MACMUN 2024

LEGAL
Background Guide

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The goal of Model United Nations is to stimulate debate and progressive discussion on topics that may range in sensitivity. Some discussion topics may be triggering or deal with sensitive subject matter, and delegates should keep this in mind when participating in MACMUN 2024.

All attendees are expected to be respectful and courteous to Staff and Secretariat members, as well as other delegates at all times. The dais will immediately call to order delegates who do not abide by this rule. Delegates who feel they are not being treated respectfully are encouraged to raise their concerns with their committee staff or a member of the Secretariat.

The United Nations Sixth Committee - Legal

Committee Welcome

Dear Delegates,

It is our privilege to welcome you to the Legal Committee of the ninth iteration of the McMaster Model United Nations (MACMUN). Your committee chairs are Katelyn Vieira and Atul Rao, joined by crisis analysts Arav Jaswal and Abdul Wasay Khatri.

With great enthusiasm, we bring to you an opportunity to focus on the legal side of international cooperation in solving future transnational legal issues. In this committee there are two topics for the legal agenda:

1. Confronting Future Realities Surrounding AI Development/Policies
2. Evaluating Global Responsibility and Response to Climate Migrants

In a blast into the future, our committee will take you to another world where AI is further developed into world political uses and the climate crisis is rapidly weakening humans' ability to withstand the environment. As technology weakens the originality of human political actions and the changing environment causes mass migration crises, we look to you delegates to dispute policy and find a global solution.

We believe that through an engaged and lively debate the hope of our future in the hands of you delegates can be solved through various reflections of policy. In our committee we warn there will also be crises. Sudden crises may arise in any part of the world surrounding the two proposed topics, and these must be addressed and solved by delegates within a limited time frame. Your crisis analysts will introduce you to these scenarios as they arise so save your questions till then!

We hope that you enjoy your time on our committee and that it proves a great experience for you! With this being said, if you have any further burning questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out and ask!

Your Legal Staff,

Katelyn Vieira & Atul Rao
legal@macmun.org

Committee Mandate

The United Nations Sixth Committee – known as the Legal Committee, plays a pivotal role in addressing legal issues and promoting the rule of law within the international community. It is the "primary forum for the consideration of legal questions in the General Assembly" and supports the General Assembly and upholding Charter 13 of the United Nations.[1] It seeks to draft legal documents that Member States should abide by, such as the 1970 "Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations".[2]

Established as one of the six main committees of the United Nations in 1947 after the Second World War, the Sixth Committee is entrusted with the responsibility of examining and deliberating on various legal matters that impact international law, global peace, and cooperation. In the 78th session in November 2023, various topics were discussed such as: The rule of law at the national and international levels (item 83), Responsibility of international organizations (item 85), Crimes against humanity (item 81) and Measures to eliminate international terrorism (item 109).[3]

All UN Member States are entitled to representation on the Sixth Committee as one of the main committees of the General Assembly.[4] The Sixth Committee itself does not hold authority over any of the Member States and their individual actions. The committee's role is to draft and modify international legislation as it is not involved in enforcing said laws upon its constituent Member States. It is strongly encouraged that all Member States participate to create a cohesive consensus on topics that affect all nations.

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[1] United Nations, "Sixth Committee (Legal)," December 10, 2023. https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/index.shtml.
[2] United Nations General Assembly, Twenty-fifth year, "Resolutions adopted on the reports of the sixth committee – Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations," October 24, 1970, 121-122, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/202170/files/A_RES_2625%28XXV%29-EN.pdf?ln=en.
[3] United Nations, "Sixth Committee (Legal)."
[4] Ibid.

Topic #1: Confronting Future Realities Surrounding AI Development/Policies

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a rapidly evolving technology that is being deeply integrated into society, possessing the potential to completely change current world order. With this potential comes a host of challenges and concerns that must be addressed. Given these rapid advances within recent years, there has been a growing awareness of the need to confront the future realities surrounding AI development and the policies concerning its use.

AI is the artificial simulation of the intelligence possessed by living creatures.[5] Instead of using pre-programmed instructions like a traditional machine, AI has the capability to learn and develop on its own, and does so much more efficiently.[6] Its uses can vary from narrow applications such as Google Maps, to general applications that are meant to replicate the function of a human entirely, known as Artificial General Intelligence (AGI).[7] AI is already present in all industries across the world, such as commerce, security, healthcare, automotive, and more.[8] As a result, most people, knowingly or not, are already using AI in some form.

Any new change or advancement in AI can drastically change the livelihood of billions of people. If these changes are not implemented with caution, they can have disastrous consequences, as the capabilities of AI can extend far beyond those of humans. Many question whether AI is necessary, as most tasks can already be accomplished by people, and if it is worth leaving their fate in the hands of a technology that is potentially untrustworthy.[9] Several companies are involved in the development of AI for different reasons, however, all of them are committed to ensuring a regulated environment to ensure that AI is used in an ethical and proper manner that would not cause harm to the world.[10] Much of the commitment to ensuring a safe and regulated environment for AI is under the jurisdiction of international organizations and governments who seek to prevent its misuse, while using it for their own purposes.

