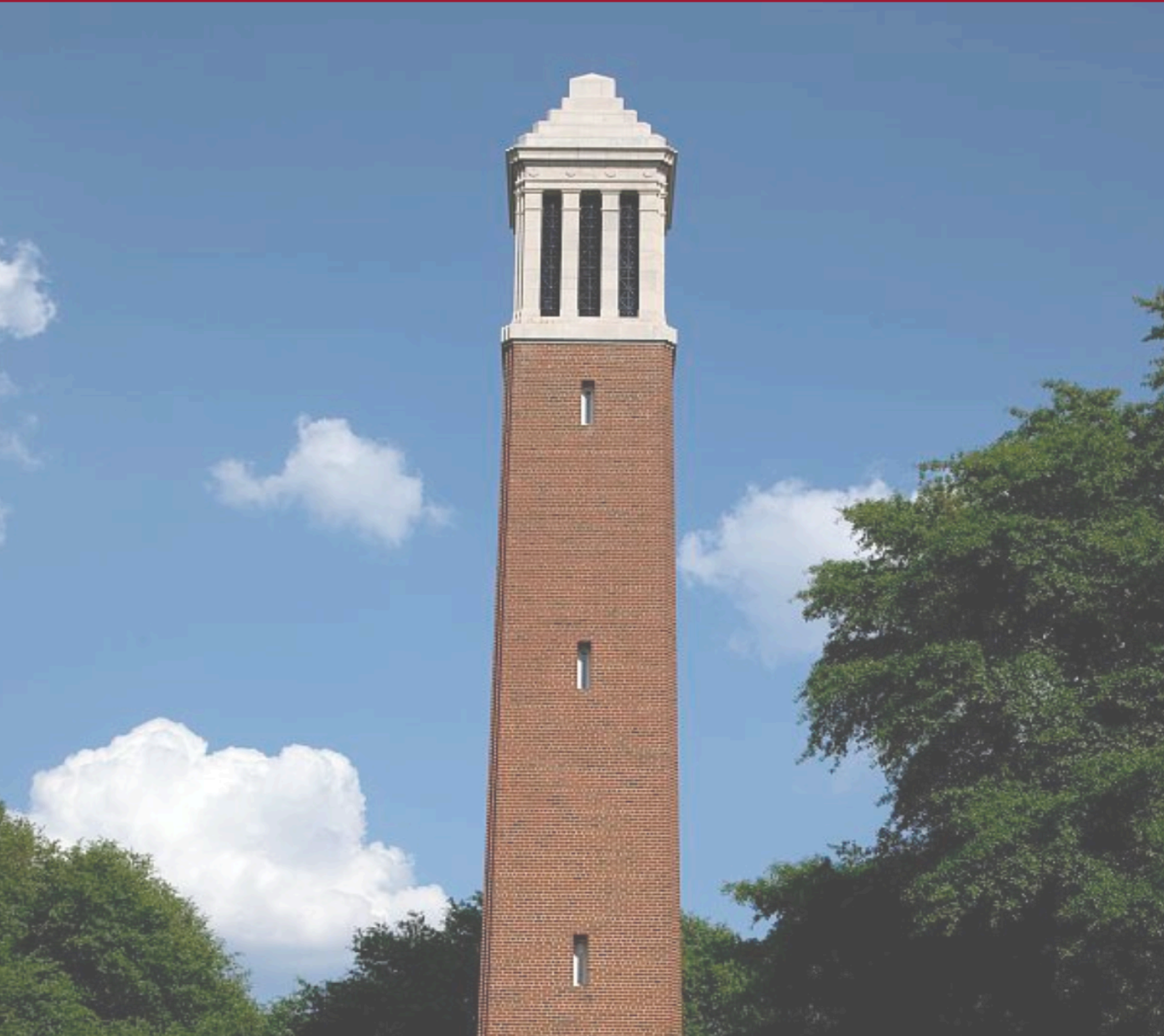


SIXTEENTH ANNUAL ALABAMA MODEL UNITED NATIONS



Administrative and Budgetary Committee

A&B BACKGROUND GUIDE

ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY COMMITTEE

Chair: Jorge Koichi Ikeda-Sanchez

Co-Chair: Vivienne van Nostrand



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Letter from the **DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

Esteemed Faculty and Delegates,

Welcome to **ALMUN XVI**! My name is Shrishti Dubey and I am delighted to serve as the Director-General in the sixteenth iteration of the Alabama Model United Nations Conference. I am a senior at the University of Alabama with majors in English and Economics, as well as minors in Mathematical Statistics and Ethics. I am also pursuing my Masters' in Economics at Bama. We have learned from ALMUN XV, our first year back in person, to provide delegates with an enhanced conference. We have prepared a diverse slate of committees, from timely General and Specialized Assemblies, to unpredictable Crisis Committees, to journalistic procedure in Press Corps.

