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*ASMUN Conference 2019*

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**Committee guide  
Economic and Social Council**



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## CHAIRS

### *HIDDE WILDEMAN*

Dear delegates,

My name is Hidde Wildeman, I am considered by many, a chair veteran when it comes to dealing with delegates developing different skills. A quick eye might have noticed that my use of alliteration is as fine as a feather. I, together with my fellow amazing chairman Rutger Sikkema will be a positive influence that guides the resolution-making process in a perfectly fine manner. Due to my experience with numerous international politics-related events such as this year's ASMUN, I was provided the possibility of refining and developing my academic skills such as debating. It is this year once again that I could not be happier, the cause of this astonishing positivity has to do with the fact that YOU, my dear delegates, are granted the possibility to undergo that personal development that I once took and am currently taking to this day. Extracurricular activities like ASMUN are where one is able to create the fondest memories and step out one's comfort zone. I advise every single individual delegate to give their all during the conference but mostly have fun and learn. I and Rutger Sikkema will ensure that a respectful and enjoyable ambience is provided during the conference. I am looking forward to seeing you all soon.

### *RUTGER SIKKEMA*

Dear fellow MUNboys, MUNgirls and all other that our BEN despises. My name is Rutger Sikkema and together with Mister Wildeman, we shall be your chairs. When I started MUN I thought it would be extremely boring, but I was wrong. It was great and I tried to be more active in the following MUNS. This all led me to this moment, this achievement, a spot at the ASMUN chairing table with no other than the legend himself, Mister Wildeman. This epic piece of raw meat is perfect for chairing because he is very talented, and I mean this. I enjoy MUN a lot because I love discussing certain topics with people. As a matter of fact, I like winning even more. MUN for me gives me the perfect opportunity to train these skills and put them to the test. The best thing is that everybody is out there, not knowing what to do, so there is no need to be shy! I can be serious as well if anybody is wondering... I look forward to chairing for you, and I know that it will be loads of fun.

## COUNTRIES IN THE COMMITTEE

- China
- Russia
- United Kingdom
- United states of America
- France
- Ethiopia
- Indonesia
- Germany
- Sweden
- Bolivia
- Coite d'ivoir
- Colombia
- Democratic republic of the Congo
- Saudi Arabia
- Papua New Guinea
- Jordan
- Syria
- South Korea
- Argentina
- Kazakhstan

## INTRODUCTION AND TASK

Welcome delegates to the committee of the Economic and Social Council. It is one of the five main organs of the United Nations. ECOSOC's responsibility lies at coordinating almost every aspect that has to do with economic and social problems discussed by the United Nations. Example of their goals are to:

- Have (to a certain extent) economically stabilized countries;
- Have human rights everywhere in the world counting for every single individual, despite your gender or background for example.



President Inga Rhonda King

One of ECOSOC's specific goals at the moment is to help vulnerable small island developing States to confront hurricanes, typhoons, drought and other impacts of climate change. According to the president of ECOSOC, Inga Rhonda King, this problem should be taken seriously. Besides that, she stresses the need for innovative solutions, as well as official development assistance and risk- informed financing, but moreover the necessity of the support of the international community.<sup>1</sup>

Delegates, it is now your task to find a solution for this complex problem, keeping in mind the requirements of your president, Inga Rhonda King.

## HISTORY OF ECOSOC

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was established as one of the six main or principal organs of the United Nations (UN). ECOSOC is considered to be the biggest and most complex subsidiary body of the United Nations. In short the function of ECOSOC can be described as being responsible for directing and coordinating the economic, social, cultural and humanitarian activities which are carried out by the United Nations. For example, ECOSOC has the main responsibility within the United Nations to follow up on all major past international conferences linked to the sustainable development goals. ECOSOC was one of the biggest players during the examination of the Millennium Development Goals and during the implementation of the new sustainable development goals for 2030.

First of all, it's important to know that ECOSOC does not only consist of delegations of states, because also NGO's participate in their work as they have a consultative status. In 1965 and in 1974 the ECOSOC the number of members was changed after an amendment. Where there used to be 18 states/ members, there are now 54 members as a consequence of the amendments. The ECOSOC membership is based on geographic representation,

which means that every geographical based area (for example continents) has a fixed number of members. For ECOSOC counts that Africa has the highest number of members, which is 14. Western Europe and North America have one seat less, so 13 seats. 11 Seats are allocated to Asia, where Latin America and Caribbean states have a total of 10 seats together. The last 6 members are from East European states. Every three years there are elections, (which take place at the General Assembly,) to choose new member states for ECOSOC. The elections for presidency however are held annually and the president gets chosen from one of the countries with relatively less power. The current president is Ms. Inga Rhonda King, a delegate of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. A decision can only be taken if there is a simple majority (more than 50% vote in favour).

