



Boston University Academy Model United Nations Conference X

Saturday, January 29th to Sunday, January 30th, 2022

Boston University Academy

Boston, MA

UN COMMITTEE: WORLD HEALTH

ORGANIZATION

(WHO)

Background Guide

Introduction from the chair and vice-chair:

Hello, Delegates!

I am Nikhil Rich, a sophomore at Boston University Academy, and I am looking forward to being your chair at BUAMUN X. Joie Liu '23 is my vice-chair. This committee is the World Health Organization (WHO), which is the assembly that handles issues of health that afflict the world.

I joined BUAMUN because of the great experience I had in middle school Model UN, especially at BUAMUN. The first conference I ever attended was actually BUAMUN in 2019. This was a great first conference, as I got to participate in debates covering topics that I never would have found at any other conference. Whether this is your first conference or you've been doing this for years, I hope you can enjoy the conference which we have prepared for you.

Preparing for a Model UN conference can be a daunting task, especially when you don't know what to expect. Although the position paper is the only mandatory assignment prior to the conference, it will be greatly beneficial to come with more prepared. It is helpful to have a written out opening speech, probably even two for the second day of the conference. I usually write these on paper so I can edit them at the conference. Research will also play a very important role in the conference, and it always gives an argument more credibility to have it backed up with sound data. I look forward to having lively discussions and hopefully passing some resolutions by the end of it. Delegates, welcome to BUAMUN!

Sincerely,

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Joie Liu

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Committee Information:

The World Health Organization is a General Assembly, meaning it is built up of representatives from many nations around the world. Committees held within the General Assembly are important in policymaking and fund allocation. The concept of WHO was conceived when the United Nations originally met in 1945, but it officially became a committee in 1948. One of the primary goals of WHO was to provide equitable access to health benefits around the world. WHO has dedicated itself, sometimes even successfully, to eradicating numerous diseases from around the world with vaccines. Most recently, you have likely heard lots of discussion of the World Health Organization due to COVID-19. WHO was the most important global organization in dealing with cases of the coronavirus, and also with funding research and distribution of the vaccines.

The topics which we will discuss in this year's WHO committee are air pollution and yellow fever vaccines. As climate change increases in relevance, air pollution is a crucial aspect of the conversation. We see air pollution throughout the globe, in both rural and urban areas, and its detrimental effects are felt by more than 99% of the population. Since the 1980's cases of yellow fever have been increasing, with over 45,000 deaths occurring in 2013. The virus is typically transmitted via mosquito bites and once transmitted, the fatality rate is between 3 - 7.5%, with the second stage of disease having a fatality rate between 20 - 50% and the last stage having a 50% death rate.

Position Paper Guidelines:

This committee requires two position papers. They are on the topics of air pollution and yellow fever vaccines. The absence of at least one position paper will disqualify you (the delegate) from receiving an award. The quality, depth, and clarity of your position papers will influence award decisions. Each position paper should be 1-3 pages and double spaced. This includes citations which are preferably in the format of footnotes. To insert a footnote, simply click *Insert > Footnote*. Note: A footnote goes after the period. Position papers should follow a general outline with three paragraphs. This is only a suggestion, as long as the paper fits the aforementioned specifications, the number of paragraphs will not be taken into consideration.

Possible position paper outline:

- 1) Introduction to your delegation and the topic as a whole
- 2) The position of your delegation
- 3) Your delegations proposed solutions

Furthermore, each position paper must be titled in the following format:

Delegation: Nikhil Rich and Joie Liu

School: Boston University Academy

Committee: WHO

Position: Sri Lanka

Topic: Air Pollution

Topic 1: Air Pollution

General Overview:

Air pollution is a broad term that describes the corruption of air quality due to many causes such as carbon emissions, forest fires, and toxic waste from industrial facilities. Numerous harmful chemicals are released into the air and can cause damage to the environment, animals, or humans who are exposed to them. Every year, pollution kills seven million people due to short or long-term causes and just over 6% of total global deaths are attributed to air pollution. 99% of the world's population lives in an environment that is deemed by the WHO to have unsuitable air quality¹. The role of the delegates in this committee will be to attempt to relegate some of the health-related challenges of air pollution and come to resolutions that attempt to solve the issues of air pollution around the world.

Main Background Guide:

In 2014, the United Nations acknowledged the ongoing threat of air pollution with the [Environment Assembly resolution on air quality](#). This resolution called on the Executive Director to aid world governments in numerous ways, such as raising awareness for air quality issues and developing policies in order to deal with air pollution. The next year, the World Health Assembly took it a step further by calling for the mobilization of resources globally. This assembly also connected the issue of air pollution to the issue of renewable energy and recognized that these are two issues that can be more effectively tackled simultaneously rather than individually. The WHA also acknowledged that other environmental issues, such as forest fires and heatwaves caused by climate change, have magnifying effects on air pollution.

