

UNDP

MITMUNC III, 2011



Committee Welcome Letter

Dear Delegates,

We are very excited to have you at the 2011 MITMUNC and we welcome you to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

During this session of the UNDP, we present two issues of pressing importance. The first is that of HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis in Africa. The spread of these diseases has exacted a horrible toll on the population of developing nations in Africa, hindering their political and economic development. It is our task to investigate and implement solutions to this problem.

We will also analyze a second issue of great importance – corruption. Corruption is endemic in many developing countries, both in the political and private sectors. High levels of corruption not only hinder a country economically, but also cultivate lack of trust in political institutions, which can be highly detrimental in developing countries. This problem is hard to tackle, but we are confident that we can make some progress during this session of MUN. Again, we would like to state our excitement for this upcoming session of MITMUNC. Do take note that position papers are required from all delegates. Information on how to write position papers may be found at <http://www.mitmunc.org/preparation.php>.

See you in February,

Oliver Huang

Ofir Nachum

This year, our discussion topics are: HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Tuberculosis in Africa Bioterrorism

HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Tuberculosis in Africa

Introduction

In 2007, HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis were responsible for a combined death toll of over 4.8 million people, with the majority of deaths occurring in impecunious parts of the world. Among these parts, Africa by far suffered the worst fate, seeing the deaths of over 3 million people due to these three diseases. The young are particularly susceptible. HIV/AIDS has affected, to a large extent, Africa's youth: over 91% of the 430,000 children newly affected were in Sub-Saharan Africa. Malaria has also very detrimental effects on Africa's youth, killing over 700,000 children in Africa every single year. Similarly, tuberculosis kills around 680,000 children per year. The tragedy here lies in that these three diseases are all easily treatable. HIV/AIDS may be treated with antiretroviral medication for as little as \$140 per patient per year; malaria can be treated with bed nets or cheap drug treatments; and a six-month anti-tuberculosis regimen costs as little as \$15.

As a result of these deaths, an entire block of the population is missing. This ultimately hampers development of Africa's government, economy and society, as it affects government hires, industrial workers, and families alike. On average, HIV/AIDS reduces the annual GDP growth in Africa by between 1 and 3 percent. Likewise, TB reduced annual GDP growth by 4 to 7 percent. These three so called "diseases of poverty" thus bear down upon the African economy, hindering economic growth.

In terms of social growth, HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis are responsible for a weak return on education. Students, teachers, and administrators alike are susceptible to the illnesses, and their low productivity translates to detrimental effects on the educational systems in Africa. In some areas, the effect of these diseases is so large that administrators have trouble finding enough new employees to replace the ones that have been affected; for example, in Zambia over 2.2% of teachers die annually, an alarmingly large number.

Education aside, HIV/AIDS, malaria, and

tuberculosis also affect the health sector. An estimated 25% of all medical staff in areas where these diseases are heavily treated are infected each year. Because these people are the ones who are responsible for the treatment of these diseases, this large proportion feeds upon itself, growing into a larger and larger issue. Malaria imposes a burden on the health system itself. It is estimated that the proportion of national health spending on malaria in high-endemic countries can be as high as 40 per cent, and increasing in regions where global warming has resulted in the spread of malaria to areas which were previously malaria-free.

These three diseases also weaken Africa's government. First, it clearly affects government workers and local government staff. Second, it substantially weakens Africa's military. It has been estimated that HIV infection rates are three times higher amongst service members, with rates between 20 and 40 per cent in the militaries of most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Like in the education and health sectors, the rates of morbidity and mortality within the public and uniformed services have a direct bearing on efficiency and effectiveness of public institutions, along with the associated costs of absenteeism, productivity loss, and treatment.

History of the Issue

HIV/AIDS has plagued mankind since about 1960, when it broke out as a mysterious group of infections and cancers that spread across Africa and the United States. Soon, people discovered that it could easily be sexually transmitted. By 1985 blood tests had been developed to try to identify those who carried the disease.

Once HIV was established it devastated East Africa far more than West Africa due to rapid transmission. Uganda was hit very hard by the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s. The AIDS epidemic then moved south, through Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Botswana.

In this region it spurred a devastating epidemic in the general population. This was exacerbated by a period of confusion as to the nature of AIDS. The cause of AIDS was still unclear in the early eighties; very little was known about transmission and public anxiety was high.

