

MISMUN'25  
JCC: OPERATION BARBAROSA  
STUDY GUIDE



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## 1. Introduction to Operation Barbarossa

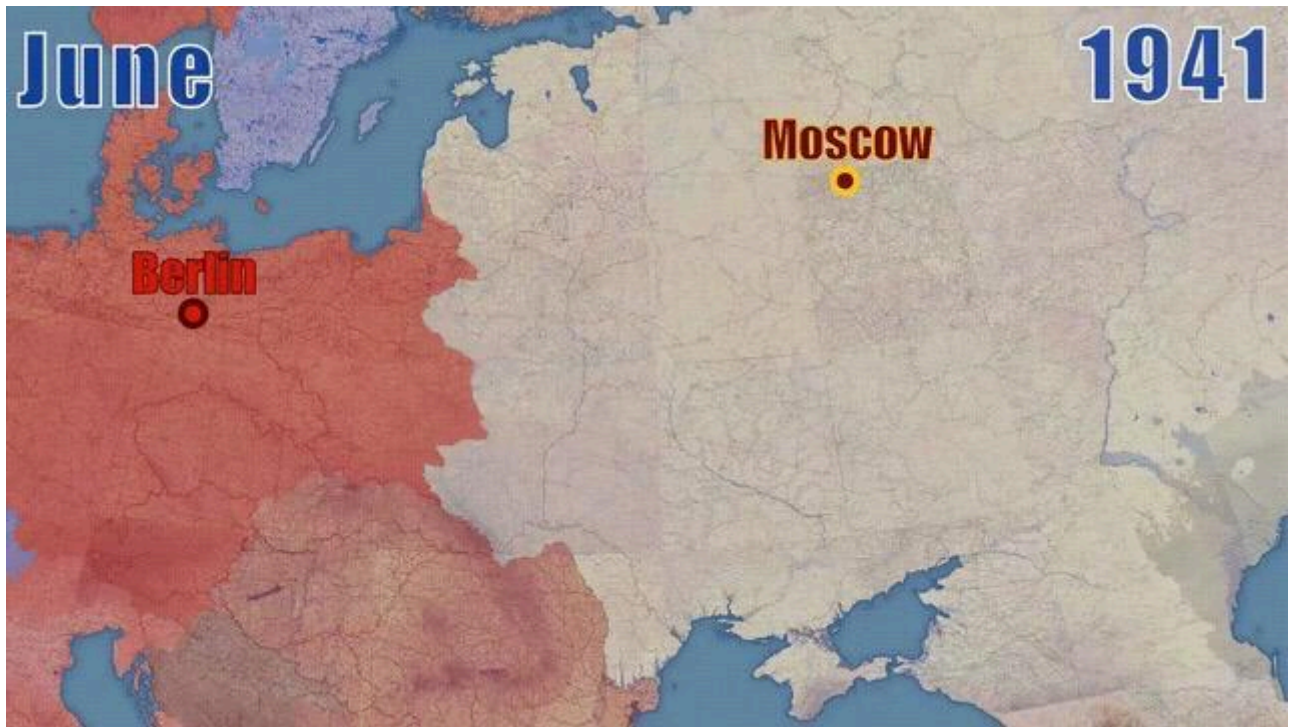
Operation Barbarossa was the codename for Nazi Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union during World War II, launched on June 22, 1941. It marked the largest military operation in history in terms of manpower and casualties. Adolf Hitler believed that conquering the Soviet Union would secure Germany's dominance in Europe, provide "Lebensraum" (living space) for the German people, and eradicate what he saw as the twin threats of Bolshevism and Jewish influence.

The plan involved a three-pronged attack: Army Group North was to advance toward Leningrad, Army Group Center toward Moscow, and Army Group South into Ukraine. Initial German advances were swift and devastating, with millions of Soviet soldiers captured in the early months. However, logistical issues, extended supply lines, and the harsh Russian winter led to the eventual stalling of the offensive.

