



Research Guide for the ECOSOC Committee **@OBSMUN 2022**

Designated email address: ecosoc@obsmun.org

ECOSOC

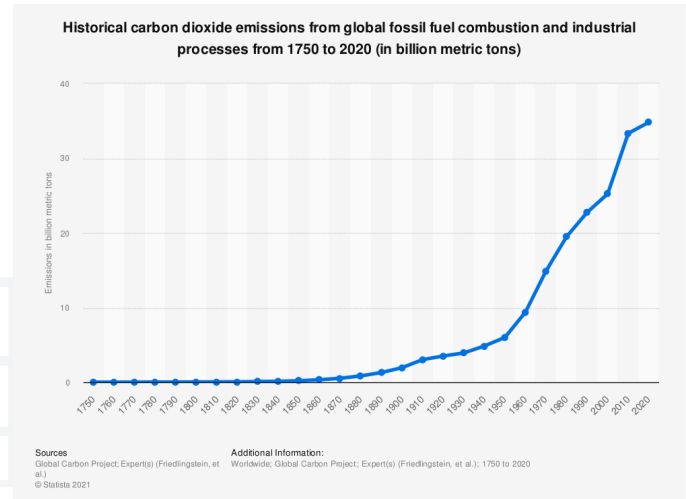
The Economic and Social Council is responsible for promoting higher standards of living, employment for all, and economic and social progress. ECOSOC is also responsible for identifying solutions to international economic, social and health problems; facilitating international cultural and educational cooperation; encouraging universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The issues being debated at ECOSOC during OBSMUN 2022 are *Increasing Renewable Energy's share in Worldwide Energy Consumption* and *International Trade as an engine for Sustainable Development*. These issues are important to the economic stability of the world and the welfare of the world population, and must therefore be solved with extreme urgency. The Economic and Social Council at OBSMUN unites a plethora of nations from around the globe to address issues of noteworthy impact and immediate urgency for resolution.

Purpose of this guide

This research guide was compiled by the Secretariat and Chairs of the OBSMUN. OBSMUN aims to provide delegates with the opportunity to further develop their research skills that will help them in their academics. Thus, these research guides do not cover the whole breadth of the issues at hand. Instead, they are designed to provide a basis from which delegates can undertake their own research into the topics, with the aim of developing clauses from their independent research.

1 - Increasing Renewable Energy's share in Worldwide Energy Consumption

The climate crisis is one of the biggest challenges we need to tackle as a species. Throughout the last centuries, greenhouse gas emissions have skyrocketed at an exponential rate, and global temperatures have already increased by 1°C since the beginning of the 20th Century, and it is estimated that if we go past the 1.5°C threshold then severe consequences will follow.



One of the ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is by switching to green, renewable energy sources, as opposed to the more polluting fossil fuels (coal, gas and oil). Since energy generation accounts for 72% of the total greenhouse gas emissions (as of 2013), increasing renewable energy's share in worldwide energy consumption would be a major benefit for our climate and our society. Acting now is key, as leaving this to the future may take us down a one-way path to dire consequences.

Due to the nature of the topic at hand, it can be assumed that the debate will revolve around the different ways to reduce rapid climate change using emission-free energy sources. Delegates should be familiar with the following terms:

- **Climate Change** - a change in global or regional climate patterns, in particular, a change apparent from the mid to late 20th century onwards and attributed largely to the increased levels of

atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels

- **Climate Crisis** - a term used to describe the threat of global warming to the planet, and to urge aggressive climate change mitigation
- **Global Warming** - a gradual increase in the overall temperature of the earth's atmosphere generally attributed to the greenhouse effect caused by increased levels of carbon dioxide, CFCs, and other pollutants
- **Renewable Energy** - a naturally occurring and inexhaustible source of energy, such as solar power or wind energy
- **Fossil Fuels** - combustible organic material, such as natural gas, coal and oil. During the combustion process, these usually emit greenhouse gases

In 2009, the share of renewable energy was 19%, and 10 years later it has increased to 37%. However, we still need to reduce net carbon emissions by 15% yearly by 2035 if we are to revert the already visible effects of global warming.

