

**SOCHUM
BACKGROUND
GUIDE**

Letter from the Executive Board:

Dear Delegates,

It takes us immense pleasure in welcoming you to the Premia Model United Nations 2024. We are honoured to serve you as Executive Board members in this edition of the conference.

We believe that each and every delegate should go through this guide, to have a clear understanding of the agenda at hand. However, this would only serve as a “Background” of the agenda and would not be covering all the aspects linked to it. Your real research lies beyond this guide and we are eager to see all of you discussing possible solutions together, applying all of your extensive research and great knowledge of the topics discussed in this committee.

Understanding both the importance and complexity of this agenda, we strongly recommend you to be prepared and well researched in committee, and at the same time request you to participate at all times, making it a learning experience for all of us. Also note, it will be important for you to have a basic understanding of how various rights get affected in the socio-legal context.

If you are participating in a MUN conference for the very first time, we would request you to have an idea of the UNA USA rules of procedure followed in committee, links to the same would be provided at the end of this guide. The rest of the work as a delegate remains the same for you, wherein you research about the agenda, your foreign policy and laws relating to the same. Please take the initiative and research accordingly.

We strongly hope that you all will come prepared and motivated to discuss the situation at hand, brainstorm together to find solutions of the same, applying legal frameworks and in the process, take back a lot from the committee. Our goal for you in this committee is to have an enriching experience by learning the art of diplomacy and at the same time see you solve real life problems happening in this world.

Goodluck and Godspeed,

Siddharth Bandam Sandilya V Jishnu Ramachandra
Chairperson Co-Director Co-Director

THIRD COMMITTEE

The Third Committee of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session is chaired by H.E. Christian Braun (Luxembourg). The General Assembly allocates to the Third Committee, agenda items relating to a range of social, humanitarian affairs and human rights issues that affect people all over the world. As in previous sessions, an important part of the work of the Committee will focus on the examination of human rights questions, including reports of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council which was established in 2006. In October 2019, the Committee will hear and interact with special rapporteurs, independent experts, and chairs of working groups as mandated by the Human Rights Council. The Committee also discusses questions relating to the advancement of women, the protection of children, indigenous issues, and the treatment of refugees, the promotion of fundamental freedoms through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and the right to self-determination. The Committee also addresses important social development questions such as issues related to youth, family, ageing, and persons with disabilities, crime prevention, criminal justice, and international drug control.

At the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, the Third Committee considered over 60 draft resolutions, more than half of which were submitted under the human rights agenda item alone. These included three so-called country-specific resolutions on human rights situations. The Third Committee is expected to consider a similar number of draft resolutions during the present session of the General Assembly.

HISTORY

SOCHUM is one of the main GA committees; therefore, like the other main committees of the GA, it was established in 1947. And it follows the rules of the General Assembly, which is indicated in the Charter of the United Nations. The membership of the SOCHUM includes all 193 member states. In addition, non-member states and other entities recognized by the UN as permanent observers may attend and participate in meetings, but they cannot vote as opposed to member states.

MANDATE

SOCHUM is a forum for United Nations Member States to discuss social, humanitarian, and cultural issues, especially those related to human rights. The SOCHUM and its subsidiary

body, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), take the lead in drafting general resolutions on these matters. According to the SOCHUM, social, humanitarian, and cultural issues include, but are not limited to:

the advancement of women's rights, the protection of children, issues related to indigenous affairs, the treatment of refugees and economic migrants, the promotion of fundamental freedoms through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and the right to self-determination. The Committee also addresses important social development questions such as issues related to youth, family, ageing, persons with disabilities, and prevention of heinous crime, criminal justice, and control over the international drug epidemic.

Unlike Security Council resolutions, resolutions passed within the context of a General Assembly are not binding, SOCHUM serves as no exception. Resolutions, by in large, is a set of recommendations for the member states to ratify and adjust accordingly.

