



JAPAN
METROPOLITAN
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UNITED
NATIONS

United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Background Guide Topic:
Reconstructing the Global Economy
During the COVID-19 Pandemic



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Director's Note

Dear Delegates,

Welcome! Thank you to all the delegates that applied to the committee of United Nations Economic and Social Council. My name is Mana Sakata, and I am currently a junior in Senzoku Gakuen. I am excited to be a part of this conference with all of you.

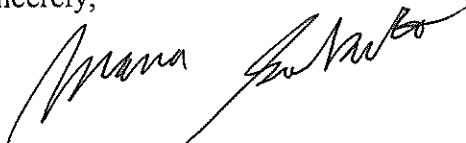
I have been participating in model United Nations from junior high school, and this is my third year being part of JMMUN. Last year was supposed to be my first year of chairing at JMMUN, but due to COVID-19, JMMUN 2020 was cancelled. I am grateful that JMMUN 2021 will not be cancelled this year, and we will be able to hold this conference online. Although this is my first time participating as a chair, I cannot wait to interact with all of you. I hope that your JMMUN experience will help everyone as you move forward into society.

The topic of this committee is an ongoing issue that affects all of us in our everyday lives. Ever since the Covid-19 outbreak, the normal that people were used to has been replaced by a new way of life. Classes are being held online, traveling restrictions have been established, people are struggling to find jobs, and many more circumstances have been affecting people throughout different nations.

Your job is to come up with creative solutions that help countries deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. No one is sure of the future that awaits us, but I hope that long term resolutions can be reached during the two-day conference.

As the Director of this committee, I am hoping for a conference, in which all the delegates are able to express their ideas and interact with other delegates. Please do not hesitate to ask the dais anything about the topic, conference, and flow of debate. I sincerely hope that this conference can become an experience to look back on.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mana Sakata', written in a cursive style.

Mana Sakata, Director
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Introduction of the Committee

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)¹ was founded in 1945 as part of the six main branches of the United Nations. This committee was set up for the purpose to develop a sustainable world. ECOSOC focuses on three platforms of economic, social, and environmental.

Key Terms

Furlough: an unpaid leave of absence due to economic conditions of the employer or the society.

Recession: a period of economic decline usually identified by the fall of GDP of two consecutive quarters. For a country to be officially considered as in recession, the National Bureau of Economic Research must declare that it is.²

Stimulus Package: a package to help stimulate a floundering economy. By boosting employment and spending, this package is to prevent or reverse a recession.³

Monetary Package: a package that involves cutting interests. When interests are cut, there is an incentive for people to spend or borrow

more money. It is used to raise the amount of money. The bank of England usually cuts interests when there is an economic crisis.

Current Situation

The COVID-19 started to spread in Wuhan, China from December of 2019.⁴ Ever since the coronavirus outbreak, more than a million deaths as of October 2020 has been reported. Moreover, the number of Covid-19 patients is on the rise day by day. Because the governments in most countries did not take actions quickly enough to prevent a pandemic, there has been a tremendous impact on the economy.

Now, millions of people are unemployed or furloughed. In fact, during the first few months of 2020, 5.4 percent (equivalent to 155 million full-time jobs) of the global working hours were lost compared to 2019. In some countries, shorter working hours led to more people becoming unemployed or on temporary leave.⁵

Furthermore, countries such as the United States have over 100,000 small businesses permanently been shut down.⁶ These

¹ UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC and SOCIAL COUNCIL. (n.d.). Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/home>

² "Recession Definition - Investopedia." 8 Aug. 2020, <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/r/recession.asp> Retrieved: 31 Aug. 2020

³ "Stimulus Package Definition - Investopedia." 5 May. 2020, <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/stimulus-package.asp>

⁴ Archived: WHO Timeline - COVID-19. (n.d.). Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/27-04-2020-who-timeline---covid-19>

⁵ "ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work. Fifth edition." 30 June. 2020, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_749399.pdf Retrieved: 25 Aug. 2020.

