



Dear Delegates,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2016 Montessori Model United Nations Conference.

The following pages intend to guide you in the research of the topics that will be debated at MMUN 2016 in committee sessions. Please note this guide only provides the basis for your investigation. It is your responsibility to find as much information necessary on the topics and how they relate to the country you represent. Such information should help you write your Position Paper, where you need to cite the references in the text and finally list all references in the Modern Language Association (MLA) format.

The more information and understanding you acquire on the two topics, the more you will be able to influence the Resolution writing process through debates [formal and informal caucuses], and the MMUN experience as a whole. Please feel free to contact us if and when you face challenges in your research or formatting your Position Papers.

We encourage you to learn all you can about your topics first and then study your country with regard to the two selected topics. Please remember that both committee members need to be well versed and ready to debate both topics.

Enjoy researching and writing your Position Papers.

We look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

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General Assembly Second Committee - Economic and Finance (ECOFIN)

The Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee), is chaired by His Excellency Mr. Andrej Logar of Slovenia. During the 70th session, it will deal with issues relating to economic growth and development such as macroeconomic policy questions (including international trade, international financial system, external debt sustainability and commodities), financing for development, sustainable development, human settlements, poverty eradication, globalization and interdependence, operational activities for development, and information and communication technologies for development.

The Second Committee will also consider issues relating to Groups of Countries in special situations - such as the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs). It will also consider the item on permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources.

Source: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/second/>

Ensuring Access to Affordable Energy Services

Topic Background

Energy in the modern world is a basic necessity fueling almost everything ranging from our cell phones to electricity for millions across the world. There is a massive discrepancy on electricity access throughout the world and steps must be taken to ensure quality, affordable, and reliable energy for the world where it needs it the most. United Nations Secretary-General, Ban-Ki Moon, himself has stressed the importance of energy when he spoke to the Center for Global Development event on “Delivering Sustainable Energy for All: Opportunities at Rio 20+20” on April 20, 2012 in Washington D.C.:

“Energy is the golden thread that connects economic growth, social equity, and environmental sustainability. I know this from my own experience. When I was a boy in post-war Korea, I studied at night by a dim and smoky oil lamp. Only when I prepared for examinations was I allowed to use a candle. Candles were considered too expensive to use for ordinary homework. This memory has stayed with me. My country changed, and my prospects changed, with the advent of affordable modern energy in Korea.”
(United Nations, 2012)

The problem of affordable energy services across the world has remained a challenge since Ban-Ki Moon’s time in post-war Korea with about 1.2 billion people having no access to electricity and the developmental benefits it brings, and 1 billion more have access only to unreliable electricity networks. Nearly 3 billion people rely on traditional biomass (such as wood and charcoal) for cooking and heating. (United Nations Foundation, 2014) The lack of affordable and accessible energy hindered the distribution of the Ebola vaccine in Sierra Leone at the height of the Ebola crisis. (The Guardian, 2015) Lack of affordable and reliable energy has caused serious national security issues and unrest in Pakistan slowing the pace of economic activity as capacity utilization in key industries has fallen and Pakistan has also been forced to import more than 1.1 million tons of goods thanks to under utilization due to lack of energy which has undercut the economy severely. (The Diplomat, 2013) Showing the extent of the problem of ensuring affordable and reliable energy across the world, in Europe, Ukraine suffers from a problem of over reliance on natural gas from Russia which has caused a number of schisms in the country’s relations with Russia and has also caused domestic issues which have further destabilized the country. (Center for Research on Globalization, 2015) Ukraine is not alone in this problem as a great number of countries in the European Union also suffer from the problem of over reliance

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on one specific energy source. The European Union is in the process of coming up with contingency plans to deal with the problem of a lack of a reliable source of affordable energy. (Reuters, 2015)

The world is in a precarious position with energy security as discussed above. If a solution is not agreed upon and worked toward then it is very much possible that countries will see a disgruntled citizenry which cannot reach its full potential and an economy which cannot perform to its highest potential increasing the probability of states failing in their duties to its citizens. This challenge is one that is not to be taken lightly or to be trifled with as the problems are immediate, and their impacts wide ranging and very serious for everyone involved. Energy is a basic human necessity across all of the earth's continents and the ripples of unstable energy flow will hurt humans in almost every country. Developing countries are particularly at risk from energy volatility but this problem does not exclude some developed countries and a comprehensive solution can be reached only with meticulous research and hard work.

