **Arranging compromises from both sides**

Valid compromises between the USA and USSR must be immediately negotiated. For the USA, its naval quarantine of Cuba must be withdrawn along with the removal of missile silos in its allied states targeting the USSR. For the USSR, its covert operations in Cuba must be brought to an end under international supervision.

## **Designing long term solutions for peace and stability**

In the long term, nuclear non-proliferation and reconciliation between the USA and USSR should be addressed. Witnessing the uncertainty and hostility that arise from the threat of nuclear warfare, possession of nuclear weapons should be restricted. Existing missiles should be scheduled and monitored for dismantling and discarding. Geopolitical tensions from the Cold War should be defused with negotiation and transparency. Between Fidel Castro, Nikita Khrushchev, and John F. Kennedy, sustained exchanges are vital to effectively settle the issue at hand.

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