

Hillwoods School Model United Nations  
Conference 2019

## Background Guide



# United Nations General Assembly

## Secretary General's Address

Dear delegates,

As the Secretary General, It is my honor and privilege to welcome you all to the 3rd Hillwoods School Model United Nations Conference. HMUN has been growing exponentially and actively augmenting the level and intensity of crises, debate and co-operation with each passing year. It is a legacy that we hope to continue and reinforce with this year's conference.

In an ever volatile, dynamic and adaptive international status-quo, it becomes increasingly vital for us as students- to deliberate discuss and formulate the groundwork of bi-lateral and multi-lateral ties that are to be established in the future.

With firm precedence, it would not be wrong to say that delegates, having attended this conference in the past, have developed a deeper and a more empirical understanding of diplomacy, compromise and conflict. From condemning theocracies to enforcing climate laws, HMUN will be an invigorating amalgamation of resolving and debating dissidence, dispute and disparity.

Having participated in various MUNs , I have had the opportunity to serve HMUN in various capacities, and subsequently feel privileged to be given the opportunity to be at the organizational apex of the conference this year.

I eagerly await your presence at Hillwoods.

Warm regards,

Rishi Goyal

## Chief-de-Cabinet's Address

Greetings!

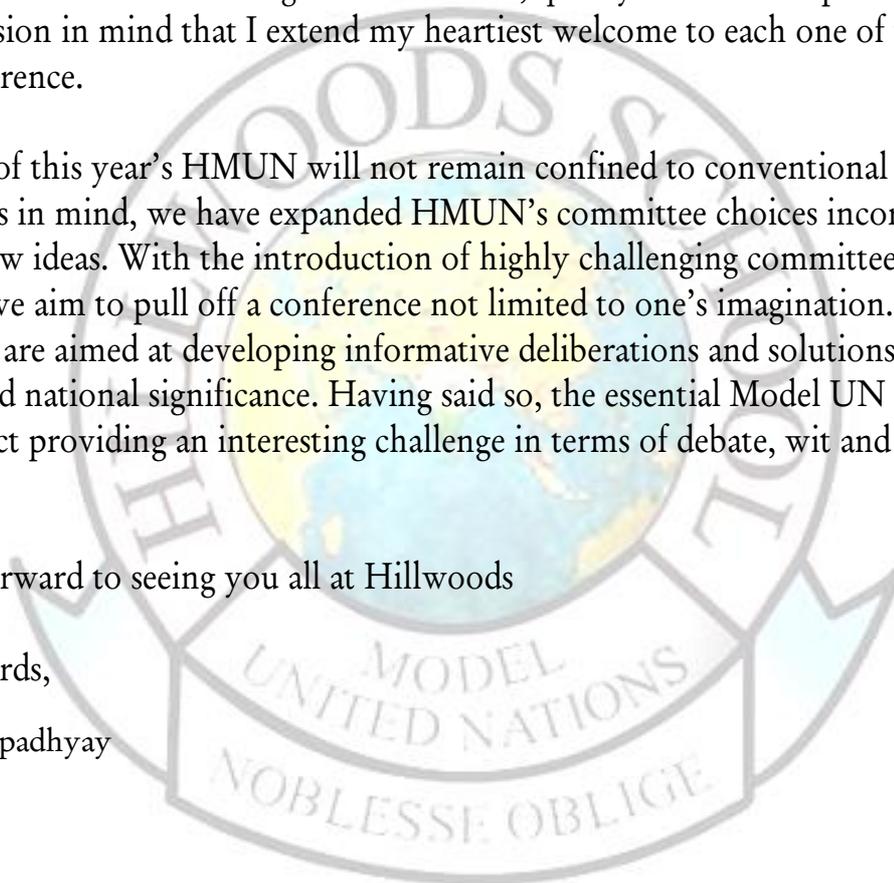
As the Chief-de-Cabinet of the Hillwoods School Model United Nations Conference, it gives me immense pleasure to invite you to the 3rd Session of the HMUN. Being at the pinnacle of a conference that finds itself amidst the top ranks in the town, both in terms of outreach and quality, has been an absolute honour. However, we at Hillwoods constantly strive to outdo ourselves and promise that this edition of HMUN will outdo all of its predecessors be it in terms of organizational skill, quality of debate or participation. It is with this vision in mind that I extend my heartiest welcome to each one of you to this year's conference.

