



SIMUN X

St. Ignatius Model United Nations

Tenth Annual Conference

Commission on Science and Technology for Development

November 5, 2011

St. Ignatius College Prep | Chicago, IL

Letter from the Chair:

Greetings Esteemed Delegates,

It is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to SIMUN X, held at St. Ignatius College Prep in Chicago. My name is Kent Hutchison, and I will be serving as your chair for the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. Similarly invested in your commission are Collin Andrews, who shall serve as Political Officer, and Anthony Hersey, who shall serve as Vice Chair.

First, a note about SIMUN X. The longevity of this conference is itself a testimony to its tremendous success. As an avid participant in SIMUN IX a year ago, I have unwavering faith in the ability of this conference to train delegates for a triumphant Model United Nations career. That being said, SIMUN X also provides an environment for veteran members to demonstrate their expertise and knowledge of procedure to obtain the most beneficial result for their nation. Novice members are encouraged to look to these old warriors for guidance, but, of course, be wary of manipulation!

The Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) is a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It is the role of the CSTD to research, debate, and ultimately pass legislation to ECOSOC, which is one of the five main organs of the United Nations. The Commission seeks the advancement of science and technology policies, particularly in respect to the needs of developing countries. Perhaps more significant to our committee session will be another goal of the CSTD: to examine questions that science and technology pose, in an endeavor to understand their implications for development.

Two position papers are expected from each delegate. One will regard Topic 1: Meeting the Millennium Goals Through Technology. The other will regard Topic 2: Availability of Information. These will be white papers that accurately reflect the position of the country that you are representing. While this written aspect is important, it is necessary to understand that the primary emphasis of this conference will be on delegates' performance in committee. In my committee, I have three goals for delegates: speak often, speak concisely, and speak accurately. Though eloquence is not necessarily a prerequisite for success, all delegates will be expected to give their best effort throughout the entire duration of our session.

On a personal level, I look forward to meeting all of you as delegates and as fellow MUNers. This is my second year in MUN, and I enjoy participating in this fantastic club immensely. When I'm not MUN-ing it up, I play baseball for St. Ignatius, as well as compete on the math team. Let's make SIMUN X CSTD the best committee we can!

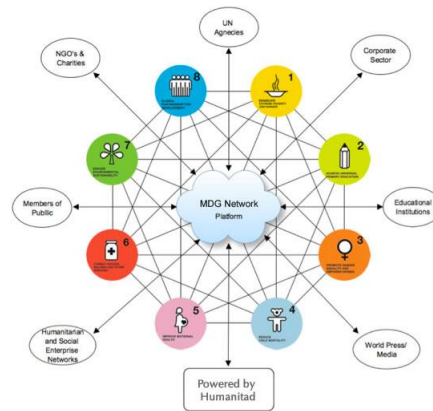
Yours in Diplomacy,

Kent Hutchison

Salutations Commission on Science and Technology for Development,

My name is Collin Andrews; I will be your Political Officer (P.O.) for our SIMUN X conference on November fifth. I am a sophomore at Saint Ignatius, and this is my second year participating in Model U.N. I want to let everyone know that all of your dais members want to make our committee enjoyable for everyone. We expect everybody to be courteous while in committee, especially to the beginners of Model U.N.

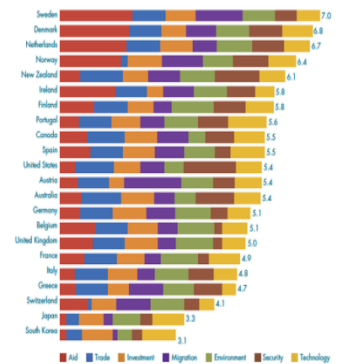
Anthony Hersee will be serving as the Vice Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. He is a sophomore at St. Ignatius College Prep.



Topic 1: Meeting the Millennium Goals Through Science and Technology

From September 6th to 8th of 2000, the largest gathering of world leaders ever organized debated what the world should look like in 2015. This debate, held at the Millennium Summit in the UN headquarters in New York, culminated on the last day of the conference with the adoption of the Millennium Declaration. This legislation reaffirmed the right of every person to dignity, equality, freedom, and a basic standard of living. The declaration was the foundation from which the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were created. The MDGs are composed of eight distinct but interconnected international development goals that were set to be reached in 2015. The MDGs focus on three primary targets: the development of social and political rights, human development, and infrastructure development.

