

Hilton 2020

General Assembly

Committee Overview

The General Assembly's primary function is to debate, discuss, and make recommendations regarding international peace and security, disarmament, human rights, international law, and other international issues. Delegates participating in this committee should strive to collaborate with other nations in order to address the issues at hand and work to prevent it from occurring again in the future.

The General Assembly (GA) runs Harvard Style which simply means that resolutions cannot be written until the topic has been set. Delegates possessing resolutions written outside of committee will not be considered for awards. Furthermore, the chairs strongly suggest that each delegate comes to committee having written at least one position paper, as a minimum of one paper is necessary to be considered for an award. **Position papers must be emailed to the chairs two days prior to the conference.** However, all delegates should remember that Model UN is not a competition and receiving an award should not be a delegate's main priority. Delegates should focus on working to solve the issues at hand while cooperating with other nations to achieve the committee's goals.

Committee Description

China's Monopoly on Rare Earth Metals

Non-Communicable Diseases in Developing Nations

Creating Legislation for Increasing Space Debris

Somalian Piracy

Chairs

Benjamin Fagnoli | bcfagnoli13@gmail.com

My name is Benjamin Fagnoli and this is my second time chairing, my fourth year in Model UN, and my third year as President of my MUN club. I am a Senior at McQuaid Jesuit where I play Varsity Football as well as participate in Pre-Med Club, DECA, and our Environmental Club. I'm very excited for a fun and productive committee! Feel free to email me with any questions or concerns.

Josh Goltsman | josh.goltsman@gmail.com

Hello! My name is Josh Goltsman, and I go to Brighton High School. This will be my fourth year in Model UN, and my first time chairing at a Model UN conference! At school, I am captain of the Swim and Dive Team and am a part of the French Club. Outside of school, I volunteer for my local BBYO Jewish Youth Group chapter. I can't wait to meet all of you and be a part of a thoughtful and productive committee! Please reach out if you have any questions.

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China's Monopoly on Rare Earth Metals



Rare Earth Elements, or REEs, are extremely valuable in many modern products. Composed of yttrium, scandium, or any lanthanide element, these 31 substances are mined as oxide compounds. Although not entirely rare within the Earth's crust, they are particularly difficult to separate, lending them their "rare" title. Rare Earths are vital to the production of many technological products such as phones, electric car motors, satellites, and military equipment.

In the past, China has had a near-total monopoly on REEs, reaching a peak around 2010. In 2017, China produced 70% of the world's rare earths, a slight decline from years past. However, China's claim over the Rare Earth Industry has led to disputes among the international community. In 2010, China placed an embargo on REEs to Japan following the detention of a Chinese fishing boat that collided with two Japanese Coast Guard ships. This incident caused uproar from many nations, particularly the US, one of the largest consumers of Rare Earths. The control of this economic sector, among other reasons, has led American President Donald Trump to place tariffs on various Chinese goods. China followed suit, adding tension and creating a trade war between the two nations.

In addition, the mining of Rare Earth Elements has a devastating environmental impact on the area in which it is mined. After several years of mining, many areas in China have seen increasing soil erosion, acidification, crop failure, and radioactivity in villages neighboring mining sites. They can be detrimental without proper regulations on waste disposal and recycling. Toxic waste ponds such as the 11 square kilometer pond in the Bayan Obo mining district can form, causing radiation poisoning from elevated thorium levels. As the REE industry expands to other nations, such as Malaysia, Australia, Brazil, and India, geologists are showing concern for communities neighboring mining sites.

The beneficial uses of REEs still stand true: a brief released by the United Nations' Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDP) reasons that REEs have many useful applications, especially for the development of sustainable energy sources such as wind turbines. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) has advised nations to continue on course with a transition to green energy for the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. However, the recent coronavirus pandemic has caused massive economic setbacks in this process. Many equipment pieces used in sustainable energy sources require REEs to function, so they will still be vital for use in the future.

How can the United Nations resolve economic conflict over REEs without infringing on National Sovereignty? What steps should be taken to prevent environmental damage from REE mining? How can this be done while still providing enough REEs to bolster production of greener energy sources?

Sources:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trade-china-rareearth-explainer/u-s-dependence-n-chinas-rare-earth-trade-war-vulnerability-idUSKCN1TS3AQ>

https://e360.yale.edu/features/boom_in_mining_rare_earths_poses_mounting_toxic_risks#:~:text=A%20half%20century%20of%20rare,with%20a%20%E2%80%9Chigh%20concentration%E2%80%9D%20of

<https://www.unece.org/info/media/presscurrent-press-h/sustainable-energy/2020/securing-critical-raw-materials-supply-is-key-to-the-response-to-covid-19/doc.html>

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Non-Communicable Diseases in Developing Nations



Across the world, millions of people are suffering and dying at the hands of a disease various non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), cancers, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, and other non-contagious ailments are the highest perpetrators of death and disability among the world's citizens, killing three out of five people internationally, and are responsible for half of all global disease cases. In fact, in almost 90% of countries, one has a higher likelihood of dying from an NCD than from an infectious or nutritional condition.

