

# Cleveland-Autumn Conference 2020

Position Papers for:

Educational, Scientific, and Cultural  
Organization (UNESCO)



*Country: Algeria*

*School: St Edward High School*

**Committee: Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**

### **Topic A - Education Responses to COVID-19**

By the week of March 18, all schools in the world were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This affected nearly 1.6 billion learners in more 190/195 countries. The pandemic affected those living in poor or rural areas the most, with remote learning being an unfavorable option. Nearly 23.8 million students may not be able to learn or may not be able to go to school next year due to the impact on the economy. The education suspension has had an effect on services and the needs of children such as children's nutrition and food supplies, forcing parents to watch over their kids at home. Since education is the foundation for kids and their lifestyle, all of these things were also put on hold and were forced to be redesigned.

Algeria closed all education establishments on March 12, and the Ministry of National Education set October 4 as the start date of the school year. The president of Algeria stressed that the Algerian government puts “protection of citizens” in first place. The Prime Minister said “We do not want to risk the health of our children and our families at this point”. As of 4pm on Thurs Oct. 22, there have been 55,081 cases, 38,482 recovered, and 1,880 deaths. The epidemiological situation in Algeria is stable as of right now, thanks to the success of preventive health measures. The Minister of Higher Education, in consultation with the FNEU and SNECHU, announced that on July 13, educational activities will be “gradually” resumed in “strict” compliance with variable preventative measures dependent on changes in the epidemiological situation. Since the pandemic has been a recent and variable development there has been little understanding of how to comprehensively control the pandemic, thus little to know how to make education systems work around the challenges it presents.

It is difficult to determine the best solution as long as we do not know the direction of the spread of the virus. Education of kids has a direct impact on their lives and their futures. To suppress the transmission of the virus, schools should be fully sanitized, avert as much traffic in crowded areas, communicate with the health community on recommendations, and make sure all students are wearing masks. The best option for Algerian students would be dividing the students into different batches so they attend classes in groups at different times with teaching hours extended to 6pm to enhance social distancing. Remote online learning would not be a viable option since not all students have access to wifi or a computer. Also, to encourage students to stay home - and emphasizing that there is nothing wrong with staying home from school if students show symptoms - would help contain the pandemic as would a rigorous regime of contact tracing of those who have come into contact with students who do show symptoms.

### **Topic B - Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

The deliberate destruction of cultural property is not only a cultural affair, but also endangers the cultural security and sense of humanity aspects of citizens. The awareness of the issue is not new or unfamiliar, but the frequency and severity of the issue has grown considerably in past years. Actions of violence against cultural property include the removal of ancient historical artifacts, destroying places of worship, causing violence to those in places of worship or practicing worship in public, and much more.

In the mandate created by the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali from 2013, the Security Council established the connection between the causing of the acts, illicit trafficking of cultural objects to finance terrorism. Rather than causing disorder or aggravating the terrorist groups, it is important to cooperate with the groups, if the desired outcome is to be beneficial. In the fifth review of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy of the UN, it was expressed and established that terrorist groups may benefit from transnational organized crime in some regions, including from the trafficking of cultural property. Additionally, UN Resolution 2347 was a major breakthrough that testified and brought awareness to the importance of the restitution of culture property as a response to conflicts. In a plan to prevent radicalization of violent extremism, the General Assembly in resolution 68/127 deplored “attacks on religious places and shrines and cultural sites in violation of international law, in particular human rights and humanitarian law”. There is already a lawful framework to address and target these crimes. Ways that all nations can disrupt these organized networks is through anti-corruption and anti-money-laundering action, putting a stronger focus and funding into investigations to stop the illicit trade and sale of such cultural property. Also, incorporating private and public sector partners that are against the violence against culture will reach deeper into investigations and give leads to investigators. Advocacy for the issue is also supported by the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. The Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime are working to assist Member States in protecting cultural heritage and countering the trafficking in cultural property. The support of United Nations entities that strengthens the legal frameworks and criminal justice systems are responses to the terrorists’ attacks.

Algeria is looking to regain international cooperation from other nations to stop terrorists in every way, mostly by depriving terrorist organizations of funding. By protecting the cultural heritage of Algeria, it is a symbol of understanding and respect for all religions, beliefs, customs, cultures, and civilizations. In order to stop the issue, or at least to make a start, it is important and essential to see where these terrorist crimes are coming from in the first place. Once it is known where the attacks are from, it is not only important to stop all operations of the terrorist group, but also understand why they are causing these acts of violence. Once it is known where these rationales are rooted, it can be used to find the other reasons other terrorist groups are causing similar acts.

*Delegation from: Argentina*

*Represented by: Saint Joseph Academy*

### ***Position Paper for the Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization***

The issues put before the Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization are: Education Responses to COVID-19 and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. The controversial nature of these issues has made it necessary for the Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization to mediate the uproar. Argentina wholeheartedly supports creating dialogue with other nations and working with the UN to best develop a COVID-19 educational response and best come to a decision on the restitution of cultural property. Argentina also maintains that the best solution for these issues and all issues the UN faces are ones in which a clear, effective solution is reached.

#### **I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

The unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic has left the Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization with little previous instruction to follow. What we do know is the great international importance of discussing education. Argentina believes creating accessible education is a human right of utmost importance in all scenarios. In the face of a global pandemic where contact is heavily restricted, Argentina sees it is best fit to create ways to enhance education while also redefining accessibility.

Argentina firmly believes that education should be the UN's first priority in securing the global future. As a nation, Argentina has ranked highest in net enrollment for tertiary education in South America while also maintaining a 99% literacy rate. Education in Argentina is free for all undergraduate degrees, directly correlating to these aforementioned statistics. The global economy has experienced an extreme downfall since the very roots of COVID-19 in March. Implementing free education for all is the most effective way to address what limits education in the modern era.

More so than just creating accessible education, the UNESCO has been tasked with creating safe accessible education. Argentina stands by the ideology that social distancing is not optional: it is essential. The United Nation's response to accessible education should take this into consideration. Giving schools the resources to convert their curriculums to a virtual format without compromising the integrity of education is of utmost concern. Argentina also recognizes that the World Wide Web may not be accessible to all students. Therefore, it is urgent to implement internet access to students as a part of the aforementioned free education plans.

#### **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

The theft of cultural property has been a threat to the integrity of cultural preservation and respect for nations globally. Argentina sees this trend of theft as something that deserves immediate priority from the Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Argentina believes immediate collaboration and discussion on the topic of preventing theft is vital. In 2018, Argentina hosted INTERPOL and UNESCO for the First Conference of the Americas on the Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property. This conference identified that strengthening implementation of the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. Argentina maintains the position that following the guidelines set in this conference while also raising awareness for how to best transport cultural items safely is the most effective way to address the theft.

This extreme disdain for theft of property has informed Argentina to believe cultural property should be returned to its country of origin by any means necessary. Individuals or countries caught stealing should face punishment. Argentina believes that the Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization should cease these items and return them to their nation of origin. As a committee, it is also within jurisdiction to enable countries with the means to nonviolently regain their own property. Argentina firmly believes that reinstating cultural property is without question the right thing to do, and the countries who have stolen these artifacts do not have any ownership of these relics.

*Country: Austria*

*School: St Edward High School*

**Committee: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization**

### **Topic A - Education Responses To COVID-19**

By now it is safe to say that COVID-19 has ravaged almost every country on this planet. This is an obvious problem as COVID-19 is very dangerous not only to the elderly and adults, but children as well. A study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that about 8 children out of 100,000 require hospitalization for coronavirus infection, compared to about 165 of adults. Among those children, one in three required intensive care. This means that although it is not as acute as with adults, children are at risk as well. Lockdowns should be implemented as they help vastly in limiting the spread of this virus. As of recently, the restrictions have been tightened in terms of limiting indoor social gatherings to 6 people and outdoor gatherings to 12 for Austria. States also have the ability to put curfews in place regionally to limit local outbreaks. Following those measures, places like Vienna, have been requiring citizens to leave contact details when visiting bars, restaurants, and clubs, exempting take-away, as a means of contact tracing should a case arise in the premises they may have visited. These measures have successfully flattened Austria's curve significantly and will continue to impose these measures as they have been proven to help limit the spread.

Schools have also been reopened as of September and have remained open unless shut down regionally. The procedures put in place are working so far as the schools are sanitizing regularly, students wearing masks at all times, having classes outside to limit close encounters when possible, and airing classrooms out for 5 minutes every 20 minutes. This is an excellent approach to handling the situation at large and other countries should adopt this idea with many schools returning to usual circumstances, including the wearing of masks. Austria is of course concerned with the wellbeing of its citizens and, as said before, will tighten restrictions to the recent spike in cases. As well as being concerned for its own citizens, Austria is concerned with the rest of the world, observing how they handle their own cases as well as well as lending a helping hand. The task at hand is a global issue therefore all countries must put aside their differences and come together for the common good of their people and all else.

These measures in schools are essential as children are the future and therefore are important to keep safe. However, school grounds can be very detrimental if not handled appropriately and seriously. Therefore, these implications should be implemented in schools nationwide without hindering the education being provided. Ideas for further measures to be implemented have been brought up such as, but not limited to, having half the students be required to take at least half the school year virtually and have in person students switch to remote when the virtual users return. It is also suggested that classrooms are limited to a certain capacity that fits the room of students as to restrict close encounters and ensure social distancing. Finally, a restricted flow of hallway traffic in schools. For example a left right system where certain students

are limited to walking on the left or right side of a hallway and having staircases limited to up or down. These measures would certainly limit close encounters, if followed properly, and slow down infection rates amongst students in classes,

### **Topic B - Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

The restitution of cultural property to countries of origin is a very important subject matter that is often not brought out into the open for many countries. Austria, however, has made efforts to return property to the original owners, country, or land. Since 1990, Austria has made huge strides towards returning artefacts to countries of origin under certain circumstances. Since then over 50,000 objects have been returned. However, under certain circumstances objects may not be returned. For example, in 2013 there was a situation where an object was requested to be returned but was politely declined as it was sold to the Austrian state in 1972. If the property was looted, or taken forcibly, it should obviously be returned to their country of origin. However, if said object had been handed over or sold to a government or head of state, that object is no longer rightfully theirs. These objects represent great historical value and show a great, or terrible, point in history therefore they should be treated with dignity and careful consideration.

Austria believes that to allow cultural objects with important significance to a country to be returned needs careful regulation and negotiation, to find ways to make it so that all countries will know precisely what is rightfully theirs and what is not. As stated before, if an object is sold or handed over to the state that it is no longer in the possession of the previous owner and is now therefore the legal possession of another country. A review of the process of obtaining artefacts in museums worldwide would allow countries to easily recognize what is rightfully theirs and what was either illegally obtained or unjustly obtained. It is also wished upon the UN that a system of obtaining said objects will be more available to the public as they should be allowed to know of the process in which the object was put in said museum. Also, the UN should make it so that there is no return tax or export bans on said items to their country of origin. Finally, it is requested that this situation would have a law imposed within respective countries' own sovereignty. This would make it easier to obtain said objects or artwork in case there are complications with returning. Accountability should be put in place if artwork or said objects are not returned within a reasonable timeframe.

Austria has made efforts to return as much art and objects looted during World War II and believes these approaches towards returning what is rightfully theirs (countries of origin) is just and fair. With a country's own sovereignty, they can impose punishments and, if needed, negotiate upon which the laws are laid out if it comes to that. With Austria returning over 50,000 artifacts to countries of origin it is firmly believed that Austria has what is needed to properly handle this situation and make it so that cultural works of art are indeed returned to their origin.

*Delegation from: Azerbaijan*

*Represented by: Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology*

## **Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization**

The issues before the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are:

Education Responses to COVID-19; and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. Azerbaijan is committed to the restoration of public education amidst a pandemic and will work towards a compromise regarding the restitution of cultural property.

### **I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

Education has always been on the forefront of the United Nations' plan to eradicate poverty. Literacy and basic knowledge of math, science, and history has been attributed to success in employment and daily life. Historically, bringing in-person classrooms to countries has shown progress in improving lifestyles. With this possibility infeasible in the current pandemic, the United Nations must formulate a plan to appropriately bring the classroom experience digitally to countries of varying standards of living and digital access.

Azerbaijan, in recent years, has attained high growth rates, and in conjunction, sustainable poverty reduction. The country's primary and secondary education system has expanded drastically. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has clearly instituted a new barrier for learning. Azerbaijan has students resume school on staggered schedules with a hybrid digital and in-person learning format. The country still remains vigilant and will make a new decision regarding classes "2 November based on epidemiologic situation in the country," according to Azerbaijan's UNICEF page. Azerbaijan has also released instructional videos designed to help preschool children continue education at home. And, with the help of the EU, Azerbaijan has received support for online vocational education. Unfortunately, many students do not have equal access to education, so the Azerbaijani government has decided to broadcast TV classes on national TV channels, with recordings available online. Azerbaijan constructed many plans of action to ensure fair education in regards to student discipline and motivation, internet and technology access, teacher training, and online extracurricular activities, all of which is detailed in Azerbaijan's submission to the OHCHR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights).

It is crucial for nations to understand the multifaceted barriers COVID-19 presents in education. Azerbaijan urges on supporting countries impacted the hardest and developing plans to bring education and technology digitally to these places as soon as possible. Policies regarding student motivation, technology access, and facilitating extracurriculars must be discussed and planned. Azerbaijan looks forward to presenting its own successful education response and facilitating discussion.

### **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

Historical artifacts are key to depicting culture of the past. Cultural property displayed in a country other than its origin may be a disservice to said country, preventing them from studying their own history and displaying it in its home. This is in case particularly in countries previously under colonization by European powers. Restituting these artifacts, however, rightfully poses objections because most of these countries demanding their cultural property back lack the means of safekeeping.

For eighty years, Azerbaijan was colonized by the Russian empire until gaining freedom in 1918, only to be taken over by the Soviet Union two years later. Azerbaijan is familiar with the issues previously colonized nations face, and advocates for cultural property to be restituted to their countries of origin. Fortunately no records of Azerbaijani artifacts have been on display or possessed by the Russian Federation. In fact, Azerbaijan has opened new museums containing purely Azerbaijani artifacts from Soviet-era and beyond.

Azerbaijan emphasizes that countries withholding the cultural artifacts of other countries should not use excuses to justify their possession of these artifacts. Doing so is a destruction of cultural heritage for not allowing future generations of impacted countries learn about their history through physical artifacts.

*Delegation from: The Republic of Belarus*

*Represented by: St. Joseph Academy*

## **Position Paper for the Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization**

The issues before the Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are: Education Responses to COVID-19; and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. The Republic of Belarus is devoted to solving these issues.

### ***I. Education Responses to COVID-19***

The Republic of Belarus has made many strides towards trying to make both genders equal in education. The Republic of Belarus has been trying to remove gender stereotypes seen in the education environment and was able to start moving towards their goal over the past twenty five years. However, with the coming of the covid-19 pandemic, all the progress The Republic of Belarus has made thus far regarding gender equality in schools is threatened.

