

Bilkent Historical Model United Nations 2019

STUDY GUIDE



Forum: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Issue: Indian Ocean Earthquake

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Introduction

The issued problem is the Indian Ocean Earthquake which happened at 2004, taking the lives of 227,898 people at the time. The delegates will debate over what could have been done to minimize the damage and what types of cautions could be taken for future incidents. It is known to be the 3rd largest earthquake in history, 3rd only to the 1960 Great Chilean Earthquake (9.5 magnitude) and the 1964 Good Friday Earthquake (9.2 magnitude).

Definition of Key Terms

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO: Is a commission that aims to promote international cooperations and to coordinate programmes in research, services and capacity-building, in order to learn more about the nature and resources of the ocean and coastal areas and to apply that knowledge for the improvement of management, sustainable development, the protection of the marine environment, and the decision-making processes of its Member States.

Contingency Plan: A plan that is designed to prevent or stop a future event.

Evacuation: The action of immediately leaving an area because of a given situation.

Background Information

The Indian Ocean Earthquake is an earthquake that happened underneath the Indian Ocean in 2004. It had a recorded magnitude between 9.1 and 9.3. It is also known by the name The Great Sumatra-Andaman Earthquake. The earthquake caused many devastating tsunamis to form alongside the coastline of the Indian Ocean, killing 227,898 people and harming many others while causing great damage to the environment. The earthquake caused many major world committees to start developing precautions. It showed them that they had to figure out an early

detection system which would undoubtedly save lives. The economic loss at the time had been calculated to be 10 billion U.S. dollars. The statistics of countries that were affected by the earthquake are:

India

Displaced: 650,000
Dead: 16,389
Injured: 6913
Housing Destroyed/Damaged: 100,000
Total Damage and Losses (in USD): 2.1 billion
Total People Affected: 654,512 people

Indonesia

Displaced: 532,898 homeless
Dead: 165,708
Housing Destroyed/Damaged: Not specified according to the official UN reports
Total Damage and Losses (in USD): 4451.6 million
Total People Affected: 523,898

Maldives

Displaced: 13000 homeless
Dead: 102
Injured: 2214
Total Damage and Losses (in USD): 470.1 million
Total People Affected: 27,214

Sri Lanka

Displaced: 480,000
Dead: 35,399
Missing: Not specified according to the official UN reports
Injured: 23176
Housing Destroyed/Damaged: 114,069
Total Damage and Losses (in USD): 1316.5 million
Total People Affected: 1,019,306

Thailand

Displaced: Not specified according to the UN
Dead: 8,345
Missing: Not specified according to the official UN reports

Injured: 8,457

Housing Destroyed/Damaged: 4,806

Total Damage and Losses (in USD): 405.2 million

Total People Affected: 67,007

Myanmar

Displaced: Not specified according to the official UN reports

Dead: 71

Missing: Not specified according to the official UN reports

Injured: Not specified according to the official UN reports

Housing Destroyed/Damaged: Not specified according to the official UN reports

Total Damage and Losses (in USD): 500 million

Total People Affected: 12,500

Somalia

Displaced: Not specified according to the official UN reports

Dead: 298

Missing: Not specified according to the official UN reports

Injured: 283

Housing Destroyed/Damaged: Not specified according to the official UN reports

Total Damage and Losses (in USD): 100 million

Total People Affected: 105, 083

Other than the countries above, Malaysia and Bangladesh have also been affected by the earthquake. 21 people have lost their lives at the event and dozens missing have been found. The earthquake hit Malaysia's northern coast. The people who lost their lives were swept by the waves, says official reports. 2 peoples lives have been lost by the earthquake in Bangladesh.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Countries and committees involved in the case include The United Nations, UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Somalia, Malaysia, Bangladesh.

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

The United Nations began works immediately with the help of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. They developed a multi million dollar project which helped alert the government when there was a threat of a natural disaster. 5 years after the accident, the project was put into effect. It is still being used, even though there hasn't been a major threat since then.

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

The earthquake was a wakeup call for the government and the committees all around the area to take precautions for the future. 5 years after the earthquake, many different warning systems had been put into place to minimize loss of life. These warning system has been funded by the United Nations and . It is a multi-partner, multi-donor 11M USD project.

Possible Solutions

Fifteen Years from the earthquake, All the countries and communities that were effected by it has mostly recovered. A plethora of safety precautions like warning systems have been put into place to beware of future events. Other possible solutions may include establishing contingency plans for immediate evacuations to minimize the loss of lives. Evacuation plans which may include a safe and secure way of transporting people in the area somewhere which will not be effected by the given situation. Somewhere where they may seek refuge and shelter for the foreseeable future. This evacuation plan would ideally be funded by the United Nations. Also natural disaster education may be given to citizens who live in areas which are at high risk of a natural disaster. This may also be a way of minimizing the loss of life. For example the Asian Broadcasting Union collaborated with the United Nations to run workshops which aim to educate journalists about disaster risks. These types of programs may be implemented into school curriculums, just like Indonesia has done, to educate upcoming generations.

Bibliography

<https://www.unisdr.org/archive/12159>

Appendix/Appendices