In 2005, during the ECOSOC World Summit, the decision was taken to organise meetings every, whereby they discuss the progress made on the internationally agreed development goals.<sup>2</sup>

In 2013, the most far-reaching reform of the Economic and Social Council since 1991 was taken by the General Assembly: the adoption of resolution 68/1. 'Resolution 68/1 makes sure that ECOSOC is in a leading position when identifying emerging challenges and promoting reflection, debate and innovative thinking on development, as well as in achieving a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. In addition, it makes it

possible for ECOSOC to convene a special meeting at another UN location to address urgent developments.

## **GOAL OF THE SESSION**

The UN strongly believes in climate change, but even more so we believe that climate change must, in any way, shape or form, be hindered from progressing any further. According to studies held by multiple UN organisations, the effects of climate change will mainly show in states that are easily damaged by the effects of extreme weather. These states are mainly island states around tropical zones near the equator. The growing extreme weather conditions worldwide and rising sea levels gradually cause destruction in these vulnerable island states. Because diminishing the extreme weather conditions and the severity of climate change and global warming is virtually impossible, the UN has called the members of the ECOSOC together today to discuss the topic of building resiliency in these vulnerable states. A suitable resolution to this problem should contain solutions to problems such as:

- The lack of resources to provide safety for the civilians in these vulnerable states;
- The lack of education on the topic of weather extremities and the urgency towards climate resiliency;

- The fact that the current infrastructure in these states is not capable of withstanding any unpredicted hurricanes, floods, droughts, typhoons or any other impact from climate change;
- The shortage and disruption of programmes that take on the effects/ that take measures to stimulate climate resilience,
- The fact that many states are not willing to improve the overall “eco-friendliness” of their country; think of things like the production and commerce of electric or hybrid cars, large scale recycling etc. to decrease overall CO2 emissions.

## HISTORY OF CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Throughout the past decades, climate change, and in particular global warming, has been a big theme and played a big role in many environmental dilemmas that have presented themselves in climate-vulnerable states. Every few years the tropics suffer from the effects of hurricanes and typhoons, such as Hurricane Matthew, which struck many states on the western side of South America. And as we see today, the east coast of the USA, particularly the state of California, is experiencing an extreme drought, which has resulted in thousands of forest fires and families being forced to flee their homes and lives because of these extreme weather conditions. While many states in South America are well funded against hurricanes and water-related natural disasters, and California is resilient against extreme droughts due to sufficient monetary funding, many states in tropical regions, like island states, are not. The only way to soften the blow of a natural disaster is by building up resilience against these giants, as we cannot change the current weather system. In many states around the world we have seen successful ways of preventing the unnecessary demise of these disasters, for example Japan.

For decades now, Japan has fallen victim to multiple natural disasters such as: typhoons, floods and earthquakes. Over the years the country has been developing high-tech infrastructure which is buoyant to most disasters and well-functioning warning systems to ensure that all inhabitants of a threatened area are able to evacuate as quickly and swiftly as possible.

The main difference between Japan and other vulnerable states is that Japan has had a booming economy in the past, which ensured that the country has a well-funded programme against natural disasters and experts on the subject, who are able to spread knowledge on climate resilience and battling the effects of natural disasters.

As we know by now, CO2 is one of the main contributors to global warming, which means that not only is the air in big cities getting extremely smoggy, but the sea levels are rising, temperatures are rising at an alarming rate and extreme weather conditions are occurring more often than they should. A suitable resolution should therefore also include these topics and strive to find a solution for them. The delegates must discuss ways that overall



CO2 emissions could be minimized by looking at the main factors that cause this: the industrial sector, transportation (flights, ships, non-electric cars etc.).

Underdeveloped states, mainly in South-East Asia, South America and Africa do not possess the knowledge, funding or programmes to counter these natural attacks and often suffer the consequences thereof, these states lack hazard management against extreme weather conditions. A suitable resolution must therefore also include a solution to this issue; address the fact that many states simply do not possess the knowledge and funding it takes to prevent the mass destruction of natural disasters and improve nationwide (and ultimately worldwide) eco-friendly products.

