

World Health Organization President's Letters

Chairing Style

Hello Delegates and welcome to the Saint Bonaventure University 2018 Model United Nations Spring Conference. My name is Bilawal Rafi-Iqbal and I will chair this committee. I have competed in multiple Model United Nations conferences in high school and here at Saint Bonaventure University. This is the second time I chair a Model UN committee. My goal by the end of this conference is to ensure that you have gained a better understanding of the procedures used in debate as well as a better understanding of the topics at hand. I advise all of you to become familiar and to gain as much knowledge as possible of the World Health Organization, its functions and its role and I can't emphasize enough how much important it is to thoroughly understand your country's policies. It is a basic element of our conference that you represent your country's policies faithfully.

Topics

Access to Healthcare Coverage

Universal health coverage (UHC) is the idea that all individuals should receive basic health services without suffering financial hardship. UHC includes a wide range of basic health services such as health promotion and prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care. As part of the Sustainable Development Goals, all United Nations member states have agreed to try to achieve universal health coverage by 2030.

According to the World Health Organization, at least 400 million people all across the world do not have access to basic and essential healthcare coverage or services. More than 100 million people become poverty-stricken due to out-of-pocket expenditure on health services. About 32% of each country's health expenditure comes from people paying out of their own pockets. An estimated 18 million health workers will be needed by the 2030 in order to help meet the World Health Organization's Sustainable Development Goals.

The scope of universal healthcare does not include providing all health services to individuals free of charge. It also does not solely focus on the financial aspect of providing health services to individuals, but also providing population-based services such as public health campaigns.

It is up to you and your fellow delegates to decide, on behalf of the World Health Organization, the future of universal health coverage for millions of people all over the world.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is your country's current healthcare policy? Is your country making steps towards universal health care?
2. How can your country make progress towards universal health care?

3. Has your country assisted in the World Health Organization's Sustainable Development Goals?
4. What is the role of the United Nations in achieving those goals?
5. Is the UN capable of really making a contribution to universal health coverage?
6. Does your country have a proposal to deal with this issue?
7. Does your country think that this is better left to individual countries rather than international organizations?

References:

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Obesity

Obesity is defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that presents a risk to health. Obesity is measured by a body mass index called BMI. A BMI of 30 is considered obese while a BMI of 25 is considered overweight. Obesity and being overweight have become an increasing health issue in high-income countries. In these countries, more and more people are being diagnosed as obese and as well as being overweight. But these issues are not limited to high-income countries: middle and poor-income countries as well started to see their rates of obesity and overweightness gradually rise.

According to WHO, the worldwide obesity rate has tripled since 1975. In 2016, there were more than 1.9 billion adults, 18 years and older, who are overweight; of these 1.9 billion adults, 650 million are obese. But the most growing concern is the rate of children living with obesity and being overweight as well. As of 2016, over 340 million children and adolescents aged 5-19 were overweight or obese. But the most startling is that 41 million children under the age of 5 were overweight or obese in 2016 as well. The numbers speak for themselves. Obviously, this is a very serious matter that needs attention on all levels.

There are many factors that determine if a person is overweight or obese. Individual factors such as behavior and genetics are some of the factors. Behavior however can be seen as the main cause. Behaviors include dietary patterns, physical activity (or inactivity), medication use, environment, education, etc... The health consequences of obesity can extremely alter one's life. Obesity can cause death, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, gallbladder disease, breathing problems, and low quality of life, to just name a few.

Questions to consider:

1. What could be done to deal with the problem of obesity and overweight?
2. Does your country suffer from this problem? How serious it is in your country?
3. Did your country take any steps to deal with this issue?

4. What are the steps countries can take to help educate their citizens about the dangers of obesity?
5. What are the steps nations can take to help lower the rate of children being obese or overweight?
6. Does your country believe that the WHO could help resolve this issue? How?

Sources

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HIV/AIDS Epidemic

The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infects cells of the immune system, leading to progressive deterioration of the immune system. This weakens people’s defense systems against infections and some types of cancer. The most advanced stages of HIV infection are known as acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). While important advances have been made regarding HIV and AIDS, such as scaled-up access to treatments and a decline in the number of children born with the virus – prevention rates among adults around the world have largely stalled.

HIV continues to be a major global public health issue, claiming more than 35 million lives so far. There are currently 36.7 million people living with HIV with 20.9 million people receiving antiretroviral therapy. Almost 1,800 young people a day are being newly infected with HIV. There

is no cure for HIV infection, however antiretroviral drugs can control the virus and prevent transmissions so those infected can enjoy healthy, long and productive lives.

Anti-retroviral therapy (ART) is the current treatment for the disease and saves lives, prevents other illness, saves money and promotes development. The Global ART coverage for pregnant and breastfeeding women living with HIV is high at 76%. Just last year, six Caribbean islands eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

It is estimated that currently only 70% of people with HIV know their status. HIV infection is diagnosed through rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs). These tests provide same day-results and are imperative for same-day diagnosis and early treatment and care. The WHO wants to reach the target of 90% of those infected knowing their status. This means an additional 7.5 million people need access to HIV testing services.

While some regions have been successful in treating and diagnosing HIV and AIDS, there are many regions of the world struggling with the virus. The African continent is the most affected region, with 25.6 million people living with HIV in 2016. The African continent accounts for almost two thirds of the global total of new HIV infections.

Although between 2000 and 2016, new HIV infections fell by 39% and HIV-related deaths fell by 13.1 million lives, the push for RDTs and ART treatment needs to continue. The United Nations want to end the epidemic of AIDS by 2030, securing healthy lives and well-being for all. In order to reach this goal, education, information and services to people living with HIV including the young, vulnerable and marginalized must be provided.

Even though we have achieved significant progress in dealing with this terrifying disease, much still needs to be done.

Questions to Consider

1. Is AIDS still a prevalent problem today in your country?
2. How can the WHO provide efficient testing for all of those affected by HIV?
3. What are the measures of prevention that could help eliminate the spread of HIV? Did your country implement a clear plan?
4. How is your country helping the UNAIDS 2016-2021 strategy to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030?
5. How can the WHO increase awareness of HIV while respecting cultural beliefs and norms?
6. What is your country's policy regarding the virus?