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[5] Nicole Laskowski and Linda Tucci, "What Is Artificial Intelligence and How Does AI Work? Definition from TechTarget," *Tech Target,* November 13, 2023, https://www.techtarget.com/searchenterpriseai/definition/AI-Artificial-Intelligence.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Avijeet Biswal, "18 Cutting-Edge Artificial Intelligence Applications in 2024," *simplilearn,* December 27, 2023, https://www.simplilearn.com/tutorials/artificial-intelligence-tutorial/artificial-intelligence-applications.

[9] Alyssa Schroer, "68 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Companies To Know," *BuiltIn,* November 7, 2023, https://builtin.com/artificial-intelligence/ai-companies-roundup.

[10] MIT Schwarzman College of Computing, "Q&A: Global Challenges Surrounding the Deployment of AI," *MIT News | Massachusetts Institute of Technology,* September 26, 2022, https://news.mit.edu/2022/qa-global-challenges-surrounding-deployment-ai-0926.

It is abundantly clear that AI is here to stay and will only continue to become more powerful and integrated within the world. As it advances, it is essential that national governments and organizations take a proactive approach to ensure that it is developed and implemented in a controlled and responsible manner to ensure the safety of the future.

History

The History of Artificial Intelligence Development and its Regulations

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a rapidly growing field that has the potential to revolutionize the way we live and work, though there are concerns about its impact on society, especially considering what it is capable of and its widespread use. AI truly began its modern development starting in the mid-20th century, when English mathematician Alan Turing first proposed the idea of machines using the same logical processes as humans.[11] In 1956, a conference was held at Dartmouth College in the United States where the term AI was first coined by John McCarthy, and from there, the development began to steadily increase over the decades.[12] Nowadays, AI is present in every industry, ranging from ChatGPT to virtual assistants such as Amazon's Alexa. With this widespread use of AI, the United Nations set to establish global regulations on the ethics and use of AI, which it did in 2022 with the *Principles for the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in the United Nations System*.[13] National governments and organizations, such as the European Union, have also begun to establish regulations on the use of AI, including Canada with *The Artificial Intelligence and Data Act* last updated in 2023.[14]

The Spread of Misinformation Due to AI: Deepfakes

A major concern regarding AI is Deepfakes, which refer to fake audio/video recordings of people generated using AI and can be made to sound extremely realistic.[15]The term was coined in 2017 on Reddit, though the concept has been around since the late 20th century.[16] Most applications of deepfakes are malicious, and they are often used against people in positions of power, such as CEO's or politicians. For instance, in 2019, a deepfake video circulated of Mark Zuckerberg gloating about how his products allow him to have the data of billions of people.[17] Another instance that had greater ramifications occurred in 2021, when members of several European countries'

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[11] Rockwell Anyoha, "The History of Artificial Intelligence," *Science in the News,* August 28, 2017, https://sitn.hms.harvard.edu/flash/2017/history-artificial-intelligence/.

[12] Ibid.

[13] "Principles for the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in the United Nations," *UNCEB*, https://unsceb.org/principles-ethical-use-artificial-intelligence-united-nations-system.

[14] Government of Canada, "The Artifical Intelligence and Data Act (AIDA) – Companion Document," https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/innovation-better-canada/en/artificial-intelligence-and-data-act-aida-companion-document.

[15] Meredith Somers, "Deepfakes, explained," *MIT Sloan School of Management,* July 21, 2020, https://mitsloan.mit.edu/ideas-made-to-matter/deepfakes-explained.

[16] Laura Payne, "deepfake." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, January 16, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/technology/deepfake.

[17] Somers, "Deepfakes, explained."

parliaments were tricked into having a call with a Russian opposition leader, that ended up being deepfaked.[18] This brought forth major security concerns and led to the discouragement of members talking to politicians abroad, threatening global communication and collaboration.

Biases & Discrimination with AI

Artificial Intelligence, despite being artificial, is susceptible to bias and discrimination, and can amplify already existing issues. Since AI is created by humans, it stands to follow that it can have the same flaws as humans; only amplified due to its vast capabilities. Many regulatory agencies have attempted to place restrictions/guidelines on how AI is implemented, however, there have been several instances where the biases of AI are on full display. In 2016, Microsoft announced the debut of their AI chatbot named "Tay" on Twitter (now X), whose intention was to interact with its users and learn from their behaviour.[19] Within hours of its release, Tay started tweeting highly offensive, abusive and racist things, as it was learning from the people it was interacting with, and after a week it had to be shut down.[20] This blunder from Microsoft displayed to the world the biases that AI can possess if not dealt with properly. In 2014, Amazon was beginning to integrate AI into their job hiring process to assist with reviewing resumes, however, the next year they realized that it was fatally flawed as it discriminated against women for more technical roles.[21] Due to the issues with this system perpetuating existing stereotypes, it was abandoned shortly after. It is vital that as AI develops, the various biases (implicit, sampling etc.) are kept to a minimum to ensure it functions as intended.

Usage of AI in Healthcare

Artificial Intelligence has the capability to revolutionise healthcare and has already begun to do so. One specific example of AI in gene applications is the use of deep learning algorithms to analyze genomic data. Deep learning algorithms can be used to identify patterns in genomic data that may be associated with certain diseases and have been used to identify genetic mutations that are associated with cancer.[22] Healthcare workers spend a lot of time doing paperwork and other administrative tasks. AI and automation can help perform many of those mundane tasks, freeing

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[18] "Dutch MPs in Video Conference with Deep Fake Imitation of Navalny's Chief of Staff," *NL Times*, April 24, 2021, https://nltimes.nl/2021/04/24/dutch-mps-video-conference-deep-fake-imitation-navalnys-chief-staff.

