

Hilton 2020

Joint: UNEP & UNICEF

Committee Overview

This committee will be run Harvard Style, meaning that resolutions are not to be written until the date of the conference itself. Additionally, it is highly suggested that every delegate write at least one position paper on a topic, as doing so will be necessary to be considered for an award, **which must be emailed to the chairs two days prior to the start of committee.**

All delegates are expected to come to the first day of the conference with a working knowledge of all or most of the topics, as well as the policies of the countries that they represent. This committee will focus on both threats to the global ecosystem and advocating for the rights of children around the world. And remember that Model UN is not a competition, so get to researching and try to have a little fun!

Committee Description

Stigma Against Pregnant Teenagers in Africa

Child Labor in South East Asia

Caulerpa Toxifolia (Killer Algae) Prevalence in the Mediterranean

The Impact of Coronavirus Medical Waste on the Environment

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Hello Delegates! My name is Bhuvana Chimmiri, and I am currently a senior at Brighton High School. This is my third-time chairing, but my fourth year in MUN. Along with being on Brighton MUN leadership, I am also a captain for my Speech and Debate team, a Science Olympiad member. I am also a big fan of International Cricket, and love to volunteer at my local hospitals. I can't wait have an awesome committee!

Chairs

Doron Indelicato | [22dindelica-
to@ga.hiltoncsd.net](mailto:22dindelicato@ga.hiltoncsd.net)

Hello Delegates! My name is Doron Indelicato, and I am currently a junior at Hilton High School. This will be my first time chairing a committee and my third year in MUN. Outside of Model UN, I am also the president of my Science Olympiad club, I have participated in the Monroe County Math League all-star meet twice and enjoy being a member of the Hilton Masterminds team. I am also a soccer player as well as a football coach. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to email me!!

Abby Schaal | abbyschaal9@gmail.com

Hello delegates! My name is Abby Schaal, and this is my second time chairing. I am a senior at Brighton High School and this is my fifth year in Model UN. Outside of MUN, I play field hockey and volunteer for TIES. I'm very excited for Hilton and I know our committee will be great! Feel free to email me if you have any questions!

Ahmed Shah | ahmed317436@gmail.com

My name is Ahmed Shah, this is my first time chairing and my third year doing Model UN. I am currently a junior at Pittsford-Mendon High School. Outside of MUN, I play tennis and enjoy other racquet sports. I also participate in our school's ocean conservation club as the vice president and French cultural club as the treasurer. Do not hesitate to ask any questions!

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Stigma Against Pregnant Teenagers in Africa



Every year, about 21 million teenage girls around the world, between the ages of 15 and 19, become pregnant and 12 million give birth. The highest rate of these adolescent pregnancies exist in Africa. When a schoolgirl in Africa becomes pregnant often it means that she has to drop out of school due to the stigma associated with pregnant girls. This stigma stems from African morals, which teach that pregnancy out of wedlock is immoral and unclean. These stigmas isolate pregnant schoolgirls from the rest of society. This isolation increases the discrimination that many of these girls face as people believe because these girls are hidden as punishment for their “crimes”.

Teenage pregnancies among girls in Africa result for a few, very similar, reasons. First, many girls are forced to endure unwanted sexual advances by teachers and other older men in order to pay for their school tuition. or even to pass that teacher’s class. Second, many girls have neither access to contraceptives nor do they have a proper knowledge on how to use them. Third, there is limited access to social work in the region and often people do not know of the resources that are available.

The aforementioned complications result in many teen pregnancies in Africa, which most African governments fail to provide assistance for, leading these girls to quit school. Though all African Union members are required to protect pregnant girls’ right to education, many AU member nations fail to keep this promise. Some nations have provided aid and have passed stricter laws to make sure these girls can receive the education they deserve. Many nations, including Gabon, Malawi, and Kenya, have passed “re-entry” policies for pregnant girls so they can resume education after they give birth; however, adherence to such policies has been minimal and oftentimes girls are still shunned from going to school. In addition, many of the laws make it much harder for girls to come back to school and as a result the willingness to receive an education decreases amongst these girls.

A lack of financial aid and lack of awareness on such policies also prevent these girls from receiving a proper education. Even though some nations provide “re-entry” and other policies to aid girls, students are often unaware of the existence of these policies and thus continue to not attend school. Even with the given aid, many African schoolgirls continue to be turned away from schools across the continent preventing them from receiving a basic human right, education.

