



Boston University Academy Model United Nations Conference X

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

Boston University Academy

Boston, MA

**UN COMMITTEE: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL
(ECOSOC)**

Background Guide

Introduction from the chair and vice-chair:

Hello, Delegates!

My name is Matthew Volfson. I am a sophomore at Boston University Academy, and I will be your chair for BUAMUN X. Ibukun Owolabi ('24) will be my vice-chair. This BUAMUN committee will be modeled on the ECOSOC organization in the United Nations. This organization is mainly focused on economic aid and interactions between United Nations member states concerning economic issues.

I joined BUAMUN because I enjoy politics and had experience with Model United Nations. As a chair, I want other people to enjoy the same experience I had while participating in numerous Model UN conferences such as BOSMUN and TUMUN. BUAMUN was a great way to bring my enthusiasm for foreign affairs and Model UN into practice.

As delegates in order to be prepared for the conference, it is important to develop position papers for your country in advance. I would recommend you make them a week (or earlier) before the conference. You must make sure they are well sourced and have efficient word choice in coherent paragraphs. At the conference, try to be social with other delegates and prepare your social skills beforehand. Remember, you will be brokering deals and resolutions with other nations in a coherent United Nations simulation. And also be sure to have fun, as this will be an enjoyable experience for everyone at the conference. I am looking forward to meeting you all in person after a rough last year and welcoming you to the conference!

Sincerely,

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Committee Information:

The ECOSOC committee is a committee focused on economic and other issues on an international scale. Essentially:

“The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) deals with economic, social, cultural and health matters as well as human rights and fundamental freedoms. It also coordinates the work of the UN and the specialized agencies” – UN Documentation: Economic and Social Council

As mentioned above, ECOSOC deals with a wide purview of issues but, as most UN agencies, ECOSOC especially aims to protect nations most vulnerable to political instability. This agency represents a symbiosis between developing and developed countries, how developed countries are those who send the monetary aid they have to help nations in greater trouble. There are many, many issues the ECOSOC deals with, but most deal with the economies of nations around the world. This ECOSOC committee is meant to give you a feel of how countries deal with economic issues through the United Nations.

The two main topics covered in this committee:

- How to help failed states (South Sudan, Yemen, Syria, Afghanistan, Venezuela) and possible failed states (Myanmar) recover to be efficient countries through economic aid.
 - Interests of developed+democratic nations (Germany, Japan, US): Help these nations through economic aid as long as they transition to a democracy and reduce corruption as well as human rights violations..
 - Interests of developing autocratic nations (China, Russia): Give governments funding no matter if the country is autocratic or corrupt or not. Their interest is to support autocracy around the world and enforce their power.
- Microloans and whether they are necessary to help developing countries.
 - Companies and/or non profit organizations of developed nations finance the microloans more than the autocratic developing ones so it is more in the developed nations' interest to invest in the new usage as it democratizes lending.
 - Helps the working classes in failed states by preventing funds from being placed in the hands of corrupt governments.
 - Less of an incentive for autocratic governments to support microloans as they prefer to go through government approved agencies.

Position Paper Guidelines:

This committee requires 2 position papers. They are on the topics of your knowledge and understanding of the ECOSOC committee and your nation's stance on the issues, economic or otherwise, presented to the committee. An example of an issue on which one might write a position paper is giving developmental aid to developing countries. 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 paper(s) 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, the position paper must be titled in the following format:

Delegation: Matthew Volfson

School: Boston University Academy

Committee: ECOSOC

Position: Netherlands

Topic: Giving economic aid to developing countries

Topic 1: Helping failed states (or ones on the verge of failure) through economic aid.

The ECOSOC committee attempts to deal with many important international issues through negotiation and cooperation between any member nation. An example of economic issues dealt with in this fashion would be, how to manage the relations of creditor countries and debtor countries to each other. Debtor countries are nations such as Zambia or Venezuela, that are in desperate need of financial benefit and owe money to creditor countries. They are failed or close to failed states. Creditor countries are wealthier nations and China that seek to plow investment into developing nations for their own benefit and geopolitical power. They hold the reins of power and the debtor countries take the inferior position on debt negotiations.