Most significantly, people did not fully

understand how AIDS was transmitted. Additionally, people over-estimated the transmissibility of HIV and added to the fear surrounding the virus. Because not much was known about HIV/AIDS in the 1980s people were often not aware that they were infected with HIV until they had progressed to the final stages of the disease when death was often imminent. In addition, at this time there did not exist an effective treatment for the disease. Because of the stigma that HIV carried with it, and because of the conditions described above, many were reluctant to test themselves for HIV/AIDS, leading to more deaths.

In 1996, an effective treatment was found. A combination therapy known as HAART became available for those living with HIV in rich countries. This treatment required patients to take a multitude of medications, but was very effective. AIDS death rates in developed countries dropped by 84% over the next four years. However, treatment was still not readily available for the poor. Over the next decade, governments and the UN have battled pharmaceutical companies for reduced prices on AIDS treatments, and although there has been significant progress made, many in Africa are still suffering from the disease without the proper medication.

By contrast, Malaria is an ancient mosquito-borne disease that has been around for millennia. It reached its peak in the 19th century in Africa, when on the west coasts mortality rates climbed to as high as 50%. Although in the rest of the world effective treatments have almost eliminated the disease, in Africa some impoverished regions are still very susceptible because the lack these treatments.

The development of Tuberculosis follows a similar path to that of Malaria. Although its treatment was discovered in the mid 1900s, it has yet to reach poorer regions of Africa, where the disease spreads rapidly, complementing HIV/AIDS to combine into a deadly illness.

Past International Action

At the Millennium Summit in 2000, world leaders met and constructed the UN Millennium Declaration: 8 goals that were to be met by 2015, based on the assumption that “every individual has the right to dignity, freedom, equality, a basic standard of living that includes freedom from hunger and violence, and encourages tolerance and solidarity.” Goal 6 in the UN Millennium Declaration is to Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Other Diseases, based on several targets:

- Target 6A: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
 - HIV prevalence among population

aged 15-24 years

- Condom use at last high-risk sex
- Proportion of population aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS
- Target 6B: Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it
 - Proportion of population with advanced HIV infection with access to retroviral drugs
- Target 6C: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases
 - Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria
 - Proportion of children under 5 sleeping under insecticide-treated bednets
 - Proportion of children under 5 with fever who are treated with appropriate anti-malarial drugs
 - Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis
 - Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under DOTS

In 2002, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria was formed to finance poorer regions of Africa based on these targets. This global partnership between governments and societies makes medication more readily available to those who need it. Recently, the US pledged a three-year unprecedented fund to the Global Fund.

Bloc Positions

Sub-Saharan Africa and other affected nations

Sub-Saharan Africa is where these diseases have struck the hardest. Of the reported deaths due to HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, most are from this region. Your goal is to find a way to combat further growth and attempt to sustain these diseases in this region, so that countries in this area can grow economically, politically, and socially.

Northern Africa and other at-risk nations

Northern Africa is relatively less hard-hit, so your goal here is to determine whether there is a risk of starting an epidemic within this region and if so, how to ward it.

Developed Countries

Developed countries are in a position to help stamp out these diseases once and for all. They have the opportunity to improve the global economy by sacrificing some of their own GDP. How far are they willing to go?

http://www.one.org/aids_poverty/
[http://www.africa-union.org/root/ar/index/LSC-EXP-10%20\(VII\)The%20Impact%20of%20HIV%20TB%20%20Malaria%20on%20the%20world%20of%20work%20in%20Africa%20\(2\).doc](http://www.africa-union.org/root/ar/index/LSC-EXP-10%20(VII)The%20Impact%20of%20HIV%20TB%20%20Malaria%20on%20the%20world%20of%20work%20in%20Africa%20(2).doc)

Corruption

Introduction

Corruption is a serious problem that afflicts many developing countries. Experts estimate that more than one trillion dollars is paid in bribes each year. This is compared to a global economy the size of around \$30 trillion. Despite the scope of the problem, corruption is hard to tackle, termed a 'secret phenomenon' as victims may not know that they have been victims of corrupt acts. Furthermore, if they do know, a complaint is seldom filed, being useless in a corrupt system. Compounding the issue is the fact that police and judiciary statistics on corruption likely do not reflect the entire phenomenon.