The Republic of Belarus recognizes the importance of education and especially the education of females. The Republic of Belarus is concerned the pandemic has worsened pre-existing gender equalities. The way The Republic of Belarus is facing this problem is by conducting research with other countries with this similar issue about gender equality and human rights in the context of Covid-19. Because of this research the RWI Europe Office will issue research grants to one Belarusian academic to conduct a study on the problem previously mentioned, Covid-19's impact on gender equality and human rights. The grant offered to The Republic of Belarusian academic will be SEK 15 000 who will then research as well as present to others the topic at hand.

The Republic of Belarus will further research the topic of gender equality that has become more serious because of Covid-19 and provide a research grant to the chosen Belarusian academic. The Republic of Belarus has in the past addressed the issue of gender equality in education by increasing the amount of girls that attend primary and secondary school from 1995 to 180 million more than previously. The Republic of Belarus' rate of girls that attend school went from 73% to 89% since 1995. The Republic of Belarus hopes to see our country address this topic through becoming a member of the OECD countries. This will help The Republic of Belarus minimize gender equalities in education because OECD countries have made progress in getting rid of gender equalities in education. The Republic of Belarus should also become involved in the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Being a part of this committee

would allow The Republic of Belarus to have an increase of women's education and would allow women to feel less separated from the men they attend school with.

## ***II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin***

While The Republic of Belarus has no specific laws in place for the restitution of property that was confiscated during the time of the Holocaust the government and people fully support and international effort to return any cultural possessions to the rightful countries of origin. In The Republic of Belarus, Jewish synagogues were demolished along with statues within them. Any cultural items that left The Republic of Belarus that were exported during war or other such situations are to be returned to the place of origin.

To deal with this issue, in 2016 The Republic of Belarus signed an agreement with the United States that involved cultural property protection. After this agreement was made, The Republic of Belarus protected and preserved cultural items left behind by various groups such as the victims of the Holocaust, in the case of The Republic of Belarus. In The Republic of Belarus, the issue of restitution of Cultural property is used when referring to the Jewish culture that was present in The Republic of Belarus. Another treaty that The Republic of Belarus signed in 2016 was regarding to the using and researching of archival documents in relation to the Holocaust.

The Republic of Belarus would like to address this topic by agreeing to more treaties that will help protect the cultural items that remain within the country. The Republic of Belarus has already made steps into helping people learn more about the cultural objects that can now be found in museums through exhibitions that are dedicated to the Holocaust event. The Republic of Belarus has also had its foreign minister speak about the Holocaust at an event where a film was shown about the Holocaust. The Republic of Belarus is a part of the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of origin. In this committee, the issues about cultural property are discussed as well as a debate to set up a UNESCO database of the legal acts concerning cultural heritage. The Republic of Belarus wants to address this topic in the near future, by preserving cultural property found in The Republic of Belarus in museums. The Republic of Belarus also plans to sign a stricter treaty concerning the return of cultural property. The Republic of Belarus hopes to join the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. This convention discusses movable cultural heritage such as statues which is relevant to the Republic of Belarus and could impact them significantly. The 1995 UNIDROIT Convention would also be beneficial to the concerns of The Republic of Belarus because this convention campaigns for the protection of cultural heritage. An important provision of this convention is that the person who possesses a cultural object has to return it no matter the circumstances, in the case that it was stolen.

***Delegation from: the Republic of Chile  
Represented by: Beachwood High School***

***Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization***

The issues standing before the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization include Education Responses to COVID-19, and the Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. The Republic of Chile is deeply convinced that developing new plans for education amidst the COVID-19 pandemic is essential and important for Chilean values, and the repatriation of cultural artifacts to their places of origin is a necessary practice in order for countries to reclaim their history stolen by war, imperialism, and colonialism.

**I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

As stated in the 1948 Universal Declaration for Human Rights, education is a fundamental human right. This statement has been backed by the UNESCO General Conference's adoption of the 1960 Convention Against Discrimination in Education, which emphasized that it was the obligation of states to ensure free and equal educational opportunity without discriminatory practices. In support of UNESCO's goal to protect educational rights, 42 member states in the General Assembly adopted "Education for Democracy" in 2016, which promoted educational institutions at all levels to integrate civic and human rights education into conventional practice, aiming to encourage citizen activism in political affairs. In 2017, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted another resolution in support of UNESCO's mission, reiterating the importance of guaranteeing the right to education. The resolution requested states promote technical, vocational education and training and establish a framework that restated international human rights obligations for education professionals. When the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the globe from late February to early March, many states closed down their educational institutions in favor of their citizens' safety. These school shutdowns extended into as late as May and June, with some countries closing in-person education until the end of the academic year. The pandemic has forced countries to adapt to a new era of education dependent on contactless learning.

In the 1980s, the Republic of Chile underwent market-oriented education reforms which involved the transfer of public school management responsibilities to municipalities and the arrival of a universal educational voucher system. Chile's Ministry of Education, essentially the coordinator and regulator of the education system, designs educational policies, academic programs and curriculum standards, in addition to officially acknowledging education providers and offering technical support to educational institutions. To ensure the quality of the school curriculum, the Ministry of Education operates under the National System of Quality Assurance along with the National Education Council, the Agency for Quality Education and the Education Superintendence. As of late 2015, the government initiated a reform of the administration of public education, which intends to remove the management of public schools from municipalities and create a system of public education in a process called New Public Education. Educational attainment in Chile has considerably improved in recent years; lower secondary education is now virtually universal and despite setbacks, there has been progress in retaining students in upper secondary education. Student learning outcomes in Chile, though considerably below the OECD average, have made considerable progress in the last decade.

In January 2020, the Chilean government started developing an Action Plan to combat the threat of the pandemic on the country's educational institutions. Following school closures in March, the Republic of Chile made the platform *Aprendo en línea* to provide digital resources to students. Chile has also allied with Athena, the Mobile Telephone Association of Chile, to ensure free downloads of texts and study guides. Students can also complement their studies with books offered on Biblioteca Digital Escolar, which offers over 10,000 freely available books. Chile has formed an alliance with Google and Fundación Chile to facilitate access and technical support to educational institutions seeking to use G Suite for Education and

Google Classroom, which help teachers organize the content of their courses. In order to support families, Chile has provided school feeding benefits for approximately 1.600.000 children who represent the 60% most vulnerable groups in the country. For citizens without internet access, Chile launched the “I Learn at Home” programme, in which the same educational material is distributed in print format, accompanied by notebooks for reinforcement. The world is faced with a new situation, one where working in a collaborative fashion with educational communities is indispensable. Since the international community is facing unprecedented circumstances, Chile hopes to emphasize to the committee that flexibility will be key to resume the academic calendar, and looks forward to collaborating with other member states in securing the human right to education.

## **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

The UNESCO 1970 Convention details a common international framework on measures to be taken to prohibit and prevent the import, export, and transfer of cultural property. The 1978 UNESCO General Conference recognized a lack of means of international negotiation and created the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation. Though the concept of cultural repatriation has existed for centuries, public interest in art restitution gained traction more recently, with European museums becoming focal points of public controversy. Calls for repatriation have also echoed outside Europe. In 2016, Leaders from Benin formally requested France’s foreign ministry for the return of cultural artifacts taken without consent during French rule of the region; in 2017, Beninese ministers of foreign affairs and culture visited Paris for formal negotiations. Current President Emmanuel Macron has taken considerable strides in repatriating stolen goods, announcing in 2017 that the return of African artifacts would be a top priority and commissioning a study of African art housed in French museums.

As a country of transit, Chile is used by traffickers to smuggle stolen cultural property out of South America. Despite not ratifying the 1970 Convention until 2014, the Republic of Chile took several steps to prevent the continuation of illicit trafficking of cultural property by forming several treaties on the preservation of cultural property with neighboring countries. The Republic of Chile’s customs system works closely with experts of the Archeological Department of the Universidad de Tarapacá to identify illegally imported cultural property. From this partnership, several cultural objects were restituted to their country of origin. Article 20 of the bilateral treaty between Chile and Peru established that each state will obey the respective national law concerning the protection of cultural property, especially those concerning cultural property exports. In other words, if illegally exported cultural objects are imported, both countries will facilitate their return. However, Chile’s late ratification of the 1970 UNESCO Convention delayed the restitution of illicitly imported cultural property. According to Claudio Gómez, director of the Museo de Historia Natural of Chile, the Convention enables States to resolve such cases through administrative channels instead of long judicial processes. Chile ratified the 1970 Convention in 2014 to raise awareness about cultural-property protections in Chile, to add Chile to the international effort against trafficking, to avoid the proliferation of illicit traffic in the country, and to obtain the assistance of UNESCO in this area.

In recent years, the Republic of Chile has taken many courses of action in order to ensure the return of cultural property to origin sites, including to Peru and Ecuador. Due to the success of the bilateral treaty between Chile and Peru, Chile encourages members of the committee to look into further collaboration with each other to ensure the restitution of cultural property. The Republic of Chile emphasizes the importance of compiling data on stolen artifacts and facilitating their return under the maintenance of art experts and international negotiators. Within this committee, Chile hopes to engage in good faith with other countries to establish a working plan for the repatriation of cultural artifacts, which Chile regards as fundamentally important to reverse the historical wrongs of war and imperialism to ensure continued artistic expression and human culture.

***Delegation from: People’s Republic of China***

*Represented by: Lake Ridge Academy*

*Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization*

The issues before UNESCO are: Education Responses to COVID-19 and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. The People's Republic of China supports a shift to remote education in order to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and encourages multilateral negotiations with the aim of restoring lost cultural property to its country of origin.

**I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

COVID-19 has interfered with the education of 87% of students globally. Educational institutions are facing closures worldwide, requiring a transition to fully remote, online education. Many nations are unable to make this switch, leaving countless students without adequate instruction. In order to mitigate the effects of school closures, the People's Republic of China supports an international effort to provide the necessary infrastructure for remote learning, especially in low-income nations.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, China's Ministry of Education has successfully implemented a shutdown of in-person classes, providing sufficient remote-learning alternatives throughout the nation for its 278 million students. The Ministry first planned an initiative named, "Ensuring learning uninterrupted when classes are disrupted," working with school management, online platform providers, and telecommunication providers to bring the initiative to fruition. It has given teachers special training on information technology and effective distance learning, as well as free guidance to the public. By making resources openly available, China has ensured that its citizens are not left behind in the transition to remote education.

The Ministry of Education has cooperated with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and with many large corporations to leverage new technologies for educational purposes. Initially, internet connectivity was made more accessible by bolstering telecommunication networks, particularly in rural areas. Platforms developed by the government in partnership with education technology companies, like Empower Learning and Educloud, have been helping to provide live coursework to students and lesson plans and schedules to teachers. Tencent Meeting Software and DingDing's Future School, developed by Tencent Holdings Ltd and Alibaba Group respectively, enable live meetings and streaming as well. New software developed specifically for the pandemic has quickly become mainstream for teachers and students.

By taking these steps, China has already witnessed a rapid recovery from COVID-19 and is widely reopening its institutions. To ensure safe a reopening, the Chinese government provides the necessary supplies for in-school preventative measures. Since China was one of the first nations to face the pandemic and recover, it recommends a similar course of action to members of UNESCO. China is now capable of providing aid to other nations still in the midst of virus outbreaks.

According to the Ministry of Education, the requirement for reopening schools is to first gain control over virus outbreaks; schools can only open after the epidemic is contained and preventative measures are taken to protect teachers and students. Since many nations have yet to make it through the pandemic, it is paramount that efforts are taken to contain the virus within each individual nation. In the meantime, online education must supersede traditional in-person curriculum. China supports a global coalition to aid the education systems of countries struggling economically, offering infrastructure, information technology education, and software for students and teachers. Institutions worldwide must come together to ensure opportunities for everyone to receive education during the pandemic.

**II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

Many nations continue to display vast amounts of foreign cultural property, much of which was obtained without consent through expansionism and warfare, in national museums. The 1970 UNESCO conference attempted to address the issue of stolen cultural property; UNESCO has since created the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin (ICRPCR) in order to mediate bilateral negotiations. The 1995 UNIDROIT Convention gave member-states an outlet for processing restitution claims through intermediary national courts. However, the UNIDROIT treaty is not retroactive, a shortcoming which makes the restitution of cultural relics lost centuries ago extremely challenging. Current standards place the burden of proof on the nation possessing the artifact: it must prove that it “neither knew nor ought reasonably to have known that the object was stolen and can prove that it exercised due diligence when acquiring the object”. Efforts to examine this burden of proof for property acquired centuries ago is essentially futile. To this day, many disputes over lost artifacts remain unsettled, leaving countries adamantly demanding the return of their lost cultural property.

An enormous amount of China’s cultural property has been lost during periods of external colonization. A notable example of pillaged property is the Qing Dynasty’s Old Summer Palace, located in Beijing. The structure contained thousands of paintings, antiques, and artworks. During the Second Opium War in 1860, the palace was plundered by British and French forces and much of the work within it was taken. Although a few artifacts have since been returned to China, thousands are still on display in various foreign museums, although most reside in the British Museum and Château de Fontainebleau. To date, significant international demand for Chinese artifacts motivates looting. International agreements have also failed to dismantle illicit trade networks. China has requested aid from the United States under Article 9 of the 1970 UNESCO Convention, which states, “Any State Party to this Convention whose cultural patrimony is in jeopardy from pillage of archaeological or ethnological materials may call upon other States Parties who are affected.” A bilateral effort between the United States and China may prove to be effective in countering illicit exportation of Chinese cultural relics.

At times, a temporary refusal to return cultural property may be appropriate. The worst outcome is the outright destruction of returned cultural property through improper care and conduct. If the recipient nation is affected by war and conflict, it may be justified to deny the restitution of lost cultural property. In these nations, secure museums must first be established with adequately trained scientific and technical personnel. China, however, is more than capable of protecting any artifacts returned to it.

Ultimately, conflicts over lost cultural property can be alleviated with clear multilateral enforcement guidelines. While such legislation continues to be implemented, countries can retrieve lost property through bilateral negotiations, exchanges, and commercial repurchases. With the current legislation, it is possible to resolve disputes over cultural property that has recently been transferred illicitly. Difficulties continue to arise with artifacts lost or stolen in centuries prior, when such legislation never existed. It is unlikely that retroactive laws can be passed; unfortunately, such disputes must be settled primarily through diplomacy.

**Delegation from: Colombia**  
**Represented by: Avon High School**

## **The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**

“UNESCO’s mission is to contribute to the building of a culture of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information” (UNESCO). The issues presented upon UNESCO include: *Education Responses to Covid-19* and *Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin*. Colombia is devoted to ensuring equal education opportunities for all, despite the national crisis we are facing. Additionally, Colombia believes that cultural artifacts should be returned to their countries of origin.