[19] Oscar Schwartz, "In 2016, Microsoft's Racist Chatbot Revealed the Dangers of Online Conversation," *IEEE Spectrum,* November 25, 2019, https://spectrum.ieee.org/in-2016-microsofts-racist-chatbot-revealed-the-dangers-of-online-conversation.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Agbolade Omowole, "Research Shows AI Is Often Biased. Here's How to Make Algorithms Work for All of Us," *World Economic Forum,* July 19, 2021, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/07/ai-machine-learning-bias-discrimination/.

[22] "Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Genomics," National Human Genome Research Institute, https://www.genome.gov/about-genomics/educational-resources/fact-sheets/artificial-intelligence-machine-learning-and-genomics.

up employee time for other activities and giving them more face-to-face time with patients.[23] AI also has the capability to help with doing surgeries from a long distance or doing less invasive surgeries to prevent blood loss and pain in the patient.[24] AI has massive implications for the field of healthcare and has already drastically changed the way it operates in a positive way; however, it is important that it is used in an ethical and unbiased manner.

Current Situation

Generative AI (gen AI) tools have seen explosive growth since late 2022. Less than a year after many of these tools debuted, one-third of survey respondents say their organizations are using gen AI regularly in at least one business function.[25] On a day-to-day basis, the most influential of these is ChatGPT developed by OpenAI, which exploded in popularity during the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, reaching 100 million users within 2 months.[26] Its popularity has greatly impacted education, with an estimated 19% (most likely underreported) of students having used it for schoolwork, raising concerns of academic dishonesty.[27] Business owners ranging from local shops to corporations have begun using ChatGPT in the workplace, and it is stated that 97% of business owners believe they stand to benefit from using it.[28]

Businesses will change significantly with deeper inclusion of AI, and there will be meaningful alterations to the makeup of the workforce. There are anticipated cuts in certain industries and large reskilling efforts to address shifting talent needs.[29] Since AI can perform many basic tasks better than humans, there has been a growing number of layoffs as people are gradually being replaced by AI. According to the World Economic Forum, different industries have a higher chance for AI automation, such as Banking, Retail and Insurance, and subsequently, jobs related to them such as bank tellers, clerks and brokers are on a sharp decline in hiring.[30] However, AI also presents

[23] IBM Education, "The Benefits of AI in Healthcare," *IBM Blog,* July 11, 2023, https://www.ibm.com/blog/the-benefits-of-ai-in-healthcare/.

[24] IBM Education, "The Benefits of AI.".

[25] Michael Chui, Lareina Yee, Bryce Hall, Alex Singla, and Alexander Sukharevsky, "The State of AI in 2023: Generative AI's Breakout Year," *McKinsey & Company,* August 1, 2023, https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/quantumblack/our-insights/the-state-of-ai-in-2023-generative-ais-breakout-year.

[26] Maria Webb, "30+ ChatGPT Statistics You Need to Know Today – Trends, Usage, and Predictions," *Technopedia*, December 5, 2023, https://www.techopedia.com/chatgpt-statistics.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Chui et al., "The State of AI in 2023."

[32] SDG Knowledge Hub, "UN Secretary-General Launches Advisory Board to Support AI Governance," SDG Knowledge Hub, November 2, 2023, https://sdg.iisd.org/news/un-secretary-general-launches-advisory-board-to-support-ai-governance.

[30] Ian Shine and Kate Whiting, "The Jobs Most Likely to Be Lost and Created Because of AI," World Economic Forum, May 4, 2023, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/05/jobs-lost-created-ai-gpt/.

new job opportunities such as AI/Machine Learning specialists and analysts/engineers who are responsible for the regulation of AI within their respective fields.[31]

With this unprecedented growth of AI, the United Nations has recently established the Advisory Board to Support AI Governance. It aims to support the international governance of AI as it is mainly concentrated within a few companies and countries.[32] By gathering experts from around the world to participate in the body, it can make educated decisions on the future of AI in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals.[33] In addition, it makes clear the challenges and risks that AI inherently possesses and come to a shared understanding amongst all nations about how AI should be applied on a wider scale.[34] Finally, it discusses how AI can be beneficial for the world if applied correctly, and the opportunities that the growth of AI presents to all people. By acting fast, any potential gains that come from AI can be increased and spread amongst the world.[35]

Striving towards a unified response to the growth of AI can ensure that all decisions made regarding its future consider the input of different corporations and countries. Although this collaboration has just begun, a more cohesive response ensures the safety and security of AI development with respect to its applications worldwide. Ethics and biases are a significant subject to consider when regarding AI development, given its past flaws in these regards. The main considerations when moving forward with AI development, especially regarding human interactions, are ensuring that AI responds in the same way to any person who is interacting with it. This is especially important in healthcare applications to ensure treatment remains equitable. Transparency with AI development is crucial because it fosters trust and understanding among stakeholders, ensures accountability, and promotes ethical and responsible use of AI technologies. It also allows for the identification and mitigation of potential risks and biases, contributing to the creation of AI while also facilitating international cooperation and alignment on AI policies. Going forward, the implementation of regulations is essential given the global impact of AI technologies.

