



**President's Letter:**

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Economic and Social Council of the Model United Nations Conference!

My name is Victoria Maras, and I will be one of your chairs this year. I am a first-year at Earlham College, and I plan to double major in Politics and History. I'm extremely interested in international relations and diplomacy, and I'm particularly fascinated by the United Nations. I've had numerous political and diplomatic experiences over the years, through classes and extracurricular activities, but this is my first time participating in Model UN, so I'm very excited to experience this conference with you!

My name is Nate Guerra, and I will be your other chair this year. I am also a first year at Earlham College, and am very excited to be chairing for my first time. I am undecided when it comes to my major, but I am leaning towards Biology. Even though my interests lie in the sciences, I found my passion for diplomacy and politics when I joined my Model UN team in my sophomore year of highschool and have participated in the club since. I am looking forward to all of the interesting debates and discussions that we will be having during the conference and meeting you all!

The Economic and Social Council is central to the UN system of advancing sustainable development from economic, social, and environmental perspectives. ECOSOC links many UN entities, providing guidance and coordination, and is responsible for follow-up to major UN summits and conferences. We hope that you will come prepared with research and enthusiasm. We look forward to meeting all of you! Do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,  
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Victoria Maras ([vgmaras16@earlham.edu](mailto:vgmaras16@earlham.edu))

### **Committee Background:**

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. Established in 1946, the Council is central to the UN system to advance economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. There are 54 members, and the Council holds four-week sessions each July, with an additional April meeting with key finance ministers from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The President of the Council is elected for a one year term and the Council structures its work around an annual theme of global importance; the 2016 theme is “implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to results.” The Council is responsible for coordinated follow-up to major UN summits and conferences, and links many UN entities, including regional economic and social commissions, functional commissions that facilitate intergovernmental discussions of major global issues, and other specialized agencies, programs, and funds. Furthermore, ECOSOC supervises subsidiary and expert bodies in the economic, social, and environmental fields. The Council engages policymakers, parliamentarians, academics, major groups, foundations, business sector representatives, and NGOs in a productive dialogue that encourages formulation of policies linking economic, social, and environmental action.

## Topic 1: Peacebuilding and Post-Conflict Recovery and Development

### Overview:

The term peacebuilding refers to efforts to prevent a country from lapsing or relapsing into violent conflict. This can be achieved by strengthening national capacities for conflict management, which can lay the foundation for development and sustainable peace. Peacebuilding requires sustained international support. International aid can come in the form of monitoring ceasefires, demobilizing combatants, assisting returning refugees, helping to organize and monitor new government elections, supporting justice and security reform, and enhancing human rights protections. Peacebuilding is often supported by humanitarian and development agencies, and peacekeeping operations have played an increasingly significant role. Throughout its history, the Economic and Social Council has played an experimental role in peacebuilding. The Council develops mechanisms to help countries respond to problems faced by countries emerging from conflict. The major challenge of peacebuilding is discovering what works and what does not.

### Historical Background:

The term “peacebuilding” emerged in the 1970s, when Johan Galtung called for the promotion of sustainable peace by addressing conflict’s “root causes” and the support of local peace management and conflict resolution. Following Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s 1992 report, *An Agenda for Peace*, peacebuilding became a familiar concept within the United Nations. In 2002, the Economic and Social Council established the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Groups to help create and define programs to support countries emerging from conflict; the Council created two groups focusing on Guinea-Bissau and Burundi. In 2005, following a World Summit, General Assembly and Security Council resolutions established a new Peacebuilding Commission, to focus specifically on creating sustainable peace practices. The Economic and Social Council has invited the chair of this Commission to inform it of economic and social challenges it encounters, and General Assembly resolutions 60/180 and 61/16 have affirmed the importance of interaction between ECOSOC and the Peacebuilding Commission. These resolutions underscore ECOSOC’s valuable experience in the area of post-conflict peacebuilding. In 2007, the Secretary-General’s Policy Committee agreed that the following statement should form a basis for the UN peacebuilding process: “Peacebuilding involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding strategies must be coherent and tailored to specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritized, sequenced, and therefore relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives.” Since 1990, more than 600 peace agreements have been concluded, and nearly 120,000 Peacekeepers were deployed in the late 1990s and early 2000s in countries around the world.

**Current situation:**

Across the globe there are many countries that are in need of international assistance in their post conflict peace building efforts. War torn countries are perceived as a threat to international security by the international community as they lack clear leadership of the government, but more importantly of the military decisions of the country. Due to these perceived threats, global superpowers like the United States, in collaboration with other countries and the United Nations, try to assist peace building efforts, but sometimes there are other interests that inhibit their ability to be the impartial in their efforts. Due to the complexity of the situations in countries post conflict, a multifaceted and comprehensive course of action is required to prevent countries from relapsing into conflict.