Another example of economic issues ECOSOC might cover is the developing country's fiscal state after major disasters, such as the Yemeni civil war or Nicolas Maduro's tragic dictatorship in the case of Venezuela. This topic is different from the previous topic as the developing countries are less likely to be in debt than the nations needing to be bailed out by the Paris Club (The Paris Club is a league of creditors that tries to make it easier for developing nations to pay their debts) and China. These nations are less likely to accept enormous loans and fail to repay them, rather, their budgets are shocked by the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. An example of a developing country suffering due to the covid pandemic might be Russia or Brazil (ironically, both members of the Paris Club and with high coronavirus cases). This issue is notably addressed and discussed by policymakers through one of the recent meetings of the ECOSOC on Science and Technology between May 17 and May 21 2021:

“Policymakers shared some of the science, technology and innovation policy measures they had taken to support a sustainable and resilient recovery from the crisis.” –Commission on Science and Technology for Development Report on the twenty-fourth session.

The exact technology and science policy used to combat the pandemic would benefit countries worldwide and especially nations excluding China that are middle class and have had high amounts of coronavirus cases. This agenda not only coincides with the 2030 UN Sustainable Development goals but actively seeks to improve on them and increase access to sustainable development databases. The 2030 UN sustainability goals show how closely ECOSOC is interconnected with other UN bodies. An example of such cooperation, as well as ECOSOC's emphasis on developing nations, can be found in this quote:

“Participants discussed the outcomes of the science, technology and innovation policy reviews undertaken in the Dominican Republic, Uganda and Zambia with assistance from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).” –Commission on Science and Technology for Development Report on the twenty-fourth session.

The Dominican Republic, Uganda, and Zambia are all developing countries but one must note that Zambia is the only one of the three nations that is a highly indebted nation. This shows that the Science and Technology commission focuses more on developing countries not struggling with debt than ECOSOC would otherwise. The fact that this committee mentions even one highly indebted nation in a committee scarcely associated with them shows how integrated ECOSOC is with helping highly indebted nations.

In addition, ECOSOC deals with social justice issues, how individuals in developing nations and debtor nations attempt to wrought lives out of the unfair circumstances they are placed in. ECOSOC seeks to debate the issues such as a lack of education or opportunities that are connected with the underperformance of national economies.

Topic 2: Microloans, whether they are necessary to help developing countries, and their connection to geopolitics

ECOSOC seeks to invest in microloans, aiding small businesses in developing nations. This goes along with ECOSOC's overall focus on improving the lives of citizens in developing nations. The concept of microloans is relatively recent. Even so, ECOSOC as well as other international charities are attempting to supercharge microloans to improve the lives of the developing poor on the ground. These microloans tend to be less vulnerable to corruption as they are smaller and tend to evade the capture of possibly major government authorities in nations such as Bangladesh and Zimbabwe.

The interests of nations in ECOSOC are heavily connected with their geopolitical ambitions. Nations such as China and Russia use their economic and military weight to export their geopolitical influence while the US uses their current geopolitical influence to broker deals and prevent the influence of China and Russia from spreading. Non-donor developing nations such as Ethiopia or Mexico are only focused on developing their economies and their nations in order to be stable, they lack worldwide geopolitical strategies like some of the most powerful donor nations have. Smaller donor nations in the European Union such as Germany and Sweden use their money to promote democracy and Western style democracies around the world. These nations don't have enough breadth in their foreign policy to develop geopolitical strategies. In addition these nations encourage their companies to follow suit with their geopolitical policy when enacting micro loans.

Another geopolitical category of nations are wishful superpowers. This includes nations such as France and India that have foreign policies restricting them to middle countries but not superpowers yet. France in particular, uses its economic strength to permanently connect it with its former African colonies. India wishes to use its population to develop economic deals with nations that have high Indian diasporas already such as Kenya.

Questions To Consider (Both Topics):

- How can ECOSOC discussions lead to coherent change in how small businesses are started in developing nations?
- How can science and technology be further developed to tackle the coronavirus?
- How do you think the decision to invest in combatting the coronavirus through developing science and technology can help your country?
- What can your nation do to improve ECOSOC's view of it through their annual economic overview?
- Do you think the direction of your nation's economic policy should be based on evaluations and developments within ECOSOC?

Bloc Positions:

DEVELOPED ECONOMIES: Nations whose economies are wealthy, well developed and established in the business world. High quality of life for citizens, diverse number of industries driving the economy.

United States: Between 2013-2018, the US gave almost \$300 billion dollars in foreign aid. The interest of the United States, for the most part, is to export democracy and the rule of law abroad.

France: Their development budget is about 17 billion Euros or about \$19 billion¹. The French state gives this money mainly to northern and central african countries to support its geopolitical influence in Africa.

Germany: About 24 billion dollars, mainly to India, China, and Syria- densely populated countries. Germany is a developed nation that seeks to improve the well being of developing countries. Germany represents the center of the European Union bloc. This bloc seeks to be a paragon for human rights and for how to correctly manage nations.

