

# **Solving this Global Issue Could Hold the Key to Averting the Climate Change Crisis**

**By Cassidy Bernstein**

76% of the global energy usage is from unsustainable energy, which means that over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of energy on earth comes from fossil fuels and other polluting nonrenewable resources. This alarmingly high amount motivated the delegates from nations around the world to act in the ECOSOC committee at MUNSA.

MUNSA (Model United Nations San Antonio) is a conference where delegates from different high schools gather to debate and find solutions to current global issues. MUNSA is the largest student-led model UN in the western hemisphere. The delegates collaborate to visualize a world where these pressing issues have been solved. This is why the theme of MUNSA XXIV is Envision, as this encapsulates the delegates' desires to find innovative solutions and create a better future for all the nations of the world.

The ECOSOC committee at MUNSA was gathered to find the best way to increase access to renewable forms of energy in developing countries. This is one of the major topics open to debate because the overuse of nonrenewable resources has led to high carbon emissions which greatly contribute to climate change. The delegates had many different ideas as to how this issue should be resolved. India started by stating that they were in favor of global cooperation and when questioned, stated that a specialized body of developed countries could provide aid to underdeveloped nations by funding their pursuit of sustainable energy. This was a popular stance throughout the debate because many delegates believed a large part of the solution needed to include monetary support from developed nations.

Though many delegates supported a global solution, some nations were more focused on solving this issue within their own borders. For example, Iceland proposed a solution that included the use of hydropower to help Iceland lean towards sustainable resources. Columbia questioned the effectiveness of this solution as "hydropower has often shown to have more cons than pros" in countries where it has been implemented. When Columbia asked if they supported this as a solution in all countries, Iceland responded with, "Not in other countries, but hydropower will still benefit Iceland overall."

Other solutions that held much discussion were raising taxes and tariffs on the import and export of nonrenewable resources, suggested by Greece, and providing tax exemptions for businesses working in the renewable energy sector, proposed by the US. These solutions have the intention of dissuading businesses from using nonrenewable energy sources and incentivizing the use of renewable energy. The idea of raising taxes and tariffs was not widely accepted due to the

economic impact of trading in fossil fuels, and while Japan sided with the US's plan of tax exemptions, India and Chad showed skepticism toward the solution's effectiveness.

While it is widely known that climate change is a dangerous and serious issue, many underdeveloped countries do not have engineers who are educated on how and why to use sustainable energy sources when unsustainable energy tends to be so much cheaper. Japan stated, "Programs could be created to educate engineers in developing countries and over time this will allow renewable energy sources to be integrated into these nations." While many delegates agreed education is important to the solution, some nations, such as China and The Republic of Korea, strongly stated that climate change is an imminent threat and action must be taken as soon as possible. China posed the question to the delegates: "What steps will be taken now?" While the Republic of Korea stated, "Climate change is a top priority, 15% of deaths in Korea are caused by climate change." He even commented on the subject of educating underdeveloped nations about renewable resources by bluntly stating, "You can't teach people if they're dead." One delegate commented on this saying "It seems like overkill, but it certainly got his point across."

Many solutions were discussed and discarded, but throughout the debate, a few solutions were accepted by all of the delegates, and the room seemed to agree that to truly resolve this problem, multiple solutions must be implemented. The delegates agreed that for the resolution, a sub-committee should be formed for this specific issue. They also decided that energy grid extensions and tax exemptions for businesses in the renewable energy sector would serve as a short-term solution while educating developing nations would serve as a long-term solution. These would all be funded by developed countries, where nations with more carbon emissions will provide more funding.

These international delegates in the ECOSOC committee debated and compromised wholeheartedly to find a feasible solution to the pressing issue of increasing access to renewable forms of energy in developing countries. Though this problem was multifaceted and difficult to solve, the delegates were able to come to an agreement and truly did their best to envision a future in which climate change is solved, and this global issue has become nothing more than history.