





DIRECTORS'  
WELCOME LETTER

Dear Delegates and Faculty Advisors,

On behalf of the organizers, the Advisory Board, and the Executive Board of AUSMUN 2019, it is my greatest pleasure to welcome you to the 12th annual AUSMUN Conference. With over 900 delegates registered from more than 40 national and international educational institutions, this conference will be the biggest one yet!

This year's background guide was diligently written to provide delegates with enough guidance for their research. It will act as a great starting point for delegates to familiarize themselves with the topics of their respective committee. After a short letter that gives the chairs a chance to welcome their delegates, a summary, a brief history, a discourse on the issue, and the latest developments of the issue will be presented. In the summary, delegates will have their first quick briefing on the issue where concerns will be defined. Followed by that, the guide delves into the root causes of the issue by identifying its history. Then, a discourse section will look into the issue with further scrutiny by presenting both sides of the topic's debate and examining some of its challenges and influences. Finally, it will aim to provide delegates with the latest activities in regards to the matter and any progressions in its respect. At the very end of the guide, delegates will find questions that will guide their thinking, some suggestions that will guide their research, and references that they can use for further relevant information. However, it is important to point out that depending solely on the guide will not be sufficient enough to prepare delegates for the conference. It is highly encouraged for delegates to look at the Delegate Handbook on the AUSMUN website and to view the "How to Research" video created by AUSMUN.

The theme of this year's conference is youth empowerment. This is very important as we are the children of tomorrow. Even if delegates are not necessarily planning on pursuing an occupation in the field of law or politics, MUN is an enriching experience to all. MUN is supposed to teach more than just details on a certain crisis, it educates them to work harder, to think on their feet, to learn from others and from themselves, to fall and to fail, and to break free from their fears. It dares them to be without hesitation. It dares them to add to the world. To Speak. To act. To know. We all understand how difficult it is to be a delegate. It requires a suspicious load of work and consumes most of one's energy. But we want delegates to give it their all and to get what they came here for.

Finally, I would like to conclude this letter by extending my gratitude to everyone who has contributed to this background guide in any way or form. It is the collaborative work of the chairs, the AUSMUN Research Team, and the AUSMUN Media Team. On behalf of them all, we truly hope that you find this background guide of great help and use.

All the best with the conference and if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at [research@ausmun.com](mailto:research@ausmun.com).

Nada Nassereddin  
Director of Research  
AUSMUN 2019



UNITED NATIONS  
EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC  
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION



Syed Asad Ali



Mohamed Nor

Zain Hussein

MODERATORS'  
WELCOME LETTER

Dear Delegates,

It is an honor to officially welcome you to AUSMUN 2019 and to especially welcome you to our committee, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It is with our utmost pleasure and honor to serve as your chairs. We are eagerly awaiting our interaction, cooperation, and communication, during and prior to our committee's debate. We will be tackling two extremely important contemporary issues that have to be comprehensively and properly addressed.

As its name might imply, UNESCO is a specialized agency for the United Nations that deals with topics related to education, science, and culture. Through these fields, it hopes to promote peace, encourage development, and celebrate diversity. It believes that the international sphere will fail to thrive without the incorporation of mutual understanding and the solidarity of morals and knowledge. To achieve that, UNESCO looks to provide quality education, advocate cultural heritage, and foster scientific programs.

The upcoming committee sessions are going to give us all a distinctive opportunity, the opportunity to debate and combat crucial and relevant issues. As chairs, our primary goal for the conference is to ensure that all respected delegates end the sessions with newly acquired knowledge. Through the participation in this conference, not only will you learn more about the UNESCO and the topics to be addressed, but you will also be able to learn more on how to efficiently research, practice diplomacy, and work effectively with others. Without a doubt, the entire conference will be a learning experience for both the delegates and the chairs.

With that being said, we all should make the most out of AUSMUN 2019. Our last piece of advice is to learn not only from the debates but to also from others around you. The community of students and staff that make up the conference is one that is friendly, welcoming, and incredibly knowledgeable, so please use that to your advantage.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at [unesco.ausmun2019@gmail.com](mailto:unesco.ausmun2019@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

The UNESCO Chairs

## TOPIC 1

### *Implementation of UNESCO Operational Strategy on Youth*

#### SUMMARY

The youth are essential agents of change, peace, sustainable development, and social transformation. Acknowledging that, during the 37th session of the General Assembly, the UNESCO Operational Strategy on Youth (OSY) was adopted as part of the UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021 in 2013. It works on "[enabling] young women and men to engage in their societies and harness their full potential as agents and subjects of social and economic transformations" (UNESCO, 2014). The strategy is structured along three multidisciplinary and complementary axes of intervention, which integrate the full array of the UNESCO's expertise in culture, education, communication, information, and social, natural and human sciences. In terms of Axis 1, it focuses on "policy formulation and review with the participation of youth" (UNESCO, 2014). The rationale behind it is that a youth policy can be neither efficient nor relevant without young women and men participating in this process themselves. Axis 2 on the other hand targets "capacity development for the transition to adulthood", through the aim of enhancing youth employability, literacy, political engagement, and welfare (UNESCO, 2014). Finally, Axis 3 addresses "civic engagement, democratic participation, and social innovation" (UNESCO, 2014). This is done to strengthen the relationship between young people and their communities. Consequently, the OSY stresses on the processes through which young people fulfill their responsibilities and acquire their full rights as active citizens..