Meeting the MDGs obviously necessitates vast amounts of aid to countries unable to promote the goals themselves. To make matters worse, the countries requiring the aid are often the least developed, as far as the MDGs are concerned. Previously, contributions to the MDGs were mainly made by Western countries, but the onset of a financial crisis has stifled what was once a mighty flow of developmental potential. These cuts in funding have come at a crucial time in which the feasibility of the MDGs is at stake. With the economic future of some superpowers uncertain, the completion of the MDGs may fall into the hands of industrial societies with fledgling international aid foundations.



As countries' developmental needs are often specific to their own situation, most MDG legislation that has been passed is general enough to obtain widespread accord. This is illustrated by CSTD Draft Resolution E/CN.16/2004/2 entitled "Science and Technology for Development." Among other clauses, this resolution promoted infrastructure building as a foundation for scientific and technological development, and reiterated the mutual interaction and, indeed, dependency between science and technology. Promotion of gainful employment in enterprise development through the use of existing and emerging technologies was also a prevalent theme throughout the resolution. Deemed especially important to developing infrastructure were information and communicating technologies (ICTs), as well as biotechnologies.

This commission will focus on the implementation of advances in science and technology to meet the MDGs. Areas that have benefitted the most from such advances include MDGs 6, 7, and 8. Respectively, these goals seek to: combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; and develop a global partnership for development. Perhaps the most susceptible of all to improvements in science and technology are Target 8E, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries, and Target

8F, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.

In the future, the CSTD will endeavor to make the MDGs as feasible as possible through applying technology and innovation to the international efforts made at punctual completion. Substantive themes of Topic 1 include: strengthening basic and applied research in developing countries and international scientific networking; identifying the potential risks and benefits of new technologies designed to meet the MDGs; and encouraging international collaboration to support the creation of these new technologies. These themes mirror previous CSTD primary focuses.

Discussion Questions:

What significant action has already been taken to achieve the MDGs?

How can improvements in science and technology reduce the expense of achieving the MDGs? Where and when should funding be allocated to meet these goals?

How can emerging technologies (green, biotechnologies, ICTs) be shared in order to meet the MDGs?

How much should be allocated to meet these goals, remembering that the target date for completion is 2015?

Where should such funding come from?

Block Positions

U.S. and European Allies: While largely meeting the goals set out by the MDGs upon their adoption in 2000, complex problems for international relations linger beneath the surface for these wealthy countries. Initially staunch supporters of the MDGs, the United States and its European allies have recently decreased the fervor of their claims of commitment. Due in large part to the economic recession of the late 2000s, and partisan politics, at least in the case of the U.S., enthusiasm for giving aid to less developed countries has been drastically reduced. The MDGs were instituted with the expectation of substantial funding by advanced, service-oriented economies. With the threat of that aid being revoked, the entire practicality of the MDGs could be called into question. The Western bloc needs to quickly and concisely form a cohesive course of action that will either reaffirm their support of the MDGs, or collectively pull support from them.

Brazil, Russia, India, and China: While all four of these enormous countries have made vast progress toward meeting the MDGs requirements in the past 11 years, tremendous

technological boundaries are yet to be overcome. China, Russia, and India suffer from poor communications systems that inhibit economic efficiency and hurt the ease of doing business in each country. China and Russia are decimating their valuable natural resources, respectively rare earths and oil, in order to fund their MDG progress. This is, obviously, contradictory to Goal 7 of the MDGs. Brazil and India are currently facing tough decisions about health care in urban slums. Such decisions will almost certainly be made against the basic principles of the MDGs in an effort to save on social program costs. Although many more examples of malaise exist despite the outward appearance of robust progress, it is evident that these countries stand on the precipice of potentially devastating decisions that threaten to erase what progress has been made. The BRIC countries are also changing the face of aid. China is currently the biggest source of investment in Africa, and African progress in the MDGs. If the BRICs do become the new donors to the impoverished world, reaffirming their allegiance to the MDGs, or not, could change the way the world looks in 2015.

Africa, Eurasia, South America, and other Developing Countries: As the primary beneficiaries of international aid intended to achieve the MDGs, developing countries wish to continue receiving as much aid as possible, despite the recent economic downturn. Such countries are the most susceptible to high percentages of HIV/AIDS, as well as malaria and other lethal disease. In many countries with little industry, natural resources are being collected and exported as the primary means of maintaining a governmental authority, a practice which is at odds with MDG #7. These countries have and will almost certainly continue to fight tirelessly for the desperately needed aid required to realize at least some of the MDGs.