I visited my campus six years ago as a novice delegate in ALMUN X. I had the pleasure of competing in ALMUN XI in my senior year of high school, in our conference's last iteration before COVID. When I joined the University of Alabama campus as a lonely freshman, I sought out the people who had introduced me to the university and found some of my most beloved friendships. Since then, I have served as Undersecretary-General of Press Corps and General Assemblies & Specialized Assemblies to bring that community to future delegates.

In my last year here, I hope to give back and introduce more delegates like my 16-year-old self to the engagement, enjoyment, and enrichment that accompanies MUN. To help you get the most out of your time here, our time has drafted resources like the Delegate Handbook and various Educational Slides, available on our website. If you have any questions about ALMUN, your committee, or MUN, please feel free to reach out to me through the email listed below. Best of luck!

Roll Tide!

Shrishti Dubey

Director-General of ALMUN XVI

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A Note on Research, Preparation, & Position Papers

Your experience as an ALMUN delegate begins during the time spent leading up to the conference. Proper research and preparation are key to a successful and valuable experience at ALMUN and any MUN conference. For new delegates, this preparation may seem like a daunting task. However, the ALMUN staff is here to help, and these notes should help you structure your lead-up time.

The first place to start your research should be your committee's Background Guide. This is a document prepared by committee staff for their specific committees' delegates. It contains historical contexts, overviews of your topics, and what the staffers will expect from delegates. This document is the perfect jumping off point for all of your research and will also help understand the innerworkings, schematics, and purpose of your character/country assignment as well as your role as a delegate during the conference. These documents can be found on the ALMUN website under your committee.

Position papers are delegates' first interactions with the dais (your committee staffers) and is the final product of a student's preparation and research for any Model United Nations conference. It contains informed perspectives and histories of the state a delegate represents and is crucial to creating an authentic MUN experience. Specific expectations for position papers are listed below.

All delegates are strongly encouraged to submit position papers. Position papers are required for a delegate to be considered for awards. Additionally, there is an award for Best Position Paper within each committee.

GENERAL & SPECIALIZED ASSEMBLIES POSITION PAPER FORMATTING

- GA & SA position papers should be two pages, each topic taking up one page. The topics should be separated by a page break. Do not exceed two pages.
- The document should be in single spaced, 12 pt, black, Times New Roman font.
- The document should begin with a three line header on the left side as follows:

Name of Delegate
Delegate's County Assignment
Delegate's Committee

- Following the header, delegates should center and identify the title of the committee, as follows:

Topic A: [Insert Title of Topic]

- Any references should be cited using footnotes in MLA format. When citing electronic sources, include the URL; electronic sources are strongly encouraged for ease of reference.
- **Position papers should be saved as a PDF file and entitled “ALMUN XV_[Committee]_[Country Name].”**

CONTENT OF GENERAL & SPECIALIZED ASSEMBLIES POSITION PAPERS

Position papers should include three paragraphs, outlined as follows:

1. **The first paragraph** introduces the topic from the point of view of the nation represented. It discussed the history of the topic, specifically in relation to the country.

2. **The second paragraph** analyzes the topic's context in the nation and expresses most of the research done on the topic. It discusses past action or inaction, success or failure, and the nation's current thoughts and feelings on the issue.
3. **The third paragraph** consists of an informed discussion of solutions to be proposed by the delegate(s) at the conference. It uses the research done on the topic and synthesizes it into new and creative ideas based on the nation represented by the student.

OTHER TIPS & NOTES

- Do not write in first person! Instead, write as the nation represented (e.g. "The Republic of Burkina Faso leans...")
- Avoid the passive voice.
- Write matter-of-factly rather than with embellished language.
- Use the example position paper provided in the ALMUN Delegate Handbook for ideas on how the writing and style should look, as well as how to present the information needed to prepare for the conference.

