

Kennesaw State University High School Model United Nations XXXI
General Assembly Plenary
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Esteemed Delegates,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the thirty-first annual Kennesaw State University High School Model United Nations Conference. My name is *Alexys Wilson* and I am honored to serve as Director of the General Assembly Plenary Committee. This is my third year on staff for this conference. I have participated in conferences, such as the Southern Regional Model United Nations (SRMUN) Conference as well as the Oslo International Model United Nations (OSIMUN) Conference in Oslo, Norway. I am currently a junior studying Marketing at Kennesaw State University with a focus on research analytics. I have three years of experience in the collegiate Model United Nations field as well as four years of experience at the High School level.

Joining me at the dais is Assistant Director *Ryan McLendon*. Ryan is a Freshman majoring in biology-PreMedical at Kennesaw State University and aspiring to attend a graduate program in the dental field. This is Ryan's first year in Model UN and he looks forward to the experience he will gain as KSUHSMUN staff.

Serving as the Chair and Rapporteur this year, are *Lauren Grubb* and *Vincent Insinga*. This is both Lauren and Vincent's first year on staff for this conference and first year participating in Model United Nations. Currently a freshman, Lauren is studying International Affairs and Relations at Kennesaw State University while also pursuing a minor in French. Vincent is a sophomore at Kennesaw State, studying mathematics and sociology. They look forward to facilitating delegates' debate and answering questions, asking that delegates not be afraid of the dais.

The topics under Discussion for The General Assembly Plenary are:

- I.) Providing Universal Access for Sustainable and Modern Energy**
- II.) Mobilizing Inclusive Partnerships for Sustainable Development**

Each Member State's delegation within this committee is expected to submit a position paper to the conference staff no later than the due date that covers both of the agenda topics. Any position papers submitted past this date will not be considered. Information for properly formatting the position papers as well as valuable advice for writing a quality paper can be found in the Delegate Resource Guide. Delegates are reminded that papers should be no longer than two pages in length. Citations should be in footnote format. Furthermore, plagiarism in an academic setting is unacceptable and will nullify any score for the paper in question. The objective of a position paper is to present the diplomatic position of your Member State on both agenda topics as closely as possible to how an actual diplomat would present the position of his or her Member State.

On behalf of all of us, welcome to the General Assembly Plenary Committee of the 31st annual Kennesaw State University High School Model United Nations Conference!

Committee History of The General Assembly Plenary

"The only sustainable solution is one that includes us all."
Rwandan President Paul Kagame addressing The General Assembly Plenary

The United Nations General Assembly Plenary was established in 1945 under The Charter of The United Nations.¹The General Assembly (GA Plen) consists of all 193 Member States of the United Nations and meets twice a year, with one session from January to August and the second session from September to December at the United Nations headquarters in New York City.² Diplomats and world leaders alike, come together to speak and make recommendations for change on a plethora of international issues facing the world.

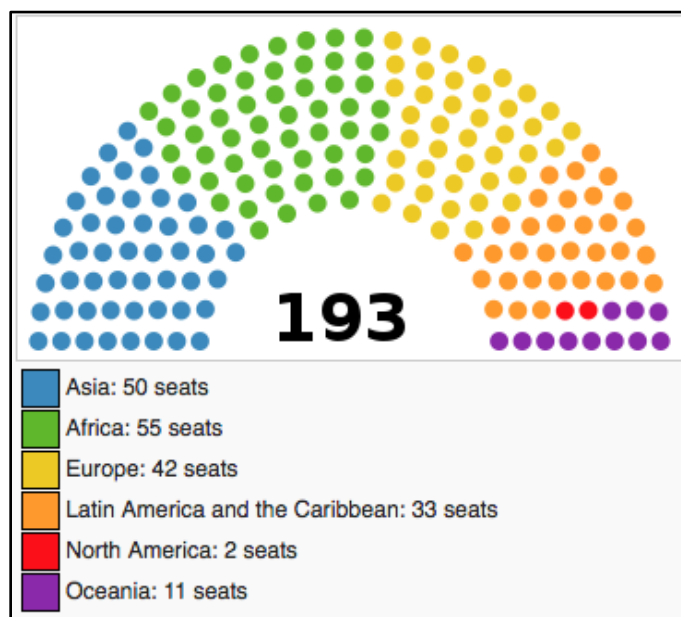
¹ "Functions and Powers of the United Nations General Assembly" <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>.

