HoMMUNC XXXVIII

October 21st, 2023

38th Annual

Horace Mann Model United Nations Conference

UNEP

Ahaan Modi

Chair

HoMMUNC XXXVIII

Table of Contents

Letter From the Secretariat

Nate Chiang
Lily Wender
Secretaries-General

Isabelle Kim
Director-General of HoMMUNC

Asha Tandon
Andrew Ziman
Under-Secretary-General of Training

Josh Anderman
Julia Bouchut
Andrew Doft
Under-Secretary-General of Research

Rain Li
Under-Secretary-General of HoMMUNC

Lili Frangenberg
Jared Margulis
Ahaan Modi
Jacqueline Shih
Conference Coordinators

Gabby Solmson
Chair of the Junior Board

Dr. Steven Fabian
Faculty Advisor

Dear Delegates,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to Horace Mann's 38th Annual Model United Nations Conference, HoMMUNC XXXVIII! Since 1985, HoMMUNC has brought together future world leaders to discuss pressing global issues. We hope that this day can be full of meaningful and didactic debate, discourse, and collaboration. We are honored to be able to organize this conference for all of you, and hopefully provide you with an enjoyable Model UN experience. We hope you are as excited as we are!

We encourage you to deeply explore your topics and arrive at HoMMUNC prepared to engage with others and involve yourself in debate, regardless of your age or experience with Model UN. Each committee is composed of a diverse group of delegates and will address a unique set of topics ranging from protecting freedom of the press to the weaponization of smallpox and the preservation of indigenous culture. We challenge you to delve deep into research and think creatively about how to address these complicated issues. Take this opportunity to learn as much as you can, work collaboratively, and be a leader in your committee.

Model United Nations has played a massive role in our lives over the past three years, and we are thrilled to share it with all of you. It has been our pleasure preparing HoMMUNC XXXVIII along with our dedicated junior and senior staff over the past six months. We hope you have an enriching and enjoyable experience at the conference!

Sincerely,
Nate Chiang and Lily Wender
Secretaries-General of HoMMUNC XXXVIII

Committee Background and Procedure:

Committee Background

After the 1972 United Nations Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm, the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) was established in the same year by Maurice Strong to preside over issues pertaining to the environment. The core mission of UNEP is to promote sustainable development within the United Nations and inspire people and nations to improve quality of life without compromising future generations. UNEP categorizes issues into six main categories: climate change, disasters and conflicts, ecosystem management, environmental governance, chemicals and waste, and resource efficiency. In all areas, the committee aims to promote sustainability. UNEP strengthens the ability of countries to combat climate change by integrating responses and solutions by providing leadership in adaptation, technology, and finance. The committee aims to raise global awareness, facilitate renewable energy development, and improve understanding of the climate crisis. Additionally, the committee strives to protect ecosystems and ensure sustainable use of natural resources. UNEP supports governments in having the necessary institutions and laws to create effective and mainstream environmental planning. UNEP also regulates toxic substances to reduce risk to humans and the overall environment. With initiatives such as the Marrakech Process 10 year plan, UNEP ensures that materials are produced and consumed in a more eco-friendly manner.

Procedure:

Roll Call: at the beginning of every committee session, the chair will take attendance, and every delegate must respond “present.” If you are late

coming to committee, send a note to the dais to let them know you are present.

Motions: used to open and close debate, decide to move to voting procedure, to propose a speakers list, moderated or unmoderated caucus. The chair will entertain several motions at one time, then will have all delegates vote on each motion in order of most to least disruptive, and the motion with the majority passes.

Speaker's List: a type of debate used to start committee, often meant to set the agenda, in which the chair would create a list of speakers.

Moderated Caucus: another form of debate, used most often during committee, that has a set time, speaking time, and specific topic to debate. Your chair will call upon countries to speak. When a delegate wishes to speak, they will raise their placard when told.

Unmoderated Caucus: a time when the rules of formal debate are suspended, during which delegates can leave their seats. This time is used for delegates to build blocs and write draft resolutions.

Resolutions: require a set number of sponsors who worked on drafting the resolution, and a list of signatories who would like to see the resolution debated. Resolutions are presented by the sponsors of the draft resolution, after which a Q&A session will be held.

