

## Facilitator Reference Sheet

This guide is designed to support instructors, facilitators, or game leaders in running *The Age of the Atom* smoothly.

### **Facilitator Role**

- Support players with rules, context, and clarifications.
- Guide the structure of each round.
- Lead the safety conversation at the start.
- Encourage collaborative, systems-oriented thinking.
- Play movements from non-playable countries passively or if a player steps away.

### **Playing Movements Passively Means:**

- Track Global Event outcomes for that station and update its tokens and resources.
- Do not make strategic decisions like drawing Progress Movement Cards or initiating Achievements.
- Maintain the movement's presence without directly shaping its actions. You may occasionally remind players to not ignore the non-playable stations, especially when upcoming events may impact them.

### **Core Learning Goals**

Players should leave the game with:

- A deeper understanding of international movements and transnational solidarity, and how these forces shape global resistance
- The ability to recognize shared interests that cross national, ideological, and racial lines, while questioning the assumptions of nationalism
- Insight into the political dynamics, pressures, and obstacles that defined the Cold War era
- An applied understanding of World Systems Theory, including how countries in the imperial core have shaped and driven global geopolitics

### **Game Setup**

- Prepare the room and player area.
- Allow players to decide among themselves which player stations to take. Playable movements include:
  - Capitalist bloc: USA, UK, France
  - Communist bloc: USSR, China
  - Non-aligned: India
- Reference the **Rules & Setup Guide** PDF for instructions.

### **Win & Lose Conditions**

Standard: The Nuclear Disarmament of the USA and the USSR

*Players lose if a Nuclear Exchange occurs*

Challenging: The Nuclear Disarmament of the U.S, France, UK, USSR, China, and India.

*Players lose if any of those 6 countries fully militarize and/or a Nuclear Exchange occurs*

Difficult: the Nuclear Disarmament of all countries

*Players lose if any country fully militarizes*

### **Preparation Before the Game**

1. Set the stage:
  - a. Give an overview of the game and its educational purpose.
  - b. Share the game summary from the WordPress page or the Rules & Setup Guide PDF.
  - c. Clarify that players represent movements, not governments..
2. Share the following safety tools with players:
  - a. This game contains historical references to violence, colonialism, and repression.
  - b. Discomfort can be part of learning about injustice.
  - c. Anyone can step away at any time. If so, you will play their country passively.
  - d. Clarifying questions are encouraged. Everyone has different knowledge backgrounds.
  - e. Invite them to share any specific content concerns before starting.
3. Emphasize the game's collaborative nature. No single player wins. Players achieve success together.

**Note: To view the full list of safety practices, see the Rules & Setup Guide PDF**

### **Round Structure**

#### **Preparation Round**

Distribute benefits of disarmaments or achievements that have already been obtained.

1. *Note: as you progress through the questions in the preparation and action phases, players can discuss amongst themselves to decide who is in the best position to act first. This applies to both the preparation and action phases.*
2. Facilitator asks these questions in the following order but players may act simultaneously:
  - a. Does anyone want to exchange 1 PCT for a Movement Progress Card?
  - b. Does anyone with an existing Movement Connection want to move/exchange Resource Cards or PCTs?

- c. Does anyone want to convert 4 identical Resource Cards into 1 different Resource Card?
- d. Does anyone want to expend Resource Cards to build an Achievement Card?
  - i. If Red Phone is built, it remains active until used to diffuse a country about to enter nuclear exchange.
  - ii. If a Movement Connection is formed, both countries must sign the Movement Connection card and may begin moving/exchanging resources.
  - iii. If a Mass Opposition is built, that country may collect their 2 PCTs.
    - 1. Only 1 Mass Opposition is allowed per country.
- e. Does anyone want to remove 1 MT by spending 2 PCTs?
- 3. If a country reaches Nuclear Disarmament, that country flips its name plate, and players update their stations based on the benefits listed on the Play Aid of the disarmed country.

### **Action Round**

- 1. You as the facilitator draw a Global Events Card and read it aloud
- 2. Players update their stations depending on the outcome of the Global Events Card, starting with any positive outcomes and ending with the worst outcomes.
- 3. If a country gains 1 MT, its major rivals lose 1 PCT.
- 4. If a country reaches Full Militarization, each of its major rivals gains 1 MT and loses 2 PCTs.
- 5. If a country falls below 2 PCT, it gains 1 MT.
  - a. Even if a country experiences consecutive rounds where it has less than 2 PCTs, it would only gain a total of 1 MT for that stretch of rounds. If a country replenishes PCT and then later in the game falls below 2 PCT again, they would lose another MT.
- 6. If 2 countries reach Nuclear Exchange, the game ends.
- 7. Hold an International Forum opens the floor for players to discuss what just happened. They can discuss how their countries fared, which country is approaching full militarization, who needs support due to low PCTs, who would like to form a Movement Connection, etc.

**Repeat Preparation and Action Rounds until the Win/Lose Condition is met or Fukuyama declares the end of history!**

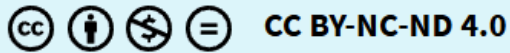
### **Pro Tips for Facilitators**

- Encourage systems thinking by prompting players to consider how events ripple globally. What happens in one country can shift the entire balance.
- If a card or situation sparks confusion or curiosity, pause to explain or ask for ideas. These moments deepen understanding.
- Ensure players think as movements, not governments or countries themselves
- Let players explore if they ask historical questions or debate past events. Make a safe space for it. That's part of the learning process.
- Have players review their Play Aid for any confusion.
- Trust players to lead, shaping their choices and own experiences.
- Offer nudges instead of answers. If players are unsure what to do, ask guiding questions or offer brief summaries to help them weigh options. Encourage them to think through trade-offs and make their own decisions. This supports deeper learning and mirrors the complexity of real-world movement strategy.

### **Debrief Discussion Post Game**

Once the game ends, don't forget to debrief with the following questions:

- Did you win? What helped you build an international movement?
- Did you lose? What frustrated your efforts to build an international movement most?
- Do you think this game would be harder if less people were playing? Is that realistic? Why or why not?
- In what ways is this game realistic? In what ways is it not?
- Which countries had the largest effect on the gameplay and, by proxy, the world? Why?
- Were some countries passive? Why do you think that is?
- Do you remember any global events we learned about that weren't in the Global Event Cards?
- What kinds of changes would have to happen within countries for the things to happen in real life as they did in the game
- Stars and wishes?



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