

# Model United Nations Climate Conference

## Introduction

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The Danish Model United Nations hereby welcomes you to the Model United Nations Climate Conference (MUNCC). MUNCC will give the participants an opportunity to experience what it is like to participate in international climate treaty negotiations.

During four hours, participants will take on the role as a diplomat for one of the countries involved in the current negotiations regarding a new climate treaty. The idea is to debate, consult and negotiate in order to come up with a statement that addresses some of the critical issues in the climate change debate.

The participants will be debating on the following 5 critical issues:

- 1) Supervision of a climate fund
- 2) Financing of a climate fund
- 3) Technology transfer
- 4) Countries to set emission reduction targets
- 5) Reduction targets

For each of these 5 issues, there will be different choices for a statement. In that regard, the position papers (an essay detailing with the policies of a country on the topic being discussed, which will be distributed before the conference) will determine the options participants will be pursuing throughout the MUNCC. Their ultimate goal will be, therefore, to work towards a statement that satisfies most of their policy interests in that matter.

## Groups and strategic alliances

There are a number of alliances and strategic groups within the negotiations on a new climate treaty. Their goal is to speak with 'one voice' during negotiations in order for their voice to gain more weight. Some of the groups are of a regional character whereas others have convergent interest. During MUNCC the countries have been split into the following 3 groups:

**G77:** This G77 consists of 130 countries – mainly developing countries. Although they act as a group they often have diverging interest and therefore also speak rather as individual countries and not as a group. Yet, in the climate negotiations they have convergent interests on many of the issues.

**EU:** The group of European Union consists of 27 countries, but also countries that are seeking to become part of the EU are working closely together with the EU in the negotiations.

**Umbrella group:** This group consists of the developed countries outside of the EU. This is a rather 'loose' group that is not necessarily convergent in interests.

During the MUNCC the countries will meet in the groups in order to work on a common strategy for the negotiations on a new climate treaty.

## Limitations to the conference

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The MUNCC is set to take 4 hours whereas the real climate treaty has been negotiated upon for years. Participants will get an idea on how it is to be involved in international negotiations and especially on why it is so difficult to reach an international agreement. But it will never be possible to simulate the real negotiations that are taking place this very moment and will be taking place for the months to come.

The position paper that each participant will get is a simplified overview of a country's position that has been fitted into the context of the MUNCC. Not all of the position papers necessarily reflect the countries current positions.

### **The Scenario**

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The Model United Nations Climate Conference (MUNCC) simulates the climate negotiations during the Conference Of Parties 15 (COP15) taking place in Copenhagen, Denmark by the end of 2009. It therefore takes its departure in the same institutional setting that is surrounding the COP15. We will therefore initiate this overview of the MUNCC scenario by quickly running through the United Nations climate regime, as this is the platform from which the MUNCC will commence.

### **The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Changes (UNFCCC)**

The UNFCCC is an international treaty, ratified by 192 countries, produced at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The aim of the treaty is to set the overall framework for international efforts to tackle the challenges of climate change.

The treaty is legally non-binding with no limits on greenhouse gas emissions for nation states and no enforcement provisions. Yet, an addition to the treaty, the Kyoto Protocol includes more powerful and legally binding measures.

The Conference of Parties (COP) is the highest decision-making authority of the Convention and consists of all countries that are parties to the Convention. One of the main responsibilities of the COP is to keep the international efforts to address climate change on track. The parties have been meeting annually in the COP to review implementation of the Convention and assess the effects of the measures taken by the parties.

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### **The Kyoto Protocol**

The major feature of the Kyoto Protocol is that it sets binding targets for 37 industrialized countries and the European community for reducing greenhouse gas emissions; this amounts to an average of five per cent against 1990 levels over the five-year period 2008-2012. The Kyoto Protocol was signed and ratified by 184 parties with one notable exception of the United States. The major distinction between the Protocol and the Convention is that while the Convention encouraged industrializes countries to stabilize GHG emissions, the Protocol commits them to do.

The world is far behind carbon dioxide emissions targets set by the Kyoto Protocol, according to the annual publication put out by the World Bank. Global carbon dioxide emissions have risen 19 percent since 1990 - 2007, more than 25 percent behind goals set forth under the Kyoto Protocol, which called for a 5.2 percent reduction from 1990 levels.

The rise has been driven by surging emissions from China (73 percent increase) and India (88 percent increase) as well ad the United States (20 percent increase) and Japan (15 percent increase). Europe's emissions, including only European Monetary Union countries, have climbed by 3 percent over the period. Despite rapid growth in India and China, per capita emissions still lag far behind those of Europe and the US. The average Chinese citizen emits less than one-sixth than that of the average American.

