

Dear Delegates,

I am extremely pleased that you are attending the Washington State Model United Nations and in particular that you are participating in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR). Model United Nations provide a unique view into the dynamic and cloudy world of international relations and allow you, as a participant, to deal with these issues in a very real and physical way. I believe that the topics for this year's UNHCR are thought provoking and interesting and I am looking forward to a lively and engaging debate.

As for myself, I am a Junior at the University of Washington studying Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering, which may at first, seem a little odd. You were expecting, perhaps, a Political Science or International Relations major? As a modern engineer, I have a particular passion for international events. Traveling through China, India, Japan, and Great Britain, among others, simply reinforced my belief in the power of people from different backgrounds and beliefs working together. I am particularly enthusiastic to be able to chair the committee this year. I am assisted, in the UNHCR, by two wonderful people. Maria Vassilieva is a Junior in Political Science with a focus in Comparative Politics and International Relations. She has an extremely keen intellect and will be serving as the secretary of the committee. Peter Yu is a Senior in Communications and Speech Communications who has a unique and thoughtful approach to international events. We are fortunate to have him serving as the moderator.

I would like to thank you for choosing to participate in the Washington State Model United Nations Conference. The world that we now live in is a closely woven net that expands well beyond the physical borders of nations. It will, and has, touched all of us. There are problems that no one nation can solve and yet a solution is needed. To provide these solutions in an innovative, stimulating, and dynamic debate is the role that you have chosen and it is one that I am sure that you will enjoy. It is important to realize that there are no quick, simple solutions, but this makes the Model UN all the more fun. I encourage you to be thorough in your research of your country. Try to understand how it feels on issues of note, what its goals are, and consider how it would react to various proposals. Be as accurate as you can, and come with a sense of adventure.

I am looking forward to seeing you in the spring and listening to your ideas. If you have any questions please email me at ldubord@u.washington.edu.

Respectfully,

Luke Dubord
Chair, United Nations Commission on Human Rights
Washington State Model United Nations Conference 2002

Overview of the committee

Fundamentally, the United Nations is the institution of the idea that the fate of any one nation is fundamentally tied to the fate of all nations. Born of the realization that there are problems that are greater prove impossible for any one nation. Together, however, by coming together in a spirit of dialog, not war, and understanding, not ignorance, a nation states are able to not only improve the state of the world but also the state of life of their citizens at home. The United Nations holds at its core the belief that the population of the world must work together in a spirit of patient communal progress if the citizens of each country of the world are going to take advantage of their individual aptitude and live the lives that the deserve. It can be frustrating and tedious but it is essential if the dilemmas of the world, to which the actions of any one nation are feeble and insufficient, are to be solved for the benefit of all mankind to say nothing of the quality of live of the citizens of the earth. It is the United Nations Commission on Human Rights that today forms one of the chief nuclear centers of thought of the United Nations. It is here that the path is chosen for the benefit of all.

The inaugural meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nation occurred in Central Hall, Westminster, London on 10 January 1946. Shortly thereafter, in 1947, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) first convened. Since then, the Commission on Human Rights, which now is located under the auspices of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), has been one of the most visible and arguably most important sections of the United Nations. The UNCHR has the function of recognizing and institutionalizing the most pure goals of human society and serves as the primary forum for forming the axioms that would describe an ideal world philosophy.

When the UNCHR first assembled in 1947, its sole purpose was to fashion a universal declaration of human rights. On 10 December 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the General Assembly. The anniversary of the declarations passage is celebrated internationally Human Rights Day. The UDHR was hailed by the President of the General Assembly as “a remarkable achievement, a step forward in the great evolutionary process. It was the first occasion on which the organized community of nations had made a Declaration of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The instrument was backed by the authority of the body of opinion of the United Nations as a whole, and millions of people – men, women and children all over the world – would turn to it for help, guidance and inspiration.” Ever since, it has not only served as the central pillar of the United Nations efforts to enact comprehensive agreements on political, civil, cultural, and social rights but also as a common gauge against which nations can be evaluated and held accountable.

Over the next twenty years the commission worked to refine the human rights standard endorsed by the United Nations and through this work came two additional Covenants: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Presently the combination of the two covenants and the UDHR are commonly referred to as the International Bill of Human Rights. With the passage of the two covenants in 1966 the UNCHR was about to undergo a fundamental change. In 1967 the commission was specifically authorized by the United Nations Economic and Social Council, with the encouragement of the General assembly,

to start to investigate, report and deal with violations of human rights. At present the commission operates an expansive network of methods to monitor compliance by states with international human rights law and to investigate alleged violations of human rights. Through the use of Special Rapporteurs and working groups the UNCHR has dispatched mission to countries all over the world, be they rich or poor, developing or developed.

