



Mission Viejo High School Model United Nations
29th Annual Conference
“Through the Fire the Spirit is Forged”



Topic Synopsis
UNDP, Economic Restructuring in the Middle East

I. Background of Topic:

In the recent years, economic restructuring has been implemented by western, democratic governments into Middle Eastern nations. These reforms have begun to lead many of these nations in a positive direction. However, the restructuring has brought higher wages and job opportunities to members in the upper class, leaving the members in the lower class to suffer. New jobs have been created, higher wages have been implemented, and time limits of employment have been adjusted, yet only a small portion of Middle Easterners are able to enjoy the new freedoms that have been provided. The lower class continues to experience low wages, with no hope of eventually climbing the social and economic ladder. Because of this, a large gap has been created in the economy with the absence of a middle class almost entirely. The lower class has less job opportunities, a lack of access to schools, and restrictions on their ability to participate in society. Before the economic restructure began in the 1980's, a majority of smaller Middle Eastern nations were nearly ruled by the major oil companies. The lower class in these nations relied on the incomes from these oil companies for basic necessities, such as food, water, and clothing. But because of the decrease in manufacturing due to economic reforms, many previously employed workers have been left without a job or compensation. Due to the multiple revolutions and Arab Spring in the recent months, many of these small nations will need global funding through loans and grants to project their nations forward.

II. UN Involvement



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The UN organ, UNDP, and the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy began a project which was part of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) contribution to the World Summit for Social Development. It investigated the goals, assumptions, impacts, and possible long-term outcomes of reforms in developing countries, especially in the Middle East, which have been substantially affected in recent years by economic crisis, structural adjustment, and revolution. The drastic social impacts of adjustment became extremely clear, and the political opposition led many governments to design programs meant to mitigate the social costs of adjustment. Resolution 57/277 worked with economic reforms in Turkey and has been slowly implemented in recent years. The United Nations is continuing to work on more resolutions with success much like 57/277.

III. Possible Solutions

The most feasible solution to this problem would be for member countries to support and promote economic reforms that remain unbiased and ensure equality to all classes. In particular, support of large, successful nations in the Middle East such as Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. Also, a proportional number high, middle, and lower class representatives should be present in each nation's government to ensure equality. Depending on each nation's involvement in the Middle East, financial advice may be given, provided the individual nations seek aid. Nations must also realize that a focus on oil in the region can have adverse economic affects seeing that oil is not a guaranteed resource to last into the future. Nations must also pay attention to the needs and pride of each country for some countries are more accepting of economic interference then others



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for some such as Iran have a very tight grip over what influence is allowed into their country.

IV. Bloc Positions

Latin American/Asian Blocs:

Although the Latin American and Asian Blocs are not directly involved with the Middle East, a majority of nations would promote the creation of more opportunities for the lower class with small business leaders, since small business thrives in many of these nations.

African/Middle Eastern Blocs:

Countries in these regions tend to have the strongest religious or cultural beliefs that could provide much opposition to the restructuring. Due to the large amount of lost jobs, these nations are generally against these reforms, seeing as they have committed more harm than benefit.

European Bloc:

These nations are at the forefront of advancing restructuring in the Middle East. They've consistently taken steps in promoting restructuring to benefit the European Union and the oil agreements between the Middle East and Europe.

V. Guiding Questions

1. Is your country in support of the restructuring?
2. How does your country plan to deal with the lower class?
3. Are other countries in your Bloc supporting or rejecting further economic restructuring?
4. How do cultural influences within your country affect your opinion to continue or end the current economic restructuring?



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5. How specifically will a greater amount of restructuring help or hinder the global community?

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