Rules Of Procedure: The MUN Rules of Procedure (RoP) are established to maintain decorum and ensure order throughout a Model United Nations conference. These guidelines are essential for facilitating an effective and organised debate.

Attendance and Roll Call:

1. Be present at all sessions.
2. Respond with "Present" or "Present and Voting" during roll call.
3. Roll call is conducted at the beginning of each session to ensure quorum.

Quorum:

1. At least one-third of the delegates must be present to start the session.
2. A simple majority (more than half) is needed to pass a draft resolution.

Debate:

Speakers' List:

The primary method for delegates to speak.

Delegates speak in the order they are listed.

Formal Debate

Follow the speakers' list.

Set time limits for speeches.

Moderated Caucus

A more flexible debate format.

Set time limits for the caucus and individual speeches.

Unmoderated Caucus

Informal discussion without a structured order.

Set a time limit for the caucus.

Point of Order

Used if procedural rules are violated.

Chair decides on the issue.

Point of Personal Privilege

Used to address personal discomfort.
Chair responds immediately.

Point of Inquiry

Used to ask procedural questions.

Motions:

Motion to Set the Agenda

Determines the order of topics.
Needs a majority vote to pass.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Ends the meeting until the next session.
Needs a majority vote to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Meeting

Pauses the meeting for a break.
Needs a majority vote to pass.

Motion to Close Debate

Ends discussion and moves to voting.
Needs a two-thirds majority to pass.

Resolutions:

Draft Resolutions

Written proposals for committee action.

Require sponsors and signatories to be considered.

Amendments

Changes to the draft resolution.

Require discussion and a vote to be adopted.

Voting on Resolutions and Amendments

Usually requires a simple majority to pass.

Voting can be done by roll call or show of hands.

Conduct:

Respectful Behaviour:

Be respectful and diplomatic.

Use polite and professional language.

Yielding Time:

Delegates may give their remaining speaking time to the Chair, another delegate, or for questions.

Key Terms:

Motion: A proposal for action or discussion within the committee session.

Clause: A specific section within a working paper or draft resolution.

Simple Majority: More than half of the members must agree.

Special Majority: Two-thirds of the members must agree.

Working Paper: A document containing policy proposals from delegates.

Draft Resolution: A formal document outlining proposed actions and solutions.

Bloc: A group of countries or political parties with shared interests and goals.

History to The Agenda:

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict dates to the end of the nineteenth century. In 1947, the United Nations adopted Resolution 181, known as the Partition Plan, which sought to divide the British Mandate of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states. On May 14, 1948, the State of Israel was created, sparking the first Arab-Israeli War. The war ended in 1949 with Israel's victory, but 750,000 Palestinians were displaced, and the territory was divided into 3 parts: the State of Israel, the West Bank (of the Jordan River), and the Gaza Strip.

Over the following years, tensions rose in the region, particularly between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, and Syria.

Following the 1956 Suez Crisis and Israel's invasion of the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt, Jordan, and Syria signed mutual defence pacts in anticipation of a possible mobilisation of Israeli troops. In June 1967, following a series of manoeuvres by Egyptian President Abdel Gamal Nasser, Israel preemptively attacked Egyptian and Syrian air forces, starting the Six-Day War. After the war, Israel gained territorial control over the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt; the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan; and the Golan Heights from Syria.

Six years later, in what is referred to as the Yom Kippur War or the October War, Egypt and Syria launched a surprise two-front attack on Israel to regain their lost territory; the conflict did not result in significant gains for Egypt, Israel, or Syria, but Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat declared the war a victory for Egypt as it allowed Egypt and Syria to negotiate over previously ceded territory. Finally, in 1979, following a series of cease-fires and peace negotiations, representatives from Egypt and Israel signed the Camp David Accords, a peace treaty that ended the thirty-year conflict between Egypt and Israel.

