



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Welcome, all Delegates to the second annual Charger Model United Nations Conference. It is our pleasure to work with you as your Dais. Jaimy Rippe will be the Committee Chair. Jaimy is currently a first-year law student at Quinnipiac University School of Law and a recent graduate of University of New Haven where she studied English and minored in Political Science and Professional & Technical Document Writing. She has participated in four NMUN conferences with the university's award-winning team over three semesters in New York, D.C., and Canada. Karissa Wilkinson will be the Committee Co-Chair. Karissa is a senior at the University of New Haven where she double majors in Political Science and Global Studies. She has participated in two NMUN conferences with the university's award-winning team in New York and China. We are truly honored to have the opportunity to see your collaborative work throughout the day as you take on the roles of individual Member States.

The topic before UNESCO is:

The Impact of Social Media on Education

ChargerMUN will take place on December 9th, 2018 and will run between three sessions: Formal Session, Moderated Caucus, and Unmoderated Caucus. During Formal Session, delegations will individually address the committee as a whole. During Moderated Caucus, delegates will discuss a specific topic as proposed to the Dais. Finally, during Unmoderated Caucus, delegates will operate freely as they form working groups in hopes of creating a resolution, or a possible solution to help address the problem. We ask that you remain professional, energetic, and cooperative throughout this conference and ongoing debate.

We encourage all delegates to read and familiarize themselves with the official ChargerMUN rules prior to attending the conference. Understanding that each delegate embodies the beliefs of unique national governments while often encompassing the views of progressive people, we encourage you to act in constant efforts of cooperation and inclusivity throughout the conference. Throughout the day, you will hear and deliver speeches, engage in negotiations, write clauses, and propose creative solutions with your fellow delegates. We ask you all to recognize that the tendency in the actual UN is to pass only one resolution among the entirety of the body of Member States within the committee. If you are to have any questions regarding our expectations of your diplomacy, please do not hesitate to approach the Dais. We are very much looking forward to meeting each of you and seeing your diligent work over the course of the conference.



Committee Overview

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Educational Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized UN agency founded on the 16th of November 1945 in London, United Kingdom. UNESCO's mandate seeks to build peace through means of international cooperation through matters of education, the sciences, and culture. Since UNESCO is a Specialized Agency of the UN, it reports to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). UNESCO has done work pertaining heavily to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as outlined in the Agenda 2030 that was adopted by the UN General Assembly (GA) in 2015. Looking back, UNESCO's past work is seen through its most significant achievements in its influential statements against racial discrimination, especially within educational institutions.

Even though the field of communication, more specifically the "free flow of ideas by word and image" has also been an active mission since the organization's beginnings, this is an ongoing controversy that is in direct correlation with UNESCO's efforts in education. Seeing as social media plays a vital role in the sharing of information and technology, it is essential to consider its role in Member States' efforts to advance education.

UNESCO emphasizes its strong initiatives, also implemented across Member States, regarding its inclusive support for the sharing of information through various standards of media platforms. More specifically, the committee's Diversity of Cultural Expressions Programme strives to further UNESCO's efforts towards empowering young males and females across Member States to collaborate on social innovation and change within our global community. UNESCO strives for inclusivity for the overarching purposes of building sustainable communities that offer support for all.

In summary, UNESCO's main priorities are ensuring peace by offering free and adequate primary education along with an open flow of communication. In this conference, Member States are challenged to propose creative solutions by working collaboratively to integrate social media and technology in education on a global scale.



Statement of the Problem

Education has long been one of the pillar issues under UNESCO. UNESCO is the only agency within the United Nations that has the mandate to cover all aspects of education, and it is currently leading the Global Education 2030 Agenda through its focus on fulfilling Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4). SDG 4 is comprised of ten targets with goals ranging from ensuring universal primary and secondary education to supporting education that provides relevant skills and leads to decent work. UNESCO's plans to achieve SDG 4 can be found in the Education 2030 Framework for Action (FFA).

It is the duty of UNESCO to address problems regarding education and adapt to new issues as they arise in the ever-changing global environment. This includes the need to integrate new technology and recognize the positive and negative implications modern technology has on education. As UNESCO strives to complete SDG 4, it recognizes the important role that technology plays in education and in ensuring that there is equal access for all to educational technology, including any beneficial aspects of social media. The Education 2030 Framework for Action states that "ICT [Information and Communication Technologies] must be harnessed to strengthen education systems, knowledge dissemination, information access, quality and effective learning, and more effective service provision."

