



# NJMUN III

THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

NEW JERSEY  
MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

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## TOPIC A: FLOW OF INFORMATION

### *History*

The free flow of information is a topic that has recently seen much attention both from the international community and from individual nations in recent years. Rapid globalization and technology advancements have contributed to the rise in communicating and sharing. More often than ever before, cultures and societies are diffusing among themselves. In order to understand the modern issues associated with the free flow of information, we must cover a brief history of the topic.

We can begin our analysis on the free flow of information with the Cold War. The United States and the former Soviet Union formed a huge split across the world, causing an enormous lack of transparency among the major world powers. While the U.S. and their allies promoted a world in which information was to be free flowing, the communistic Soviet Union and their collaborators implemented stronger policies limiting the free flow of information. The end of the Cold War coincided with the rise of the personal computer. During the 1990's, the Internet became the largest medium for communication, allowing an unprecedented amount of information to be sent instantaneously from anywhere around the world.

### *Current Situation*

The Internet's development has led several countries to majorly censor their Internet, most notably China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and several other countries in the Middle East. Such censorship has been accused of being in violation of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. More recently, the United States has considered passing the Stop Online Piracy and Protect IP Acts. Both, if passed, would drastically alter the free flow of information

due to the large concentration of websites based in the United States.

The advent of social networking during the late 2000's is credited with inspiring protests, revolutions, and rallies all over the world. Colloquially known as *Facebook* revolutions, they epitomize the modern free flow of information using the Internet. Internet censorship, while justly aiming to stop online pirating and protect copyright infringement, could prevent the free flow of information, which facilitates the organizing of rallies and protests. Advocates of Internet freedom and the free flow of information argue that censoring the Internet would have crippled such movements.

Like the U.N.'s stance on the free flow of information in regards to journalism, the U.N. has declared Internet access as a basic human right. In situations where journalists have limited access, for example during times of humanitarian crises or natural disasters, images and messages posted to the internet have played important roles in keeping the international community informed of the situation. Though many believe the Internet is a positive tool, offering new and expanded opportunities to disseminate and access information and ideas, this notion of a global network of information sharing has raised questions in regards to privacy. The right to privacy on the Internet is indeed a current controversial topic around the world.

In spite of the numerous beneficial aspects of the Internet, several arguments exist as to why the Internet should be censored. Unlike any other form of media, the Internet provides a medium for which crime to committed. Cyber-crime exists in forms of online piracy, cyber-bullying, and most notably cyber-terrorism. Many legislative bodies across the globe are seemingly stuck between allowing the Internet to remain a free environment and

censoring the Internet in order to prevent Internet crimes. Balancing the efforts to keep the Internet safe and maintaining the free flow of information while preventing infringement on privacy issues and limiting censorship has proved to be a delicate issue.

### *Questions to Consider*

- What defines the free flow of information?
- With the rapidly changing nature of the Internet, how can the Internet be regulated and kept safe?
- How can the U.N. dictate the extent at which an individual nation censors their Internet without infringing upon national sovereignty?
- Does a government have the right to see anything on their nations network? Does this create privacy issues?
- Which party is at fault when it comes to illegal file sharing? What legislation can be done to eliminate ambiguous law across international cyber-space?

## **TOPIC B: FLOW OF LABOR**

### *History*

Labor has been a valuable commodity since the existence of ancient civilizations. The value of a constant labor source has its roots in serfdom in medieval Europe and manifested itself in the form of slavery in later years. However, with a changing market system, labor found a digression from forced labor and an exponential increase in free labor. The increased concern over the issues of implementation of a free or fair market system began to shed light on the issues concerning this topic. The many issues that inhibit the flow of labor include immigration laws and caps on foreigners, language proficiency requirements, and the re-licensing of individuals of a certain trade. The issue of stringent immigration policy is a major block in implementing the

open border policy that accompanies free flow of labor.

Using the United States and many Western developed nations as an example, immigration resistance tends to occur towards countries that are less developed. Discrimination toward immigrants and migrant labor has been ongoing for centuries and is in no way a new phenomenon. For example, one can see a pattern of discrimination against immigrants from nations that were viewed as “uncivilized” or “inferior” such as the Chinese Exclusion Act. Immigration laws can also restrict the duration of stay of an individual entering the country, thus instigating a constant migration of a labor force.

However, there have been steps taken to uphold the free flow of labor system. In 1985, countries in the European Union began to formulate the Schengen Agreement. This treaty tried to create a single market with a standard set of rules that allows any individuals from the EU nations to work freely in another EU member state. In 1997, it became incorporated under the Amsterdam Agreement which made the agreement a part of EU law. In 2006, a directive allowed passport-less travel to any EU nation, if the individual had a national identity card from an EU nation.

### *Current Situation on Topic*

Although the Schengen Agreement is still in place, with 26 members agreeing to abide by its regulations, there are incidents where this treaty is violated. People aren't able to fully use passport-less travel, because some countries refuse to accept a national identity card, and others do not issue national identity cards, so passports are required to travel from country to country. Another example of a treaty violation occurred in April of 2011, when

the French government temporarily blocked an Italian train carrying displaced migrants from North Africa and the Middle East, from entering the country. These incidents may reflect a certain country's policy, but have a greater effect with the global economy by disregarding the treaty in place.. Another recent attempt to promote free flow labor includes the ASEAN nations. The nations have been trying to implement mutual agreements and amending their own free trade agreements. The nations have proposed a goal of free low of skilled labor by 2015. They urge nations to simplify passport and visa applications in all member nations in order to enable easier movement of individuals from country to country. While the nations have proposed some ideas, more solutions need to be created to achieve free flow of labor by 2015. With the impact of globalization and the recent economic downturn, the labor force has increased and the immigration laws seem to hav become stricter to have more jobs for nationals. Immigrants and migrant workers are continuing to face obstacles in being able to legally immigrate and migrate in order to find better job opportunities. This committee will need to consider the implications and the requirements needed to implement and maintain free flow of labor on a global scale.

#### *Questions to Consider*

- What revisions are necessary in revising existing agreements, such as the Schengen agreement, to ensure that individuals are able to migrate to new countries to find jobs? What should happen to countries that violate these agreements?
- Should a new agreement be established on the international free flow of labor?
- What programs should be put in place to combat the recent spike in immigrant detention?

- What constitutes reasonable immigration standards and what constitutes discrimination?