In the 2002 session of the Washington State Model United Nations the Commission on Human Rights will address two pressing issues that affect millions of people worldwide: refinement of the enforcement of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and evaluation of the rights of those with AIDS against the rights of Intellectual Property.

Topic 1: Child Rights

Statement of the Problem

Children, the human beings below the age of eighteen years¹, live in every country, and are in every race, nationality, and religion. As it was stated by the UNICEF, “The healthy development of children is crucial to the future well-being of any society,”² and with that to every nation-state. As every human being, children have rights.

In 1989, the General Assembly adopted a highly important document in the history of the Human Rights – the Convention on the Rights of the Child – that stated the rights to which each child in the world, independently of race, sex, religion, or beliefs, was entitled. It also stated the obligations of the parties involved in the lives of the children to protect their rights in the best way possible. Five years following this event, 191 countries have ratified this document, thus signifying that they are legally bound by the terms of the Convention.

The Convention granted children such rights as the right to live, the right on survival and development, the right to have family, the right to receive education, and many others. However, the current global events and reports show that many children throughout the world still do not enjoy the rights to which they are entitled. In many countries of the world children are continually mistreated and their rights are horrendously violated.

About six million children suffer from hunger around the world every year³, and it is well known that in a family stricken by hunger there is a higher possibility of a child being exploited or mistreated, even being sold for money, sent into armies or other services.

Therefore, in 1998, a good eight years after the adoption of the document, about three hundred thousand children worldwide served as child soldiers, many of who were participating in the life threatening combat situations.⁴ Many of these children were forced to enroll as soldiers by their governments or opposition groups.

The convention also recognizes families as the ones responsible for child guidance, development, and welfare, especially according to the articles 5, 7, 8, and 9. However, in many countries, in Latin America in particular, for many children the family becomes the reason for their living on the streets. Physical, emotional, and sexual abuse by parents – often by stepparents – are the most common reasons why children leave

¹ The Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF, (<http://www.unicef.org/crc/fulltext.htm>), p.3, art. 1

² “Why make a Special Case for Children?” UNICEF, (<http://www.unicef.org/crc/specialcase.htm>)

³ Children and Hunger. <http://www.pcusa.org/wmd/yoc/hunger.htm>. Sept. 27, 2001.

⁴ Children Rights, Human Rights Watch, <http://www.hrw.org/worldreport99/children/index.html>

their families.⁵ So, in Latin American countries alone there are about 40 million children living on the streets, out of over 100 million street children worldwide. Living on the streets subjects these children to other dangers such as drugs, HIV/AIDS, prostitution, and other forms of exploitive labor.

Not only street children are subjected to exploitive labor. The problem of children being involved into forced, bonded, or hazardous types of labor is very widespread throughout the world. In some countries, children starting at a young age work in unsafe places and perform very exhausting and hard types of work, which are harmful for their physical and psychological development. Such type of labor is a huge problem not only in less developed countries of Africa, Turkey or India, but also in such highly advanced countries as the United States.⁶

As a whole, even though all these countries approved the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the rights stated in this convention are violated by many. The states that ratified the Convention are obligated to submit detailed reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and some improvements are being made. Of course, following the terms of the international document is not easy, and the problems are hard to fix at once, but not all of the governments of these states attempt with sincerity to abide with the terms of the documents. This problem exists due to absence of the sufficient mechanism that would make sure the Party States, that ratified this particular Convention, actually follow its proposition. The existence of a document that would enforce the Convention, even if only the parts of it that apply for all the Party States regardless of cultural differences, is a necessity for the rights to be ensured for every child. The development of such a mechanism is the goal of this gathering.

History of the Problem

Thus, the Convention on the Rights of the Child has granted the children their rights in the form of the official document for countries to sign. After two years, 191 countries have ratified the document, thus making it a legally bounding piece of policy inside their territories. However, the problem of Child rights stands after over ten years of the existence of the Convention. The obstacle, however, is not that the United Nations has ignored the document it had created, but is in the implementation of it inside all the party-states.

Every year since ratification of the Convention, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the nations that ratified the Convention meet for a discussion of the reports of the states' achievements and hardships in the area of the rights of the child. In addition, the Committee on the Rights of the Child organizes yearly Days of the General Discussion, which are devoted to enhancing understanding of the contents and implications of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Every single discussion is devoted to a different set of problems that Convention addressed, and the particular problems of the states, to which Committee gave certain recommendations for improvement.

