

**Davis Model United Nations Conference 2013 (DMUNC)**  
**Committee – World Health Organization (WHO)**  
**Topic – Pandemic Prevention**



Your Specialized Committee Dais:

*Head Chair* – Tim Kousnoutdinov

*Vice Chair* – Etra Caldes-Liu

*Legal* – Micah Lively

## Welcome delegates!

My name is Tim Khoustoutdinov, and I have the pleasure of being your head chair for the WHO committee at this conference. I'm 21 years old, and a junior transfer student studying political science. I'm happy to officiate and serve you in the best way I can for these exciting few days...you're in for a treat and plenty of twists! As for myself, my education experience includes musical training from the age of 4, transferring through community college and experiencing a re-definition of myself within the realm of politics and academic discourse, to enter my studies at UC Davis in September of 2012. Throughout that developmental period I have greatly involved myself with campus and political extracurricular activities. At Diablo Valley College, I focused on libertarian political thought and activism, school-sponsored journalism as well as MUN, where I performed in various duties such as being the lead Secretariat facilitator and administrator, a conference builder, and a traveling delegate. As a relative newcomer to UCDMUN, I am focusing my efforts on high school level conference chairing (CCCMUN, DMUNC and DVMUN), participating as a delegate in various California conferences (BayMUN, BMUN, and UCLAMUN), and leading Davis' own upcoming DCCMUN. I hope my experience will positively factor into your experience of what I hope will be a fair and professionally run United Nations simulation.

As I suggested before, this committee is dedicated and based around the World Health Organization. It will be run in single delegate format, with topical goals and crises. Since there is only one delegate per UN member-state, it is important to understand the structure and operations of the WHO and the UN system on a close and individual level. In brief, the functions of this organization include providing leadership on global health matters, shaping the health research agenda, setting norms and standards, articulating evidence-based policy options, providing technical support to countries and monitoring and assessing health trends. The organization was established on 7 April 1948, with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, as a member of the United Nations Development Group. It is an important part of the structure of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, with 194 member-states signing on. Its predecessor, the Health Organization, was an agency of the League of Nations. My interests have recently stemmed to this field of world health affairs due to the last few years of health panics (like the Swine and Bird Flu's) and other hypothetical but sometimes plausible deadly endemics, epidemics, pandemics and continuing health issues. The normal conference agenda fails to address some of the more popular sub-issues so my dais and I took it upon ourselves to carve out a special set of circumstances within the current environment of world health and human life...which is sure to be a socially and scientifically charged situation! Use the subsequent preparatory materials on top of outside research to prepare yourselves for the opportunity to solve something I consider stimulating as model leaders and culturally aware individuals.

The Committee Staff and Conference Secretariat are happy to receive and interact with all of you! This will surely prove to be a creative and informative debate! If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me through email at [tkhous@ucdavis.edu](mailto:tkhous@ucdavis.edu).

All the best,

Tim Khoustoutdinov  
*In immortalis veniunt!*

*[STORYLINE - THE FOLLOWING IS BASED ON A FUSION OF ONLINE RESEARCH AND INTERESTING, MOSTLY FICTIONAL, IDEAS:]*

Humanity has entered into a new century of wealth and prosperity the likes of which have not been seen in the historical continuum of planet Earth. The wars and woes of the past are largely irrelevant to the bustling populaces found across the globe. The old order had died along with its guard, as well-funded and staffed world-scale organizations like the United Nations have risen to take the place of more sectional and traditional associations. Some may doubt the effectiveness and legality of such new-age organizations, but they must remember that events and actions of the past helped necessitate the creation of such bodies of power. Furthermore, some issues are better addressed on a larger, multilateral scale, for the world has grown smaller within its modern spirit of globalization and communication. Many problems still plague various societies, and easy solutions are always hard to come by, but most people would be right to feel that having some sort of united organization is better than being on your own.

In the realm of health, one such organization towers above the rest: the WHO. Since good health is almost always essential to a good life, keeping tabs on medical developments and world health factors is important work. In its long 60+ year history, the WHO has performed fairly well, helping to eradicate smallpox, combat AIDS, control the spread of malaria, cholera and tuberculosis, promote nutritional and hygienic standards, as well as advising in various institutional levels of public policy regarding health and medicine. Despite the progress and incredible improvements in health since 1950, there are still a number of challenges, which *should* have been easy to solve. Here are a few:

- One billion people still lack access to health care systems.

- 36 million deaths each year are caused by non-communicable diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and chronic lung diseases. This is almost two-thirds of the estimated 56 million deaths each year worldwide. (A quarter of these take place before the age of 60.)
- Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) are the number one group of conditions causing death globally. An estimated 17.5 million people died from CVDs in 2005, representing 30% of all global deaths. Over 80% of CVD deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries.
- Over 7.5 million children under the age of 5 die from malnutrition and mostly preventable diseases, each year.
- In 2008, some 6.7 million people died of infectious diseases alone, far more than the number killed in the natural or man-made catastrophes that make headlines.