Operation Barbarossa is not only a story of military strategy but also of ideological conflict, atrocities, and the resilience of the Soviet people. For JCC delegates, it provides a fertile ground for crisis planning, moral debates, and strategic recalibration.

## 2. Historical Context and Timeline









#### Pre-1941 Developments:

- 1939: Germany and the Soviet Union sign the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, a non-aggression treaty with secret protocols to divide Eastern Europe.
- September 1939: Germany invades Poland, triggering WWII. The USSR invades Eastern Poland soon after.
- 1940: Hitler begins contemplating an attack on the Soviet Union despite the pact.

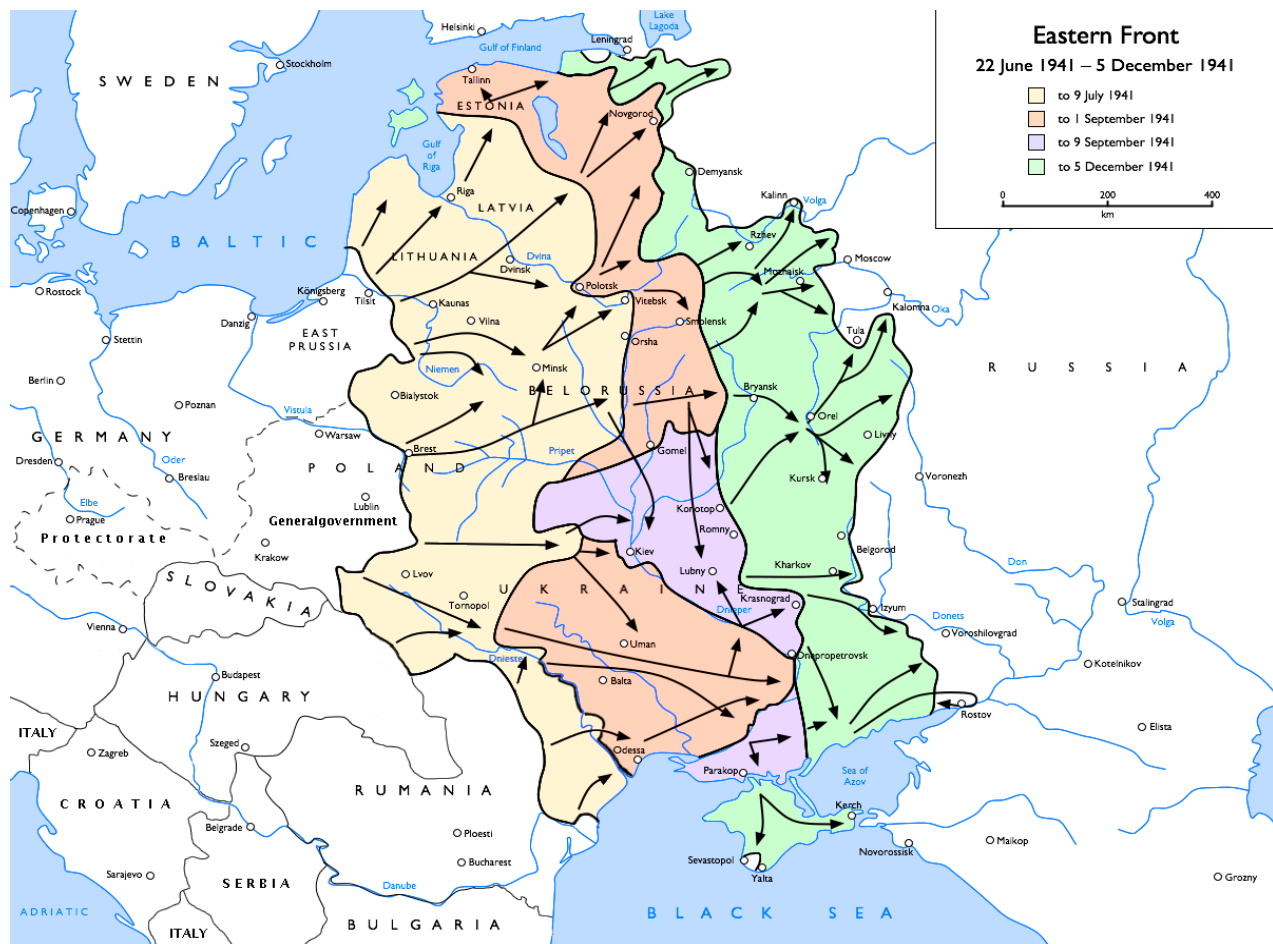
#### 1941 Timeline:

- June 22: Operation Barbarossa begins with over 3 million German soldiers and 3,000 tanks crossing into Soviet territory.
- June-July: Rapid German advances; Minsk and Smolensk fall.
- August: German forces push toward Leningrad and Kiev.
- September: Siege of Leningrad begins; German Army Group South encircles Kiev.
- October: Operation Typhoon targets Moscow.
- December: Soviets launch a counteroffensive around Moscow; German advance is halted.

#### Aftermath:



- Though Germany gained large swathes of Soviet territory, it failed to deliver a decisive blow. The USSR would gradually recover and push westward, culminating in the fall of Berlin in 1945.



### 3. Axis Powers Cabinet — Character Profiles

#### 3.2 Adolf Hitler — Führer & Commander-in-Chief (High Power)

As Germany's dictator, Adolf Hitler had the final say over every military, diplomatic, and economic policy. He micromanaged military operations, often overruling generals and making critical errors, particularly during Operation



Barbarossa. His ideological obsession with defeating "Judeo-Bolshevism" distorted strategic decisions.



### 3.3 Joachim von Ribbentrop — Foreign Minister (Medium Power)

Von Ribbentrop was instrumental in negotiating the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which bought Germany time to conquer Western Europe. Despite this, he was not highly respected by other Nazi leaders and often out of touch with military realities. His role during Barbarossa was diminished, yet he remained the face of German diplomacy.

In committee, he will lead outreach to Finland and possibly attempt to sway neutral powers or future Axis allies like Hungary and Romania. He must walk a fine line between loyalty and realism.



### 3.4 Walther von Brauchitsch — Chief of Army (High Power)

General von Brauchitsch was the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army (Heer) until December 1941. He had experience and reservations about Hitler's strategic micromanagement. Though he initially supported Barbarossa, he warned about its logistical challenges and the dangers of winter campaigning.

Delegates playing Brauchitsch must advocate for realistic logistics, secure supply lines, and assert their strategic voice without directly confronting Hitler. Timing and persuasion are crucial.

### 3.5 Hermann Göring — Luftwaffe Commander (Medium Power)

As head of the German Air Force, Göring was a key figure in the early successes of Blitzkrieg. He was also one of Hitler's earliest followers and held immense political clout, having served as President of the Reichstag and head of the Four-Year Plan.

His failures, such as during the Battle of Britain and air support in Barbarossa, reveal his overconfidence and detachment from operational reality. In committee, Göring can leverage his influence for political goals and logistics but must defend Luftwaffe effectiveness amid supply shortages.

### 3.6 Heinrich Himmler — Head of the SS & Security Services (Medium Power)

Himmler oversaw the SS, the Gestapo, and later the Einsatzgruppen, which conducted mass executions in occupied Soviet territories. He represented the ideological enforcement arm of the regime and aimed to reshape conquered lands based on racial policy.

In this simulation, Himmler has jurisdiction over internal security, ideological operations, and population management. He might propose policies relating to ethnic cleansing, forced resettlement, and suppression of resistance movements.

