

Unit 4: Lesson 10: **Causes of Conflict**

IB Global Politics

Causes of Conflict

Discuss Political Cartoon



'MOCKINGBIRD'

Causes of Conflict

- We can see that conflicts around the world have different causes. It is obvious that not all conflicts occur for the same reasons.
- For example, the root causes of the conflict in Rwanda in 1994 were different from the causes of the current conflict in Syria.
- Reasons for conflict include: *greed, grievance, territorial control, material interest, resource scarcity, ideology, threatened identity and perception.*

Causes of Conflict

- We will be looking at two case studies in detail. The first, in Sierra Leone, which was arguably caused by *grievance* but continued for so long due to *greed*.
- The second, in Northern Ireland, was arguably caused by a combination of *threatened identity* and *greed*.
- You will notice the use of the word ‘arguably’. This is because it can be difficult to say with any certainty, what exactly the causes of the conflict are as it involves some measure of perception by the different parties to a concept.

Sierra Leone

- Watch the following video and take notes.
- You should pay particular attention to the causes of the conflict in Sierra Leone.
- As with most conflicts we have looked at, it can be confusing at first, lots of names you haven't heard of and historical context can be tricky.
- If necessary, watch the video more than once.

Sierra Leone Civil War & Blood Diamonds Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=9&v=mEoKDx0KoXE

Sierra Leone Civil War & Blood Diamonds

- Having watched the video, *what would you say were the root causes of the conflict in Sierra Leone?* Write down your answers, you may use bullet points.
- Was it for example, a war over resources or was it caused by poor governance and corruption?
- **Discuss answers.**

Root Causes of the Conflict in the Sierra Leone

- Read the following article published by the CIGI (the Center for International Governance Innovation). (HANDOUT COPY OF ARTICLE)
<https://www.cigionline.org/blogs/rethinking-peacebuilding/vertical-integration-and-persistent-causes-of-conflict-sierra-leone>
- **What does the author argue in this article? What was the conflict fueled by? What was the root cause?**
Write down your answers to these questions.
- Discuss potential answers.

IB EXAM TIPS

- Based on the two sources (video & article) that we have looked at (and with the proviso that it is impossible to build complete picture based on only two sources), *what were the causes of the conflict in Sierra Leone?*
- Discuss potential answers.
- **It is important that you familiarize yourself with this conflict as it is one that you can use in the exam to support your arguments in this unit, Peace, Conflict & Violence.**

Northern Ireland

- The conflict in Northern Ireland is, like many conflicts, difficult to explain in terms of simple causes.
- One of the reasons for this is because parties to the conflict - as well as outsiders - see the causes as being very different.
- Some of the elements include: *identity, religion, economic and political discrimination* - both real and perceived.

Northern Ireland

KEY QUESTIONS:

“What combination of factors led to the conflict in Northern Ireland?”

“What role does identity play in the Northern Ireland conflict?”

Northern Ireland Conflict: Easily Explained Video

- Watch the following video about the Northern Ireland conflict.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=1kR11vn41XU

Northern Ireland:

A Brief History of the Troubles

- Read the article that provides a detailed historical context of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. This article is taken from the History Channel. (Hand out copy of the article.)
- Discuss history of Northern Ireland's troubled past.

The European Capital of Terrorism: Belfast, Ireland

- Watch the video and write down reasons for this conflict.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=4nzDuiV3U8o

Northern Ireland

ANSWER THE KEY QUESTIONS:

Write down your answers in paragraph form.

“What combination of factors led to the conflict in Northern Ireland?”

“What role does identity play in the Northern Ireland conflict?”

Belfast and Israel-Palestine Conflict

- Watch the video and write down reasons for the Israel-Palestine conflict.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=71xFuIiXMZw

- Discuss answers.
- **Compare and contrast these two conflicts. Write down your answer in paragraph form as if you were writing a short essay.**
- Discuss answers.