



SPECPOL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TOPIC A:

COMBATTING FOREIGN AID DEPENDENCY POST COVID-19

Our first topic focuses on the many impacts of foreign aid dependency as we navigate through the COVID-19 global pandemic. Foreign aid is defined as the voluntary transfer of resources from one country to another, with prime examples of aid including money, food/supplies, medical assistance, health care, education, infrastructure, and training services. In essence, foreign aid dependency begins as newly emerging or developing countries become too reliant on the goods and resources of donor countries, which can have long-lasting negative effects. While foreign aid can be a beneficial short-term solution to supporting struggling nations, when developing countries become too dependent on international or external help, they begin to neglect improving their own economic state, establishing a stable government, and promoting self-governance for their own societies.

Further, nations that receive foreign aid from powerful countries feel an obligation to contribute their own natural resources, decrease tariffs, or decrease border restrictions, which can further decline their economic status and create a new series of issues. Many western and colonial powers (such as the United States, European Union members, Japan) place a large pressure and expectation on their aid-recipient countries to support them and provide access to their markets in return for providing resources and aid. This could be perceived as neocolonialism, since even though nations are not directly colonizing, they are informally setting an obligation for their regulations to be followed and supported. A prime example of foreign aid dependency in today's world is Sub-Saharan Africa. According to a report from 2019, Africa's foreign aid totaled 34.4 percent of total net official development assistance (ODA), with Sub-Saharan Africa's ODA amounting to USD 41.2 billion. Most African nations greatly depend on the West, specifically

nations such as the United Kingdom and the United States to develop and offer initiatives, provide medical resources, and create low-level labor opportunities. Though in return, these nations expect control over many of Africa's markets and resources and often enforce new economic regulations favoring themselves rather than Africa.

I chose this topic due to the large prevalence it plays in continuing colonialism and preventing social, economic, and political independence in today's very complex world. Decades of aid distribution have revealed many inefficiencies with current and past processes. It is essential to understand the inefficiencies of the current aid distribution system and how detrimental it can be to emerging economies and vulnerable populations and cultures. Dependency in aid has evolved to not only pertain to money and resources, but also technical or vocational skills that a region is unable to procure due to foreign donors having complete control over aid distribution, structural adjustment programs, and the implementation of other projects that leads to an over-reliance on foreign involvement.

In regards to your research and debate, I highly encourage you to keep in mind the complexity and fragility of this issue, as while foreign aid dependency continues to negatively impact nations, a certain level of foreign aid is essential to supporting struggling communities and populations in dire need of assistance. Specifically, the COVID-19 pandemic placed many regions and countries in an even more vulnerable state with lack of access to healthcare, medical supplies, or infrastructure (hospitals, clinics, etc), creating a vast need for foreign aid. Many countries already lacked a structured government, and the pandemic places them even further back with essentially no stability or independence. When researching, identify feasible and cost-efficient methods governments can improve their own organization and dependability, to then support their own people and begin to develop such sectors. Important sub-topics delegates should focus on include: economic independence, employment opportunities, civil and political participation, government stability, access to education and healthcare, and infrastructure development.



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specpolbmun72@bmun.org

TOPIC B:

POLITICAL STATUS OF NON SELF GOVERNING TERRITORIES (NSGTS)

The United Nations Charter definition of a NSGT is “a territory whose people have not yet attained a full measure of self-government.” Our second topic debates and discusses the political statuses of the current 17 official remaining NSGTs, under which two million people currently live. As we explore this topic, reviewing the history of colonization and the age of imperialism is essential. Post World War II, Western, European, and Asian powers began a period of vast colonial expansion caused by imperial rivalry and the growth of industrialization. This originally established 72 NSGTs with 750 million people living in them, with the 17 remaining being ruled by the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and New Zealand.

Within the last century, NSGTs have continued to gain a reputation involving political and government instability, human rights violations, and close to no autonomy or sovereignty. According to Amnesty International, the seven reasons underdeveloped NSGTs have struggled to improve their economic and social state include civil wars and terrorism, unending corruption, the knowledge gap, education, health and poverty, geographic disadvantages, international aid, and unfair trade policies. Unstable governments and the uncertain status quo of NSGTs leave populations and citizens without political representation, limits the opportunities available, and stunts economic and social development.

Looking back in history, it is much easier to see the injustices of the stripping of in-

dependence of countries by colonial powers. However, it is much more startling to see that these instances are still occurring present-day. To the shock of some, there are still 17 Non-Self Governing Territories remaining today—about a fifth of all former colonies that gained independence since the creation of the United Nations. It is crucial to take the understanding of the injustices of the past and apply them to the present territories at hand. Human rights violations are occurring worldwide today, and without learning about them, change cannot be made. Only then will the United Nations’ decolonization values of respect for the self-determination of all people be truly and more fully executed. It is essential that you understand the nature of the political statuses of the 17 remaining NSGTs in order to lend to fruitful discussion in pursuance of their independence and decolonization.

As you begin your research journey, be sure to understand the fragility and complex nature of colonialism and territorial disputes. As you explore the case studies, take note of the past ceasefires and referendums implemented by the UN to alleviate the dispute and thoroughly assess their effectiveness in the conflict. It is critical to understand how each nation’s history plays a large role in their stance on the topic and impacts their current policies, legislation, and structure of the government. Furthermore, understand that when debating the political status of these NSGTs, there are several micro-topics which should be addressed within your solutions such as the economic disputes, access to resources and aid, government corruption, human rights violations, and autonomy/sovereignty for people presiding within NSGTs.

Due to the various country policies and member states involved in this issue, it is important to distinguish and understand how each country holds a different perspective. There may not be one defined solution to resolve the conflict within all territorial disputes and conflicts occurring within NSGTs. Through better understanding both the goals and mission of the United Nations, as well as of the key actors in this topic, you will be able to best support and resolve the various social, political, and economic issues at play. Delegates will need to collaborate with one another and think creatively to establish the most effective solutions and policies which can support the international community and people presiding under these territories.