Global Peace  
Affirmative Case by Nathaniel Braswell



Many affirmative cases this year will be predicated on country-specific ideals such as national security or political legitimacy; however, a global perspective offers a unique and powerful argument for the affirmation of the resolution. There are two unique reasons why debating with a value of global peace is persuasive. First, it allows you to delve into a broad variety of issues that with standard cases would sometimes be inappropriate. For instance, a case with a value of national security generally focuses on the specific countries being threatened instead of the entire world scene. The discussion primarily revolves around what would keep that one country secure as opposed to what would be the most internationally stable option. During WWII, the United States delayed involvement until after their national security was compromised at Pearl Harbor, whereas if they had attacked the Axis powers at the outset, the war would have likely been over faster.

The second advantage a global interpretation offers is an increased scope of impact. During the Six Day War, Israel preemptively struck its Arab enemies and avoided a large-scale conflict. However, often the countries threatened don’t have the ability to conduct a precise preemptive mission. Arguing a value of national security would limit you down to the countries that can look after themselves, whereas valuing global peace requires the needs and abilities of the developing world to be accounted for as well.

A popular argument against this case will be that the peace of the planet is not the responsibility of a national government. Against this there are two main responses. The first is that the national security of a country is directly predicated on a peaceful world. An international community that is in chaos makes it very difficult to be secure and almost impossible to be economically prosperous. Therefore, countries ought to look out for international peace simply to preserve their own wellbeing. In addition, international organizations like the UN lack a military and thus don’t have the ability to be effective peacekeepers. If strong countries don’t work together to protect the weaker ones, rogue states and reckless regimes will catalyze massive destruction and end thousands of lives.

As is true with most affirmative cases, setting up clear parameters for preemptive warfare is key. As the definition states, preemption is not just one country feeling threatened and responding with force. In order for something to classify as preemptive, there has to be imminent danger involved, which means there is a definite threat that could unfold at any time. If the threat is possible, but not definite, then responding with force is called a preventative strike, not a preemptive one.[[1]](#footnote-1) Additionally, preemptive warfare must be aimed at dissolving the threat. If a danger is imminent, the country being threatened can not just attack with the intent of scaring the other country’s government; instead, they must target the specific source of the threat in their strike.

The main argument of the case is that standard warfare is often unnecessary and will, in many cases, lead to more war. In 1967, Israel and her Arab enemies (Egypt, Syria, and Jordan) would have been engaged in a long and bloody war if Israel had waited to retaliate. Their preemptive surprise attack eliminated a majority of Syria and Jordan’s planes, which removed the capacity for these aggressors to start a war. Preemptive warfare is an effective tool to avoid armed conflict and promote global peace.

Global Peace

“Mankind must put an end to war before war puts an end to mankind.” John F. Kennedy’s rhetoric is testament to the importance of avoiding war and promoting international peace. In order to save the lives of countless citizens across the globe, I urge you stand with me in affirming the resolution.

# Definitions

To clarify the round, let’s present a few definitions

**Preemptive Warfare** is defined by the United States Army War College as, “A war initiated on the basis of expectation and/or evidence that an enemy attack is imminent.”

**Morally Justified** is defined by Oxford English Dictionaries as something that is, “Done for or marked by a good or legitimate reason.”

Now that we know what the terms mean, how do we decide if disrupting an imminent enemy attack is good or legitimate?

# Value: Global Peace

In order to answer this question, I’ll be presenting the value of *Global Peace*,which according to the Cambridge Online Dictionary refers to, “Freedom from war and violence.”[[2]](#footnote-2) By presenting this value, we are defining the goal of the debate round and giving you a weighing mechanism to judge each side of the resolution.

Global peace must be valued highest for two main reasons. First, it is difficult to attain national security and economic prosperity if the international community is in chaos. Countries have their own incentive to act responsibly and promote peace in order to stabilize the global environment. Secondly, international organizations like the UN lack a military and thus don’t have the ability to be effective peacekeepers. If strong countries don’t work together to protect the weaker ones, rogue states and reckless regimes will catalyze massive destruction and end thousands of lives.

For these reasons, global peace must be valued highest. As President Jimmy Carter stated, “Whether the borders that divide us are picket fences or national boundaries, we are all neighbors in a global community.”

# Contention 1: Preemptive Warfare Necessary for Global Peace

Along with the exciting technological advances at the dawn of the 20th century came the largest international conflict in human history. Hailed by many as “The war to end all wars,” World War I reached a new level of atrocity that was previously thought to be undoubtedly impossible. Although the objective of many powerful world leaders was to abstain from getting involved in the uncontrollable chaos, almost none, including President Wilson, succeeded. In 1917, the United States formally entered World War I after three tense years of evading the war.

Even though the United States drove the Allied powers to victory, WWI, with all its crowded graveyards and gas-filled trenches, ultimately accomplished very little for international relations. This is a reminder for all generations that war is unproductive and ought to be avoided at all costs. Preemption is a potent mechanism that can often dissolve hostile threats before they catalyze war. Saving lives through evading violent conflict will always be a moral pursuit proving that preemption is morally justified.