If you are looking for more information on how a committee runs and debate flows, please check out our [Delegate Handbook](#) and [Educational Powerpoints](#). These documents will break down everything you need to know about awards, parliamentary procedure, and writing.

Please submit all position papers to [this Google Form](#) no later than February 4th, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. CT.

DELEGATES THAT DO NOT SUBMIT POSITION PAPERS WILL BE INELIGIBLE FOR AWARDS.

Letter from the Chair

Honorable Delegates,

Welcome to the 16th iteration of ALMUN! My name is Jorge Koichi Ikeda-Sanchez and I am excited to serve as the chair to this committee! I am a sophomore pursuing a degree in Anthropology, another in Psychology, and lastly in Business Administration, and I have done Model United Nations for many years now, from the wee days of middle school to the hectic days of high school, like each and every one of you.

I hope to present each one of you a constructive and informative experience, and implore each one of you to maintain a respectful and diplomatic approach this conference. Do your best to make friends and truly exhibit the spirit of your nation through your words, your positions, and your acts, and may you have a fantastic time in beautiful Tuscaloosa! If you have any questions, concerns, or seek help at any time, be sure to ask and I will be happy to aid in whatever way I can.

Roll Tide!

Jorge Koichi Ikeda-Sanchez

Letter from the Co-Chair

Honorable Delegates,

Welcome to the 16th iteration of ALMUN! My name is Vivienne van Nostrand and I am so excited to serve as the co-chair of this committee. I am a sophomore pursuing degrees in psychology and public health with minors in liberal arts and philosophy. Like Koichi, I have been doing Model United Nations for eight years now.

Within this conference, we hope that each of you will learn how to cultivate understanding, promote diplomacy and respect, foster collaboration, and develop effective communication skills. Each of you represents a unique voice and viewpoint. We hope that you will emerge from this conference with a nuanced and enlightened perspective of both Model United Nations! If you have any questions, concerns, or need help at any time, please be sure to ask so I can help in whatever way possible!

Roll Tide!

Vivienne van Nostrand

Committee Overview

The United Nations General Assembly Fifth Committee, or the Administrative and Budgetary Committee, is one of the six main committees of the General Assembly, and is tasked with overseeing the management of the United Nations and its associated organizations, as well as the funding of various UN functions, including but not limited to, peacekeeping operations, international justice, administrative duties, and the international board of auditors. The Committee meets during the General Sessions and oversees its various jurisdictions to ensure the will of the General Assembly has the resources and logistical management to be enacted.

In this iteration of ALMUN, the Fifth Committee will seek to find compromise and craft solutions that will address international issues in a fair and balanced manner, keeping in mind the jurisdiction of the United Nations General Assembly, the constraints of the international market, economic considerations and independent goals of sovereign nations, and the need for broad consensus in implementing resolutions.

TOPIC A: DEBT RESTRUCTURING

LOAN JENGA

Introduction

In recent history, as turbulence in international trade grows and government spending rises to response to concurrent crises, greater scrutiny has been placed on unsustainable debt burdens many nations have taken on, with special attention given to the economic warfare utilized by nations such as China and France to entrap poorer nations in impossible loans to secure strategic assets and major economic concessions.¹ This committee will seek to create a comprehensive, international framework for restructuring debt in a manner that preserves the sovereignty of nations while also fairly compensating the creditors in a manner that preserves international credit.

¹ “Issues in Restructuring of Sovereign Domestic Debt” (2021).

History of the Issue

Sovereign Debt has been a root cause of significant problems across history, creating incidents ranging from the American invasion of Haiti to secure repayment to the collapse of the German economy under the Weimar Leadership after an attempt to inflate the deutschmark to pay off the debts forced on it by the Treaty of Versailles.² However, the latter crisis is most acute given the vast number of nations affected, spanning the globe and leaving the global economy at the brink of systemic degradation.

