Country: Singapore

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**Second Position Paper**

**Topic 1 – Governance in Relation to Education**

The issue on governance in relation to education is one that has been discussed more and more over the years. Governance relating to education makes sense as corruption and political instability in governments draw attention and funds away from important issues like education. Countries like Somalia and Cambodia experience a type of corruption that involves government officials accepting bribes to alter polices to benefit corporations (3). Political instability is also a problem in the world and places like Syria, who are in the middle of a civil war. They had to close their schools due to continuous riots. Political instability in cases like this are tragic because before the war almost every child was put into a primary school before the war. However, in 2013 approximately 1.8 million people were out of school (3).

Corruption is not really a problem in Singapore. Singapore is 5th least corrupt country in the world (1). But it does indirectly effect Singapore as countries surrounding like Malaysia and Thailand are corrupt (2) Thailand, even though it has the legal framework and range of institutions to effectively counter corruption many companies regularly are offered bribes and other corrupt practices (4). Governance also effects the education in Singapore because of how strict they’re government is, because of this Singapore has one of the highest education systems in the world (5). Having a strict government keeps things like education in order and helps them thrive.

Governance is about the way that your government runs your country. Even if your country is run smoothly you can always make things run better. Singapore only attained self-government in 1959 and at the time corruption control was at the top of the list of things to be fixed (6). Implementing clear rules is the first step to get rid of corruption in the world. Singapore is a relatively new country and is smaller than a lot of other countries so saying that it will be just as simple as implementing a few stricter rules is not fair. It will take years to get corruption out of certain countries, like Syria. Instituting stricter laws is just a way to get started stopping corruption in these countries.

(1)<https://www.mfa.gov.sg/content/mfa/media_centre/singapore_headlines/2012/201212/infocus_20121206.html>

(2)<http://www.newmandala.org/corruption-in-malaysia-and-singapore/>

(3) <http://www.ssuns.org/static/BG/UNESCOFinalDraft.pdf>

(4) <http://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/thailand>

(5) <http://fairreporters.net/world/the-best-education-systems-in-the-world-in-2015/>

(6) <http://www.unafei.or.jp/english/pdf/RS_No83/No83_17VE_Koh1.pdf>

**Topic 2 – Preserving World Heritage Sites**

World Heritage sites are all over the world. They represent the peak of human-made and natural creations around the world. The protection of these sites has been going on since 1972. Each site is required to meet one or more of 10 carefully chosen criteria. There are 5 criteria based on cultural components and 5 based on natural components (2). Even though these sites are legally protected, they still undergo the threats of climate change and war. A report was put out in May of 2016 that emphasized the damage that climate change had on World Heritage sites across the globe. Some of these sites included Venice, Stonehenge, and the Galapagos Islands. These sites are said to have already been at risk due to environmental factors, but now have only been intensified due to climate change. An example of this is the rising sea levels in Venice. The Great Barrier Reef would have also been on this report, but was never included due to the fact that it might have a negative effect to tourism (2). Another problem for the protection of World Heritage sites would be if there are in an area of conflict. The civil war in Syria has been horrific, it has also been putting many World Heritage sites at risk. The ancient city of Palmyra in Syria has experienced noteworthy destruction due to firefights and military occupation. The raiding and looting inside the site still stays an important issue (2).

Singapore has one World Heritage Site, the Singapore Botanic Gardens (1). The Singapore Botanic Gardens is the first and only tropic botanic garden on UNESCO’s World Heritage List and it was proclaimed a World Heritage site in 2014 (3). Singapore has also begun to see the effects of climate change in their region. There has been an increase in their average yearly temperature. Their average sea level has also increased, and their rainfall has grown more intense over the years. In 2001 there was a cyclone near the equator, that swept north of Singapore but caused major flooding (4). The increase in temperature could end up affecting the Singapore’s Botanic Gardens, and if there is another cyclone it would also most likely damage the site.

There is really no real clear way to fix these problems as they are problems we have been trying to fix for years. It is not as easy as saying to stop war, or to stop polluting the environment. The first step in my opinion is doing little things to help the environment like taking shorter showers and opening your windows instead of turning on every single light on in your room. Those little things, if everyone in this room does them might be able to help just a little bit.

(1)<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_World_Heritage_Sites_in_Singapore>

(2) <http://www.ssuns.org/static/BG/UNESCOFinalDraft.pdf>

(3) <https://www.sbg.org.sg/unesco/>

(4) <https://www.nccs.gov.sg/climate-change-and-singapore/national-circumstances/impact-climate-change-singapore>

**Topic 3 – Supporting and Accomplishing Education 2030**

Since it was developed in 1945 the UNESCO has developed many different missions, from issues like peace promotion to sustainable development. To make sure these issues are addressed there have been goals that were made. Two examples are the Millennium Development Goals, or MDGs and the Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs that both have an emphasis on education. Education can mean many things but is most commonly known as the establishment of a basic academic knowledge to young individuals. This can be split up further into primary, secondary, and tertiary education. Education also indicates to the achievement of a certain set of skills (1). UNESCO’s educational goals include providing global and regional leadership in education, strengthening the education systems all over the world, and responding to modern global changes through education also supports SDG number 4. This particular SDG is about ensuring complete and reasonable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for everyone (1). At the World Education Forum in 2015, the Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 was assumed with the purpose of improving education for everyone, no exceptions. This includes an outline on how to simplify the implementation of SDG 4. It also promotes the at the international and national level to overseer the progress. Education 2030 itself focuses on an educational approach that that promotes expanded and increased access, as well as inclusion, equity, quality, and learning at all levels (1). A huge limitation to this goal is that large amounts of children are not able to receive their education due to conflict or natural disasters. Also, without the proper tools to maintain the education system in area of unrest, you can never ensure equitable and inclusive education. Like how in certain areas of the world where gender equality has not yet been achieved, it is near to impossible to ensure that women and girls get the same education as boys and men. However, the question of control and culture make it very hard to set international principles for programs (1).

Singapore in a whole has a very good education system that runs very well. However, Surrounding countries like Indonesia have some of the worst education systems in the world. Corruption is taking money from the school systems and putting it into the pockets of corrupt civil servants (2). Education experts say that more than half the teachers do not even have the minimum teaching requirements needed to teach properly. The Indonesian system also does not support independent or creative thought and focuses more on learning by rote. It is very strict and students are expelled for simple misbehaver (2).

Some ways to look at these problems is to make sure you have a good supportive learning system in your own country. Keeping your own education system supportive and a good learning environment is the best way to support other countries.

1. <http://www.ssuns.org/static/BG/UNESCOFinalDraft.pdf>
2. <http://www.aliquidfuture.com/indonesias-education-system-is-one-of-the-worst-in-the-world-according-to-a-recent-report/>