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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear delegates,

Hello, and welcome to UTMUN's Skyrim JCC. My name is Elizabeth Bobbitt, and I will be serving as your director for this committee. Joining me are Chairs Sanjit Dasgupta, Roberto Fusciardi, and Owen Ward, chairing the Aldmeri, Stormcloak, and Empire committees respectively, along with a fantastic team of moderators, managers, and analysts.

In this JCC, you will be acting as major players in the Skyrim Civil War, the main background conflict from the popular video game *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim*. I'm sure that many of you are familiar with this game, but if not, there is no need to worry — all the information you will need to participate effectively in this committee will be provided in the background guide.

You will be a part of either the Stormcloaks, the Empire, or the Aldmeri Dominion, all of whom have an important stake in the war. The Stormcloaks, a band of rebels led by Jarl Ulfric Stormcloak, are fighting for the independence of their home province of Skyrim from the Third Empire, who wish to regain control. Lurking in the shadows are the Aldmeri Dominion, a state of nationalistic elves who had a strong hand in causing the civil war and stand to profit significantly from it.

As a JCC, the actions and decisions of the delegates in one committee will have a direct effect on the delegates of another. This will allow you more control over the flow and direction of the committee than is found in a typical crisis committee — though that control might be difficult to maintain. You will have to work together with the other delegates in your committee to achieve your goals. As the Stormcloaks, this will be the independence of Skyrim; as the Empire, it will be regaining control over your wayward province; and as the Aldmeri, it will be to find a way to use the war to your own advantage in furthering your control over Tamriel.

JCCs offer delegates a great chance to expand their skills and showcase their ingenuity, and I can't wait to see what you all come up with. I hope that you are looking forward to it just as much as I am, and I'll see you all in February!

Best regards,

Elizabeth Bobbitt

Director of Skyrim

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THE ELDER SCROLLS

First released in 1994 with the publication of the game *Arena*, *The Elder Scrolls* is a wildly popular video game series created by Bethesda Game Studios. Since *Arena*, Bethesda has gone on to release four more main installments to the series — *Daggerfall* (1996), *Morrowind* (2002), *Oblivion* (2006), and *Skyrim* (2011). The games all take place in the same universe, on the fictional continent of Tamriel. The content of this committee will focus on the events that unfold in *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim*.

The universe of *The Elder Scrolls* contains many elements typical to the fantasy genre, such as magic and mystical creatures. *Skyrim*, specifically, features a playable character known as the Dragonborn, who is capable of absorbing the souls of slain dragons and thus learning how to produce Thu'um, an ancient form of magic. While magic is a very important element of this universe, it is not something that we will focus much on in this committee. The Dragonborn, while important to the video game, will likely appear in the committee only in the background. Instead, we will be focusing more on the political situation of the continent of Tamriel — namely, the Skyrim Civil War and the conflict between the Septim Empire and the Third Aldmeri Dominion.¹

TAMRIEL

The continent of Tamriel has been known by many names, such as Dawn's Beauty and the Arena, and has been historically divided into nine provinces. It is home to a number of different races and peoples, and this has led to a very long and tumultuous history of rivalry and warfare. The first inhabitants of Tamriel were the Atmorans (the predecessor of Man) and the Aldmer (the predecessor of Mer, or elves). As they spread across the continent of Tamriel, they split into different groups, each with their own unique cultures, and, inevitably, they came into conflict with each other, as well as with the races of beastfolk inhabiting Tamriel.²

RACES OF TAMRIEL

ALTMER

Known by most of Tamriel as High Elves, the Altmer are one of the most magically-gifted and intelligent races on the continent. They are also one of the oldest races, being some of the first descendants of the Aldmer. This is a heritage that the Altmer are incredibly proud of, and whose survival they take great pains to ensure. They argue that they are the most civilized race on Tamriel, and look down upon other races, particularly humans. They hail from the southwestern province of Summerset Isle.³

¹ "The Elder Scrolls." *Wikipedia*. November 01, 2018. Accessed November 20, 2018. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Elder_Scrolls.

² "Tamriel." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Tamriel>.

³ "Altmer." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Altmer>.