Topic - Water Scarcity

Overview

Water, the essence of life, sustains ecosystems, nourishes agriculture, and supports human existence in myriad ways. Yet, despite its vital importance, water scarcity has emerged as a pressing global concern, threatening to disrupt societies, economies, and the environment. This committee will delve into the complex issue of water scarcity, exploring its causes, consequences, regional disparities, and potential solutions.

Water scarcity, the condition where the demand for water exceeds the available supply, is a challenge shaped by an intricate interplay of natural and human factors. As the global population increases, urbanization and industrialization intensify, driving an ever-increasing demand for water resources. Simultaneously, pollution and mismanagement of these resources compromise their quality and availability, exacerbating the problem. Climate change further complicates matters, altering precipitation patterns, increasing evaporation rates, and causing the melting of glaciers and polar ice, ultimately disrupting the distribution and availability of freshwater resources.

The consequences of water scarcity are far-reaching and multifaceted, impacting various aspects of human life and the environment. One of the most critical sectors affected is agriculture, which heavily relies on water for crop growth and livestock maintenance. Reduced water availability can diminish crop yields, endanger food security, and potentially trigger price hikes and global supply chain disruptions. Industries requiring substantial water inputs, such as textiles, chemicals, and energy production, face operational constraints and potential shutdowns, affecting economies at large.

Perhaps the most alarming consequence is the threat water scarcity

poses to public health. Insufficient access to clean water and proper sanitation services leads to the increased spread of waterborne diseases, endangering lives, especially in developing nations. Mortality rates soar due to illnesses caused by contaminated water, creating a vicious cycle of poverty and health crises. Furthermore, ecosystems suffer as rivers, lakes, and wetlands experience reduced flow, disrupting aquatic habitats and imperiling various species. Groundwater depletion, seen in regions like India and the United States, can lead to land subsidence (or the caving inwards of land), destabilizing the very ground upon which communities are built.

History

The narrative of water scarcity takes us back to the cradle of civilization, ancient Mesopotamia, nestled between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Here, an intricate irrigation system was harnessed to cultivate fertile land. Unfortunately, mismanagement and neglect resulted in the salinization of arable land, offering a stark lesson on the consequences of failing to sustainably manage water resources. This ancient misstep underscores the significance of responsible water stewardship.

Advancing through time, the 1930s Dust Bowl in the United States emerges as a modern illustration of the repercussions of ignoring ecological equilibrium and water management. Unsustainable farming practices and extended drought resulted in soil erosion and massive dust storms. This tragedy laid bare the intricate connections between water, land, and human actions, highlighting the imperative of judicious land use and water conservation.

The contemporary era places the Middle East at the center of complex water scarcity challenges. The Jordan River, once a regional lifeline, has diminished due to excessive extraction and competing demands.

The shrinking Dead Sea, a visual testament to environmental degradation, underscores the interrelatedness of water bodies. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, often intertwined with water rights, serves as a vivid portrayal of how water scarcity can intensify existing geopolitical tensions.

The United Nations has been actively engaged in addressing water-related issues since its inception. The 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm marked a pivotal moment when the global community first recognized the importance of sustainable water management. This event led to the establishment of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), which played a key role in advocating for sustainable water practices.

Water scarcity was also a prominent concern in the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a set of eight international development goals established in 2000. Target 7C of the MDGs aimed to "halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation." While progress was made, especially in urban areas, achieving this goal proved challenging due to disparities between regions and insufficient investment in water infrastructure. The successor to the MDGs, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015, further emphasized the importance of addressing water scarcity. SDG 6 specifically focuses on ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. It encompasses targets related to safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, water quality, water-use efficiency, integrated water resources management, and international cooperation.