Questions to Consider:

The Chairs would look favorably upon resolutions that attempt to take the handling of air pollution further than the aforementioned resolutions. This means that any resolution proposed should do more than simply raise awareness for air pollution but, most importantly, allocate resources to specific, finite areas of development. These resolutions should not only discuss how to prevent further air pollution but also how to mitigate the damage which has already been done.

¹ "Air Pollution." *World Health Organization*. <https://www.who.int/health-topics/air-pollution>.

Therefore, the Chairs recommend discussion of both energy alternatives and healthcare as necessary parts of dealing with air pollution.

Bloc Positions – Topic 1:

The following is a list of general positions held by various nations.

Global Leaders in Air Pollution:

These are nations that are heavily involved in the matter of Air Pollution due to their wealth and resources. While these nations must deal with their own issues regarding air pollution, they are also in a position of power when it comes to solving air pollution globally.

Canada

China

France

India

United States

Singapore

Nations Most Afflicted:

These are nations that are at the greatest risk for air pollution but are not necessarily in a position to effectively deal with it on their own.

Brazil

Ghana

Columbia

Ethiopia

South Korea

Senegal

Pakistan

Bangladesh

Further Research:

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/air-pollution>

https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/253237/A68_R8-en.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

[https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17135/UNEA1_Resolution7AirQuality.p
df?sequence=1&%3BisAllowed=](https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17135/UNEA1_Resolution7AirQuality.pdf?sequence=1&%3BisAllowed=)

<https://www.iqair.com/us/world-most-polluted-countries>

Topic 2: Yellow Fever Vaccines

General Overview:

Yellow fever is a mosquito-borne virus, the symptoms of which are fever and sickness. While many are able to survive the disease, others aren't so lucky, and many eventually die. Yellow fever epidemics are usually caused by severe population density coupled with a large number of mosquitoes. The vaccines for yellow fever are extremely effective, so the primary goal of this committee should be to aid in the distribution of the vaccine.

Main Background Guide:

Prevalent in tropical areas of Africa and Central and South America, the Yellow fever virus is estimated to cause 200,000 cases of disease and 30,000 deaths each year². Although a relatively small percentage of those who contract a fatal virus, of those who develop serious symptoms, 50% die within 7 - 10 days. The virus is typically characterized by symptoms of fever, headache, jaundice, muscle pain, nausea, vomiting, and fatigue. There are three types of yellow fever: sylvatic (or jungle) yellow fever, intermediate yellow fever, and urban yellow fever. The Eliminate Yellow Fever Epidemic strategy is an initiative of the World Health Organization which was established in 2017. The organization is partnered with groups such as UNICEF and Gavi. It provides support to over 40 at-risk countries and responds to yellow fever outbreaks and suspected cases. By 2026, over 1 billion people should be protected against the disease. Vaccinations are the most important prevention of yellow fever. Safe and affordable, a single dose provides life-long protection against yellow fever disease and a booster dose is not needed. In addition to routine infant immunization, mass vaccination campaigns and vaccination of travelers also exist for people going to yellow fever endemic areas. 80% of the population at risk must be vaccinated in order to prevent transmission in a region with an outbreak. The people who are excluded from vaccination are:

- Infants aged less than 9 months
- Pregnant women
- People with severe allergies to egg protein
- People with severe immunodeficiency

² <https://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/newsroom/topics/yellowfever/index.html>

Bloc Positions – Topic 2:

Global Leaders in Yellow Fever Vaccines:

These nations are important in the distribution of yellow fever vaccines. Although they are not especially at risk of outbreaks, they can use their resources to help the nations in areas that are much more vulnerable.

Canada

China

France

India

United States

Singapore

Nations Most Afflicted :

These are nations that struggle most with Yellow Fever. These countries must be involved due to the seriousness of Yellow Fever to their health, so their input on the distribution of vaccines is of utmost importance.

Nigeria

Brazil

Ghana

Peru

Ecuador

Columbia

Ethiopia

Kenya

Senegal

Further Research:

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/yellow-fever>

<https://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/newsroom/topics/yellowfever/index.html>

<https://www.who.int/initiatives/eye-strategy>

<https://www.cdc.gov/yellowfever/maps/africa.html>

https://www.cdc.gov/yellowfever/maps/south_america.html