



Newton College
Model United Nations

SOCHUM

**RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION**



**RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION**

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Letter from the Secretary-General

Dear Delegates and Faculty Advisors,

It is with immense happiness that I welcome you to NewtonMUN 2024. Model United Nations is truly such a necessary activity in today's world that it makes me incredibly proud to be able to open the national conference circuit in 2024 after having fully recovered from the effects of the pandemic not only in the activity but in our national socioeconomic context.

I moved to Peru in 2018 and joined the Newton Model United Nations club a few months after joining the school. What that means is that I joined the club completely fluent in Spanish but with very mediocre English...needless to say, I was shaking. This feeling persisted until almost 6 months later, when I attended my first conference, NewtonMUN 2019. Two conferences later, I was still shaking at Cambridge College Model United Nations 2019 when I won my first best delegate. In 2022, I had my first opportunity to speak at a United Nations conference, the UN Ocean Decade conference in Lisboa. Even after all my years of training in public speaking and receiving awards at a national level...I was still shaking. Nowadays, even having attended almost 30 conferences, every time it's my turn to give my opening speech, I still feel my stomach go cold, my neck gets tense, and I feel that mix of adrenaline and nervousness.

So what is the difference? How have these 6 years in MUN helped me grow as a person? The difference is that this feeling doesn't stop me anymore. I know many of you will have this same feeling throughout the conference and in many more in the future, in varying degrees of course. MUN, oversimplified because it is so much more than that, is also about building strong personal armour. It is about falling and learning that you can still stand up, maybe even taller than you did before. I am confident that I wouldn't be the person I am today without participating in so many stressful and, quite honestly, ego-shaking events. Through updates, direct attacks, backstabbing and fear, I realized that the world doesn't end when something doesn't go according to plan. You don't fail when your plan is not the best, because it never will be (another important lesson from MUN). You fail only if you let temporary losses prevent you from long-term wins.

Now, I would like to address all of the faculty advisors. We know many of you have children and partners at home, which you left behind to be at the conference for those two days. And even if you don't, I am sure all of you can come up with a list of more relaxing activities than following your delegates around through hours of intense debate, encouraging everyone and fixing all types of emergencies, ensuring we are all eating and drinking, and getting us prepared for the conference in the first place. That is why I thank you. Thank you for making the sacrifice that allows these students to pursue their dreams. Directly and indirectly, you are making a big impact on their lives. Know that every speech they give and every personal challenge they overcome, has been enabled because of your commitment.

With all of this being said, we await to see all of you on April 20th and 21st. The topics, as well as the overall design of the conference, have carefully been chosen to make sure you have the best time possible throughout this weekend. I hope you learn a lot through your time in the conference, and that the leadership you take throughout the conference, at varying levels, will give you the confidence to pursue your dreams. It is through the challenges you face that you will grow, and the Newton team cannot wait to see it!

Thank you very much for your attention, and we look forward to seeing you at the conference!

Sincerely,
Enzo Porto
Newton Model United Nations Secretary-General

Letter from the Director

Dear delegates,

It is with utmost pleasure that I welcome you to the Newton MUN 2024 SOCHUM Committee!

My name is Nina Porto, and for the duration of this conference, I am honored to take on the role of your director. I'm currently a Form 4 student at Newton College. I arrived at this school 5 years ago from São Paulo, Brazil, and have always loved to share parts of my culture with my friends. I have a strong interest in any type of music, from bossa nova and jazz to rap and MPB. It has always been something I have shown a love for. Once I finish high school next year, I plan to study Humanities since human sciences, philosophy, economics and communication have always intrigued me. Hopefully this will be shown throughout the committee as I help you all discuss and debate about responsible consumption and production, a topic I believe should be widely addressed and acknowledged as it takes a huge part in our everyday life and the impact we have on the environment and on society.

I first joined MUN in 2020 during my first week of school before the pandemic hit, but trying to learn all the terms and rules of procedure through zoom lessons didn't compare to the real experience of an MUN conference. After leaving for a few months I was encouraged to join by my older brother Enzo, our current Secretary General. I never looked back on this decision, as MUN taught me to face my fears of public speaking and find confidence within my stances and be able to defend my beliefs. Moreover, it showed me to trust myself on the spot and go and talk in front of a classroom with just 4 bullet points prepared on a post it note.

Although MUN helped me a lot in facing that fear, it is still present, which I know is the case for many other delegates, too. I hope that through the committee I will be able to create an environment that you all feel comfortable in talking in, debating and exploring new frontiers so we can all grow together.

