

Cerritos Novice Conference 2020

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)



Topic: Food Insecurity

Director: Daewon Kwon

October 10th, 2020

To Delegates of CHSMUN Novice 2020

Dear Delegates,
Welcome to CHSMUN Novice 2020!

It is our highest honor and pleasure to welcome you all to our 2020 online novice conference here at Cerritos High School. On behalf of the Cerritos High School Model United Nations program, we are proud to host our very first virtual novice conference, where you will become more knowledgeable on international issues, participate in intellectually stimulating discussions, and create new and everlasting friendships.

The CHSMUN program continues to compete around the world as a nationally ranked MUN program. Our delegates utilize diplomacy in order to create complex solutions towards multilateral issues in the global community. Our head chairs are selected from only the best seniors of our program, undergoing a rigorous training process to ensure the highest quality of moderating and grading of debate. Furthermore, all the topic synopses have been reviewed and edited numerous times. We strongly believe that by providing each and every delegate with the necessary tools and understanding, he or she will have everything they need to thrive in all aspects of the committee. We thoroughly encourage each delegate to engage in all of the facets of their topic, in order to grow in their skills as a delegate and develop a greater knowledge of the world around them.

Although this wasn't what we expected, our advisors and staff have put in countless hours to ensure delegates have an amazing experience at the online conference. Our greatest hope is that from attending CHSMUN 2020, students are encouraged to continue on in Model United Nations and nevertheless, inspired to spark change in their surrounding communities. CHSMUN Novice 2020 will provide a quality experience for beginner delegates to develop their speaking and delegating skills.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us! We look forward to seeing you at CHSMUN Novice 2020!

Sincerely,

Anjali Mani and Karishma Patel

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Secretary-Generals

A Note From The Director

Delegates,

My name is Daewon Kwon and I look forward to being your director for the UN Food and Agriculture Organization at the 2020 Cerritos Fall Conference. I joined MUN four years ago, and every conference has been an amazing opportunity to showcase my solutions and growing speaking skills. Out of all the committees, FAO has been my favorite of all time, as the solutions they present are innovative and the issues they tackle are applicable to any period of time. Outside of MUN, I've been part of many initiatives and sports at Cerritos like Volleyball, Swim, Water polo, and Scioly, I also am an avid reader and a fan of interesting hobbies like sculpting with gypsum, spearfishing, and transcribing historical documents! I hope that as your director, I can create an enjoyable environment in our new online format that can contribute to your MUN journey as it has for me. Thank you for your time, and feel free to contact me anytime if you have any questions or concerns!

Sincerely,

Daewon Kwon

Director, FAO

Committee Introduction

The oldest permanent specialized agency in the UN, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), was established on October 16, 1945, replacing the International Institute of Agriculture and leading the eradication of hunger worldwide through proper food security. Initially headquartered in Washington D.C. but moved to Italy, Rome, over 189 member states work in collaboration with the European Union and have an international impact of 130 countries. FAO is separated into eight departments, including various aspects of food insecurity like agriculture, biodiversity, corporate services, and others in order to be able to tackle this multi-faceted issue in various perspectives. The UN branch is led by the Conference of Member Nations, which reconvenes every two years in order to review its legislative related works influencing policy and various global frameworks to ensure high quality, correct the budget for the next biennium, and continuously strive for improvement. Additionally, the conference also is obligated to elect a new Director-General and the governing body consisting of 49 member states for a three-year term. Starting in 1994, a movement was started to also begin decentralizing the agency, with half of the FAO's personnel working in various field offices outside of Rome, Italy, and cutting overall expenses by \$50 million. Funding for the agency comes from a combination of assessed and voluntary contributions, 39 percent coming from assessed contributions by the member countries, and the remaining amount from additional contributions from Member states and other partners, like affiliate organizations and large donors.