² Ibid.

The GA Plen is the biggest committee at the United Nations and is comprised of six separate committees all focusing on specific themes. The General Assembly Plenary plays a major role in allowing the views and concerns of every Member State to be expressed and heard in a grand auditorium. It is the main policy making institution of the United Nations and every Member State has one vote on resolutions except those Member States that are Observer States. One could say that the General Assembly Plenary is like a forum for every Member State to have a chance for pertinent issues to be brought to the the forefront of the world. In Chart 1 below, the breakdown of how the Member States are distributed is shown based on region.

The range of topics and concerns discussed at the General Assembly Plenary are very diverse and past topics have ranged anywhere from Human Trafficking to Nuclear Disarmament.³ The first session of the General Assembly was held in London in 1946 and only consisted of 51 Member States. Since then, the General Assembly has grown into an enormous multi-faceted body made up of subsidiary bodies and different committees. Along with Member States, the General Assembly can further invite organizations or even Non-Member States to participate in Sessions.⁴ When in session, the Member States and Observers work to pass and establish resolutions pertaining to the different topics being discussed at that time. The resolutions that are passed are non-binding which means that there is no penalization to the Member State for not abiding by said resolution.⁵ That being said, Member States from the General Assembly are able to elect Non-Permanent Members to the Security Council which does have the capability of creating binding resolutions.⁶

A priority function of the General Assembly Plenary is appointing The Secretary General of The United Nations. Since 2007, Ban Ki Moon has been the Secretary General and beginning in 2017, António Guterres of Portugal will be the new Secretary General.⁷ It is a role that comes with great responsibility as the Secretary General has the power to influence debate. An additional function of the General Assembly is to vote on the budget and decide how it will be allocated within the whole UN body.⁸ The Resolutions passed within the General Assembly Plenary encourage lasting solutions to the various international disputes and the vast amount of problems facing our world today.



I. Promoting Universal Access for Sustainable and Modern Energy

“The time is past when humankind thought it could selfishly draw on exhaustible resources. We know now that the world is not a commodity”

French President François Hollande⁹

Introduction

³ “General Assembly Plenary 64th Session” <http://www.un.org/en/ga/64/resolutions.shtml>.

⁴ “Observers” <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/observers.shtml>.

⁵ “UN Charter, Chapter Five” <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-iv/index.html>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ “Former Secretaries General” <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/former-secretaries-general>.

⁸ UN Charter, Chapter Five” <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-iv/index.html>.

⁹ “Renewable Energy: The Basics of Solar Energy” <http://www.cpwtoday.com/solar-energy.html>.

Access to sustainable energy is a topic of great importance and is the seventh United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG-7).¹⁰ SDG-7 “ensure[s] access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.”¹¹ This goal is essential in order to achieve success among the other Sustainable Development Goals. The World Bank has been instrumental in working with developing Member States to provide energy to those that are in need of clean, modern energy by supporting numerous Member States in their transition to more sustainable and modern technology through financial means.¹² This is an imperative topic that has been discussed in depth and with some success but that is far from being completely solved.

History

The topic of modern energy was first highlighted by the United Nations in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development while discussing Agenda 21, which emphasized harmful energy practices and how they will negatively impact the future, “especially if demand continues to increase, and stressed the importance of using energy resources in a way that is consistent with the aims of protecting human health, the atmosphere, and the natural environment.”¹³ As a result of this conference, the Commission on Sustainable Development was created to monitor the progress of member states as they move to more advanced technology.¹⁴ Though the topic of energy was deemed important, it did not become a Millennium Development Goal but rather was pressed to have a larger emphasis placed on the implementation of cleaner energy during the Ninth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-9).¹⁵ In doing so, this held Member States to a higher standard when it came to clean and renewable energy.