Helpful Resources:

<http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Page.asp?intItemID=3769&lang=1>
<http://www.undp.org.cn/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&catid=32&sid=6>
<http://www.undp.ru/index.phtml?iso=ru&lid=1&pid=98>
<http://deepbrazil.com/2010/04/07/millennium-goals-on-the-way/>
<http://www.economist.com/node/21525899>
<http://www.doingbusiness.org/rankings>
http://www.worldforworld.org/millennium_goals.asp

Special note to delegates: Although some specific MDGs are stated, by no means will debate be limited to these specific clauses. As always, stay on position and explore options beyond what is listed in this background guide.



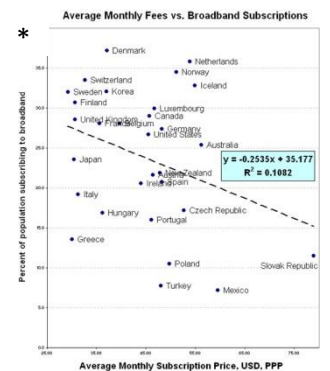
TOPIC 2: Availability of Information

Subtopic 1: Infrastructure and Capability

Over the last decade the number of people with access to the internet has increased dramatically. In Africa and the Middle East alone, internet users have jumped, respectively, 2527.4% and 1987.0% over ten years. Billions of dollars have been spent on broadband lines as well as high speed Wi-Fi, which can connect thousands of mobile devices to the internet wirelessly through the simple use of a modem and router. This explosion of Internet use prompted questions as to the link between Internet connectivity and economic growth. In response, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) published a report entitled “Promotion of Investment into Infrastructure.” This report cited information technology infrastructure as a “prerequisite for economic and social development.” In addition, the UNCTAD found that Internet availability was vital to the efficiency and growth of a developing economy. This sentiment was reiterated by the a CTSD substantive theme from its 2003 session, which sought to promote universal Internet access at affordable costs as well as to build strategic partnerships in the field of science and technology for development and international competitiveness.

Currently, there is widespread international accord that Internet infrastructure would be utilized to its fullest capacity if installed in developing countries. The primary worry of advocates of such plans is the often prohibitive cost of installing such infrastructure. It is commonly assumed that, if advances in science and technology can bring the initial as well as the monthly costs of Internet access down, developing countries will quickly shift their previous economic focuses to online aspirations. Interestingly, the correlation between average monthly internet fees and the percentage of the population subscribing to internet broadband service in developed countries is significant. This seems to suggest a worrying relationship between price and use. Questions about the cultural value of the internet in different regions of the world have risen as a result of such data suggesting a surprising lack of association between price and usage.

Another major problem faced by potential Internet infrastructure investors is the population density of developing countries. Countries like Japan are very densely populated in small regions, and as such the cost of bit (of data) per person is very low, regardless of the actual price to the user. Developing countries are often much less dense. Therefore investors often have to span vast distances to connect small amounts of people. Advances in technologies such as WiMax and Long Term Evolution (LTE) wireless systems may provide the answer to such dilemmas.



Although Internet infrastructure development has come primarily from foreign aid in the past, the recent economic downturn will prompt many countries to look in the future to the private sector for Internet capacity increasing. Competition between governments of developing countries for the large long-term capital investments necessary for Internet infrastructure development, already quite strong, are likely to intensify in the future. Governments themselves are looking to become more actively involved in such projects, although investment promotion agencies (IPAs) are still likely to participate heavily in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI). IPAs often have to attract FDI while facing daunting problems with existing infrastructure, or the lack thereof. For example, FDI is often necessary to use first to create a power plant to supply mobile communications before the construction of infrastructure for the mobile communication itself is initiated. In the future, it is likely that FDI from the increasingly fiscally conservative private sector will be won only after such basic infrastructural needs are addressed.

Subtopic 2: Censorship

In some countries where Internet connection is readily available, governmental censorship of the web has sparked domestic and international ire. In some extreme cases, intense governmental regulation of the Internet can create similar conditions to those faced by areas where Internet connectivity is not a possibility. As such, this Commission will address these two related issues in tandem.

The clearest way to illustrate the issues this subtopic creates is, ironically, to examine a case study plagued by doubt and intrigue. As China prospers as a result of its pseudo-communist economic reforms, millions of Chinese are suddenly gaining access to the Internet, especially through mobile devices. China has had a long a troubled past with the availability of information that allegedly culminated in an attack on a Western Internet-based corporation. In December of 2009, a highly sophisticated cyber-attack on Google, the previously mentioned corporation based in Santa Clara County, California, was undertaken by sources apparently originating from China. In this case, corporate intellectual property was successfully stolen. Again in March 2011, Google accused the Chinese government of disrupting its Chinese version of Gmail, Google's online messaging service. Google has produced evidence that the intent of the attack was to break into Chinese human rights activists' Gmail accounts. Chinese officials have rebuked such allegations, but there is increasing widespread accord that the ruling Communist Party runs a large information-suppression campaign which restricts phone-calls, emails and Internet access that can promote negative views of the government. Informally dubbed "The Great Firewall," the Internet-restricting, cyber regulation measures of the Chinese government have come to symbolize the endangered right of freedom of information across the globe.

