



## **Main Model United Nations Conference**

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**SDGs – Leave No One Behind**

# **BACKGROUND**

# **GUIDE**

# **SECURITY COUNCIL**

Gregor Beck

Ann Katrin Korb

*Main Model United Nations Conference 2023*

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# 1. Word of Welcome

Honourable Delegates,

welcome to the 18th iteration of Main Model United Nations (MainMUN) at Goethe University and to this year's simulation of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

Our names are Ann Katrin Korb and Gregor Beck and we are happy to be your committee chairs for the upcoming session of MainMUN's Security Council in March.

For that reason, we would like to introduce ourselves to you.

I am Ann Katrin Korb, part of MainMUN for now 8 years since a friend dragged me to one of the team meetings. Obviously, I haven't left since. When I am not busy attending national and international MUNs either as a delegate, chair, part of the press, or faculty, I am finishing my masters American Studies in the Goethe University's Master program or I am working in marketing at a small women-led firm.

My name is Gregor Beck and I studied International Relations/Peace and Conflict Studies at the Goethe-University in Frankfurt. I'm a long-time member of the MainMUN team, having already chaired several committees at MainMUN and at other MUN conferences. For the past MainMUNs I was a member of the crisis team.

The United Nations Security Council at MainMUN 2023 will be debating the following topic:

## **The Situation in Central Africa**

The topic in itself provides content for intense and complex debates. Consequently, we advise you to read the following background guide cautiously. It provides you with a solid understating of the topic and will serve as the foundation for your own research.

Ideally, your research will result in a position paper, in which your country's position on the topic is laid out. This will further help you prepare for the debates within the committee and will significantly improve your experience at MainMUN 2023.

Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind, that the Security Council at MainMUN 2023 will be one of the two crisis committees at the conference. The crisis team has prepared an interconnected crisis for you delegates, and it will be your task to react to crisis events in a timely manner, and to be able to debate on all other topics that might arise during a crisis situation. A thorough examination of the policies of the country you are representing is therefore highly encouraged.

We would kindly ask you to also read the crisis handout, which includes further instructions on how to interact with the crisis team and information on your position as a delegate of the Security Council

in the crisis simulation at MainMUN 2023. Additionally, we would like to draw attention to the special set of rules which is present in the Security Council. You will find a detailed explanation of these in this background guide as well.

Delegates should keep in mind that while we take diplomatic conduct very serious at MainMUN 2023, the conference is also a simulation. Please be always courteous to your fellow delegates, even if you do not agree with their country's policies and try also to interact with delegates of member states who are important to your own, even if they are not represented by your friends. MUNs are a great place to form new friendships, which we have both experienced in the past, and we hope you get to experience this as well. Do not forget to lobby for your ideas in the committee and outside, as our experience shows that the best deals are made over food and coffee.

If you have any more questions arising during your preparation for the conference or if you have general, organizational questions, feel free to contact us via the Ryver committee chat. We wish you all the best for your preparations and we are looking forward to intense and interesting debates.

Sincerely,

Ann Katrin Korb

Gregor Beck

## 2. Introduction

The UNSC is the primary body to maintain international peace and security. Its powers include the establishment of peacekeeping operations, the establishment of international sanctions, and the authorization of military action through Security Council resolutions; it is the only United Nations (UN) body with the authority to issue binding resolutions to member states.

## 3. The United Nations Security Council

### 3.1. History

After the effects of World War II and the failure of the League of Nations, the United Nations were established as an intergovernmental organization to maintain peace and security. In turn, the UNSC was created with the responsibility to maintain those principles.<sup>1</sup> The first session of the UNSC was held on 17 January 1946 at Church House in London, England. Later however, the UNSC received its permanent domicile at the UN Headquarters in New York. Until 1965, the Security Council was comprised of five permanent and six non-permanent members. It was after 1965 that the number of non-permanent members was increased to ten.<sup>2</sup> During the Cold War, the UNSC, due to the disagreements between the United States of America and the former Soviet Union, was quite ineffective and the permanent members made frequent use of their veto power to prevent certain resolutions from passing. The late 1980's, however, were marked by an effective Security Council, which authorized peacekeeping missions in different countries, such as the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kosovo, and East Timor. Since the end of the Cold War, the Council has adopted significantly more resolutions by consensus than during the Cold War.<sup>3</sup>

### 3.2. Competencies

The UNSC is the only body that has the power to adopt binding resolutions. When a resolution is adopted, the member states, in accordance with Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations (1945), must accept the Council's decision. The mandate of the SC is to maintain international peace and security and to take measures whenever those are threatened. The Council's authority is particularly relevant with respect to the UN's four primary purposes, as specified in the Charter of the United Nations (1945): maintaining international peace and security; developing friendly relations among nations; cooperating in solving

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<sup>1</sup> Charter of the United Nations 1945, Article 1.