Even though the Camp David Accords improved relations between Israel and its neighbors, the question of Palestinian self-determination and self-governance remained unresolved. In 1987, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip rose up against the Israeli government in what is known as the first intifada. The 1993 Oslo I Accords mediated the conflict, setting up a framework for the Palestinians to govern themselves in the West Bank and Gaza, and enabled mutual recognition between the newly established Palestinian Authority and Israel's government. In 1995, the Oslo II Accords expanded on the first agreement, adding provisions that mandated the complete withdrawal of Israel from 6 cities and 450 towns in the West Bank.

In 2000, sparked in part by Palestinian grievances over Israel's control over the West Bank, a stagnating peace process, and former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's visit to the al-Aqsa mosque—the third holiest site in Islam—in September 2000, Palestinians launched the second intifada, which would last until 2005.

In response, the Israeli government approved the construction of a barrier wall around the West Bank in 2002, despite opposition from the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

Factionalism among the Palestinians flared up when Hamas won the Palestinian Authority's parliamentary elections in 2006, deposing longtime majority party Fatah. This gave Hamas, a political and militant movement inspired by the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood, control of the Gaza Strip. Gaza is a small piece of land on the Mediterranean Sea that borders Egypt to the south and has been under the rule of the semi-autonomous Palestinian Authority since 1993.

The United States and European Union, among others, did not acknowledge Hamas' electoral victory, as the group has been considered a terrorist organisation by western governments since the late 1990s. Following Hamas' seizure of control, violence broke out between Hamas and Fatah. Between 2006 and 2011, a series of failed peace talks and deadly confrontations culminated in an agreement to reconcile. Fatah entered into a unity government with Hamas in 2014.

In the summer of 2014, clashes in the Palestinian territories precipitated a military confrontation between the Israeli military and Hamas in which Hamas fired nearly three thousand rockets at Israel, and Israel retaliated with a major offensive in Gaza.

The skirmish ended in late August 2014 with a cease-fire deal brokered by Egypt, but only after 73 Israelis and 2,251 Palestinians were killed. After a wave of violence between Israelis and Palestinians in 2015, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah announced that Palestinians would no longer be bound by the territorial divisions created by the Oslo Accords.

In March of 2018, Israeli troops killed 183 Palestinians and wounded 6,000 others after some Palestinians stormed the perimeter fence between the Gaza Strip and Israel and threw rocks during an otherwise peaceful demonstration. Just months later, Hamas militants fired over one hundred rockets into Israel, and Israel responded with strikes on more than fifty targets in Gaza during a twenty-four-hour flare-up. The tense political atmosphere resulted in a return to disunity between Fatah and Hamas, with Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah party controlling the Palestinian Authority from the West Bank and Hamas de facto ruling the Gaza Strip.

The Donald J. Trump administration reversed longstanding U.S. policy by cancelling funding for the UN Relief and Works Agency, which provides aid to Palestinian refugees, and relocating the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The Trump administration also helped broker the Abraham Accords, under which Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates normalised relations with Israel, becoming only the third and fourth countries in the region—following Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994—to do so. Similar deals followed with Morocco and Sudan. Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah rejected the accords, as did Hamas.

In early May 2021, after a court ruled in favour of the eviction of several Palestinian families from East Jerusalem properties, protests erupted, with Israeli police employing force against demonstrators. After several consecutive days of violence, Hamas, the militant group which

governs Gaza, and other Palestinian militant groups launched hundreds of rockets into Israel territory. Israel responded with artillery bombardments and airstrikes, killing more than twenty Palestinians and hitting both military and non-military infrastructure, including residential buildings, media headquarters, and refugee and healthcare facilities. After eleven days, Israel and Hamas agreed to a cease-fire, with both sides claiming victory. The fighting killed more than 250 Palestinians and at least 13 Israelis, wounded nearly 2,000 others, and displaced 72,000 Palestinians.