### 3.7 Albert Speer — Minister of Armaments (Medium Power)

Though not yet Armaments Minister in June 1941, Speer rose rapidly due to his organizational talent. He would later dramatically increase German war production





under difficult conditions. He is forward-thinking and pragmatic, often clashing subtly with Nazi ideology.

A Speer delegate can focus on efficiency, logistics, and long-term planning. He may argue for strategic allocation of resources and propose innovations in transport, industry, and mechanization.

### 3.8 Joseph Goebbels — Head of Propaganda (Low Power)

Goebbels crafted the Nazi narrative, convincing Germans that Barbarossa was a righteous battle for survival. He manipulated the press, radio, and film to justify the war and rally the populace.

In JCC, Goebbels can shape morale, propaganda responses to Soviet gains, and public perception of casualties. Delegates can innovate with speeches, media plans, and psychological operations aimed at both domestic and enemy audiences.

### 3.9 Lt. Gen. Erik Heinrichs — Finnish Liaison (Medium Power)

Heinrichs was a respected Finnish commander who coordinated military cooperation with Germany. Finland joined Barbarossa under its own motives — to regain territory lost during the Winter War (1939–1940).

As liaison, Heinrichs must maintain Finnish autonomy while aligning with Germany tactically. He may press for Finnish interests (e.g., avoiding conflict with Leningrad) while contributing to Axis goals.

## 4. Soviet Union Cabinet — Character Profiles

### 4.2 Joseph Stalin — General Secretary (High Power)

Stalin was both head of state and supreme commander of the armed forces. Initially caught off-guard by Barbarossa, he recovered and oversaw the total mobilization of Soviet resources. However, his purges had weakened the Red Army, and his early decisions worsened Soviet losses.





#### 4.3 Vyacheslav Molotov — Foreign Commissar (Medium Power)

Molotov was the Soviet Union's top diplomat and co-architect of the non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany. After Barbarossa, he coordinated Soviet appeals for Western aid and tried to maintain morale.



In simulation, he is the USSR's diplomatic bridge to Britain, the U.S., and neutral states. Delegates must manage foreign relations, frame Soviet messaging, and possibly seek allies.

#### 4.4 Semyon Timoshenko — Chief of Red Army (High Power)

Timoshenko initially commanded Soviet forces during Barbarossa. He oversaw defensive lines and tried to delay the German advance, but was eventually replaced by Zhukov due to poor coordination and heavy losses.

Delegates playing Timoshenko must stabilize the front, propose realistic troop movements, and coordinate with regional commanders. Political loyalty and competence are key.

#### 4.5 Lavrentiy Beria — NKVD Chief (Medium Power)

Beria led the Soviet secret police and was responsible for intelligence, counter-intelligence, and internal security. He also organized mass deportations and executions of "enemy elements."

In JCC, Beria can act as Stalin's enforcer, root out traitors, and manage internal dissent. Delegates can use intelligence gathering and black ops to shape crisis updates and anticipate Axis moves.

#### 4.6 Pavel Rychagov — Commander of Red Air Force (Medium Power)

Rychagov was young and ambitious, overseeing Soviet air operations. He faced difficulties due to inferior aircraft and lack of preparedness. He was later arrested and executed during Stalin's purges.

#### 4.7 Dmitry Ustinov — Minister of Armaments (Medium Power)

Ustinov oversaw weapons production and supply logistics, which were crucial to the Soviet war machine. His leadership helped relocate factories eastward beyond German reach.



A delegate playing Ustinov can propose evacuation plans, manage supply lines, and develop long-term production strategies to ensure the Red Army is well-equipped.

#### 4.8 Andrei Zhdanov — Propaganda Minister (Low Power)

Zhdanov led efforts to frame Barbarossa as a “Great Patriotic War.” His role was to maintain morale, unify ethnic groups, and portray the USSR as the defender of civilization.

Zhdanov’s player can counter German propaganda, rally civilians, and manipulate enemy troops through information warfare.

