Delegate Name: Alex Chan

Country: Iran

Committee: UNESCAP

Topic: The Role of Infrastructure in the Development of South East Asia

School: Columbia Prep

Iran was under international sanctions for decades which has limited economic relations with Southeast Asia. However, after the lifting of sanctions following the nuclear deal with the US and European Union, Iran has been looking to expand relations with Southeast Asia. This is a major issue on our foreign policy agenda.

Iran has great interest in good trading relations with Southeast Asian nations. Our main exports are oil and natural gas with our main export destinations being China, Japan, and Turkey. Our main imports come from China and the United Arab Emirates with machinery and iron related goods being some of the main imports. However, trade with Southeast Asia is minimal. We want to expand our trade with Southeast Asian nations in regards to oil and energy. Because of our abundance of natural resources such as oil and our unique geographic location being the closest major energy supplier to Asia, Iran is important for the energy security of Southeast Asian nations. Southeast Asia also exports a lot of rice to Iran, so both sides will gain more from boosted trade. Our president recently travelled to Vietnam and agreed with the Vietnamese president to increase trade with Vietnam to $2 billion. In addition, we recently signed on the the ASEAN treaty on Amity with a goal of everlasting peace. These examples show that our country has a great stake in Southeast Asia and is working towards building a stronger relationship. Iran is well situated to be “the gateway to West Asia.” We can be a country that serves as a transit route between East and Southeast Asia and Central Asia and Russia. We believe that infrastructure development in Southeast Asia will boost this trade.

To develop this trade, Iran believes that it is important to develop the infrastructure in Southeast Asia. Iran supports the goals of UNESCAP. We believe that the problems facing infrastructure development in Southeast Asia is that there is a lack of organization, cohesiveness, and funding for this large scale development to occur. Iran proposes that the UN focuses on coordinating efforts between Asian countries and organizations like ASEAN to ensure that infrastructure is developed in Southeast Asia as this will facilitate greater trade.

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Delegate Name: Alex Chan

Country: Iran

Committee: UNESCAP

Topic: Future of Food

School: Columbia Prep

Iran is a big supporter of “Climate-Smart Agriculture.” We have been facing a water crisis where many important rivers and lakes have dried up. In addition, 90% of the country’s water goes towards agriculture. This means that our country has a stake in developing sustainable agriculture so that we have food for our future generations.

Iran takes this issue very seriously at home. We have been collaborating with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN on developing sustainable agriculture in our country. A key area of our partnership is development of sustainable small-scale agriculture and “Climate-Smart Agriculture.” This partnership is part of the 2012-2016 Country Programming Framework and plans are being put in place to extend this to 2021. The program has four main priorities: sustainable environment and agriculture management, food security, inclusive development and resilient economy, and knowledge management. Iran is a major importer of rice, and other staple foods. Many Asian countries produce our rice, so we have a great interest in ensuring that farming in the Asia Pacific region is sustainable.

Iran is calling for the FAO Country Programming Framework to be extended to countries in the Asia Pacific region. We believe that by working together, a more sustainable future can be realized. In addition, we believe that CAPSA should work more closely with Asian nations and small independent farms to ensure that “Climate-Smart Agriculture” is a reality. Iran will be happy to share our own experience in some of these programs with our Asian partners. We believe that working the future of the world depends on the future of food. So, we would like to see plans developed so food production is increased and more sustainable so our future generations can benefit.

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Delegate Name: Alex Chan

Country: Iran

Committee: UNESCAP

Topic: Labour Migration and Illegal Trafficking in the Asia-Pacific

School: Columbia Prep

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been hosting and providing assistance to Afghan and Iraqi migrants over a period of 30 years. This includes refugees and labour migrants. We are one of the top refugee hosting countries. At the peak in 1991, our refugee population exceeded four million. Iran has had to deal with the burden of hosting refugees and migrants while at the same time international assistance was limited. We have worked with the respective countries in terms of repatriation and resettlement.

Iran has worked hard to host all of our refugees. In spite of all the challenges we face, our government has worked hard to improve the conditions for migrants in our country. Our government has provided education, healthcare, and livelihood opportunities. We have even included migrants into our national health insurance scheme. We are working together with the UNHCR to continue to focus on the livelihoods of the migrants as well as empowering them to help rebuild their home country so they can one day return. In addition, together with UNHCR, we have been advocating to enhance measures on international protection of migrants. We would like to come up with durable solutions on protecting the rights of these people.

Iran thinks that there are three ways in which we can improve the situation. First, we believe that the UN should increase funding for countries hosting many refugees and migrants. Iran has struggled, but is working hard, to provide for our migrant population. Second, we believe that the UN should sponsor a government to government approach on dealing with migrants. Many of the situations faced by countries in East Asia are different to the situation we face, so we believe that it is best if governments work regionally under the supervision of the UN. Lastly, we believe that countries should work with the UNHCR, like we do, to ensure that the rights of migrants and refugees are protected and a concrete plan on protecting rights is created.

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