Overview:

Hamas launched its deadly attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, prompting the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to engage in aerial campaigns and ground operations within the Gaza Strip. On international grounds nations deliberate upon each other stance on which party is in the right, while at the same time in palestine:

Citizen's hostages, Hamas affiliated groups and injured civilians continue to have the shower of missiles. Here lies the questions which the international community continues to deliberate upon but never seem to have a mutual conclusion.

Historical Context:

The situation in Palestine has a complex and deeply rooted history, marked by significant events and milestones:

- **Ottoman Empire Era (1517-1917):** Palestine was part of the Ottoman Empire for four centuries. The region was characterised by a diverse population of Muslims, Christians, and Jews living relatively peacefully.
- **British Mandate (1920-1948):** After World War I, the League of Nations granted Britain the mandate to govern Palestine. During this period, Jewish immigration increased significantly, fueled by the Zionist movement and the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which supported the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine. This led to rising tensions and conflicts between Jewish and Arab communities.
- **UN Partition Plan (1947):** The United Nations proposed a plan to partition Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem as an international city. The Jewish community accepted the plan, but the Arab states and Palestinian Arabs rejected it, leading to increased hostilities.
- **1948 Arab-Israeli War:** Following the declaration of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, neighbouring Arab countries invaded. The war resulted in significant territorial changes, with Israel gaining more land than was allocated by the UN plan. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were displaced, an event known as the Nakba (catastrophe), creating a large refugee population.
- **1967 Six-Day War:** Israel captured the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, and the Sinai Peninsula. This war significantly altered the geopolitical landscape

and intensified the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The occupation of these territories remains a central issue in the conflict.

- **First Intifada (1987-1993):** A Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation began in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The intifada brought international attention to the Palestinian cause and led to the Madrid Conference and subsequent peace talks.

- **Oslo Accords (1993-1995):** These agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) aimed to establish a framework for peace and the creation of a Palestinian state. The accords led to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and partial self-governance in parts of the West Bank and Gaza. However, the peace process has faced numerous challenges and setbacks.

- **Second Intifada (2000-2005):** A second, more violent Palestinian uprising erupted, leading to significant casualties on both sides and further entrenching the conflict. The intifada ended with a fragile ceasefire, but the peace process remained stalled.

Current Situation:

The current situation in Palestine is characterised by ongoing conflict, humanitarian crises, and complex political dynamics:

- **Territorial Disputes:** The West Bank and Gaza Strip remain key areas of contention. The West Bank is divided into areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority and areas under Israeli control, with numerous Israeli settlements considered illegal under international law. Gaza is governed by Hamas, an Islamist political and militant group, leading to a split in Palestinian governance.

- **Humanitarian Crisis:** The ongoing conflict has led to severe humanitarian issues. In Gaza, the blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt has resulted in widespread poverty, unemployment, and limited access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and clean water. The West Bank also faces significant challenges, including restrictions on movement, economic hardship, and frequent clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinians.

- **Peace Process Stalemate:** Efforts to achieve a lasting peace agreement have repeatedly stalled. Key issues include the status of Jerusalem, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, security concerns, and the borders of a future Palestinian state. The lack of progress has led to frustration and disillusionment among both Israelis and Palestinians.

- **International Involvement:** Various international actors, including the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and regional powers, have been involved in mediating the conflict. However, achieving a consensus has proven difficult. The U.S. has traditionally played a significant role, but its policies have often been controversial and seen as biased by different parties.

- **Recent Developments:** Tensions often flare up, leading to violence and military confrontations. Recent events, such as settlement expansions in the West Bank, evictions of Palestinian families in East Jerusalem, and clashes at religious sites, continue to exacerbate

the situation. Ceasefires and temporary truces are frequently broken, leading to cycles of violence.

- **Human Rights Concerns:** Both sides have been accused of human rights violations.

Israel's military operations and settlement activities have been criticised for their impact on Palestinian civilians. Conversely, Palestinian militant groups have been condemned for rocket attacks on Israeli civilians and other acts of violence.

Recent Developments:

The United Nations has been instrumental in addressing the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, actively pursuing a peaceful resolution to the Question of Palestine.