#### HISTORY

The UNESCO has always recognized the youth as a priority group and implemented the Strategy for Action with and for the youth in 1998. Eventually, its age-old dedication to youth has taken a new incentive. Since 2008, reviews have been provided on the UNESCO's work on the youth to allow for analytical studies on its comparative advantage, allocation, and role in this field. The very first UNESCO Youth Forum took place at the 30th General Conference in 1999. Since then, they have developed dramatically until, in 2003, the General Conference universally decided to label the Youth Forum a permanent feature of the UNESCO's General Conference (UNESCO, 2014). The forum's purpose is to bring young participants from all around the globe together to exchange points of views, to share their

experiences, to reflect together, and to identify common opportunities and challenges that the youth face.

## DISCOURSE ON THE ISSUE

The Operational Strategy on Youth is an interesting project due to the immense importance it places on the youth and future generations. As previously mentioned, this strategy seeks not only to elevate the rights of young individuals throughout countries, but to also allow for their active participation in deciding key policies. Particularly, these policies focus on the formation of a sustainable and innovative environment for younger generations as well as an accepting society.

Additionally, the OSY seeks to ensure a smoother transition from childhood to adulthood. Coupled with potential psychological and emotional frustration due to the lack of guidance and societal pressure, many young individuals tend to experience a rough transition into adulthood, bearing with them the pitfalls of their past. Too often in societies, children do not receive the required all-rounded education and skill formation for a promising future. This may be due to the fact that governments do not typically hold effective policies towards such aims. As discussed above, UNESCO has distinguished three interlinked axes on the subject at hand which need to be properly incorporated to ensure a good foundation for the youth. The most integral part of this process, however, would be the co-operation with the youth in order to obtain beneficial input and feedback.

## PAST IO ACTIONS AND THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Since 1998, the youth has always been the focal point of the UNESCO. Its commitment towards them has taken new measures in 2008 as it took on new developments. Through this, an analysis was provided on the contributions of global and regional actors towards enriching the youth with various ideas and challenges. Additionally, it has compiled national policies related to younger generations and their representation structures. Ideally, the organization would like to see the representation of the youth's perspective in forming international policies. Furthermore, in 2016, the UNESCO supported the establishment of a multi-partisan Group of Young Parliamentarians in El Salvador. In this project, the young work in building policies and agendas through an intergenerational perspective to strengthen the general youth law, the juvenile integration, and the sports legislations (UNESCO, 2016). These developments have led to positive advances in the UNESCO which helped make a partnership with the organization more attractive. Given that, its outreach has expanded to reach multiple youth societies and donors. Furthermore, the UNESCO aims to work diligently to ensure solidified cooperation with the youth for it to reap benefits in peace and sustainable development worldwide. As per a United Nations



report, some of its steps towards this include a comprehensive vision in recognizing youth as agents of change, social transformation, and peace. Therefore, it is without a doubt that younger generations are the future that will lead this planet towards further sustainable development. Given that, it is important to for the strategy to be properly enacted and constantly pushed forward to ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved.

## QUESTIONS THE DISCUSSIONS AND THE RESOLUTIONS SHOULD ADDRESS

- Most perceptibly, how successful are the current methods for implementation?
- What current areas of the current methods are lagging and what could be improved?
- How receptive are the current generation and the youths to the Operational Strategy as a whole? Are there areas that the Operational Strategy did properly address?
- Are the youth actually given just and fair representation within member states and the UN itself?

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- The Importance of Youth Empowerment.
- The Crisis of Youth Representation in Local Government.

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## TOPIC 2

### *Protecting and Preserving Endangered Languages*

#### SUMMARY

A language is considered to be endangered when the majority of its speakers adopt a different language, especially one that is typically prevalent among the general public or a dominant society. Several factors exist that affect or threaten languages, so of which could be related to the military, religion, economics, culture, or education. Such forces may encourage negative attitudes towards a society's inherent language. One of the most important players to consider in this act is cultural imperialism through globalization. As the world is becoming more interconnected, dominant societies are taking the form of global popular cultures that appear to be more attractive to international citizens, especially in terms of language. Another relevant dimension of globalization is the introduction of migrants to a given state. Through migration, foreign societies are born throughout the nation, weakening the solidarity to the immigrant's native language. Consequently, while globalization reaps its benefits, it is without a doubt a major force that threatens languages.

