Addressing Mental Health during humanitarian Crisis

Hi, I am Eilidh Smith, and along with my fellow pupil Archie Fergusson, I will be chairing the Health Committee. I have participated in many MUN conferences, and I am looking forward to chairing for the first time at North Berwick High School's MUN. I think the topics we have chosen for this year are relevant issues and i am looking forward to everyone's contributions during the debates.

I would strongly recommend that in order to prepare for the debate, each delegate produces a position paper on each of the debate topics. It should only be around 50-75 words as it only a brief summary of your countries point of view on the debate topics. It must be noted that in order to be in the running for an award you must produce a position paper for each topic. This can be emailed to: nb13smite@edubuzz.org . On top of writing a position paper, it is recommended that delegates write a resolution for the debate topics. Writing a resolution allows you to further develop your knowledge on your countries stance on the issues, enabling you to contribute more during the debates. If you produce a resolution, you must bring multiple printed copies and an electronic copy on the day. This can be emailed to either of the chairs. Should you require any assistance when writing your resolution then do not hesitate to refer to the NBHS MUN website, it is a useful resource for all things MUN. https://www.edubuzz.org/modelunitednationsnbhs/wp-content/blogs.dir/2579/files/2016/03/How-to-write-a-resolution.pdf

The United Nations Children's Fund estimates that a quarter of the world's children are living in countries affected by conflict or natural disasters. We know that these events can have a long-term impact on children's and young people's mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, and while many programmes have been designed to support children and young people dealing with the consequences, however there are still many people who are not receiving essential care during these horrific events.

There are many cruel consequences after a humanitarian crisis, but it is key that Mental Health is monitored and supported in emergencies within any population exposed to extreme stressors, such as refugees, internally displaced persons,

disaster survivors and terrorism, war or genocide exposed populations. After a Humanitarian crisis such as a natural disasters or warfare, there are a large number of people exposed to extreme stresses and that exposure is a risk factor for mental health and social problems. It is extremely important that people's mental health is monitored. This is because they will be more likely to recover if they feel safe, connected, calm and hopeful and if they have access to social, physical and emotional support.

Humanitarian agencies are increasingly prioritising the provision of evidence-based mental health and psychosocial support for people affected by crises. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the prevalence of mild and moderate mental disorders can increase from a baseline of 10% to an estimated 15–20% in a humanitarian crisis. The prevalence of severe mental disorders can increase from 2–3% to 3–4%. At the same time, unrest and conflict exacerbate the challenges in delivering high-quality mental health services. In the Central African Republic, instability and the presence of armed groups have forced people in need of MHPSS to travel further to receive care. Many are simply unable to obtain the support they need. In Iraq, where an estimated 20% of the population will suffer mental health problems at some point in their life, only 6% are able to access treatment. This is a huge problem, and this is when the state or government should intervene in making sure that citizens affected by crisis should be able to receive essential care efficiently and easily.

Points To Consider:

- Is your country extremely affected by this? If so what can they do to improve support for people?
- Problems that can occur if people's Mental Health is ignored during or after a crisis.
- Is it the state's responsibility to provide accessible care to people whose mental health is affected by a crisis?
- Should other countries within the UN intervene if the country affected cannot provide for their people?
- How to change your countries view on Mental Health

Useful Links for research:

- https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/global-youth/2017/11/06/mental-health-and-wellbeing-after-humanitarian-emergencies-what-do-we-know-about-support-programmes-for-children-and-young-people-in-low-and-middle-income-countries/
- http://www.who.int/mental_health/emergencies/en/
- https://internationalmedicalcorps.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/194-MentalHealth_2011_4P_HQP.pdf
- https://www.gov.uk/dfid-research-outputs/mental-health-and-psychosocial-support-in-humanitarian-crises