Several challenges have impeded the effectiveness of past UN actions against water scarcity. One major challenge is the lack of political

will and financial commitment from some nations to implement sustainable water management practices. Additionally, the complexities of transboundary water management have hindered cooperation among neighboring countries, leading to disputes over shared water resources. Climate change has exacerbated water scarcity by altering precipitation patterns and contributing to more frequent droughts, further stressing already strained water supplies. Despite the challenges, the UN's efforts have yielded significant progress. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF, between 2000 and 2017, over 1.6 billion people gained access to basic drinking water services. This achievement demonstrates the positive impact of global initiatives and partnerships in addressing water scarcity. The UN's emphasis on cross-sectoral collaboration and knowledge sharing has also led to improved water management practices and enhanced data collection to inform decision-making. Furthermore, the UN's involvement has facilitated the development of innovative solutions to combat water scarcity. For example, the UN's Water Action Decade, which ran from 2005 to 2015, encouraged the implementation of water-related projects and initiatives at local, national, and regional levels. This includes projects that promote rainwater harvesting, wastewater recycling, and improved irrigation techniques, all contributing to better water resource management.

Current Situation

As we navigate the complexities of the 21st century, the issue of water scarcity remains a critical challenge that transcends borders and cultures. The current global situation of water scarcity is a mosaic of regional disparities, emerging trends, and

interconnected factors that demand urgent attention and action.

Water scarcity is not distributed evenly across the globe. Certain regions, particularly those with arid or semi-arid climates, are more vulnerable to the impacts of water scarcity. The Middle East and North Africa continue to grapple with severe water stress due to limited freshwater availability, political conflicts, and inefficient water management practices. Sub-Saharan Africa faces challenges exacerbated by population growth, lack of infrastructure, and inadequate sanitation services. In Asia, rapid urbanization and pollution strain water resources in densely populated areas, while parts of Europe and the United States experience water scarcity due to prolonged droughts and over-extraction. One current example that shows how dire this crisis is in today's world is the 2018 Cape Town water crisis. In 2018, the South African city, stood on the precipice of an unprecedented water crisis. Drought, population growth, and inefficient water management pushed the city to the brink of 'Day Zero,' when taps would run dry. This stark scenario underscores the urgency of addressing water scarcity in urban areas and the necessity for proactive measures to build resilience against shifting climate patterns.

Rising global populations, along with increasing urbanization and industrialization, place significant strain on available water resources. The expanding demand for water, driven by agriculture, industry, and households, amplifies competition for limited supplies. As these trends continue, the tension between water availability and demand becomes more pronounced, putting pressure on societies to adopt sustainable practices and innovative solutions.

Climate change is also an escalating factor that exacerbates water scarcity. Altered precipitation patterns, more frequent and intense droughts, and unpredictable hydrological cycles

disrupt the delicate equilibrium of water availability. Glacial melting, vital for the water supply of many regions, accelerates due to rising temperatures, potentially leading to long-term water shortages for millions.

Water scarcity's ripple effects extend beyond human communities to ecosystems and biodiversity. Rivers, wetlands, and lakes suffer reduced flow or even desiccation, endangering aquatic habitats and species. Declining water levels in oceans, such as the shrinking Aral Sea, can alter salinity levels and threaten marine life. These ecological changes reverberate throughout food chains and ecosystems, ultimately affecting the planet's delicate balance.

Insufficient access to clean water and sanitation services continues to have dire consequences for public health, especially in developing nations. Waterborne diseases flourish in areas with inadequate infrastructure, contributing to illness and mortality. Moreover, water scarcity undermines economic development, disrupts food production, and deepens existing social inequalities, further straining the fabric of societies.

Possible Solutions

Amid the challenges, several potential solutions offer hope for alleviating water scarcity. First, improved water management practices, including efficient irrigation techniques and rainwater harvesting, can optimize the utilization of existing water resources. Investment in water infrastructure, such as dams, reservoirs, and wastewater treatment plants, can also help regulate water supply and reduce pollution. Desalination, the process of converting seawater into freshwater, presents a solution for coastal regions facing water scarcity, with advancing technology making it more efficient and cost-effective.

Water recycling, the process of treating and reusing wastewater for non-potable purposes like irrigation or industrial processes, conserves

freshwater resources. In addition, Governments play a pivotal role in crafting and enforcing water management policies that promote sustainability, protect ecosystems, and ensure equitable access. Cross-border cooperation among nations sharing transboundary water resources is essential, with international organizations facilitating such collaborations. Cross-border cooperation would be remiss if it were to ignore the distribution of humanitarian aid across the globe, especially to developing countries that are currently dealing with the brunt of this crisis. Raising public awareness about water conservation and its consequences through education initiatives can also foster a culture of responsible water use. Additionally, addressing the root causes of water scarcity requires global efforts to mitigate climate change, as it directly influences precipitation patterns and water availability.