The scope of this year's HMUN will not remain confined to conventional committees. Keeping this in mind, we have expanded HMUN's committee choices incorporating some bold and new ideas. With the introduction of highly challenging committee such as UNHRC, we aim to pull off a conference not limited to one's imagination. This year's committees are aimed at developing informative deliberations and solutions to issues: both of global and national significance. Having said so, the essential Model UN committees still remain intact providing an interesting challenge in terms of debate, wit and diplomacy to one and all.

Looking forward to seeing you all at Hillwoods

Warm Regards,

Ms.Kiran Upadhyay



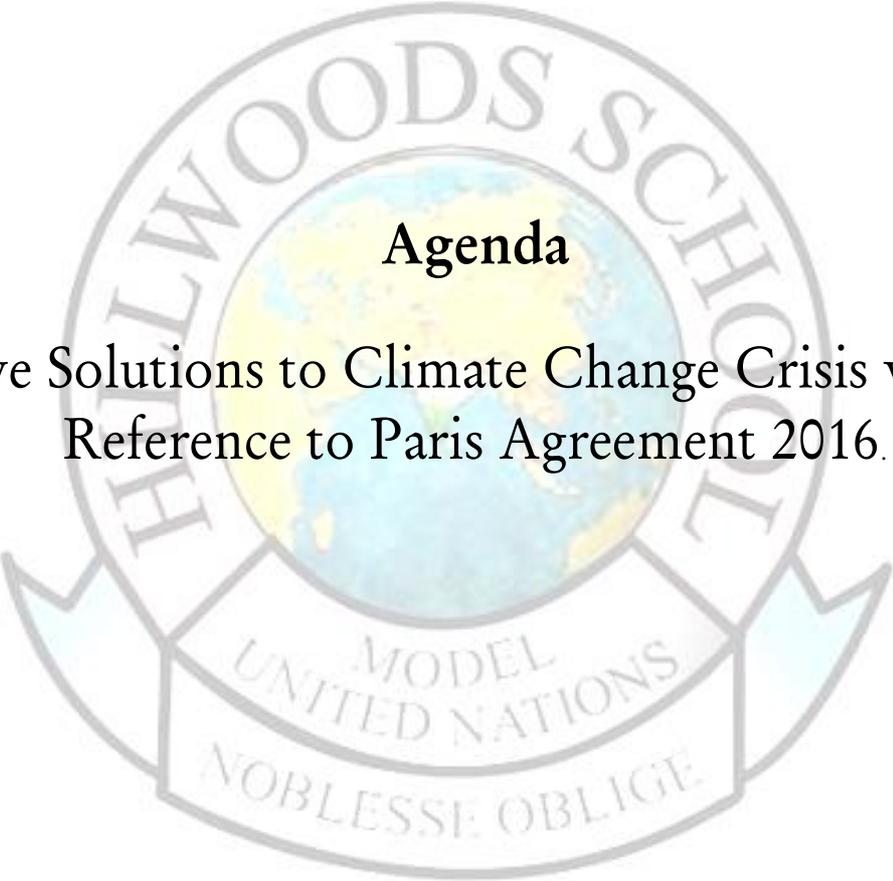
## Introduction to the committee

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations (UN) system, consistent of 47 Member States. All responsible for cooperation for the promotion and protection of Human Rights. Utilizing the Charter of the UN, the Universal Declaration of HR (UDHR) and HR instruments to which each state is a party, and especially considering the interrelated nature of HR law and international humanitarian law; focus on the latter.<sup>1</sup> Having been created by the General Assembly by Resolution 60/251 in 2006, to replace the UN Commission on Human Rights.