⁶ Long, H. (2020, May 12). Small business used to define America's economy. The pandemic could change that forever. Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/05/12/small-business-used-define-americas-economy-pandemic-could-end-that-forever/>

businesses are dealing with one of the worst waves of bankruptcy since the Great Depression. There are relief funds for these businesses. However, depending on the country, these funds are not effective or enough.

In response to the economy collapsing, central banks in most countries have lowered their interest rates. This is to make borrowing cheaper and encourage people to spend more money to improve the economy.⁷ For example, the Bank of England has cut their interest rates from 0.25 percent to 0.1 percent. This is the lowest rate that the bank has set.⁸

While the traditional businesses are collapsing, the online market is booming. According to the Digital Economy Index report published in May 2020, e-commerce shopping rates were higher during the pandemic than the 2019 holiday season. Consumers spent over \$153 billion in April and May of this year.⁹ This creates a gap between traditional and online businesses. In order to save these physical shops from closing down, brick-

and-mortar businesses have turned to technology as a solution. For example, local stores in Southeast Asia have made use of online food deliveries to carry their food to customers.¹⁰

The pandemic has forced many countries to have a lockdown which put tourism on hold. In 2019, tourism accounted for 300 million jobs globally. In some countries, over half of the GDP relies on tourism.¹¹ Therefore, this crisis puts those countries at risk. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimates that lockdowns and travel restrictions may lead to a loss of 850 million to 1.1 billion international tourists and put 100 to 120 million direct tourism jobs at risk.¹²

Many countries are now business starting to ease their travel restrictions. However, in order to prevent a second wave of illness, these countries must take caution in reopening to foreigners. There are stimulus packages provided by governments. In fact, across 24 countries' stimulus packages, a total of nearly 100 billion dollars have been dedicated to the tourism sector.¹³ However,

⁷Jones, L., & Brown, D. (2020, June 30). Coronavirus: A visual guide to the economic impact. Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-51706225>

⁸Coronavirus: UK interest rates cut to lowest level ever. (2020, March 19). Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-51962982>

⁹ Online Shopping During COVID-19 Exceeds 2019 Holiday Season Levels. (n.d.). Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://blog.adobe.com/en/2020/06/12/online-shopping-during-covid-19-exceeds-2019-holiday-season-levels.html>

¹⁰Kang, S. (2020, April 16). COVID-19 whets appetite for e-commerce in Southeast Asia, but bottlenecks remain. Retrieved August 29, 2020, from

<https://www.spglobal.com/marketintelligence/en/news-insights/latest-news-headlines/covid-19-whets-appetite-for-e-commerce-in-southeast-asia-but-bottlenecks-remain-57985529>

¹¹ "Covid-19 and Tourism: Assessing the Economic ... - UNCTAD." https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcinf2020d3_en.pdf 26 August, 2020

¹²WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION. (2019, June 28). Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.unwto.org/news/covid-19-international-tourist-numbers-could-fall-60-80-in-2020>

¹³Constantin, M., Saxon, S., & Yu, J. (2020, August 17). Reimagining the \$9 trillion tourism economy--what will it take? Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/travel-logistics-and->

some stimulus packages are being criticized for not having sufficient impact.

An overwhelming number of countries are still in the depths of a recession. It is uncertain how long it will take for the global economy to fully recover.

Subtopic I: Increasing the Employment Rate

Due to the pandemic, an overwhelming number of people are starting to lose their jobs. G7 countries have been hit hard depending on the area. In Japan, for example, it is estimated that 1 million people will become unemployed. On the other hand, in harder-hit countries like America, over 30 million people have filed for unemployment. If developed countries are being hugely affected, the impact this pandemic can have on developing nations is extreme. Loss of jobs in one region results in negative impacts in another region. Loss of jobs equals to less spending from people. Currently, countries such as Italy and Spain which rely heavily on tourism are suffering economically. When other nations are in crisis, it usually leads to these countries that depend on tourists to economic catastrophe. There is an interconnected nature of the global economy.