As technology and social media spread further, it is crucial that the benefits of social media in supporting access to education are realized. It is predicted that the ICT Sector will have a skills shortfall of at least two million jobs across the world by 2020, and ninety-five percent of all future jobs will have a digital element. It is therefore crucial that UNESCO understands and examines the relationship between education and aspects of technology such as social media in order to better understand the best way to integrate this technology for useful purposes. In doing so, it will further support its goals for universal and equal access to education by 2030.



History of the Problem

UNESCO has recognized the importance of technology integration for decades and has worked to facilitate the use of new technology throughout the global community. Since 1949, UNESCO has supported the use of technology in education and has encouraged Member States to integrate it into educational opportunities. In an effort to continue to support the advancement of technology in education, UNESCO held the first International Congress on Education and Informatics in Paris in 1989 where they adopted the Convention on Technical and Vocational Education. This called for Member States to integrate technology within education and ensure that young people were exposed to technological education so that they would have practical skills needed to get a job.

Since then UNESCO has strived to support the integration of technology and education within the international community “with the aim to alleviate educational disparities within and between the countries, improve the management system of education and to broaden access to various types and forms of education and training within the context of a future complex learning society.” UNESCO’s Third Medium-Term Plan (28 C/4) for 1990-1995 urged cooperation between inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to help promote the use of “new information and communication technologies in education.”

During the Second International Congress on Education and Informatics in Moscow in 1996, UNESCO’s work to integrate technology into education was furthered. It covered multiple themes including working with teachers to integrate technology into education and the benefits of technology in areas such as developing a curriculum that is culturally appropriate and adapts to the specific needs and context of each Member State. In November 1997 and during the General Conference of UNESCO at its 29th session, the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE) was established. Its establishment was based on the recommendation of the aforementioned Second International Congress on Education and Informatics: Educational Policies and New Technologies that took place in Moscow in 1996 and was a means of continuing to pursue resolution 1.17 ‘The Use of New Technologies in Education’ adopted by the 28th session of UNESCO’s General Conference in October to November 1995. The institute was established to support the application of Information Communication and Technologies (ICTs) in education through methods such as collecting and disseminating data, promoting studies for Member States, providing technical assistance for the use of ICTs in education, providing training to educators in the use of ICTs, and developing the use of ICTs in education within UNESCO’s regional groups. Since then, the IITE has continued to play an integral role in the relationship between technology and education and has worked to adapt to the ever-changing roles and developments of technology.

The support for ICTs and their integral role in the future has been emphasized by a report of the Secretary-General that called for international and national support for investing in ICT and the need for ECOSOC to play an integral role in supporting these processes. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) first took place in Geneva in 2003 and helped to lay the foundation for understanding technology and its role in education. Its Geneva Declaration of Principles cited the need to uphold Article 19 and Article 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in ensuring that all have access to the opportunities that the Information Society offers. In Resolution 2010/2, UNESCO reiterated its support of the meetings of the WSIS that have been held since its initial years and also emphasized the need to follow up on WSIS’s reports. ECOSOC also further supported the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CTSD) in Resolution 2010/3 and asked for it to further its work and for Member States to continue to bridge the gap of technology and integrate it further into society. The CTSD



is a subsidiary body of ECOSOC and is also charged with monitoring progress of follow-ups to the WSIS, determining which methods are effective, and working with other groups to achieve the objectives lined out in the Summit. The work of the WSIS is as recent as its 2018 conference and provides further insights into the role of technology today.

Current Situation

In more recent years, UNESCO has continued to support the integration of technology and education and has further developed ideas specifically regarding newer forms of technology such as social media and their uses in furthering educational advancements and opportunities around the globe. The Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE) is supporting the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in facilitating and accomplishing Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4). Its priorities include using ICT to promote inclusivity in education, support teachers who improve the quality of education through ICT and use global dialogue and networking in order to strengthen the potential for ICT benefits in education. The 2017 Qingdao Statement further supports using ICT to support education and fulfill SDG 4 and emphasizes the need for equal access to ICT-supported education. It expounded upon the need for there to be mindfulness about making this type of education sustainable in local communities that are lacking proper resources to maintain it.