Sweden: About 5 billion dollars in 2016², Give the largest amount of money per their population. Sweden is a donor focused on improving human rights and enforcing adequate democratic rule of law around the world. Sweden is focused on making sure developed nations can fix their economies and adjust them to the democratic standards of the Western world.

¹ "France: Funding Trends" *Donor Tracker*.

[https://donortracker.org/country/france#:~:text=French%20official%20development%20assistance%20\(ODA,%2C%20or%20US%249.2%20billion\).](https://donortracker.org/country/france#:~:text=French%20official%20development%20assistance%20(ODA,%2C%20or%20US%249.2%20billion).)

² "New Strategy for Humanitarian Aid." *Government Offices of Sweden*.

[https://www.government.se/articles/2017/02/new-strategy-for-humanitarian-aid/.](https://www.government.se/articles/2017/02/new-strategy-for-humanitarian-aid/)

Switzerland: About 3 billion dollars³, Focused on at risk people and places in the world- aims to reduce poverty. Swiss interests are similar to Swedish interests when it comes to economically developing nations, investing money in nations that adhere to human rights standards outlined in the UN charter.

United Kingdom: Spent about 20 billion dollars on foreign aid, economic or otherwise, mainly to Pakistan, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Afghanistan, and heavily on Yemen. The United Kingdom seeks to reboot its geopolitical status in the world, to be a global nation again. Boris Johnson established the notion of the possibility of returning to a “Global Britain.”

Norway: About 4.29 billion dollars, to help with education and economic relief effort, providing vaccines for developing countries, etc.

Canada: Humanitarian country, following broad western ideals of promoting human rights and rule of law around the world and rewarding nations following that status quo with extra economic aid.

MIDDLE AND TRANSITIONING ECONOMIES: Nations whose economies are reasonably developed, but not necessarily developed to the status of a high income economy.

Mexico: Similar to Saudi Arabia, Mexico is rich in oil but it depends less on the resource. On the flip side, Mexico has a higher poverty rate and therefore tends to be a net recipient of foreign aid.

China: A net donor of foreign loans to developing countries. Their foreign aid is bigger in scale than microloans. Interested in developing their sphere of influence, bankrupting developing countries by forcing them to pay back the loans given to them.

Russia: A net donor internationally. Seeks to be a balancing power in the middle east, mainly focused on donating military equipment to other countries. Economy is very weak but the military is strong. The Russians seek to exploit the economies of stabilized nations for their own geopolitical benefit.

Dominican Republic: A net receiver of foreign aid, the Dominican Republic is a developing nation which, although improving its economy, is still lagging behind in corruption.

³ “International aid – Switzerland gives less but still 8th most generous.” *le News*.
<https://lenews.ch/2018/04/11/international-aid-switzerland-gives-less-but-still-8th-most-generous/>.

India: Developing nation, wishes to invest more to improve its economy and then project its influence toward Africa and to the world. Goal to be a superpower rivaling China and US but long way from achieving goals.

Morocco: developing nation, one of the most advanced countries in Africa but the goal is to be a developed nation like in Europe. Nations like France and Spain hold close economic connections to Morocco and help Morocco develop for geopolitical reasons as Morocco is not a democracy, violating the common western covenant.

Saudi Arabia: Although the nation has lots of petrocarbons, the nation's economy is primitive and overly dependent on oil, making it unable to exactly be classified as a developed economy. The nation's focus is to diversify its economy particularly and in the grand scheme of things and invest in the economies of low income nations in order to increase Saudi geopolitical influence.

LOW INCOME NATIONS:

Zimbabwe: Depends, heavily, on other organizations and countries to help them, especially since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic. Zimbabwe is also in a lot of debt and owes a lot of these organizations money.

Yemen: In recent years, Yemen has received much financial aid from the US because of the war and violence going on in the country. The United States remains the largest single donor of humanitarian assistance in Yemen, providing more than \$3.6 billion to alleviate suffering of the Yemeni people since the crisis began six years ago.

Syria: Very similar to Yemen because of the violence in the country, in a civil war. Weak economy under an authoritarian dictatorship Western developed nations.

Ethiopia: Was originally a high growing economy with great aspirations when a civil war between government and TPLF isolated Ethiopia from the international community economically. Seeks more aid from western nations to develop the country.

Democratic Republic of the Congo: In a civil war, similar to Ethiopia but for a longer length of time, seeks to develop the nation to be similar to western countries but hit roadblocks with tribal tensions. Continuously welcomes foreign aid from Western nations in order to develop or for officials to actually seize the monetary aid for their benefit, plaguing the nation as a whole.