The topic of sustainable energy, however, was not discussed within this UN body until 2002 during the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). The JPOI focused on many aspects but all centered around one key idea: in order for clean, sustainable energy to be available to all Member States, education and investments had to be made to those in need of changes to their energy sources.¹⁶ In addition, the World Summit on Sustainable Development was held in 2002, resulting in the 2004 creation of UN-Energy. UN-Energy is a program that focuses on compiling information on all energy activities by UN agencies.¹⁷

In 2011, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon created the Sustainable Energy for All initiative. Encompassed in this initiative are three goals that are to be met by 2030. Among them are universal access to modern energy as well as doubling both the global improvement of efficient energy and renewable energy rate.¹⁸ The following year, Ban Ki-moon declared 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All. This declaration led to numerous activities, commitments, and conferences which in turn led to promises for a more successful future in sustainable energy. Among these conferences was the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development where Member States pledged to focus on modernizing energy as well as making it cleaner and more sustainable.¹⁹

Two years after the declaration of the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, the United Nations General Assembly announced that 2014 to 2024 would be known as the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All. During this time, the United Nations calls upon Member States to make a dedicated effort to not only better their own energy sustainability but to also aid developing Member States in their quest for modern and sustainable

¹⁰ “The World Bank: Energy -- Overview” <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/energy/overview>.

¹¹ “Affordable and Clean Energy: Why It Matters” http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/7-Why-it-Matters-Goal-7-CleanEnergy_2p.pdf.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ “History of Energy In the Sustainable Development Agenda” http://www.se4all.org/sdg7_history.

¹⁴ “Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform: Agenda 21” <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=400&nr=23&menu=35>.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

energy.²⁰ In the same year, the General Assembly also proposed the Sustainable Development Goals, with energy being Goal 7 on their list.²¹

Current Situation

During 2010, the topic of reducing the emissions and use of fossil fuels such as coal and refined petroleum/crude oil was subjected to change. The report on the Committee on Sustainable Energy resolution (ECE/ENERGY/80/Add.1), created on the General Assembly's eighteenth session, discussed the possible solutions to "Sustainable energy". With this hearing many oil and nonrenewable energy dependent Member States attended to discuss the gradual progression into cleaner burning or sustainable resources. The committee designated favorability of social and economic conditions taking regulatory conditions, environmental resources, and economic impact into consideration. In relation to today's global energy sector this policy and agreement by numerous Member States such as the United States, France, and the German Federation, defined barriers to non-renewable resources as "cost-effectiveness, technical barriers, and market barriers such as inconsistent pricing structures, institutional, political and regulatory barriers, and social and environmental barriers".²² Furthermore, the push for clean and sustainable energy by multiple members of the body has expanded the access and predominance of the topic. As the global energy sector progresses towards cleaner sources of energy, the gradual implementation of clean energy is crucial to promote economic prosperity in the global market. In addition to the subject of international trade, a sudden shock to trade and energy would destroy entire portions of Member States' Net Domestic Product (NDP).

As of 2015, the Member States of the General Assembly still work feverishly towards making sure everyone has clean, renewable energy that is sustainable and modern. Their focus is to meet the requirements of providing modern and clean energy to all Member States, as listed in the Sustainable Energy for All initiative, expiring in 2030. The topic of sustainable and modern energy stands at the center of global discussions. The United Nations General Assembly has begun to call upon intergovernmental organizations to aid in monitoring progress with regards to advancing the goals outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals.

Conclusion

The topic of sustainable and modern energy is a topic of high importance. Modern and sustainable energy is believed by many to be a basic human right. Energy can impact numerous aspects of everyday life, such as education, safety, service, and job creation, while also being able to "end extreme poverty and promote prosperity."²³ It is estimated that around 1.1 billion people, specifically in Asia and Africa, are without access to modern and sustainable energy, if they even have energy at all.²⁴ We call upon you, delegates, to create a solution that can decrease the number of those throughout the world without sustainable and modern energy.