Sincerely,

Nina Porto

SOCHUM Director for Newton MUN 2024

History of the committee

In 1945, towards the conclusion of World War II, the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, or the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM) was established, in response to the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This committee's goal is to preserve the fundamental freedom ideals that are meant to apply to the entire international community, such as the right to life, the right of the expression of cultures, the protections of children's rights, the freedom of political movement, and many others.

The Third Committee has the authority and main objective to initiate studies and offer recommendations to enhance international political cooperation, develop and codify international law, promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, foster international collaboration in various fields such as economics, social issues, humanitarian efforts, culture, education, and health, make recommendations for the peaceful settlement of situations that could harm friendly relations among countries, and review reports from the Security Council and other United Nations organs. When addressing the issue of consumption and production, it's crucial to consider the Third Committee's mandate and explore potential joint actions with other international entities like the United Nations Human Rights Council.

As SOCHUM is a committee that lacks the independent authority to pass resolutions, it aims to address global social crises by issuing non-binding resolutions that serve as recommendations for member states. Operating under the General Assembly, SOCHUM lacks the authority to independently enact resolutions. Instead, its members draft regulations during concurrent sessions with the GA, which are then debated in the General Assembly. Therefore, SOCHUM has almost all the powers of the General Assembly, including the ability to set agreed-upon international standards and recommend actions. However, it has no power to force nations to keep any promises or actions, and it has no power to pass resolutions independently.

Overall, the SOCHUM committee aims to promote the right to life and social development for everybody. Meanwhile, the Third Committee encourages delegates to advocate for their beliefs and the freedom that others deserve. SOCHUM urges all delegates to strive for a brighter future, where we can all reside in a more inclusive and non-discriminatory world.

History of the topic

Responsible Consumption — or SDG 12 — was created by the United Nations in 2015 alongside 17 other sustainable development goals (SDGs) that are a call of action in order to achieve prosperity, equality, sustainability and resolve poverty, climate change and a variety of life threatening factors that disrupt one's life and health which are mostly aimed to be achieved by 2030. SDG 12 “Responsible Consumption and Production” aims to improve sustainable consumption and correct management of natural resources. Specifically emphasizing the need for sustainable production in developing countries and large business sectors. This goal tackles a variety of elements surrounding responsible production such as recycling, waste minimization.

SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production highlights sustainable production to ensure a responsible use of natural resources, providing decent jobs and emphasizing on energy efficiency and life quality. Addressing unsustainable patterns of production and the environmental, economic and human well-being impact of these harmful practices. Therefore the goal tackles the root of the issue encouraging a global effort to have a comprehensive approach that acknowledges private and public sectors, stakeholders and policies. Indicating positive and negative progress highlighting transparency amongst production patterns to achieve environmentally conscious ideas. Being interconnected with a variety of SDGs that tackle issues such as climate action, economic growth that expand to a broader sustainable agenda.

Responsible production is sustainable and conducts ethical practices that prioritize minimizing carbon emissions, highlighting sustainable ideas and focusing on equal treatment. Analyzing a company's production in order to ensure the correct management of natural resources with the aim of less environmental pollution from the production. Emphasizing on the importance of proper waste management. Additionally ensuring sustainable and ethical sourcing of the products. As a crucial aspect in SDG 12 aiming to adverse impacts of production on the environment. Aww Modeling the human well being and economic aspect of any type of production.

Delegates are highly incentivized to discover the ways to promote sustainable lifestyles in order to increase renewable consumption patterns that tackle environmental, social and ethical issues behind the consumption of these products. Such as the rising industry of fast fashion culture. These forms of life styles run away from resource efficiency.

In order to fully comprehend SDG 12, it is vital to understand key elements that make up this goal and different areas this target works to tackle. By 2030 SDG 12 works to halve the per capita global food waste in order to reduce food losses as well as the post harvest losses. By 2020 this target aspires to have environmentally sound management of chemicals in order to reduce their impact on water, air, and soil. Reducing the impact on environmental and human health. A critical sustainability goal should be empowering people worldwide with education and awareness about responsible consumption and production by 2030. This involves disseminating relevant information and knowledge to global citizens that encourages the adoption of renewable, environmentally-conscious lifestyles. Additionally, developing nations must be equipped with greater capacity to research and implement localized solutions that enable their communities to transition towards equitable and ecologically sustainable development patterns. Supporting the capability of these countries to pursue context-appropriate sustainability frameworks tailored to their needs and constraints is paramount. With informed, engaged individuals and communities along with the global transfer of knowledge

around best practices, attainable pathways can emerge that allow all countries to progress socially and economically while preserving environmental integrity for future generations. By intersecting with other Sustainable Development Goals focused on economic expansion, climate change mitigation, and policy reform across sectors, SDG 12 and its multi-stakeholder, transparency-based approach to responsible production and consumption provides a crucial backbone for the broader sustainable development agenda.