TOPIC: Food Insecurity

Background:

The World Food Summit defines food insecurity as when stable physical and economic access to sufficient and nutritious food is absent. According to the World Food Program, in 2018, about 821 million people were malnourished, which has been a stagnating number since 2014 and shows no sign of decreasing. Through improper nutrition, many dangerous consequences are bound to follow. For example, 9 million die due to malnutrition and hunger every year according to the organization The World Counts, 3.1 million being children and accounting for half of all children's deaths worldwide below the age of 5. Not only does food insecurity become a fatal issue, those who survive become three more times more vulnerable to depression and anxiety, while additionally increasing the rates to other irreversible damage like stunting and organ failure. Deforestation, which is the act of clearing large plots of land (consisting of shrubs, trees, and other various types of native vegetation) often for access to a large patch of usable land, is an issue that has been increasing in prevalence in recent times, despite the recent wealth of information regarding the negative implications. From 2014 to 2020, the New York Declaration on Forests in the UN Climate Change Summit expected 150 million hectares of land to be saved and lower our deforestation rates by half internationally, but recent studies show there was an increase in rates by 43 percent instead. Not only is there financial incentive to cut down trees through palm oil and charcoal farming, 1.6 billion people depend on these forests in order to sustain their households. Often, farmers will employ a common practice of burning the local area, as the left land will leave a solid chunk of fertile land. This is exemplified in the fact that about 80% of tropical deforestation, often occurring in developing countries where a significant portion of the population is independently farming for sustenance, can be accredited to agriculture. With the loss of trees, several problems arise, but most prominently a loss of biodiversity and land degradation pose the worst hazards. With the loss of the world's strongest method of carbon sequestration, the local wildlife and other plant life dependent on the trees all disappear, hurting the biodiversity of local nature and fueling climate change that'll negatively impact agriculture for years to come. This also leads to a never ending cycle for the rural farmer, as land degradation and agricultural usage often follows deforestation since trees and its roots hold the soil together and prevent soil erosion. With the lack of proper and healthy soil, crop yield drops by an average of 34 percent and food prices soar, fueling malnutrition trends that affect over 1.2 million people in the developing world (of which 65% are children). The lack of water is another prevalent issue plaguing food security efforts all around the world. 70 percent of water consumption in the world is in the agricultural sector, and in developing countries, this number soars to 95 percent often due to inefficient agricultural systems. With this overwhelming usage of such a scarce resource, it's no surprise that there are large shortages of water, especially in areas affected by climate change and low socioeconomic factors (reliable roads, etc). For example, in Southern Africa where water scarcity has been exponentially magnified in the past few years, food production is speculated to decrease by at least 30% according to IFPRI solely according to climate change (land degradation, loss of vegetation, and lack of water due to

changing climate). Not only that, Lake Victoria dropped by 50% in water streams during droughts (that are increasing in recent decades). Finally, according to a sample land plot the UNEP analyzed, about 38% of the water was contaminated with unsafe levels of nitrate, due to leakage from nearby agricultural production centers. Without proper access to water and continuing inefficient methods, farmers (especially self-sufficient) will be at an exponentially higher risk of food insecurity. One factor that threatens food security is overpopulation. According to the FAO's How To Feed The World in 2050 document, the world's population will increase by 34 percent, which will come to about 9.1 billion people and will be mostly observed in developing countries. Additionally, the world is also projected to increase to 75 percent urbanization, up from 49 percent today. With this increase, the average calorie consumption would increase 15 percent to 3060 kcal per person (observed in 2016), necessitating a 70 percent increase in the food production market. The FAO states that cereal production annually will have to increase from 2 to 3 billion tons and meat production from 200 million to 470 million tonnes. With land becoming an increasingly rare resource as well (and arable land being a small fraction of unused lands or often becoming arid due to aforementioned issues like desertification), production will also be limited to an increasingly malnourished and growing population. Proper improvements are necessary or the world will be on track to malnutrition due to the lack of nutritious food for every individual. With recent developments such as COVID-19 and locust swarms, the aforementioned issues are other factors that only magnify the other causes. With the new pandemic, physical emergency aid has to be socially-distant, and immediate physical aid is now harder to access and distribute. Not only that, the recent locust outbreak (the worst observed in decades) has been lowering the current stockpiles, putting even more at risk. Although the impacts mentioned even forecast that over 200 million additional individuals will become food insecure after this pandemic. Delegates should try to innovate with solutions in order to adapt to these uncertain circumstances and provide food security for all.