<sup>2</sup> Bourantonis 2005, p 10.

<sup>3</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014.

international problems; promoting respect for human rights as well as being a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations. In order to prevent the escalation of a given conflict, the Council may call upon the parties to comply with provisional measures. The Council also cooperates with a number of international and regional organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations to gather knowledge and implement its decisions.

### **3.3. Operation**

The Charter of the United Nations (1945) lays out the Council's specific powers and responsibilities: First of all, the Council is allowed to call its members to apply sanctions and other measures. Sanctions can, among others, consist of economic and financial penalties, restrictions on travel or the cancellation of diplomatic relations. Furthermore, the Council has the mandate to investigate any dispute which may lead to aggression between two parties, such as states, other non-state groups or within national territories. Finally, the Council can decide on military action against any international peace- or security-threatening situation, and - where needed - is allowed to further decide on the deployment of troops or observers. Whether a situation endangers peace or security is determined by the Council.

### **3.4. Special Rules of the Security Council**

The right to veto decisions is one of the special rules applied in the SC and sets it apart from the other main bodies of the United Nations. The following rules, additional to the rules mentioned in the MainMUN Rules of Procedure Guide, will be applied in the SC only.

#### **3.4.1. Minimum Majority and Veto Power**

Each member of the SC has one vote. Votes on all matters require a majority of nine member states, with the concurrent support or abstention of all permanent members in substantial matters. If one of the five permanent members votes against a matter of substance, such as a draft resolution, it is "vetoed" and does not pass. The five permanent members were granted a special status in the Security Council. Each of them is allowed to the right of veto at any time. In accordance with Article 27 of the Charter of the United Nations, "decisions on procedural matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members. "

Decisions of all other matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of nine members including the concurring votes of the permanent members. If a permanent member does not fully agree with a

proposed resolution, but does not want to veto, it may choose to abstain. The resolution can be adopted, if the required number of nine favourable votes are given.

### **3.4.2. Declare a Vote Substantial**

This is a motion which may only be used by the permanent members of the Security Council. It may be entertained on any procedural motion. The aim of this motion is to change the required vote on the procedural motion into a substantial vote. On a substantial vote, all delegates who are 'present' may abstain, and, even more important, the required majority for that motion to pass is nine including all permanent members.

Chair: "Are there any points or motions on the floor? N-P5 state, to what point do you rise?"

N-P5 State: "Distinguished chair, we/the Republic of... move(s) to suspend the meeting for the purpose of a caucus for five minutes."

Chair: "Thank you, this motion is in order at this time. Are there any further motions on the floor? P5 state to what point do you rise?"

P5 state: "Honourable chair, fellow delegates, we/the Republic of... move(s) to declare the motion to suspend the meeting substantial."

Chair: "This is in order at this time. Is there any opposition to this motion?" (Several placards are raised) "Seeing objections, we will now have to vote upon re-declaring this motion procedural. All those in favour of re-declaring, please raise your placards now." (12 placards are raised) "Thank you. All those against?" (The P5 state which originally declared the motion substantial raises its placard) "Abstentions?" (Two placards are raised) "Due to the veto of a permanent member state, the motion to re-declare the motion [for suspending the meeting] procedural fails. We will now vote substantially upon suspending the meeting. All those in favour, please raise your placards." (13 placards are raised) "Against?" (Again, the P5 state which originally declared the motion substantial raises its placard) "Abstention?" (One placard is raised) Due to the veto of a permanent member, this motion fails. We will continue with the formal session.

### **3.4.3. Status of Observers**

A non-Council member (observer) is given debating rights. This will allow the delegation to be recognized by the Chair during debate and proposing motions to the floor or vote upon procedural matters. Observers cannot vote on substantial matters and submitting draft resolutions or amendments is prohibited. Observers can be UN members whose interests are directly affected, or non-members of the UN and experts, who are invited to the UNSC.