#### 4.9 Elena Stasova — Partisan Coordinator (Medium Power)

Stasova was a veteran Bolshevik involved in organizing underground resistance in Nazi-occupied territories. Partisans sabotaged railroads, ambushed patrols, and gathered intelligence.

In JCC, she directs asymmetric warfare. Delegates can launch resistance missions, coordinate with locals, and spread terror among enemy ranks.

### 5. Strategic Objectives & Policy Recommendations

Delegates must recognize that their decisions have implications beyond the battlefield. Here are key strategic objectives for both cabinets:

Axis Powers:

- Rapid capture of Moscow to force Soviet surrender.
- Securing Ukraine's resources (grain, oil, manpower).
- Neutralizing Leningrad and cutting off Baltic ports.
- Coordinating with allies like Finland and Romania.
- Preventing Soviet counter attacks during winter.

Soviet Union:

- Defense-in-depth: delay the Axis advance and trade space for time.
- Preserve industrial capacity by relocating factories eastward.

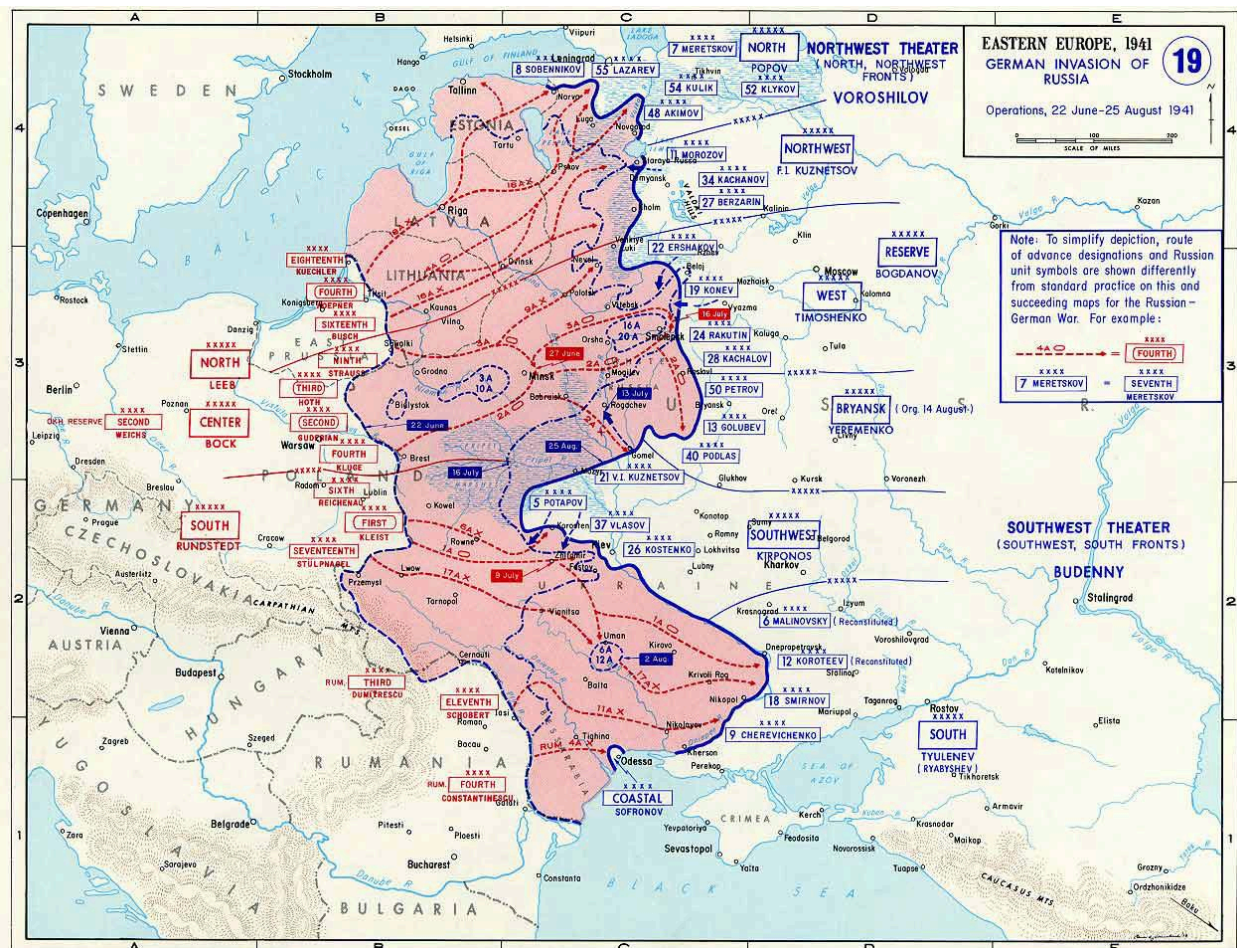




- Mobilize manpower and national morale.
- Coordinate partisan warfare behind enemy lines.
- Strengthen ties with Britain and appeal to the US for Lend-Lease aid.

#### Policy Recommendations:

- Use intelligence to anticipate attacks and respond quickly.
- Maintain cabinet unity—factionalism could hinder the war effort.
- Manage internal narratives through propaganda effectively.
- Prioritize logistics; overextension was a critical Axis failure.



## 6. Possible Crisis Arcs and Scenarios

As a JCC committee, you will face real-time crises that may shift the historical timeline. Potential arcs include:



- Winter Unpreparedness: Axis forces face starvation and frostbite due to lack of winter clothing. Will you divert resources or press on?
- Partisan Rebellion: Soviet partisans launch a successful sabotage campaign. Can the Axis suppress uprisings?
- Decapitation Strike: Stalin is nearly assassinated. How does the Soviet Cabinet respond?
- Axis Discord: Göring and Himmler plot against Hitler. Will your cabinet remain loyal?
