COLUMUN 2024
UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)

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INFORMATION OF THE UN:

The United Nations is an international organization founded in 1945. The UN has evolved over the years to keep pace with a rapidly changing world. Currently made up of 193 Member States, the UN and its work are guided by the purposes and principles contained in its founding Charter. It remains the only place on Earth where all the nations of the world can come together, discuss common problems and find shared solutions that benefit all humanity.

The UN purpose is to achieve international co-operation in solving global issues of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, promoting progress, better living standards and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction. Some aspects that the UN provides are the following: Maintain International Peace and Security. Protect Human Rights. Deliver Humanitarian Aid. Support Sustainable Development and Climate Action.

OBJECTIVE OF COLUMUN:

The COLUMUN is a role-play activity in which you will have the opportunity to represent a State Member of the UN in solving problems along with other members in order to maintain peace around the world and improve life quality. There are three very important things to consider:

1. The goal of each committee within the MUN is to work collaboratively to come up with a solution for the topic discussed in response to the challenges presented against the world or humanity in a diplomatic form.

2. Participants must assume the role of that country's diplomats and each delegation represents the views of "their" country, reflecting its national interests, rather than their own personal opinions on an issue.

3. Delegates research their country's position on selected topics, paying particular attention to their country's perspective on the topics to be discussed at the MUN.

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization):

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It contributes to peace and security by fostering international cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture, communication and information. UNESCO promotes the exchange of knowledge and the free flow of ideas in order to accelerate mutual understanding and a better understanding of each other's lives. UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in the 2030 Agenda, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015. Some of the sustainable development goals are:

- **End of poverty:** Create strong policy frameworks at national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication measures.
- **Zero Hunger:** By 2030, end hunger and ensure access for all, in particular the poor and those in vulnerable situations.
- **Well-being:** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. Significant progress has been made in increasing life expectancy and reducing some of the most common causes of death related to child and maternal mortality.
- **Quality Education:** The achievement of quality education is the basis for improving people's lives and sustainable development. Significant progress has been made in improving access to education at all levels and increasing school enrolment rates, especially for women and girls. The minimum literacy level has increased significantly,
- **Gender Equality:** While there has been global progress towards gender equality through the Millennium Development Goals (including equal access to primary education for girls and boys), women and girls continue to experience discrimination and violence everywhere in the world.
- **Clean water and sanitation:** Accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in. There is enough freshwater on the planet to achieve this. Water scarcity, poor water quality and inadequate sanitation

negatively impact food security, livelihood options and educational opportunities for poor families around the world.

- **Affordable and clean energy:** Energy is central to almost every major challenge and opportunity facing the world today. Whether for jobs, security, climate change or food production, access to energy for all is essential. By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.
- **Among others.**

As early as 1942, during wartime, the governments of European countries facing Nazi Germany and its allies met in the United Kingdom for the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education (CAME). The Second World War was far from over, but these countries were looking for ways to rebuild their educational systems once peace had been restored. New governments decided to join in. At the suggestion of the CAME, a United Nations Conference on the Establishment of an Educational and Cultural Organisation (ECO/CONF) was convened in London from 1 to 16 November 1945. The war had barely ended when the conference opened. It brought together representatives of forty-four countries who decided to establish an organization that would embody a genuine culture of peace. In their view, the new organization should establish the "intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind" and thus prevent the outbreak of another world war. From the beginning, UNESCO refuted racist theories and developed innovative projects that changed the world:

- Universal Copyright Convention (1952).
- Man and the Biosphere Programme (1971).
- World Heritage Convention (1972).
- Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003).

The Organization has 194 Members and 12 Associate Members. The General Conference meets every two years with the participation of Member States and Associate Members. The Conference shall determine the place of the next session during its regular session.

Meetings convened by UNESCO are divided into two categories: meetings of a representative nature and meetings of a non-representative nature.

Meetings of a representative nature are those in which States, governments, intergovernmental organizations or international non-governmental organizations are represented as principal participants.

Meetings of a non-representative nature are those in which the principal participants act in a personal capacity.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has been criticized throughout its history. It is accused of taking positions contrary to press and market freedom, in particular for the NWICO initiative, which recognized the right of states to censor the press.