This was one of the measures of implementation of the Convention. But mostly, up until now the implementation of the Convention was based on Committee recommendations and monitoring of many different non-governmental organizations

⁵ Street Children, Casa-Alianza, <http://www.casa-alianza.org/EN/street-children/>, sec.6

⁶ Child Farm Workers, Human Rights Watch, <http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/crp/farmchild/index.htm>

(NGOs). However, there was never any direct enforcement or common accountability, for this particular direction leads into a complicated dilemma between the extent of the power of the UN document and the prevalence of nations' sovereignties, which member states must confront.

Bloc Positions

The violations of the children's rights can be found in almost every country in the world. The problems vary according to the welfare and level of development of the state, and of course the internal problems. Thus, less developed states have fewer resources to ensure the rights for children. However, the divisions are not as sharp.

The Child Soldiers problem is not only present in the less developed countries. Although the use of child soldiers is more prevalent in Africa and Asia, many countries across the Americas and Europe, still recruit children into their armed forces.⁷ In particular, the Western countries that use children as combatants are Greece and United Kingdom, according to Amnesty International.⁸ Forced labor tends to have the same trend.

The problem of street children is very widespread in Latin American countries, as it has been sited before, only 40 out of 100 million street children are in Latin America.⁹ Thus, this problem touches many other nations.

The divisions become sharper, however, in the cases of preventable diseases and access to education. These rights are realized to a greater extent in more developed countries, although again not to every child. In short, though all countries that ratified the convention agree with its spirit, each has particular issues that it finds more difficult to address. Each, therefore, desires enforcement and real progress with regard to certain clauses and issues while claiming national sovereignty on others.

Past UN action

The first time the rights of the child were addressed was in 1924 by the League of Nations in the document entitled Declaration of the Rights of the Child. The second large step toward recognition and promotion of children's rights was the United Nations Charter, which "encouraged respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms."¹⁰ In 1948, United Nations General Assembly adopted two major human rights documents – the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and a second Declaration of the Rights of the Child. It was amended and detailed in 1959. In 1961, the two International Covenants – on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights – became first two Human Rights documents that were binding on the nation-states that ratified them. However, they did not address Child Rights separately.

In 1978, Poland officially proposed the draft of Convention on the Rights of the Child, and during the next twenty years, this draft was completed with contributions from every nation and society. In 1989, the Convention was adopted by the General Assembly and came into full power the next year. By 1995, it was ratified by one hundred and

⁷ "The campaign to Stop Child Soldiers," Amnesty International
<http://www.amnesty.org.uk/childrights/soldier.htm>, sec. 4

⁸ "The campaign to Stop Child Soldiers," Amnesty International
<http://www.amnesty.org.uk/childrights/soldier.htm>, sec. 4

⁹ Street Children, Casa-Alianza, <http://www.casa-alianza.org/EN/street-children/>, sec.6

¹⁰ "Convention on the Rights of the Child," UNICEF, <http://www.unicef.org/crc/convention.htm>

ninety-one countries. Only two countries of those who signed did not ratify it: Somalia and the United States of America.

To make sure that the Party States follow all the terms of the Convention, there was instituted the Committee on the Rights of the Child, consisting of 10 internationally recognized experts on the human rights.¹¹ Every year the Party States are obligated to submit detailed reports to the Committee about their achievements in the area of Children's Rights. This is the primary mechanism used by the UN to enforce the Convention.

Further worldwide events resulted in formulation and adoption of Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child to fight the problem of Child Soldiers. It was adopted by the General Assembly on May 25, 2000. Currently it is not in effect. The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers leads the campaign for universal ratification of the Optional Protocol to Fight Child Soldiers, with the determined goal of 100 signatures and fifty ratifications by the UN Special Session on Children in September 2001.

Proposed Solutions

As the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection, and Development of Children stated, "The well-being of children requires political actions at the highest level." The statistics and the monitoring reports to the Committee clearly show that even though the necessary documents stating the Child Rights exist, they lack one crucial part – an enforcement mechanism.