The aim of the council is to promote universality, interdependence, indivisibility of HR, inherent cooperation, to be a transparent intergovernmental process and to be realistic. Their focus is not only on Member States but also on Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and national HR institutions. Topics dealt with mostly are specific HR situations involving certain countries, however affecting a lot of Member States, groups of certain people and individuals.

Through utilizing a mechanism of 'Universal Periodic Review' they assess all HR issues in all UN MS. The 'Advisory Committee' is a panel of experts and advisors who give advice on the most thematic issues. While the 'Complaint Procedure' allows for individuals and organizations to bring forward specific HR issues.<sup>2</sup> Moreover the council works with 'UN Special Procedures' which can be made to advise and publicly report on specific HR issues in certain countries, this is a team made up out of rapporteurs, special representatives and independent experts.

To note they are very different from the OHCHR they coordinate different human rights activities throughout the different UN bodies. The Council works with other UN bodies but focuses mainly on the interaction of HR in MS.



## Agenda

Innovative Solutions to Climate Change Crisis with Special Reference to Paris Agreement 2016.

## Overview

With rapidly changing weather patterns and sea levels, it becomes increasingly clear that climate change is the defining issue of our time. The effects of climate change are widespread. It is disrupting economic progress, affecting the quality of life, increasing costs incurred by various people and communities, while raising global temperatures. As time passes, it continues to become more difficult and costly to be able to adapt to the negative impacts of climate change.

The core issue associated with this agenda is of global warming. The problem of global warming is mainly caused by the greenhouse effect. Although it does play an important role in maintaining warm temperatures on the earth, its levels have become dangerously large in scale and are causing an increase in average global temperatures. This gradual but large-scale change has widespread effects, including its effect on weather and climate patterns. There are numerous ways used to measure the level of greenhouse gas emissions and they come from a wide variety of sources, including transportation, electricity production, industrial processes, residential activities, and agriculture.

The gases present in the atmosphere that absorb radiation are known as "greenhouse gases" (sometimes abbreviated as GHGs) as they are mainly responsible for the greenhouse effect.

The greenhouse effect, in fact, is recognized as one of the leading causes of global warming. The most important greenhouse gases present in our atmosphere are water vapor (H<sub>2</sub>O), carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O).

Fundamental scientific research for over half a century has shown that the concentration of greenhouse gases in the earth's atmosphere directly corresponds to the average global temperature on Earth, and the concentration of these gases, along with the mean global temperatures, has been rising steadily since the time of the Industrial Revolution. The average global temperature has risen by 0.85°C from 1880 to 2012. This has lowered snow and ice levels and caused the sea levels to rise at the same time.

The most commonly present GHG, accounting for about two-thirds of GHGs, is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), which is largely the product of burning fossil fuels.

The issue has faced extensive ignorance, and decisive action is the demand of the moment. The issue's relevance is reinforced by various events or disasters, such as floods, which are caused by changes in climate patterns. Scientists are very confident that global temperatures will continue to rise for decades to come, largely due to greenhouse gases produced by human activities.

Scientists from the IPCC forecast a temperature rise of over 4 degrees Celsius over the remainder of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Moreover, overall global costs will rise significantly in an effort to cope with this change. A very important part of the impacts of climate change is that they are long-term in nature. These include the consistent increase in average temperatures, the shortening of the winter season and changes in rain and precipitation patterns. Moreover, a further rise of 1 to 4 feet in sea levels is forecasted, along with the projection of the Arctic becoming ice-free.