Current Situation

Given the rising social inequality and environmental degradation, the concept of responsible consumption has gained a significant importance, particularly within our progressive society. Nonetheless, it is crucial to consider that the causes of the rapid growth of this issue are multifaceted, involving factors such as changing consumer behaviors, disruption in global supply chains, and the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, severe threats to global stability are increasingly common, and the need to adopt responsible consumption practices remain as urgent as ever.

Currently, one of the main drivers behind unsustainable consumption is the heightened recognition and emphasis within the fashion industry, particularly on short trends and the proliferation of fast fashion, which extraordinarily exemplifies the effects of rapidly changing consumer behavior. As the years go by, the production boom becomes evident, as the matter of fact, global clothing production has doubled since 2000, with 100 million garments annually. Although “shorter fashion cycles” allow business models to sell clothes quickly and cheaply the average garment is worn only 7-14 times before being discarded, which negatively impacts not only people but the environment as a whole.

Despite all the conveniences mentioned above, the high demand for products generated by fast fashion places significant pressure on workers tasked with fulfilling production processes. In order to meet the demands of irresponsible consumption, manufacturers in developing countries, where labor regulations are often lax and wages are low, resort to operating sweatshops. Currently, in the garment industry alone, 27 million workers suffer under sweatshop conditions facing incredibly long hours of work, abysmally low wages, unsafe environments, poor ventilation and exposure to toxic chemicals.

In addition to the previously mentioned points, irresponsible consumption leads to broader issues which manifest on a massive scale and are reflected in the environment, such as food waste and air pollution. In face of the incredible consumption levels of organics, one-third of food produced globally is wasted, amounting to 1.3 billion tons annually, enough to feed 2 billion people. This does not only represent an immense damage to biodiversity but also a significant economic loss throughout the supply chain.

Past actions

In 2015, 193 UN Member States successfully agreed to 17 global goals in order to achieve a 2030 agenda for sustainable development. In which the progress made in order to achieve each target must be reported and transparently shared to stakeholders. The public accessibility in order to review and research each country's implementation of the policies aims to support sustainable consumption and production and increase the reliability in renewable energy and resources.

As it is crucial in order to identify rising trends and determine guiding principles and implementation of practices that will monitor and encourage sustainable production. Therefore, SDG 12 can monitor the progress and policies to achieve this target at a national level for different countries. Tackling the problem through an economic and social lens to understand the benefits of this target and reduce the harmful impact of these unsustainable consumption and production patterns.

The Global Goals Organization provides a variety of actions people can partake in to help achieve SDG 12. Cultivating global awareness of sustainable production and consumption practices requires both top-down and bottom-up solutions. On an individual level, we must widely promote simple daily lifestyle shifts - reducing excess packaging waste and supporting small, local enterprises to circulate income through communities. These conscious consumer decisions compound to make significant environmental impact over time. Simultaneously, large-scale policy incentives and disincentives should realign business behaviors towards responsibly-sourced packaging, localized production whenever feasible, and employment opportunities distributed equitably across communities. By driving change through policy and through individual awareness of how even small buying choices preserve jobs and sustainability on a collective scale, production and consumption can be transformed globally into a force for economic inclusion, waste reduction, and environmental restoration. This organization encourages people to buy second hand and be aware of the sourcing and production of the products they use daily, specially clothing. In regards to reusable products, they highlight the importance of recycling specially items such as water bottles and bags. Lastly, emphasizing on advocating for change in your community by signing campaigns and petitions; specifically understanding the impact of spreading awareness.

The United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) Has created a project on Global Opportunities for Sustainable Development Goals (GO for SDGS) Which works to strengthen different countries' capability to achieve this goal. Additionally, UNEP is making progress in developing the SDG 12 hub that will create coordination and provide resources regarding sustainable consumption. Which connects further to one of the UNEPS past projects the OnePlanet Initiative for Sustainable Consumption and Production, two initiatives which are extremely aligned within their objectives. Allowing UNEP to closely monitor both of these approaches in the success of achieving their goals. Moreover, the online application SCP hotspot analysis tool (SCP-HAT) provides data on the environmental and socio economic impact and performance of more than 150 countries during the last 25 years. In order to analyze key information of policy and actions.

