

UN Commission on Sustainable Development

Esteemed delegates,

We are delighted to have you join us for, the 8th Edition of the Thomas Jefferson Model United Nations. This year, many changes have been implemented to provide you with a better and improved model and we are excited to share this experience with you. The TJMUN is a platform that allows delegates to communicate and debate their views on major global issues and to come up with solutions regarding them, while developing great research, public speaking, teamwork, and leadership skills.

Our committee, the UN Commission on Sustainable Development was established by the UN General Assembly in December 1992, in order to ensure an effective follow-up of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit. Ever since, it has worked to achieve a greater advance in the sustainable development agenda within the international community.

We are aiming, as a committee, to come up with new perspectives and approaches in finding solutions that will help improve the sustainable development of our nations and the world as a whole. Sustainability is an essential element for the further development and improvement of our world. Consequently, us working together, is the only way to ensure a stable future for us and the generations to come.

Most sincerely,
UN Commission on Sustainable Development Co-Chairs

Yunuen Neria Arce
Regina Rabell Ruiz

Topic A: Create a Sustainable Economic Growth, Employment and “Righteous” Work for All.

Introduction

Currently, half of the world's population lives with less than \$2 USD a day. In numerous places of the world having a job does not ensure the immunity to poverty. The continuous lack of decent work opportunities and insufficient investments are elements that affect an entire society and its development. For reasons such as these, creating quality jobs will be a major goal in the upcoming years. For there to be sustainable economic growth it is required that societies create new conditions allowing individuals to have quality jobs that stimulate and help grow the economy, while protecting the environment. Sustainable work opportunities result in sustainable economic growth and maintainable grow rates without generating new conflicts, especially for future generations.

Topic Outline

A Righteous work provides “opportunities for everyone to get work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration. It is also important that all women and men are given equal opportunities in the workplace” (United Nations, 2016). Unfortunately, there's a large number of people who are unemployed, and even those with jobs, are usually unable to strive for a quality job.

Promoting a sustainable economic growth, as well as sustainable and righteous work for all is a key step in eradicating one of the world's most concerning issue, poverty. Poverty and unemployment are issues that affect most nations of the world, even first world countries. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), more than 204 million people are unemployed as of 2015. With the number having increased considerably from 170 million people back in 2007.

For the issue to be solved, it is necessary to create an approximate number of 470 million jobs globally, between 2016 and 2030, for new entrants of the labor market. This, just to keep up with the growth of the global working age population. Around 30 million jobs would have to be implemented every year for this to become a reality. Additionally, there needs to be improvement in working conditions for the 750 million men and women who despite being employed, are not earning enough to live a life away from poverty.

Essence of the Debate

The debate expectations are to come up with viable and realistic solutions that show their intellect and their previous research on the subject, considering the conditions the planet faces as of today. It is important to point out that sustainable economic growth and employment goes beyond the effects on the environment, it is also a topic about the people and their stability regarding this issues.

Questions to Consider

- If everyone has access to sustainable job opportunities, will extreme poverty be completely eradicated? Or are other steps necessary to accomplish this?
- How can we ensure that people looking for employment take jobs that allow them to develop in a sustainable way, rather than those that pay better but do not allow for this?
- How can we convince companies that giving righteous employment has bennefits for them as well as for the employees?

References and Suggested Websites

United Nations. (2016). *Sustainable Development Goals*. Retrieved 19/05/16 from un.org, website: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/economic-growth/>

United Nations. (2016). *Employment, Decent Work for All and Social Protection*. Retrieved 19/05/16 from un.org, website: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/employment>

United Nations. (2016). *Decent work and Economic Growth: Why It Matters*. Retrieved 19/05/16 from un.org, website: http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/8_Why-it-Matters_Goal-8_EconomicGrowth_2p.pdf

Topic B: Corruption in Environmental Governance

Introduction

Our governments play a major role in the sustainable development of our countries, it is through them, our representatives, that decisions regarding major environmental issues are made. Unfortunately, many countries, especially those in development, experience severe cases of corruption, and this also applies when referring to environmental governance.

Topic Outline

Corruption has a serious impact on the environment. Every two seconds a forest the size of a football field is cut down by illegal loggers. Forest crimes do not only affect the environment, but also many local communities, because nearly one billion people, in lower economic classes, depend on forests for their livelihoods, so any illegal activity affects them directly. Other sectors particularly vulnerable to corruption are the protection of endangered species, water supply, and oil exploitation.

Talking specifically about the water sector, “corruption increases the costs of building water infrastructure by as much as 40 per cent - this equates to an additional \$12 billion a year needed to provide worldwide safe drinking water and sanitation” (UNDP, 2011). Water is a commodity and a basic need on the daily life, either for sanitation, energy or drinking purposes, but sadly millions of people don't have access to it. Why? Because money gets diverted for personal gain, and people have to rely on insecure and polluted water.

These and other examples are just a tiny part of how corruption affects the environment and the people surrounding it.

Essence of the Debate

Delegates are expected to analyze the current environmental agreements and the violations that have been made in regard to them by the several countries governments and major corporations. This in order to come up with modifications to them, as well as create new regulations that impede or sanction this actions.

Questions to Consider

- What sanctions should people, especially politicians and major company owners receive when violating the environmental governance agreements? How can we ensure that they follow through with them?

- How can we stop the collusion between the government and companies, when the latest violate the environmental law?
- How can we strengthen the laws so that it is impossible to violate them?

References and Suggested Websites

United Nations Environmental Programme. (n.d.). *Environmental Governance*.

Retrieved 19/05/16 from unep.org, website:

<http://www.unep.org/pdf/brochures/EnvironmentalGovernance.pdf>

United Nations Institute for Training And Research. (n.d.). *Environmental Governance*

Program. Retrieved 19/05/16 from unitar.org, website: <http://www.unitar.org/egp/>