

HMUN 2020

Haarlem Model United Nations

Student Officer:

Sam Groennou

Issue:

Minimizing the impact of natural disasters caused by climate change on economies

Forum:

Group of Twenty Summit (G20)





HMUN 2020

Issue:	Minimizing the impact of natural disasters caused by climate change on economies
Forum:	Group of Twenty summit (G20)
Name:	Sam Groennou
Position:	President

Introduction

Climate change is one of the largest challenges for mankind in history. The world around us is changing all the time and now we are the ones in danger. Climate change causes more extreme types of weather, such as but not limited to: drought, hurricanes and typhoons. These natural disasters are both threatening for human lives and planet can live in the area of climate change and where we can still have a stable economy. Because all the natural disasters caused by climate change will impact our economy. When large surfaces of land will be flooded that will have a negative impact on our economy. But there is also a way that climate change can actually be good for our economy, we can transform our economy and try to find solutions to make sure that natural disasters have as little impact as possible.

Definition of Key Terms

Climate Change

Climate change is causing global warming. This is caused by the emission of forcing gases such as carbon dioxide. This is a product that is released during the burning of fossil fuels. Global warming results in natural disasters, rising sea levels and drought.

Natural disasters

Natural disasters are disasters caused by the earth without human influence. Examples are volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, hurricanes, droughts, floods, tsunamis and forest fires. Natural disasters can be a disruptive factor in a society, it can cause people to flee their homes and leave everything they have behind. Natural disasters are very bad for the economy because they cause a lot of damage and disrupt the work and production process.

Economy (source: <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/economy?q=economy>)

The state of a country or region in terms of the production and consumption of goods and services and the supply of money. Natural disasters can disturb economies when they prohibit people from working.

LEDC's



HMUN 2020

LEDC's are less economically developed countries. LEDC's have fewer economic opportunities to protect their countries against natural disasters and because of that are more vulnerable.

MEDC's

MEDC's are more economically developed countries. MEDC's are rich, western countries with a well-functioning globalist economy. MEDC's have more opportunities to protect their country and economy against natural disasters caused by climate change.

General Overview

This issue has its origins in the times of European colonialism. Of course, at that time there was no mention of climate change and all its consequences. But it is the reason why many countries in the world are still lesser economically developed. And these less economically developed countries are the ones that are going to take the biggest blows of the natural disasters caused by this climate change. For richer, more developed countries with a knowledge economy have both the money and the knowledge to protect the country and the economy against these natural disasters. But countries that are still completely focused on agriculture or industry cannot do that.

European imperialism revolved around getting as much economic prosperity as possible in the motherland. A lot of raw materials and food were shipped to Europe to stimulate the rapidly developing industry, without giving much back to the countries. As a result, the (economic) development of many countries is 150 to 200 years behind that of MEDCs. After the independence of the former colonies in the 50s of the 20th century, the western world has not stopped economically exploiting its former colonies and other LEDCs. When Western prosperity started to increase, a lot of industry moved to LEDC's because it could be produced much cheaper there, with the direct consequence that the inhabitants of these countries were still exploited to produce as much as possible for as little money as possible. This cheap production that has kept the western economy high all these years is also the reason why climate change has happened so fast. Because when everything has to be as cheap as possible, the impact on the earth is hardly taken into account anymore. So, you could say that MEDCs are directly to blame for both the economic problems in LEDCs and climate change.

But it is logical that MEDCs want to do everything they can to protect their economy because if one thing is certain, climate change is going to change things in the economic systems. And if the world is on fire and LEDCs can't produce anymore due to climate disasters it will always have bad consequences for the economy of MEDCs because the current economy is based on cheap production.

Climate change is causing global warming. Because of global warming, the polar caps are melting which will mean that the sea level will rise, and low-lying areas will flood. Other areas will suffer from extreme drought, which will result in forest fires and crop failures. As a result, more and more famines will occur in poorer parts of the

world. Other natural disasters such as hurricanes will also become more frequent. Over the past century, mankind has always put economic growth on one level, which has put us in this situation. Many countries don't want to do something about climate change either, because who says other countries will do something about it? And maybe your economy will deteriorate while other countries don't take the climate into account and will have a thriving economy. So, the story of climate change is a perfect example of a "prisoners dilemma". For every party, it is better to prevent climate change (because then you save the earth), but the fear that another party wouldn't do it leads to the fact that every party just chooses the economy.

It is true that climate change will cause a lot of problems for LEDC's because they don't have enough economic power to protect their country against the dangers of natural disasters. MEDCs do have that economic power, but they don't think it's in their direct interest to invest in other countries while they have problems of their own. If you look at it that way it seems like it will never be solved. But there is hope. Because you could also reform the world economy to ensure that it is beneficial to invest in projects that counteract climate change and these natural disasters, without it being bad for the economy. MEDC's can use their knowledge economy to carry out projects in LEDC's like building dams, environmentally friendly factories, and famine prevention. Also, the mindset of countries and people should change, away from endless economic growth but focused on preserving the earth. Another reason why MEDC's should be attractive to invest in this kind of project is to counter refugees and migrant flows. It is predicted that tens of millions of people will flee from climate disasters between now and 2050. For MEDCs, such flows will be cultural, economic and humanitarian disasters. It will therefore also directly benefit MEDCs to invest in LEDCs.

