



Santa Clara Valley Model United Nations

XXXV Annual Session - February 3-4, 2006

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Chairs

Danielle Pham
408-375-1352
dapham@scu.edu

Yha'Mourhia Wright
408-835-1966
mourhia@gmail.com

Michelle Vo
408-499-9805
vomichelle@hotmail.com

Topics:

Natural Disasters and
Crisis Prevention
Women's Rights

Welcome delegates to the United Nations Development Programme! This year's topics for the committee will be "Natural Disasters and Crisis Prevention" and the "Promotion of Gender Equality and Women's Rights." Before going onto the topic synopsis, we would like to introduce your chairs.

Danielle Pham is an alumna of Santa Teresa, class of 2004. She is currently at Santa Clara University, studying business. However, she plans on graduating this year to pursue a legal education next fall. This will be her fifth year (and perhaps last year) participating in SCVMUN. She is currently working on her thesis and law school applications and looks forward to the spring time, when she plans to travel to Europe and dedicate herself to shopping.

Michelle Vo is also an alumna of Santa Teresa, class of 2004. She is attending De Anza College with the purpose of transferring to Santa Clara University. She is pursuing a major in Finance, as well as a possible major in English. She has participated in three SCVMUNs, but this will be her first chairing experience. In her free time, she likes to catch up on much needed sleep, eat, and go shopping.

Yhá Mourhia D. Wright is a Santa Teresa alumna, class of 2005. During her junior and senior years at Santa Teresa, she was a member of the International Relations Club or IRC. Since, graduation, she has gone on to attend Santa Clara University where she plans on majoring in Communications with a minor in International Business. At Santa Clara, Yhá Mourhia works in the Multicultural Center. She is one of three siblings and enjoys singing, dancing, acting and reading.

We look forward to having you in our committee and hope that you have a fun, yet constructive, experience. Also, please read the additional information before writing your position papers. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Your UNDP Chairs
Danielle Pham
Yha'Mourhia Wright
Michelle Vo



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Additional UNDP Information

To make your position papers more readable, please format your papers in this way: we would like the papers split into three sections: General Information, Country's Position, and Possible Resolutions. It is expected that you do additional background information to supplement the general ideas we outline in the synopsis. We have also chosen broad topics in hopes that you will choose directions for the committee that will be most interesting to you.

For delegates from developed countries, if you get the chance, please skim "How Rich Countries Can Help Poor Countries Help Themselves." The link is http://undg.org/documents/2355-From_Promise_to_Performance__How_Rich_Countries_Can_Help_Poor_Countries_Help_Themselves_-_34.pdf. This will give you an idea of what your role in the committee should be.

It is expected that you turn in a position paper and that it be on-time. Anyone without a position paper will not be eligible for an award. If for any reason your paper will be late, you will have to contact that chairs, stating your reason and length of extension needed. You can e-mail Danielle at DAPham@scu.edu or call her at 408-375-1352. Papers turned in late without an extension will not be reviewed.

Finally, this is a professional conference, and it is expected that delegates dress accordingly. Please do not wear jeans or sneakers. Gentlemen, please wear a long-sleeved shirt and preferably, a tie. Ladies, please do not wear skirts that are shorter than mid-thigh or with slits higher than that length (it is preferred that you wear knee length).

We ask that you follow these guidelines as to maintain the dignity of the conference and the productive environment of the committee. Thank you, and we hope to see you in February!

Danielle Pham



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The UNDP seeks to provide developing countries with the means to help themselves; focusing on the eradication of poverty, improvement of human rights, and the Millennium Development Goals.

Natural Disasters and Crisis Prevention

Background

A natural disaster is defined as any natural event that has catastrophic results for society. They are capable of destroying lives and communities instantly. But it is impossible to predict when disaster will strike that scientists can only speculate. Even though computer models are not sophisticated enough to predict the future, the models and graphs that it reveals are frightening. The fundamental of surviving a natural disaster involves preparation, planning, and communication.

Preparation is a key to reaching affected areas quickly and timely to prevent more possible deaths. While it is true that less people are being killed by natural disasters, more people are being affected by them because of the world's changing climate. Instead of waiting for disaster to strike, it is important for governments to have a plan in mind. Another important aspect involves communicating with impacted areas. But in developing nations, this leads to another question of how the government will communicate with areas lacking media access. A large part of world still lives outside of the influence of the media. In many parts of Africa, television, radio and even newspapers are non-existent. In numerous countries, like Vietnam, the TV only broadcasts for two or three hours per day. And in some countries, for instance in Siberia, Kazakhstan and Mongolia, the people have no way of receiving the programs even though there are TV transmitters.

There has to be an effective system of gathering emergency supply kits and transporting it to affected areas. Food and water are other issues calling for attention.