The prelude to this debt crisis began in the 1990s, when the loose monetary policy of the United States took root. With an economic boom and interest falling towards zero, a torrent of almost free money flooded the economies of many nations.³ However, these good times incurred a cost: a cost foreshadowed in the 2008 Eurozone crisis. As nations had taken on more and more debt, encouraged by the miniscule interest payment and prosperous economic growth the debt to GDP ratio climbed globally.⁴ With the slowdown of the 2008 Recession, the prospect of debt interest outpacing growth (and thus the government's ability to repay) frightened many investors and central banks, leading to the near collapse of several heavily indebted European nations such as Iceland and Greece, only to be saved by unified action and unprecedented fiscal centralization by the European Union.⁵ Due to the return to global prosperity in the 2010s, many nations returned to their old borrowing practices, ignoring the near crisis until it was too late.

² Thurston (2021).

³ Schwarcz (1999).

⁴ Kenton (2021).

⁵ Zettemeyer (2013).

The economic shock of not only a global pandemic but also wars across the world triggering energy and food crises has finally proven to be too much for those most indebted. Without the economic growth of previous years, nations could no longer enjoy the growing revenue that had been projected to pay interest on the mountains of debt, and thus began falling further and further behind on payments, until several nations fell into default, with strategic assets being seized as collateral and subsequent cratering of living standards triggering massive social, political, and economic upheaval.⁶ Sri Lanka serves as a great example of this, whereupon the default caused an economic implosion led to the storming of the president's palace and the ousting of the government. Nations that have yet to fall into default are not safe either- Nigeria continues to pay its obligations, yet now spends 96% of its public funds on servicing this debt, leaving only 4% for all other public expenditures. Whether collapsing from default or at the brink of doing so with little spending room left, the debt crisis is creating brutal living conditions for the population of these nations, leaving many without functioning healthcare, infrastructure, or security, adding urgency to the snowballing crisis.

⁶ Szwarcz (1999)

Past Solutions

In the past, oftentimes nations would simply secure more obligations that matured later to pay those due at the moment, or simply take more future debt to pay current debt. But with the overall debt of developing countries surging past \$11 trillion, that simplest solution was simply not feasible anymore.⁷ When nations could no longer secure further debt, they often came to the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank to secure a bailout or a significant loan.⁸ However, these came with extremely stringent conditions, oftentimes forcing unpopular austerity measures that cut public expenditures to service debts, leading to a noticeable decline in social services.⁹

The international framework for unsustainable debt, the G20 framework, too, has failed many nations, as the framework is only used for the poorest of nations and struggles to successfully restore a functioning time, often only burdening the nation further. Private restructuring with creditors such as China or the United States have also failed to alleviate the crises, as the moment of vulnerability at the negotiating table will be used to secure further trade or strategic concessions with no regards to the wellbeing of the nation.¹⁰

⁷ “Issues in Restructuring of Sovereign Domestic Debt” (2021).

⁸ Schwarcz (1999).

⁹ Schwarcz (1999).

¹⁰ Thurston (2023).

Current Issues

Any attempted solution has to overcome significant challenges. First, by tying strategic interests to loans, creditors such as China will be reluctant to renegotiate the debts owed to them without securing their greater geopolitical ambitions.¹¹ Second, institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank have a strong neoliberal ethos and are very resistant to change, as well as outside the jurisdiction of the United Nations. Third, nations such as the United States and Great Britain are reluctant to provide aid to other nations to service debts when they also have accumulated an intense debt burden themselves. The committee must keep these considerations in mind whilst devising a solution to the crisis.

¹¹ Thurston (2023).

Potential Solutions

A potential solution often discussed is the revamping of the G20 framework, more focused on international mediation of debt restructuring negotiations, or an international oversight group to manage such negotiations. Another proposal has been tying debt forgiveness and negotiation to certain environmental and social goals and utilizing foreign aid funds to permit governments to use a greater share of their budget on the people they are meant to serve. A third proposal has been to loosen the conditions the International Monetary Fund places on their bailouts and to secure more funding for the organization to tap into in order to better stabilize the debts of the developing world.

Questions to Consider

1. How is your country affected by the current turbulence in international trade on sovereign debt issues?
2. How did the global pandemic and ongoing wars across the world exacerbate the debt crisis?
3. How do strategic interests tied to loans, with nations like China, impact the willingness to renegotiate debts?
4. How can nations balance their own debt burdens while providing aid to other nations facing sovereign debt crises?
5. How does international mediation approach enhance debt restructuring negotiations?
6. Considering the potential revamping of the G20 Framework for international mediation in debt restructuring negotiations, what specific features and principles should be integrated to ensure fair, transparent and comprehensive discussions among debtor nations and creditors?