Bloc positions

Countries which work in order to achieve the targets of the SDGS approach each goal with adaptations to their nations needs and weaknesses. Due to this, countries might have strong, medium or lack any regulations or policies in order to tackle SDG 12. Cuba has been extremely active in making progress on a variety of SDGS. Yet for SDG 12 specifically focusing on agricultural and consumer waste as well as food and beverages.

Strong regulations:

Cuba has had a variety of macro policies, voluntary schemes and legal regulations working alongside the ministry of science technology and the environment. Furthermore, Ecuador has made progress focusing on legal regulations. Emphasizing on consumer goods waste, and the industrial and scientific sector. Showing their commitment through regulations and macro policies adopted by the ministry of environment and water. Moreover, Finland has also demonstrated the ratification of their policies working with economic and fiscal approaches to achieve this target by focusing on energy waste, food and lastly housing. With their economic policy of "More for Less Wisely" which was adopted in 203 by the Ministry of Environment. Lastly the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern islands have made notable progress in SDG 12 by highlighting the importance of water and chemical waste, consumer goods and environmental services. Through a variety of economic, voluntary and macro policies such as the "Plastic Packaging Tax " which was implemented in 2022 by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural areas.

Medium regulations:

Many countries have held the position of medium regulations due to their progress in achieving SDG 12. As China has been pushing forward the foreign environmental cooperation center focusing on agricultural and chemical waste in the country. Whilst on the other hand, France's last regulations were reported in 2020. Approaching the goal by focusing on Regulatory and Legal policies such as "Loi relative à la lutte contre le gaspillage et al economic circulaire" Which was adopted in 2020 by the French Environment Ministry. Moreover, Chile has only pushed forward 2 macro policies regarding specifically agriculture and fishery alongside building and construction waste. These macro policies were adopted by the Ministry of Environment.

No regulations:

A variety of countries have not exhibited any progress to SDGS. The Russian Federation and the Republic of Brazil have demonstrated the least support for the SDGS. Moreover, countries such as Qatar, Afghanistan, Brazil and the Dominican Republic have had a blank progress report by the SDG 12. An international hub in order to check the progress by different world leaders and take accountability for the lack of efforts to achieve these targets.

QARMAS

1. How can developing nations achieve economic growth through sustainable practices that don't compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs?
2. How can the international community most effectively establish legal frameworks to ensure sustainability on a global scale?
3. What is the role of media in shaping patterns of consumption and production?
4. To what extent should cultural practices be acknowledged for the establishment of sustainment practices/regulations?
5. To what extent should international regulations be placed for the protection of low income communities in the role of “cheap” manufacturers?
6. How can developing nations access alternative means of energy that will allow for development in a sustainable manner?

Guidelines for Position Papers

A position paper is a document that outlines a nation's position regarding the topic, as well as possible solutions that address the concerns of the committee. The position paper is divided into 3 main parts which correspond to its paragraphs:

- **Paragraph 1:** Introduction to your country's view on the topic, explain how your country sees the issue being discussed and what should be done, not an introduction to the topic itself.
- **Paragraph 2:** Past actions, explain past actions done by the United Nations and/or your country, and your country's opinions regarding those actions and their effects.
- **Paragraph 3:** Solutions, offer one or more solutions to the topic, within the scope of what your country can do, while remaining per what your country thinks and has done in the past.
- **Bibliography:** A bibliography formatted according to MLA9 citation guidelines is mandatory. Failure to include a bibliography with any position paper will result in instant disqualification and be considered plagiarism, rendering the delegate ineligible for an award.

Furthermore, this document has a specific format. We strongly request delegates to follow the specifications below as any documents that fail to do so will not be accepted.

- Font: Times New Roman 12 pts.
- Line Spacing: 1.15.
- Margins: 2.54 cm from all extremities (standard margins)
- Pages: 1-page max. (excluding bibliography)
- Bibliography format: MLA9

Lastly, all position papers are to be delivered by the 12th of April, at 11:59 PM in PDF format to the following email address: 2018057@newton.pe . For ease and to ensure no position papers are lost in spam, please send all of them with the subject “*Position Paper - Your Country*”.

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