Committee Directives

While completing research for this portion, we urge delegates to observe other modern solutions. We do not want to see any repetition of previous UN resolutions because many of the solutions addressed in these documents are either outdated or not applicable to every Member State present. We suggest delegates look at solutions developed within their own Member State and try to adapt this to an international level. We encourage delegates representing developed Member States to look into solutions that would benefit their already expanding energy programs while benefitting developing Member States' advancement towards sustainable and modern energy. In addition, we urge delegates representing developing Member States to focus on bettering their own energy programs. We recommend looking at regional non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that can be used along with those that can be adapted in

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² "Barriers to renewable energy penetration; a framework for analysis"

<http://www1.upme.gov.co/SGIC/sites/default/files/Barriers%20to%20renewable%20energy%20penetration.pdf>

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

an international sense. For example, we urge the delegates to look at the work done by the Sierra Club and shape it into a more international organization.

II. Mobilizing Inclusive Partnerships for Sustainable Development

“A selfish and boundless thirst for power and material prosperity leads both to the misuse of available natural resources and to the exclusion of the weak and the disadvantaged.”

Pope Francis addressing The General Assembly Plenary²⁵

Introduction

Sustainability is vital for the future of the human population and the environment. Partnerships that promote Sustainable development are voluntary initiatives carried out by governments and stakeholders.²⁶ A combination of organizations, Civil Society leaders, companies, NGOs, and governmental institutions should cooperate in order to shape development in a sustainable way together. The path to a better and cleaner future must involve many different sectors in order for real change to occur. The 17th United Nations Sustainable Development Goal includes revitalizing global partnerships. When these partnerships are formed at the local, regional and international level, sustainable development objectives can be better mobilized.²⁷ In the developing world, building infrastructure, strengthening the economy and ensuring the basic needs of every citizen is a struggle. Doing so in a sustainable way is even more so of a challenge. Therefore, when deriving solutions to better develop in an environmentally conscious way, investment is crucial for long term success.

History

In 2002, The World Summit on Sustainable Development was held in Johannesburg.²⁸ At this Summit, Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development were at the forefront and more than 200 partnerships were launched.²⁹ One of the key outcomes of this was that the body decided that “six partnership plenary meetings would be held, on the themes of water and sanitation, energy, health, agriculture, biodiversity, and cross-sectoral issues.”³⁰ These meetings addressed the intersectionality of the challenges facing sustainable development and the different sectors that are vital to addressing them. For example, at the meeting for agriculture, statements were made by representatives from groups such as: farmers, businesses, youth, indigenous communities, women, NGOs, and technological and scientific communities.

In 2015, numerous heads of state and governments came together to create the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which focuses on many points discussed in the Sustainable Development Goals.³¹ This was the first conference of its kind to happen outside of the UN and as such is very important. 169 representatives came together to create a plan to better the globe through these SDGs. The plan they came up with encompasses “social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable sovereignty of the member states.” This was imperative and groundbreaking work that the sponsors intended to be completed by 2030.³²

Current Situation

²⁵ “Before The World's Most Powerful, Pope Delivers Environmental Message”

<http://www.npr.org/2015/09/25/443489164/before-the-worlds-most-powerful-pope-delivers-environmental-message>.

²⁶ “Partnerships for Sustainable Development” http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships/publications/brochure_E.pdf.

²⁷ “Global Partnerships” <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/globalpartnerships/>.

²⁸ “Partnerships for Sustainable Development” http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships/publications/brochure_E.pdf.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ “UN Report on Summit of Sustainable Development” http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/131302_wssd_report_reissued.pdf.

³¹ “UN Sustainable Development Goals” <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>.

³² “UN Summit on Sustainable Development Goals” <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/summit/>.