Bloc Positions

North America: North American Nations have recognized that water scarcity concerns in specific regions have led to an emphasis on efficient water management practices. Cross-border cooperation on transboundary water resources, exemplified by the Great Lakes and shared rivers, stands as a significant action taken by these countries. Additionally, advocating for technology exchange to address water scarcity issues in agriculture and urban areas has showcased a proactive approach to sustainable water resource management.

European Union (EU): The EU has stressed the importance of sustainable water use and improved conservation practices, acknowledging varying levels of water stress across member states. An example of action taken involves the sharing of best practices in water management and infrastructure development among member states. Furthermore, the integration of water

scarcity considerations into regional climate change adaptation strategies demonstrates a comprehensive approach to addressing interconnected challenges.

Middle East and North Africa (MENA): For MENA nations, addressing severe water scarcity challenges in arid and water-stressed regions has been and should continue to be a top priority. Advocacy for the equitable distribution of shared water resources, such as the Nile and Tigris-Euphrates rivers, has resulted in diplomatic efforts to ensure water security. MENA countries have also showcased the potential of desalination and water recycling technologies as proactive measures to alleviate water scarcity.

Sub-Saharan Africa: Sub-Saharan African nations are particularly vulnerable to water scarcity due to climate variability and limited infrastructure. Seeking international support for capacity building, investment in water infrastructure, and sustainable agricultural practices has been instrumental in improving water resource management. Moreover, advocating for climate change adaptation strategies serves as a testament to the commitment to long-term water security.

Asia-Pacific: Densely populated nations in the Asia-Pacific are facing rapid urbanization and pollution-driven water scarcity, prompting immediate action. The proposal of regional cooperation on water-sharing agreements for rivers like the Mekong and Brahmaputra illustrates collaboration in water resource management. Highlighting the importance of technology transfer in improving water efficiency and addressing pollution showcases innovative solutions to water scarcity challenges.

Latin America: Latin American nations should address both urban and rural water scarcity issues while considering water's significance in agriculture and livelihoods. Advocacy for sustainable land use practices stands as an example of action taken to prevent soil erosion and degradation, which contribute to water scarcity. The preservation of water ecosystems, particularly in the Amazon Basin and other critical areas, highlights the commitment to long-term water resource sustainability.

Oceania and Small Island States: Oceania and Small Island Nations face unique challenges such as sea-level rise and saltwater intrusion. Advocating for climate change adaptation measures and disaster preparedness demonstrates the urgency of addressing water scarcity during extreme events. The emphasis on building resilient water infrastructure with international support underscores the commitment to safeguarding water resources in vulnerable regions.

Questions to Consider

1. What factors contribute to water scarcity in your region?
2. How do land use and deforestation impact water availability?
3. What is the current demand for water for agriculture, industry, and households?
4. Are water withdrawals sustainable in your country, given the available resources?
5. How effective are current water management strategies in minimizing waste?
6. How is climate change affecting precipitation patterns and water availability?
7. How can public awareness campaigns encourage responsible water use?
8. How can we balance human water needs with the

preservation of natural environments?

9. What technological innovations can improve water efficiency and availability?
10. How can effective diplomatic solutions be reached to ensure equitable use and prevent conflicts?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Highlighting Rise in Water Scarcity, Climate-Induced Disasters, Speakers at Global Conference Call for Transformational Change to Better Manage Aqua Resources | UN Press." United Nations, March 23, 2023. https://press.un.org/en/2023/envdev2054.doc.html

Wild, Sarah, and Sarah Wild. "Water in a Loop: How to Combat Water Scarcity on Remote Islands." Horizon Magazine, August 8, 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/research-and-innovation/en/horizon-magazine/water-loop-how-combat-water-scarcity-remote-islands