### 3.4.4. Explanation of a Vote

You are allowed to explain your vote after a roll call vote, when you say “no, with rights” or “yes with rights”. The explanation should be kept rather short, as you will have only a short time to realise it. You may only explain your vote if you vote against a draft resolution or abstain from a vote. Furthermore, you need to remain in diplomatic conduct at all times. Reasons for an explanation of vote can only refer to your country’s position, personal reasons are not allowed. With voting clause by clause and divisions of the question, it is quite easy to vote in favour only on specific parts of the resolution. To prevent the confusion of your colleagues, if you vote against the resolution in a particular case, it might be necessary to explain your vote to the committee. On the other hand, there is of course also a possibility to make a final point about the resolution as a whole, but you should be mindful that the chairs will realise if you try to abuse such an explanation.

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## 4. Topic 1 - The Situation in Central Africa

### 4.1. Introduction and Background

Central Africa is a subregion of the African continent. There are different definitions as to which countries belong to the region. If not stated differently this study guide refers to the members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) when referring to Central Africa, as this aligns with the area of responsibility for the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA)<sup>4</sup>. The region therefore comprises of Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tomé and Príncipe.

Over the last decades, the region had to, and still is facing numerous challenges: an increasing number of refugees, arms trafficking, piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, transnational crime and the proliferation of armed groups like the Lords Resistance Army and Boko Haram to name just a few<sup>5</sup>. The UNOCA has been established to help the countries in the region in dealing with these issues, and to implement “a comprehensive and integrated approach to issues of peace, security and development in Central Africa”<sup>6</sup>. In the following chapters we will look at some of the challenges the region is facing, naming measures the international community has taken to tackle these issues. We will furthermore provide you with some guiding questions for your additional research in order to be fully prepared for the debate at MainMUN 2023.

### 4.2. Challenges and International Response

#### 4.2.1. The Central African Republic

The Central African Republic is a landlocked state in Central Africa, bordering Cameroon, Chad, the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan and South Sudan. The country has faced numerous challenges over the past years. In 2013 then President François Bozizé fled to Cameroon after being removed from office by the Seleka, a primarily Muslim rebel group.<sup>7</sup> Since then there has been an ongoing conflict between Muslims and Christians in the country, predominantly between the Seleka and the Christian anti-balaka militias.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> UNOCA 2022.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Human Rights Watch 2013.

<sup>8</sup> Security Council Report 2020.

The situation in the country has become worse as actors from neighbouring states started influencing the Seleka and the anti-balaka militias in the country.<sup>9</sup> This has led to an increase in the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons (SALWs). In 2019 a study by the African Union (AU) confirmed, that SALWs are brought into the country through regional actors, but tracking the exact number of illicit weapons in AU member states remains impossible.<sup>10</sup> Both militant groups have used their access to SALWs to conduct human rights violations, such as forced displacements, mass killings, attacks on peacekeeping forces or gender-based violence.<sup>11</sup>

An increase in sexual and gender-based violence, involving both Seleka and anti-balaka militias, as well as UN peacekeeping forces, in itself is a problem the country is facing.<sup>12</sup> Sexual harassment, rape and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) are among the most common acts of sexual violence in the country.<sup>13</sup> In 2020 the UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict was able to confirm 240 cases of conflict-related sexual violence, including 221 rapes or attempted rapes, and 12 cases of sexual slavery.<sup>14</sup> In 2016 the first incidents of sexual violence perpetrated by UN peacekeepers were published, with reports stating that more than 40 members of peacekeeping forces were involved in sexual abuse cases.<sup>15</sup> Cases of Female Genital Mutilation add to the forms of sexual violence women in the Central African Republic are facing. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines FGM as “the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons”<sup>16</sup>, stating that “[t]he practice has no health benefits for girls and women”<sup>17</sup>.

An average of 24% of women and girls have undergone some form of FGM in the Central African Republic, with some regions having rates of up to 53% of women being subjected to FGM, according to UNICEF. 52% of the victims of FGM were between the ages of 10 and 14.<sup>18</sup>

The situation in the Central African Republic remains fragile. The United Nations, for a long time, has been involved in establishing and maintaining peace and security in the country. A Political Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation (APPR) was signed by several actors in the country in 2019.<sup>19</sup> In its most recent resolutions the Security Council called for the further implementation of the APPR,

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> See African Union/Small Arms Survey 2019.

<sup>11</sup> See S/2020/545.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict 2021.

<sup>15</sup> BBC 2016.

<sup>16</sup> WHO 2022.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> The Borgen Project 2021.