As well as investing in different sectors for reaching sustainable development goals, the sharing of knowledge, technology, and expertise is key to reaching a better future that is healthier for the planet. The Sustainable Development Goals address ways to incentivize Member States to come up with creative solutions to such a complex issue. Specifically, the 17th UN Sustainable Development Goal focuses on partnerships that aid all Member States but also recognizes that developing Member States will need much more resources if they are to keep up with the rest of the world. The effects of successful and conscious partnerships would not only have an impact environmentally but also on a macroeconomic scale that could benefit the global economy.³³

Another pertinent goal regarding the global economy is for developing Member States to significantly increase their exports by 2020, hopefully doubling them. All of the Member States who signed resolution A/RES/70/224—which calls upon the UN to cooperate with all relevant partners—are implementing plans of action to create stronger relationships between the private and public sectors. A phrase from the resolution that exemplifies this is from operative clause three which “stresses the importance of the contribution of voluntary partnerships to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, while reiterating that they are a complement to, but not intended to substitute for, the commitment made by Governments with a view to achieving those Goals”.³⁴ This is vital in order to address the many areas that comprise developing in a more sustainable way for a better future.

Conclusion

The alarming rate at which the human population is growing, coupled with climate change, rapid development and infrastructure growth in much of the world, is already causing serious problems within the global system. That is why the development of creative and practical solutions are vital to ensure that the human population does not use up or significantly diminish its already scarce resources. Having Inclusive Partnerships that traverse public, private, civil society, governmental and non-governmental institutions will help bring about change in many areas as development is not limited to one area alone. Development is also not limited to specific Member States and the inclusion of aid for developing Member States is key to ensuring that everyone is able to reap the benefits of global partnerships. The world is becoming more and more globalized and therefore the sharing of information and expertise will advance the methods of developing sustainably as well. When coming up with draft resolutions to mobilize Inclusive Partnerships, we call on delegates to think creatively, inclusively and with all of humankind and the future of the planet in mind.

Committee Directives

Our request as the dias is for you to think outside the box while in committee whilst maintaining your Member State’s position. We would like you to come up with innovative and creative solutions that really stress how partnerships can aid in development sustainably. We do not want you to simply create solutions that echo previous resolutions already passed within any UN body. Any working paper presented to the dias with this as their premise will be denied and the Member States involved with the paper will be referenced back to this background guide. This means that you as delegates will have to look deeply into your Member State’s aims for the future. Using sources such as the UN database are very beneficial and are viewed favorably by the dias. While creating new committees is always tempting when creating resolutions, be sure to look at the existing committees within the UN that have the capacity to carry out solutions.

Research Appendix

The resources listed below should be used to aid in researching for your position papers and discussion in committee. The resources address the committee history, topic one and topic two, as well other useful sources.

Committee History

UN Document Database: <https://documents.un.org/prod/ods.nsf/home.xsp>

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ “General Assembly Resolution 70/224 “ Towards global Partnerships” http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/224.

UN Foundation: The General Assembly: <http://www.unfoundation.org/what-we-do/issues/united-nations/the-general-assembly.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>

UN General Assembly Plenary Charter: <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/index.htm>

UN General Assembly Plenary Website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>

Topic I: Promoting Universal Access for Sustainable and Modern Energy Citations

Sustainable Energy for All Initiative: <http://www.se4all.org/>

Special Event of the 66th Session of the General Assembly:
http://www.un.org/en/ga/second/66/docs/FoodandEnergySecurity_2Nov2011_rev_of_1Nov.pdf

Sustainable Development Goal 7 Information: http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/7_Why-it-Matters_Goal-7_CleanEnergy_2p.pdf

United Nations Development Program:
<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/climate-and-disaster-resilience/sustainable-energy.html>

World Energy Outlook 2010 for the UN General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals:
http://www.worldenergyoutlook.org/media/weowebiste/2010/weo2010_poverty.pdf

Access to Modern Energy:
http://www.iiasa.ac.at/web/home/research/researchPrograms/Energy/IIASA-GEF-UNIDO_Access-to-Modern-Energy_2013-05-27.pdf

Topic II: Mobilizing Inclusive Partnerships for Sustainable Development Citations

Global Partnerships, Sustainable Development Goals:
<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/globalpartnerships/>

UN Partnerships for Sustainable Development:
http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships/publications/brochure_E.pdf

World Summit on Sustainable Development, 2002 Summary:
<http://www.un.org/events/wssd/summaries/envdevj1.htm>

UN Report on Summit of Sustainable Development, Johannesburg:
http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/131302_wssd_report_reissued.pdf

UN General Assembly Resolution 70/224: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/224