Case Study: Earthquake in Pakistan

One example of how deadly natural disasters can be is the Pakistan earthquake. Earthquakes are unpredictable events occurring when the tectonic plates under the Earth's plate suddenly shifts. On the surface, it has the ability to shake a building foundation to its core. On October 8, 2005, a devastating earthquake with a magnitude measuring 7.6 on the moment magnitude scale, struck Pakistan. In its path, the quake traveled 105 miles to Gilgit, Kashmir, and reached as far as Afghanistan and Northern India, bringing a series of catastrophic events, which still remains unresolved. More than 978 aftershocks were measured as of October 19. Thousands of buildings and homes collapsed, trapping victims that have yet to be recovered. The biggest impact occurred in Uri, India, damaging 80% of the town. Mudslides, triggered by the quake covered villages and roads, making it difficult for rescuers to reach the mountainous regions. The death toll reached approximately 86,000, along with 69,000 injuries. UN officials are worried that another 80,000 deaths will occur before the winter is over, while 3.3 million people are left without shelter. Not to mention that there is a lack of proper equipments for clearing the roads and wreckage. Instead, citizens are left digging through the rubbles with pickaxes, or even their bare hands. If relief efforts do not improve, the death toll will increase.



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Natural Disasters and Crisis Prevention (continued)

UNDP Involvement

Natural disaster affects every single country, developed or undeveloped. However, developed countries will be more negatively impacted since they often lack the infrastructure and means to react quickly and effectively. The UNDP has created the Disaster Reduction Unit whose goals include promoting the integration of disaster risk planning and preparation by national and regional programmes. The DRU also aids in strengthening already existing institutions and supporting inter-agency programmes in risk prone countries.

Points to Consider

With the increased number of natural disasters occurring, natural disasters are going to have an increasing impact on our world. While this synopsis gives a brief overview of the topic and goals of the committee, it is expected that delegates continue learning about the topic in general and in their countries' context. Please review the information on the Disaster Reduction Unit.

Questions to Address

- Presently, is there a natural disaster program in your country? If yes, how effective is it? Can it be implemented in developing nations?
- How can governments in both developed and developing nations effectively communicate natural disaster warnings to its citizens?
- Should the central government or local city governments delegate the task of gathering emergency supplies?
- How can the UNDP's existing goals and programs be improved to address the changing environment?

Sites for Research

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/>

<http://www.undp.org/bcpr/disred/index.htm>

<http://www.unisdr.org/>

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc103?OpenForm>

This website lists all the natural disasters countries are currently facing.



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The Promotion of Gender Equality and Women's Rights

Background

The United Nations has dedicated itself to eight Millennium Development Goals, which all member states have pledged to meet by the year 2015. One of these goals is the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The United Nations, in promoting the ideas of freedom, equality, tolerance, and shared responsibility throughout the global community, finds it imperative that the rights and treatment of women be addressed.

The UN is working towards have gender equality to empower women and eradicate the disparity amongst women in both primary and secondary education. For the year 2005, it is the goal of the United Nations to eliminate the disparity between women and men in primary and secondary education. Ultimately, by 2015 the UN wants to work towards women in countries having the resources to attend all levels of education.

At this time, women disproportionately suffer the burden of poverty, are the primary agents of child welfare, are the victims of widespread and persistent discrimination in all areas of life, and put their lives at risk every time they become pregnant. They are increasingly susceptible to HIV/AIDS and other major diseases, play an indispensable role in the management of natural resources, and have the right to gain as much as men from the benefits brought by globalization.

UNDP Involvement

The UN Millennium Development Project has helped UNDP focus their goals by defining gender equality in three categories or "domains." The first category is capabilities and refers to the basic human abilities in relation to women. Health, nutrition, and education are all apart of the basic human needs and abilities and should be available to all women. Secondly, opportunities are a focus for the UNDP. Women should be enabled to use their "basic capabilities" as a means to succeed beyond their normal expectations. Women should succeed in their economically and politically. Lastly, the UNDP focuses on women being liberated from harsh violence that has been placed on them by living in patriarchal societies where women are viewed as less than inferior to their male counterparts. As a cure to this social ailment, we have focused on trying to liberate women from violence and conflict which lead to both physical and psychological harm to the women who are being subjected to these ways of living.

To achieve these goals, countries must have policy, plans, and practices that promote women's rights. An area that must be addressed by all countries includes the development of democratic governance. The UNDP has supported this cause by supporting women in the electoral process. The UNDP also plays a key role in legislative and judicial reform to ensure women's rights are protected by policy and in practice. The UNDP has also played a role in poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, which are areas that need to addressed as countries move towards gender equality. The UNDP has also created the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) which works to protect women's rights.



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The Promotion of Gender Equality and Women's Rights (continued)

Points to Consider

For the development of any country, the development of women's rights and equality is imperative. There are two ways of achieving gender equality: mainstreaming gender and promoting women's empowerment. Please become familiar with both methods. While this synopsis gives a brief overview of the topic and goals of the committee, it is expected that delegates continue learning about the topic in general and in their countries' context.

Questions to Address

- What rights are legislated to women in your country by law? In practice, do these laws work? Why or why not?
- What programs are implemented in your country for the promotion of women's rights?

Sites for Research

<http://www.mdgender.net/>

<http://www.undp.org/gender/>

<http://www.unifem.undp.org/>

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reports.htm>

These are country reports for most countries concerning the advancement of women.