- Allied Interference: Britain launches bombing raids on Eastern Europe or arms resistance groups.
- Finnish Withdrawal: Lt. Gen. Heinrichs considers pulling Finland out of the Axis coalition.



## 7. Research and Source Material Recommendations

To excel, delegates should explore multiple sources:

- Books:
  - “Barbarossa: The Russian-German Conflict” by Alan Clark
  - “Stalingrad” by Antony Beevor
  - “The Road to Stalingrad” by John Erickson
- Primary Sources:



- Hitler's Directive No. 21
- Soviet archival dispatches and communiqués
- Web Resources:
  - Encyclopedia Britannica ([www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com))
  - United States Holocaust Memorial Museum ([www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org))
  - Yad Vashem Database ([www.yadvashem.org](http://www.yadvashem.org))
  - Imperial War Museums ([www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk))
  - Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History ([www.rgaspi.org](http://www.rgaspi.org))
  - Wilson Center Cold War International History Project  
([www.wilsoncenter.org/program/cold-war-international-history-project](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/program/cold-war-international-history-project))

## 8. Glossary of Key Military and Political Terms

- Blitzkrieg: Lightning war; fast-moving, coordinated attacks.
- NKVD: Soviet secret police and intelligence agency.
- Lend-Lease: U.S. military aid to Allies.
- Wehrmacht: Unified armed forces of Nazi Germany.
- Einsatzgruppen: SS death squads.
- Scorched Earth: Strategy of destroying infrastructure during retreat.

## 9. Map Analysis and Geopolitical Layout

Understanding terrain is vital to simulate battlefield decisions:

- Key Fronts: Leningrad (North), Moscow (Center), Ukraine (South)
- Natural Barriers: Dnieper River, Russian forests, and swamps
- Logistics Challenges: German supply lines extended over 1,000 km
- Urban Strongholds: Smolensk, Kiev, Kharkov

Use maps to plan offensives and understand Axis/Soviet vulnerabilities.

## 10. Bibliography and Further Reading

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