ARGONIAN

The Argonians are a race of lizard-like beastfolk who hail from the southeastern province of Black Marsh. Their swampy homeland has caused them to develop a number of natural abilities which allow them to survive in the otherwise harsh environment, such as immunity to several local diseases and the ability to breathe underwater. They are considered to be experts of guerilla warfare, and are known to make proficient thieves. A large number of Argonians have immigrated to Skyrim, and though they have experienced a significant amount of racism, they are regarded more kindly than other immigrants to the region.⁴

BOSMER

Known more commonly as Wood Elves, the Bosmer are a simple people, who prefer to live in harmony with nature and animals. They are the best archers in Tamriel, and are also known to be able to command wild animals. Their light-footedness also makes them skilled scouts or thieves. They come from the heavily-forested southwestern province of Valenwood.⁵

BRETON

The Bretons are some of the most skilled magic users in Tamriel, and are considered to be a very intelligent people, second only to the Altmer. They are descended from both humans and elves, and are thought to also have Aldmer ancestry. They come from the small province of High Rock, on the very northwestern tip of Tamriel.⁶

DUNMER

Also known as Dark Elves, the Dunmer come from the northeastern province of Morrowind. They are gifted merchants, a skill which has allowed them to thrive in the other regions of Tamriel. This was particularly useful after the eruption of the Red Mountain, a volcano located in Morrowind, which caused a great number of Dunmer to flee their homes. Most travelled to Skyrim, where their status as refugees and elves has caused them to experience a great amount of racism.⁷

IMPERIAL

The Imperials are a race of humans native to the central province of Cyrodiil. They are known to be wealthy and well-educated, and their military training and prowess is known throughout Tamriel. The Imperials are actually split into two separate ethno-cultural groups, the Nibeneans and Colovians. The eastern Nibeneans are more attuned to magic, commerce, and spirituality, while the western Colovians are more similar to the Nords, with a focus on the military.⁸

⁴ "Argonian." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Argonian>.

⁵ "Bosmer." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Bosmer>.

⁶ "Breton." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Breton>.

⁷ "Dunmer." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Dunmer>.

⁸ "Imperial." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Imperial>.

KHAJIIT

The Khajiit are a race of feline beastfolk from the southern province of Elsweyr. Their natural stealth and night vision makes them skilled thieves and assassins, a profession which many Khajiit who live outside of Elsweyr engage in. This, along with their “bestial” appearance, has led for them to be seen as untrustworthy by the other races of Tamriel. This discrimination has gone as far as to cause Khajiit to be banned from entering the cities of Skyrim. Additionally, they have a strong dislike for Argonians, a feeling reciprocated by the lizard beastfolk.⁹

NORD

The Nords are a militant race of humans who are known as skilled warriors. They hail from the northern province of Skyrim, and have an incredible resistance to the cold. Their prowess as warriors has caused them to serve as soldiers and mercenaries all over Tamriel, and they excel at all manners of warfare. Their culture places a heavy emphasis on honour, glory, and family values. They also have great experience in seafaring, and can be found captaining and crewing vessels all along the coast of Tamriel.¹⁰

ORSIMER

The Orsimer, known more commonly as Orcs, hail from Orsinium, a city-state which was originally located in the Wrothgar Mountains of High Rock but is now found in the Dragontail Mountains between Skyrim and Hammerfell. Their exact origins are unknown; some say that they are a variant of elves, while others posit them as a race of beastfolk. Nonetheless, they are considered to be some of Tamriel’s finest warriors and smiths.¹¹

REDGUARD

The Redguards are a race of men from the western province of Hammerfell. They are thought to have an innate proficiency with all types of weaponry, making them naturally skilled warriors. Despite this, however, they do not do well as ordinary soldiers, having a proclivity to pride and independence. As such, they serve well as scouts, adventurers, and mercenaries.¹²

⁹ “Khajiit.” *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Access November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Khajiit>.

¹⁰ “Nord.” *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Nord>.

¹¹ “Orsimer.” *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Orsimer>.

¹² “Redguard.” *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Redguard>.