### **I. Addressing Our Education Responses to Covid-19**

On behalf of Colombia, we would like to share with you our preoccupation regarding Covid-19 and the effects the virus has on education among our impoverished youth. It is a fact UNESCO’s goal is to ensure education for all and that education is a human right. Remote education is possible for our families that have internet and computer access, however, around 40% of Colombians are not able to provide their children with proper online education. We are partnered with UNESCO with regards to the Global Education Coalition, and believe partnership is the only solution in these unprecedented times. It is our nation's goal to respond to this crisis very swiftly using all the help we can receive from the committee. Our plan of action or proposed idea is to restore education among children who are in need the most. We want to limit the population with internet access from attending school and allow them to learn through remote education. On the contrary, we would like to provide in-person learning to students without internet access, while following Covid-19 restrictions and guidelines. Covid-19 is an extremely infectious disease, as clearly stated by the CDC. Our goal is to provide equal education to all Colombian students, while taking precautionary measures to ensure safety and protect them from Covid-19. We understand in-person learning is a risk, but we believe it is a risk worth taking if we want our children to have access to an education in times where school is absolutely needed. Colombia would like to call upon the committee for support and guidance. We would be open to changes suggested by the other nations, but we think this circumstance has the ability to change education and how it is provided. Before, online learning was never really considered until we were blindsided by the pandemic and its negative effects. We believe with our plan and help from the United Nations; Colombia can persevere through the pandemic and continue to provide equal education for all.

### **II. Addressing the Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

Colombia would like to address our stance on the importance of cultural property and the restitution of artifacts to their country of origin. Cultural property is extremely important to every country and it is very appreciated when artifacts are held by each individual country of origin.

Artifacts can represent a country's history, traditions, and culture. Colombia is fully aware cultural property should be kept and preserved in a safe place to be appreciated. We also understand other countries around the world are not able to provide museums and other safe places for their cultural properties to be preserved and fully appreciated. To solve this problem, we believe well developed countries and countries with artifact systems in place should work to help undeveloped countries UNESCO is dedicated to returning cultural property back to our country and to other nations. We respect UNESCO's efforts to return these artifacts and we acknowledge that it is very important to every country to know the history of their nation. However, the ownership of cultural property is not always clear-cut. This is because cultures do not always line up with the location of each nation today. Furthermore, we believe if artifacts are honorably represented and stated where the item originates then we see no issues with them being in a different location. In conclusion, the restitution of cultural property is important, but the location of where the artifacts are held is not always clear-cut. In addition, we believe with the help of UNESCO and pre-existing artifact systems; undeveloped countries can work to advance their own cultural organization.

*Delegation from: Croatia*

*Represented by: Beaumont School*

**Single Del.**

**Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization**

The issues before The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are: Education Responses to COVID-19 and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. Croatia's response to COVID-19 in regards to education is technology based and Croatia is for the Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin.

**I. Topic A: Education Responses to COVID-19**

Croatia's education system has always struggled, with relatively low enrollment rates, as well as many less mandatory instructional hours per year (525). Strategies to improve these rates have been proposed, yet not implemented. Underfunding is yet another struggle for the Croatian education system, as their share of education expenditure, 4%, is well under the European average. Many improvements have been suggested, such as providing learning alternatives for students, management of the system to become decentralized, implementing reform strategies, participating in international learning assessments, and holding accountability for their results. An example of the struggling system is the teacher's strike of 2019, where 95% of educational staff throughout the country went on strike for 36 days over their salaries. Although there are some issues, Croatia also has some advantages to their system, such as compulsory education being free and Universities having guaranteed autonomy. Their system consists of four levels, early childhood/preschool, elementary, high school, and higher education.

This topic is related to Croatia as 92% of schools have chosen to have in-person education during the global pandemic. With this decision, they must have a specific plan to keep their students safe. Croatia has taken many measures to address education in the midst of COVID-19, such as closing schools at the beginning of the outbreak successfully, as in 2015, Croatia launched the e-Schools project, giving digital equipment and educational tools to over a hundred schools. Some measures my country has taken to address the issue, and resolutions, treaties, conventions, or other international policies relating to the issue that your country has either supported or opposed are guidelines and actions plans for both online and in person studies.

The desired policy outcomes from Croatia and UNESCO are to continue the previously successful online education and Croatia would like the committee to address the topic by continuing to train teachers and

staff on proper online education, communicating with students regularly, and continuing to monitor each individual student's participation in their personalized classes.

## **II. Topic B: Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

Restitution of cultural property to their countries of origin includes negotiations, research, proper training, and reporting all actions to Unesco. As Croatia is for this restitution, they believe in the functions of the committee and agree with attempting to end the world's second most profitable businesses. The general assembly has published a resolution on December 9th, 2015. This document recalled the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. From these documents and meetings there have been many positive changes, such as adopting new rules and procedures. Croatia, along with most other countries in the UN are concerned with the illicit trafficking of cultural property and damage to its history.

This topic is related to Croatia as they have a very strong and defined stance about cultural property and items. They fully believe in this restoration. With this stance, they must have specific guidelines and a plan to implement said guidelines throughout the country. Croatia has taken many measures to address the Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin, such as the ministry of culture. Under this branch is the Directorate for the protection of cultural heritage, and under that is more definite categories. A measure my country has taken to address the issue, and resolutions, treaties, conventions, or other international policies relating to the issue that your country has either supported or opposed is the Croatian Parliament, Article 89 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia. Published on December 17th, 2014, this Article addresses what defines a cultural item, what is to be done when a cultural item is brought out of the territory unlawfully, and the consequences of a holder of a cultural item.

The desired policy outcomes from Croatia and UNESCO are to continue updating and perfecting their policies and regulations regarding the restitution of cultural property to countries of origin. Along with keeping these documents up to date, Croatia must have a more vigorous and strict set of rules and regulations regarding cultural items and the consequences when they are not treated correctly. Croatia can go about this by enforcing/creating stricter laws, having more regulations on cultural property, and looking deeper into the business of selling these products.

Delegation from: **Dominica Republic**

Represented by: **Gilmour Academy**

## **UNESCO**

### **Topic A: Education Responses to COVID-19**

As a response to COVID-19, the Dominican Republic has chosen to continue distance education. It has modified the school curriculum by putting it online, printing study guides for those without access to the internet, and supplying radio and television lessons. The nation has implemented eighteen regional directorates and established a mandatory diagnostic test to prepare for the possibility of schools reopening. Although 70% percent of the information was taught before the Coronavirus outbreak, the recovery plan is not fully determined yet, as it is deciding whether to prioritize students' subject area regarding their cognitive baselines. The closing of schools physically has affected the community because schools are responsible for coordinating feeding programs. As a result, some countries have relied on the police, ministry personnel, or local organizations to deliver food and ensure the property healthcare for students who cannot afford it themselves. It is positive that the Dominican Republic is continuing to provide some type of schooling the best they can, as education has been an ongoing struggle. Due to poverty, the education system is free but consists of poorly trained teachers, causing repetition of grade levels, and a high dropout rate. Although the nation has attempted to socially advance its education, it is still incomparable to other nations, as it deals with unresolved issues such as gender inequality and the involvement of outside organizations.

### **Topic B: Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

Cultural heritage is rich in the seas of the Caribbean region and the Dominican Republic, as it represents the early contact between Europe and America. It is valuable in knowledge and has given the Dominican Republic its national and cultural identities. However, treasure hunting and commercial exploitation have threatened the nation's heritage; thus, UNESCO instituted the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. This workshop will protect underwater heritage internationally, specifically historical archaeological remains. To avoid illicit trafficking and promote its restitution of cultural property, the Dominican Republic has developed human and institutional capacities of prevention at a national level, encouraging the reinforcement of national and sub regional cooperation as well as the awareness of the public. The nation appreciates the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation's funding. Part of the Dominican Republic's efforts included the exchange of resources between different governmental institutions and promoting the creation of inter-institutional commissions. It was also involved with UNESCO Secretary for the 1970 Convention; after this convention was the establishment of the Declaration aimed to prevent the violation of cultural property of origin. Training sessions were held for police forces with the objective of training national specialized teams in Customs. Another objective was to unite municipal, national, regional, and international pertinent institutions. Awareness campaigns were launched advocating the Dominican Republic's protection, specifically targeted at young people.

*Delegation from: Democratic Republic of the Congo*

*Represented by: St. Edward High School*

*Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*

**I. Education Responses to Covid-19**

Covid-19 has swept the world off its feet, but the deadly virus is not the only thing threatening people's well-being. Children, young men, and women alike are being robbed of an education due to Covid-19. The world was forced to find a way to make distance learning as efficient and productive as possible. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is proud of the leaps and bounds it has made in education, especially in the years from 2002 to 2014 when the completion rate at the primary level improved by 41%. The nation has no intention of losing this progress due to the necessity of distance learning caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

A major issue early on in this crisis was children's accessibility to remote-learning education. Not being able to meet in person meant that many children throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo were going entirely without education at all. Thanks to GPE grants as well as other forms of funding from UNICEF the nation was able to find various solutions to this problem. These grants allowed 14 million students nationwide to have access to educational resources in some of the most crucial disciplines such as Math and French. The Democratic Republic of the Congo has even taken advantage of multimedia platforms to maximize the efficiency of the nation's resources.

Although the nation has found a way to carry on there are still a great deal of students not receiving the education they were promised. The ultimate goal for the Democratic Republic of the Congo is to safely get all of its students back into schools. As these past few months have gone by the nation has indeed welcomed many of its students back into schools, taking as many safety precautions as possible in the process. Unfortunately, many young girls have not been able to return to education around the world and this has been especially true in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The total state revenue is \$2.5 billion, while experts estimate that the annual cost of education for the nation is \$2.6 billion. This seems a nearly impossible feat when countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo and those like it already have a horrible poverty problem and now have to deal with Covid-19 safety measures. This leaves these nations with no choice but to seek out grants and other means of funding from organizations like UNICEF and UNESCO. Without help from other nations as well as these organizations the Democratic Republic of the Congo cannot hope to educate its youth, and in return cannot hope for a brighter future. This money is crucial to the success of this nation's education response to Covid-19 as well as the nation's future.

## **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

World history has unfortunately seen many instances of the theft of cultural property from countries, often occurring alongside physical atrocities against vulnerable local populations. The continent of Africa has fallen victim to far too many of these crimes. There have been various efforts to restore this property to the rightful countries of origin. This has in some cases been met with success in others to no avail.

Countries from the continents of Africa, Asia, Europe, South as well as North America have all expressed grave interest in the return of this stolen heritage. In 2006 the Democratic Republic of the Congo helped author a resolution which aimed to ensure that much of the stolen cultural property was returned to its place of origin. While steps like these are important to the advancement of the cause, they are not enough. Resolutions like these will not be sufficient while many of the countries who committed the theft of cultural property still possess much of it.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo recognizes the importance of many of these historic and cultural artifacts. This is why the nation asks for the understanding of those who possess them, of their importance in their country of origin. These things are part of a national cultural identity that many countries need when building solid social infrastructures. The Democratic Republic of the Congo would like to refrain from naming specific countries in a spirit of prompting such countries to take steps of their own for proper restitution. The nation hopes that these countries will return the same thoughtfulness and understanding that they have been shown when considering possible resolutions on the topic. The best hope for the genuine return of cultural property is diplomacy and the sincerity of the countries holding such property, to see the opposing countries point of view.

*Delegation from: The Republic of Estonia*

*Represented by: Vermilion High School*

***Position Paper for the Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization***

The issues before the Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are: Education Responses to COVID-19 and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origins. The Republic of Estonia is steadfast in its belief that the richness of our nation allows for us to provide a high ground for other nations to follow.

**I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

The Republic of Estonia is one of the world's most technologically advanced nations. We have been helped during these turbulent times by our strong reliance on digital technology in education, government, and other areas. This has proved beneficial for us before the COVID-19 pandemic, and during it. We believe that in order to continue to strengthen our education systems as a planet, we must work to expand our digital footprint to all corners of the globe and make education accessible to all through those means.

The Republic of Estonia has always had a unique position in the world. We were a former Soviet Republic, albeit against our will. What enables us to come out of the breakup of the Soviet Union and flourish into the great nation we are today is our Baltic spirit, with a little help from Finnish television. Due to our geographical location, our people were able to receive Finnish, and Western, television broadcasts during our time as a Soviet Republic. We were able to keep a great sense of hope and understanding of the Western world because of this. We heavily invested in the internet under the leadership of former President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, who, during his tenure, introduced computer classes in schools in the 1990's among many other technological pushes, and we have not looked back since. Over 99% of our homes have broadband internet connectivity, and over 99% of government services are online as well. This includes many of our educational systems. We were able to quickly transfer to digital learning due to the use of digital learning aids before the pandemic, and will continue to rely more and more on digital tools for education for many years to come. We are not selfish in our knowledge, however. Through our e-Estonia platform, we have hosted over 4,800 digital briefings that share our story and knowledge with different groups around the world. Many of these briefings have centered around education and the benefits of technology with it. We know that not every nation has the capabilities to transition to the reliance on technology that we have, but we are willing to help them achieve their goals, and to make education an opportunity in more parts of the world.

The Republic of Estonia wishes to express a great desire to help other nations transition to a more technologically reliant education system, not just during this pandemic, but in the future. We believe that the digital landscape offers many opportunities for learning tailored to each student's individual needs, and that by turning digital for education, we can ensure that each student is truly able to thrive in their schooling and beyond. By helping to provide the tools necessary to ensure this transformation, Estonia is willing to help create a better future for people of all nations.

## **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

The Republic of Estonia views this topic from a similar perspective as our Baltic neighbors, who sadly could not be present with us for our discussion. We have both cultural property from other nations that were acquired by various organizations, and some of our own cultural property is currently in museums outside of our borders. We fully believe in the work of the United Nations through its various summits and treaties, and wish to carry out the goals stated in those.

In 1970, the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property convened in Paris, France. Estonia ratified the treaty in 1995, and have worked to fulfill its goals ever since. In our report on the application of the convention in 2015, we stated that “Estonia has had cultural property returned from many countries. These properties have in various ways been dispersed around the world. Germany returned in 1990 the Tallinn City Archives that were taken away from Tallinn in 1944, which contained documents from as early as the XIII century. Sweden returned in 2002 the most important Estonian foreign policy documents from the years 1918-1939, including the original of the Tartu Peace Treaty signed by the Republic of Estonia and the Russian RFSR that had been evacuated to Sweden immediately before Estonia’s occupation by the Soviet Union. Estonia has also returned cultural property. In 1991, Estonia returned to Russia the Petchory Uspenski Monastery’s library that had upon Estonia’s occupation by the Soviet Union been kept in Tartu University Library. Estonia has held bilateral negotiations on restitution issues as well as participated in international projects dealing with restitution matters of cultural property and concluded relevant agreements and programmes with several partners.” It has not been entirely without difficulty, however. As the same document states, “Obstacles include different interpretations of the circumstances of how the cultural property was taken out of the country of origin and disputed ownership issues. Complicated historical-juridical issues also play their part. Estonia has striven to adhere to the practice of international law by returning foreign cultural property and also retrieving many of its own cultural treasures. Nevertheless, a great number of national culture heritage treasures remain outside Estonia.”