Past Actions

In very recent action from United Nations member states, energy has been accepted as a Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) as part of the post-2015 development agenda. SDG Number 7 states that states should “ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.” Several targets have been set to reach this important SDG which include:

- ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services
- increasing substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix
- doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency
- enhancing international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology,
- promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology and expanding infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, and small island developing states by 2030. (United Nations, 2014)

The United Nations is expected to finalize these terms for adoption amongst its members in the Sustainable Development Summit to be held September 25 – 27, 2015 which gives impetus from the United Nations to make progress on the issue of affordable energy.

While the United Nations and respective governments have been working on the issue of affordable energy, there are a number of non-governmental bodies which have taken up the mantle of working towards different aspects of energy. A renowned non-governmental organization working on the issue of energy is the World Energy Council. The World Energy Council is the principal impartial network of leaders and practitioners promoting an affordable, stable, and environmentally sensitive energy system for the greatest benefit of all. Formed in 1923, the Council is the UN-accredited global energy body, representing the entire energy

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spectrum, with more than 3000 member organizations located in over 90 countries and drawn from governments, private and state corporations, academia, NGOs, and energy-related stakeholders. The World Energy Council informs global, regional and national energy strategies by hosting high-level events, publishing authoritative studies, and working through its extensive member network to facilitate the world's energy policy dialogue. (World Energy Council, 2015) The World Energy Council has branches for each country which work toward achieving governmental change in nations which can have a positive impact on providing ways and means to improve the reach and affordability of energy.

Another non-governmental organization which works towards the multi-faceted energy problems the world faces is the Renewable Energy Agency (REA) formed in 2003. The REA is tasked with the promotion of environmental protection by means of implementation of renewable energy technologies (using wind, solar, biomass energy, etc.) and energy savings, dissemination of knowledge to the public on energy resources conservation, promotion of creation and implementation of ecologically clean and safe technologies for both renewable energy utilization and energy saving technologies, conduction of renewable energy resources (RES) assessments, prefeasibility and feasibility studies to demonstrate economical, environmental, and social benefits of RES utilization for public and commercial needs, consolidation efforts of the public, politicians, state structure agents, scientists, businessmen, etc. (Renewable Energy Agency, 2015) The REA has worked diligently in its initiatives such as Project "Vision 2050" with International organization INFORSE (Informational Net of Sustainable Energy). The scenarios of energy sector development in different European countries in a "Vision 2050" were developed for estimation of ability of transfer to sustainable development in energy sector. The REA has also worked with the United States' Environmental Protection Agency on Landfill Gas Feasibility Study and Collection System and Flare Installation at The Rivne Landfill.

The topic of ensuring access to affordable energy services goes hand in hand with the United Nations Millennium Development Goal 8 of developing a global partnership for development which includes a call for accessible and sustainable energy. (United Nations, 2015) While the United Nations has made steady if not concrete progress toward achieving this goal, it is almost a certainty that this goal will not be reached on this important Millennium Development Goal. However the United Nations is committed to achieving this goal and believes that Sustainable Energy for All is an important goal to achieve while on the road to completing Goal 8 of the MDGs.

Possible Solutions

While the topic of affordable energy may not be achieved in the current MDGs it is important to ensure the world is not distracted from this important issue. Affordable energy could not be more important in a Post-2015 Development Agenda. Energy generation, distribution, and maintenance could not be more important for economic growth, empowerment, and development of the world. An economy without reliable and affordable energy is one that is held back

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severely and cannot be effective in helping its people reach their goals. As such the issue of affordable energy needs to be addressed with a degree of decisiveness, wit, and attention to detail.