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[31] Ibid.
[32] SDG Knowledge Hub, "UN Secretary-General Launches Advisory Board."
[33] United Nations, "AI Advisory Body," https://www.un.org/en/ai-advisory-body.
[34] SDG Knowledge Hub, "UN Secretary-General Launches Advisory Board."
[35] Ibid.

Bloc Analysis

Western Bloc: North America, European Union, UK, Australia, New Zealand

These countries have arguably been the leaders in AI development, and the initial concepts and prototypes of AI were developed in this bloc. Many of the biggest companies dealing with AI are from the USA, whose focus on AI policies is improving AI innovation, advancing trustworthy AI, and creating new education and training opportunities. There is some tension with the government however, due to its commitment to overseeing operations to ensure consumer protection.[36] Canada is also important in this bloc with the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR), which has the goal to launch a Pan-Canadian Artificial Intelligence Strategy to retain and attract top academic talent.[37] The European Union has recently established their first regulations on AI development, while individual members such as Germany and France are continuously pushing to improve their nations contributions to AI development.[38]

They plan to invest €1 billion per year in AI, while mobilizing additional investments from the private sector, and want each member state to reach an annual investment volume of €20 billion over the course of the digital decade.[39] Relationships between countries within the Western Bloc are generally positive, while having mixed relations with the Eastern Bloc, notably China. In November 2023, the EU and Canada launched a Digital Partnership to continue their cooperation in technological fields, while the USA and Canada cooperate in most regards.[40] The main nation in contention with China is the USA, as they are pushing sanctions on China to halt their development of AI.[41] The United Kingdom having recently left the EU has caused some tension, but they continue to have positive relations with the member states, while having differences of opinion when it comes to the future of AI.[42]

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[36] The White House, "Executive Order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence," October 30, 2023, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/10/30/executive-order-on-the-safe-secure-and-trustworthy-development-and-use-of-artificial-intelligence/.

[37] OECD, "AI Strategies and Policies in Canada," https://oecd.ai/en/dashboards/countries/Canada.

[38] European Parliament, "EU AI Act: First Regulation on Artificial Intelligence," August 6, 2023, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20230601STO93804/eu-ai-act-first-regulation-on-artificial-intelligence.

[39] European Commission, "A European Approach to Artificial Intelligence - Shaping Europe's Digital Future," https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/european-approach-artificial-intelligence.

[40] European Commission, "EU and Canada Launch Digital Partnership to Strengthen Strategic Cooperation - Shaping Europe's Digital Future," https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/eu-and-canada-launch-digital-partnership-strengthen-strategic-cooperation.

[41] Will Knight, "The US Just Escalated Its AI Chip War With China," *WIRED*, October 17, 2023, http://www.wired.com/story/the-us-just-escalated-its-ai-chip-war-with-china/.

[42] Claire Wiseman, Niamh Connell, and Rachel Montagnon, "AI Regulation Remains EU Priority as UK Committee Report on AI Raises Issues but Answers Still Pending," *Lexology*, September 13, 2023, https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=3a316c07-1038-4e39-84a2-67d62cda67e0.

Middle East Bloc: Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt

Despite this region not having many initial contributions to AI, they have recently begun pushing towards its development. The UAE government's vision is to make the UAE a world leader in AI by 2031, as per the National Artificial Intelligence Strategy launched in 2017, and one of their government officials is part of the AI Advisory Board in the United Nations.[43] Saudi Arabia is also heavily investing in AI development, however there is controversy as it has been reported that they have been using this technology to spy on dissidents and identify political threats.[44] Financial incentive is one of the main reasons for the Middle East's push for AI development, as they seek to move their economies away from a dependency on oil. Given the current situation in the region, relations between countries within the bloc are good, but are mixed abroad.

Eastern Bloc: India, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Japan, People's Republic of China

This bloc has also invested heavily in the AI industry and contributed significantly to the field. Most countries within this bloc have strong, positive relations with the Western Bloc, with the exception of China, and have mixed relations with the Middle East. South Korea is one of the world's foremost nations regarding technological AI advancement due to their for artificial intelligence developed in December 2019. This strategy emerged amidst Korea's already strong technological ecosystem, in which a prominent goal of making AI a driver of the fourth industrial revolution, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, has persisted.[45] Japan is enthusiastic about the future of AI and wants to focus on improving it as much as possible while integrating it into society. Many restaurants have begun to use AI robots in place of humans, and businesses are seen as having an overreliance on AI.[46] A key reason for AI development in these countries is to combat the issues that come with having a significant aging population. Singapore being a small nation with a high GDP per capita has also pushed heavily into AI development as they lack natural resources. Its National Artificial Intelligence Strategy outlines a future where the country has a sustainable AI ecosystem that benefits the economy.[47] China has recently published its rules/regulations of AI and seeks to continue their development in the industry.[48] China also has several of the top AI companies in the world and has an advantage in data collection due to their

[43] UAE, "UAE Strategy for Artificial Intelligence," November 7, 2023, https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/strategies-plans-and-visions/government-services-and-digital-transformation/uae-strategy-for-artificial-intelligence.

