



Topic Synopsis:

World Bank, Dual-Use Infrastructure

I. Background of Topic

Today’s world is riddled with turmoil, rioting, war, and those struggling to recover from devastating natural disasters and toppling regimes. With the unfolding Arab Spring, the tsunami in Japan earlier this year, the continuing conflicts in Israel and Palestine, and the developing conflicts along the Kenyan-Somalia border, millions are left homeless without medical supplies and without a place to turn to.

Dual-use infrastructure is meant to combine medical centers and emergency shelters with schools, post offices, or other public or community centers. For example, by building community shelters that are equipped with added safety features that would allow it survive the annual flooding in common flood zones, as used in Vietnam, infrastructure can be utilized much more efficiently. By combining bridges with drainage features or schools that with emergency response trained teachers, cost can be reduced and efficiency can be optimized.

With the United States’ national debt approaching 15 trillion dollars, the financial collapse of Greece, and the global recession, cost efficiency is very important. In order to help the most people by extending shelter and medical supplies to as many as possible, costs need to be minimized. Dual-use infrastructure seeks to reduce costs while strengthening local and public health infrastructure that will both “function effectively day to day as well as during unpredictable emergencies” scenarios.¹

II. UN Involvement

¹ <http://www.apha.org/meetings.htm>



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The World Bank was developed during World War II at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire and sought to aid in Europe’s revival and help the world to stabilize once again. It gave its first loan of \$250 million to France in 1947 for post-war reconstruction and the bank has focused many on reconstruction following wars, natural disasters, and humanitarian emergencies ever since.

In more recent years, the World Bank has begun to focus on improving the overall standard of living in poverty-stricken regions. Dual-use infrastructure focuses on improving fragile states as one of the six major facets of the World Bank. Approximately 1.5 billion people live in countries affected by violent conflict, addressed by the International Development Association (IDA) of the Bank. Since 2000, the IDA has loaned over US\$5.9 billion to post-conflict recovery programs to strengthen the conflict-affected areas in order to improve standard of living.

While striving to accomplish the 2015 Millennium Development Goals, the World Bank continues to strive to reduce extreme poverty and increase education. The 2011 World Development Report examines violent conflict on a country and regional basis and seeks to investigate what cause the cycle of violence. Lack of infrastructure and poverty often contribute to the feelings of extremist groups, fueling future conflicts. Infrastructure is most needed in fragile situations, which are defined as having a composite World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) rating of 3.2 or less, the presence of a United Nations or regional peace force, and the lack of secure borders, in the past three years. Also, natural disasters are capable of placing a country in a temporary state of emergency and instability. In



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order to reduce the annual global cost of conflict, which is estimated to be around \$100 billion, infrastructure and reconstruction efforts need to be given the necessary funds.²

III. Possible Solutions

Possible solutions for the World Bank for this committee will be written in loan proposals. A loan proposal seeks to explain in specific terms how much money would be needed to develop a dual-use infrastructure program or in some way combine multiple public service providers (schools, hospitals, post offices, and community centers) to reduce costs, increase efficiency, and improve public well-being. Loan proposals need to be specific, based in the country you will be representing, and sustainable. They need to have realistic figures attached to different portions because we may end up debating down to the penny in committee.

Loan proposals need to focus on some sort of infrastructure that not only improves transportation, internal communication, or buildings but also improves public health, access to education, water and shelter, or something similar.

IV. Bloc Positions

Each country is in a different financial situation and has a different stability level. Many of the countries that are assisted by the World Bank have a specific need. For example, regional flooding in Southeast Asia brings about the need for raised buildings, flood shelters, and preventative flooding barriers. In the Middle East, temporary structures and refugee camps are needed. In South America and in Africa, medical clinics, wells, and schools are needed. Examine

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the country you are representing and seek out an infrastructure based development that will improve the standard of living in your country. Past loans from the World Bank can help to guide you:

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/0,,pagePK:180619~theSitePK:136917,00.html>

V. Guiding Questions

1. Is your country currently in conflict?
2. Is there a refugee problem in the country?
3. Is medical aid or schooling easily accessible?
4. Where would funding be distributed within the nation? How can funds be used most effectively?
5. Why should funds be directed to improving this part of the infrastructure?