Useful Treaties and Organisations

- **Kyoto Protocol** - this is an international agreement linked with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This protocol recognises that developed nations are responsible for the current high levels of greenhouse gases, due to over 150 years of industrial activities. This protocol urges all nations to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- **Paris Agreement** - this is a more recent international agreement that aims to strengthen global response and cooperation to the

threat of global warming and climate change. It aims to maintain global temperatures from rising over 2°C this century

- **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** - The IPCC governments at all levels with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies. IPCC reports are also a key input into international climate change negotiations
- **COP 26** - A Climate Change Conference held in Glasgow, from 31 October to 13 November 2021. It is deemed by many our last chance to tackle climate change

Past Resolutions

Economic and Social Council; 39th plenary meeting; 2010/3; Science and technology for development - <https://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/2010/res%202010-3.pdf>

Possible Perspectives From Which to Formulate Solutions

Countries with strong renewable energy operations may try to push other nations to follow them and adopt clean energies, as these could help the environment, and would contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations.

Delegates may try to discourage the use of renewable energy if the country they are representing is part of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries or has a fossil fuel-driven economy. They may try to value the reliability of fossil fuels, and downplay the climate crisis.

External Links

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/energy/>

http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/items/2830.php

http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php

2 - International Trade as an engine for Sustainable Development

International trade is the exchange of goods and services between countries. International trade is conducted to improve a nation's standard of living by providing commodities it has in abundance for commodities it lacks. Much of the modern history of international relations concerns efforts to promote freer trade between nations. We have now entered a period in history where more and more of international relations' concerns revolve around sustainable development. International trade is no exception.

Sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainability is a paradigm for thinking about the future in which environmental, societal and economic considerations are balanced in the pursuit of meeting our needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Due to the nature of the topic at hand, economic considerations will take precedence but the environmental and societal considerations essential to sustainable development should not be ignored.

Due to the nature of the topic at hand, it can be assumed that the debate will revolve around the interference of nations and international organizations with international trade. Delegates should be familiar with the following terms:

- **Protectionism** - government policies that restrict international trade to help domestic industries, through tariffs, import quotas, product standards, and subsidies. Usually implemented with the goal to improve economic activity within a domestic economy but can also be implemented for safety, environmental and quality concerns
- **Free Trade** - buying and selling of goods and services across international borders with little or no government tariffs, quotas, subsidies, or prohibitions to inhibit their exchange
- **Tariffs** - a tax imposed by one country on the goods and services imported from another country
- **Quotas** - government-imposed trade restriction that limits the number or monetary value of goods that a country can import or export during a particular period to regulate the volume of trade and boost domestic production
- **State Subsidies** - financial aid provided by a government to a producer or seller of a good or service that is designed to increase the competitiveness of a particular industry firm or an entire industry

By grasping these terms delegates can aim to be able to engage in debate on how government intervention in international trade can turn into an engine for sustainable development. Nevertheless, delegates should not forget that the current general trend is to reduce trade barriers so measures should be sensible.

Useful Treaties and Organisations

- **Addis Ababa Action Agenda** - highlights the importance of international trade, supported by appropriate domestic policies,
- **European Union and Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union** - the European Union is a free trade area and a single market, allowing the free movement of goods, services, capital and labour
- **World Trade Organization** - an intergovernmental organization that regulates and facilitates international trade between nations. Aims to reduce tariffs and other barriers to international trade
- **Sustainable Development Goals** - blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice

Past Resolutions

Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development; International trade as an engine for development; D.79-92

https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/AAAA_Outcome.pdf

Possible Perspectives From Which to Formulate Solutions

Delegates can look at the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and formulate solutions from the perspective that following trade liberalization encourages long-term investment in productive capacities that can help to promote productive employment and decent work, women's empowerment and food security, as well as a reduction in inequality, and contribute to achieving the sustainable development goals.

Delegates can also formulate solutions from the perspective that through protectionism certain nations, industries and even individual companies which use unsustainable production methods can be coerced into adopting more sustainable production methods. Subsidies can be used as an incentive for those who adopt sustainable production methods. (Note: in the matter of sustainable development, the whole supply chain should be considered, not just production methods)

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