It is 2013, but there is much work left to be done, especially with the twenty-first century's peculiar explosion of new illnesses and ailments, diseases, infections and viruses. The reason that this assembly has been called to order is to address such a development. As the secretive report outlines, a team of UN WHO specialists has supposedly identified a potential large-scale health threat, originating in the Amazon. This information seems suspiciously limited and vague to you, but your superiors have insisted that you attend this emergency session as it could be quite important. You are not so pleased, however, as you know that WHO meetings tend to drag on for quite some time without concrete or immediately effective action being taken, regardless of the issue. Still, you wonder, with no plenary sessions having taken place in the last six months regarding new serious world health problems, something must be wrong.

During a planning meeting, you manage to overhear some theories being pushed around between some of the WHO's bureau officers. Although they are not particularly important people, their energized exchange makes you slightly curious as to what they are saying. You manage to glean a few choice words and passages which you end up sharing with other attending delegates soon after: "...is it true? Well, we won't know for sure until the field team sends back their data...I think it's serious...people ought to be warned...let's not rush

things...we have our orders...it's ridiculous...whole tribes wiped out...the chiefs are all scrambling...security has been beefed up, like we're in danger or something!" As the final preliminary meeting comes to a close, the air in the entire conference wing seems to sizzle with excitement and anxiety. Your phone vibrates, letting you know that you have received an official memo from the WHO Directorate. In short, it poses a challenge for the assembling delegates to address when the official session begins...something clearly short term-orientated and needing a speedy resolution. The most interesting part of the memo, however, deals with the abilities of the organization: simply and cleanly authorizing the use of full UN resources in the case of an immediate and pressing need to address a critical health concern anywhere in the world. This is unprecedented, you think, as no Security Council or General Assembly meetings have been held in any UN complex since you arrived in Geneva. Surely the use of force is unwarranted in any situation regarding the concerns and objectives of the World Health Organization! Regardless, your primary focus as an empowered representative and actor within the organization begins with the task of addressing the proposed challenge:

- **In committee, you must analyze the situation in South America, decide on a course of action, and contain the spread of whatever this new threat is, whether it is biological, pathological or something else entirely. The timeline for effective response is within the first two committee sessions, but this may change at the Chairs' discretion. Further updates will be provided depending on the pace and effectiveness of debate, decision-making, and passing of resolutions.**

**Now, onto some boring technical stuff (*please read*):**

- Position papers should be printed in duplicate with only one copy per delegate turned in to the dais, with the other copy retained for delegate use. They will be graded in a secret but holistic manner.

- Use the structure and rules of formal Parliamentary Procedure at all times, unless indicated otherwise such as during unmoderated caucuses. This will ensure a lively and effective deliberative environment.
- Do not feel shy in addressing the dais, as the role of the chairs is to facilitate debate and recognize delegates who are well prepared, forward with their ideas, involved, and diplomatic.
- This committee is a crisis-intensive simulation, with the time period being roughly that of early 2013, the setting being the Palace of Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, and the overall goal being pandemic prevention, no matter what new crises unfold during the course of the conference.

### **Consider some questions before engaging each other and the situation:**

1. Does the sudden extension of the World Health Organization's powers suggest that a potentially devastating crisis is unfolding? If so, will panic spread or will tight centralized control maintain at least a semblance of international stability?
2. How will you use these powers in tackling whatever events unfold over the course of the conference? Will your actions be in line with your home-state's national objectives? Will you take into account previously established international norms before proceeding with any collective action?
3. What are you prepared to do if the threat is not properly contained quickly enough? Should your nation also act on its own within its territory as the situation develops, on top of the committee's decisions?
4. Are you prepared to look past individual desires and petty politics to be able to effectively answer any ongoing or sudden developments?
5. Do you feel safe in the supposedly well-guarded chambers of the WHO's Geneva compound?
6. How well are you in touch with today's major health issues and methods of response?
7. How familiar are you with today's "disease-related" popular culture?

### **Useful Reference Links and Citations:**

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World\\_Health\\_Organization](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Health_Organization)
- <http://www.who.int/about/en/>
- <http://www.globalissues.org/print/issue/587>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pandemic>
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palace\\_of\\_Nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palace_of_Nations)
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Nations\\_Office\\_at\\_Geneva](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Office_at_Geneva)
- [http://news.ucdavis.edu/search/news\\_detail.lasso?id=10431](http://news.ucdavis.edu/search/news_detail.lasso?id=10431)

- <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/04/080401225633.htm>
- [http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Disease/diseases\\_TropSAmer.html](http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Disease/diseases_TropSAmer.html)
- <http://news.softpedia.com/news/How-Do-Our-Bodies-Fight-Against-Viruses-039-Attack-52395.shtml>