It will also be important that countries make plans to protect the internal market and economy when more natural disasters occur. After all, what should a country do if the harvest fails? Or if half a city is wiped out? These are all things that will not only be a humanitarian disaster but will also have enormous economic consequences.

Major Parties Involved

United States of America

The United States is one of the biggest players on the world stage. For years, the U.S. has had the largest economy in the world and is also one of the largest producers in the world. In addition, the U.S. has withdrawn from the Paris climate agreement. The U.S. also often suffers from hurricanes and other natural disasters. So, the US is involved in all facets of this problem.

European Union

The European Union collectively has the largest economy in the world. The EU is also very dependent on production in LEDCs for its economy. Certain countries in the European Union are also going to suffer from rising sea levels. Because the EU is close to Africa and has open borders, it is also sensitive to the consequences of climate refugee flows.

China

China has a huge economy that is mainly focused on production. China also invests a lot in developing countries where they will notice the consequences of climate change. China is a very diverse country and will suffer a lot from natural disasters that will threaten the country's industrial economy. China is also partly responsible for the climate crisis caused by these disasters because China is the biggest polluter in the world.

India

India is very much affected by climate change and the disasters that result from it. The serious air pollution in cities like Delhi, for example, can be seen as a natural disaster in itself. India also suffers a lot from flooding. These climate disasters have a huge effect on the economy. So, for India, it is important to find a solution to protect its inhabitants and the economy.

All UN member states

This issue concerns all member states. Because every economy is going to be affected in a certain way by these natural disasters. So, it is important for all countries in the world to find a way to protect their economies from the effects of climate change.

Timeline of Key Events (source: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/infographic/climate-negotiations-timeline/index_en.html#event-2010)

1972	The United Nations Conference on the human environment.
1979	The World Climate Conference takes place in Geneva.
1988	The intergovernmental panel on climate change is founded.
1990	The first IPCC assessment report.
May 1992	Convention on climate change is adopted.
1992	Rio earth summit.
1994	The UNFCCC enters into force.
1995	COP1 in Berlin.
1997	The Kyoto protocol is adopted.
November 2001	The Marrakesh accords.
February 2005	The Kyoto protocol enters into force.
2010	The Cancun agreement are adopted.
December 2015	Paris 2015 climate agreement.
June 2017	US president Donald Trump announces that he intends to withdraw from the Paris 2015 climate agreement.
November 2017	COP23 in BONN.
December 2019	COP25 Chile/ Madrid fails.

Previous attempts to resolve the issue

The United Nations have not specifically tried to protect economies from the effects of climate change before. However, the UN has taken several decisions to reduce

the effects of climate change as a whole. The best-known of these is the Paris Climate Accord of 2015. It seems, however, that many countries are not keeping to the agreements made in this agreement and that the targets will therefore not be met. It is therefore now important to make agreements to mitigate the effects of climate change and the natural disasters it will cause.

Possible Solutions

It is in the interest of MEDCs to help LEDCs in their fight against these natural disasters. Because for many developed countries it is important that their products are produced in developing countries. For many countries with a knowledge economy, it can, therefore, be a solution to invest specifically in LEDCs and to make that an important part of their economy.

It is also important that production takes place in a sustainable way so that the earth is not further destroyed. The member states must therefore make agreements about sustainable production.

Climate refugee flows will almost certainly get underway. Many countries will have to take these flows into account to protect their economies. A special convention could be drawn up for climate refugees with a fair distribution of refugees across all member states. Member States also have to change/update their refugee infrastructure in other ways.

Member States need to find a way to counter protectionism of countries. Protectionism creates a negative economic spiral that is of no use to anyone.

Bibliography

Interactive timeline: a guide to climate change negotiations. (2017). Retrieved January 5, 2020, from http://www.europarl.europa.eu/infographic/climate-negotiations-timeline/index_en.html

State of the Climate in 2018 shows accelerating climate change impacts: Report. (2019, March 27). Retrieved January 5, 2020, from <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2019/03/state-of-the-climate-in-2018-shows-accelerating-climate-change-impacts/>

Guterres, A. (2019). *REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE 2019 CLIMATE ACTION SUMMIT AND THE WAY FORWARD IN 2020*. Retrieved from https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/assets/pdf/cas_report_11_dec.pdf

Wikipedia contributors. (2020, January 4). Climate change (general concept). Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Climate_change_\(general_concept\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Climate_change_(general_concept))



HMUN 2020