



*Douglas S. Freeman High School Model United Nations Conference*

# Historical Crisis: Spanish Conquest of the Aztec Empire

## *Crisis Simulation*

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### Dossier

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#### **Moctezuma II**

The emperor of the Aztec Empire. Known for his cautious approach to initial Spanish encounters.

#### **Hernán Cortés**

The leader of the Spanish conquistadors who landed off the coast of the Aztec Empire. He is motivated by acquiring gold and other natural resources, earning glory for himself and Spain, and spreading christianity.

#### **Cuitláhuac**

Moctezuma's brother, a respected war leader, known for his aggressive stance against the Spaniards.

#### **Cuauhtémoc**

Nephew of Moctezuma, strongly anti-Spanish and promotes the unification of the Aztecs against the Spanish.

#### **Tlaxcalan Chief**

Leader of the Tlaxcalans. Constantly at war with the Aztecs and could see the arrival of the Spanish as a way to take down the Aztecs.

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**Totonac Chief**

Leader of the Totonacs, a group that has been taken over by the Aztec Empire for years, and could see the arrival of the Spanish as a chance to gain freedom.

**High Priest of Huitzilopochtli**

The high priest of the god of war, Huitzilopochtli. This position oversees war rituals and sacrifices and is one of the two high priests in Tenochtitlan. Resists the spread of christianity and is a religious purist who is very pro sacrifice.

**High Priest of Tlaloc**

The high priest of the god of rain, Tlaloc. This position oversees rituals pertaining to nature, vital in times of plague or famine. Sees the spread of smallpox as divine punishment from the gods due to Aztec leadership.. A religious purist who blames poor leadership for disasters.

**Priest of Quetzalcoatl**

The priest of a widespread cult which worships the feathered serpent, Quetzalcoatl. Believes prophecies pertaining to Quetzalcoatl's return and the arrival of Hernán Cortés. A religious reformist who sees the Spaniards as divine messengers.

**Cacamatzin**

Nephew of Moctezuma, a powerful noble. Anti-Spanish and disagrees with Moctezuma's cautious leadership. Advocates for a reform of power to deal with the Spanish.

**Tetlepanquetzel**

The ruler of Tlacopan, one of the cities in the Aztec triple alliance. A noble who is cautious about initial Spanish encounters.

**Ixtlilxochitl II**

A powerful noble and a main rival of Cacamatzin. Advocates for leadership reform as well, but see the arrival of the Spanish as a chance to overthrow Moctezuma and gain personal power.

**Isabel Moctezuma**

Daughter of Moctezuma II and an imperial princess. Cautious about conflict with the Spanish.

**La Malinche**

An Nahua woman who was enslaved and given to Cortés. An interpreter who was critical to negotiations between the Spanish and Aztecs. Has immense influence and divided loyalties.

**Jerónimo de Aguilar**

Spanish friar fluent in Mayan languages. Worked with La Malinche. Pro Christianization.

**Pedro de Alvarado**

Brutal lieutenant of Cortés. Pro ethnic cleansing of the Aztecs and have lots of military power.

**Cristóbal de Olid**

A captain under Cortés who was very pro-conquest. Incredibly self-serving and clever, loyal to Spain as a whole but not to any one person.

**Tlapalizquixochtzin**

An Aztec noble, despite the anti-Moctezuma position of many nobles at the time, he was one of the few pro-Moctezuma nobles and favored a diplomatic response to the Spanish.

**Qualpopoca**

An Aztec military governor known to be very hostile to the Spanish. Distrustful of Moctezuma and very anti-Spanish.

***Position* - Bernal Díaz del Castillo**

A foot soldier from Spain who later wrote *True History of the Conquest of New Spain*. A pro-conquest Spanish soldier was more focused on soldier welfare and spoils.