

Project Cold Conflict

Introduction

This project was part of the *International Game Architecture and Design* Bachelor programme in the Netherlands. The goal of the project was to create a narrative design document that provides detailed information on all aspects related to the narrative of the game. The document will then be used as a bible (reference document) for the narrative during the production phase of the game. The requirements of the bible are detailed on the next page.

I worked on this project with a team of five people. For the sake of clarity, this document only contains my contributions to the project. I was responsible for researching and crafting a large portion of the back story and writing the central conflict of the game.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Client Briefing	2
Back Story	3
Back Story Summary.....	3
History of Earth: 2052-2200.....	4
After 11 July 2105: “the Day of Desertion”	7
Singapore	9
Food	10
Residence	11
Common jobs	12
Resource usage	12

Client Briefing

The client has licensed the Dunia™ Engine and are using this to create a science fiction based FPS for the PC.

The aim is to have a game narrative that has at least two playable characters, and in which the narrative differs dependent upon the choice of character. Ideally the paths of the characters should cross at various points within the story.

It is anticipated that the player will be joined by one or more AI characters at various points of the game, who will assist in combat and provide information through dialogue.

The client has indicated they would be interested to see the following elements integrated into the game concept:

- A squad-based dynamic (see *Saving Private Ryan/Band of Brothers*)
- Conspiracies (there should be plenty of twists and turns in the story)

The client has indicated that they are keen to ensure that the game clearly differentiates itself from products such as the *Gears of War* and *Halo* series.

It is very important that a rich and complex background story is developed as the client is keen to develop this into both sequels and spin-off games (i.e. RTS, MMORPG, etc.). Your narrative needs to take this requirement into account. The client anticipates that the narrative will be a story taking place in the context of a larger conflict (for example, as *Saving Private Ryan* takes place against the background of World War 2). The client desires for the science, cultures and conflicts to be as believable as possible.

Back Story

Back Story Summary

Halfway into the 21st century a glacial age approaches Earth. The UN decides to take action and starts working on two projects to save humanity. One project focuses on preventing the Earth from turning into a snowball, while the other project tries to terraform Mars in order to make it habitable for humans.

The large amount of energy sources required for these two large projects are not available and thus the UN is forced to use a new resource: methane hydrate.

Unfortunately, the mining of methane hydrate backfires as large quantities of methane leak into the atmosphere which accelerates the cooling down process the Earth.

The UN decides to abandon the Earth project and instead focus on terraforming Mars. They manage to build structures on Mars to make it habitable for humans, but only a small 100.000 people can be supported. The UN heads for Mars in 2105 with 100.000 of the most elite humans aboard the spaceship in order to rebuild society on Mars. Earth never heard from them again.

Chaos breaks out on Earth and humanity fights against nature and itself for survival. Civilisation as we know breaks down and the whole earth gets covered in snow. At this point Singapore is the only remaining functional country in the world. Singapore starts gathering resources from all around the world in order to survive for as long as possible.

Meanwhile, humanity has established a self-sufficient community on Mars.

Unfortunately, a major portion of the people on Mars suffers from heavy depressions. Leaving behind Earth was a heavy burden on them. Suicide rates are high and the population is going down rapidly. The Mars government decides that they need to crank up their population. After a recon mission on Earth they decide to send in special teams in order to gather more individuals to boost Mars' numbers. Since the Mars base is still unable to support a large number of humans, the government decides to do this in secrecy.

Venezuela is one of the locations where Singapore mines oil from and also where Mars performs kidnappings (mostly baby's). The game lets players explore this conflict between Singapore, the native population of Venezuela, and Mars.

History of Earth: 2052-2200

In the second half of the 21st century humanity registers the first signs of an impending glacial age. Global temperatures on earth are dropping rapidly due to a rapid increase of the greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere. In order to counter the looming glacial age, the UN launches a global initiative with the sole purpose to decelerate and ultimately stop the cooling down process of the Earth.

