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Delegation of Belarus

**Topic 1: The Impact of Climate Change on Human Health**

The impact of climate change on human health is growing exponentially day-by-day. Environmental threats such as increased frequency and intensity of heat waves, increased floods and droughts, changes in the distribution of vector-borne diseases, and malnutrition from crop failures are becoming increasingly prevalent and have a heavy negative effect on civilian life. Over the past thirty years, climate change has been claiming over 150,000 lives annually. Thermal stress is a risk that is very present in highly populated areas where there is low ventilation and where heat is easily retained. The transmission of infectious diseases is also sensitive to the change in our climate, in higher temperatures many infectious bacteria thrive and epidemics can break out. Floods contain thousands of disease carriers, weather it be through human sewage or animal carcasses. Lastly the burden of these environmental changes not being shared equally among our population, factors such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status can determine the effect of climate change on a specific person. As climate change continues to grow, so does the inequality of health in our population.

Belarus shares global concerns over the impact of climate change and supports international efforts on reducing carbon emissions. In 19992 Belarus joined the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The objective of the UNFCCC was to stabilize green house gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. No specific rules were set to limit green house gas emissions and no execution methods were mentioned, instead the convention suggested international treaties to be written to agree upon green house gas limits. Later on in 1997, the UNFCCC established the Kyoto Protocol and in 2005 Belarus signed it. This protocol sets some ground rules when it comes to international green house gas emissions. The Kyoto protocol makes it obligatory for countries to reduce their own green house gas emissions or partake in other ways such as: Emission trading, Joint Implementation, and Clean Development Mechanism

Climate change is now affecting almost every area of civilian life and the global community needs to work together to halt climate change’s severe influences. In response to this Belarus is promoting green technologies in order to reduce green house gas emissions. The national government of Belarus is promoting the use of green technologies to its people and the delegation of Belarus believes that this can be adopted by almost any national government and can result in substantial change. In addition an incentive needs to be present, a fee on carbon would provide an economic incentive to reduce energy use, a fee that increased over time would encourage businesses to invest in sustainable energy technologies

**Topic 2: Climate Refugees**

With the growing negative effects of climate change, climate refugees are also becoming a more prominent threat. The term climate refugee refers to civilians who have to re locate due to the dangerous environment. Unlike war refugees, climate refugees have no protection and are not recognized in any way by the law, no one is maintaining the human rights of these people and keeping them safe. Many believe that climate refugees could result in civilian uprisings, since governments can be blamed for environmental damage and failure to preserve citizen homes. Climate refugees are not able to apply for resettlement in another country and other countries have no legal obligation to allow these climate refugees refuge.

Belarus currently hosts refugees, around two hundred seek refugee status in Belarus each year. Belarus complies with the international refugee regulations. No refugee camps are located in Belarus but there are temporary accommodation centers. After seven years of living in Belarus, refugees can apply to become a citizen of Belarus. Belarus has a very high refugee acceptance rate compared to other countries; there are about 3 denials to every refugee accepted. Taking into account Belarus’ current refugee status, Belarus would be willing to take climate refugees into consideration as well.

The delegation of Belarus believes that the first step is to properly define a climate refugee and officially categorize these affected peoples as refugees who receive the same protection and rights are war refugees. These civilians are forced to flee their countries just like war refugees but due to the lack of recognition, they cannot apply for refuge in any other country. In addition there should be a United Nations committee formed that focuses on establishing climate refugees in new homes. This committee will help spread awareness of climate refugees and it will maintain the human rights of these refugees, which are not being maintained presently. Once countries are legally obliged to allow climate refugees to enter their country, these people will finally be recognized, as they deserve.

**Topic 3: Steps to Enforce the Paris Agreement and Further Reduce Green House Gas Emissions.**

In 2015 Countries were finally able to come together and reach a consensus on climate change. All member nations of the United Nations agreed that greenhouse gas emissions needed to be reduced and limited in the future. However this verbal agreement is not all is takes to make member nations accountable for their emissions. There are three steps that need to be accomplished in orders for the agreement to become binding in each country. The first step, which was to get the Paris Agreement passed, has already been completed. The second step is to get the Heads of State to sign the agreement at a signing ceremony in New York City. Many countries have already signed this agreement but several have not and the deadline is in April of 2017. Lastly the third step is for countries to get the agreement ratified by their own government and people. This is the most difficult steps and at least fifty five countries must complete this process for the agreement to come into effect, as of now only sixteen countries have had the agreement ratified by their respective legislative bodies.

Belarus has signed and ratified the Paris agreement. In addition Belarus was one of the first European countries to express support and consent towards the Paris Agreement; this is alongside Albania, Iceland, Norway, and Ukraine. From 2020 on wards, Belarus will be participating in various special programs to move towards a greener economy and in turn reduce harm to the environment and abide by the Paris Agreement.

The delegation of Belarus believes that to draw in countries that have not wanted to previously sign on to the agreement, there must be a global incentive. Many studies shows that wealthier countries are more worried about climate change than poorer countries. The United Nations needs to outline the global gains of the Paris Agreement to countries where climate change is a threat but the country does not see it as a problem.

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