TOPIC B: NEOCOLONIALISM

GREED IN A HEART OF DARKNESS

Introduction

In the post-World War 2 international order, there was a great hope that former colonies would at last stand on their own and chart their own destiny. However, the reality of the matter has been far more complicated, as behind the facade of faux independence lies economic tendrils that still tie countries to their former overlords. This committee will seek to investigate diplomatic solutions to release the former colonial states from economic subjugation while preserving the economic integrity of their overlords and ensuring both colonizer and the colonized agree to a better framework for a better future.

History of the Issue

In the 19th and 20th century, the mercantilist economic model that had originated in Bourbon France and dominated European economic models for centuries began to fade with the advent of greater nationalism and industrialization. The drive for imperialistic competition in the peace following Napoleon's defeat set into motion European conquest and subjugation of many areas of the world, seeking new markets to extract raw resources and sell processed goods, notable examples being the division of the continent of Africa at the Berlin Conference, the unjust treaties imposed on the Qing Empire following the Opium Wars, Soviet influence in Central Asia, and American intervention in the Banana Republics of Latin America.¹²

However, in the rubble of 1945, two new superpowers competed for influence on the global stage, with feuding ideologies seeking to assert global dominance. As such, it was in the interest of both the United States and the Soviet Union to take anti-colonial stances, which culminated in the decolonization period and final collapse of the French and British Empires following the Suez Crisis of 1956.¹³ Whilst both had used various approaches to maintain hold over their colonies, for example the British Commonwealth and the French integration of Algeria, both had failed, as the agitation for independence and self-rule gradually won through both peaceful and armed means. However, their former overlords found new ways to exert control over them- through economics.

Neocolonialism is defined as “the control of less-developed nations by developed nations through indirect means”.¹⁴ These indirect means included, but were not limited to, control over monetary and fiscal policy, the holding of sovereign reserves,

¹² Rahaman (2017).

¹³ Rahaman (2017).

¹⁴ Vakhurshev (1973).

governance rights over central banks, exclusive resource extraction rights, stakes in state-owned industry, socio-economic and political influence over the education and curriculum of a nation, and the dominance of a market by foreign companies, any combination of which will place a seemingly independent nation under the oversight of their former oppressor without the formality and thus responsibility of the past. This undermining of liberation led pro-independence advocates such as Kwame Nkrumah to declare that the denial of economic independence had left Africa free “but her resources have been and still are being used for the greater development of the overseas interest”.¹⁵

Perhaps unsurprisingly, former imperial powers such as France and Britain contest such a narrative and instead present an alternative and more benevolent one. France in particular has sought to reshape its image following the bloody war in Algiers and has sought to portray its efforts as a stabilizing force and a driver for economic growth. In the late 20th century, French policy in the former territories of French Africa, policies known as *Françafrique*, have led to more efficient use of resources, created stronger GDP growth compared to other states in the Sub-Saharan region, and limited the expansion of jihadist extremism.¹⁶ This is not to say that French intervention in the area is with the approval of the locals; in fact, it is widely unpopular. However, the governments of the area, before recent coups, had supported the French presence due to the order and stability such presence projected brought greater international investment and foreign aid to the region, in theory improving the lives of the people. British neocolonialism, on the other hand, has argued to have been a product of transnational corporations rather than conscious and deliberate action, as internal government

¹⁵ Rahaman (2017).

¹⁶ Kenney (2018).

missives find the British did not wish to intervene in their former colonies and sought to preserve good relations instead.¹⁷

Past Solutions

Past solutions have followed one of three paths against neocolonial influence, all of which were focused on insulating an economy from foreign influence and have both advantages and disadvantages. The first method some nations attempted, the pioneers being former Spanish colonies such as Mexico and Chile, was protectionism, which included steps such as nationalization of key industries, steep tariffs to protect domestic industry, and government subsidization to grow local production in substitution to international investment.¹⁸ However, this method was vulnerable to corruption given the degree of government control necessary to implement it, and any magnitude of instability had severe effects on economic output and thus worsened political crises. An example of this would be Mexico in the presidency of Porfirio Diaz, a military dictator under whom a mixture of protectionism and limited foreign investment fostered industrialization.¹⁹ However, political chaos introduced economic turbulence and the subsequent collapse sparked a devastating civil war that undid much of the progress made.

