

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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Hello esteemed delegates, my name is Junhyung Kim, and I will be the head chair of UNESCO also known as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The other chairs and I are massively looking forward to welcoming you to UNESCO to engage in a constructive and fruitful debate. MUN provides a valuable opportunity to enhance your public speaking skills and provide an idea of what a real UN conference would be like where you might want to enter such a career path in the future.

If you have any queries or questions about MUN or the upcoming debate I would be delighted to answer any of them, so please do not hesitate to ask; just send an email to me at:
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**What do you need to prepare?**

Policy statements

As part of being a delegate, it is required to produce a policy statement. A policy statement is a short speech given by every delegate at the beginning of the conference.

The aim of the policy statement is to succinctly show the delegate’s position on each issue being debated.

Resolutions

It is advised for all delegates to produce a resolution on one of three topics in preparation for the conference. To produce a resolution, most of tips can be found in habsmun.com, and in the resources section or by simply clicking on the link here: <https://habsmun.com/documents/howto-resolution.pdf>. However here is some general advice in writing a resolution:

Too Long – It is advised not to make resolutions too long as they will be more difficult for delegates to read thoroughly and debate about. The recommended number of clauses would be seven to eight clauses.

Vague/Ambiguous – Clauses should refrain from being too ambiguous and vague as they will lack clarity and obscure the intended purpose of the resolution and would create an ineffective resolution.

I wish you the best of luck for writing your policy statements and resolutions and look forward to seeing them being debated.

(Please no ai. It will be obvious)

**The Question of the Preservation of Significant Cultural Sites**

Background information

UNESCO defines cultural sites as monuments, a group of buildings and sites, museums that have a diverse value of symbolic, historic, artistic, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological, scientific and social significance. As such one of UNESCO’s goals is “to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.” To accomplish this goal, UNESCO has a list of sites around the world that are UNESCO World Heritage Sites. These sites are selected by ten different criteriaand are of great importance as promote education and awareness, economic and social benefits. World Heritage sites encourages international cooperation in the protection and preservation of these cultural and natural treasures which helps foster a sense of global responsibility for the stewardship of these sites.

Unfortunately, these cultural sites have been the subject to damage whether that could be naturally or by humans and thus, brings attention to address the issues which countries face in the preservation of these cultural sites. These issues are linked with the 5 strategic objectives.

In 2002, at the 26th session of the World Heritage Committee that was held in Budapest, four “C’s” were adopted, credibility, conservation, capacity-building and subsequently in 2007, upon the proposal of New Zealand, the fifth C: community was added by the World Heritage Committee at its 31st session.

These five strategic objectives, credibility, conservation, capacity-building, communication, community were aimed to help improve the implementation of the World Heritage Convention by creating a more sustainable, comprehensive and inclusive implementation of the World Heritage convention.

Key Issues

Environmental threats: Natural disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation pose significant risks to the preservation of cultural heritage sites. Rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and erosion can all have detrimental effects on geographical sites.

Urban development and encroachment: Cultural sites can be threatened by rapid urbanisation and infrastructure development where the rapid expansion of cities and construction of roads or other urban development can lead to the destruction or alteration of historic areas.

Lack of funding and resources: Many cultural sites lack financial resources and technical expertise required for the cultural site to be preserved. Maintenance and conservation efforts also require significant amount of funding and manpower to ensure the cultural site is well managed and preserved. This means that developing countries will struggle to secure such resources and ensure that their cultural site is preserved.

War and conflict: Armed conflicts and war can result in deliberate destruction, looting, and damage to cultural sites. Historical monuments and artifacts are often collateral damage in times of conflict, leading to irreversible loss of cultural heritage.

Tourism and visitor pressures: Although tourism can bring economic benefits, it can also pose significant challenges for the preservation of cultural sites. Large numbers of visitors can cause wear and tear on structures, and improper management of tourism can lead to overcrowding and damage to cultural sites.