By adhering to the treaty laid out in the 1970 convention, the Republic of Estonia wishes to return all cultural property to its respective owners. This should be determined by which groups belong to the property’s heritage and are able to ensure that those items can, and will, be preserved for generations to come.

***Country: Fiji***

***School: St. Edward High School***

***Committee: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)***

### **Topic A - Education Responses to COVID-19**

The world is currently experiencing a pandemic not seen before since the great influenza pandemic of 1918. Countries and governments around the globe have tried their best to combat the impact of the virus on both their economies and human life. In the United States alone, more than 200,000 people have died as a result of COVID-19. Worldwide, the virus has claimed the lives of more than 1.1 million people. The Coronavirus doesn't segregate its victims by age, gender, economic status or country of origin; while certain factors make an individual more susceptible to the virus, school age children for the most part are the least vulnerable.

While countries like the United States battle along political lines on how the government should have best handled the pandemic, Fiji's leaders have taken a more direct approach - holding webinars with the Executive Director of Dialogue and the Minister of Health and Medical Services to allow individuals to have an open discussion with those who have lead roles in Fiji's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the most debated topics are how Fiji's schools will approach education. Like most governments around the world, Fiji temporarily closed all of its schools as of March 20, 2020, to assist in flattening the curve within the country.

But while schools were closed, students and teachers in Fiji struggled to maintain educational standards. The country's disadvantaged students struggled to participate in online classes, as did students with disabilities. In addition, weaknesses were identified in online educational platforms which were relied upon to educate students. This led to increasing evidence that these platforms needed to be further optimized. But it just wasn't technology that was hurting Fiji's students. It was noted that there were issues with teachers' abilities to provide blended lesson plans for both online and offline learning, and teachers needed continued education on curriculum alignment.

Despite the challenges that online learning has posed to Fiji's education system, teachers and students are slowly heading back into the classroom. While the country hasn't reported a new case of COVID-19 in nearly two weeks, Fiji's Minister of Education warns that schools could be shut down again, should the country see spikes in cases as other countries have seen. In order to minimize the impact another shut down of the education system could bring to Fiji's school aged children, it's imperative that the UN assist in furthering to expand the services and assistance offered in the Global Education Coalition. More than 1.5 billion students of all ages around the world have had their education impacted by COVID-19. UNESCO's efforts in protecting the right of education needs to reach beyond these protections. Establishing global distance learning platforms, coordinated curriculums, and investments in the psychological and social wellbeing of students are imperative as the world recovers from the impacts of COVID-19.

## **Topic B - Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

Cultural property is defined as certain materials that have special status to a country's indigenous people and/or culture – often defined as such by under national laws. As a result, cultural property cannot be privately owned, sold or exported without the permission of that country's government. Different countries have different definitions of what makes up cultural property, for example, not only could it be moveable property such as manuscripts, paintings or sculptures, but immovable objects as well - monuments or buildings. Cultural property represents the life, history and identity of a country and looting it would take a piece of that country away.

Throughout history, cultural property, or antiquities as they are more commonly known, have, during the course of war and/or the period of colonisation, been acquired by those nations that were invading foreign lands. In particular, this activity was most common in World War II. Under the rule of Adolf Hitler, the Nazi's were responsible for looting thousands of items as the Wermacht marched through Europe, expanding its empire. As a result of this unprecedented looting by Nazi Germany, the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed Conflict was signed in 1954.

In the island countries where Fiji is located, the first ever workshop on this issue was held in 2016, which brought together government officials of Fiji as well as UNESCO officials. The topic of discussion was the Hague Convention and how its protocols relate to the pacific island nations. Opeta Alfeo, Director of the National Archives of Fiji discussed the advantage of using international treaty and development frameworks such as the Hague Convention to “integrate the cultural agenda in the national development plan in Fiji and the other Pacific island states.”

During times of peace, UNESCO advises countries to take several steps in securing their cultural property. Countries should create an inventory of their cultural property; prepare for emergencies such as preventing collapse or fire in buildings and monuments; create a plan to remove and store cultural property items and keep them somewhere safe, and finally, assign officials to govern over the safeguarding of cultural property.

UNESCO has also created guidelines that assist member nations in seeking restitution in getting back cultural property that was obtained illegally. The Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property (ICPRCP) was established to help with negotiations when seeking return of cultural property; ensuring that both sides are cooperating. In addition, the ICPRCP has launched education campaigns on the importance of the issue of cultural property restitution and why it is necessary to return those pieces to the countries of origin.

While the island countries have seen many years of peace, the UN and UNESCO must make sure that the Hague Convention not just protects nations in time of peace. The Hague Convention needs to be updated to protect cultural property that is destroyed or misplaced from natural disasters, especially those that often occur in the island nations. Countries such as Fiji rely on tourism dollars to support their economies and an important part of tourism is their cultural property. Natural disasters pose a very real threat to the destruction of these pieces, making it an important addition to the Hague Convention.

*Delegation from: The Republic of Finland*

*Represented by: The Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology*

The issues presented before the Educational and Scientific Organization are the Educational Responses to COVID-19 and Restitution of Cultural Properties to Origin. Finland advocates for the safety of school children during such drastic times while maintaining the same quality of education. Finland is also looking to negotiate with other countries to return cultural properties to their origination.

### **I. Educational Responses to COVID-19**

The pandemic has affected countries around the world and specifically had an impact on the education sector. The Republic of Finland has been able to contain the spread of the deadly and heavily infectious virus and understands the dangers it may bring by allowing students to return back to in-person instruction. Finland first announced the in-person learning would take place back in April, shortly after containing the spread of the novel coronavirus. Significant efforts have been made to ensure that schools reopen with necessary social distancing and/or other procedures to keep students safe. The Republic of Finland agrees that it is crucial that even during these times, the right to a safe, basic education is necessary. The education sector should work to continue to educate students even though it may be hindered by the COVID-19. Finland is looking forward to discussing with the committee ideas on how to further the efficiency of in-person education while remaining as safe as possible.

### **II. Restitution of Cultural Properties to Origin**

The Republic of Finland is generally not often included within discussions of lost or stolen cultural property. However, its close proximity to the Russian Federation means that it could be in between some of the illegal transit or trading of cultural property or artifacts. Finland agrees that it is important for cultural property to be returned to its places of origin, and the location of Finland plays a pivotal role in this. It currently acts as a border between most of the Baltic states, and some of the transits that take place between exchanges of items will occur in Finland. Because of this, Finland hopes to work with the committees to better understand how the cultural property is being transported and also how it can be possible to uncover the items and return them to their origins.

***Delegation From: Republic of Ghana***

***Represented by: St. Edward High School***

**United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization**

### **Topic A - Education Responses to COVID-19**

With a pandemic that no one could have seen coming, educational institutions across the globe were rapidly closed. This greatly affected the learning process of students from the primary level to the university level. At its height Covid-19 affected about 1.6 billion learners, according to The World Bank. The World Bank also estimates that \$10 trillion dollars in future earnings will be lost. The sudden loss and change of education is predicted to cause almost 7 million students to drop out of school, as well as leading to 0.6 years of schooling being lost from their basic education. These dire consequences of the Coronavirus Pandemic push UNESCO to help countries that are unable to prioritise the restarting of school.

Ghana has taken a hard stance against putting Ghanaian children at risk of getting Covid-19. On Monday 16th, March, 2020 President Nana Akufo-Addo ordered all schools to be closed. The challenge of how to educate students became a hard one; however, Ghana was up to the challenge. Ghana's Ministry of Education, with the help of Ghana Education Service(GES) quickly set up an online education hub called iCampus Ghana. This has provided access for 1.2 million students to content of all of the core subjects, like math and English. Learners also have access to the Ghana Library App which gives students extra educational content and resources to improve their reading. Moreover, with a joint effort of the government and the private sector, Ghana has been able to zero the rates on these online schooling platforms. This effort has made it increasingly easier for pupils to access these online platforms with smart devices that have no data; this helps low-income or in poverty students that can't afford a telephone bill. Further cooperation between the private sector and the government is through a nationwide 24-hour channel on television that only broadcasts educational material in the core subjects as well. Currently, the Ministry of Education is working on establishing a radio station that airs only educational content.

With a second spike coming with the colder weather all over the world, it is even more apparent that measures need to be taken to keep the children of the world safe, while simultaneously providing an education. One of the main objectives of this committee is "Attaining quality education for all and lifelong learning". To stay true to this mission the UN has already created the Covid-19 Global Education Coalition, which is a collection of about 140 private sector companies and some other private institutions. However, this isn't enough; this committee should stand with all of the students of the world by growing the Covid-19 Global

Education Coalition. UNESCO must actively seek for more partners in educating the world during these trying times, and should give funding to the Coalition. Additionally, another focus should be added to this organization's main objectives, and that is to promote and find solutions to get students back into classrooms safely.

### **Topic B – The Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

Africa has had a dark past with colonialism, and it seems that it may not be over. According to a UNESCO study from 2007, 90% to 95% of African artefacts are housed or displayed in non-African countries' museums. These artefacts of course were taken away from their countries of origin when they were ruled over by countries on a different continent during the era of colonisation. In the past, many sub-Saharan countries have requested their cultural property back but they have been refused. Now, in recent years European countries have begun to start talks with African museums about the return of their artefacts. However, there are still those who wish to keep stolen artefacts on display in their countries.

Ghana supports a strong relationship with all countries of the world, and is actively trying to better its connections to the world. And Ghana's aspiration in the spirit of those relationships and connections is that stolen artefacts can be returned to their countries of origin. Ghana also supports the idea of unity and that the commonalities of African countries outweigh the differences. To better that unity, Ghana hopes that with multilateral and bilateral cooperation countries, not only stolen Ghanaian artefacts can be returned, but also artefacts stolen from other African countries can be returned as well. It is Ghana's hope that people who try and hold onto other countries' heritage and cultural property see how wrong it is to do so. It is Ghana's hope that such people realize that these artefacts aren't theirs, therefore they should be returned to their countries of origin, where they belong.

A good starting point is what France is doing with such their stolen artefacts. French President Emmanuel Macron commissioned the review of all cultural artefacts in French owned museums. It is estimated that 90,000 such artefacts are in France. Although small and minute compared to the total, France has agreed to return 26 items back to Benin, for example. A resolution that would be most effective and functional is the creation of a new subcommittee of UNESCO, that is completely dedicated to the restoration of cultural property. This new committee would be made up of top academic researchers who are on both sides of the argument. Their mission would be to come up with a list of stolen cultural properties and to return them in a timely manner. This committee would still be under the control of UNESCO but would get additional funding, so that it does not take away from any other programmes. This committee would take cases from all over the world, not just cases in Africa. The committee would be a third-party entity that helps to nurture existing relationships and/or make new relationships between countries to return cultural property to the country of origin.

*Delegation From: The Republic of Iceland*

*Represented by: Western Reserve Academy*

*Position Paper for United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization*

The issues before the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are: Education Responses to Covid-19 and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. The delegation of Iceland believes these issues to be especially relevant in today's social climate and hopes that this committee will come to a constructive conclusion through productive and amicable means.

**I. Education Responses to Covid-19**

Education Responses to Covid-19 were, for the most part, hastily executed and continue to have an impact on students across the globe. With many students sent home in early March to avoid unnecessary infections, educational institutions everywhere suffered from subsequent confusion and lack of proper technological knowledge to keep classes running smoothly. Students without proper internet access, economic stability, or other extenuating circumstances suffered. And even students with a stable environment had trouble adjusting to the new routine. Now that society is more accustomed to acting in accordance with Covid-19 protocols, Iceland is devoted to finding a way to send students back safely; because education is a fundamental human right, even during a pandemic.

Iceland is extremely secure in regards to both Covid-19 and education. All educational costs are met for the entirety of the traditional academic career (primary through university). With less than 1% of the population infected with Covid-19 and only 11 fatalities, Iceland is one of the top twenty safest countries in the world. Our students are going back to school in person with strict safety protocols that minimize the risk of infection such as; 2-meter physical distancing, a maximum of 30 people per room, limiting the interactions between different groups of students, consistent sanitization between each use of a shared-contact surface, etc. These policies have ensured stability for the educational institutions of Iceland, and it hopes this stability will endure.

An ideal solution would be offering off-campus alternatives to ensure the population's continued education until it is safe for educational institutions to return to their former practices. Of course, this demands stable internet access, proper resources at home (eg. printers and school supplies), financial stability, etc. The delegation of Iceland would like to see this committee dedicated to optimizing the utilization of technology and international funding in order to keep education accessible for everyone. As an accessory to this, Iceland would like to work towards subsidizing the cost of living for families with students who have to work instead of attending school.

**II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

Cultural property can be defined as physical items that represent the cultural heritage of a group or entity. Items including but not limited to paintings, film, sculptures, manuscripts, etc. Throughout history colonialism, imperialism, and other forms of conquest have resulted in the

illegal obtainment of cultural property. Recently, these now independent entities want these artifacts returned to them. There is debate regarding the entity's right to their own cultural property versus their ability, or lack thereof, to properly maintain it compared to its current place of residence; as well as the concept of burden of proof. UNESCO wishes to facilitate negotiations for the return of cultural property to countries of origin, and the Republic of Iceland hopes the committee will attempt to produce a fair procedure for the restitution of these artifacts.

In the late 20th century, the Arnamagnaean manuscript collection was returned to Iceland from Copenhagen University. These Manuscripts were the cultural property of Iceland and held sentimental value in both a national and international sense. Representing the separation of Iceland from Denmark and an appreciation for its own history. The Republic of Iceland heavily advocates for the restitution of cultural property to countries of origins and has ratified several conventions such as UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1995), UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (2004), etc.

The Republic of Iceland would like to propose that cultural property is returned to the place of origin unless said place consents to having the artifact(s) remain where it is. Regarding a group or entity's aptitude for proper artifact conservation, having maintenance training or an ambassador to ensure that all artifacts are safely kept could be an option, if need be. Iceland would like UNESCO to think about how it can come up with a solution to this issue that both respects the sanctity of the artifact as well as its fragility.

***Delegation from: Indonesia***

***Represented by: Lake Ridge Academy***

### ***Position Paper for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization***

The issues before the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization are: Education Responses to COVID-19, and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. The Delegation of Indonesia is looking forward to finding solutions to these issues.