At this point, NASA had already been investigating terraforming for multiple decades. The initial goal was to research and test methods for terraforming Mars, and eventually other planets, in order to make them habitable for humans. Until 2058, the research into terraforming was mostly driven by the fear that earth would eventually run out of resources to support the ever growing world population. This perspective changed drastically as the first signs of the glacial age became apparent.

In 2058 the UN approaches NASA to collaborate on two of the largest scale projects ever conceived by mankind. One of the projects focuses on utilising the established terraform methods in order to counter glacial age on Earth while it is still in an early stage. The other project focuses on the continued development of terraform techniques and using them in order to terraform Mars as quickly as possible in case the glacial age on Earth turns out to irreversible.

In a race against time, the UN finds itself in a problematic position as their energy demand skyrockets due to their newly conceived projects. With the major portion of accessible oil, coal and gas reserves depleted and the clock ticking, the UN requires new, readily available, energy reserves.

One of the most viable options available to the UN is the mining methane hydrate. The methane hydrate reserves are estimated to be larger than all of the other fossil fuel reserves combined. Unfortunately, the mining of methane hydrate also brings many complications with it. Almost every methane hydrate deposits is located beneath the ocean floor, and as a consequence, advanced mining techniques are

required to efficiently harvest methane hydrate. Currently, these mining techniques are still in development and experimented with. But most importantly, large amounts of methane could leak from methane hydrate reserves if mining is handled incorrectly. Methane that escapes to the surface, being the powerful greenhouse gas that it is, would only serve to accelerate the cooling down process of the Earth. Regardless, the reality of the situation is that the UN requires additional energy sources.

In 2063, in an act of desperation, the UN decides to greenlight the mining of methane hydrate on a massive scale. This decision backfired completely as within a year, two large methane hydrate deposits had their methane leaked into the atmosphere. This put the nail in the coffin of the project to reverse the glacial age on earth.

In 2065, the UN officially abandons the project to save Earth and starts investing all its resources in the Mars terraform project. Additionally, since the UN now considers Earth a lost cause, they decide to continue the mining of methane hydrate.

Unfortunately, the Mars project has had difficulties of its own. It had quickly become apparent that humanity would not be able to terraform Mars before Earth had become inhabitable due to the glacial age. The UN would first need to build air-tight bases with systems that artificially regulates the gas composition in the air within the bases. Humanity will need to use these bases until the atmosphere on Mars had been sufficiently altered for humans to be able to breathe outside of the bases.

The UN was aware that within the time available, they would never be able to build enough bases to provide housing to even a small nation, let alone all humans currently living on Earth. In addition they would need to invest a large amount of resources in building a self-sufficient community on Mars for humanity to have any hope of survival. While keeping the rest of humanity in the dark about the true state of affairs, the UN continues their Mars terraform project.

As the year 2100 approached, humanity was losing faith in the UN and started to grow suspicious of the Mars terraform project. Due to the lack of large scale operations on Mars and minimal information provided by the UN, people began to fear that they would never make it to Mars. Instead, they would spend their remaining days on Earth, soon to be a frozen wasteland.

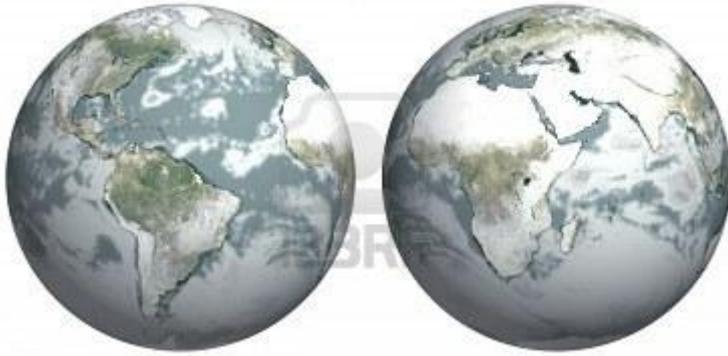
The UN realised that problems would start to arise if the current situation lasted any longer. In order to ease the growing unrest in the world population, the UN announced in 2100 that they will start evacuating the people to Mars in 2105. From the first evacuation onwards, a spaceship will fly to Mars roughly every 780 days, which is the time between two oppositions of Earth and Mars (closest position to each other in their orbit around the sun). But humanity falls in disarray when three years later it is revealed that only 100.000 people will make it across every 2 years. This means that it would take approximately 180.000 years for the entire world population to be evacuated. The UN assures that more ships would be produced as the project got underway, thus increasing the evacuation capacity, but the damage had already been dealt.