Lack of community engagement: Developing countries and local communities may not be sufficiently engaged in the preservation efforts, leading to a lack of understanding, support, and stewardship for the cultural sites.

Points to consider

Besides UNESCO Heritage Sites, what constitutes as cultural property?

Are there any measures that can be taken to improve the selection process of World Heritage Sites?

Does your country contain cultural sites?

How can existing conventions be improved to ensure the protection of cultural Sites?

How does your country view cultural sites?

Why is the protection and preservation of cultural sites important?

How do you plan to improve the cooperation of countries to preserve cultural sites?

What is the historical and cultural significance of the site, and how has it contributed to shaping human history?

What is the current condition of the site, and what conservation and restoration plans are in place to preserve its authenticity and integrity?

How are sustainable management plans being developed to ensure the long-term preservation of the site, including visitor management and environmental sustainability?

How are local communities being engaged in the preservation efforts, and what measures are being taken to ensure cultural sensitivity and sustainable stewardship?

What educational and awareness programs are being implemented to raise public understanding of the significance of the site and the need for its preservation?

How is international collaboration being leveraged to support the preservation of the site, and what partnerships are in place with other countries and organizations?

What sustainable tourism practices are being implemented to minimize the impact of tourism on the site while maximizing its economic and educational benefits?

What measures are being taken to identify and address potential risks to the site, such as natural disasters, climate change, or conflict, to mitigate their impact?

Useful Websites/Further Reading

1 <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>

2 <https://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/>

3<https://whc.unesco.org/en/convention/>

4<https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/>

5<https://whc.unesco.org/en/nominations/>

**The Question of Transgender Rights in Sports**

Background Information

The right to participate in sports in underpinned by several core human rights which are the Universal Declaration on Human rights which says everyone has the right to freedom of association, health, rest and leisure, and to participate in cultural life, UNESCO’s International Charter of Physical Education and Sport identifies sports as a fundamental right. This is further supported by the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Woman that calls for equality between men and women that includes gender identity as among the forms of potential discrimination.

Despite these core human rights, there are multifaceted issues surrounding transgender rights in sports.

Key Issues

Inclusivity and Equality - All individuals, regardless of gender identity, should have the right to participate in sports without discrimination. Transgender athletes deserve the same opportunities and rights as their cisgender counterparts. Despite this, there is an issue of fairness in competition as allowing transgender women to compete in women's sports may create an unfair advantage due to differences in physical attributes developed during male puberty, such as muscle mass and bone density and that biological differences such as testosterone levels can influence athletic performance. Further, there are concerns about potential injuries that could occur when athletes with differing physical attributes compete against each other, particularly in contact sports.

Human Rights: Denying transgender individuals, the right to compete in sports aligned with their gender identity is a violation of their human rights. It perpetuates discrimination and exclusion based on gender identity. However, in some countries there have been laws introduced and passed aimed to ban transgenders youths from participating in school sports. As of June 2023, the Equality Federation identified 72 bills introduced to ban transgender students from athletic consistent with their gender identity.

Privacy: There are some concerns regarding the privacy and medical disclosure requirements for transgender athletes and some policies may require transgender athletes to disclose some sensitive and private medical information in order to participate in sports.

Stigmatism: There is a large stigma that is against transgender athletes from participating in sports where transgender athletes can face discrimination and hostility from both within sports organisations and from the public.

Need for Clear Regulations: There is a need for clear and consistent regulations regarding transgender athlete’s participation in sports to address concerns about competitive fairness and safety.

Points to Consider

What is your country’s regulation on transgender rights in sports?

What measures should be proposed to promote inclusivity and non-discrimination for transgender athletes in sports competitions?

How can the resolution ensure that transgender athletes have equal opportunities to compete in sports without facing discrimination based on their gender identity?

What steps can be taken to safeguard the privacy, dignity, and rights of transgender athletes in sports, including in locker rooms and changing facilities?

How can the resolution encourage the development of policies and guidelines that support the inclusion of transgender athletes at all levels of sports competition?