PROVINCES OF TAMRIEL

SUMMERSET ISLES

An archipelago of three main islands, the Summerset Isles are located in the southwest of Tamriel, off the coast of the mainland. They are the homeland of the Altmer, who believe the Isles to have been the first landing place of the ancient Aldmer. This province is the main hub of the Third Aldmeri Dominion, which is also made up of the provinces of Valenwood and Elsweyr.¹³

VALENWOOD

The forested province of Valenwood is located in the southwestern corner of the mainland of Tamriel. It is home to the Bosmer, and is largely made up of uninhabited wilderness. Its settlements are few and far between, and its limited roads are maintained by the Altmer for the sole purpose of transporting their arms to and from the coast. It is one of three provinces that makes up the Third Aldmeri Dominion.¹⁴

ELSWEYR

The southern province of Elsweyr is home to the beastfolk race of the Khajiit. It is separated into two nations which are both client states of the Third Aldmeri Dominion: Anequina and Pelletine. The northern Anequina is largely made up of desert-like badlands with a population of nomadic tribes. The southern Pelletine is more tropical, with dense jungles and forests and a population of wealthy plantation owners.¹⁵

BLACK MARSH

The swamp-covered Black Marsh located in the southeast of Tamriel is home to the Argonians. It is considered a “backward” province by the standards of most others on Tamriel, with poor trade routes and little agriculture beyond subsistence farming. The province is ruled by the An-Xileel, a political faction who wish to return the Black Marsh to the state it was in before numerous invasions and rulings by foreign powers.¹⁶

MORROWIND

The northeastern province of Morrowind is home to the Dunmer. It consists of two main parts, the mainland of Morrowind and the island of Vvardenfell. For much of history Morrowind had been a part of the Empire of Tamriel, with its own monarch who serves as an Imperial representative to the people. At the beginning of the Fourth Era, the volcanic Red Mountain on

¹³ “Summerset Isles.” *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018.

http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Summerset_Isles.

¹⁴ “Valenwood.” *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018.

<http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Valenwood>.

¹⁵ “Elsweyr.” *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018.

<http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Elsweyr>.

¹⁶ “Black Marsh.” *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018.

http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Black_Marsh.

Vvardenfell erupted, rendering the entire island uninhabited and forcing many of Dunmer to flee their homes.¹⁷

SKYRIM

Home to the hardy Nords, Skyrim is the northernmost province of Tamriel, with a rugged, mountainous terrain. It has a long and tumultuous history, but has been part of the Empire for some time. However, it was recently thrown into civil war, an act which has split the province into two and pitted it against the Empire. Skyrim is ruled by a High King or Queen, with Jarls ruling over various Holds (regions) throughout the province. The division of the Civil War pitted the western Holds against the eastern Holds.¹⁸

HIGH ROCK

High Rock, home to the Bretons, is located on the very northwestern tip of Tamriel. It has a very varied geography, and is known for its numerous small towns, villages, and fortifications. Despite having different social classes, the culture of High Rock is seen by outsiders as being very uniform. It is a part of the Empire, who, since gaining control of the province, have been systematically destroying its many fortifications in the hopes of preventing future rebellions.¹⁹

HAMMERFELL

Located in the west of Tamriel, the vast province of Hammerfell is home to the Redguard people. It was a part of the Empire until very recently, when it gained its independence in the Great War. A large portion of the province is covered by the Alik'r Desert, though there are also areas of mountains and grasslands. The Alik'r Desert is considered to be one of the most inhospitable regions in Tamriel.²⁰

CYRODIIL

The most central province of Tamriel, Cyrodiil is home to the Imperial race of humans and, fittingly, has been the centre of three human empires. As a result, it is one of the wealthiest and most powerful nations of Tamriel. It is currently the capital province of the Third Empire. It is ruled over by the Elder Council, and is the centre of the Imperial Legion, whose forces stretch across all Imperial provinces.²¹

¹⁷ "Morrowind." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Morrowind>.

¹⁸ "Skyrim." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Skyrim>.

¹⁹ "Hammerfell." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/High_Rock.

²⁰ "Hammerfell." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Hammerfell>.

²¹ "Cyrodiil." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018. <http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Cyrodiil>.