This is not news for many people who are involved in the campaign for the rights of the child. Therefore, during the Day of General Discussion in 1999, which addressed general measures of implementation, one of the participants stated that there existed a necessity "to increase the usefulness of the recommendations of the Committee and the efforts to follow up on their implementation."¹² This is perhaps, one of the best possibilities to increase states' action toward ameliorating the rights of the child without direct intervention of the United Nations into the matters of the states. This solution, however, will need to be evaluated carefully on the subject of the domain of the recommendations, the possible allowed depth of follow-ups in context of state sovereignty, and by whom would these follow-ups be conducted. It might also be suggested to involve the International Court of Justice or a certain financial or other sanction on the state if during the follow-ups heavier child rights violations were discovered. However, this particular measure, as well as the solution itself, is up for the discussion of the members of the Human Rights Committee, for even though the most fundamental value of the Charter is global efforts in order to find solutions for the problems of the common wealth of the people, it does not provide for the intervention. Perhaps, during the discussion the Committee will be able to come up with another solution, which will be effective and not include interference.

¹¹ "Who Monitors Implementation of the Convention?" UNICEF, <http://www.unicef.org/crc/monitoring.htm>

¹² Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Committee on the Rights of the Child. Reports of General Discussion Days.* pp. 106-107. <http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu2/6/crc.htm>. Sept 25, 2001.

Topic 2: AIDS and Intellectual Property Rights

A Statement of the Problem

The pace of HIV/AIDS is not only escalating but also approaching a terrifying and dangerous level in many nation states around the world. In many African countries, as elsewhere, life expectancies are dropping, driven by a resurgence of malaria and tuberculosis and more potently by spreading HIV/AIDS. Almost 2.5 million Africans died of AIDS in the year 2000. According to UNAIDS, more than 36 million people worldwide are infected with AIDS virus. In sub-Saharan Africa, the region most devastated by AIDS, an estimated 25.3 million Africans are living with HIV¹. Each day in Africa six thousand people are killed by AIDS. This is more than the number of people killed by wars, famines and floods and millions of children are left orphaned². Infection rates are also spreading ubiquitously in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, from both intravenous drug use and sexual transmission. In the mean time, advance treatment and newly invented drugs in cut AIDS deaths increasingly in rich countries in the 1990s. Developed, prosperous, countries such as the United States, The United Kingdom, Germany, France, have reaped the most benefit from these developments in pharmaceuticals. However, the same advantage is not enjoyed by the developing and underdeveloped world. Several reasons affect this worrying outcome. Factors such as poor accessibility of education, limited knowledge regarding the disease, limited governmental and public resources and high cost of AIDS drugs are all contributing to the resulting discrepancy. The unbearable cost of AIDS drugs is the most controversial issues among the other culprits. Countries hard-hit by AIDS are asking for cheap generically produced medication to help those who are simply unable to afford the brand name prices but developed countries are concerned about patent and intellectual property rights. As a result, the drug price issue has raised many international lawsuits against either pharmaceutical companies or the local governments. Two recent international lawsuits will improve our knowledge on this controversial issue.

History of the Problem

Brazil, the country with the greatest number of AIDS infections in Latin America is currently battling with American pharmaceutical manufacturers for the right to produce its own generic AIDS drugs with a cheaper cost and equal quality. Nevertheless, the US medical labs are trying to stop Brazilian generic versions of these drugs from being used or produced within the country. In 1998, motivated by the high cost of antiretroviral drugs which make up part of the cocktail of drugs used to keep HIV/AIDS in check, Brazil's government had decided to take a deeper step in producing its own generic antiretroviral drugs. According to Far-Manguinhos lab, located in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil imports the ingredients from Asia and produces 12 drugs that keep AIDS under control for 200,000 Brazilians³. In fact, based on Brazil's medical reports, made in Brazil drugs are 79 percent less expensive to make and this self-made policy has reduced AIDS deaths by half. Also, it has improved the quality of life for thousands of people living with the disease, transcending social status⁴. This solution, however, has not proven pleasing to all, in particular the US pharmaceutical corporations. The drug industry takes a remarkably different viewpoint. They argue that the price of drugs is not the main problem but instead the issue revolves around intellectual property rights and patents.

Protecting intellectual property right is the major concern and the first priority of large research corporations. Therefore, many decided to engage a trade battle with Brazilian government to maintain their monopoly privileges by preventing the manufacture of generic Brazilian AIDS drugs.