Languages are always developing and changing dynamically. However, the value of language preservation must be acknowledged as it is vital for cultural determination. Unfortunately, the survival of endangered languages in today's globalized world presents a challenge. To overcome that, its usage must be promoted in a great number of relevant domains such as the media, the public, and schooling. Attitudes towards it must also be adjusted to an increased value. Given that, the UNESCO aims to contribute to the transmission and the safeguarding of linguistic and cultural diversity through its programs on the protection of endangered languages.

#### HISTORY

Throughout the years, the growth of language structures and mediums has not only extended its communicative capabilities, but also its intrinsic "power". During the colonial era, more specifically the fifteenth to the mid-twentieth century, linguistics was used as an imperial tool to conquer populations by making colonial influence more appealing and practical. In this period, many languages gradually began to disappear. In addition, frequent massacres led to the extinction of numerous languages. In modern times, this issue has become increasingly difficult to recognize and differentiate. This is because language endangerment has, to a large extent, become a result of globalism and stigmas

against indigenous groups, rather than by force. The imposing nature of “powerful” and influential lingua-francs, such as English, has lured indigenous individuals to integrate for economic and social benefits. The lack of incentive to adopt regional, less popular languages, has fundamentally placed them into a path of slow extinction.

## DISCOURSE ON THE ISSUE

Through its use in communication and knowledge preservation, linguistics has helped make mankind what it is today. Given that, expanding on one’s understanding of different languages can add to an individual’s insight. Additionally, it would have a positive effect on one’s neurological system (Lupyan, 2016). Still, a nation’s mother tongue is a significant part of its traditions and identity. How the words are used in a language and what they attribute to helps explain a large deal of the nation’s values and paradigms. The death of a language would bring with it the death of knowledge, unique customs, oral traditions, and diversity, making it akin to losing historical sites. Given that, to preserve a language would be to preserve centuries of culture, history, and a peoples’ contribution on humanity. As such, there is a moral and ethical responsibility to preserve languages that are dying out (UNESCO 2009). In alignment with its ambitions, UNESCO has contributed a fair amount in efforts to ensure that endangered languages remain within the global society. However, still, many languages remain at risk. Currently, there are various risk factors that weigh in on language preservation. These include the natural devolution of minority languages and the lack of initiative to educate them to the young. The primary issue herein lies with the lack of awareness and care for minority languages that are endangered. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the exposure and the rise of popular languages adds to the complexity of the matter at hand. This factor needs to be addressed to further the current initiatives in relation to language preservation. Those that are most affected generally live in developing countries or distinctive diasporas which poses another barrier. Currently, the UNESCO and many NGO’s have been compiling data on these endangered languages and archiving this data. Yet, these efforts are not as feasible as once thought as 4% of the languages were already lost in the last 60 years (UNESCO, 2009).

## PAST IO ACTIONS AND THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

While language diversity does have its advantages, the endangerment of minority languages remains a significant issue. Consequently, the UNESCO is taking many steps to combat it. Firstly, it promoted linguistic diversity through its Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UDCD) in 2001 and the UN Resolution 56/262. Through this, the UNESCO encourages the presentation of content in various

languages on the internet and orthographies for oral languages to build on their survival.

One of the UNESCO's more prominent projects, the Endangered Language Programme (ELP), furthered the cause of language preservation. This looked to raise awareness about language endangerment through a series of documentaries aired on the Discovery Channel. The UNESCO has also published Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger to highlight the endangered languages throughout the world. Furthermore, to add on the urgency of the issue, the UNESCO established a link between biological and cultural diversity and aims to use language to create synergy between them.

To add to that, the organization also aims to promote language policies through local capacity building. "Capacity-building for safeguarding languages and oral traditions and expressions in Sub-Saharan Africa" (Rieks Smeets, n.d) is an example of that effort. To enhance its efforts in language preservation, the UNESCO sought the help of experts from around the world. Through this, a scaling system was created to account for the level of endangerment each language possessed so that resources could be allocated efficiently. Still, such efforts will prove barren if the international community does not reciprocate. Given that, societies are encouraged to learn and educate on the value of language preservation as well as come up with new methods to ensure language preservation.

## QUESTIONS THE DISCUSSIONS AND THE RESOLUTIONS SHOULD ADDRESS

- What additional measures could be adopted to preserve endangered languages?
- How can governments revitalize languages that are threatened by a dominant lingua franca?
- Is creating an archive of lingual data enough to ensure a language is preserved?
- Can technology and social media be used to re-introduce endangered languages?

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- Language Vitality and Endangerment.
- The Connection between Language and Culture.
- The Role of Code-Switching.

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