One country that is currently in the midst of receiving international assistance in their efforts to build peace in their country is Iraq. Since the 1980s Iraq has been a constant state of conflict, but the situation was worsen after the 2003 invasion by the United States. After the combined efforts by the Iraqi and American forces to overthrow Saddam Hussein and his regime, the two powers faced several issues on how to stabilize the country economically and socially. The financial ramifications of the war cost were immense and have been estimated to be a total of 5 trillion USD by the two countries. Leading up to 1990, Iraq's economy was on the rise due to the high production rate of oil (the GDP of the country went from 3 billion in 1969, to 179 billion in 1989). The sanctions implemented in 1990 by the United States and the Security Council took an economic toll on the country, however the reduction in oil production and the slowed economy in the country was even worsened by the war. The war caused devastation to the infrastructure and landscape of the country which also had detrimental effects on the economic situation of the country and lead to Iraq to be in a weak economic situation after the war.

In the rubbles of the post war Iraq rose the self-proclaimed Islamic State, which started to claim land and seized control of most of Iraq in 2014 when they pushed prominent political figures out of the country. ISIS took control of most of Iraq's oil reserves which has significantly slowed the economy of Iraq and has lowered the GDP of the country considerably. Oil exports make up nearly 99% of all exports of the country, and 54% of the GDP; the losses of oil reserves have been a hard economic loss for the country. ISIS has also taken significant steps to dismantle the standing government and has left the government of Iraq unstable politically weakened.

The international community has been working to hard to both support the country of Iraq while also fighting the caliphate within. In its current situation, it is hard to clearly separate the two and has made it hard to build peace within the country and rebuild.

**Questions to consider:**

1. How can the international community assist the country of Iraq as they strive for sustained peace and stability?
2. How much international intervention is needed?
3. How can countries target efforts against the Islamic State that has control of Iraq, while also assisting the country and Iraqi forces?

**Bibliography and Recommended Sources:**

- Information about ECOSOC peacebuilding efforts  
<http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/peacebuilding.shtml>
- International Peace Institute website for news and information on international peacebuilding efforts <https://www.ipinst.org>
- Information on post conflict reconstruction in Iraq  
[http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reprints/2006/RAND\\_RP1197.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reprints/2006/RAND_RP1197.pdf)  
<http://www.usip.org/publications/post-conflict-iraq-race-stability-reconstruction-and-legitimacy>
- Information on the consequences of war in Iraq  
<https://www.globalpolicy.org/humanitarian-issues-in-iraq/consequences-of-the-war-and-occupation-of-iraq.html>  
<http://www.e-ir.info/2013/10/07/implications-of-the-iran-iraq-war/>
- ISIS in Iraq  
<http://globalriskinsights.com/2016/05/iraq-political-instability/>

## Topic 2: Renewable Energy Independence

### Overview:

Today, there is not a single country on Earth that is not experiencing firsthand effects of climate change. Key to mitigating harms and preventing future damages is reducing greenhouse emissions to slow global warming. This goal can be achieved through the promotion of renewable energy sources which provide clean, affordable electricity and reduce carbon emissions. The Economic and Social Council brings a diverse group of people and partners together in order to promote sustainable development.

### Historical Background

Greenhouse and carbon emissions have steadily risen in the postindustrial period, wreaking havoc on our planet. Average annual losses from earthquakes, tsunamis, tropical cyclones and flooding amount to hundreds of billions of dollars. Following the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002, new and renewable energy sources gained international attention. The Kyoto Protocol, which was adopted in 1997 and entered into force in February of 2005, sets internationally binding emission reduction targets for those countries that signed. The Clean Development mechanism established by the Protocol provides funding for the diffusion of renewable energy technologies in developing countries. At the 2015 Climate Conference in Paris, 195 nations negotiated a climate agreement that declared that we must hold the increase in global average temperature to less than 2 degrees celsius above pre-industrial levels, and that we should pursue efforts to keep the temperature rise to less than 1.5 degrees celsius. Efforts to encourage clean energy production led to increased use of renewable energy sources, especially in Europe, but despite this progress, greenhouse gas levels are rising. Currently, they are 50% higher than their 1990 level. Since 1970, carbon dioxide emissions have increased by about 90%, with emissions from fossil fuel combustion and industrial processes contributing to over 75% of the total greenhouse gas emissions increase.

### Current Situation:

Every country in the world is experiencing first-hand effects of climate change. The Paris Climate agreement's goal of limiting the temperature increase to 2 degrees or less requires collective action. Individual nations must each dramatically reduce their greenhouse emissions. Currently, 65% of global greenhouse gas emissions come from carbon dioxide from fossil fuel combustion or industrial processes. In 2014, 39% of the world's energy came from coal, 22% came from gas, 17% came from hydroelectric, 12% came from nuclear, 5% came from oil, and 5% came from other sources.

There are several obstacles that prevent nations from moving to 100% renewable energy production. Widespread adoption of renewable energy is constrained by financial, regulatory, and policy barriers. There are, however, many countries that have successfully adopted renewable energy production.