Additionally 39 U.S. pharmaceutical companies have allied together against the government of South Africa. The drug industry hopes the trial will overturn a law that allows the government of South Africa to import cheap AIDS drug⁵. The companies believe that their patent rights have been violated and an aggressive action must be taken immediately. Also, these 39 drug manufactures have lobbied the U.S. government to punish South Africa for trying to gain access to affordable AIDS medicines. Unsurprisingly, the Clinton administration listened to the pharmaceutical manufacturers. It placed South Africa on a “watch list” of “free trade violators” and denied it tariff breaks on its exports. According to the 1992 and 1996 campaign reports, Clinton-Gore campaigns had received a total of \$582,945 from pharmaceutical corporations during two campaigns⁶. In December, 1999, the US Trade Representative officially dropped the complaint against South Africa after receiving pressure from the worldwide community of nations. The South African government, however, have seen the situation differently. It believes that it is protecting its sovereign right to lay a foundation for its health care policy. It also thinks that the government is doing the right thing and believes patent laws are less crucial than the loss of 20,000 lives every month. According to the official estimation, it predicts that 25 percent of the population will die within the next decade if the present situation continues⁷.

When the position of the pharmaceutical industry is examined more closely however, it becomes clear that it is not one that is solely motivated by profits at the expense of lives. American pharmaceutical corporations maintain that allowed generic drugs into the marketplace would simply be the sharp edge of the wedge in the side of intellectual property rights. They maintain that the high cost of such drugs is necessary to recuperate the losses that were accumulated during the research and testing of these drugs. Without this recuperation the industry would become bankrupt to the detriment of all. Without the industry, there would simply be no better, more effective, anti-AIDS drugs in development. Furthermore, the high prices of AIDS drugs are necessary to provide the seed funds needed to begin a new generation of research into AIDS drugs. To give in to generic drugs, they argue, would not only lead to rampant pirating of ideas throughout the world but also would cripple the only institution able to do the research and development needed to continue the fight on AIDS⁸. In an economy that had become increasingly knowledge, rather than product, based US corporation are keenly aware of the worlds current business environment.

Additionally, they argue that the mere provision of AIDS drugs to nation states is not sufficient when the states in question often lack the most basic standards of medical care. The dangers of unsupervised use of these potentially very dangerous drugs would not only be hazardous to the people who are taking them but also could lead to more powerful variations of the AIDS virus that are immune to the current drug treatments. This argument bears close resemblance to the dangers that are currently being encountered with the misuse of antibiotics. Healthcare, the corporations maintain, is more than simply giving someone a pill, and must be a multifaceted exercise⁹.

Bloc Positions

Although the high cost of AIDS drugs involves many countries around the world, there are basically two sides holding different positions: human right versus corporate right.

Humanitarian Bloc Position

People standing on Human right position believe that their right to health care should be highly protected by the law. They draw the Human Rights Covenant adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966 as their backbone and proclaim the right of everyone to enjoy “the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health”. The Covenant also requires government to prevent, treat, and control diseases, and to assure medical care and attention to everyone in the event of illness. Two nations among 142 governments did not ratify the Covenant: the United States and South Africa.

One holding the humanitarian position finds difficult to believe that pharmaceutical industry’s profit is more salient than human lives. The critics from humanitarian perspective are unhappy about the slow action and false hopes promised by drug industries since the scope of the AIDS epidemic remains virtually unchanged in underdeveloped and developing countries around the world. “The bottom line is we need real reduction in price, not public relations. And reductions need to be sustainable and broad without any sort of conditions attached,” said Asia Russell, a member of Health Gap Coalition in Philadelphia¹⁰.

Another furious critic is coming from the antiracism groups. There is no obvious disagreement between two sides that Africa is the continent hardest hit by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The disease vividly reveal the unspeakable conflicts between rich and poor, North and South, developed and underdeveloped, human rights and patent rights, and the most touching one for US audiences, Black and White. Critics argue that the drug price issue is highly related with global racism and international abandonment of the continent of Africa. Global racism and discrimination is considered by some as the key to understanding the entire issue. Naturally the countries that are more inclined to support the Humanitarian position are those which are struggling to deal with limited resources and increasing AIDS cases. This stated, however, there are also large humanitarian groups in most industrialized nations.

Corporate Bloc Position

Unlike human right protesters, corporate right believers are fundamentally associated with industry. Chief among their arguments is the belief that the release of intellectual property rights with regard to the AIDS issue will simply be the first step on a very slippery slope. If such a precedent is set then the very notion of intellectual property rights could be undermined to the detriment of all. Therefore, no single case should be allowed and surely the theft of a drug formula.