How can UNICEF take action to help the many pregnant girls who are being turned away from schools? How can unwanted pregnancies and sexual advances be prevented? How can the UN urge African nations to adhere to their “re-entry” policies without infringing on national sovereignty? How can these stigmas surrounding pregnant girls be overcome?

Sources:

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/06/14/leave-no-girl-behind-africa/discrimination-education-against-pregnant-girls-and>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-pregnancy>

<https://www.wvi.org/publications/report/central-african-republic/children-report-violent-truth-about-teen-pregnancy>

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Child Labor in South East Asia



There are over 150 million children worldwide that are estimated to be involved in child labor, and 42 million of those children are located in South Asia. While child labor has been in decline since 2000, progress is still very slow.

These children are involved in a variety of jobs, many of which are hazardous, such as bonded labor, child soldiers, mining, textiles, and agriculture. These children are also at risk of sexual exploitation, trafficking, and abuse. In addition to these dangers, child labor has long-lasting negative impacts on their well-being, and prevents many children from getting a proper education.

Child labor stems from several factors, such as poverty, social standards, lack of opportunities, migration, and emergencies. It is concentrated in “hotspots,” mostly in India and Bangladesh. The high concentration of child laborers in these areas is often driven by internal migration. In these regions, children are likely to be out of school or face difficulties in school, mostly because of language barriers. In addition, children often combine work and school, which impacts their progress and their chances of escaping poverty through a quality education.

A study done by UNICEF suggests that discrimination plays a significant role in determining if a child will become involved in child labor. Girls, children from lower castes, children from marginalized ethnic groups, and migrants are all more likely to be targeted for certain types of child labor.

Many Southeast Asian countries have taken steps to prevent child labor, such as imposing a minimum age for employment, however, factors such as poverty and conflict have made enforcing this difficult. In addition, child labor is seen as socially acceptable, whereas, education is not seen as a priority.

The fight to end child labor is likely to face more setbacks due to the long lasting economic effects associated with COVID-19. More children will presumably stop attending school and more will become involved in dangerous child labor.

The continuation of child labor could have dire effects on national economies, and has severe short and long-term consequences for children. For example, in India, only 50% of children who completed primary school can read a three-sentence passage. In Bangladesh, this figure decreases to 34%. A lack of a quality education can lead to skills mismatch and vulnerability to hazardous work. By engaging in child labor, children risk both their mental and physical health, leisure, and freedom, and lose the opportunities that a proper education could provide.

How can UNICEF quicken the progress of ending child labor? How can UNICEF address the factors that have caused child labor in Southeast Asia? How can the UN change the societal convention that makes child labor seem acceptable? How can the UN encourage more children to stay in school? How can UNICEF impose action against child labor without infringing on nations' national sovereignty?

Sources:

<https://www.unicef.org/rosa/what-we-do/child-protection/child-labour-and-exploitation>

<https://asianews.network/2018/07/05/child-labour-in-asia-wages-of-innocence/>

<https://blogs.unicef.org/evidence-for-action/ending-child-labour-in-south-asia-through-access-to-quality-education/>

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Caulerpa Taxifolia (Killer Algae) Prevalence in the Mediterranean



The Mediterranean Sea has one of the most complex marine ecosystems in the world. Due to the human activities which have taken place in or around the Mediterranean for thousands of years, the sea's ecosystem has been subject to extreme levels of strain and stress. As a result, many alien species have been able to thrive in the Mediterranean, including *Caulerpa Taxifolia*.

Caulerpa Taxifolia, otherwise known as Killer Algae, has become one of the largest threats to marine ecosystems in the Mediterranean during recent years. Most studies of Killer Algae have credited its harmful capabilities to its rapid growth and reproduction, as Killer Algae grows at a rate of one inch per day. In the Mediterranean, the aquarium strain spreads vegetatively by the growth of the stolons or by regeneration from broken off fragments as small as 1 square centimeter

in size. Long distance spread occurs via ballast water discharge from transoceanic boats and illegal dumping of aquaria plants. More localized dispersal occurs through the unintentional movement of plant material on boats, anchors, or fishing gear, or via algal fragments dispersion by sea currents.