## **Model United Nations Climate Conference**

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In this Model United Nations Climate Conference the participants will discuss a few of the many essentials calling for an international agreement on a climate treaty. Below you will find a short introduction to the issues that will be discussed as well as the questions and statements that will be discussed at the MUNCC.

### **Introducing the issue of Finance and Technology**

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The finance and technology debate is a complex issue. Yet one of the most important exercises is to agree upon how to enhance livery of financing and technology for both adaptation to and mitigation of climate changes. Many developing countries are already facing the effects of climate change with flooding and droughts and especially small island states are more vulnerable to flooding. Developing countries and especially small island states also face problems with limited access to funding and the fact that there is limited priority given to adaptation and mitigation issues, whereas the priority is given to technology change. Many developing countries argue that the industrialised countries are responsible for the climate changes and say the industrialized world should pay for their efforts to cope with and adapt to climate change, including cuts in greenhouse-gas emissions. Yet, the industrialised countries are reluctant to agree upon this since many of the economically fast growing developing countries have very high CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Estimates rank China as number one when it comes to emissions of greenhouse gasses.

### **Debating Finance**

Different financing proposals have been presented and there are consensus that a financial mechanism is needed in order to support technology, finance and capacity building especially in developing countries. The Parties have thus decided upon establishing a climate fund and the questions to be discussed today are:

**1. *The climate fund that all countries agree upon has to be supervised by an organisational body. How should this fund be supervised?***

- A) A climate fund should be supervised within the framework of the UNFCCC
- B) A climate fund should be supervised through another framework, or in another institutional setting such as the World Bank
- C) An alternative solution

**2. *How should such a Climate fund be financed?***

- A) A climate fund should be financed through already existing overseas development assistance from the industrialised countries (donors) to development countries (recipients) – which is up to 0,7% of GDP.
- B) A climate fund should be financed through an integrated scheme where all countries pay an amount into a fund based on their economic output, population and fossil-fuel output. Least developed countries and small island developing states will be exempted from paying to the fund. The fund would amount to \$10 billion a year.
- C) The climate fund should be financed through new funding from industrialised countries, up to 1% of their economic output.
- D) An alternative solution

### **Debating Technology**

One of the big problems for developing countries is the access to environmental friendly technology that would facilitate a more sustainable development. Yet, the main dilemma is the patents on green technology which prevents developing countries to use the technology to get a more sustainable development. It is not up to the Members of the UNFCCC to decide upon patents, this is a question for the World Trade Organisation (WTO). However, since the WTO consists of most of the Members of the UNFCCC, the discussion is important to take. The question that will be discussed today is:

**3) To what extent will Members of the UNFCCC secure access for developing countries to technology that can promote a sustainable development?**

- A) The patents on green technologies will not be suspended in order to ensure access for developing countries.
- B) The Members of UNFCCC will work towards easier access for developing countries to green technologies.
- C) All Member countries should have equal access to green technologies in order to secure a sustainable development for all and patents on green technologies should be dissolved.
- D) An alternative solution

### **Introducing the CO2 emission debate**

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There is consensus among Members of the UNFCCC that it is essential to reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses in order to avoid devastating climate changes. During the latest meeting in the Group of Eight (G8) the parties agreed upon keeping global warming below 2 degrees Celsius. The United Nations Climate Panel has stipulated that even a slight increase in average temperatures will wreak havoc on farmers around the globe, as seasons shift, crops fail and storms and droughts ravage fields. It is therefore vital for everyone; both developing and developed countries, to work towards a solution that helps turn the current scenario around.

### **Debating CO2 Reduction targets**

Yet, the reduction of greenhouse gasses can also pose certain constraints on the countries that set reduction targets – especially if some countries do not set targets, thereby creating an uneven playing field. CO2 emissions has to be lowered if the planet is to be able to prosper in the future. We have to think about our children's future and their children.

However there are also several economic advantages from engaging in the development of green technologies. Not only will the environment prosper, but green technology can create new jobs, attract investments and help nations reduce their expenses, by lowering energy costs. The questions to be discussed today are:

**4) Which Members of the UNFCCC should reduce their CO2 emissions?**

- A) All Members of the UNFCCC should reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The least developed countries and small island states are exempted from reduction targets.
- B) Industrialised countries should have reduction targets. Developing countries should set a peak year for their emission of greenhouse gasses within the expiry of the Kyoto Protocol (2012). The least developed countries and small island states are exempted from peak year targets.
- C) The industrialised countries should reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- D) An alternative solution

**5) How much should the Members of the UNFCCC reduce their CO2 emissions with?**