The second method leans more heavily on command economies and was more often used by Soviet allies in the former colonial world. For example, after overthrowing the Batista dictatorship, the government of Fidel Castro in Cuba was devoted to establishing a state-controlled communist model based on the Khrushchev model of the time. Through state enterprises, Cuba focused on expanding social welfare and

¹⁷ Altbach (1977).

¹⁸ Vakhrushev (1973).

¹⁹ Cassar (2023).

developing its agricultural prosperity and burgeoning heavy industry, expanding with aid from the Soviet government.²⁰ However, this approach is flawed in its tendency to over concentrate the economy, leading to a surplus of skilled labor that far exceeds demand and leaving other critical industries neglected, creating sluggish growth, corruption, and an unemployment crisis as cost of living soars, as seen in modern day Cuba and Venezuela.

The third path would be one focused on shock therapy, as was utilized in China and Vietnam, where a strong central government begins protectionist and gradually transitions to free market capitalism for international trade, creating explosive economic growth in the process.²¹ This system worked to great effect in most of Southeast and East Asia, creating some of the world's fastest growing economies through strong infrastructure development and cheap labor; however, it had significant weaknesses. The economies were fragile and dependent on global growth for funding their own, and when global conditions changed or when local circumstances were altered, the economies could derail and implode, an example of which would be the catastrophic Tiger economic collapse of the 1990's.

Given that past solutions have all delivered a degree of success but each one has suffered from an Achilles' heel that would leave the nation crippled and worse off than before, it is imperative to find a solution that avoids the pitfalls of the past but improves on them.

²⁰ Vakhrushev (1973).

²¹ Altbach (1977).

Current Issues

As it stands, neocolonialism has been an issue debated at length in the third world for decades, and today many issues remain in implementing solutions.

In Africa, conscious attempts to push back against French influence by the military juntas of the Western Africa region have only worsened living conditions for the populace whilst their repression only grows. Not only that, but with the economic chaos following the pandemic inflaming radicalism in the disenfranchised Islamic population, instability has rocked the security of the nations, leading many to willingly trade away mining rights and sign exploitative contracts with paramilitary organizations under the directive of the Russian Kremlin.²² These groups inflict grave harm on the local population and economies, yet their firepower is crucial to the governments that employ them. The Committee will have to find a solution that does not leave nations vulnerable to a new imperial overlord taking the place of the former.

In Latin America, the economic woes following the mismanaged policies of the pink revolution have left nations wary of any already tried methods and open to radical change. Instability in the region has also fostered a growing dependence on American economic dominance and only furthered entrenched the influence of American transnational companies. Organized crime and the lucrative drug market for cartels has also led to significant portions of many economies becoming devoted to the illegal narcotics trade, which is too dependent on the massive American market.²³ Any attempt at economic independence will have to appease a populace eager for an end to the

²² Cassar (2023).

²³ Cassar (2023).

turbulence of the last two decades and economic growth, whilst also contending with organized crime and trade dependence.

Potential Solutions

Several nations across the globe have proposed ideas for solutions to the exploitation of neocolonial practices. An idea fostered in the mid 20th century was for former colonial states to offer restitution to their former colonies, which would be used to develop local economies and diversify production past their current economic model, in which very little has changed from the specialized mercantilist model. Along a similar vein would be a collective effort by developed nations to channel funding into these economies through outreach packages, similar to China's Belt and Road Initiative. However, developed nations will be reluctant to offer any form of restitution to third world countries due to domestic political and social realities, and such solutions leave open the potential for transnational corporations to still exploit these nations, given the lack of international regulation.

Questions to Consider

1. In what ways is the official language of a nation tied to their identity and is it worth it to maintain a colonial tongue for the economic benefits over cultural heritage?
2. How has economic chaos, especially post-pandemic, influenced the radicalism and exploitation by external powers?
3. How have certain countries become dependent on this neocolonialism and what role does organized crime play in the economic structures of these countries?
4. What challenges might arise with the collective efforts by developing nations to channel funding into former colonies such as China's Belt and Road Initiative - how would international regulation prevent exploitation?
5. How can restitution be structured equitably to benefit the economic development and diversification of former colonies?
6. How does the international community work together to create effective regulatory frameworks that balance economic interests?

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