What role can the MUN resolution play in advocating for the protection of transgender athletes from harassment, bullying, and stigmatization within sports environments?

What mechanisms can be introduced so that sports organizations ensure fair competition while respecting the rights of transgender athletes, especially in relation to potential differences in physical attributes?

What challenges do sports organizations and governing bodies face in creating clear and inclusive policies for transgender participation in sports?

How do discrimination, stigmatization, and hostility affect the ability of transgender athletes to fully and comfortably participate in their chosen sport?

What are the concerns regarding privacy and medical disclosure requirements for transgender athletes, especially in relation to sensitive and private medical information?

What legal and legislative challenges have arisen in the context of transgender rights in sports, and how are these impacting the sports community?

In what ways does discrimination and exclusion from sports impact the mental health and well-being of transgender athletes, and what can be done to address these concerns?

Useful Websites/Further Reading:

1<https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/international-charter-physical-education-physical-activity-and-sport>

2<https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

3<https://www.equalityfederation.org>

4<https://www.unesco.org/en/gender-equality-women-empowerment-sports-and-science>

5https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/3343\_unwomen\_unesco\_vawg\_handbook\_6a\_singlepage.pdf

**The Question of the Protection of Freedom of Expression**

Background Information

Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right that allows individuals to express their thoughts, ideas and opinions without the fear of censorship or punishment. This fundamental right is protected by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Freedom of expression encompasses various forms such as speeches, writing, art, music and any other forms of creative expression.

However, freedom of expression is not an absolute right where it is limited to certain circumstances where it incites violence, promotes hate speech or violates the rights of others. Thus, it is important to maintain a balance between protecting freedom of expression and addressing its potential harms through the misuse of this right but whilst ensuring the human rights are respected and not infringed upon.

Key Issues

Censorship: Governments or other authorities may impose censorship on speech, media, or artistic expression, limiting the free flow of ideas and information. This also means that media organisations face challenges related to these government restrictions and censorship where it could threaten their safety. However, censorship is also important due to national security concerns, especially in the context of sensitive information and state secrets.

Online Expression: With the rise of the internet and social media, questions about the regulation of online expression, including issues such as fake news, cyberbullying, and the responsibilities of online platforms, are increasingly important. And in 2019 from its conception the Media Freedom Coalition has partnered with UNESCO in order to tackle media freedom.

Blasphemy and Religious Offense: The balance between safeguarding the right to freedom of expression which may express dissenting or controversial opinions whilst need to respect religious beliefs and prevent the incitement of religious hatred is a major issue.

Privacy vs. Freedom of Information: The tension between the right to privacy and the public's right to access information can lead to conflicts, particularly in cases involving whistleblowers and leaked documents.

Corporate Influence: Media corporations may influence of media content or potentially suppression of dissenting voices in the pursuit of profit.

Points to consider

What are your country’s regulations on freedom of expression?

What is considered free speech and how can your country effectively balance the right to freedom of expression with the need to prevent hate speech and incitement to violence?

What measures should be implemented to protect the rights of journalists, writers, and artists to express themselves without fear of censorship or persecution?

How can the spread of misinformation, fake news, and disinformation be addressed without infringing upon the principles of free speech?

What are the considerations when navigating the intersection of freedom of expression and national security concerns, especially in the context of sensitive information and state secrets?

How can digital platforms and social media uphold freedom of expression while also combating online harassment, cyberbullying, and harmful content?

What strategies can be employed to respect cultural and religious sensitivities while safeguarding the right to express dissenting or controversial opinions?

What are the implications of balancing freedom of expression with privacy rights, particularly in the context of surveillance, data collection, and online anonymity?

Useful Websites

1<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf>

2<https://mediafreedomcoalition.org/who-is-involved/unesco/>

3<https://www.unesco.org/en/freedom-expression-rule-law>

4<https://www.unesco.org/en/freedom-expression-online>

5<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>