transport-infrastructure/our-insights/reimagining-the-9-trillion-tourism-economy-what-will-it-take

¹⁴ "Coronavirus: Developing economies are getting crushed" <https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-developing-economies-are-getting-crushed-heres-why-their-rich-neighbors-should-help-them-135601> Retrieved: 1 Oct. 2020

¹⁵ "How coronavirus has hit employment in G7 economies | World" 13 May. 2020, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/05/coronavirus-unemployment-jobs-work-impact-g7-pandemic/>. Retrieved: 31 Aug. 2020

Western nations have been affected the most by the pandemic. Brazil is expected to not have any growth this year.¹⁴ Although African nations have not had high coronavirus cases, the unemployment rate is still rising in their region. Overall, the United Nations estimates that 1.6 billion workers would suffer from the pandemic.¹⁵

Vietnam

Vietnam's population is approximately 97 million people.¹⁶ Out of all these people, there have been 1,040 coronavirus cases and 32 deaths.¹⁷ The country has been praised for its ability to contain the pandemic. Unfortunately, economic and health gains are not equal which explains why Vietnam's economy has been damaged. Its GDP growth this year is 0.4 percent which is the worst growth rate the country has seen in the past 35 years. Researchers estimate that more than 30 million people in the country will be affected by lockdowns.¹⁸ Despite all this, compared to other Southeast Asian countries, Vietnam is doing far better. In fact, Vietnam's economy is forecasted to rebound

¹⁶ "Vietnam Population (2020) - Worldometer." <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/vietnam-population/> Retrieved: 31 Aug. 2020.

¹⁷ "Vietnam Coronavirus: 1040 Cases and 32 Deaths - Worldometer." <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/vietnam/> 31 Aug. 2020.

¹⁸ "Vietnam must boost new drivers of growth to avoid the COVID" 4 Aug. 2020, <https://blogs.worldbank.org/eastasiapacific/vietnam-must-boost-new-drivers-growth-avoid-covid-19-economic-trap> Retrieved: 31 Aug. 2020

from the 3.8 percent decrease the country experienced in its GDP.¹⁹ Its growth rate is expected to be 6.8 percent in 2021. In addition, Vietnam was one of the countries to first shut down its borders. Hence, the country was able to lift its lockdown as early as April 22.²⁰ Although they were able to do this, Vietnam relies heavily on attracting investment and tourists from countries such as China, Japan, and South Korea. Workers who are involved in the tourism business were negatively impacted because of these targeted foreign country's current situation. The government estimates that 3.5 million people could be unemployed.

In response to this, the government has proposed a 2.7 billion dollar relief fund which aims to aid workers in the labor market. Furthermore, Vietnam can make use of the growing industry of face masks in order to reconstruct the economy.²¹

South Africa

South Africa's unemployment rate soars to 30 percent.²² A total of 350,000 workers became unemployed in the first quarter of the pandemic. Banking, agriculture and community services were affected by this amount of unemployment. South Africa is

Africa's most advanced economy and it was in recession way before the virus hit the country. The government did not offer any major support during lockdown which later impacted hundreds of people.²³ Moreover, South Africa's youth unemployment rate is at 59 percent in the first quarter of the pandemic. According to a survey done by Youth Employment Services, 43 percent of employed South African youth are earning less now. It also revealed that job security is a main concern. These people are unsure of if they will be able to keep their jobs.²⁴ This youth unemployment crisis must be solved; however, there has not been much development throughout the last few months.

Subtopic II: Improving the gap between small businesses and big corporations

In general, small businesses are more likely to be affected by the pandemic as bigger corporations are secured with insurance.

United States

¹⁹ "Vietnam to halve 2020 GDP growth target due to pandemic ..." <https://asia.nikkei.com/Economy/Vietnam-to-halve-2020-GDP-growth-target-due-to-pandemic>

²⁰ "Assessing Vietnam's Economic Prospects After COVID-19." <https://www.vietnam-briefing.com/news/assessing-vietnams-economic-prospects-foreign-investors-after-covid-19.html>. Retrieved: 31 Aug. 2020.

