



MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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DIRECTORS WELCOME LETTER:



Dear Delegates and Faculty Advisors,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the American University of Sharjah Model United Nations (AUSMUN) 2020. This conference has been the home of fruitful debate, practical resolutions, dedicated moderators, spectacular delegates, and diligent advisory and executive boards for the past twelve years and is continuing to do so for its thirteenth year. With 1000 delegates registered from more than 45 national and international educational institutions, this conference will be the biggest one yet!

This year's theme 'Embracing Diversity, Shaping the Future' has been designed to capture the essence of issues that surround our globalized society. Even though we have come this far in time, there has been little to no improvement in accepting diversity as portrayed by the latest atrocities in several countries around the world. However, the future can be successfully shaped for us, the youth, only by embracing diversity in every sector of life and we hope to draw attention to this.

This background guide has been formulated by our hard-working chairs and the research team to provide delegates with the starting point of their preparation for this three-day conference. The guide is initially divided into two sections based on the two topics and is further split into logical components. Firstly, the Summary and History section acts as an introduction to the issue by highlighting important events, terms, history, and global implications. Secondly, the Discourse on the Issue section establishes a link between the issue, its implications, significance, and the United Nations Charter. Lastly, the Past International Organization (IO) Actions and Latest Developments section elaborates on the previous action that has been taken and latest development in terms of the last actions taken with regards to the issue. At the end of each issue, delegates will find sections of Questions the Discussions and Resolutions Should Address and Suggestions for Further Research that aim to streamline the process of delegate's research. However, in order to grab a better understanding of the topic and be able to position yourself better to participate during the conference, it is advised to go beyond the background guide since this guide does not encapsulate enough information to be sufficient for every country and is only a brief introduction to the issues at hand. It is highly encouraged for delegates to view the 'Delegate Handbook' on the AUSMUN website and the 'How to Research' video on YouTube created by AUSMUN.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to all the contributors to this background guide. It is the collaborative work of the Moderators, AUSMUN Research Team, and the AUSMUN Media Team. On behalf of them all, I truly hope that this guide will be of great help to you.

All the very best for the conference and if you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at research@ausmun.com.

Sincerely,
Manaswi Madichetty
Director of Research
AUSMUN 2020

MODERATORS WELCOME LETTER:



Shamma Abdalla

Shohrat Sailab

Muhammad Habib

Fatima Almheiri

Dear Distinguished Delegates,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you all to the 2020 American University of Sharjah Model United Nations Conference (AUSMUN2020). As chairs of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), we look forward to hearing the new ideas you would bring to the table on solutions for solving international issues regarding our committee, as well as hearing your intense debates and resolutions.

The UN charter states four main objectives for the existence, which are to maintain international peace and security, develop relations among nations, foster cooperation between nations in order to solve international problems, and to provide a forum for bringing countries together to meet UN's purposes and goals. Therefore, proper communication and acting in a diplomatic manner is important to maintain the flow of the committee.

UNPFII consists of sixteen members; eight of the sixteen members are to be nominated by the government and elected by the council, whereas the other eight are to be appointed by the president of the council after formal consultation with the Bureau, who is someone that proposes the agenda and organizes the session. The goal of this committee is to solve worldwide issues regarding indigenous issues, mostly in third world countries.

Throughout the course of 13 years, AUSMUN has been inspiring the youth into solving international conflicts and strives to improve the experience for new coming or previous delegates that are looking forward to joining us. We hope you all have a memorable and fruitful experience with AUSMUN 2020.

For any inquiries or concerns about the conference, please do not hesitate to contact us through the following email: UNPFII2020@gmail.com

Sincerely,
The UNPFII Chairs



UNFPII

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Topic I

Protection of Indigenous Reserves/Homes

1. Summary & History

One of the most necessary components for human dignity is having a secure place to reside in. This enables the preservation and enhancement of physical and mental health thus assisting in development. Indigenous people oversee immensely biologically diverse territories in the world. Indigenous people protect eighty percent of the world's remaining biodiversity while they only inhabit 1/4 of the world's surface. Further, housing insecurity has been recognized as one of the most tenacious issues impacting Indigenous women. The right to adequate housing has been recognized in article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and more. Indigenous peoples are losing their land to reasons such as conflict, natural disasters, infrastructure plans, and private investment projects. This loss carries grave consequences, such as the loss of livelihood and culture. These lands are not only crucial for indigenous people, but are also protected under international human rights law ("United Nations Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues", n.d.). The United Nations during the course of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People facilitated important steps towards tackling the disadvantages of indigenous peoples, including their living conditions. The collaboration between UNHABITAT and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is a part of the effort of collaborations that incorporate indigenous welfares and rights into United Nations programs. United Nations Housing Rights Programme Report No. 7 outlines indigenous peoples' right to adequate housing. This report is aimed at identifying indigenous peoples right to adequate housing and to distinguish possible strategies that could aid in the realization of this right ("Right to Adequate Housing," 2005).