As developing nations grow both in population and economic strength, several predicaments emerge in keeping their populations free of NCDs. Over three-quarters of all NCD deaths occur in developing nations, with socioeconomic factors such as aging populations, new consumption patterns from globalization, and urbanization being key factors in creating the proper conditions for a higher likelihood of NCDs. In addition, behavioral components of populations within developing nations create increased NCD incidences, such as tobacco and alcohol use, physical inactivity, and unhealthy diets. Death and disability due to NCDs also has a profound economic impact. As work productivity decreases due to higher proportions of the population having NCDs, people work fewer hours and die earlier in life. With NCD cases on the rise, it is estimated that \$47 trillion between 2011 and 2030 will be lost from preventable diseases.

Since 2011, the UN has held three separate High-Level Meetings on the Prevention and Control of NCDs, the most recent of which in 2018. They agreed on several preventive and educational measures, such as campaigns promoting healthier lifestyles, treating hypertension and diabetes, and vaccinations against the HPV Virus to prevent cervical cancer. In addition, they called upon food manufacturers to reformulate products with less sugar, salt, and saturated fat, and to change labeling and marketing to inform customers of the risks of an unhealthy diet. However, this issue continues to press on today, especially with the Coronavirus pandemic. People with NCDs are much more susceptible to become ill or die from COVID-19 than those without, and the majority of COVID-related deaths are in patients with at least one NCD. In addition, the negative impacts of self-isolation, such as worsened mental health and lower physical exercise, can be detrimental to those with NCDs. The lack of telemedicine in developing nations leads to the declining health of patients with and without COVID-19, NCDs, or both.

What legislation should be created to build upon existing NCD legislation? How can the United Nations interact with the private sector to reduce the impact of NCDs during this global pandemic? What would be the most beneficial for reducing the impact of NCDs for developing nations in general?

Sources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/stories/economics-of-noncommunicable-diseases.html>

<https://www.europeanpharmaceuticalreview.com/article/122690/effect-of-covid-19-on-treatment-of-non-communicable-diseases/>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/27-09-2018-heads-of-state-commit-to-lead-response-to-beat-noncommunicable-diseases-promote-mental-health>

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Creating Legislation for Increasing Space Debris



As wide spread commercial space travel becomes a reality, the need for cooperation on the front of space debris management is imperative. Each launch increases the likelihood of a collision for all future ventures and can possibly cost an entity millions from an accidental collision. The previous UN treaties are becoming outdated and have not accounted for the growth in space travel that has occurred.

In 2020, there are more than 150 orbital launches scheduled, all adding to the growing issue. With a majority of these launches lacking a de-orbiting plan, it's only a matter of time before it becomes an issue. NASA currently reports over 500,000 pieces of space debris that are currently in orbit topping speeds of 100,000 mph.

The globe must have a unified response in order to correctly deal with such an issue. If individual nations address this issue without collaboration, there will be large confusion and could result in multiple collisions and billions of dollars destroyed. For this reason, it is the United Nations responsibility to unify the world to prevent collisions.

A single collision could lead to GPS black outs and a massive loss of data spanning all specialties. In order to keep a functioning society, these collisions must be prevented. The topic currently has several mechanical means of collision avoidance but when the investments are in the billions, it is important to have wide-spread automation to bring human error to a minimum.

How will the United Nations get private companies to follow regulations? How will the United Nations prevent the suppression of smaller space programs while ensuring safety for every country? How will regulations increase collaboration and awareness of surrounding space debris?

Sources:

https://www.esa.int/Safety_Security/Space_Debris/The_cost_of_space_debris

<https://www.space.com/topics/space-junk>

https://www.nasa.gov/centers/hq/library/find/bibliographies/space_debris

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Somalian Piracy



Primarily occurring in the Gulf of Aden and the Somali Sea, piracy off the coast of Somalia has become an expanding issue following the Somali Civil war in 2000. The weak government in Somalia has been unable to prevent or mitigate piracy and it is becoming a serious threat to global economic trade. While occurrences of piracy are growing smaller, the severity is increasing.

The piracy is not as simple as theft; it is a dynamic system of taking ships and sailors hostage in exchange for ransoms from the government or the shipping company. Many sailors sit for years before returning to their native country. Ships carrying fuel are having their cargo stolen and sold on the international market. Many nations and private corporations buy this oil at a discounted rate and excuse themselves from responsibility by not asking where it is from.

Piracy in Somalia is much more complicated than it has been portrayed. The crime involves investors, large scale corruption, and high-skilled negotiators. Contrary to popular belief, the issue is much deeper than petty crime. It has led to new costs for shipping in the region, piracy insurance and armed guards, which then get passed down to the consumer, affecting developing and isolated nations the most.

The issue has been primarily left up to individual corporations to address. In order to provide equal trade opportunity, it is imperative for the United Nations to construct a cohesive plan. The situation within Somalia must be considered along with the depth of the economic scale at which this is occurring.

How will the United Nations address the corruption within Somalia? How will the United Nations prevent the sale of stolen cargo on the international market? How will the United Nations create an equal playing field for all mariners in the region?

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<https://www.un.org/africarenewal/web-features/somali-piracy-search-remedies-global-malady>

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2014/10/481692-sustained-response-somalia-piracy-requires-effective-state-governance-un>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-46454055>