#### **I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

COVID-19 is a global pandemic. It began in December of 2019, was declared a pandemic on 3/11/2020, and is still ongoing to this day. It has been responsible for over 1 million deaths, and a vaccine is still in development. It spreads very rapidly via physical closeness, and can easily sustain itself in the air and on surfaces. Its spread is greatly magnified in environments with many people in a small area, such as schools. This is why it is important to maintain proper mitigation measures in schools in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

COVID-19 has hit Indonesia relatively hard. At the time of this writing, it has had 393k confirmed cases and has suffered 13,411 deaths. As representatives of a relatively poor country that has been affected by COVID-19, our delegation would encourage efforts working to fight back against the virus, most notably attempts to mitigate the spread of the virus in schools.

In order to support in-person schooling, it is important that proper mitigation measures are put into place and enforced. Masks need to be easily accessible by all students. There also must be proper social distancing protocol put into place to ensure that the spread of the virus is halted, or at least slowed greatly. At times like these, it becomes ever more important for students to continue their education properly, and in-person schooling is the best way to accomplish this. However, for some, online schooling may be a necessity. This can be due to health risks or even simple paranoia. It's important that accommodations are still made for these students in order to continue their education, such as proper internet connections and functional devices for them to remotely perform their studies.

The delegation of Indonesia believes it would be preferable for a resolution to support both online schooling as well as in-person schooling, provided that proper mitigation measures are put in place for the latter.

#### **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

Many countries have had much of their history stolen. Many museums have been accused of stealing cultural property from their countries of origin. Much of this property has been accumulated through war and other violent means, and many countries are upset to have lost important parts of their history.

The delegation of Indonesia believes that it is important to help restore important cultural property to its country of origin. It is more important for countries to have possession of their own history rather than others holding it to themselves simply for observation. Restoring the cultural properties of countries could help create peace and reduce tensions.

*Delegation from: Ireland*

*Represented by: Rocky River High School*

*Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)*

The issues brought before UNESCO are: Education Responses to COVID-19 and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. Ireland is committed to, in regards to the former issue, maintaining a balance between educational integrity and public health, and, in regards to the latter issue, returning the stolen cultural properties to their respective countries of origin.

**I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

For the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Republic of Ireland has prioritized and will continue to prioritize the health of the Irish people. Nonetheless, Ireland has continuously emphasized the need to carry on with providing education at as high a level as possible. According to UNICEF, at least 31% of children worldwide did not have access to virtual learning during the months directly

Though the well-being of students does come first, taking extraordinary and at times unnecessary measures against COVID-19, such as a complete transference to at-home schooling, is not encouraged except for times of extreme emergency. It is important to balance preventative measures and necessary activities, such as education. Therefore, Ireland has adopted a policy of addressing situations as they come instead of generalizing the problem into one long-term solution. This may mean adapting to a cycle of locking down and reopening; engaging in such a cycle allows the Irish people to stay safe while preventing as much severe economic, social, and educational backlash as possible. The mindset of keeping everyday life as normal as safely possible at any given moment is more specifically demonstrated in educational strategies for those in primary and secondary school through a localized approach to outbreak containment. At the moment, in the event of an outbreak at school, all students in close contact with the student(s) who has contracted the virus are sent home immediately. The Health Service Executive (HSE) then coordinates for each student to receive a test in the following two days. From the time at which the student is sent home, they must abide by specific guidelines of self-isolation or restriction of movements for at least two weeks, regardless of whether or not they test positive or show symptoms. Overall, this system of contact tracing and isolation of all those in contact has allowed Ireland to effectively continue youth education while containing school-centered outbreaks. In addition, in accordance with recommendations from the National Public Health Emergency Team, all students must wear face masks to school, whether in classrooms or corridors. Ireland urges other member states to follow suit in instituting these methods of prevention, immediate testing, and isolation.

Acknowledging that the expenditure of tests for those suspected of close contact may be impossible in some nations, Ireland calls for nations to set up other standards for quarantine/isolation for close contact students that abide to recommendations by the World Health Organization (WHO) and accommodate for the inability to test. Ireland encourages all nations to fund or seek international funding regarding masks for students who cannot afford them, virtual learning equipment or at-home learning materials, tests for outbreaks at

school, and other precautionary equipment. Nonetheless, complete closing of schools is strongly advised against when there are other options that do not compromise educational integrity.

However, public universities and other higher education institutions in Ireland have, since the beginning of the school year, redirected most teaching online, as the capacity for providing online resources is often high in such institutions. All on-campus activities or gatherings are strictly prohibited. In regards to on-campus facilities, however, public universities will be keeping residential buildings and, in most cases, supplemental educational facilities (libraries, etc.) open with precautionary measures. These are necessary to support students, specifically during the pandemic, and are also more easily able to adapt to extensive disease prevention measures than lecture halls, labs, etc. Ireland encourages other nations to follow suit in this plan as many students' primary residence during the school year may be college residences and many may rely on services, nutritional or otherwise, that are provided by the school.

## **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

The Republic of Ireland recognizes that the withholdment of items of archaeological, historical, cultural, rare scientific and religious importance, illegally taken from other countries during times of conflict, is unethical and must be addressed. Cultural property, a pillar of civilization and the identities of various ethnic groups, has been displaced as a result of colonization, depredation, and theft throughout the course of history. These barbaric acts have caused the loss of valuable information and priceless artifacts; the likes of which mankind can never recover. In fact, the Archaeological Institute of America estimates that as many as 85% to 90% of "classical and certain other types of artifacts on the market do not have a documented provenance." The 1970 United Nations Economic, Social, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and 1995 International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) conventions took significant steps towards making amends regarding restitution. However, in some African countries, there have been issues with the implementation of the solutions created during the conventions, thus hindering the restitution process. Though the only 70.4% and 3.7% of the selected countries ratified the two conventions respectively in 2014, there is still a great deal of room for improvement. Nations that are still struggling to implement, domesticate, and ratify the conventions' stipulations should constitute specific cultural property legislations, fortify their enforcement methods, and maintain control over cultural property within their borders.

The Republic of Ireland, although not having partaken in colonization or theft of culturally significant objects from other countries, is dedicated to the restitution of said significant objects. As a victim of pillaging in the past, Ireland understands the plight of other nations that have experienced it on a larger scale.

The Republic of Ireland proposes that a specialized and diverse UN police force devoted to the restitution of cultural property is established, and an international database is developed. The police force would investigate the trafficking of stolen artifacts and retrieve the artifacts so that they can be returned to their country of origin. The database would consist of the missing and recovered works of art, and would assist the police force as well as others who are involved in the recuperation of the stolen artifacts. Ireland also proposes that member states set a concrete definition for "stolen artifact" which would include all objects taken from their home country by another country without unanimous written permission from all parties and clear terms as to the length of time this object would be in the possession of the other country. This would assist the force in returning these objects peacefully.

*Delegation from: State of Japan*

*Represented by: Beachwood High School*

**Committee: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

***Position Paper For the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization***

The issues before the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are: Education Responses to Covid-19 and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. The State of Japan hopes to achieve effective and fast-acting solutions within the committee.

**I. Education Responses to Covid-19**

With the onslaught of the novel Covid-19 virus pandemic beginning early this year, nations' educational infrastructure has been significantly challenged. In an attempt to hinder virus transmission, schools throughout the globe have shut down. In fact, according to UNESCO reports, over 1.2 million students' learning were affected by the virus. In response, many well-funded schools resorted to online learning programs to continue students' education and many nations have begun innovating new ways to make education more accessible for their less-privileged students. However, for the over 830 million children worldwide without access to the internet at home, there is still much to be done to ensure students receive an education while remaining safe. Through global stay-at-home orders and in-person school cancellations, the alarmingly stark disparity in educational quality between students with access to technology and those without has only been exacerbated. Similarly, the spread of the virus has worsened the \$148 billion dollar funding gap for schools in lower-income nations. In response to the exacerbation of educational disparities brought on by Covid-19, the UNHCR has partnered with the national governments of Jordan, Chad, Mali, and Niger to help students and teachers adjust to online learning programs, and to help educators create quality educational content such as self-learning programs and booklets for students to read. Furthermore, UNICEF, UNESCO, and the WHO released numerous public health guidelines and considerations for schools resuming in-person learning.

With the 19th highest education index according to the UNDP, the nation of Japan is on the forefront of ensuring high quality education for all its students. As a signatory on the Convention Against Discrimination in Education, the nation of Japan has committed to ensuring educational equity among all its students. As the Covid-19 pandemic struck, the Japanese government was quick to shut down schools and reduce virus transmission. Although some schools were not able to continue their curriculum virtually, school districts across the country were able to find new ways to reach their students. Additionally, with a relatively low number of new daily Covid-19 cases, Japanese schools have been able to reopen in the fall successfully. Additionally, as a major donor for the Global Partners for Education program, Japan has been a large presence in the global community in helping disadvantaged students abroad obtain a quality education.

As the delegation of Japan enters committee, Japan hopes to see the establishment of better guidelines to make education more accessible, while ensuring the mental and physical wellbeing of students, potentially in collaboration with UNICEF. In regards to the economic challenges lower-income nations face, Japan hopes to see the strengthening and formation of mutually beneficial international relationships to facilitate foreign aid programs and the introduction of more efficient methods of virtual instruction. With this, Japan also encourages the reopening of in-person school for countries with low Covid-19 prevalence, while following public health practices outlined by the WHO. Overall, Japan hopes to see member states cooperating together on effective long-term solutions that ensure the safety of children while making the most of their virtual education experience.

## **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

As a result of years of war, colonialism, and global conflict, many important works of art, literature, religious objects, and other objects of cultural significance have been stolen from one country by another. For example, the Greek "Elgin Marbles" at the British Museum and "Priam's Treasure" at the Pushkin Museum in Russia were taken from their home countries by occupying armies or colonial governments over the past 300 years. As countries with histories plagued with colonial rule declare independence and rebuild their economies, it's important for these countries to also reclaim their cultural identity. In response to the growing requests for culturally significant artifacts to return to their home country, UNESCO held the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, aiming to reduce the export of stolen artifacts and allow countries to request the repatriation of such objects. Furthermore, the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property has been established to facilitate the restitution of stolen artifacts and promoting international cooperation on the issue. However, while a majority of culturally significant artifacts remain in museums abroad, many object to the ability for nations to properly maintain and protect repatriated artifacts. Others raise concerns over the many artifacts with no established provenance, or those which have resided in museums' exhibitions for over 50 years. Evidently, there is much more deliberation needed to fully establish a system to reconstitute cultural property to their countries of origin.

With a long history of colonialism and war, Japan has acquired a vast amount of artifacts with foreign origins. For example, according to the Cultural Properties Administration of Korea, there are at least 34,157 cultural objects of Korean origin in Japan. Acquired during Japan's Imperial period, more than 1,000 Korean artifacts are on exhibition at the Tokyo National Museum, more than 800 displayed at the Osaka City Museum of Ceramics and more than 2,100 books are in the Kyoto University Library. In light of the demand for repatriation of artifacts, Japan ratified the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property in 2002. Evidently, Japan has taken many steps forward in acknowledging their moral obligation to return culturally significant objects to their home countries. In 2019, Japanese collectors returned over 80 artifacts to Cambodia. Japan has also returned a valuable 8-piece bronze Chinese pottery set to the Chinese government. However, Japan has also faced numerous difficulties in cultural restitution. With a large majority of stolen artifacts under collections owned by individual collectors or public exhibitions, their return involved substantial public embarrassment and economic detriment. Despite this, Japan will continue in its commitment to repatriate stolen artifacts.

Japan has provided a tremendous amount of assistance in the restitution of cultural property, and the nation plans on further helping resolve the conflict throughout the conference. First, Japan advocates for more nations to ratify the 1970 convention. Furthermore, Japan hopes to work with other countries to create guidelines on how countries with stolen objects can return them to their host countries, while ensuring their protection after returning home. Additionally, Japan believes improving infrastructure in the preservation and exhibition of artifacts in underdeveloped nations is essential to prevent theft, loss, and damage to such artifacts. Lastly, Japan hopes to find ways to create a more objective process for determining stolen artifacts and more efficient ways to facilitate the restitution process. Some cases may arise where stolen artifacts should not be returned, and Japan hopes to create guidelines to determine when such solutions are appropriate. Overall, Japan hopes to increase international cooperation and foster an effective, long-term solution that will successfully return stolen artifacts to their home countries.

*Delegation from: the Republic of Kenya*

*Represented by: Avon Lake High School*

*Position Paper for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*

The issues before the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization are:

Educational responses to COVID-19 and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin.

Kenya is honored to be attending this prestigious conference and hopes that the forum finds effective and viable solutions to the issues at hand.

**I. Educational responses to COVID-19**

COVID-19, a contagious pandemic that has affected the globe, has caused Kenya's schools to go into shutdown. With 50,833 cases in the country, the country has become a Level 3 zone. All unnecessary trips within and to Kenya have been banned in order to try to stop the spread of this worldwide pandemic.

Schools in Kenya have had to suffer the most. With limited resources and an underdeveloped healthcare system, a single infection can easily spread to others. The Kenyan youth has now spent more than 6 months away from their schools. This has not only caused late literacy but also a lot more social issues such as child violence, labor, and pregnancies. The Kenyan government has tried to fight these issues by aiming to open schools again in the next few months. For preparation, the government has asked that any donations to the education system are in supplies instead of money due to the government corruption in Kenya. The government is also inviting all students to go back to school even if they are ashamed of the loss in progress that they faced due to the pandemic.

Some solutions for this catastrophe include using larger facilities such as places of religious worship or warehouses in order to gather as many people as possible yet maintaining sufficient social distancing. Kenya has also called for the implementation of mandatory masks in order to also help limit the spread of the virus. If the spread of the virus stops, schools can finally reopen and education can persist despite the social and economic hardships caused by the pandemic.

**II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

Restitution of cultural property to a country's origin is a huge issue that we still face to this day. Restitution of cultural property refers back to World War II when most cultural assets of a country were displaced and stolen by German or Soviet troops. This issue has been going on for more than 75 years and yet museums all around the world are continuing to project to the public another country's cultural property.

For Kenya, this is a massive issue since Kenya has a vast cultural heritage and has very important and interesting cultural property. More than 100 thousand objects are in museums all over the world that belong to Kenya. Thankfully, Kenya is starting to track its valuable stolen

artifacts worldwide with German help. If this issue ends and Kenya could get a hold of all of its cultural property and all of its art, then this can help a lot in solving Kenya's economic crisis. Many individuals worldwide go to certain museums just because of Kenya's cultural property and artifacts in that museum. If Kenya contains all of its cultural property then that would make the country more of a touristic country, which will cause the country to become financially stable. Kenya is now more aware of this issue and the Kenyan government is speaking publicly about this issue trying to raise awareness of what could happen to the country. If this issue resolves then this could benefit Kenya drastically.

