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Discussing Overpopulation and Ethical Methods of Population Control**Report of the Chair****I. Statement of the Problem**

1. For nearly a century, population growth rates have been an issue and therefore the subject of much debate. This issue applies on a global scale and affects all countries in some way. The thought that the world could have a population of almost 10 billion by 2050 is overwhelming. Alarmed by this growth, there are a few countries that have already taken action in limiting their population.

2. Overpopulation leads to problems such as depletion of resources, malnutrition, child labor, and unemployment. If populations were to become more manageable then individual countries could focus on other important issues like education and reducing unemployment instead of trying to stop the population boom.

3. Although statistics suggest continued population growth in the years to come, there are still those that doubt the global population will ever exceed a level of manageability, but they still recognize the issues of large populations[3]. They offer that educating women will lead to lower birth rates.

II. History of the Issue

4. At the 48th session of the Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia (ESCWA), Social and Population Development was mandated as a priority theme for the 2010-2011 review cycle [1]. Since then, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has held four meetings dealing solely with population.

5. Western Asian population growth rates over the past decade have exceeded world averages. One of the fastest growing age groups within these populations is the margin of youth

aged 15-24. This sudden growth has led to an increase in unemployment among teenagers and young adults in Western Asia [1].

6. *Population Connection* suggests that population growth within the last six decades has resulted in an 80 percent reduction of the earth's rain-forests [7]. A large population creates higher demand and puts extra strain on the world's natural resources. Increased population translates to increased consumption. In many cases, production has not been able to keep up with rising rates of consumption and large portions of a country's population are left without substantial food or water [8]. This largely affects poor nations that lack both effective means of birth control and appropriate resources for their rising populations.

7. Less developed countries tend to have the highest birth rates along with high infant mortality rates and low education. In addition, the percentage of people 30 and under makes up a majority of the population in most developing nations. Countries with lower, more stable birth rates typically have a more educated population and a decent life expectancy rate [4].

8. Control of population is a very controversial subject. Methods such as abortion and easy access to birth control have been condemned by different religious leaders and face a lot of opposition because of this. More sinister methods such as eugenics (the extermination of unfit population groups most infamously employed in Nazi Germany and in genocides elsewhere) have led to widespread death and strife. Because of these negative associations many people look unfavorably towards population control.

III. Potential Solutions

9. This chair would like to suggest a few starting points for possible solutions to the problem:

- Compare your country's birth rate against others. Delegates should consider forming blocs.
- Consider education for the women in poorer countries. Research has proven that African women, upon becoming educated, are three times less likely to become HIV positive. Statistics also suggest that educated women have smaller, healthier families. [5]
- Remember that while education might help to prevent population growth in Africa, other methods might be needed in different countries. The goal is to find socially acceptable methods of controlling population growth. Keep in mind the different religions and ethical standards each country may have.

IV. Position and Research Tips

10. This chair would like to remind all delegates to be professional and reasonable when drafting resolutions. Be considerate to the fact that limiting childbirth could instigate problems in other categories. Please try to see all sides of the problem and work to create a resolution that will benefit all members of the United Nations. Remember that when drafting your resolution, think of all the different aspects that affect this issue, and all of the possible side effects that could come of it as well. The delegates should consider the following questions when researching this topic:

- What is your country's current population?

- What is your country's estimated population for 2050?
- Has your country had an increase in population recently that could possibly affect the estimated population in 2050?
- Has your country passed any laws working to control population?
- Have they been beneficial/disadvantageous?
- What have been some negative effects on your country because of overpopulation?
- What are some reasonable solutions to these effects?

Useful Web Sources

- <<http://www.un.org/en/>>
- <<http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/>>
- <<http://www.nytimes.com/>>
- <<http://www.overpopulation.org/>>
- <<http://www.economist.com/node/11402576/>>

V. Note to Delegates

Delegates,

My name is Dylan Reid and I will be one of the chairs in ECOSOC this year. I have an excellent co-chair to work with, and I am extremely excited to have the chance to be a co-chair this year. I know that the workload seems intimidating, but if you break it down and start your research early, it will be easier to handle. I look forward to meeting all of you, good luck in your research delegates.

Dylan Reid

References

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- [6] "Meetings of the United Nations Population Division." *United Nations*. Web. 23 May 2011. <<http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings.htm>>.

- [7] "Population Growth - How Global Population Growth Is Creating Serious Environmental Problems." *Environmental Issues*. Earth Talk. Web. 24 May 2011. <http://environment.about.com/od/biodiversityconservation/a/population_grow.htm>..
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