²¹ "VN could become world's face mask factory amid COVID-19 ..." 14 April. 2020,

<http://vietnamnews.vn/economy/715208/vn-could-become-worlds-face-mask-factory-amid-covid-19.html> Retrieved: 31 Aug. 2020.

²² "Coronavirus The unemployment rate in South Africa soars to" 24 June. 2020,

https://en.as.com/en/2020/06/23/latest_news/1592936714_614525.html Retrieved: 31 Aug. 2020.

²³ "South Africa's unemployment rate hit record high before virus ..." 23 June. 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/safrica-economy-unemployment/south-africas-unemployment-rate-hit-record-high-before-virus-idNKBN23U1NT> Retrieved: 31 Aug. 2020

²⁴ "Survey shows 43% of employed SA youth earning less ... - IOL." 4 Aug. 2020, <https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/survey-shows-43-of-employed-sa-youth-earning-less-due-to-covid-19-crisis-f78fb196-cbe8-4b8b-838d-9abf281d90f5> Retrieved 31 Aug. 2020

The forth coronavirus relief package is aimed at supporting small businesses and hospitals. This deal will add 310 billion dollars to the Paycheck Protection Program. The Paycheck Protection Program is a loan designed to help small businesses.²⁵ It was originally funded 349 billion dollars; however, due to the high demands of small businesses, the program ran out of money. It was also criticized for how the fund was mostly used up by chain restaurants, hoteliers, and publicly traded corporations and not small businesses which are in most need of support.²⁶ This deal will also have additional funds for Economic Injury Disaster Loans which like the Paycheck Protection Programs ran out of money. There were many shops where even if they applied to these programs, they were rejected.

On the other hand, big corporations, especially tech-related companies, have gained a lot. In fact, American billionaires became 434 billion dollars richer in the past few months.²⁷ This is because of the attention tech-related companies are receiving. For example, Amazon has doubled its net profit from 2.6 billion to 5.2 billion dollars.²⁸

This creates a huge gap between big and small corporations. Due to the pandemic, online shopping, for instance, is gaining more popularity than going to physical stores. This makes it harder for these small businesses to compete or gain much. This eventually led to many stores closing down.

India

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announced the 266 billion dollars economic package.²⁹ A 40 billion emergency credit line of collateral-free loans will help small businesses. Small businesses make up about one fourth of the 2.9 trillion economy of the nation. Considering this fact, 40 billion is not enough to save the 500 million workers. In addition, without government support, 35% of the 650 million small businesses will be in danger of shutting down.³⁰

Subtopic III: Strengthening Tourism

Covid-19 has severely impacted tourism due to travel restrictions. There has been between 60-80% decline in the international tourism economy in 2020.³¹

²⁵ "Paycheck Protection Program - Small Business Administration." <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program> Retrieved: 31 Aug. 2020

²⁶ "Ruth's Chris and other chain restaurants got big PPP loans" <https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/19/business/small-businesses-ppp-loans-chain-restaurants/index.html> Retrieved: 31 Aug. 2020

²⁷ "American billionaires got \$434 billion richer ... - CNBC.com." 21 Aug. 2020, <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/21/american-billionaires-got-434-billion-richer-during-the-pandemic.html> Retrieved: 31 Aug. 2020

²⁸ "Amazon doubled its profit during a pandemic - The Verge." 30 July. 2020, [https://www.theverge.com/2020/7/30/21348368/amazon-q2-](https://www.theverge.com/2020/7/30/21348368/amazon-q2-2020-earnings-covid-19-coronavirus-jeff-bezos)

[2020-earnings-covid-19-coronavirus-jeff-bezos](https://www.theverge.com/2020/7/30/21348368/amazon-q2-2020-earnings-covid-19-coronavirus-jeff-bezos) Retrieved: 31 Aug. 2020.