It is up to ECOSOC to draft a suitable resolution for these vulnerable states in order to ensure the safety of not only the civilians, but also of the biodiversity, economy and infrastructure.

## **BLOC POSITIONS**

### **EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

The prosperous European countries admit the climate change problem and are willing to try to improve the situation. However, they would like to see the whole world trying to tackle climate change, instead of them being the only ones. These countries are willing to give financial aid to help the vulnerable countries. As they believe the main way to tackle the situation in the vulnerable countries right now is preventing and adapting, they strongly urge other countries to not only give financial aid, but also humanitarian aid. Furthermore, they stimulate action against climate change. New techniques are also seen as a significant part of the plan. These techniques should improve the hazard management, which will have to lead to more preparedness as new catastrophes should be prevented.

### **AUSTRALIA**

Australia believes that climate change is a big problem, with maybe even vital consequences. As Australia has its own difficulties concerning these consequences, they have a made plan for themselves to tackle the problem. Australia believes that in order to improve the resilience of Australian environment, money should be invested in science. Great investments in science have been done to get more knowledge about the weather and climate in Australia. As a consequence, specific patterns have been recognized in the weather a climate, which makes it easier to set up a plan that enlarges the good adaption practices. Australia's priority right now is to solve their own plans, by investing in science and innovation. They are however willing to also help the other vulnerable states. In order to adapt to future climate changes, Australia believes that those countries should invest in science too.

## NORTH AMERICA

In North America we see that not all countries take the climate change problem serious. These countries might not be willing to help as much as other countries. In North America however we also find vulnerable states. These states hope to get financial aid in order to pay their debts and to recover from catastrophes in the past. These countries see climate change as a big threat. In addition to financial aid they believe that new innovative techniques and more open-minded policies might be a key to the problem. In order to prevent new catastrophes in the future they would like to see support from the international community.

## AFRICA

In the past the coasts of Africa have been struck by extremities like hurricanes and tropical cyclones before, and Africa has managed to call for and receive help for the victims that have sadly fallen from these disasters. So not only is Africa one of the more vulnerable regions in the world when it comes to extreme weather conditions, it also has lots of experience dealing with these conditions. Africa is also home to some of the most disaster struck islands, especially in the tropical regions. Seeing as many African states do not possess the funding or necessities needed to manage such a crisis, the only resources they have to spare are knowledge and humanitarian support. Keep in mind that the knowledge that African states possess over this topic is unfortunately limited, due to lack of overall education in this region. Africa would therefore propose the solution of setting up education programmes that teach inhabitants of danger zones in their area and also for the improvement of infrastructure in these zones, to minimize the effects when another natural disaster strikes in these vulnerable island states.

## ASIA

Nowadays, with Asia's booming economy, we see that some Asian countries take the matter of climate change quite seriously, especially when it comes to building resilience in their own vulnerable island nations. Japan, for example, has set up an amazing infrastructure and warning system for when a tsunami strikes. Even though tsunamis aren't one of the extreme weather conditions caused by global warming, Japan lies near a major fault line in the earth's crust, which means that earthquakes, and eventually tsunamis, are a common threat in those regions. Furthermore, islands in Southeast Asia are receiving funding for education programmes and for the improvement of infrastructure from more well faring Asian countries. The above mentioned states that receive funding are for example islands near the coast of Thailand and Thailand itself, which have experienced many natural disasters the past few decades due to climate change, like tropical hurricanes etc.

## LATIN-AMERICA

As we all know, states in Latin-America all well known for their rich culture and beautiful nature zones, however this comes at a price. Many islands near the coast of Brazil, for example, lie perfectly on and around the equator, which means that they easily fall victim to El Niño weather conditions and climate change, in particular the rising sea levels and rising

temperatures. Much like Africa these states simply do not have the funds that are needed to establish an infrastructure in the danger zones that is capable of defending a city and its inhabitants from extreme weather conditions. In south American countries this becomes a big problem when a disaster strikes where lots of people reside in a small area, for example the infamous slums of Brail. This can however easily be prevented by setting up a warning system, much like the Japanese, by warning the inhabitants through an alarm that can be heard anywhere in town, that a major hurricane/ cyclone/ tsunami etc. is coming. This is therefore, one of the propositions of these Latin-American states, along with the improvement of the current natural disaster education system.

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