United Nations Involvement:

The United Nations has recognized the importance of this issue and has taken numerous steps in order to combat food insecurity around the world. After the creation of FAO in 1945, the UN set out to establish guidelines on essential human rights and the necessity of proper nutrition, drafting the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and listing food security as one of the many inalienable human rights. Then, in 1961, the World Food Program was created after the 1960 FAO conference in order to provide food aid through the UN. Aside from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations have acknowledged the severity of food insecurity and set eight different goals in the Millennium Development Goals. Between 1990 to 2015, the first goal was to "eradicate extreme poverty and hunger", achieving this by providing "full and productive" work to all individuals, halving the number of households with a daily income of \$1 or less, and most importantly cutting the number of individuals who suffer from hunger in half. Even if you observe the Sustainable Development Goals set in 2015, the second Sustainable Development Goal works to improve the current situation of food insecurity, stating "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture." In addition to this, the United Nations has passed numerous resolutions

to help raise awareness and relieve tensions caused by food insecurity, like A/RES/35/70, which established the World Food Day to bring . Even recently, the FAO has established the Global Humanitarian Response Plan, formulating different approaches in order to combat the changing situations. Physically, in 82 countries, over 500 genebanks were able to be conserved through 14 distributing centers that distributed a total of 5.3 million seeds and provided local farmers with the opportunity to plant healthy and viable seeds. The FAO has also held multiple World Summits on Food Security, addressing various aspects of the issue and inviting 10,000 participants from 185 countries to appoint hundreds of governmental organizers to provide for an inalienable right.

Bloc Positions:

Western: The western Bloc faced several unique challenges that may require different approaches than the other Blocs. Although malnutrition (in the United States, for example, about 88% of the population is food secure) is not as severe compared to other Blocs, new developments and conflicts have been shaking their previously firm foundation. The Western Bloc is leading the fight against malnutrition, an example being the US's creation of the international Feed the Future Initiative. Under Barack Obama's presidency, the program was funded with \$3.5 billion and was tasked to work in other Blocs to promote sustainable economic growth in order to maintain food security, especially in rural areas, through maintaining fixed prices and funding sustainable and productive agricultural practices.

Latin America and Caribbean: In the Latin American and Caribbean Bloc, about 6.1% of the population combined (accounting for over 37 million individuals) are food insecure, according to the World Health Organization. Although a significant number, it's to be noticed that this number is extremely small compared to other blocs and is impressive considering that in 1990, 68 million, or 15.7% of their population, was reported to not be properly nourished. Unlike the other Blocs, this Bloc's problem doesn't rest in the issue of the lack of food, as it actually has an agricultural production efficiency that produces enough food to sustain its entire population. This Bloc's problem is that because of socioeconomic factors and inefficient frameworks, individuals cannot have any access to safe, nutritious food in satisfactory quantities. To combat this, the Latin America and Caribbean Bloc has been working alongside initiatives like the Feed The Future Initiative, which collaborate with other programs like the FAO's regional Hunger-Free Latin America and Caribbean Initiative. Through their efforts in the past three decades, they have played a crucial role in increasing accessibility for all and decreasing the overall amount of malnourished individuals exponentially.

African: The African Bloc is one of the main Blocs affected by food insecurity, as over 239 million individuals were food insecure (about ¼ of the world's food insecure population). For example, one of the African Bloc's countries (Yemen) has one of the highest consistently ranked in the Global Hunger Index, with a 61.1 percent child stunting rate, 35 percent difference in the size of diets between genders, and a 17.9 percent wasting rate. Not only that, in 37 countries inside the African Bloc, there was a study conducted which showed how with a lack of potable

water alone (not accounting for other factors like conflict exemplified by the South Sudan Civil War) decreased the production of agriculture by 54%. The African Bloc has been beginning to respond through initiatives like the Australia Africa Food Security Initiative, created by the Commonwealth in 2011 and seeks to distribute the Australian agricultural research while stimulating the private sector in Africa.