Various developed countries, such as the USA and the UK, have successfully reduced pollution levels in their country as the significance of the manufacturing sector has declined and blame the problem of climate change on rapidly developing nations such as India and China. However, these nations argue that the developed nations had emitted large amounts of greenhouse gases over the course of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, and that controlling carbon emissions would significantly hinder economic progress. In this way, no country claims responsibility for the problem of climate change. However, recent reports have that some of the biggest economies, including the USA, have emitted very high levels of greenhouse gases. However, all nations continue to remain reluctant to take steps

to radically combat climate change as it puts them at an economic disadvantage.

While nations have been reluctant to take radical steps to oppose climate change, various individuals and organizations, including the World Bank, have acknowledged the significance of this issue.

At the One Planet Summit convened at the end of 2017, the World Bank made a few but significant announcements in line with its ongoing support to developing countries for the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement's goals. These included its decision to end the provision of financial support for upstream oil and gas, after 2019. The group has started publishing reports, which present the greenhouse gas emissions from the projects funded by the group. The group is working closely with the United Nations and is providing assistance with regard to the implementation of various UN agreements, including the Paris Agreement.

Moreover, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, representative-elect in the United States, has taken a radical stance against climate change by proposing the effective implementation of the Green New Deal. The Green New Deal revolves around the ideas of creating a large-scale program of investments in clean-energy jobs and infrastructure. It ambitiously aims at bringing a massive change in the

functionality of the entire economy- by decarbonizing it and making its working style significantly fairer and just. On the other hand, the various challenges posed to it include the high economic benefit yielded from the operations of greenhouse-gas emitting industries. Moreover, various industrial units will have to bear large costs in order to change their production methods. This could put the nation at an economic disadvantage. Due to these reasons and many more, the Green New Deal has faced extensive opposition. However, the support for this cause continues to rise as ideas pertaining to sustainability and environment-protection gain significance.

Fundamentally, the lack of willingness on the part of many nations to make the necessary sacrifices is putting the lives of all of us and the existence of humanity itself at risk.

### **Course of the Committee**

In order to successfully climate change as the United Nations General Assembly, it becomes imperative for the committee to discuss enforceable methods and their effectiveness. The Council needs to look at climate change as a defining issue of our time. Hence, it is considered imperative for the committee to find radical solutions to solve the problem of climate change. While the issue is very often referred to the United Nations

Framework on Climate Change, it must be understood that the committee has already identified long term issues associated with climate change (in the form of temperature rises and environmental disturbance which threatens the survival of the human species) and aims to effectively find enforceable international laws to control the negative effect of climate change.

The committee is not about creating a framework for tackling climate change.

The aforementioned aim is already achieved through other various other conferences and diplomatic forums such as the Paris Climate Agreement and the United Nations Framework on Climate Change. Thus, in order to solve the problem of climate change, the General Assembly must look at and critically consider the various enforceable methods and the effectiveness of their implementation.

In order to channelize debate successfully, all delegates must keep in mind that combatting climate change is an international issue. As mentioned earlier, nations remain reluctant to radically combat climate change as it gives their competitors an unfair advantage over them. This is unacceptable to nations in the competitive environment that exists today. Therefore, all delegates are expected to negotiate methods, which can be enforced internationally in order

to maintain fair competition between countries.

All delegates are expected to negotiate effective methods while keeping their national interest in mind. Delegates are expected to initiate debate by sharing individual opinions and stance.

Discussing various enforceable solutions and their implementation should further the debate. Using the available formal and informal means of negotiation available, the delegates are expected to reach a resolution, which presents the decisions made by the committee at the end of negotiations, and includes methods to control climate change which can be enforced internationally.

Along with this, delegates are expected to clearly lay out the extent of non-compliance which would correspond to a certain level of corrective action.

### Scope of the Agenda

There is scope for extensive discussion on this issue. Various branches of the agenda, such as the causes, countries responsible, and solutions can be discussed extensively. Moreover, the various aspects (economic, social and political) of the issue and possible solutions can be discussed and debated.