Mozambique: USAID's 2019 assistance investment in Mozambique totaled \$288 million. Foreign aid in Mozambique is being used in several key developmental areas, such as education, humanitarian aid, and national health.

Kenya: Fast developing nation in East Africa. Receives an increasing amount of capital from nations such as India or China, wishes to turn into the financial center of Africa.

Ghana: Similar situation as Kenya, but retains closer ties to the United Kingdom, former colonial overlords of Ghana. Seek to be financial center and educational center of Africa

Bangladesh: Fast developing South East Asian country, actively seeks out clothing companies to develop in the nation. Although politics are dysfunctional, there is still hope for continuous growth as in the past.

Further Research:

Below are the sources we used to gather material for our background guide. I recommend using these sources for your position papers.

<https://digitallibrary.un.org/search?ln=en&as=1&m1=a&p1=Economic+and+Social+Council+Of+Official+Records&fl=series&op1=a&m2=a&p2=&f2=&op2=a&m3=a&p3=&f3=&dt=&d1d=&d1m=&d1y=&d2d=&d2m=&d2y=&rm=&ln=en&sf=year&so=d&rg=50&c=United+Nations+Digital+Library+System&of=hb&fti=0&fti=0>

<https://research.un.org/en/docs/ecosoc/introduction>

<https://marketbusinessnews.com/financial-glossary/paris-club-definition-meaning/>

<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3931467?ln=en>

<https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/economic-and-social-council>

<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter>

France:

<https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20210306-france-shifts-policy-on-aid-to-africa-to-counter-rising-chinese-influence>

China:

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/10/01/seven-years-into-chinas-belt-and-road/>

Saudi Arabia:

<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/saudi-arabia-s-aid-world-reaches-nearly-33-billion-10-years>

Tanzania:

<https://borgenproject.org/how-the-us-benefits-from-foreign-aid-to-tanzania/>

<https://www.foreignassistance.gov/explore/country/Tanzania>

Russia:

<https://www.refworld.org/publisher/ECOSOC.STATEPARTIESREP.RUS.593aa6d44.0.html>

Zimbabwe:

<https://www.borgenmagazine.com/zimbabwes-foreign-aid/>

<https://www.usaid.gov/zimbabwe/history>

<https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-s-exclusion-g20-debt-relief-must-not-block-assistance-covid-19-response>

United States:

<https://mz.usembassy.gov/u-s-government-commits-110-million-in-development-assistance-to-mozambique/#:~:text=U.S.%20Government%20commits%20%24110%20Million%20in%20Development%20Assistance%20to%20Mozambique,-Home%20%7C%20News%20%26%20Events>

Mozambique:

<https://borgenproject.org/foreign-aid-in-mozambique/>

Yemen:

<https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/aug-9-2021-usaid-announces-165-million-additional-humanitarian-assistance-yemen#:~:text=The%20United%20States%20remains%20the,crisis%20began%20six%20years%20ago.>

South Africa:

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/after-protests-looting-tear-through-south-africa-nation-wonders-what-n1275585>

United Kingdom:

<https://news.trust.org/item/20201120164622-38et5/>

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/content-series/inflection-points/boris-johnson-transforms-global-britain-slogan-into-an-inspiring-strategic-plan/>

Dominican Republic:

<https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/dominican-republic>

France:

<https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/how-the-france-backed-african-cfa-franc-works-as-an-enabler-and-barrier-to-development/>

Kenya:

<https://www.theafricareport.com/136616/kenya-hopes-a-new-financial-centre-will-pull-in-global-investors/>

Ghana:

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ghana/overview#1>

Bangladesh:

<https://www.adb.org/countries/bangladesh/economy>

Norway:

<https://www.norway.no/en/missions/UN/statements/general-assembly-plenary/2020/ecosoc-2019-2020-report/>

Mexico:

<https://www.refworld.org/publisher/ECOSOC,,MEX,5881dbd94,0.html>

Syria:

<https://www.heritage.org/index/country/syria>

Ethiopia:

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ethiopia/overview>

Democratic Republic of the Congo:

<https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/august-2016/drc-economy-giant-awakens>

Germany:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/adamandrzejewski/2021/08/04/new-report-nearly-300-billion-in-foreign-aid-spent-by-us-government/?sh=180a81c64374>

More information on developing, transitional, and developed economies:

https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/wesp_current/2014wesp_country_classification.pdf

Source for low income nations:

<https://g2lm-lic.iza.org/call-phase-iv/list-of-lic/>