Some solutions for this issue include raising awareness to others, especially Chad, Cameroon and Madagascar since they currently have 25000 artifacts that belong to Kenya. Also, if there is a law that can be set worldwide that states that keeping cultural properties that belong to other countries is illegal, then countries would start to take action.

## *Republic of Korea*

### *Laurel School*

## **United Nations Education, Scientific, Cultural Organization**

The issues before the Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are: Education responses to Covid-19; and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. South Korea is devoted and committed to the protection of both the advancement and improvement of education under health restrictions due to Covid-19, and the restitution of their cultural property remaining with their independent country.

### **I. Education Responses to Covid-19**

The people of South Korea are strongly devoted to the advancement and development of accessible and available education under the Covid-19 pandemic. As a country that is already largely technologically advanced, with 99.7% of households having access to the internet before the pandemic even struck, the country of South Korea was quick to adjust their schools and students to an online platform. Having experienced its first Covid-19 case in mid-January, the government declared a nationwide health emergency which kept students from entering campus for a total of four months. During this time the government worked to implement accessible online learning and support for educators and administrators. The people of South Korea worked hard to incorporate online education throughout the country by offering affordable, accessible, and available outlets for WiFi enabled devices. They have advanced and developed a successful way of online education and have set the precedent for other nations to follow.

The government of South Korea has taken measures to ensure that students and teachers can continue education as seamlessly as possible. The Ministry of Education expanded ICT, or internet usage, infrastructure. They created extra servers to allow for optimum access, accommodating 3 million students at one time. The Ministry added the extra servers to two major online learning platforms known as the Korea Education and Research Information Service (KERIS) and the Education Broadcasting System (EBS). Along with the expanded internet servers and infrastructure, the government published educational guidelines for teachers nationwide. They published a website known as School-On which serves to provide information on how to teach and keep up productive communication between students and educators. Another educational tool known as Teacher-On was created by volunteer teachers at Metropolitan and Provincial which supports technical difficulties that teachers may face by allowing for remote connection to devices. The Community of 10,000 Representative Teachers was also formed, with the number 10,000 representing one teacher for each of the 10,000 South Korean schools. This wide range of support for teachers, educators, and administrators allowed for easier access to classes and a more smooth transition into online school. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education, 17 Metropolitan and Provincial offices of Education, KERIS, and EBS all aim to support not only the educators, but the students as well. The government furthered its support of education by offering a free digital device rental service. This allowed for families of low income to purchase devices to be used for educational purposes and ensured that the economic divide did not expand. Students were given free access to mobile data when using educational websites, and families of lower socio-economic standing had internet services installed in their homes supported by a monthly subsidy of 17 US dollars. By providing quick and easy access to IT support, as well as expanding internet access to low income families, the education system in South Korea remains a pillar of educational excellence.

The country of South Korea has consistently and successfully supported both educators and students. Through the thorough and attentive focus on education, students were able to easily adapt to online schooling. Nations all around the world should study and learn the ways in which the South Korean government handled education in response to Covid-19 because of its clear and advanced systems and opportunities. The delegation of South Korea believes that if education guidelines were put in place at an international level by UNESCO, then education around

the world could drastically be improved. The government of South Korea is available and happy to share with the world its knowledge and techniques for educational support and is willing to work with UNESCO as a whole to create and cultivate education at its finest. The educational responses to Covid-19 were shown to be successful from South Korea and they continue to represent the best that education can offer.

## **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Country of Origin**

The country of South Korea has long had to endure the loss of their cultural property, including historical artifacts such as documents, seals, and sacred objects. Due to disputes between Japan, France, and China respectively, South Korea has lost hundreds of thousands of historical documents that outline Korean royalty and customs. It is faced with attempting to negotiate for their cultural property to be returned and protected. These artifacts symbolize Korean heritage, tradition, and legacy and the people of South Korea deserve to have their history returned to them. The government of South Korea has negotiated for their cultural property and believes that other nations' cooperation in the restitution process is fundamental.

The government of South Korea made arrangements for their cultural property to be returned to its country of origin. Dating back to the Japanese colonizing them, South Korea has lost thousands of documents and treasures that symbolize their distinctive history. While in negotiations, Japan has returned artifacts that were from the Joseon dynasty. Furthermore, documents containing outlines and descriptions of royal rule and customs have been kept from their country of origin. The people of South Korea have asked for Japan, the United States, and France to all return their stolen property. The United States owned two royal seals that date back to the 16th and 17th centuries. However, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, returned these two royal seals in June of 2017. The two seals in question were taken amidst the Korean War and the Japanese occupation of the peninsula. The United States has been cooperative with the government of South Korea in returning stolen items. However, the French government was not so lenient. The French agreed to lease texts that were taken during an invasion of 1886 which resulted in the deaths of French missionaries. However, these royal texts were shown to be bearing the French National Seal. Along with the national seal and the agreement to only lease the texts back to the South Koreans, the government of Seoul felt it insulting and degrading to their culture. In working to gain back their cultural property and ultimately their individuality, the South Korean government has come to peaceful agreements with both the United States and Japan. The negotiations with France were more controversial due to the French only agreeing to lease texts and documents and, unlike Japan, did so without an apology. As South Korea continues to win back its cultural property, the animosity from Japan, having to do with the Japanese occupation of Korea, and despite being current allies, has lessened. The government of South Korea continues to work towards restoring cultural artifacts and history and remains firm in the belief that all cultural property should be returned to its rightful country.

The country of South Korea remained respectful while negotiating with other nations for their stolen property. The people of South Korea have long since been missing pieces of their history and seek to have it returned. Understanding and sympathizing with other countries who have experienced losses of property due to colonization or occupation is one of the reasons why countries need to come to peaceful agreements. Despite having troubled pasts filled with disputes and trading of ownership over property, South Korea has been able to look past this in exchange for the simple restitution of their artifacts. Cultural property and cultural history is largely important to the identity of an individual country. It not only outlines parts of history that otherwise would be unknown, but symbolizes a country's individuality in both culture, religion, and way of living. Therefore, it is imperative that nations work together to negotiate with each other for the return of artifacts, documents, and texts. It is immensely important that the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural council works to oversee the restitution of cultural property in order for countries to make peace with prior incidents. The government of South Korea firmly believes that, with the help of UNESCO and the cooperation of the world, the restitution of cultural property to its country of origin can and will be successful.

*Delegation from: Lebanon*

*Represented by: Mentor High School*

*Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization*

The affairs being discussed within the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are both the Educational Responses to COVID-19, and the Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. Lebanon desires to use online resources, mainly televisions and social media, to continue education in response to the Corona Virus and supports the return of cultural property to the countries of its origin.

***I. Educational Responses to COVID-19***

COVID-19, otherwise known as coronavirus, is a worldwide respiratory disease pandemic. Because the first case was presented in December 2019, there are many unanswered questions about SARS-CoV-2. How to continue education in these uncertain times is very important amongst these questions. Lebanon, a developing country located in the middle east, has pondered what their response will be. With the fall and winter seasons starting, a spike in cases has been occurring. On October 25, 2020, Lebanon had 1,484 cases, while on June 4th, 2020, they had 0 cases. In view of the fact that Lebanon is having a major apex in cases, and schools are starting once more, this middle eastern country has to address the safety of their students and educational teachers.

Lebanon encouragingly believes that schooling should continue; however, with different safety precautions put in place. The middle eastern country decided to start off the school year with a hybrid model. They will use this to make school half online, where students will stay at home, and half in school, where students will be present in their designated school building. Lebanon does plan to pull kids out of school, if necessary, and convert to all online. The online schooling aspect majorly impacts families from this country, many of whom cannot currently afford the costs of purchasing devices for their children to use. Lebanon, not being able to provide school issued devices to their students, has come up with the solution to send printed out paper copies of school work home via mail. With these paper copies, parents would have to teach their children the necessary skills that they would have acquired in school. With a deepening economic crisis, Lebanon will be trying to work with families and parents to form the best way that their children can be educated, and protected from the risks of COVID-19

Keeping a positive, yet precautionary approach to education within 2020 and forward is Lebanon's response to the pandemic and its impacts to their families. Students staying in school, but also adopting some form of an all at-home online, or paper, schooling will be implemented into Lebanon's system to help stop the spread of Corona and keep education going.

***II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin***

The restitution of cultural property to countries of origin is a strong, controversial issue within Many middle eastern countries' borders. Returning property of culture to its country of origin shows the respect and responsibility that the giving country has for the others. Although these properties are possibly worthful, or profitable, they have sentimental value to the original owner. Returning cultural property shows a sign of mutual respect, even if there is not mutual benefit in that moment, there will be for each country eventually.

Lebanon strongly believes in the restitution of cultural property to countries of origin. Lebanon, being on the receiving end of this action, has gotten many artifacts that hold great value to themselves and its people. An example of this is when the United States of America, after saving three marble statues from the Temple of Eshmun, returned them to their country of origin- Lebanon. Artifacts can hold great sentimental value to many; the returning of them is crucial. Lebanon is willing to strongly work with other countries to see more restitution be implemented within their own, and other countries. Cultural preservation is extremely important in today's cultural-combining world. The restitution of cultural property to countries of origin helps preserve long lasting cultural values; Lebanon is in strong compliance with this.

**Delegation from: the Netherlands**

**Represented by: Saint Joseph Academy**

**Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

UNESCO is discussing Education Responses to COVID-19 and the Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. The Netherlands believes all people have rights that should not be hindered by a lack of education or uncontrollable occurrences. The Netherlands looks forward to working with other countries to support all people through education and fair practices.

**I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

The Netherlands believes that positive and helpful education responses to COVID-19 are crucial for the state of not only, the Netherlands, but the world. With the country's 6 million euros pledge to support Education Cannot Wait in response to COVID-19 is the precedent the Netherlands wanted to set for the future. COVID-19 has shaken the entire world, but the Netherlands still finds education to be crucial for the bettering of the country. The Netherlands vows to continue supporting its people by continuing to pass legislation, and by making helpful decisions about education during the pandemic.

With the recent pandemic, the Netherlands has adjusted quickly, and has tried to give students access to electronics for online school. The first key for the Netherlands has been providing information to the public about new protocols. All schools had the option to go fully virtual, stay in school, or do a form of hybrid learning. At the beginning of the pandemic, the Netherlands was forced to close schools which hindered education for many students. Recently, the Netherlands has pledged 6 million euros to Education Cannot Wait. This money will help low income families receive access to the proper education. The Netherlands did have to make restrictions on the rights of citizens to ensure safety; this included virtual learning.

The Netherlands hopes the committee creates resolutions that will grant access to education to people around the world. The Netherlands is a country based heavily on an educated community. This country wants to work with other countries to pass resolutions that work for the greater good and make life easier during this difficult time. The Netherlands wants to create a fund for those who are lacking the proper education, not just in the Netherlands, but around the world. The Netherlands is committed to the safety of its citizens, and wants teachers and educators to have proper training. The Netherlands also believes that educators should have proper PPE while teaching students. COVID-19 is to be taken very seriously, and it is important that everyone has access to safe and effective education. All countries need to come together to form proper measures that will help the furthering of education.

**II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

The Netherlands understands and respects the rights of individuals; especially, those who have rich history. Countries have property that is rightly theirs, and it should be returned to those countries of origin. It is a very large issue when a country is stripped of the right to their property. The Netherlands has taken steps to give back property to countries that have history connected with it.

The Netherlands have provided property to countries that should be owned by countries of origin. In November of 2018, the Netherlands gave a mosaic of Saint Mark back to Cyprus. This was a major step for the world, working together to ensure products of the world are protected. The Netherlands recognizes the important history of each country and wants to make sure that it is honored. At the 1970 Convention, the Netherlands signed a treaty with other countries to protect cultural objects. To support their signature, the Netherlands has enacted new regulations. If an object is illegally acquired from another country, the buyer in Netherlands is required to give it back to the origin country.

The Netherlands hopes to make more treaties with fellow countries to promote the return of property to origin countries. The Netherlands has taken large steps to help in this matter, and is willing to support other countries. The Netherlands is looking forward to attending more conventions to ensure the return of property to the rightful owners. Each piece of property holds a special place in a country's history. If a country is connected to a piece of property it belongs to them. Countries need to come together and truly treat each other with respect. The committee needs to treat this topic with the utmost importance. If countries do not take this seriously the traditions and cultures of other countries at stake. By coming together, the Netherlands is looking forward to working together to secure the better good of countries.

*Delegation from: the Federal Republic of Nigeria*

*Represented by: Archbishop Hoban High School*

*Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization*

The issues presented to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are: Education Responses to COVID-19; and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin.

**I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

As a developing nation in West Africa the Federal Republic of Nigeria's education systems have been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. While Nigeria has not seen COVID-19 become as widespread as in many Western nations, the closure of schools left many poorer students without schooling for months. Lack of access to remote learning materials or the safe return to schooling ought to be the primary concerns of the committee. Young girls especially have been affected by the pandemic, as many have seen an increase in household responsibilities during lockdown.

Human Rights Watch reported that students across the African continent were receiving little to no education due to lack of resources. This problem was exacerbated in Nigeria, which already suffers from a large population which does not attend schools. While the Nigerian government has worked towards virtual platforms, such as the Unity Schools Virtual Learning Platform, these remain inaccessible to those without access to the internet. Recently, however, schools have begun reopening with strict guidelines.

The Nigerian Delegation would like to see programs implemented structured similarly to those put forth by the Nigeria Education in Emergencies Working Group. Back to school measures recommended by this group focus on the dissemination of information on how to contain the spread of COVID-19. In another sector, anything which could facilitate the acquisition of funds for COVID-19 responses would be highly appreciated, especially in the event of another lockdown. The pandemic has taken a particular toll on Nigerian resources and international aid may be needed to continue to successfully combat the disease.

**II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

The Federal Republic of Nigeria, as a former colony of the British Empire is closely tied to the problem of cultural restitution. Many of its artifacts and works of heritage were pilfered during the colonial period and now reside in museums across the globe. Of particular note are those objects taken from the Kingdom of Benin during a punitive expedition in 1897.

Nigeria recognizes the growing interest in and support for the restitution of cultural artifacts. A notable event in this trend was the commissioning of a report on the restitution of cultural artifacts by French president Emmanuel Macron in 2018. More recently are the actions of activist Mwazulu Diyabanza, bringing attention to the concentration of African artifacts in Europe.

Recognizing these trends the Federal Republic of Nigeria would like to make a point of its support for the repatriation of cultural artifacts and its desire to have its cultural property returned. As the Nigerian Minister of Information and Culture notes, Article 4 of the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property defines cultural property as “created by the individual or collective genius of nationals of the State concerned, and cultural property of importance to the State concerned created within the territory of that State.” As such, the Federal Republic of Nigeria believes it has a right to objects taken from its territory during the colonial period. Towards this end, President Muhammadu Buhari, along with 11 other African heads of state at the 33rd Assembly of the African Union, committed Nigeria to speeding up the return of cultural assets. The delegation from Nigeria would like to see policies instituted towards this end.