[44] Cathrin Schaer, "Gulf States Spending Big on AI: Opportunity or Oppression?" *Deutsche Welle*, June 7, 2023, https://www.dw.com/en/gulf-states-spending-big-on-ai-opportunity-or-oppression/a-65840985.

[45] Kyunghee Song, "Korea Is Leading an Exemplary AI Transition. Here's How," *OECD*, March 10, 2022, https://oecd.ai/en/wonk/korea-ai-transition.

[46] "Japan's AI Draft Guidelines Ask for Measures to Address Overreliance," *The Japan Times*, October 15, 2023, https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2023/10/15/japan/politics/ai-draft-guidelines/.

[47] Smart Nation Singapore, "National AI Strategy," https://www.smartnation.gov.sg/nais/.

[48] "China's New Rules For Generative AI: An Emerging Regulatory Framework," Fasken, August 23, 2023, https://www.fasken.com/en/knowledge/2023/08/chinas-new-rules-for-generative-ai.

large population.[49] India having recently become the most populated country in the world, also has this advantage and has drafted a national strategy for AI.[50] India's development of AI has ethics as a top priority to ensure that when AI gets into the hands of citizens, it will be safe to use assisted by the several AI start-ups that have grown significantly.[51]

[49] Christy DeSmith, "Why China Has an Edge on Artificial Intelligence, What Ancient Emperors Tell Us about Xi Jinping," *Harvard Gazette*, March 16, 2023. https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2023/03/why-china-has-an-edge-on-artificial-intelligence/.
[50] Umesh Rathod, "AI Policies Across The World: Key Lessons For India," *Forbes India,* May 23, 2023, https://www.forbesindia.com/article/isbinsight/ai-policies-across-the-world-key-lessons-for-india/85163/1.
[51] Ibid.

Research & Preparation Questions

1. What are the ethical considerations of AI development and how can they be addressed?
2. How would different industries be affected by advancing technology? Would different countries benefit more than others, and how?
3. What role should governments play in regulating AI development and use? What role should international organizations such as the United Nations have in this discussion?
4. What are the implications of AI for international security and stability? What have organizations done already to prepare for this?
5. Should AI development be transparent and shared across all nations and corporations, how much individual control should a country or company have over its AI assets?

Topic #2: Evaluating Global Responsibility and Response to Climate Migrants

Introduction

In an era marked by escalating environmental challenges, climate migration has emerged as a critical concern, necessitating discussions about an effective global response. In 2023, a record figure of 110 million displaced people was reached, due in part to factors such as climate change and natural disasters.[52] This imminent crisis also underscores the harsh reality of the socio-economic gap as climate change disproportionately impacts impoverished communities. As climate migrants seek refuge, the relocation process carries profound implications for both the displaced individuals and their host countries.

The International Organization for Migration highlights that the displacement of climate migrants introduces challenges such as resource strain, heightened social tensions - especially between migrants and citizens of the host countries - and increases the potential for conflict. Forced to flee their homes, lands, and livelihoods, people who are displaced due to climate change are also at a much higher risk of experiencing food insecurity.

Delegates are tasked with generating solutions to mitigate this multifaceted crisis that not only address the root cause of climate change, but also promote community resilience against future climate disasters. Proactive measures should be prioritized to ensure the long-term success of these solutions.

History

The history of global responsibility and responses to climate migrants demonstrates the interconnectedness of the world and how crucial a global response is to address this humanitarian crisis that is continually exacerbated by climate change. As environmental circumstances begin to shift, large populations and communities are displaced, causing many nations to suffer ethical, legal, and practical challenges in safeguarding the rights and well-being of climate migrants.

The high standard of living caused by the mass industrialization of societies functioning largely on fossil fuel combustion resulted in the substantial amounts of CO_2 released into the

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[52] United Nations General Assembly Council, Seventy-eight session, "44th Meeting (PM): With Conflicts, Climate Change Pushing Displacement to Record Levels, Third Committee Highlights Need to Ramp Up Refugee Funding, Address Root Causes," GA/SHC/4395, October 31, 2023, 4-5,
https://press.un.org/en/2023/gashc4395.doc.htm#:~:text=in%20feeling%20aggrieved.-,In%20the%20ensuing%20interactive%20dialogue%2C%20delegates%20voiced%20concern%20over%20the,people%20was%20reached%20in%202023.

atmosphere.[53] The history of climate change and migrants has been developing for thousands of centuries, changing with the way in which life forms interact with the environment. The increased amount of CO2 in the atmosphere in combination with other harmful greenhouse gases alters the energy balance of the climate system causing increasingly frequent natural phenomena. [54] Examples of these disasters that occur across the globe include desertification, more severe droughts, floods, tropical cyclones, more frequent wildfires, rising sea levels and melting glaciers.[55]