Jacob, Charmaine. "The Scarcity of Water Is Emerging as a Global Economic Threat. with China and India Looking the Most at Risk." CNBC, June 13, 2023. https://www.cnbc.com/2023/06/13/water-scarcity-china-and-india-look-the-most-threatened-from-shortages.html

Hundertmark, Thomas, Kun Lueck, and Brent Packer. "Water: A Human and Business Priority." McKinsey & Company, May 5, 2020. https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/sustainability/our-insights/water-a-human-and-business-priority

Kummu, M., J. H. A. Guillaume, H. de Moel, S. Eisner, M. Flörke, M. Porkka, S. Siebert, T. I. E. Veldkamp, and P. J. Ward. "The World's Road to Water Scarcity: Shortage and Stress in the 20th Century and Pathways towards Sustainability." Nature News, December 9, 2016. https://www.nature.com/articles/srep38495

Stuckenberghttps://harvardnsj.org/author/major-david-j-stuckenberg/, Major David J. "Major David J. Stuckenberg." Harvard National Security Journal, May 18, 2018. https://harvardnsj.org/2018/05/18/water-scarcity-the-most-understated-global-security-risk/

"Sponsor a Child." Global Water Crisis - Water Scarcity Facts & How To Help | World Vision Australia. Accessed August 31, 2023. https://www.worldvision.com.au/global-water-crisis-facts#:~:text=1800s%3A%20Water%20shortages%20first%20appear,more%20than%20one%20billion%20people

Blue, Circle, Fraser Byers, Brett Walton, Vladislava Sukhanovskaya, Keith Schneider, and Circle of BlueCircle of Blue provides relevant. "Experts Name the Top 19 Solutions to the Global Freshwater Crisis." Circle of Blue, October 5, 2018. https://www.circleofblue.org/2010/world/experts-name-the-top-19-solutions-to-the-global-freshwater-crisis/

Husbands, Samara. "Exploring the Most Efficient Solutions to Water Scarcity." Earth.Org, June 20, 2023. https://earth.org/solutions-to-water-scarcity/

Murray-Playfair, Ellie. “What Are the Solutions to Reduce Water Scarcity?” Waterlogic. Accessed August 31, 2023. https://www.waterlogicaustralia.com.au/resources/blog/how-people-are-resolving-to-reduce-water-scarcity/

“Water.” United Nations. Accessed August 31, 2023. https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/water

“Imminent Risk of a Global Water Crisis, Warns the UN World Water Development Report 2023.” UNESCO.org. Accessed August 31, 2023. https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/imminent-risk-global-water-crisis-warns-un-world-water-development-report-2023

“Water Shortages Have a History.” Home. Accessed August 31, 2023. https://www.historians.org/research-and-publications/perspectives-on-history/september-2019/water-shortages-have-a-history-how-the-kenyan-colonial-state-mismanaged-a-resource-and-endangered-a-community

SOURCES

1. https://press.un.org/en/2023/envdev2054.doc.htm

2.https://ec.europa.eu/research-and-innovation/en/horizon-magazine/water-loop-how-combat-water-scarcity-remote-islands
3.https://www.cnbc.com/2023/06/13/water-scarcity-china-and-india-look-the-most-threatened-from-shortages.html
4.https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/sustainability/our-insights/water-a-human-and-business-priority
5.https://harvardnsj.org/2018/05/18/water-scarcity-the-most-understated-global-security-risk/
6.https://www.worldvision.com.au/global-water-crisis-facts#:~:text=1800s%3A%20Water%20shortages%20first%20appear,more%20than%20one%20billion%20people
7.https://www.nature.com/articles/srep38495
8.https://www.circleofblue.org/2010/world/experts-name-the-top-19-solutions-to-the-global-freshwater-crisis/
9. https://earth.org/solutions-to-water-scarcity/
10.https://www.waterlogicaustralia.com.au/resources/blog/how-people-are-resolving-to-reduce-water-scarcity/
11.https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/water
12.https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/imminent-risk-global-water-crisis-warns-un-world-water-development-report-2023
13.https://www.historians.org/research-and-publications/perspectives-on-history/september-2019/water-shortages-have-a-history-how-the-kenyan-colonial-state-mismanaged-a-resource-and-endangered-a-community