

Academy of Science

December 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>

<http://scimunc.wixsite.com/scimunc>

# SCIMUNC II

Hosted by: The Loudoun County Academy of  
Science

## World Health Organization Background Guide 2017



Written by: Siddhant Pathak, chair

## Letter from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

I am excited to meet you all and hearing your possible solutions to these pressing issues. While writing your initial position papers, it is important to fully address the issue and provide an informed analysis and opinion of whatever problem is being discussed in the perspective of the nation you represent. Use the information provided below as an introduction, but NOT as a complete guide, for your position papers.

Additionally, remember to write positions for BOTH of the topics being discussed since either one could be picked. Although these papers do not need to be overly stylized, they should be neat and legible, as well as carefully checked for errors, both factual and grammatical. Position papers will be collected before any committees have begun, so they should be finished before you arrive to the first session of this conference.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email SCIMUNC with "WHO" in the subject line. Besides that, be ready to debate, discuss, and most importantly, have fun! See you all in committee!

Your chair,

Siddhant Pathak

## Topic 1: Universal Health Care Reform

Universal health insurance has been a topic of debate in many nations for the past few decades. The World Health Organization defines health care as the access to medication, quality medical attention, and the adequate maintenance of medical records as necessary for each patient. Currently, the stance on health insurance is split between two major sides: those who support universal health care and those who do not. Those who support universal healthcare (nations like Canada) believe that everybody in one country should be able to have access to health insurance sponsored by the government. Those who do not support universal healthcare believe that private institutions should provide healthcare to their constituents and people who can afford it.

The main reason this is such a topic of debate is that many people argue about who should be paying the sometimes high costs behind health insurance. For example, in America, the passage of Obamacare ensured that all Americans would have the access to medical care that would be facilitated by the government. This act extended previous Medicaid and Medicare institutions and also offered several new advantages, such as allowing dependents to stay on their parents' health insurances well into their 20s, allowing many young adults to establish themselves in a working environment without the fear of not having health insurance. It also provided provisions on allowing people with pre-existing conditions, which were not previously covered by health insurance companies, to get access to healthcare.

Although these changes were embraced by many Americans, conservative thinkers opposed this piece of legislation because of the rise in premiums that many Americans faced that they felt they did not need. This issue is prevalent in many other nations as well, and the clashes in ideologies has slowed down the progression of health insurance coverage in many developed and many developing countries

Currently, the World Health Organization has instituted a plan in an attempt to achieve universal health coverage in every nation by 2030. This plan states that every nation should try to achieve a health care plan for every citizen that covers access to physicians, medication, and an information system all covered by a stable source of funding.

### *Questions to Consider*

1. Does the United Nations have the jurisdiction to urge member nations to institute universal healthcare coverage?
2. What is the most efficient way to provide healthcare to low-income individuals who cannot pay high premiums?
3. What is the best way that less developed nations can begin to develop such a health care system if they do not have the resources for it?
4. How much of a role should private insurance companies play in the development of a universal healthcare plan? Additionally, how should conflicts of interests be minimized if such private entities are involved in direct transactions with the government?

## Topic 2: Ensuring Access to Clean and Safe Drinking Water

Even in the developed and technologically advanced world we live in today, many people still lack basic resources such as food and water. Access to water for sanitation and drinking can improve an overall economy and also has a tremendous impact on public health. A contaminated water source can facilitate the spread of many harmful diseases such as hepatitis A, typhoid, polio, among others. However, due to challenges like climate change, demographic growth, and urbanization, providing clean water access to an exponentially growing population has proven to be a challenge. Although 2.6 billion more people have acquired a clean water source since 1990, it is estimated that half of the world's population will be living in water-stressed areas by 2025.

Currently, approximately 160 million people rely on surface water as their primary source of water and hundreds of millions more rely on unimproved sources of water. In many low and middle income nations, a large percentage of the population does not have ready access to water for sanitation such as handwashing and for health care facilities.

The World Health Organization has combatted the challenge of providing clean and safe water by issuing clear guidelines for water quality to effectively assess which nations are not up to the global standard for clean water. Current efforts of global collaboration have resulted in the creation of wells, pipelines, and other water channels that provide water in many heat-stricken and underserved

parts of the world. However, the current challenge to tackle involves providing developing countries with sustainable water sources to last for years and to cope with population increases and climate change.

### *Questions to Consider*

1. What is the best way to fund the creation of new water sources and how should they be allocated and created?
2. How can existing water sources be improved to reduce their environmental impact?
3. What are ways that the World Health Organization can conserve water and improve sanitation?
4. What should be done to preserve natural sources of water like lakes, rivers, and glaciers?

## Sources

World Health Organization Sustainable Health Goal 3: Health

[http://www.who.int/universal\\_health\\_coverage/en/](http://www.who.int/universal_health_coverage/en/)

World Health Organization Drinking Water Fact Sheet

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs391/en/>