

**Forum:** Health Committee  
**Topic:** On measures to promote and implement sustainable and fair lockdown procedures in the event of a global pandemic  
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## **Introduction**

### **Introduction to the Committee**

The Health Committee is concerned with the general health of the world's population and scrutinizes the major health issues in order to pursue the third category of the Sustainable Development Goals; good health and well-being. The purpose of the Health Committee is to promote and implement physical, psychological and emotional well-being of our world through coming up with solutions that will guide us to the ensured healthy lives and welfare. It is critical to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being at all ages in terms of sustainable development. The world is currently experiencing a global health catastrophe unlike any other in history—COVID-19 has been causing human suffering, severe economic downturn, and collapse of billions of lives worldwide. The global health crisis poses a worldwide danger and has demonstrated the crucial necessity for preparedness and investment in 21<sup>st</sup> century public health services.

### **Background information**

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, it was reported by the World Health Organization that a previously unknown virus was identified in Wuhan, China. It has been stated by the Chinese officials that the disease was not a reoccurrence of the Severe Acute Respiratory or Middle East Respiratory Syndrome despite that the symptoms involved severe respiratory disease such as cold, flu, or pneumonia. They have identified the virus as a novel virus, which the WHO has later named it as "COVID-19". The virus had rapidly spread overseas, and on January 21<sup>st</sup> of 2020, the U.S officials confirmed their first infection case of the novel virus along with confirmed cases in numerous other countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Thailand. In spite of the high infection rates on a global scale, WHO did not declare the virus as a "public health emergency of international concern" until the official announcement made by the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The central government of China had

immediately imposed a lockdown in Wuhan and other cities with infected cases with an effort to quarantine after the announcement of the epidemic. By enacting efficient yet forceful lockdown measures, China was able to secure the number of new infected cases. This, however, was not the situation everywhere else throughout the world. For instance, the president of the United States and numerous democrats performed anti-lockdown protests and social media uploads against government-imposed restrictions in response to the virus, facing thousands of new virus cases per day. The virus so far has caused more than 5.11 million deaths and more than 254 million infected cases over the course of the two years—lockdown procedures are critical to limiting contacts as well as minimizing the further spread of the virus.

### **Topic Overview**

The topic “On measures to promote and implement sustainable and fair lockdown procedures in the event of a global pandemic” is fraught with uncertainty, as the goal is to encourage a “sustainable” and a “fair” lockdown, in which the two phrases appear to contradict one another. While some countries may pursue a “sustainable” lockdown in order to perform a long-term lockdown with no restrictions being breached, some countries may look for a “fair” lockdown concerning the guarantee of essential human rights during such restriction. As an example, China is a country with an authoritarian government and may prioritize a “sustainable” lockdown to be imposed on the population through enforcing obligations on wearing masks, quarantine, security cameras and so on. On the other hand, the U.S is a typical example of a democratic country that may pursue a “fair” lockdown. Instead of imposing restrictions and lockdowns, they would prioritize the economic activity of individuals and allow them to perform their daily actions even with high number of infected cases. This way, your responsibility as a delegate is to seize and understand what your respective country prioritizes in order to contribute to the best possible solution for the topic. Delegates must recognize, however, that the two concepts are not mutually exclusive. This is due to the fact that a sustainable lockdown is unattainable unless it is fair to some extent in the long run, and as a result, the primary goal of the conference is to determine how far countries should work out each of the components of lockdown. In conclusion, delegates must seek to reach an agreement in the level of “sustainability” and “fairness” while the lockdown serves its goal when taking place, since a lockdown with force could be desirable for an authoritarian government while a democratic government would prefer a lockdown with negotiations and fairness. Hence, it is also crucial for delegates to clearly understand the political structures of their respective countries.

### **Functions of “Promotion”**

Promoting is an act of encouraging an event or an action to take place, and it happens through generating a change in one's psychological state. In case of the pandemic, promotions hold a power to convince the public into believing in certain procedures for the recovery from COVID-19. Linguistic and visual devices are used to frame the conceptions of certain aspects in order to manipulate the viewers and the public. This way, promoting can be a vital key to influence the society's perceptions of the disease and the idea of "lockdown".