On 7 October 2023, Palestinian armed groups in Gaza launched thousands of rockets toward Israel and breached through the perimeter fence of Gaza at multiple locations, entering into Israeli towns and killing and capturing Israeli forces and civilians. The Israeli military declared "a state of war alert," and moved its troops into Gaza, subsequently targeting numerous locations including residential and healthcare facilities.

The Israeli military operation has resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of Palestinians in the first six months of the war, two-thirds of whom were women and children, and displaced over 2 million individuals. Extensive damage to Gaza's infrastructure has precipitated a healthcare crisis, with an increase in communicable diseases, especially among children, and brought the entire educational system in Gaza to a standstill.

Moreover, Gaza's entire population is facing a severe food crisis, escalating the risk of famine and disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups. Additionally, more than 200 humanitarian workers have been killed in the first six months of this conflict – including more than 175 UN employees.

The Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza:

In October 2023, the Palestinian militant group Hamas launched a massive surprise assault on southern Israel, the deadliest single attack on Israelis in history. Israel's subsequent declaration of war with the intent to destroy Hamas has further worsened an already dire situation in the Gaza Strip, where more than two million Palestinians lived prior to the conflict. International efforts to negotiate a full humanitarian cease-fire have failed as the war's death toll has climbed.

During their assault, Hamas militants killed around 1,200 Israelis, about 70 percent of them civilians, and took roughly 240 hostages. While Hamas freed more than 100 hostages under a weeklong cease-fire deal in November, it still holds some 136 people captive, though an estimated 32 of them have died, according to an assessment conducted by the Israeli military and reported by the New York Times. In a January 2024 ruling, the International Court of Justice ordered Israel to contain the civilian death toll in Gaza, though it did not issue an order demanding a cease-fire.

How bad is the humanitarian situation in Gaza?

The Gaza Strip, a small territory of about 139 square miles (360 square kilometres), or roughly the size of the city of Detroit, was already experiencing a severe humanitarian crisis before the current hostilities broke out. As a result of a sixteen-year blockade by Israel, more than half of all Gazans depend on international assistance for basic services. Additionally, some 80 percent of Gaza's residents are considered refugees under international law, and Palestinians overall compose the largest stateless community in the world.

Israel's military operations in response to Hamas's attack have resulted in "colossal human suffering," UN Secretary-General António Guterres said in January. As of February, Israel's retaliation has killed 27,748 people and injured more than 66,800 others, according to the Hamas-run Gaza Ministry of Health. (These figures could not be independently verified, but outside sources have also reported similar numbers.) More than 120 journalists and media workers have also been killed, as well as over 150 UN employees, the highest number of aid workers killed in any conflict in UN history.

Israel maintains a complete siege of Gaza, cutting off electricity and water, and supplies of food and medicine remain scarce. A December report by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, an initiative composed of independent international food security and nutrition experts, warned that an estimated more than 90 percent of Gaza's population is facing crisis levels of food insecurity. Without fuel, meanwhile, Gaza's only power station has gone dark. The lack of electricity has shut down desalination and waste-water treatment plants, further compromising access to safe drinking water.

Israel's aerial bombardments have demolished neighbourhoods, schools, and mosques; satellite imagery analysed by the United Nations shows that approximately 30 percent of Gaza's total structures have been destroyed or damaged. (Similar satellite imagery analysis by the BBC puts this number higher, at between 50 and 61 percent.) The Israeli military has said that Hamas has placed portions of its command network and military tunnel system below civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, which Israeli strikes have hit.

Gaza's health system, which was reported to have collapsed in November 2023, remains crippled, with hospitals running extremely low on rationed fuel reserves and medical supplies. Northern Gaza's two major hospitals have long greatly exceeded their capacity, and Nasser Hospital, the largest functioning medical facility in southern Gaza, is now unable to provide critical medical care. Health authorities have also warned of the growing risk of disease outbreaks as health conditions rapidly decline.