The UN selected a number of candidates over the years leading up to the first evacuation. The candidates consisted of elite scientist, politicians, professors and other individuals that are vital to building a strong society on Mars. These individuals are taken in protection by the UN a year before the evacuation in order to prevent them falling victim to threats such as enraged individuals and violent world-wide protests.

In 2105 the first evacuation spaceship is launched to Mars. Aboard the Spaceship were Earth's 100.000 most elite individuals tasked with building a strong human society on Mars and prevent humanity from going extinct.

But after the day they launched, they were never heard from again...

By those who remained on Earth they became to be known as "The Deserters".



After 11 July 2105: “the Day of Desertion”

At first the people that remained on earth tried to establish contact with the group that evacuated to Mars. But, they never received a signal back from “The Deserters”. Doubt arose about whether they had cut contact, they had malfunctioning equipment or that the ship had not survived an impact with space debris, among other theories. Whichever was the case, those remaining on Earth failed to establish contact “The Deserters”.

Soon plans arose to start the construction of a second spaceship. Unfortunately, nearly all of the experts involved in building the first spaceship were part of the 100.000 people that boarded the spaceship to Mars. Furthermore, suspiciously little information could be found in the data and materials left on earth about how to build a spaceship. There are additional complications such as increasingly scarce resources, the increased tension among the world population and the collapse of the UN, as they were suspected of having conspired with “The Deserters”.

As the years passed by resources were getting scarcer as the land became covered with ice and snow. Electricity and gas were valuable resources and became harder and harder to obtain.

In a coordinated effort to fight the glacial age the GRN (Glacial Resistance of Nations) was founded. The nations that were part of this resistance (which were most nations whose governments had managed to stay intact) banded together to fight the glacial age. The GRN established a set of rules that each member nation needed to adhere to. These rules covered everything from electricity usage to how much, how often and in what manner food would be distributed among a nation’s citizens.

Everything the GRN did was for the sole purpose of maximizing the chances of survival on Earth.

However, as time went by, the situation on Earth worsened. Nature laid waste to developed countries and economic centers on the Northern hemisphere. New York, London, and Tokyo, the top three economic centers in the world were slowly taken over by the ice and eventually its citizens were forced to migrate to countries near the equator.

As more and more land was taken over by ice, conflict started to arise. The massive migration to the tropics brings the severity of the situation to light. Shelter needs to be provided for those who migrated to the tropics. The GRN requests cooperation from everyone, and helps to provide shelter to the refugees. This means that new houses need to be built and temporary shelter needs to be provided.

However, the countries around the equator are mostly third world countries whose citizens have lived their lives in poverty. They were always at the mercy of the developed countries, who barely offered them help. And now the GRN forces the third world citizens to help the first world citizens. After the first world citizens had ignored the cries for help from the third world citizens for so long.

As a result of the glacial age everyone is forced to migrate close to the equator. Because of this people got clumped together and clashed. The first world citizens stand eye in eye with the problems of the third world citizens whom they had so long ignored. What they now see in each other's eyes was hate. The third world citizens feel hate because they had been left to die in the past. The first world citizens feel hated because the third world citizens now refuse to help them. And not just shelter, the third world citizens also need to spare part of their own resources (food, and energy sources) in order to help the refugees.