The World Bank has identified corruption as among the greatest obstacles to economic and social development. Put simply, corruption is an abuse of power. This can be present in several sectors, including business, political, and public service. In political corruption, government officials abuse their office and resources for personal gain through extortion, soliciting bribes, etc. Corruption can also be performed by public servants. For example police may refrain from pursuing or selectively pursue an investigation for personal gains in many forms, such as career advancement, bribes, etc. More often than not, corruption is prevalent and interconnected throughout government and private sectors, severely hindering the development of a country.

A country's development is undermined by corruption, distorting the rule of law and damaging the institutional foundation on which economic growth depends. The most severely impacted by the effects of corruption are the poor, who are most vulnerable to economic decline, are most reliant on the facility of public services, and are least capable of paying costs associated with bribery, fraud, and the misappropriation of economic privileges. It is ironic that corruption mainly sabotages policies and programs that aim to curb poverty or provide humanitarian aid (many of them sponsored by the UN). Thus tackling corruption is critical to the achievement of increased efficacy of developmental

programs.

History of the Issue

The origins of corruption are hard to pin down and often involve a number of factors. Many conceivable theories on corruption have been derived from the moral and cultural characteristics of societies. Some argue that the corruption plaguing many developing countries today is carried over from cultural behaviors like negotiations, gift-giving and unconditional solidarity with extended families, clans and other communities. This may explain the contrast between Africa and Europe, and the differences between the catholic Western European countries with a "Latin" culture and the Nordic, protestant countries.

The level of corruption has been demonstrated in various statistical presentations to vary negatively with the level of economic prosperity. In other words, as a country grows richer, the level of corruption decreases. However, this provides a dilemma, since corruption holds a country back from development: It creates a positive feedback loop, establishing an environment that is more corrupt and that is unable to break the chains of corruption through development. Corruption is considered to be only one of the socio-political consequences of exploitation, along with political authoritarianism and economic underdevelopment. The prevalence of corruption is usually explained in terms of economic underdevelopment. Economic decline and economic crises are common explanations to increases in the level of corruption.

The political setting also has some effect on the level and form of corruption – the two vary systematically. Corruption levels and forms vary with the regime type within which it occurs. A widely held general assumption about corruption is that it varies negatively with democratization. As levels of democracy increase, levels of corruption subsequently decrease. This may be not directly due to democratization but rather another principle: that the degree of corruption varies inversely to the degree that power is consensual. That is, the more the power is legitimate, the less corruption.

Levels of corruption are most extreme in countries that are experiencing the concurrent processes of political and economic liberalization. These transitions cause uncertainty, ineffective political institutions, and increased opportunities for corruption at the same time. High levels of corruption have been found in countries going through rapid economic and political transformations, like in the former Soviet Union and certain countries in Latin America.

Past International Action

There have been several international attempts to effectively tackle the problem of corruption. One of these is that International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC) which is an international conference held once every several years and attracts representatives from many countries. Past conferences have accomplished some progress, though most has been ultimately insignificant. Some of the IACC's accomplishments include the Seoul findings stating the "strong conviction that there is absolutely no substance in the myth that corruption is a matter of culture. Rather, it offends the beliefs and traditions of us all." The 12th IACC released the Action Agenda outlining practical measures to curb corruption.

In December 1996 the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted a Declaration against Corruption and Bribery in International Commercial Transactions, as recommended by the UN Economic and Social Council. Although not legally binding, the declaration's wording on criminalizing foreign bribery and ending its tax deductibility signifies broad political agreement in the international community on this matter. In February 1996 the UN General Assembly recommended that the Economic and Social Council take steps to prevent illicit payments.

Several nongovernmental organizations have also attempted to tackle the problem of corruption in political institutions. One of these is Transparency International, which aims to solve corruption by advocating increased transparency in political practices.

Bloc Positions

North America and Western Europe

North America and Western Europe represent countries with developed and mature economies and political institutions. Therefore, they are united against corruption and towards more reliable practices.

Middle East and North Africa

Many of these countries are experiencing the early stages of economic development. Also, most of these countries are not fully democratized, with a ruling dominant party. Thus, they are reluctant to crack down on corruption.

East Asia

While many of East Asia's economies are either well established (like South Korea or Japan) or have been rising rapidly for some time (like China), their governments are not ideally democratic. Tackling

corruption has been predicted to negatively impact China's economic development, which is mired in corruption.

<http://web.worldbank.org/>

"Political Corruption: An Introduction to the Issues." Inge Amundsen. Chr. Michelsen Institute. 1999.

<http://iacconference.org/>