<sup>19</sup> S/RES/2659, p. 1

and implemented measures to prevent the trading of small arms.<sup>20</sup> Members of the Security Council must further discuss how the instable situation in the Central African Republic can be tackled, to promote stable and lasting peace in the region. The presence of the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) since 2013 has helped with stabilizing the region. However, MINUSCA has suffered blows to its integrity and credibility after the accusations of sexual violence perpetrated by its peacekeepers, including a debate on how UN peacekeepers can be held accountable under international humanitarian law.<sup>21</sup> The debate on this topic is not only important for MINUSCA, but for all peacekeeping operations conducted by the United Nations.

#### 4.2.2. Boko Haram

Boko Haram is the name of the media for the terrorist group which calls itself Jama'atu Ahl as-Sunnah li-Da'awati wal-Jihad (JASDJ; Group of the Sunni People for the Calling and Jihad). The group originated in western Nigeria in the late 1990s and has since changed forms multiple times. In 2009 the group was struck by anti-terrorism attacks leading to a high loss of members including their former leader Muhammad Yusuf.

Boko Haram received international interest in 2014 when 276 students of the *Government Girls' Secondary School Chibok of Borno State* were abducted by the terrorist group. Rapidly the phrase *Bring Back Our Girls* went around the globe and brought the issues in Central Africa into the public eye. As of September 2022, 98 of the kidnapped students are still in captivity<sup>22</sup>. In 2014 the group also started near-daily attacks, especially on Christians, under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau. One year later they pledged their allegiance to the Islamic State in Iraq and started calling themselves ISIL - West Africa Province (or IS-WA). Consequently, the group split between more conservative and more lenient members, producing two opposing factions: IS-WA and Boko Haram. Boko Haram continued to execute suicide bombings in Nigeria and Chad the following years whereas IS-WA started to distance themselves from the brutal attacks against Muslim civilians and pledged to focus on attacks on Christians<sup>23</sup>. IS-WA started to rebuild some state-like services and the region and soon took over the original Boko Haram group in number of members and size of the controlled areas<sup>24</sup>.

After a few quieter years, IS-WA members killed the head of the Boko Haram group, Abubakar Shekau, which prompted thousands of people, many former Boko Haram members, to flee the

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., S/RES/2648

<sup>21</sup> Timmermans 2022.

<sup>22</sup> Ibrahim, H. 2022

<sup>23</sup> Congressional Research Service 2022

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

region towards Cameroon or forced them to surrender to Nigerian authorities<sup>25</sup>. Today IS-WA is mainly active in the Lake Chad Basin at the borders to Niger and Chad.



Figure 1 – Source : DNI 2023

Many former Boko Haram members have joined local gangs all over Nigeria and continue to be part of attacks on civilians and government institutions. This distribution makes it hard to determine how many active members there still are. IS-WA is predicted to have around 4,000 to 5,000 active members today<sup>26</sup>.

The ongoing attacks and threats continue to displace people, especially women and children, which is further complicated by the instabilities of the neighbouring countries. Recently, Chad, Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon have all reported attacks by Boko Haram jihadists.

### 4.2.3. Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea

The maritime area of the Gulf of Guinea has been a hotspot of maritime piracy for over a decade. Although the number of piracy and armed robbery at sea dropped by 32% in 2021 compared to 2020, the region remains a piracy hotspot, accounting for the large majority of kidnapping incidents

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Congressional Research Service 2022

globally in 2021.<sup>27</sup> 57 seafarers were kidnapped during the year, with several being injured and one crew member being killed.<sup>28</sup> As shown in the table below, kidnapping incidents may occur while a ship is docked at port, as well as on the high seas, with incidents taking place up to 212 nautical miles from shore.<sup>29</sup>

Kidnapping incidents 2021 (source IMB PRC)				
Date	Country	Location	Type of vessel	Crew kidnapped
23 Jan	Sao Tome and Principe	98 nm NW of Sao Tome Island	Container ship	15
8 Feb	Gabon	83 nm WSW of Port Gentil	Fishing vessel	10
11 Mar	Benin	212 nm South of Cotonou	Chemical tanker	15
19 May	Ghana	66 nm South of Tema	Fishing vessel	5
31 May	Benin	104 nm South of Cotonou	Fishing vessel	5
5 Sep	Gabon	At Owendo Inner Anchorage	Offshore supply vessel	1
13 Dec	Equatorial Guinea	46 nm SW of Luba	Container ship	6

**Table 1:** Kidnapping incidents in the Gulf of Guinea in 2021 – Source: GARD 2022.

The ability of pirate groups to operate far from shore has increased over the last years. In April 2022 a pirate attack was repelled by the Italian navy 260 nautical miles (480 kilometers) off the coast of Ghana.<sup>30</sup> There is also growing concern, that piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is becoming more violent, compared to other piracy hotspots. Pirate groups in the area are described as well armed and violent. Instead of capturing oil tankers to sell their cargo, like pirates in South-East Asia, pirates in the Gulf of Guinea rely more on kidnapping crews for ransom.<sup>31</sup> This goes as far as even affecting

<sup>27</sup> GARD 2022.