²⁹ "Coronavirus: India targets small businesses in economic bailout. (2020, May 13). Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-52640807>

³⁰ Kumar, M. (2020, July 10). India's ambitious plan to help small businesses does little to save them. Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://in.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-india-small-business/indias-ambitious-plan-to-help-small-businesses-does-little-to-save-them-idINKBN24B101>

³¹ "Tourism Policy Responses to the coronavirus (COVID-19). (n.d.). Retrieved August 29, 2020, from

Japan

Compared to recent years, the number of foreigners traveling has decreased by 99.9%.

³² The Japanese government recently launched a campaign called Go To Travel to promote domestic traveling. Go To Travel was launched to improve the circulation of money. However, this campaign is causing confusion among travel agencies and to the citizens of Japan. ³³

Australia

After people from China were prohibited from the country, Australia lost millions in the tourism economy. The largest retailer of travel in Australia, Flight Centre Travel Group closed 100 stores across Australia in response to the coronavirus during the beginning of the pandemic. ³⁴

In response to low demand for travel, The Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC) has called on to the federal government for a 72 million fund. ³⁵

Brazil

Brazil is after the United States for the highest number of Covid-19 cases. Despite the circumstance, Brazil has reopened borders from July 29th. All nations are now allowed to come into Brazil. Furthermore, testing for Covid 19 is not a requirement. ³⁶ Although the border restriction was lifted, the number of tourists will decrease dramatically affecting the industries of many fields. (hotels, casinos, restaurants, rental cars, etc.)

Past UN Actions/Resolutions

The council also hosts special meetings addressing global development emergencies or crises, in order to respond to emergencies or crises most effectively and successfully. These special meetings have addressed global public health emergencies, including the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in 2003, avian flu in 2005, and Ebola in 2014. Most recently, the council had a briefing on finding a solution towards Covid-19 in May, 2020. Economic-related emergencies such as food crises in Africa in 2005 and the global food crisis in 2008. In addition, the council held a special meeting during natural disasters including floods in

<https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/tourism-policy-responses-to-the-coronavirus-covid-19-6466aa20/>

³²Writer, S. (2020, April 20). Foreign visitors to Japan fall 99.9% amid pandemic. Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Coronavirus/Foreign-visitors-to-Japan-fall-99.9-amid-pandemic>

³³ Johnston, E. (n.d.). Japan's controversial Go To Travel campaign kicks off as criticism and concerns grow. Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/07/22/national/japan-go-to-travel-campaign-criticism-coronavirus/>

³⁴ABC News. (2020, March 13). Flight Centre closes 100 stores across Australia due to business impact from

coronavirus fears. Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-03-13/coronavirus-fears-prompt-closure-of-100-flight-centre-stores/12053206>

³⁵AusLeisure. (n.d.). Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.ausleisure.com.au/news/atic-calls-for-government-support-to-counter-coronavirus-impact-on-tourism-industry/>

³⁶ Kucheran, K., & 30, J. (2020, July 30). Brazil Reopening Borders For Tourism. Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.traveloffpath.com/brazil-reopening-borders-for-tourism/>

Mozambique in 2000, the Tsunami in the Indian Ocean in 2004, the massive earthquake in Haiti in 2010, Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013.”³⁷

Ebola

On December 25, 2014, ECOSOC held a special meeting on the outbreak of Ebola. The meeting focused on two points of identifying multiple solutions based on different responses and discussing the impact of Ebola on the economy and society.³⁸

Covid-19

Held on May 11, 2020, the special meeting covered the topic of health, jobs, food security, economic dimensions, and regional dimensions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The goal of the Economic and Social Council is to put nations back on track and aim towards achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Questions to Consider

What is the current economic situation of your country and that of surrounding countries??

What kind of resolution should the UN propose for countries' economies caused by Covid-19? Consider the resolutions that were proposed for other pandemics such as MERS and SARS.

What fields of economy have affected the nation the most?

Are the current solutions that governments are proposing effective?

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³⁸Ebola – A Threat to Sustainable Development | UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC and SOCIAL COUNCIL. (n.d.). Retrieved August 29, 2020, from <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/node/50056>

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