They also warn people that drug companies will be less willing to take the substantial risks in developing drugs for diseases such as AIDS if they are eventually required to give product away for free or at cost¹¹. They argue that such a result might make it difficult for them to recoup the millions spent on research and development of the anti-AIDS drugs. The drug industry complains that they have not only been singled out but also have been demonized by the public, the media, and by trade protectionists from

certain countries. They argue that such attacks are often passionate expressions of emotion and a suitable, lasting, effective solution will not be one produced in the heat of passion but instead will only be produced through sober thought and consideration. Consequently, drug companies defend their positions by attacking underdeveloped and developing countries' poor health care system and malpractice of government policy.

Past UN Action

The right to health is considered salient and fundamental in the human right perspective. It is adopted as preamble by many international instruments. World Health Organization (WHO) is one of them. WHO preamble formulates the "highest attainable standard of health" as a fundamental right of everyone and defines health as a "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."¹² In addition to the preamble of WHO constitution, Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) is the most well-known and influential one among other provisions.

Various UN World Conferences, including the Vienna Declaration, the Programme of Action of the Cairo Conference, and the Beijing Declaration, and Programme of Action have also expressed their concerns associating with AIDS outbreak and human health. It has formed bedrock on which some state parties have acted. As a result of serious impacts caused by AIDS, a UN program has been developed in 1996 to handle the crisis. The program is called UNAIDS. It has six co-sponsors such as United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the WHO, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the World Bank. UNAIDS has been the main channel reporting any AIDS related news worldwide and a major resource of information.

Recently, several UN actions were taken combating with AIDS around the world. AIDS has been mentioned officially on UN General Assembly. As a result, major drug companies have reduced their prices for anti-retroviral AIDS drugs by 20-fold from about \$ 10,000 per year per patient to \$ 350-600 per year for some developing countries. Countries like Uganda, Senegal, Rwanda and Botswana have benefited from this deal¹³. Botswana, the country with the highest rate of AIDS in the world, has received \$ 100 million donations from Gates Foundation and GlaxoSmithKline Plc, the pharmaceutical giant.

Proposed Solutions

Some proposed solutions are either in the process of discussion or are currently being placed into action. Cutting drug prices not only has been functioning quite successfully in certain countries but also has produced some positive effects in controlling the AIDS pandemic. Additionally drug companies have cut drug costs increasingly quickly in the past few years. Treatments or anti-AIDS drugs that are currently priced at thousands of U.S. dollars in the developed countries are now being made available at only hundreds of dollars in many states in the greatest danger from AIDS. For instance, Senegal is a nation that receives price cuts on official anti-AIDS drugs.

A few large drug corporations were asked to have a worldwide system of differential pricing for drugs that would offer steep discounts to the various poorest underdeveloped and developing countries while maintaining levels in more developed nations. As such, the cost would be based upon ability. There are still many issues with this solution, however, including the dynamic nature of the problem, the need to evaluate each country individually and the continuing need to reimburse the corporations adequately.

There has also been a strong movement that has advocated basic AIDS education. Education, it is argued, would ease the problem at a fundamental level and benefit both AIDS-hit government and its citizens. Education would also bring superstitions away from malapropos folk beliefs. As an example, there persists a belief in certain countries that AIDS can be cured by sleeping with a virgin or a young girl. Furthermore, there exists a continuing deadly expectation that a woman must have unprotected sex with her husband even if he is HIV positive.

State parties are urged by UN to prevent or resolve the problem. Techniques such as the creation of informational campaigns, the adoption of laws to prevent discrimination against HIV positive persons and the quest to avoid measures that discriminate against people with HIV/AIDS. These measures are in response to some states' adoption of coercive measures to minimize the spread of AIDS, including transit restrictions, mandatory testing, and control of prostitution¹².

Conclusion

It is evident that the topics that have been chosen are not simple issues. In each, there are levels of debate that must be filtered and solved. Each, however, is an issue that affects millions of people daily and is essential to the future stability of the world, to say nothing of the lives of the people that are affected. I would like to encourage you to struggle with these topics yourselves. As a starting point, call the Embassy, or Consulate, that represents your country to find out its national position on these issues and the actions that it has taken with respect to these concerns. Then expand your search. There are some links below which you can use as a starting springboard. Try to get a complete feeling of how your country moves and acts on the international stage. At the same time that you are developing your country profile, look into the issues yourself. How do you feel about these issues? What solutions would you suggest? Are these solutions compatible with the beliefs of your Nation? The better prepared you come to the conference and the more accurately you know your Nation the more interesting, and rewarding, the experience will be. These issues promise to be very thought provoking and the conference itself should be a whole bunch of fun. We all look forward to seeing you in April.

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