Asian-Pacific: The Asian-Pacific Bloc has a unique challenge when it comes to food insecurity. As 2030 approaches, many countries in this Bloc are becoming more urbanized and have made amazing progress towards economic growth. However, only a handful are set to meet the SDG goals, and it's predicted that despite the economic improvement in this Bloc, approximately 486.1 million people still remain malnourished due to insufficient production, inefficient distribution methods, low overall nutritional value per serving, and inflated/unaffordable prices. The progress is expected to slow exponentially and stagnate as 75% of maternal and child sanitation is also predicted to decrease in quality. Despite these shortcomings, the region has been a major hub of initiative in order to combat food insecurity, with initiatives like the South Asia Food and Nutrition Security Initiative (SAFANSI) popping up in every corner of the map. The initiative has sought to combat chronic malnutrition through innovative solutions and research, first securing food security in 2010-2015 as its first phase and now advocating for change and improving our current capacity in the second phase of work. Endorsed by the World Bank and the European Commission, their impact has reached multiple countries and has touched on many different aspects of the issue the FAO listed in its eight departments.

Basic Solutions:

When researching solutions, delegates should consider three main points and delve into the various aspects of the issue through different subtopics of food insecurity like deforestation, water shortage, agricultural practices, land degradation, and others. One aspect that delegates should consider is data, as the FAO is one of the main facets of distributing data regarding food insecurity and data collection to promote more efficiency. Delegates may consider implementing a more accessible database or creating a new source of data, but should recognize that many resources are already collecting similar data regarding food insecurity and a call for a new information hub should imply innovative techniques or new information. Another aspect that delegates should consider is deforestation, which is often a necessary but destructive act that leads to detrimental results for both the farmer and the environment. Instead, recognizing their need and providing incentive for those farmers and presenting a simple solution to support both the livelihood of their household and the local nature would be the best solution. One example can be Nucleario, founded by a native Brazilian Bruno Rutman Pagnocelli who grew up with the horrors of deforestation in his home country. Recognizing the futility of current efforts to maintain and constantly plant new trees, he utilized biomimicry to mimic leaf litter with a small canister preventing the washing away of soil and overall humidity/moisture levels consistent, making water usage efficient while protecting seedlings from physical harm. Not only does this simplify the process of replanting forests, it's a cheap alternative that increases the overall success rate and hosts a variety of different plants, potentially trees that could become a second

revenue stream for farmers, like a fruit tree. Of course, despite its cheap production and reliability, distribution to rural areas will be a challenge, and delegates should seek for ways to further incentivize and distribute both short and long-term solutions to overcome this limitation. Finally, delegates should consider those who are affected by food insecurity, especially those who are often farming for personal sustenance and are in rural areas where socioeconomic standards may be low, and seek to provide frameworks and practical solutions like the South Asia Food and Nutrition Security Initiative (SAFANSI) to provide immediate aid. Delegates, however, must consider the policies of other countries where this will be implemented, how effective it has been in various climates/environments, and differentiate between long and short term solutions. Delegates should also keep in mind the second topic of the East African Locust Crisis when researching solutions, and to properly balance the usage of solutions for both topics.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is the current food security situation in your country? Are there any conflicts or other circumstances that could potentially affect your citizens and their reliable access to nutritious food?
2. What has your country done to combat food insecurity both in and outside its borders? What made their initiatives successful, and what kinds of frameworks have your country allowed/favored?
3. What can be done to improve the sustainability and efficiency in agricultural methods currently practiced in various environments around the world? Is this feasible to be implemented in multiple settings worldwide, or would you need to modify this approach to each Bloc or country?
4. What different solutions can be implemented in order to maximize efficiency and utilize our limited resources, and will it be feasible and accessible especially in developing countries?
5. After providing immediate aid, what can be done to prevent future issues and increase resilience to potential crises?
6. What have the impacts of recent events had on food security, and what can be done to adapt to our current environment and fulfill our goals?

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