Larkin Wisdom

Pelham Memorial High School

Committee: UNFCCC Conference of the Parties 22

Position: Liberia

As a sub-Saharan nation, the Republic of Liberia maintains many relevant concerns regarding climate change. The UNFCCC Conference of Parties 22 aims to address several of these key concerns. First, the Republic of Liberia has concern that it lacks sufficient resources to maintain the health and well-being of its citizens with the increased threats to health brought about by climate change. Three-fourths of Liberia’s citizens are supported by agriculture. As global temperatures begin to rise, annual rainfall and flooding is predicted to increase, destroying large sectors of local crop. This will damage Liberian citizens economically, causing them to lose the means to pay for food and healthcare, as well as the inherent malnutrition that comes with a loss of food amid a static population. In addition, intense rainfall and flooding can cause unwanted flow of contaminated water, leading to diseases such as cholera. As threats to farmland and water pollution primarily result from flooding and increased rainfall, this will be a major point of focus for the Republic of Liberia. Possible adaptations to the situation include raising awareness and developing infrastructure for improved water treatment, as well as educating on modern agricultural techniques to resist high rainfall, erosion, and flooding. Both of these objectives can be accomplished with the support of the WHO, which has already established a working plan to raise awareness about the health effects of climate change. The Republic of Liberia’s goal with regards to public health is to garner the support of the WHO and the international community to assist Liberia and other coastal nations in educating on this topic.

Liberia also wishes to address the rapidly-growing international issue of climate refugees. Although not yet an issue specific to the borders of Liberia, in the future Liberian people could be displaced from coastal regions by rising sea levels. In addition, Liberia, who as recent as 2014 took thousands of refugees in to protect from Islamic terrorist uprisings in West Africa, understands the importance of maintaining a network of international relations open to accepting refugees. The Republic of Liberia will seek to get an international law passed that defines people displaced from their country by environmental issue as refugees.

Last, Liberia wishes to establish a global system by which collectively we can work to mitigate the potential effects of climate change. The most direct way to accomplish this is by targeting carbon-based atmospheric emissions, as well as supporting carbon banks, specifically forests. Liberia wishes to impose a standardized system under which countries will be held accountable for their carbon emissions, with an elected inspection committee to ensure implementation. In addition, Liberia would like to encourage the planting of trees and discourage deforestation globally, as forests are an extremely useful natural carbon sink which actively consumes carbon-based compounds upon development and later consumes carbon dioxide cyclically.

In conclusion, the Republic of Liberia wishes to implement three simple, effective plans that will have a positive impact on health, climate refugees, and carbon emissions. Liberia does not believe that any of its proposed ideas will weigh too heavily on any one nation, but instead is confident that its proposals are fair and likewise effective for the creation of a brighter humanity.

Bibliography:

"Climate Change Adaptation in Africa." (2014): n. pag. Web. <https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/liberia\_adaptation\_fact\_sheet\_jan2012.pdf>.

@ipsnews. "West Africa's Refugee and Security Crisis." Inter Press Service. N.p., n.d. Web. 09 Nov. 2016.

@refugees. "Refugees." UNHCR News. N.p., n.d. Web. 09 Nov. 2016.

"The World Factbook: LIBERIA." Central Intelligence Agency. Central Intelligence Agency, n.d. Web. 09 Nov. 2016. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/li.html>.