TOPIC A: Access to education and digital divide:

Our world is at a unique historical juncture, characterized by increasingly uncertain and complex trajectories that are changing at an unprecedented speed. These sociological, ecological and technological trends are reshaping education systems, which need to adapt. Yet education has the greatest transformative potential to shape just and sustainable futures.

Education is a fundamental human right that lifts men and women out of poverty, overcomes inequalities and ensures sustainable development. Yet 244 million children and young people around the world remain out of school for social, economic or cultural reasons. Education is one of the most powerful tools for lifting marginalized children and adults out of poverty, as well as a catalyst for ensuring other fundamental human rights.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to the sudden and massive implementation of online distance learning solutions, and many countries were not equipped to ensure that all learners could continue their education without interruption. The digitalisation of education allows for more flexible and personalized learning processes and paths, but it also drives changes in the way education management systems are conceived and the competences of learners are assessed.

In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, States recognized the importance

of the expansion of information and communications technologies and global interconnection, and highlighted the need to overcome the digital divide and develop knowledge societies.

As mentioned above, access to education is a fundamental human right, but due to digitalization, mishaps can arise. The "Digital Divide" shows many of these new problems, such as the following:

- The cost of investing in information and communications technology. Technological infrastructure, along with software, technical support, teacher training and maintenance, requires significant financial support from the State. In the developing world, digital devices are not always affordable, either for students or for public educational establishments.
- While a digital-based education can provide advantages through access to a computer or electronic device, when students or schools lack the financial means to obtain such access, they are left behind. (It is important to note that under international human rights law, States are responsible for providing resources to realize the right to education.)
- The use of digital technology can create divisions within society. Access to the Internet requires devices such as computers, tablets and smartphones and broadband services. People in urban areas are the first to gain better quality access, leaving those in remote or isolated areas at a disadvantage or without access. Reliable access to electricity to charge devices is often a problem in the developing world.
- The delivery of education services through digital technology can also contribute to gender disparities. In developing countries today, men are much more likely than women to own and use information and communications technologies.

Children with disabilities face a number of barriers to accessing information and communications technologies, as they need adaptive technologies to use computers, tablets and mobile phones.

Digital technologies necessarily involve private partners and agencies that

collaborate with universities, both public and private, on the procurement and operationalization of not only hardware but also software. The use of digital technologies in education has led to more consumer-oriented attitudes in universities and is resulting in the commodification of knowledge and the valuing of information in economic terms rather than for its social and cultural significance. Sponsored by a range of entities, including individual proprietors and profit-seeking businesses, private institutions of higher education now constitute the fastest-growing segment of higher education. Universities are moving away from their social function. The commercialization of education could divert attention away from the classical type of higher education by accumulating advantages in the most advanced countries and institutions, by discriminating against the most deprived and by contributing to brain drain in many poor countries.

TOPIC B: Education for global citizenship

Economically, environmentally, socially and politically, we are linked to other people on the planet as never before. With the transformations that the world has gone through in the past decades – expansion of digital technology, international travel and migration, economic crises, conflicts, and environmental degradation – how we work, teach and learn has to change, too. UNESCO promotes global citizenship education to help learners understand the world around them and work together to fix the big problems that affect everyone, no matter where they're from.**GCED is about teaching and learning to become these global citizens who live together peacefully on one planet.**

What does the topic entail?

- Adjusting curricula and content of the lessons to provide knowledge about the world and the interconnected nature of contemporary challenges and threats. Among other things, a deep understanding of human rights, geography, the environment, systems of inequalities, and historical events that underpinned current developments;
- Nurturing cognitive, social and other skills to put the knowledge into practice

and make it relevant to learners' realities. For example, thinking critically and asking questions about what's equitable and just, taking and understanding other perspectives and opinions, resolving conflicts constructively, working in teams, and interacting with people of different backgrounds, origins, cultures and perspectives;

- Instilling values that reflect the vision of the world and provide purpose, such as respect for diversity, empathy, open-mindedness, justice and fairness for everyone;
- Adopting behaviours to act on their values and beliefs: participating actively in the society to solve global, national and local challenges and strive for the collective good.