In Iceland, 85% of the total primary energy supply comes from domestically produced renewable energy sources, 57.7% of Scotland's electricity came from renewables in 2015, and Costa Rica ran on 100% renewable energy for 76 straight days in the summer of 2016. These and other countries have radically reduced their dependence on fossil fuels and reduced their carbon footprints through a combination of geothermal, wind, solar, and hydroelectric power.

Solar, wind, and hydroelectric power not only produce minimal carbon emissions, they can reduce poverty by increasing energy access. Currently, one fifth of all people in the world lack reliable electricity access. Energy poverty can limit economic development, reduce life chances, and trap millions in extreme poverty. Investing in solar, wind, and geothermal can help assure universal energy access across the world. Currently, over 50% of the world's population lives in urban areas; this figure will rise to over 65% by 2050. This indicates that sustainable development must take care to focus on transforming urban spaces.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP), of which the Economic and Social Council is a parent organization, has set a series of sustainable development goals to be achieved by the year 2030. These goals aim to "end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity." These goals include affordable and clean energy, sustainable cities and communities, and climate action.

**Questions to consider:**

1. How should renewable energy production be incentivized?
2. What steps should be taken to achieve the UNDP's climate-related goals?
3. How should energy poverty be addressed?
4. What level of responsibility should each nation assume?

**Bibliography and Recommended Sources:**

- Economic and Social Council website: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/home>
- Sustainable Energy for All--a UN partner focusing on energy access: <http://se4all.org>
- Information about this year's EcoSoc council: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/ecosoc6720.doc.htm>
- Information on UNDP sustainable development goals: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html>
- News and information regarding renewable energy resources: <http://www.renewableenergyworld.com/index.html>
- Energy sources and production map: <https://yearbook.enerdata.net>

### Topic 3: Trans-Pacific Trade Partnership

#### **Overview:**

One of the most complicated international issues is the issue of balance between domestic economies and the relationship with the international economy. Due to the fact that countries rely on each other for resources that they cannot manufacture or grow in their own, countries throughout the years have drafted and ratified dozens of treaties, agreements and partnerships, the most recent being the Trans-Pacific trade partnership, signed earlier in 2016.

#### **Historical Background:**

Negotiations for a trans-pacific trade agreement started in 2002 at the APEC summit in Mexico by New Zealand, Singapore, and Chile. The goal of the negotiations were to advance international trade and the international economy by limiting trade barriers which would in turn leave opportunities for high levels of consumption and more international business to occur. With the addition of Brunei, those three countries solidified into the P-4 and came to an agreement that was signed in 2005, and enforced in 2006. The main idea of this agreement (TPSEP) was to open trade of goods and intellectual property.

In 2008, the United States joined the coalition which raised some concerns among the countries involved. Up to that point Chile, and other South American countries had open trade agreements with the United States and were concerned with the superpowers interest and heavy involvement with the new deal. Some concerns were based in the idea that the United States was looking to exert economic control on other countries and that the pact would simply be an extension of the already standing NAFTA (ratified in 1994). Several south Asian and South American countries joined the bloc and by 2009 they had 9 countries in the negotiations.

In 2016, after seven and half years of negotiations, twelve pacific rim countries agreed on a partnership that would: "promote economic growth; support the creation and retention of jobs; enhance innovation, productivity and competitiveness; raise living standards; reduce poverty in the signatories' countries; and promote transparency, good governance, and enhanced labor and environmental protections." Large portions of the agreement resembled the 2005 TPSEP agreement, but with more countries.

#### **Current situation:**

Since it has been signed, the newly formed TPP has come under several criticisms and has become a controversial agreement among countries. One of the criticisms has been that it was a U.S. lead agreement and large portions of the agreement favored large international, but U.S. based corporations and that it wouldn't serve for the greater good of the international community or economy. Specific clauses of the partnerships gave unprecedented amounts of power to international companies with very few restrictions. Most of the countries involved with the negotiations of the partnerships held mostly closed door meetings and were not very open with what they discussed.



Another issue that has risen in the wake of the signing of this document has been how the agreement seemingly fails to protect human rights and environmental protection actions by countries and previous passed resolutions by the UN. Several UN delegates of condemned the agreement stating that it is out of touch with current human rights legislation and resolutions. Other UN officials fail to find its relevance and see more harm coming in the wake of the ratification of this agreement than international benefits.

**Questions to consider:**

1. If the TPP in its current state does not best serve the international economy, what sorts of revisions would?
2. How do countries go about growing the international economy and strive for job creation and the elimination of poverty?

**Bibliography and Recommended Sources:**

- Background about TPP  
<http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-origins-and-evolution-of-the-trans-pacific-partnership-tpp/5357495>  
<http://www.citizenstrade.org/ctc/trade-policies/tpp-potential-trade-policy-problems/>  
<http://www.citizen.org/TPP>
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