What are the refuge options for Palestinians in Gaza?

Gazans' options for refuge are severely limited. As of January, some 75 percent of the territory's population of more than two million have been displaced. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have fled bombing in the north, cramming inside the southern city of Rafah, considered the last designated safe zone for those seeking shelter. However, Israel's

defense minister announced in February that the Israeli military plans to expand its ground campaign into Rafah, now the strip's most populous city. Aid groups say such a move could lead to a large-scale loss of life and place more pressure on neighbouring countries to take in refugees, though Israeli officials have said they will coordinate with Egypt before any ground offensive takes place to evacuate displaced Palestinians northward.

Egypt, which shares the Rafah border crossing with Gaza and already hosts some 390,000 refugees and asylum seekers, primarily from around the region, is the only viable outlet left. The Egyptian government was initially reluctant to open the crossing following the outbreak of war.

Since then, Israel has allowed aid trucks carrying water, food, fuel, and medical supplies to enter Gaza. (UN agencies have said that aid delivery has been hindered by ongoing fighting, a slow vetting process, and the lack of crossings into Gaza.) A few hundred foreign nationals and injured civilians have also been allowed to flee Gaza via the border crossing, which has temporarily closed several times due to Israeli strikes.

How are humanitarian aid organisations responding?

In November 2023, the United Nations launched an updated \$481 million flash appeal to address the needs of people in Gaza and the West Bank; as of December, nearly half of total funding requirements had been pledged. In Gaza, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) are helping to provide essential goods and services, such as medical supplies, fuel, and emergency assistance. However, the Joe Biden administration announced in January that it is temporarily suspending new funding to UNRWA following allegations by Israel that a dozen agency employees participated in Hamas's October 7 attack; many other countries, including Canada, Germany, and Japan, have also suspended their donations. Several other major organisations, including the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement—which comprises the Palestine Red Crescent Society—and Doctors Without Borders, are also supplying humanitarian aid.

As the fighting continues, international calls for a humanitarian cease-fire have grown; in December, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the immediate cessation of hostilities; ten countries, including the United States, voted against the measure.

Secretary-General Underscores Two-State Solution Only Way to End Israeli-Palestinian Conflict:

A lasting end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only come through a two-State solution, the United Nations chief told the Security Council today, following the reported rejection of such a formula by Israel's leaders amid the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

"Any refusal to accept the two-State solution by any party must be firmly rejected," said United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in his briefing to the 15-nation organ, stressing that Israeli leaders' recent, clear and repeated rejection of a two-State solution is unacceptable.

The denial of the right to Statehood would indefinitely prolong the conflict, and a one-State solution — huge Palestinian populations inside that State without any real sense of freedom, rights and dignity — would be inconceivable. The only way to address the legitimate aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians is through the two-State formula, he underscored.

Riyad Al-Maliki, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the State of Palestine, said that Israeli leaders “do not see our people as an empirical and political reality to coexist with, but as a demographic threat to get rid of through death, displacement or subjugation”. There are only two paths ahead, he stressed — one that starts with Palestinian freedom and leads to shared peace and security in the region, or one that continues denying this freedom and dooms the region to endless conflict. “Israel should no longer entertain the illusion that there is somehow a third path whereby it can choose continued occupation and colonialism and apartheid and somehow still achieve regional peace and security,” he emphasised.

Israel’s representative, meanwhile, urged the Council to shift its focus towards addressing the real, significant security threats in the Middle East, which is suffering from “cancer” — the continuous threat posed by Hamas, which exploits international aid to turn Gaza into “a war machine”, as well as the “genocidal goals of annihilating Israel” pursued by Hamas during the 7 October events where over 1,200 Israelis were killed.

Describing Council members’ calls for a ceasefire as “shocking”, he warned that any such measure would leave Hamas in power, allowing them to regroup and rearm while “Israelis will face another attempted Holocaust”.

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