*Delegation from: Norway*

*Represented by: Lake Ridge Academy*

**Committee: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization**

The issues before the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are as follows: education responses to COVID-19 and restitution of cultural property to countries of origin. Norway is in support of the discussion revolving around these issues in order to ensure that education and culture is a priority around the world.

### **I. Education Responses to COVID-19.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has uniquely affected the world in a way that many have never seen in their lives. This pandemic has caused many countries to close down their institutions, one common institution being schools and universities. Norway recognizes that COVID-19 is a serious issue that has caused the loss of lives globally. The airborne disease has now caused a surge in the required use of masks and for a time shut down not just those institutions involving education, but most institutions like businesses that have caused most economies to dwindle. Norway believes that through the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, the world can return to the prosperous place it was before COVID-19. We believe that the way effective learning can be achieved is through communication, leniency, and support in the schooling system around the world. We also recognize that this is only something that can be obtained through the combined efforts of each and every country. If every country does not take a stance in resolving this issue by promoting and supporting education, the world will begin to crumble to an anarchist society the likes we haven't seen in centuries.

Norway will always place importance on reopening educational institutions in a safe and timely manner. Due to the severity of the issue, Norway began opening its schools in April of 2020 along with Denmark to be the first European countries to do so. Beginning with smaller class sizes and limiting interactions between students, Norway strives to combat this issue. Beginning with the youngest age educational institutions, we began to reopen schools. The Norwegian Institute of Public Health created a "traffic light" model for educational institutions to follow nationally in May of 2020. This model gave insight on what control measures are to be followed. Under the green "light", school hours can run as normal. At the yellow level, schools must take measures to socially distance students as well as place special importance on hygiene. At the red level, schools must minimize the number of students attending as well as review the situation daily. As the issue worsened globally, schools were shut down and were forced to remain virtual to the best of their abilities. We believe that implementing current, accessible, and user-friendly technologies is the best way to virtually handle COVID-19 in coordination with training for teachers aimed to educate them on how to best handle the emotional, social, and academic well-being of students.

The COVID-19 outbreak is one that must be discussed with a magnitude of respect and importance considering the mortality rate and overall spread of the issue. The committee should hope to gain an understanding of what methods and practices should be mandated in order to achieve a swift resolution. In the discussion, there should be a stress to discuss what virtual methods have proved worthy in keeping when COVID-19 resolves. There needs to be a national pathway out of this pandemic or else the world will continue to suffer at the hands of this disease. We also wish to be an aid in helping other countries out of the pandemic and are in support of clarifying our policies.

## **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin.**

The restitution of cultural property to its respective countries of origin is a pressing issue that has been tied to colonialism, international law, and morals. Norway recognizes these ties and strives to provide insight and discussion in respecting the ownership of cultural property. It is the responsibility of all countries to come together and ensure that culture is respected everywhere as culture is a fundamental part of life. Through various wars, cultural property such as paintings or sculptures has been stolen or obtained by different governments around the world. Some may argue that returning cultural property to countries that aren't stable or are consistently in war should not be allowed due to the possibility of damaging said cultural property. Is it morally right to decide for another country whether their cultural history should belong to them? Norway took the initiative to return stolen cultural property in 2014 when we discovered that a Matisse painting was looted by Nazis. As a policy, Norway hopes to come to an agreement on the restitution of these cultural properties in order to achieve what is ethically right.

Norway belonging to several European countries is subject to hold several stolen pieces of cultural property. In the recognition of this trend in European countries, we seek to return this stolen art and listen to the voices of those who are victims in this situation. We have ethically returned several art pieces but it is of great importance that we discover and transport these pieces to their rightful owners. It is no question that art can be appreciated best from listening and viewing where the art came from, its creator. Norway believes that it is not up to the country that possesses the stolen art whether or not it is stolen. If it is beyond the shadow of a doubt where the art comes from, it should be returned to that country. It is through the conversation within The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, that global laws should be enacted to achieve this restitution.

Norway believes that through this discussion, policies will be made in returning stolen cultural property. We recognize that because of the colonialist attitude of European countries, several pieces of cultural property have not ended up in the hands of their owners. It must also be said that in this discussion, respect must be at the forefront of the matter. In these policies, we hope to lead the world in showing that supporting developing countries in the security of their art is necessary. If we believe that a country isn't apt to keep their culture, then why don't we fund that security? Norway will hope to find a policy that the UN will enact to ensure that stolen cultural property will find its way back to its home and in the case of war will be protected. In the future, we hope to follow these policies as well as make sure that art isn't imported to our country wrongfully.

***Delegation from: Peru***

***Represented by: Hawken***

***Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization***

The United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization Committee will be discussing the issues of Educational Responses to COVID-19 and the Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. Both issues are incredibly important to the country of Peru, and Peru is prepared to collaborate with countries around the world to form a solution to these pressing issues.

**I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

While education has always been a fundamental human right that many areas struggle to secure, the spread of COVID-19 around the world has brought about further challenges. COVID-19 has brought scary realities even to nations with ample resources, and further hurt countries already struggling. COVID-19 has already killed millions of people worldwide with few countries bringing the disease under control as countries such as the United States begin their third peak in cases and death rates. COVID-19 has caused many to lose jobs creating economic turmoil and political unrest for many countries reaction to the crisis. The risk of going to in-person classes is incredibly high, especially with lack of sanitation products, testing, medical care or resources for other prevention methods. On the other hand, leaving children to deal with the difficulties of online learning creates further issues. For example, many children may not have internet access, a manner that many schools around the world are utilizing for classes. Additionally, many parents have work and cannot take care of young children. Areas around the world are experiencing debates over whether they should send children back to school because of the two sides of the argument.

Peru has had one of the best COVID-19 responses of many of the countries in the surrounding region, as the country recognizes the threat of COVID-19 and the need for distancing guidelines to be set. Peru has a plethora of experiences across the country. While some cities and more densely populated areas have issues to deal with in terms of the high numbers of people in the area, more rural areas have various issues as well. For mountain areas, Peru's response has been to send students back, hoping to keep the rural areas separated and safe. These areas are only allowed because of lack of internet access as well as positive COVID-19 cases. In more populated cities, Peru has launched a program called, "I learn at home," which interacts with students through TV and radio broadcasts as well as the internet. Programs such as these are incredibly important to Peru's educational prosperity during these trying times.

For Peru, the educational issues are being handled and maintained well by the government, and the country would advise that others do the same. Within the country of Peru, there are diverse regions with COVID-19 responses that must be handled differently, and the country recognizes that for many, this concern may be the same. If countries have the means, they should separate rural areas into their own circles in order to ensure that COVID-19 is not spread between areas and to encourage the education of those within the area. Should the committee fail to allow students back to school in whatever manner possible, the world will deal with a generation of children with lower literacy rates and social skills who are less informed than generations of the past. The committee cannot fail the next generation in providing a solution to this crisis, and Peru will do what it takes to lead the way for a solution.

## **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

The looting and stealing of cultural property has been an issue for centuries, beginning with the rise of colonialism and imperialism. Countries hoping to enforce power over a people would loot valuables they found, which many times reside in museums that are not the country of origin for those artifacts. In present time, it becomes an issue for money that can be made while also destroying cultural landmarks for many countries whose said landmarks have generational importance to communities as well as sometimes providing economic opportunities for the country through tourism. Organized crime can make a profit from the trafficking of objects from their countries of origin, and countries around the world are working through their customs enforcement to ensure that no artifacts cross territories.

Peru is a country with an incredibly rich history. One of the major economic sectors is the tourist industry with landmarks such as Machu Picchu, the Nazca Lines, the Sacred Valley, and many more. Many of the sites have cultural importance to the Inca Empire after the Spanish conquistadors invaded and destroyed the people, towns, and artifacts. Each of the sites also includes many artifacts. Peru has had issues in the past with the destruction and looting of cultural sites by those hoping to make a profit selling the artifacts online or carrying the objects across borders; however, there are not enough resources to protect each site to ensure this does not happen. This fight to secure adequate resources to protect every historical landmark in Peru is futile as graves sights are dug up constantly throughout the Peruvian desert. In order to combat this, Peru has begun a program to educate archeologists and historians through professional training about the importance of protection for these cultural sites and their artifacts. Additionally, Peru has worked with the United States of America in the past to ensure that artifacts stolen from Peru are safely returned to the country. Even with emergency measures such as those being taken in order to return Peruvian artifacts, Peru has been working to create more resources in order to store artifacts within their own museums and exhibitions rather than needing to loan objects to other countries.

These exhibitions are incredibly important to the prosperity of Peru on both a cultural and economic level. Landmarks such as Machu Picchu and the history of the Inca empire encourage tourism within the country, amongst other things. Allowing other artifacts to stay in Peru is imperative to a final solution to this problem. Additionally, resources need to be provided to countries of origin in order to display and educate others about their culture. Sharing of culture is not up to other countries who hold the artifacts because of previous imperialist ideals, this is the county of origin's history to own, celebrate, and enjoy. Peru does lone artifacts to other countries for exhibits as an alliance with the country, so this would also be important to include in the final resolution.

*Delegation from: the Russian Federation*

*by: Mentor High School*

*Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization*

The issues before the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are: Education Responses to COVID-19 and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. Russia values the importance of both issues on domestic and global scales and looks forward to working with the committee to find favorable global solutions to these issues with great respect to national sovereignty.

**I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

Russia has had a long history of international education. In 1956 the People's Friendship University of Russia was established in Moscow to serve Russian students and foreign students from Africa, Asia and Latin America. This emphasis on international education has been a mutually beneficial relationship between Russia and their international students as they provide higher education to students who may not have access to it in their native nations and get to bring in some of the most talented minds from around the world to contribute to Russian progress along with global discovery. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 daily life in Russia has been altered to accommodate concerns surrounding the spread of disease. This has resulted in less international education efforts and hindered learning environments for those in Russia. The nation hopes to be able to responsibly welcome international students as soon as possible while avoiding dangerous infection rates.

Distance learning has been implemented since March when Putin announced mandatory non-work days throughout the country. Several conferences with Valery Falkov, the Russian Minister of Education, have produced strict guidelines for universities to combat the spread of the disease. Masks are required at all educational institutions, temperature checks occur twice a week and all areas are regularly disinfected. Most universities have begun school but some have deferred to start at a later date. Education has not only been hindered by efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19, higher education institutions have especially been deprived of valuable students and faculty due to a lack of foreign enrollment and opportunity for global collaboration. Internationalization has been a point of emphasis for the Russian education system over the past 5 years so this current obstacle presents many challenges in regards to these goals. Russia's educational system has also strived to be competitive and produce globally capable students who can compete against those from institutions in Europe, Asia, and America. Preserving the international and competitive nature of the Russian educational system is at the heart of many concerns surrounding the virus.

Russia is looking to continue to implement plans that inhibit the spread of COVID-19 in educational institutions. The nation will maintain hope that they can provide a welcoming environment for foreign students in a safe manner in order to benefit the Russian federation and the students it educates. The Russian Federation would like to see the committee address the concern surrounding international students and recognize the importance of such students to the

education of the students and their invaluable role in the educational systems of many countries. Additional ideas regarding the enhancement of education quality with personal protection and distance learning through technology should also be explored by the committee.

## **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

After WWII many Soviet cultural valuables were destroyed or taken and compensation was demanded for such items. Debate surrounding cultural items from Germany also arose and remained relevant for the Soviet Union and other European powers. The Russian Federation stands by current laws enacted regarding cultural objects despite any international criticisms.

In 1998 a law on cultural property displaced to the USSR as a result of WWII. Although some claim this law has justified “trophy art” Russia views this law as a fair due to the nations right to compensatory restitution for the loss of the nations own cultural artifacts. Several decrees regarding Russian cultural items were issued in the early 2000s. This includes the Approval of the Regulations for Examination and Control of the Export of Cultural Property, Exemption from Customs Duties for Customs Clearance of Cultural Values displaced across the Customs Border of the Russian Federation for the Purpose of Exhibiting, and Measures for Implementation of the Federal Law on Cultural Valuables displaced to the USSR as a result of the Second World War located on the Territory of the Russian Federation to reinforce the previously explained law from 1998. In March 2018 amendments to a law on the export and import of cultural valuables to place less regulation on the export and import of cultural values between Russia and non-EAEU nations. There are hopes that this will facilitate growth in the Russian art market.

Russia has complete respect for the national sovereignty and cultural pride of every nation. Russia is hoping to preserve its standing laws while still remaining open to negotiations and collaboration to find solutions to any withstanding disagreements surrounding cultural valuables. The nation hopes the committee respects the cultural significance and value of many objects, artifacts, and pieces of arts for both Russia and other nations while still observing the rights for restitution following conflict or war.

***Delegation from: Republic of South Africa***

***Represented by: Beachwood High School***

***November CCWA Conference***

***Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization***

The issues presented before the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are: Education Responses to COVID-19 and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. The Republic of South Africa is dedicated to working to resolve these issues and hopes for future cooperation between nations and advancements on the topics at hand.

***I. Education Responses to COVID-19***

COVID-19 is a severe pandemic that is a modern day issue. Caused by a coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2, COVID-19 affects people of all ages, but has a higher mortality rate for people 85 years or older. Additionally, people who have underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease also have a higher mortality rate for COVID-19. Because of its severity and the fact that this disease is more contagious than the flu, it is recommended that even children remain socially distanced in order to protect themselves and more importantly, their families. Thus, millions of schools have closed and more than 87% of the world's student population has been negatively impacted. The right to education is a fundamental right that the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization upholds and affirmed in the Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960). Thus, for these reasons UNESCO must take action in resolving this human rights crisis.

The Republic of South Africa strongly affirms its commitment to education and combating the negative effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Like many other countries, the Republic of South Africa has been tremendously affected by COVID-19. So far, the Republic of South Africa has as many as 718 thousand confirmed cases of COVID-19. When COVID-19 was at its peak, the Republic of South Africa was the fifth-most-infected country in the world. While some vaccine experts claim that the big surge in infections may have resulted in some level of herd immunity, COVID-19 is still a prevalent problem that has the potential to worsen. Thus, COVID-19 has severely affected access to schools, educational facilities, and educational programs. The Republic of South Africa believes that action must be taken in order to resolve this crisis in its country and around the world.

In order to combat COVID-19, South Africa has been closing its schools. However this has severely limited everyone's access to education. Thus South Africa believes that there must be more support towards online school, and helping citizens gain access to the internet. South Africa also firmly believes in providing enough personal protective equipment to schools with students who have no access to stable internet and thus must have school in person. The Republic of South Africa looks forward to working with other countries in the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization to combat this issue.