Following these efforts by the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, in the year of 2007, Resolution 61/295 or the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, passed in the General Assembly. This resolution aims to secure Indigenous Peoples' rights. Especially relevant to the topic of protecting indigenous lands is Article 10 in the declaration. The article reads: "Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories. No relocation shall take place without the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned and after agreement on just and fair compensation and, where possible, with the option of return." Further, the State of the World's Indigenous Peoples was published by the United Nations in 2009 has been a collaborative effort in which a number of experts and organizations have participated in highlighting some major issues indigenous peoples face and act as a tool for the solidification of states cooperation and partnerships with indigenous peoples ("United Nations Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues", n.d.).

2. Discourse on the Issue

All around the world, there are conflicts between governments and indigenous people regarding land. The conflict is between the fact that most indigenous people live on traditional terrain, and the state tends to use the land for other purposes. Ingenious people are often looked like a block in the way of a better use for the land. The government wants to use the land for many reasons,

such as natural reserves, commercial use and more. Governments may portray indigenous people as “backwards” and “uncultured” and “uneducated”. In addition to that, many states and governments look at indigenous people as an embarrassment to the current lifestyle because of their way of living. This results in a bias against indigenous people. Which results in, the people siding with the government when it comes to using the land that ingenious people live in. Even though indigenous people are looked upon as a block to modern development, their traditional knowledge and culture should also be seen as an asset. It is widely believed that humans should preserve a wide range of cultural diversity and protection of indigenous people’s houses and land promotes that. Recently, there has been a rise in the rights of indigenous people and their ancestral lands. According to the state, it is the governments land because no one owns it but according to the natives, it’s their land because they occupied it generations ago.

3. Past International Organization (IO) Actions & Latest Developments

The first time the issue of states versus indigenous people was introduced was back in 1925. In a League of Nations meeting, a leader from a New Zealand tribe travelled to Geneva to speak about his rights and his people’s rights to live under their own law and land. He did arrive in Geneva, but he was not allowed to speak. Later in 1982, the UN introduced the Working Group on Indigenous Populations (WGIP). This UN sub-body allowed the indigenous to speak about their problems to the UN. After that, in 1993, through resolution A/RES/47/75 the UN claimed 1993 as “The International Year of the World’s Indigenous People”. This served as an opportunity for the UN to raise awareness about the indigenous and promote a better relationship between states and natives. A few years later, in 1994, the UN adopted resolution A/RES/48/163 which allowed the UN to further promote the protection of the rights of indigenous people. In 2000, the UN introduced the “Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issue” (UNPFII) to solve and discuss all problems related to Indigenous people. Since then, the committee has met on eighteen different occasions with the latest meeting being in 2019. On September 13, 2007, the General Assembly adopted the “Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People”. This declaration is the most detailed statement of the rights of the indigenous people ever developed. Finally, the UNPFII discussed the theme “Indigenous peoples’ collective rights to lands, territories and resources” in April 2018. The meeting lasted a week but no resolution was adopted, because they occupied it generations ago. However, the land they use is not “legally” theirs, but on the other hand, their families have been living there for generations.

4. Questions the Discussions and Resolutions Should Address

- How can international governments secure funds to help preserve indigenous colonies and communities?
- Will there be a rise in taxes? If so, how will this impact tax-paying citizens?
- What security measures and special rights could be implemented to ensure the protection of indigenous communities?
- To what extent should the government have access to indigenous communities’ lands? When should a line be drawn?
- How can you advance legal, administrative and programmatic reforms at the domestic level, and in the area of international cooperation, to implement the standards of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

5. Suggestions for Further Research

- Inclusion of indigenous people in natural resource extraction projects
- International organizations and indigenous people
- Land rights and claims for indigenous people.

