

Controlling transport regulation to limit the spread of diseases:

Hello, my name is Alec Thompson and I'll be chairing the Health Committee alongside Rachel Jackson this year. We are excited to see the interesting solutions you invent for our chosen topics, especially considering we have no idea how to solve them! We implore you to think outside the box for your resolutions, new delegates and old, all sources of ideas are welcome. For those of you who find this is your first MUN conference I can assure you that, although you may not be as experienced, your creativity and enthusiasm are just as valuable as a seasoned delegates. We also ask you to prepare a position paper, a brief paragraph of around 50 words, detailing your country's view on both issues. Please email this to nbathomp11@edubuzz.org, or nbrjack11@edubuzz.org.

(If you could include a short joke relating to healthcare then it certainly wouldn't hurt your chances for best delegate)

“Humans can reach almost any part of the Earth today within the incubation period for most microbes that cause disease in humans”

This catchy quote from Mary Wilson exemplifies the problems that international travel creates for the spread of disease; what is to be done to regulate this potential disaster?

The question I pose is whether it's justifiable to restrict the transport into a country to limit the spread of certain diseases. It is clear that many deadly diseases have been spread throughout history via international travel, including infections like HIV, influenza, and Dengue fever. Although it seems that restricting travel, like increasing the vaccination certifications required to enter a country, would be beneficial to preventing the spread of disease, it is crucial to take into account the economic damage this would have.

A modern example of this would be the Ebola crisis, during which many African countries had their transport restricted to prevent the spread of the disease. This may have slowed its spread but in the process did large economic damage to the countries themselves; West African countries were predicted to have lost from 20-75% of their national GDP from the reduction in cross-border trade. Is it worth protecting neighbouring countries at the expense of the ones suffering from outbreaks of disease?

Another example would be the recent concerns over the Rio Olympics and the potential spread of the Zika virus, on one hand those entering and leaving Brazil could be screened for the virus (based on their symptoms) but this would undoubtedly cause a reduction in tourism. Would the potential reduction in the spread of the virus outweigh the damage caused to the economy?

There are various other issues regarding health checks, for example would you instate checks for those leaving West African countries during Ebola, even if it meant hindering these countries' economies? Furthermore many of the countries this regulation would affect

would be developing countries like Sierra Leone and Senegal, which are already struggling economically.

Perhaps it is necessary only for the most serious illnesses, diseases such as SARS, Yellow Fever, Falciparum Malaria and Dengue Fever which could all reduce with stricter border regulation. This brings up other questions however, which diseases would be considered dangerous enough to screen for? Would the cost of checking for the diseases be better spent on researching a vaccine? These are the kinds of questions worth researching when writing your resolutions, remember to think of any possible effects travel restrictions may have.

Some steps have already been taken to limit the spread of disease caused by globalisation, the GeoSentinel Surveillance Network was setup to study the international movements of diseases. Furthermore the [International Health Regulations \(IHR\)](#) was instituted to provide important safeguards in limiting the growth of infectious diseases.

Some points to consider:

- How would your country be affected by limitations on travel, do they rely on tourism?
- How would you go about regulating travel?
- Which countries would be focused on?
- Does your country accept tighter UN regulation or would it disagree with travel restrictions?

Keep in mind these are just examples of possible questions you could address, don't feel restricted only to economic damage caused by travel restrictions. We look forward to some interesting, and potentially crazy, resolutions from you.

Useful Websites:

Scientific studies on the spread of diseases (pretty dense but some good stuff for getting an overall picture of the issue):

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3145127/>

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK45724/

<http://thebritishgeographer.weebly.com/the-spread-of-disease-and-its-management.html>

For Economic damage in African countries:

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/africa-in-focus/posts/2014/10/01-ebola-outbreak-west-africa-sy-copley>

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/publication/socio-economic-impacts-ebola-sierra-leone>

Potential ideas for alternative methods to combat disease:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/2016-summer-olympics-rio>

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/statements/2016/zika-olympics/en/>

Against restricting travel:

<http://blogs.cdc.gov/global/2014/10/13/cdc-director-why-i-dont-support-a-travel-ban-to-combat-ebola-outbreak/>

http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/guidance/public_health/travel_advice/en/

<http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=20936>

For travel restriction:

http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/19/2/12-0312_article

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1764026/>

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/07/130730193535.htm>