Despite the prominence of these disasters and environmental changes for years, the understanding of climate-induced migration is a modern idea from the late 20th to early 21st century as the discourse around the repercussions of climate change on human displacement was scientifically more evident and intensified. With this correlation, scientists suggest that climate change could generate hundreds of millions of human migrants by the middle of the century.[56] Though this is globally known, there is great uncertainty about the potential implications of climate change and its migrants on specific countries and areas.[57] All that is known is that the challenging predicament of climate change and its creation of migrates disproportionately affect those who suffer socio-economically. As a result of the lavish, superfluous lives led in developed countries, underdeveloped countries and those in them suffering socio-economically in them are most likely to bear the burden of climate change and its negative effects.[58]

Historically, the world and dividing countries have developed at differing rates causing some countries to be categorized as developed while others falling short are under-developed. The 45 recognized underdeveloped countries by the United Nation to this day are in the prominent areas of Africa (33 countries), Asia (8), Caribbean (1), and the Pacific (3).[59] Putting these countries at the forefront of the effects of climate change, interconnected with their higher rates of poverty, they are at a greater loss to climate sensitive resources such as water and food supplies.[60] Poverty reduces a country's ability to withstand environmental change, putting its population at risk of displacement. Exacerbating existing socio-economic disparities and underdeveloped country's vulnerabilities, the global conversation to address climate change is a long old conversation, but its result of internal and external population displacement is a newer topic addressed by the United Nations. In the United Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) notably addressed in the Paris Agreement of 2015, the UN acknowledged the impact of climate change on

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[53] Raphael Nawrotzki, "Climate Migration and Moral Responsibility," *Ethics, Policy & Environment* 17, no. 1 (2014): 69-70.
[54] Working Group I to the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC, *Climate Change 2007: The Physical Science Basis,* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 2.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Working Group, *Climate Change,* 2.
[59] UNCTAD, "UN list of least developed countries," https://unctad.org/topic/least-developed-countries/list.
[60] Katrina Wyman, "Responses to Climate Migration," *Harvard Environmental Law Review* 37 (2013): 174.

displacement and migration. [61] And as these populations grapple with rapidly diminishing resources and heightened environmental conditions, the phenomenon of climate migrants seeking refuge is history in the making, shifting the dynamic of the globe as seen today.

Current Situation

Today, climate change is a key driver of migration and displacement, and numbers are projected to rise rapidly. In April 2022, the UNHCR reported that 21.5 million people were forced to leave their homes because of climate crisis events over the last 11 years. By 2050, the Institute for Economics and Peace estimates that this number will rise to 1.2 billion people displaced around the world due to climate related disasters. If the global population reaches 9.9 billion by 2050, as projected, this indicates that 12% of the world will be climate migrants.[62] As such, it is imperative to explore the intersections of poverty, food insecurity, and the capacity of host countries when discussing the relocation of climate migrants.

Poverty and Food Insecurity

The largest demographic of climate migrants are people who are below the poverty line. Poverty is a significant driver to the increase in global climate migration as it amplifies country's vulnerabilities to environmental changes. Impoverished communities often lack resources to adapt to changing climates or recover from disasters, compelling them to seek better accommodations elsewhere. Recent events show a growing trend of people leaving regions affected by climate-related issues, seeking refuge or better livelihoods. For instance, more than one million people fled Somalia and faced displacement by consistent droughts in 2022.[63] Furthermore, in the same year, countries such as Honduras and Guatemala faced the same issue with drought which plagued poorer rural communities.[64] The lack of rainfall in these regions and subsequent agricultural devastation have made the lands inhabitable and sufficient resources unobtainable.[65] The failing agricultural productivity and spreading desertification undermines rural livelihoods and worsens job prospects in these areas, prompting increased migration to urban areas.[66]

According to World Vision, a global relief, development, and advocacy organization, seventy-five percent of the world's poor population living in rural areas depend on natural resources, including surrounding forests, lakes, and oceans, for their livelihoods, [67] In heavy reliance on their

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[61] UNFCC, "The Paris Agreement," https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement.

[62] "Climate refugees," *Concern Worldwide US,* April 5, 2022, https://concernusa.org/news/climate-refugees-explained/.

[63] Lawrence Huang, "Climate Migration 101: An Explainer," *Migration Policy Institute,* November 16, 2023, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/climate-migration-101-explainer.

[64] Ibid.

[65] "How climate change impacts poverty," World Vision, June 21, 2021, https://www.worldvision.ca/stories/climate-change/how-climate-change-impacts-poverty.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

agricultural industry and other environmentally dependent industries, when these dependencies fail, families lose their primary source of income and sustenance, prompting them to migrate.[68] In 2010, the United Nation Development Programme stated that "climate change is inextricably linked to poverty and hunger."[69] In addition to their acknowledgement, it was made clear that declining sectoral output, growth rate, and livelihoods are linked to significant economic and human development impacts.[70] With a depleting growth rate and livelihood, countries who are already facing economic struggles will face more difficulty in their ability to respond to environmental changes.