## **A Reminder**

Although you may be urged as delegates to discuss the solution or vaccination for COVID-19, as they also are a part of the issue, make sure to keep in mind that our topic addresses "sustainable and fair lockdown". I, as a chair will strive to keep the conference on topic, and you, as a delegate must prepare and research without deviating from the central idea. The resolutions must include guidelines preparing for any future outbreaks like COVID-19.

## **Possible solutions**

Although there have been efforts made over the few years in order to perform lockdowns in form that meets the needs of each respective countries, and one of the reasons why this issue still remains prevalent is because of the negative reputation "lockdown" has in terms of government intervention in one's restriction in movement. Considering this situation, the delegate nations should envisage that establishing promotions and media framing in order to cause a change in the public's perspectives would be a possible solution to perform a "sustainable" and a "fair" lockdown. Increasing taxation to media that is thoroughly used could be an example, although this must be done in a way the government's objectivity is maintained. If the government becomes too prejudiced in their decisions, it may be accused of political manipulation by controlling the media and violate the freedom of expression rights.

Moreover, the measures brought by the committee are not always successful due to the economic situation of individuals as not everybody are able to perform their work from home. Hence, the governments should be flexible in application of their economic policies. Delegates must conduct research on various economic conditions and monetary policies that have the ability to salvage a country from an economic recession.

In addition, combining the elements of "fairness" and "sustainable" lockdowns in order to meet the need of preventing from further spread of the virus yet still being able to have freedom as individuals could be done. This way, delegates and nations must contemplate the "fairness" and "sustainable" measures along with other various aspects that are vital to a country's overall welfare.

## Key terms

*COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease):* A highly contagious respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

*Epidemic:* The occurrence of illnesses in a community or a specific region, specific health-related behavior, or other health related events that occur in excess of what is expected.

*Framing effects:* A cognitive bias where people make choices on option depending upon how the options are presented.

*Lockdown:* An imposed isolation or restriction of access of animals, humans, and materials suspected of carrying infectious disease or virus.

*Pandemic:* An epidemic that occurs over a wide range of area, crossing through international boundaries and typically affecting a large number of people.

*Promotion:* Activity that supports or encourages a cause, venture, or aim.

*Quarantine:* A state, period, or place of isolation in which humans or animals that have been exposed to infectious disease are placed.

*World Health Organization (WHO):* A specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health and deals with major health issues around the world.

## Timeline of Major Events

*2019 December 31<sup>st</sup>* —The Wuhan Municipal Health Organization reports that a new virus has been identified in Wuhan, China.

*2020 January 11<sup>th</sup>* —Chinese state media had reported the first death from the illness caused by the virus.

*2020 January 20<sup>th</sup>* —First confirmed cases outside China occurred in Japan, South Korea, Thailand, as well as the United States.

*2020 January 23<sup>rd</sup>* —The Chinese authorities closed off the city of Wuhan.

*2020 January 30<sup>th</sup>* —The World Health Organization officially declared a “global health emergency of international concern”.

*2020 February 2<sup>nd</sup>* —The first coronavirus death was reported outside of China, which was in the Philippines.

*2020 February 11<sup>th</sup>* —The World Health Organization proposed an official name for the coronavirus: COVID-19.

*2020 March 17<sup>th</sup>* —Japan and Germany, the two of the world’s largest economies entered recessions.

*2020 March 24<sup>th</sup>* —The United Kingdom enters lockdown.

*2020 April 2<sup>nd</sup>* —The total COVID-19 cases exceeds 1 million.

*2020 June 27<sup>th</sup>* —The total COVID-19 cases exceeds 10 million.

## **Relevant UN Treaties and Events**

The United Nations has been implementing various actions and policies as the outbreak of COVID-19 has become a global threat, and the role of the UN became significantly crucial.

The UN’s response to COVID-19 promotes the three following pillars of operation:

- Delivery of a large-scale, coordinated and comprehensive health response.
- Adoption of policies that address the devastating socioeconomic, humanitarian and human rights aspects of the crisis.
- A recovery process that builds back better.

As part of the response, the UN is issuing policy briefs to provide governments in areas of: food security and nutrition, people on the move, mental health, human rights, debt, jobs and social protection, cities, tourism, socio-economic impact, inequality, education, universal health, people with disabilities, older persons, children, women, regions like Africa, Arab States, South-East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and so on. The details of each of the policies can be viewed in UN’s official website.

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