The result was disastrous. Bloodshed commenced all around the equator. Though it were no wars in traditional terms, since there are no countries fighting each other, the results are just as, if not more horrific. Governments, or what remained of it, collapsed as they completely lost their grip on their people. As a result the GRN became powerless and chaos ensued. Survival became the goal of every individual.

For most people this meant that anyone whom they had to share their food and shelter with was an obstacle.

The war is still on-going and it is, without a doubt, worse than any war mankind has seen before.

Singapore

From 2148 onwards Singapore, which was the fourth largest economic centre of the world at the start of the 21st century, remains as the sole country with a functional government and society. Singapore is the single location on Earth where people's living conditions have changed the least since 2105.

Singapore has managed to maintain such a strong society due to its location close the equator and its strong technological, political and economic background. In addition, since Singapore is located on an island it has a considerable defensive advantage against any offensive launched against the nation. Due to its strong standing Singapore became the stronghold of the GRN soon after the fall of New York, London and Tokyo. Presently, Singapore is regarded as the best chance that humanity has for survival on Earth during the glacial age.

Soon after 2105, activity in the Port of Singapore started to dwindle down to nothingness. With the entire world falling into chaos, trading slowly became less and less feasible. Eventually the Port of Singapore lost its primary function and was revamped into large warehouse for storage purposes. The containers in the Port of Singapore are now used to house food supplies, and other vital materials and equipment for survival. By the time the first countries had fallen to the glacial age, Singapore had already taken action to ensure they would become a self-sufficient nation who could last through a glacial age stretching over multiple centuries. They focussed on building up vast food reserves and a strong self-sustaining resource gathering system. As a result Singapore has managed to stay ahead of the rest of the world in virtually every aspect during the glacial age.

Singapore spends 10% of their total resources each year on research and projects with the purpose of finding ways to survive the glacial age, ways to slow it down, and even possible methods that may be used to reverse it. Examples of such projects are

the collecting resources from locations all around the globe, developing technology to combat cold and the development of methods to filter greenhouse gasses out of the air.

Another 5% of Singapore's resources is being spent on defence. Singapore has the advantage of being an island which makes it fairly easy defend. Since 2148, Singapore has been attacked on a few rare occasions and has had increasing issues with the number of illegal immigrants it was attracting. Singapore adapted the policy that no people will be allowed to move into the country in order to maximise the chances of survival for its existing population. Law enforcement is also part of the equation. Singapore has heavily invested into this in order to prevent the country from falling into a state of chaos similar to the one outside its borders.

Singapore Info Snapshot

- From 2148 onwards, Singapore is the only remaining superpower on Earth.
- Singapore houses 3 million people.
- The average temperature in Singapore is 5 degrees Celsius.
- No citizens are allowed to enter or leave the country.
- All resources stored in the Port of Singapore at any one time would allow the entire population of Singapore to last for over a decade.
- Singapore has the only remaining military force in the world.
- Singapore constantly restocks its supplies by gathering resources from all over the world.
- Venezuela is currently Singapore's largest source of energy resources due to its large fossil fuel reserves. Mining operations and resource transport are under permanent military supervision.

Food

During the glacial age the main source of nutrients for humans are fish and other life forms that occupy large, unfrozen bodies of water. Because of the relative stable temperature of water compared to that of land, life forms that live in large bodies of water are least affected by the climate change. Creatures on land are more affected by the climate change and thus those creatures have a harder time surviving. In turn, that means they are a less reliable source of food for humans when compared to fish.

As a direct result, most human settlements in the glacial age are located next to large bodies of water. Be they large rivers, lakes or oceans. Many conflicts on a smaller scale take place near coastlines because people are fighting over settlements near water.

Residence

The types of residences that can be found during the glacial age differ from one location to another. Most residences that were built after 2105 are large flat / apartment buildings. There are two important reasons for this.