Specifically delegates must answer 3 important sub-issues that are obstacles in providing affordable energy for all. Some questions that need answering are:

- 1) Can the pressing need to deal with climate change be an obstacle in providing affordable energy for all?
- 2) How can and does the renewable energy revolution help the world in reaching the affordable energy panacea?
- 3) How can nations which possessing expertise in energy issues be motivated to assist nations which are suffering from severe energy problems?

These are three fundamental questions in the movement to ensure affordable energy for as climate change and renewable energy are intertwined in this debate. Developing countries such as Bangladesh invests heavily in coal as it is a “cheaper” source of energy and in a country that depends on its agriculture heavily, energy is important. (Energy Business Review, 2015) However, the use of coal has detrimental effects on the country’s climate thus creating a dilemma for these countries on what to do to solve their crisis.

The second question is oftentimes presented as a solution to the problem posed by the first question, as the renewable energy revolution takes place in many countries across the globe. Israel is an example of the renewable energy boom as solar energy is touted to satisfy 10% of the country’s energy needs by 2020; new investments have also increased the scope and scale of solar energy thereby setting an example for other countries to move forward with renewable energy sources. (Business Insider, 2015) However there are considerable challenges associated with renewable energy which include the high cost of developing renewable energy technology, the need for high levels of technical expertise for these types of jobs, and the influence from powerful fossil-fuel and other energy corporations on various governments to ensure the unfettered growth of their business as they view renewable energy as a threat to their business. All of these are important issues under renewable energy which have to be dealt with to ensure affordable and reliable energy access.

Finally what motivation does a country such as Denmark which hopes to produce all of its energy from renewable sources by 2050 have to help a needy country in another continent? (DW, 2015) The costs and need for technical expertise make it difficult as everything stands to make progress in producing energy from renewable sources for one’s own, so how can any other country afford to spare anything for other nations? What sort of incentives, if any, would convince a country like Denmark to help a country such as Nigeria which is heavily dependent on fossil fuels? This is a difficult question that requires solid research and thought to come up with workable and realistic solutions.

While answering these questions one must be aware of the different challenges and perspectives on the issue of providing affordable energy across the world. The African Group and large parts of the Asia-Pacific group pose a unique challenge in ensuring access to energy to all of its vast population first, which means setting up infrastructure for energy which does not yet exist. Ensuring access and affordability is thereby a dual challenge as opposed to the Western Group of “developed” nations which already have the infrastructure for energy setup and only need ways to improve efficiency and cost effectiveness. A pan global approach in trying to solve this issue may not therefore be the wisest policy solution.

Keeping all of the above in mind, countries must work hand in hand to come up with solutions for ensuring affordable energy access for all. This issue is too big to fail as the livelihoods of literally billions of people depend on you. Starting from countries such as Belarus with uncertainty in energy costs and Pakistan losing significant economic steam due to energy crises your challenge is immense. Your hard work and thoughtful solutions just maybe enough to save the planet from a catastrophe for its people and its environment. Put your best foot forward and achieve nothing less the absolute zenith for affordable energy solutions for the planet!

Further Research

United Nations on affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all-
<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/energy/>

Millennium Development Goal on global partnership for development –
<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/bkgd.shtml>

Beyond the MDGs – Post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda –
http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/EN_MDG_backgrounder.pdf

World Energy Council –
<https://www.worldenergy.org/>

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Questions:

1. Which goal on the Sustainable Development Summit deals with affordable energy?
2. Which Millennium Development Goal is intertwined with affordable energy?
3. Which UN accredited body works towards ensuring progress on energy issues?
4. Do all United Nations groups have the same challenges for affordable energy issues?
5. Is renewable energy an easily accessible resource?

Answers:

1. Goal 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
2. Goal 8 Developing a global partnership for development
3. World Energy Council
4. No, African and Asian challenges are vastly different from those of Western European group.
5. Developing renewable energy technology takes significant investment and expertise