The causes can be discussed extensively as the history of climate change and various patterns are analyzed. Moreover,

various aspects of different solutions can be considered. There are a large number of possible enforcement solutions as various factors have to be considered and they have to apply internationally.

Delegates are encouraged to collect statistics and other relevant information pertaining to the various aspects of the issue considering the wide scope for discussion on the agenda.

An understanding of the timeline of this issue is also very important. Delegates must understand that greenhouse-gas emissions rose exponentially as the Industrial Revolution gained pace through the later part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The levels of emission have been increasing through the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, with developed countries being the prime polluters at the time. From the 21<sup>st</sup> century onwards, the currently developing countries started to become the countries responsible for the carbon emissions.

### Possible Blocs and Solutions

In order to make negotiations effective, alliances need to be formed. Alliances shall be formed based on common interests. They may be formed according to levels of economic and political development or the significance of greenhouse-gas emitting energy sources in the country.

Countries such as **China** and organizations like the **European Union**

are leaders in the renewable energy market, and therefore have been seen as the leaders in adhering to existing frameworks against climate change.

Developed and peaceful nations, which do not yield any significant benefit from greenhouse gas emitting processes such as Sweden and Norway, are leading the fight against climate change

On the other hand, economies which are largely dependent on production methods and products, which emit greenhouse gases, include Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Russia and USA, all four of which notably refused to even 'welcome' the IPCC report. Furthermore, countries like India and Nigeria are also dependent on fossil fuels to grow their nascent manufacturing industries.

The delegates could devise various possible solutions. Some of them have been explained below.

In a globalized world, economic sanctions can be an extremely effective measure at rectifying the wrong actions of a country. However, their effectiveness depends on various other factors such as the dependence of the country on international trade. They can be of various types and can include levying heavy duties on goods produced in a certain country, placing an embargo, which completely bans the consumption of goods, and services produced in a particular country or simply cutting off all trade relations with a country. However, it must be noted that trade sanctions will only be effective if economically powerful countries support them. Therefore, reaching a consensus is very important. The committee is expected to analyse the

effectiveness of these solutions as well. Since the end of the 20th century, it has been highlighted that sanctions heavily inflict external costs, which have to be borne, by vulnerable civilian groups, third party countries and other sections of society, which are not responsible for the problem.

Selective sanctions are less elaborate than full-scale embargoes. This means that they only place restrictions on certain products and particular finance flows.

These could be used to restrict the trade of specific harmful commodities such as those, which emit greenhouse gases at a large scale. This brings in another idea of banning the operations of all industries that emit dangerously high levels of greenhouse gases. Various methods could be used to control the greenhouse gases emitted by industries.

These could include the introduction of a high pollution tax, which would be charged in proportion to the level of greenhouse gases emitted by the industries.

Moreover, government or non-governmental organizations that are opposed to climate change must be provided with adequate funds.

These organizations could be made to use the resources available to them to help industries change their production processes.

Another type of sanctions is targeted or smart sanctions. These focus on and aim to impact particular individuals or groups in society. Some examples of this may include arms embargoes or asset freezes. While it may overlap with ideas pertaining to selective sanctions, the difference between the two must be understood. Targeted sanctions could be an ideal method for corrective action

adopted by the committee. The sanctions will provide a strong economic incentive for countries to comply with the emission level limits and parameters set by the committee. This may be very significant as enforcement is a very important aspect of this issue, as highlighted before. Therefore, sanctions can be very effective as they can significantly affect the economic, social and political conditions prevalent in a country, especially those that are highly dependent on international trade. In order to avoid domestic turmoil, countries and groups of society are likely to respond to sanctions in a prompt manner.

Solutions could also include banning a company, which is found to be indulged in malpractice, and violates the parameters laid out by the council. However, national governments will have to be efficient with regular checks of the levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

Sanctions could be applied against a country that is found to not report malpractice from their country.