The first reason is that these types of buildings provide housing for a large amount of people per square kilometre. This will be essential in housing large amounts of people if the glacial age would reach its later stages where all of humanity would need to evacuate to the equator.

The second reason is that the usage of resources like electricity and gas are easier to manage in these types of buildings than they are for individual residences.

Eventually, when the worldwide conflict broke out these two functions became obsolete. In fact, many of the conflicts arose because of these buildings. People with different ethics, religion and ancestry were all crammed together in such buildings. This often meant that there was mix of third world and first world citizens living in one building. Instead of invoking sympathy for each other, these living conditions only served to add fuel to the fire. These buildings, because of the fact they were built with the thought of withstanding a glacial age in mind, became desirable to live in. Third world citizens started to claim these buildings as their own by forcing the first world citizens out and stated that the first world citizens should just go back to their own countries instead of expecting help from the third world.

These buildings soon became territory of often either third or first world citizens though there are examples of other types of groups claiming buildings. The majority of those groups in question are religious in nature.

As these buildings became populated by mostly one specific group they also became easier targets for people to direct their anger towards. Eventually people started to destroy buildings of opposing groups or raided them to claim them as their own.

Large scale conflicts began to centre around these residences and as a result many of these buildings eventually got destroyed.

The only place in the world where these buildings still fulfil their original purpose is Singapore.

Common jobs

While the jobs as we knew them at the start of the 21st century only remain to exist in Singapore, there are certainly similar roles to be found around the rest of the world.

The most common jobs have to do with supporting humanities basic needs for survival. Think of jobs like farmer, fisherman, carpenter, doctor and soldier.

In Singapore there are a greater variety of jobs to be found ranging from psychologist and manager to politician and actor. With the term actor we refer to stage actor, not movie actor. Movies, TV series and the like no longer exist on Earth during the glacial age. Since electricity is a valuable resource the citizens of Earth do not waste it on entertainment. Instead they have reverted back to the more popular media in the 19th and 20th century such as theatre, opera and books.

Resource usage

Resources like oil, gas, coal and electricity are used almost exclusively for survival, only in Singapore these resources are actually used for other purposes, albeit rarely. This means that electricity or fuel driven transport, which is considered a luxury, not an absolute necessity, has ceased to exist. Cars became useless without the fuel needed to drive their engines. Because of this many cars, subway systems and railway stations have been left abandoned. Some of these have even been reused as homes and storage space.

As a result, fuel-less transport became the standard in the more urban civilised areas, especially Singapore. Bicycles, skates, long boards and any other type of human driven transport tool became the norm. As a fun fact: this led to a very famous scene of a highway during rush hour which was crowded with cyclists, skaters and the like.

Fossil fuels and electricity are resources that are absolutely necessary to survival. Although they are used in very limited areas, the resources are absolutely vital. In fact, it is because they are so absolutely vital that humanity is being extremely cautious with their use. Around the world these resources are traded against high prices. Although no money is involved in these trades, because the currency system has collapsed resulting in traditional money losing its worth, the amount of food that can be gained by selling electricity and especially fossil fuels is not to be underestimated. Unfortunately, due to the high demand for these resources it is also very dangerous to be trading with them.

Only in Singapore the use of these resources is regulated. Everything is handled by the government and individuals are not allowed to use any of the resources since they are considered collective goods. As a result there is hardly any conflict surrounding them, although there is limited trading of these goods going on in the black market. Individuals who are involved in these practices risk facing heavy sentences, which in the worst case can lead to individuals being exiled from Singapore.

Singapore has a variety of projects running that are focussed on keeping their resource stock high. These include mining operations in the middle-east and Venezuela, two of the largest oil reserves in the world and the only ones that remain accessible enough for mining. The fact that mining sites had already been constructed at these locations makes the mining of resources a fairly costless operation.

The mining personnel sent to these locations is escorted by the military as they need protection on site and on the transport route between the mine site and Singapore. The operation is guarded from pirates, thieves, aggressive locals and other threats by the military units that accompany the missions.