## ***II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin***

Cultural property can have a major significance to its country of origin. However, much of this art or cultural property has been stolen or pillaged in the past, resulting in countries like South Africa and Greece missing art that has a huge amount of cultural significance. Members of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization who seek to resolve this issue and return cultural property to its rightful place have already established a committee called the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution (ICPRCP) that can be called upon in cases where international committees cannot be established. This committee is responsible for promoting bilateral communication between a country of origin and the current location of a piece of cultural property. Furthermore, UNESCO will continue to remain committed to its goal to encourage more fluid communication to ensure that cultural property ends up where it belongs.

The Republic of South Africa was one of the twenty seven African countries that participated in the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. Because African States appear to be the most vulnerable of any group of countries to illicit trade in cultural property, the Republic of South Africa is committed to resolving this issue. In 1999, the Republic of South Africa passed the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999, which established the South Africa Heritage Resources Agency together with its Council as a body that would promote the management of cultural and heritage property. This act established the system of heritage inspectors, the verification of heritage inspectors, and the ability of the heritage inspectors to confiscate antiquities if anybody is operating without a permit. The Republic of South Africa remains committed to this issue.

The Republic of South Africa firmly believes that the issue of the displacement of cultural heritage affects every nation, especially African states. To combat this issue, the Republic of South Africa proposes establishing a similar plan to its National Heritage Resources Act of 1999, and its introduction of heritage inspectors. In addition, South Africa continues to encourage increasing communication between countries in order to instigate the return of cultural heritage. The Republic of South Africa looks forward to working with other members of UNESCO towards combating this challenge.

*Delegation from: Spain*

*Represented by: Hawken*

**Position Paper for United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization  
(UNESCO)**

The issues before the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are: Education Responses to COVID-19; and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. Spain is committed to the protection and progress of education, science, and culture. It hopes that it can be helped and help other countries to protect these virtues.

**I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

According to the New York Times, the Covid-19 pandemic was declared a global health emergency on Jan 30, 2020. Since then, almost every country in the world has been affected by it in one way or another. Because schools could be seen as highly infectious situations, countries have been forced to change what education is. Spain and many other countries were forced to either homeschool or virtually learn. According to the economic policy institute, as of the spring of 2020, 1.4 billion children are out of school or childcare globally. And many schools and instructors feel that they cannot use or support students with this new virtual way of instruction. According to the OECD, only 67% of teacher globally felt they could support students through the use of digital technology. They continue that 25% of principals found their school's digital technology was inadequate or ill-fulfilling globally, and 19% reported that there was insufficient internet access.

Spain has a slightly higher rate of students capable to participate in online learning, but not by much. So, when school started in September many schools reopened. And according to an NPR article regarding education during Covid-19 on October 21, there were no spikes of Covid-19 in Spain related to the reopening of schools. This can be contributed to highly extensive contact tracing, mask mandates, ventilation, bubbles, and social distancing. But Spain is not perfect, while early on it managed Covid-19, now it is rising again. According to the Washington Post regarding an article about Covid-19 on September 18, in mid-September Spain was averaging 22 cases per 100,000 people. This can be blamed on the vacation season, as more people are interacting with each other. Hard lockdowns were then put in place. But again, this rise in cases was not due to the reopening of schools in Spain.

Spain believes than in-person education is incredibly important, and done right, can still be implemented without a rise in Covid-19 cases. Although, it recognizes that not all countries have the same resources as it. So, it proposes multiple measures. First it recognizes that in order to ensure that schools can stay open, it must first keep thorough track of cases. It proposes a dashboard similar to one implemented in the United States, where schools can anonymously and voluntarily report their cases, and safety strategies they are using. This can help keep track of cases in schools, and use it to so see what policies are effective. But, because this is voluntary, it must be upgraded and highly recommended by governments around the world to make sure it works. Second, it proposes a plan to provide funding for schools to improve their ventilation systems. When many people are indoors and are in close contact there is less airflow to break up

and dilute the virus particles in the air. Ventilation that brings in a lot of air from outside and minimizes recycled air is very important. But not all schools have the budget to improve this ventilation, which is why Spain proposes a plan that provides funding for those less privileged schools. And third government provides facilities to create and distribute sanitary equipment to schools. This includes things like extra masks, plexiglass dividers, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant. When having remote education is not accessible to everyone and is not a productive way to learn, to better our youth we must look for ways to put them in school safely which is why Spain proposes the addition of a Covid-19 tracker dashboard, funding for schools for better ventilation, and that governments create facilities to produce sanitary equipment.

## **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

The movement of cultural property to different countries can happen for multiple reasons. It could be occupation of a foreign power taking the property, the illegal movement of the property, etc. According to unesco.org in 1976 a group of professionals came together to discuss restitution and the return of cultural property to the countries of origin. They asked the Director-General of UNESCO to create a group that can help progress talks that bring these properties back. This group was established in 1978 and was called the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation or the ICPRCP. Countries can appeal to the committee to recover stolen property and return it to the country of origin.

There are not many restitutions in regard to Spain, but there are some key incidences. According to Marc-André Renold of the University of Geneva in 1941 and 1956 Spain and France passed laws for the Guimet Museum to return around 60 items made in Japan. According to illicitculturalproperty.com in 2009 Spain tried to recover coins found in a shipwreck by an exploration team that wanted to keep them.

Spain proposes that the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation be expanded. Currently countries can appeal to it, to get property back. With an expanded committee and organization, the committee could go out and research pieces themselves and see if the country of origin wants the piece back. This way countries that may not have had full knowledge of either the committee or the stolen property can be restituted. An expanded committee means that countries can recover all of their important cultural items and property so that their culture can be fully respected and preserved.

*Delegation from: Sweden*

*Represented by: Hawken*

*Position Paper for United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization*

The issues presented to the Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization are the response to Covid in Education and Return of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. Sweden has made strides to ensure the safe education of the population during the pandemic. Sweden is also committed to working with other countries to resolve any issues.

**I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

Covid-19 has posed challenges and threats for all countries, Sweden included. The delegation of Sweden believes that education is vital for every child and maintains it is a human right per article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Schooling for children is a fundamental place for student development, and not all students have access to materials allowing them to be successful in online classes. According to UN statistics, over a million students have been affected by school closures over safety concerns for Covid-19. Sweden is dedicated to ensuring proper and fair education, as demonstrated in support of A/HRC/RES/44/3.

The issue of accessibility of students to online learning and resources is essential. Many lower-income households lack access to adequate technology and internet connectivity. Considering if the capacity to distribute technology resources must be a collective consideration. Another obstacle with schools during the pandemic is child safety. Children at home that are receiving food through school programs means increased hunger in children. In A/RES/44/25, a child's right to education and a standard of living is upheld, access to social security for children, such as free school lunches if needed, is included.

The resource and support system "Skola Hemma" was created and launched in March. The website includes posted resources for teachers and schools making transitions online. The abundance of accessible and free resources proved helpful in the transition to online instruction. PowerPoints guiding schools through a variety of circumstances assisted the quick response in March and beyond. These resources helped schools adopt and communicate a plan of action to families and students, relieving stress. Aiding countries in a collective project of similar nature would have practical benefits for all involved parties. Necessary support efforts like these can help reduce some stress from the population and improve online instruction quality. A collective effort to evolve a resource for countries as part of a UN initiative would be a stride in the right direction. Making learning resources accessible on multiple types of devices is essential, as some students do not have access to laptops, and tablets are the only option. The delegation of Sweden emphasizes the importance of education, as demonstrated in the resolutions supported previously. Creating a tracking and contact tracing database would make the returns of in-person schools more achievable. Covid-19 has impacted all countries, and education is an important area to address, as it will have lasting effects on the population. Considering the quality of education itself and the other resources schools provide, such as meals and childcare, is imperative.

## **II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

The restitution of Cultural property to countries of origin is a complicated issue, and a straightforward resolution may not be possible. Some states change their view from case to case. Other countries have set opinions. An estimated 90% of art from sub-Saharan Africa are in European collections and museums. Some of the nations housing these artifacts have been in possession of the art pieces for enough time they feel it belongs in the museum. Another argument against is the ability of the countries of origin to store and display the items correctly.

Sweden has been dedicated to preserving the cultural property of heritage sites of the country and is committed to finding a better way to address the issue. Respect to the parties in possession of the property and countries of origin must be considered to find a solution. While remaining neutral in many votes, like when Sweden abstained from voting for A/RES/52/24, Sweden believes there is a better way to handle the restitution and requests for restitution. Sweden attended The Washington Conference of Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art, whose goal was to create a system to find art stolen during World War II and return the pieces to the proper homes.

One idea Sweden proposes is the country's collaboration in possession of the property and the country of origin to ensure a safe environment to preserve its integrity and cultural value. A collaborative effort with representatives from the UN as moderators, could provide a system improved on from the current one in place. A more formalized request system would make it more accessible and improve the flow. This system would allow the country to seek property return to present the case before the committee, then decide on a resolution, much like the current system. The new part of this system would be the connection and collaboration between the country seeking the return and the state returning the item(s). The partnership would ensure the safety of the piece(s) and eliminate the concern that the country of origin cannot handle the object's preservation.

***Delegation From: Syrian Arab Republic***

***Represented by: The Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology***

**Position Paper for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization**

The issues being presented before the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization are: Education Responses to COVID-19 and Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin. Syria is dedicated to continuing education for students through online platforms and the to the restitution of its cultural property.

**I. Education Responses to COVID-19**

The right to an education is a fundamental human right. Having access to an education is a very powerful tool that is critical for becoming a respectable human and for including impoverished children and adults. However, in the midst of the current global health crisis, over 87 percent of students worldwide have been affected by school closures. Despite existing challenges regarding access to education in the nation, The Syrian Arab Republic greatly supports the continuation of education despite the ongoing health crisis.

Since the start of the global COVID-19 pandemic, Syria has had one of the lowest public number of COVID-19 cases. At the beginning, the Syrian Arab Republic's Ministry of Education has launched and utilized numerous learning platforms in order, such as YouTube and the Syrian Educational Platform to allow students to continue exercising their right to learn. Since doing so, Syria's higher education ministry has allowed many schools to reopen despite protests against it. The ministry has also implemented sanitary measures in schools in order to ensure the safety of students and staff members. Proper sanitation and social distancing have been used to the best of the schools' and universities' abilities. These measures, however, differ across schools, depending on the fear of students and staff, and are not very strict, with many cases of the virus still existing. The ministry supports that the lives of people must go on eventually.

The Syrian Arab Republic believes that education is a priority for students despite the global health crisis. Countries and schools must open eventually. However, due to the continuing fear of the virus from students and parents, safety measures should be implemented. In general, Syria would like to see a compromise between the safety of students, their ability to learn, and the continuation of their daily lives before the pandemic.

**II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

Cultural property is defined as tangible items that express the cultural heritage of a group. These include works of art, historical buildings and monuments, and museum and library collections and archives. Many of Syria's cultural artifacts and objects have been illegally traded and destroyed, and many historical sites have been looted. This irreplaceable property is essential to preserving the culture of Syria and must be protected. The Syrian Arab Republic strongly supports the restitution of cultural property to countries of origin.

Cultural property of Syria has continuously been looted and passed through neighboring nations, but efforts to protect the property have been made. In May 1954, UNESCO accepted a resolution on the Hague Convention, asserting that protecting cultural property, especially during armed

conflict, could be considered customary law. Article 7 of the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property also addressed the issue, stating that the import of stolen cultural property from a museum or an important site is prohibited. It also stated that if the state of origin requests the object back, the object should be returned. Of course, these acts didn't necessarily work very well, and many culturally important stolen or looted objects still have not been returned. Then, in 2014, UNESCO, with funding from the European Union, launched the Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Heritage Project in yet another effort to safeguard and protect the Syrian Arab Republic's cultural heritage. Still, many of the Syrian Arab Republic's cultural properties and artifacts have not been returned, which is partially due to ongoing conflict in the area.

The restitution of cultural property to the country of origin is a very important issue for the Syrian Arab Republic, though due to conflicts in the area, the job may be much harder. Since UNESCO has worked on solving the problem before, Syria hopes to see more protection of cultural property and greater effort in having stolen or destroyed cultural property be compensated for. Action should be taken against the states who have seized and not returned artifacts as many disputes still have not been settled. Syria hopes that our cultural heritage will be restored, returned, and protected.

*Delegation from: Venezuela*

*Represented by: Lake Ridge Academy*

**Position Paper for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

Coming forward to this committee today are two topics. One such topic is the response to the decrease in quality of education as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Another such topic is the restitution of cultural property to the country of origin. The Delegation of Venezuela looks forward to resolving these issues today. Thank you.

**I. Education Response to COVID-19**

As it pertains to the success of our nations, education is one of the most important factors in deciding the future of the globe. This is why it is so immensely important to continue expanding education for years to come. Unfortunately, with the recent pandemic stifling businesses and shutting down schools, we have seen a massive decrease in national schooling systems and their standards of education. Our delegation believes that this is unacceptable and we must find a way to build up education once more while trying to fight this deadly disease. Some key factors that we will need to focus on are the increase in quality and engagement in online education. Another key factor is attempting to reopen in-person schools with safe measures so that no one is at high risk of contracting COVID-19. Our delegation purely believes we should focus many resources onto opening school safety and allowing the future generation to be educated. We must as a body work towards improving online learning and patching its many flaws. Regardless of whatever situation, education is one of the most important subjects that we should work towards, so that people will have access to information should they need it, especially in a time like this, with a pandemic raging and closing schools. If we do not act now, many education systems will potentially be weakened. However, this is a vital opportunity to expand education internationally, as a reform of the school system can lead to many benefits, as the school system becomes integrated with modern technology. Despite many flaws with the online education system, and many problems with opening up traditional schools, the delegation of Venezuela believes this committee can come together on a resolution that can ease the opening of traditional schools and advance the technology of online schooling in order to improve the quality of education in schools internationally.

**II. Restitution of Cultural Property to Countries of Origin**

Restitution of cultural property has always been an important topic in modern history. Particularly when multiple countries started to declare independence. The delegation of Venezuela firmly believes that cultural repatriation should be fulfilled due to multiple factors. First of all, cultural ownership should be a particular nation's tie to a particular art piece or object of importance. While it is true that it is not particularly clear the bounds of a certain culture, our delegation believes cultural restitution should happen in some form. One such example of our cultural restitution is the restitution of 196 artifacts to Costa Rica in January of 2018. The delegation of Venezuela believes that the culture that can most appreciate an artifact or, in other words, take the most meaning from such artifact is the culture that has a direct connection to said artifacts/works of art, and has a cultural bond to these artifacts. Our delegation believes that developing countries such as ourselves should support each other's interests in developing a healthy climate for cultural restitution and developing a system in order to ease the process of doing so. Despite multiple problems regarding cultural restitution, such as cultural borders not being definite, the restitution process itself being difficult, and many other factors, the delegation of Venezuela believes that this committee can come together on a resolution that develops said method of cultural restitution. We look forward to coming together with a resolution on this matter. Thank you.