Topic II

Ensuring Equal Opportunities for Indigenous Children in Global Society

1. Summary & History

Indigenous children are children who are native to an area, and are most likely considered a minority. These indigenous children and youth do not have access to the same privileges and opportunities that other, non-indigenous children, do around the world. In fact, they face many hardships and unfortunate situations. Overall, indigenous people make up 15% of the world's poor; this accounts to 370 million people of the world's population. They are scattered across 90 countries and divided into 5000 different groups (Pais, 2003). Indigenous people and children are mostly inhabitants in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The issues they face as indigenous people include injustice in economic and social development and having absolutely no human rights, which leads to the increase in violence, discrimination, suicide, and incarnation. This also leads to a loss of culture due to having no lands and territory rights, along with displacing indigenous people because of dam and mining activities. Also, having no access to education due to extreme poverty and a lack of resources results in living in extremely poor conditions caused poor levels of health such as high rates of HIV, diabetes, and mental health ("UNPFII", n.d). In addition, indigenous children face high mortality rates, low birth-weight, behavioral and emotional disorders (Wise, 2013). In addition to sexual harassment, assault, exploitation, and trafficking of indigenous young girls (Pais, 2003). The indigenous people or communities are those that have a chronicled coherence with pre-colonial social orders which developed on their lands with total disregard to the indigenous community. Around 70 % reside in Asia; several Asian governments argue that the term "indigenous" does not apply to their respective nation, due to the majority of the population living on their land unlike the people in western countries. The second largest population of indigenous groups are located in Latin America with an estimate of 40 to 50 million people. With a plethora of autochthonous nation, the crimes against them have been insufferable and inhumane. With cultures threatened with extinction, languages disappearing and physical violence against the specified group, the UN has established various articles such as article 14 that states " Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures". Even though there are laws created to serve the indigenous people, the youth has been vastly affected and targeted of discrimination in various countries.

2. Discourse on the Issue

On a global standard, systematic discrimination and injustice towards the indigenous children has been distinguished as a massive issue that must be tackled as soon as possible. Some of these injustices include the continuation of historic injustice and illiteracy due to the high rate of poverty, lack of medical treatment and lack of culturally appropriate education in their native tongue. In order to eradicate such nugatory predicaments, the UN Declaration of the indigenous People (UNDRIP) preserves the rights of the indigenous children and youth by forming article 21 and 22, which stress on the importance of particular attention to indigenous children and improving the economic and social conditions of their living. Furthermore, The declaration urges the governments to provide the right to live in freedom and peace, right to education without discrimination (Article 14.2) and the right to be protected from violence and any or all

sort of discrimination (Article 22.2). Article 15 plights about the equality of the indigenous children and protecting their right to control or establish their own way of living and communicating with different communities outside their own. With such profound understanding of diversity and acceptance, the indigenous youth has so much to contribute to the world and must be preserved at all costs.

3. Past IO Actions and The Latest Developments

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (IO) ACTIONS AND LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

As of 1946, when UNICEF was formed, the United Nations has recognized alerting issues that children face around the world. Countless of international organizations have been working on providing indigenous children with better opportunities. UNICEF, along with UNFPA, WHO, and PAHO, are trying to improve health conditions for women during childbirth, along with improving the quality of maternal and child care and assistance in implementing the “National Strategy to Prevent Adolescent Pregnancy”. This helped develop a protocol with local forces to stop violence against indigenous children. Moreover, when more indigenous representatives started to participate in WGPI’s movements, the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations was created. However, despite all the efforts done by the UN into improving living conditions and providing better opportunities for indigenous children, the issue is very much still existent and growing larger (UNICEF, 2017).

In July 2000, when the UN created the UNPFII as an advisory subsidiary of ECOSOC, indigenous children were a massive issue that needed to be focused on and resolved. Since its first session in 2002, UNPFII held 18 sessions, the latest one being held in 2019. UNPFII is responsible to integrate indigenous issues across the UN system with the mandate that deals with issues related to indigenous people such as economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights. Under the mandates, UNPFII must align their policies and implement them UNDRIP, provide expert advice, and raise awareness throughout the UN system. In addition to the mandates, indigenous children are a cross cutting issue. It is currently tackling issues like the lack of culturally appropriate education, Illiteracy and drop-out rates, discrimination, forced relocation and loss of land, environmental pollution, unemployment, incarceration and lack of legal protection, armed conflict, massive migration towards the cities, traffic and sexual exploitation, lack of healthcare services, malnutrition, HIV/AIDS, suicide and self-harm (UNPFII, n.d).

4. Questions The Discussions and The Resolutions Should Address

- How can the UNPFII provide indigenous children with equal opportunities and better living conditions like non-indigenous children?
- How should economically stable countries aid with issues related to indigenous children?
- What new mission should the UNPFII create to improve the lives of indigenous children on a global scale?
- How can nations preserve the indigenous youth’s rights?

5. Suggestions For Further Research

- GESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH
- United Nations recent actions towards helping indigenous children.
- The situation of the world’s indigenous children and youth
- Countries aiding indigenous people
- Recommendations on indigenous youth contribution to society

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