Additionally, the 2018 WSIS Forum promoted the stories of states taking positive action in Session Fourteen: “Knowledge societies, capacity building, and e-learning/Media.” The nation-state of Mauritius’ third largest sector of its economy is that of ICT, and in an effort to support this, it has worked to create educational opportunities that better integrate technology from upper primary and lower secondary classes to universities. The United Arab Emirates believes that giving citizens access to an education in ICT will enable them to engage in capacity building and in developing innovations that benefit the economy. It has attempted to support e-learning by using more attractive means of learning such as through virtual reality and other technology and believes that in using the technological tools already present, it will help to support education and make learning much more personalized and effective.

At this same WSIS conference, UNESCO called for strengthening the role of media and social media in advancing the SDGs. This was discussed during the C9 Action Line meeting at the WSIS Forum and involved experts who discussed how these platforms provided freedom of expression for new voices. They noted that there was a need to better understand the importance that social media and media can have in further helping to facilitate the full realization of the SDGs.

Furthermore, a March 2011 Policy Brief by the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education titled “Social Media for Learning by Means of ICT” found that social media can play an integral role in facilitating education. It pointed out the vital role that social media has in helping with businesses and marketing and how it is an important skill for students to use in the future. It is important for it to be integrated into the classroom in a way that does not cause a distraction but rather supports future endeavors in fields such as marketing. The report found that “In short, social media can help



schools allow the real world into their classrooms, and hence prepare students for a real, better future in their communities. Educators and curricula designers should ask themselves how social media could play a role in their specific local communities and local economies.” Social media plays an important role in raising the individual’s awareness through media such as Twitter and Facebook as well as shows the importance of crowd-sourcing and distributed cognition. It both helps learners become aware of how experts view the topic as well as developing and contributing their own perspective on the issue. Another key skill that social media can provide in education is networking. Free systems such as LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook allow individuals to be introduced to others. It is important that students understand the importance of privacy and security while also learning how to connect with others to support their ideas, education, and job prospects afterward. Teachers must be trained to understand how to best approach integrating social media into education and finding the most positive ways in which it can be used.

Unfortunately, not enough Member States are focusing specifically on the use of social media. The desire to use technology and updated forms of technology is present, but there have not been actions to unlock the potential of social media in supporting education. Delegates should take this as an opportunity to look at ways in which Member States have used prior types of technology to support education and integrate the specifics of social media platforms into these methods. This gives delegates the ability to come up with innovate solutions that look to the future and expand upon the present.



Additional Research

Social media and its role in education is a relatively new topic being explored by the UN, and there is a lot of further work to be done in facilitating the use of social media in education and supporting initiatives to do so. UNESCO's work within the ICT field is not new, though, and can be used as a starting to develop ideas and conduct further research. Resolutions such as A/RES/64/187 and A/RES/63/202 can also provide a baseline of the view of the United Nations and its goals in using technology for development. Delegates are encouraged to also look beyond the work that UNESCO has done on the subject and investigate how non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other subsidiary bodies of the UN such as the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CTSD) have begun to address the issue. UNESCO has partnered in the past with NGOs to discuss topics such as "Does e-learning address challenges of education systems worldwide?" in its bi-annual International Conference of NGOs held in 2016. It has also partnered with NGOs to encourage participation in the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

Delegates should focus on the national policies of their own countries regarding the use of social media in education and see what steps their country has taken on this front. This is essential in understanding the stance of their member state on the issue and how much their country has already progressed in this field. It is crucial that delegates have a thorough understanding of how their country will interact with its fellow Member States and recognize the importance of cooperation and dialogue in the United Nations.

Additional Resources:

<https://en.unesco.org/node/265600>

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002456/245656E.pdf>

<https://en.unesco.org/themes/ict-education/mobile-learning/fazheng>

<https://en.unesco.org/news/equals-skills-coalition-addressing-gender-divides>

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001049/104916E.pdf>

<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/documents/2010/res-2010-2.pdf>

<http://unctad.org/en/Pages/CSTD/CSTD-Mandate.aspx>