GOVERNMENTS OF TAMRIEL

THE THIRD EMPIRE

Also known as the Septim Empire, the Third Empire is a human-led regime currently based in the province of Cyrodiil. It was founded in the late Second Era by Tiber Septim, whose dynasty ruled for hundreds of years, until the end of the Third Era. At its height, the Empire ruled over all of Tamriel, as well as several other territories on separate continents. The leader of the Empire is the Emperor, and its central government is the Elder Council, a unicameral and unelected ruling body. Its capital is Imperial City, located in the heart of Cyrodiil. When the last Septim Emperor, Martin, died with no heir, this brought an end to the Septim dynasty and a period of unrest followed in the Empire. This was ended by the ascension of a new Emperor, Titus Mede I, which began the Mede dynasty. However, the power of the Empire continued to decline, with numerous provinces seceding. Today, the territories of the Empire, outside of Cyrodiil, consist only of High Rock and Skyrim, the latter of which is currently embroiled in civil war.²²

THE THIRD ALDMERI DOMINION

Established in the early years of the Fourth Era, the Aldmeri Dominion is an elf-led body of government created by the Thalmor, a group of nationalist Altmer from the Summerset Isles. They believe in the supremacy of the races of Mer over the races of Men, and have consolidated the provinces of Valenwood and Elsweyr as part of their territory. They had a policy of expansion across Tamriel, which brought them into conflict with the Third Empire and which, ultimately, led to war. Following the conclusion of the war, the Aldmeri Dominion continued to expand in prestige and power, subtly extending its influence into the other provinces of Tamriel. The Thalmor form the leading council of the Dominion, based in their capital city of Alinor on the Summerset Isles. Their ultimate goal is the eradication of the Empire and the end of the dominance of men on Tamriel.²³

RELIGION IN TAMRIEL

Each of the different races of Tamriel has their own form of religion, most of which revolve around a combination of ancestor worship and different pantheons of various gods. The most important of these is the Imperial Pantheon of the Nine Divines (also called the Eight and One), which is the official religion of the Third Empire. This combines the Eight Divines, who are said to have created the world, with Talos, who in life was known as Tiber Septim, the man who founded the Third Empire.

The religion of the Aldmeri Dominion is very similar to this, with the exception that they do not worship Talos. Quite the opposite, in fact — they consider the worship of Talos to be heresy.

At least some of the Eight Divines are included in nearly all variations of religion in Tamriel, mixed in with various other gods, some specific to a single race. This is true of Skyrim, where a

²² “Septim Empire.” *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018.

http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Septim_Empire.

²³ “Aldmeri Dominion (Skyrim).” *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018.

[http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Aldmeri_Dominion_\(Skyrim\)](http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Aldmeri_Dominion_(Skyrim)).

different pantheon of nine gods is worshipped. Additionally, many Nords consider the god Talos to be worthy of worship as, in his human life as Tiber Septim, he liberated Skyrim from the elves, causing his worship to be rather prevalent in the northern province.²⁴



²⁴ "Nine Divines." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018.
http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Nine_Divines.

THE HISTORY OF TAMRIEL

The history of Tamriel is divided into six eras: the Dawn Era, the Merethic Era, the First Era, the Second Era, the Third Era, and the Fourth Era. We will be focusing largely on the events of the Fourth Era which led to the Skyrim Civil War, with some attention paid to the very end of the Third Era. Years in the Elder Scrolls universe are written *era*, *year*, so the seventy-second year of the Fourth Era, for example would be written 4E 72.

THE OBLIVION CRISIS

The Oblivion Crisis occurred in the final years of the Third Era, the culmination of a long period unrest and instability. It was caused by the death of Emperor Uriel Septim VII, and involved a destructive conflict between all of Tamriel and the Realm of Oblivion, a plane of existence that is usually separate from that on which Tamriel exists. The Oblivion Crisis wreaked havoc across all provinces of Tamriel, with Cyrodiil particularly affected, and led to the death of the final Septim Emperor, Martin. This marked the end of the Third Era and the beginning of the Fourth, in 3E 433.²⁵

THE FOURTH ERA

The Altmer, under the leadership of the Thalmor, were instrumental in ending the Oblivion Crisis and, capitalizing on this success, the Thalmor established the Third Aldmeri Dominion in 4E 22, seceding from the Empire. By 4E 100, they had added Valenwood and Elsweyr to their territories, becoming a power to rival the Third Empire. This, of course, caused a great deal of rivalry between the two, as the Aldmeri continued to expand their influence to the detriment of the Empire.