The rapid rate at which Killer Algae can spread allows the invasive strand to smother other algal species, seagrasses, and sessile invertebrate communities. It does this by either out-competing species for food and light or through the toxic effects of caulerpenyne compounds that are contained in its foliage. Large meadows of Killer Algae have vastly reduced native species diversity and fish habitat. Native fish which are able to eat Killer Algae, such as Mediterranean bream, accumulate caulerpenyne toxins in their flesh which makes these fish unsuitable for humans. This lack of marine utilization will cause overpopulation in previously harvested areas as well as economic crisis in coastal areas.

Caulerpa Taxifolia has not only invaded the ecosystems of the Mediterranean, but it has also made appearances in the waters of Southern California in 2000. When first detected the populations of Killer Algae in southern California were small enough for eradication to be feasible. In order to do so, patches were covered with tarpaulins held down by sandbags that sealed the edges. Chlorine was poured under the sealed tarpaulins, which in this instance, acted as a pesticide and killed all of the trapped organisms, including the infamous Killer Algae. The unintentional killing of fish, invertebrates, and plants while not desirable was deemed necessary and preferable to letting *Caulerpa Taxifolia* spread unchecked.

In the Mediterranean, little has been done to target the species because of how widespread and unchecked the species is. Due to the risks of treating any effective waters and the uncertainty involved, the UN as well as coastal countries have endured scientific and legislative conflicts. Effective solutions have not been developed for the current circumstance. As a result of various other algal threats, such as the 2014 algal bloom incident in Lake Erie, UNEP has attempted to create blanket solutions for all forms of algal blooms which could harm ecosystems and water supplies. Along with these blanket solutions, UNEP also developed the Mediterranean Action Plan in 1975 which works to prevent marine degradation in the Mediterranean. Overall, UNEP is continuously working to find cost effective solutions, law reformations and monitoring programs in order to make the most progress towards eliminating *Caulerpa Taxifolia* and other invasive algae. Despite the various avenues explored, an all encompassing solution has yet to be found as scientists continue to test treatments and solutions to a growing biological threat.

*What are some regulations which can prevent the exposing of *Caulerpa Taxifolia* to untouched bodies of water? What is the economic impact of *Caulerpa Taxifolia* and its possible solutions? How can UNEP work to further eliminate the spread of other alien species in all forms of ecosystems?*

Sources:

https://www.hawaii.edu/reefalgae/invasive_algae/chloro/caulerpa_taxifolia.htm

<https://www.unenvironment.org/unepmap/>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/35085712>

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The Impact of Coronavirus Medical Waste on the Environment



The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) has been declared a global pandemic due to its ease of spread. People around the world have started using gloves, surgical masks, and sanitizers to reduce the risk of transmission from one person to another, known as personal protective equipment (PPE). The daily use of these items has resulted in the surge of medical waste produced globally. As the virus continues to spread, medical waste will be an increasing threat to the environment.

According to Science Direct, the city of Wuhan, China, produced 200 tons of clinical trash in a single day. Though many health organizations have taken steps to decontaminate facilities and regulate the medical waste being produced, the environmental impact remains. Many masks, which are made of plastic-based materials, are liquid resistant and long-lasting meaning these masks cause damage to animals and their habitats when they enter oceans or landfills.

According to an environmental NGO, Ocean Asia declared that a large amount of single-use masks have been found on a 100 meter stretch in the ocean in Hong Kong. Moreover, most surgical masks and gloves cannot be worn more than once, which makes up a huge part of the medical waste being produced. According to Health Management, medical waste containing plastic can release carcinogens into the atmosphere if burned. However, some techniques, such as incineration, might be effective if the equipment is properly maintained and regulated. As the rise of medical waste continues, much of the waste is not properly collected and is burned openly at unmanaged dumpsites. Although 75% to 90% of medical waste is non-risk, separation of waste which contains plastic is an important factor to effectively manage medical waste during the pandemic.

The management of coronavirus medical waste is very important to mitigate the risks of transmission. Raising awareness and promoting environmentally friendly options is imperative at this time. Finally, finding long term solutions that can help people safely dispose of their personal protective equipment is very important.

What are alternatives to one time use PPE? How can UNEP raise awareness about medical waste in the environment? What can people do to reduce the rise in medical waste due to coronavirus? How can the current medical waste be safely dealt with?

Sources:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7183989/>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/health-care-waste>

<https://healthmanagement.org/c/healthmanagement/issuearticle/how-covid-19-pandemic-is-changing-waste-management>