There are many challenges impacting families and communities in the world's poorest countries. These include prolonged droughts, causing mass agricultural devastation and loss of water resources, as well as the inability to farm due to environmental degradation such as toxins in soil.[71] This leads to the withering of crops, starving families and those they support such as animals and communities.[72] Hurricanes, floods, and landslides often wipe out key infrastructure in towns and cities, leaving families and communities without shelter and unable to finance rebuilding.[73] Furthermore, the lack of habitable land can result in conflict amongst and within communities where families are left to compete for available land and housing, often which is overpriced. This widens the divide between the wealthy and those without the means to meet the wealth standards of living. Finally, families unable to financially support a complete relocation may become separated as some relatives depart in search for work.[74] Climate change perpetuates poverty in a vicious cycle, leading to challenges such as food and water shortages, diminished livelihoods, and reduced education levels.[75]

Many of the countries with the largest numbers of internally displaced peoples (IDPs) also face crisis levels of food insecurity. This is also known as acute food insecurity or IPC phase 3+.[76] The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) defines food insecurity as "lacking regular access to enough safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life. This may be due to unavailability of food and/or lack of resources

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[68] Ibid.

[69] Srilata Kammila, Usman Iftikhar, Nick Remple, Pradeep Kurukulasuriya, and Eric Patrick, "Millennium Development Goals and Climate Change Adapatation: The Contribution of UNDP-GEF Adaptation Initiatives Towards MDG1," United Nations Development Programme, September 2010, 2 Shttps://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/publications/17463_UNDP_GEF_MDGi1.pdf.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Satchit Balsari, Caleb Dresser and Jennifer Learning, "Climate Change, Migration, and Civil Strife," *Current Environmental Health Reports* 7 (2020): 405.

[72] Ibid., 405-406.

[73] Ibid., 406.

[74] "How climate change impacts poverty."

[75] "Climate refugees."

[76] "Global Report on International Displacement 2023," The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2023, 93, https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/IDMC_GRID_2023_Global_Report_on_Internal_Displacement_LR.pdf.

to obtain food."[77] When individuals are forced to leave their homes, lands, and livelihoods fleeing climate disasters, they become less able to produce food for themselves and their communities, increasing their risk of experiencing food insecurity. According to a survey conducted by IDMC, 6 million people faced IPC 3+ levels of food insecurity across Pakistan due to monsoons and floods in August 2022.[78] The same month, in Mali, 61 percent of IDPs reported three times more difficulty accessing food after being displaced than before their displacement.[79]An assessment made by the WFP stated that 30 percent of IDPs surveyed in Iraq had to employ food-based coping strategies to survive.[80]

As members of the legal committee, advocating for sustainable community-based climate disaster risk management initiatives is imperative. Solutions involving watershed management, reforestation, soil and water conservation, and land rehabilitation should be prioritized. Stakeholders around the world combating food security have already begun to take more anticipatory action rather than focusing solely on reactive emergency aid. Both FAO and WFP have supported various governmental programs in developing social protection systems to ensure adequate nutrition and food security for IDPs. Specifically, WFP launched its anticipatory action agenda in 2015 to support governments and communities in preparing for and recovering from climate disasters via financing and early warning. It covered about two million people in 2022, having been implemented in 21 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.[81] Delegates must collaborate to integrate sustainable solutions like this into frameworks that enhance community resilience against climate change threats.

Relocation of Climate Migrants and their Impact on Host Countries

In 2022 alone, there were 33 million natural disaster-related displacements.[82] From excessive flooding in Pakistan to droughts in East Africa, the largest displacement situations necessitated that people relocate themselves away from disasters.[83] In the 2022 Pakistan flood crisis, an estimated 8 million people were displaced, causing over 30 million US dollars in damages to their livelihoods.[84] While these disasters typically lead to short-term displacement, people frequently decide to permanently relocate if massive damages recur repeatedly to their industry and home.[85] These mass migration numbers continue to be amplified by climate-related disasters and it is important to consider the impacts of climate migrants on host countries.

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[77] Ibid., 95.
[78] "Global Report on International Displacement 2023," 100.
[79] Ibid., 103.
[80] Ibid.
[81] "Global Report on Internal Displacement 2023," 109.
[82] Huang, "Climate Migration 101."
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.

The UN's definition of a refugee is someone who has crossed an international border due to a "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion" or due to conflicts and "events seriously disturbing public order."[86] Therefore, according to the UNHCR, the term climate refugee is inaccurate, as many people facing the detrimental impacts of climate change do not leave their country or face persecution. This raises a problem as people who are forced to leave their homes as climate migrants often are not able to claim status as refugees. Thus far, they have not been granted protection under international law, nor do they have a formal classification, limiting the aid that is provided to them. However, in October 2020, UNHCR published a set of legal considerations dealing with claims for international protection due to climate change and disasters.[87] Delegates should prioritize the development and implementation of further legislation to guarantee the rights of people displaced in climate disasters.

Internal displacement, which is responsible for much of today's climate migration, disproportionately burdens host countries in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre in 2022, the top 5 countries containing the greatest number of people displaced due to climate events were Afghanistan, with 1.1 million climate related IDPs, India, with 929,000 IDPs due to climate, Pakistan, with 806,000 IDPs due to climate, Ethiopia, with 633,000 due to climate, and Sudan, with 454,000 IDPs due to climate.[88]A coordinated effort from the international community is essential to ensure that host countries receive the support they need to mitigate the consequences of climate-induced internal displacement. Financial assistance, technological transfer, and capacity-building initiatives from the international community can help build a more sustainable and resilient future.

[86] "Climate refugees."
[87] "Climate refugees."
[88] Ibid.