## Application: Six-Day War

In 1967, Egypt and Jordan signed a mutual defense pact enforcing unity against their common enemy Israel. For years, Arab states had insisted on denying Israel’s sovereignty, even Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser at one point vowed to destroy Israel’s livelihood. This defense pact created a military coalition that outnumbered the Israeli army, making it possible for the Arab countries to finally mobilize and attack.

On June 5, 1967, Israel preemptively launched fighter planes and caught the Arab militaries unaware, allowing the planes to almost completely destroy Egypt, Jordan, and Syria’s air forces in a single day. According to an official at US Marine Corps University,

“The Israelis were able to turn a potentially disastrous situation into a resounding victory by launching a preemptive attack on the suspecting Arab armies massing to attack its country.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

If Israel had waited to absorb the first wave of attacks, they would have been trapped in a long, bloody conflict instead of one precise operation.

Certainly, preemptive warfare won’t present this type of tactical advantage in every circumstance. However, since it can secure borders without formal war, it is morally justified at least as a first attempt. By affirming the resolution, you are agreeing that we ought to try and limit the chances of war. A vote for the affirmative is not a vote for reckless intervention overseas, it is a vote for responsible and precise solutions to cases of imminent danger.

# Contention 2: Lack of Preemption Prevents Global Peace

If countries wait to be struck as they did in World War I, they often increase the probability of prolonged conflict. A preemptive attack is usually a surprise to the enemy, and it stands a significant chance of fatally decapacitating their military when executed well. Once formal war has already been declared and shots have already been exchanged, a single immobilizing strike becomes much less likely. Threats tend to grow once war is declared, and so eliminating the threat while it’s insignificant is key to the value of peace.

## Application: Al-Qaeda Intervention

As we know, the attacks on September 11th were largely catalyzed by the work of Osama Bin Laden. During the Clinton administration, the opportunity to kill bin Laden, who at that time posed an imminent threat to the US, presented itself on four different occasions. President Clinton decided against a preemptive strike on Bin-Laden, even though it would quite likely have prevented the greatest terrorist attack the United States had seen. In addition to ignoring the opportunity to directly assassinate bin Laden, Clinton also neglected to strike the arms-manufacturers that were supplying weapons to Al-Qaeda.[[4]](#footnote-4) A preemptive strike would have effectively prevented the death of thousands of people and a decade-long war on terror.

In conclusion, military operations must be conducted in a responsible way that prevents war. Human history has sadly proven that the only result of war is additional war, and that it is always better to prevent violent conflicts. Preemption is an effective strategy for avoiding extended fighting since it often comes as a surprise to the enemy and fatally injures their military capacity. Because preemption serves to support global peace, I urge an affirmative ballot on the resolution.

Opposing This Case

Since this case is impact-based, the challenge behind defeating it is going to be killing its significance. By disconnecting the supposed lives saved from preemptive warfare, you will want to show the judge that countries can engage in responsible foreign policy through means other than preemption. The affirmative claims that preemption is necessary to preventing war, however there are many other political mechanisms that can prevent violent fighting. Diplomatic meetings, tariffs, United Nations resolutions, and military sanctions are just a few of the other tools that can mitigate conflict without aggravating the tension into war. The affirmative asks the judge to make a quick knee-jerk decision and vote for him to avoid war, but doesn’t adequately explain the other alternatives. There is no need to vote for preemption solely on the basis of preventing war. Without responding to the value of global peace, the case’s structure can be questioned.

If you fancy value-centric responses, there’s plenty of ways to attack global peace. For starters, the actor under the resolution is a national government. While each government should certainly consider the international ramifications of their actions, it is not their duty to play a proactive role in mitigating international conflict. There is a definite distinction between making responsible decisions in your conflict and getting involved with someone else’s. Countries should not be obligated to fight wars for other non-ally countries, so the “obligation to global peace” thesis doesn’t hold up.

Additionally, peace is a rather subject concept. The world will never be truly absent of war or violence, but what kind of violence warrants an international response? If a country is preemptively attacked, its citizens might get angry with its government and revolt, which worsens overall global peace. Does this mean that preemption is morally unjustified when it could have this result? This goes hand in hand with the fact that global peace can conflict with a country’s national security. Pressing them to choose between the two in cross-examination would be an excellent strategic choice.

Finally, peace can easily be subjected to other values. Technically, solitary confinement cells in a prison are 100% peaceful, because they lack any kind of violence or war. So why don’t we value them enough to live in one? There are things we value more than peace, both in solitary confinement and on an international scale.

1. Lieutenant Colonel(P) Michael J. Arinello (United States Army). “NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY OF PREEMPTION.” USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT, March 18, 2005. [www.dtic.mil/get-tr-doc/pdf?AD=ada431862](http://www.dtic.mil/get-tr-doc/pdf?AD=ada431862) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Dictionary, peace. "Peace Definition In The Cambridge English Dictionary." Dictionary.cambridge.org. N. p., 2017. Web. 4 Aug. 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Dtic.mil. N. p., 2017. Web. 9 July 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Good, Dan. "Bill Clinton's Chilling Statements Hours Before 9/11 Attacks". ABC News. N. p., 2017. Web. 7 July 2017. <http://abcnews.go.com/US/bill-clinton-hours-911-attacks-killed-osama-bin/story?id=24801422> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)