Along with this, military interventions could be reserved as the 'last-resort' to enforce laws upon countries. Countries that repeatedly fail to comply with the agreed norms could be subjected to military action. The impact of military action on a country is likely to be very high. This will incite immediate response from the country responsible and might set an example for other

countries. Therefore, military action could be used in extreme cases of non-compliance.

### **Past Resolutions and Actions**

The United Nations has presented the various steps it has taken, including the formation of various bodies, to analyze and tackle the issue of climate change, as described in detail below:

#### **United Nations Framework**

##### **Convention on Climate Change**

The United Nations has assumed the lead role in the effort to save the planet. In 1992, its "Earth Summit" produced the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as a first step in addressing the climate change problem. Today, it has near-universal membership. Over 195 countries that have endorsed the Convention are Parties to the Convention. The ultimate aim of the Convention is to prevent the dangerous human activities that interfere with the climate system from taking place

##### **Kyoto Protocol**

By 1995, numerous countries had initiated negotiations to strengthen the global response to climate change, and, two years later, adopted the Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol legally bound developed country Parties to abide by the

emission reduction targets. The Protocol's first commitment period started in 2008 and ended in 2012.

The second commitment period began on 1 January 2013 and will end in 2020. Now, there are 197 Parties to the Convention and 192 Parties to the Kyoto Protocol.

#### **The Cancun Agreements (2010),**

Adopted at Conference of The Parties 16, included a universal temperature increase limit for the first time while outlining measures to assist developing countries in achieving this. The adoption of the Paris Agreement (2015) marked the culmination of a shift toward universal voluntary climate goals regardless of development level. In order to alleviate the additional burdens on developing countries, a greater focus on increasing the capacity of developing countries to ultimately meet these goals was placed at a high priority. Articles 9-11 outline the need for developed countries to financially and technologically contribute to capacity-building initiatives in developing countries. To facilitate this, the Paris Agreement requires that all countries submit National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), outlining weaknesses and priority areas in their abilities to combat climate change.

#### **Paris Agreement**

At the 21st Conference of the Parties in Paris in 2015, Parties to the UNFCCC reached a landmark agreement to combat climate change and to accelerate and intensify the actions and investments

needed for a sustainable low carbon future. The Paris Agreement furthers ideas from the Convention and – for the first time – brings all countries into a common cause of undertaking the ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with increased support to assist developing countries to do so. As such, it draws out a new course in the effort to combat climate change.

The Paris Agreement's primary aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat posed by climate change by keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to follow and build upon previous efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

On Earth Day, 22 April 2016, 175 world leaders signed the Paris Agreement at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. This was, till the time, the largest number of countries ever to sign an international agreement on a single day. There are now 184 countries that have joined the Paris Agreement.

Youth play a significant role in achieving the Paris Agreement. As of 2015, young people, defined as those between 15 and 24 years old, constituted 1.2 billion people or 17% of the global population. The UN acknowledges the critical role of young people as agents for social change, technological innovation, and economic transformation. Young

people are important stakeholders in the UN system and are involved in advocacy, mitigation actions, national adaptation and other related activities. Young people will be disproportionately affected by climate change and its future consequences. This is especially true in developing countries, where young people represent an even larger proportion of the population. Climate change accelerates depletion of natural resources, leading to exacerbated competition for jobs among young people in developing countries, who are often dependent on natural resources and climate-sensitive jobs such as farming and animal production. The important role of climate change education has been consistently recognized. At the 2015 Paris Conference of Youth (COY), education was highlighted as a priority among young people in order to combat climate change. Education deepens the knowledge of young people on sustainable practices which help mitigate climate change impacts. Climate change education has raised awareness among young people and informed behavioral changes to mitigate and adapt to global changes. Education also gives authority to young people in initiating calls to action on climate change. Furthermore, training on disaster and risk reduction

practices help mitigate and deepen climate change adaptation strategies, especially for young people, in small islands and communities at greater risk from the effects of climate change

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