THE GREAT WAR

This rivalry came to a head in 4E 171, when the Thalmor sent a delegation to Imperial City with an ultimatum for the Empire. Among other requests, they demanded the outlawing of Talos worship and the ceding of large sections of Hammerfell to the Dominion. The Empire rejected, and war broke out.

Most of the war was fought in Cyrodiil and Hammerfell, leading to large amounts of destruction and bloodshed. The war finally came to an end at the Battle of the Red Ring in 4E 175, in which the Aldmeri Dominion was defeated.²⁶

THE WHITE-GOLD CONCORDAT

The Great War was officially concluded with the White-Gold Concordat signed between the Third Empire and the Third Aldmeri Dominion. Despite the Dominion's defeat at the Battle of the Red Ring, it is incredibly likely that, without the Concordat, the Dominion would have continued fighting the war and would have gone on to win against the Empire. As such, the

²⁵ "Oblivion Crisis." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018.
http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Oblivion_Crisis.

²⁶ "The Great War." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018.
http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Great_War.

Concordat was the Empire's only way of ensuring peace, and it therefore heavily favours the Aldmeri Dominion.

Its terms are very similar to the original demands made by the Dominion before the start of the war. A large portion of southern Hammerfell was to be ceded to the Dominion, the worship of Talos was outlawed, and the Blades (an order of Imperial spies) were disbanded. Additionally, the Thalmor were given permission to move throughout Skyrim to enforce the Concordat, more specifically the outlawing of Talos worship.

Hammerfell was unwilling to accept the loss of some of its territory and so it continued to fight even after the signing of the Concordat. In order to maintain the terms of the treaty and prevent war from breaking out again, the Empire released Hammerfell as an Imperial province.²⁷

THE MARKARTH INCIDENT

In 4E 174, the Reach, a Hold in western Skyrim, was thrown into chaos by an uprising of Reachmen, a sect of Bretons native to the region. The Jarl of the Reach, Hrolfdir, was unable to stop the uprising and was thrown from the capital city of Markarth. The rebellion was successful and, from 4E 174 to 4E 176, the Reach operated as an independent kingdom.

When the Great War came to an end, Hrolfdir sought aid from Ulfric Stormcloak in ousting the Reachmen from his Hold. The Jarl of Eastmarch, Ulfric was deeply bitter about the banning of Talos worship by the White-Gold Concordat, and Hrolfdir promised him that, if he helped retake the Reach, Hrolfdir would allow free worship of Talos. Ulfric accepted and marched against the Reach alongside his men and were successful in retaking it from the Reachmen.

Hrolfdir initially kept his promise, allowing free Talos worship, as did the Empire, when they caught wind of what had happened in the Reach. However, when the Aldmeri Dominion found out that the Empire had allowed Talos worship, the Empire used Ulfric as a scapegoat to make it appear as if they hadn't breached their treaty. Ulfric was arrested and subsequently imprisoned, an experience which left him even more bitter towards the Empire.²⁸

THE SKYRIM CIVIL WAR

Shortly after his release, Ulfric founded a militant group of rebels who became known as the Stormcloaks. Determined to oust the Empire from Skyrim, creating an independent kingdom, they were motivated largely by the banning of Talos worship and the capitulation of the Empire to the Aldmeri Dominion at the end of the Great War.

They clashed violently with the Imperial Legions stationed in Skyrim, and Civil War broke out in 4E 176. Including Ulfric's Hold of Eastmarch, the eastern Holds of the Pale, the Rift, and Winterhold are aligned with the Stormcloaks. The western Holds of Falkreath, Haafingar, Hjaalmarch, and the Reach are aligned with the Empire, while the central Hold of Whiterun is currently neutral.

As of 4E 201, the war is still ongoing.²⁹

²⁷ "White-Gold Concordat." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018.
http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/White-Gold_Concordat.

²⁸ "Markarth Incident." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018.
http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Markarth_Incident.

²⁹ "Skyrim Civil War." *Elder Scrolls Wiki*. Accessed November 20, 2018.
http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Skyrim_Civil_War.

APPENDIX A: THE PROVINCES OF TAMRIEL