Background

GCED is not a single subject with a set curriculum but rather a framework, a prism through which education is seen. It can be delivered as an integral part of existing subjects – from geography to social studies – or independently. UNESCO supports the dissemination of GCED on different levels and in multiple areas of life beyond the classroom. GCE, like global citizenship itself, is the focus of much academic criticism. Critiques of the term often refer to its ambiguity and to both latent and explicit western assumptions that some consider to be embedded in its core (Andreotti, 2006). These critiques have led to the development of various typologies, which enable scholars as well as policy developers to identify, articulate, and assess the goals of GCE. Veugelers (2011), for example, distinguished between three categories of global citizenship: open global citizenship, which recognizes the interdependence between nation states in the global age and recognizes opportunities for cultural diversification; moral global citizenship based on equality and human rights and emphasizing global responsibility; and socio-political global citizenship, which is meant to shift the balance of political power so as to promote equality and cultural diversity.

What is the committee doing to deal with the problem?

UNESCO works with countries to improve and rewire their education systems so that they support creativity, innovation and commitment to peace, human rights and sustainable development.

- Provides a big-picture vision for an education that learners of all ages need to survive and thrive in the 21st century. Adopted in 2023, the [UNESCO Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development](#) is a global standard-setting instrument that lays out how education should be used to bring about lasting peace and foster human development.

- Supports the development of curricula and learning materials on global citizenship themes tailored for diverse cultural contexts. Among many examples are the [general guidance document on teaching and learning objectives of global citizenship education](#) or recommendations on integrating social and emotional learning principles (SEL) in the education process.
- Studies the positive impact of learning across subjects and builds linkages between sectors and spheres. One of the key focus areas is the [Framework](#) on [Culture and Arts Education](#), in which UNESCO highlights the positive impact learning of the arts and through the arts has on academic performance, acquisition of different skills and greater well-being, as well as broadening horizons.
- Collaborates with partners across UNESCO programmes and the broader UN system to address contemporary threats to human rights and peace and infuse the principles of understanding, non-discrimination and respect for human dignity in education. Among others, UNESCO leads the global education efforts to [counter hate speech](#) online and offline, address [antisemitism](#), fight [racism](#), prevent [violent extremism](#), enable [cultural dialogue](#),

educate about human rights violations and violent pasts.

- Promotes international collaboration in education through [UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs](#), and [UNESCO Associated Schools Network](#), connecting over 12,000 educational institutions worldwide.

Causes & Consequences

Based on the evidence that UNESCO has accumulated on GCED impact, learners who benefit from such education from early stages become less prone to conflicts and are more open to resolving them peacefully while respecting each other's differences. It has also proven successful in post-conflict transformation. For example, discussing the root causes of human rights violations that occurred in the past helps to detect alarming tendencies and avoid them in the future.

Official members of the committee

The Organization has 194 Members and 12 Associate Members. Most Member States have established Permanent Delegations to UNESCO which, headed by Ambassadors, undertake liaison between the Organization and their governments.

All Member States have established a National Commission for UNESCO. The UNESCO National Commissions are national cooperating bodies set up by the Member States for the purpose of associating their governmental and non-governmental bodies with the work of the Organization.

Information Links

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VI.I HOW TO RESEARCH YOUR COUNTRY

It is important for you to find out information about your country on your own, always keep in mind that.

The origin and purpose of your source are important. The COLUMUN is an opportunity for you to see

what cooperation between states could achieve, and also figure out why the international community

has not solved all the world's problems.

VI.Il HOW TO RESEARCH YOUR COUNTRY

To know your country investigate these aspects

ASPECT	CHECK
Where is it in the world and what are its neighbors? Which countries are powerful in its region?	
What system of government does it have and who is its leader?	
Is its economy industrialized or mostly agricultural? What are the main sources of income?	
What is the role of religion in the state? How tolerant of different religions and beliefs is its government? Are its laws based on religion or is it secular?	
Are there minority groups? Are these groups treated differently to the majority?	
Are there civil conflicts? What is the government response to this?	
Are there any groups that are fighting to be independent or autonomous?	
What is the country's history?	

Is it a developed or developing country? Does it have adequate infrastructure? Does it struggle to feed its population? Does it owe money to other countries or is it able to be a lender?	
What is the state of its environment?	
What is the social and political position of women and girls?	
Has the country been guilty of human rights violations? What kinds and to what extent?	
Is it open to contacts with other countries? (tourism, business, schools, etc.)	
How does the government get on with other countries? Does it cooperate with or is it a member of international groups such as NATO, the EU, the African Union, etc.?	
Are there individual countries with which it has especially strong ties? Who are its competitors and allies? Major trading partners? Aid donors or recipients? Has it ever fought against another country?	