

OFFICIAL WELCOME

Dear Delegates,

It is with great enthusiasm that I welcome you to the 2007 National Model United Nations (NMUN) – DC Conference. Our staff has worked tirelessly throughout the year to ensure your experience is both challenging and rewarding, and it is our sincere hope that these materials serve you well in your preparation for our NMUN – NYC Conferences, in spring 2008.

This Research Guide has been provided as a resource for your preparation for NMUN-DC '07. Along with helpful links and background information, I have posed contextual questions around each committee topic area. I'm confident throughout your conference preparation and your committee participation you will learn firsthand the challenges of "collaboration." Concurrently, you will also learn and appreciate the profound impact and dimensions of what it truly means to "collaborate" and "compromise" with those who are different, but still alike in unseen ways.

HISTORY OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

The World Health Organization (WHO) was established in 1948 and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. WHO is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) that acts as a coordinating authority on international public health. WHO's constitution states that its mission is the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health. Its major task is to combat disease and promote the general health of the peoples of the world. The constitution of WHO defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not as consisting only of the absence of disease or infirmity or mental retardation.¹ As well as coordinating international efforts to monitor outbreaks of infectious disease such as avian influenza, malaria, and AIDS, it also has programs to prevent and treat such diseases. WHO also supports the development and distribution of safe and effective vaccines and pharmaceutical drugs.

TOPIC #1: CHILDREN AND HIV/AIDS

- What direct and indirect impacts does HIV/AIDS have on the lives of infected children, their families, and ultimately, their communities? Additionally, what are some of the key obstacles to accessing treatment for children and their families, and what can WHO and its partners do to help these communities reduce these barriers to access?

¹ World Health Organization Constitution: http://www.who.int/governance/eb/who_constitution_en.pdf

Children and their families are often forgotten when policy-makers and advocates begin to consider the global HIV/AIDS epidemic that is ravaging our global community. According to the *2006 WHO AIDS Epidemic Update*, HIV/AIDS is a tragic reality for 2.3 million children and over half a million children became newly infected with HIV/AIDS in 2006. Nine out of ten children with HIV/AIDS live in Sub-Saharan Africa, the region of the world where AIDS has caused the most devastation.

Children with HIV/AIDS have a distinctively challenging life and few chances to rise above impoverished conditions. Mother-to-child-transmission of HIV/AIDS accounts for the vast majority of children who are infected with HIV/AIDS. Fortunately, antiretroviral therapy can suppress HIV and delay its progression to AIDS in children, just as it can in adults. However, enormous barriers to both prevention and treatment exist in the communities where HIV/AIDS is the most prevalent. It is now the delegates charge to identify these barriers and work to develop collaborative solutions.

TOPIC #2: Afghanistan: Combating communicable diseases in a post-conflict country

- What are the greater public health ramifications of politically unstable nations? What are some means of preventing and limiting outbreaks of infectious diseases in the difficult context of post-conflict Afghanistan?

War and political instability have destroyed much of Afghanistan's social infrastructure, healthcare delivery systems and economy. Afghanistan ranks second-to-last on the UNDP Human Development Index. Due to decades of civil war, Afghanistan's economy is unstable, healthcare delivery systems have been completely eroded and other collapsed infrastructure have left the people of Afghanistan, mostly pre-industrial workers, vulnerable to increasing incidence of communicable diseases. Squalid living conditions, experienced by a majority of Afghans, are incubators for emerging and growing diseases, such as AIDS and avian influenza. This problem is disastrous for the Afghani people.

TOPIC #3: Building Individual and Global Health Security

- How can the WHO build on current prevention efforts to increase preparedness and a nation's ability to respond to public health emergencies? What is the role of recovery in the development of individual and global health security?

WHO's *Global Health Agenda* highlights seven public health priority areas for the global community. Global health security has become an item of paramount importance in the international agenda. Conflicts, natural disasters, and disease outbreaks are increasing in number. HIV/AIDS, which has become a disaster in

many countries, is an example. Others examples are Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, which devastated the United States in 2005, and the 2004 Tsunami that ravaged Thailand. Preparedness, response, and long-term recovery must be considered when addressing the issue of individual and global health security; it will be the delegates' responsibility to consider the aspects of preparedness, response, and long-term recovery in addressing the issues of individual and global health security.

ANNOTATED BIBOLIGRAPHY

CHILDREN AND HIV/AIDS

UNAIDS/WHO AIDS Epidemic Update. (2006, December).

Retrieved June 20, 2007 from:

http://data.unaids.org/pub/EpiReport/2006/2006_EpiUpdate_en.pdf

The annual AIDS Epidemic Update reports on the latest developments in the global AIDS epidemic. With maps and regional summaries, the 2006 edition provides the most recent estimates of the epidemic's scope and human toll, explores new trends in the epidemic's evolution.

Progress for Children Report. (2004). *A Child Survival Report Card, Volume 1*.

Retrieved June 20, 2007 from:

http://www.unicef.org/progressforchildren/2004v1/pdf/pfc_eng.pdf

This report addresses the fourth Millennium Development Goal which aims for a two-thirds reduction of under-five mortality rates between 1990 and 2015. It reveals global gains in child survival since 1990, but also significant discrepancies within and across countries and regions.

AFGHANISTAN: COMBATING COMMUNICABLE DISEASES IN A POST CONFLICT COUNTRY

"Afghanistan." WHO. Health Action in Crises Monthly Report. Issue 43, May-June 2005. Assha, Dr. Abdul Wasi. "Afghanistan Country Report." Presented at the Inter-Country Meeting of National Malaria Program Managers. Muscat, Oman. 24-28 March 2002. Retrieved June 22, 2007 from:

<http://www.emro.who.int/RBM/meetings/muscat02/CountryReport-AFG.doc>

This report provides an overview of the impact, spread, and prevalence of malaria in Afghanistan. It also provides a series of recommendations to addressing some of the larger systematic public health issues of finance, capacity-building, and surveillance.

"Health and Nutrition Annex of Securing Afghanistan's Future:

Accomplishments and the Strategic Path Forward." Retrieved June 22, 2007 from:

<http://www.af/resources/mof/recosting/draft%20papers/Pillar%201/Health%20and%20Nutrition%20-%20Annex.pdf>

This report provides a summary of accomplishments and identified challenges in the transformation of Afghanistan's healthcare delivery system.

“Infectious Diseases: Afghanistan.” USAID. 16 February 2005. Retrieved June 22, 2007 from:

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/id/tuberculosis/countries/ane/afghanistan_profile.html

This report provides a snapshot of the prevalence and public health impacts of tuberculosis in Afghanistan. It also describes current aspects and dimensions to Afghanistan's public health systems.

BUILDING INDIVIDUAL AND GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY

Engaging for health: 11th General Programme of Work. (2006, May). Engaging for health: A global health agenda. Retrieved June 27, 2007, from:

http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2006/GPW_eng.pdf

Health is increasingly finding its way into the international development agenda, due in part, to the commitment to many partners across the globe. Where does WHO fit into the picture? WHO will fulfill its priorities through its outlined plan in the Eleventh General Programme of Work.

Emergency Preparedness and Risk Management. (2007, January).

WHO five-year strategy for the health sector and community capacity-building. Retrieved June 29, 2007, from:

http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/preparedness/EP_Strategy_30Jan07.pdf

This strategy is based on the recommendations of a global consultation held by WHO in February 2006 that brought together experts in emergency preparedness and response from around the world. The consultation was followed by several important activities to discuss the various components of the strategy and to reach consensus on the objectives and key directions.