In this case China, of course, only personified what is an international, contemporary problem. The explosion of Internet users has prompted a massive reevaluation of the impact of Internet use on society. Again, a case study, this time the so-called Arab Spring of Africa and the Middle East, provides perhaps the best understanding of the subtleties of subtopic 2. Much of Africa and the Middle East has been rocked by discontent and protest that culminated in with the topple of leadership structures spanning decades. Recognizing the Internet as a major source of discontent, many governments facing protests tried and failed to shut down domestic Internet access. For proponents of the influence of Internet access on society, the Arab Spring demonstrates the awesome power of mass access to the Internet, and specifically social media. Continuing with this logic, it would appear that Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia have fallen at the hands of the unappeased masses, armed with the Internet. It is vital, however, to recognize the realities of these supposed “online-revolutions.” The most basic misunderstanding is the cause of these revolutions. The economic problems of each country, soon to be thrown into chaos by revolution, were very real for much of their population, regardless of their Internet connectivity. What Internet and social media acted then as a catalyst, not a motive, for revolution. Despite this vital difference, it appears a new internet-enabled media ecology has been created in some areas that experienced huge increases in Internet connectivity among their populations over a short period of time.



Both a lack of Internet infrastructure and censorship over existing Internet structures pose huge problems for the availability of information. Rapidly increasing Internet connectivity necessitates quick and robust response to these issues.

Discussion Questions:

Is internet access vital to the development of emerging countries? And if so, what measures should be taken to foster the growth of internet related infrastructure and industry?

Do China’s supposed infringements on freedom of speech justify condemnations, sanctions, or similar means of discouragement?

Is “The Great Firewall” a concern for freedom of access to information?

How can internet access be a catalyst for change? And if so, how should that potential be addressed?

Is it in the best interests of the countries assembled to increase funding for internet related infrastructure?

What lessons, if any, about mass internet access can be derived from the Arab Spring?

Block Positions:

U.S. and European Allies: Western countries are largely zealous proponents of both the freedom of information and the right of individuals to utilize technology as they see fit. The majority of this bloc operate highly advanced service economies that are almost entirely based off of high speed Internet connections. Needless to say, Internet connectivity is viewed as a necessity if developing countries desire to follow the Western model. The United States and Europe have devoted huge sums to the development of Internet infrastructure at home and abroad. The European Commission recently proposed a €5 billion investment in broadband Internet communication systems. These countries responded swiftly and resolutely to allegations of Chinese meddling in secure Internet access. They have strongly condemned China's censorship of the Internet, while largely approving of the use of the Internet by populist uprisings on the shores of the Mediterranean. These countries view the right to Internet access as a contemporary natural right that should not be infringed upon lightly.

China and Middle Eastern Countries: These 'enemies of the internet,' as alleged by Reporters without Borders, a Paris based NGA, are highly involved in Internet censorship activities. They support and fund the creation of Internet infrastructure in emerging economies, but warn about the follies of instantaneous global communication. China and its allies often allegedly engage in systematic repression of their domestic Internet users. The Internet is seen as a method of economic advancement, but also as a source of social unrest that must be contained. With the number of Internet subscribers quickly increasing, a declaration of intent is necessitated from these countries.

Developing Economies: Countries still in the process of legitimizing their economic processes by increasing economic output have until recently turned to the Internet as a source of growth and dynamism. With the Arab uprisings, however, some countries already in the turbulent grip of social unrest are reconsidering the urgency of soliciting FDI for Internet infrastructure advancements. Leaders struggling to cling to power could be tempted to see in the Internet a powerful force for revolution that would dismiss any economic advantages it could facilitate. Emerging countries inhibited by such circumstances are more likely to follow the Eastern path of economic use accompanied by social censorship, while more stable countries are increasingly likely to follow the Western path of freedom of access to information.

Helpful Resources:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/142>

http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/webdiaeia20082_en.pdf

http://www.technologyreview.com/blog/guest/27122/?mod=ArabSpring_stories

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/22/world/asia/22china.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=China%20restrictions%20Google&st=cse

<http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2010/01/new-approach-to-china.html>

http://www.uscc.gov/annual_report/2009/executive_summary.pdf

<http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>

* <http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/05/22/does-lowering-the-price-of-broadband-increase-its-use/>