Bloc Analysis

Major Climate Change Stakeholders: Brazil, China, Qatar, United States, and United Arab Emirates

Post-industrialization, these countries are consistently mentioned in conversation surrounding carbon dioxide emission contributions per capita. Fossil fuels are the largest contributor to climate change, accounting for 75% of total global fossil fuel emissions, and 90% of all carbon dioxide emissions.[89] The UNFCC NDC Synthesis report (2023), reported a 9% jump in global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030, a drastic increase when compared to 2010 numbers. As the largest liquefied natural gas producer, Qatar has the highest per capita emissions of any country in the world. Becoming the focal point of climate change conversations on the global stage, the "Qatar National Vision 2023" aims to reduce GHG by 25% for 2030.[90] 10% of total GHGs come from the agricultural sector, with Brazil, and the USA being some of the key contributors. The Paris Agreement, in 2015, set precedent as one of the first international joint cooperation efforts which signalled a commitment to ambitious efforts and adaptation in response to climate change - all listed parties signed this agreement.[91] All listed countries are signatories to climate change agreements, while still mobilizing large investments into major climate change contributors. China has pledged to use more solar and wind energy by 2030, but is still responsible for 30% of emissions globally.[92] Overall, these countries are major stakeholders in climate change fate, and as a consequence are large contributors to the climate migrant crisis. Most countries on the global stage have taken policy driven measures for climate change, but still markup the highest receipts by the end of the year. Mitigating climate change contributions is a challenge but should be at the forefront of actions and policy.

Climate Policy Drivers: Denmark, UK, Norway, France, European Union and Chile

As some of the leaders according to the Climate Change Performance Index, these countries have made a concerted effort to meet CCPI guidelines.[93] The four contributing factors to this metric are GHG emissions (40%), renewable energy (20%), energy use (20%), and climate change (20%). Global reporting like that done by the CCPI have served as the public means to hold many nations accountable in their climate change action, in a multi-prong manner. These countries have not only adapted UN climate change policy measures, but actively seek to minimize their contribution to

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[89] "Causes and Effects of Climate Change," *United Nations Climate Action,* https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/causes-effects-climate-change..

[90] International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce, "Qatar Energy Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Reductions and Sustainability Initiatives," December 27, 2022, https://www.trade.gov/market-intelligence/qatar-energy-greenhouse-gas-ghg-emissions-reductions-and-sustainability.

[91] Grantham Institute – Climate Change and the Environment, "What are the world's countries doing about climate change?" Imperial College London, https://www.imperial.ac.uk/grantham/publications/climate-change-faqs/what-are-the-worlds-countries-doing-about-climate-change/

[92] Helen Regan, "World's biggest polluter just had its hottest year on record, marked by deadly extreme weather," *CNN,* January 5, 2024, https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/05/china/2023-hottest-year-china-climate-intl-hnk/index.html.

[93] Climate Change Performance Index, "CCPI 2024: Ranking and Results," https://ccpi.org.

global climate change. One notable mention that has lagged in the European Union is Poland as coal power dominates their energy matrix.[94] These countries have been at the forefront of global praise for climate change efforts, and have created provisions in response to the climate migrant crisis, but maintenance of some national efforts has been brought into question by the CCPI in certain years. For these nations, the question is about not only sustaining their climate change policies, but also ensuring their longevity and that their actions can contribute positively in the mitigation of the climate change crisis and response to climate refugees.

Stagnant States: Russia, South Korea, Germany, Turkey, Iran and Yemen

These countries have pledged their commitment to achieving global climate change goals, but have been targets of commentary about their unambitious actions. Germany has increased GHG emissions, South Korea continues coal plant construction, and Russia signed the 2015 Paris agreement only after a significant amount of global tension.[95] Listed countries continue to have actionable climate change policies in place, but have yet to align their actions with stated goals, short and long-term. Iran and Yemen have not yet ratified the Paris agreement, showing an indifference to climate change goals and actions that need to be taken.[96] Not only does that lack of the Paris Agreement ratification hinder these countries in meeting global climate change goals, but it reflects their mode of thinking towards the SDGs set by the United Nations, as well as their approach to broader societal issues.

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[94] Climate Change Performance Index, "Poland," https://ccpi.org/country/pol/.
[95] Nsikan Akpan, "Only 2 countries are meeting their climate pledges. Here's how the 10 worst could improve," *PBSNewsHour,* September 26, 2019, https://www.pbs.org/newshour/science/only-2-countries-are-meeting-their-climate-pledges-heres-how-the-10-worst-could-improve.
[96] Maia Golzar Anderson, "Bringing Iran to the climate action table," Middle East Institute, September 22, 2023, https://www.mei.edu/publications/bringing-iran-climate-action-table.

Research & Preparation Questions

1. How are global policies addressing the responsibility of nations in supporting climate migrants, in consideration of their historical contributions to greenhouse gas emissions?
2. What measures are being taken or could be taken by international organizations to ensure a coordinated and effective response to the needs of climate migrants?
3. How are corporations going to be held accountable for their role in exacerbating climate change and displacement of communities, and what steps are they taking to address this responsibility?
4. What are the major challenges faced in a global response considering both socio-economic and political landscapes of deferring affected regions?
5. What solutions and goals can countries strive for in collaboration of a global framework addressing immediate humanitarian needs and long term sustainable methods to combat environmental changes and migration?