<sup>28</sup> GARD 2022.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Greminger/Al-Rodhan 2022, p. 5

<sup>31</sup> Greminger/Al-Rodhan 2022, p. 5f.



landlocked countries. In 2018 pirates captured 12 Swiss crew members of a cargo ship transporting wheat off the coast of Nigeria.<sup>32</sup>

There is also growing concern about connections between pirate groups in the Gulf of Guinea and terrorist groups operating in Central and West Africa. Pirates are gaining combat experience while supporting separatist groups and there are reports of terrorist groups financing their operations with the help of piracy.<sup>33</sup>

The causes for piracy in the Gulf of Guinea can be attributed to weak governance structures, corruption and organized crime.<sup>34</sup> When tackling the issue of piracy, one also has to take into account other root-causes, namely high levels of youth unemployment and income disparities within the society.<sup>35</sup> The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by UN member states in 2015, have the goal of tackling these root causes, with goal eight promoting sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, goal four calling for quality education and goal ten advocating for a reduction of inequalities within and among countries.<sup>36</sup>

On a United Nations level the issue of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea was most recently addressed by the Security Council in May 2022 and in a report of the Secretary-General in November 2022. Report S/2022/818 of the Secretary-General also highlights the underlying causes for piracy, naming widespread poverty, high unemployment and the failure by governments to address governance challenges and achieving the SDGs as main causes.<sup>37</sup> The report furthermore underlines the impact of climate change on the livelihoods of communities in the coastal regions in the Gulf of Guinea:

“the effects of environmental degradation – such as those linked with the operations of oil and gas industries – on the socioeconomic conditions of communities fuel discontent and grievances that are exploited by pirate groups”<sup>38</sup>.

The Security Council Resolution S/RES/2634 from May 2022 calls upon states in the region to criminalize piracy and armed robbery at sea, and to develop and implement maritime security strategies.<sup>39</sup> Both, the report and the resolution, address the absence of adequate legislation concerning piracy on the national level.<sup>40</sup> To adequately tackle the issue of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, a multifaceted approach is needed, taking into account the underlying economic, social and

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>35</sup> S/2012/45, p. 20.

<sup>36</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2023.

<sup>37</sup> S/2022/818, p. 4.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> S/RES/2634, p. 3

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 3, S/2022/818, p. 5.

environmental causes of piracy, and acting in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>41</sup> The United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) supports and assists member states with the implementation of measures to counter maritime piracy. In 2014, as a result of efforts made by UNOCA in cooperation with the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), ECCAS and other regional groups, the Interregional Coordination Center for Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea (CIC) was established in Yaoundé.<sup>42</sup> It is in charge of

“enhancing the activities geared towards cooperation, coordination, mutualization, and systems interoperability as well as the implementation of the regional strategy on safety and security within the Central and West African common maritime space”<sup>43</sup>.

### 4.3. Points of Discussion and Guiding Questions

The challenges facing the region of Central Africa are manyfold, and this background guide can only provide you with a glimpse of the many issues the region is dealing with. As delegates of the Security Council and foreign ministers of your assigned countries, it is your duty to come up with comprehensive policy solutions to tackle the issues presented in this background guide. What measures can be taken to alleviate tensions in the region? How can the issue of the illicit trade of small arms be addressed? What measures can be taken to address gender-based violence? How can the international community help in combating piracy in the Gulf of Guinea? These are only some of the questions we will debate during our sessions at MainMUN 2023. This background guide provided you with an overview of the topic. To further help you with your preparation for the conference we collected some guiding questions you can use in your research:

1. What economic and diplomatic relations does your country have with Central African countries?
2. Is your country contributing to UN peacekeeping operations in the region?
3. Does your country have experiences with maritime piracy, and can your country provide best practice examples to tackle the issue?
4. How can your country contribute to tackling the root-causes of violence, armed conflicts and piracy in Central Africa, and what is your country doing to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals?

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<sup>41</sup> S/2022/818, p. 13.

<sup>42</sup> UNOCA 2023.

<sup>43</sup> ICC 2023.

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