

National High School Model United Nations 2012

Country: Equatorial Guinea

Committee: Commission on Science and Technology for Development

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Topic A: **The Development of Global Health Technology**

INTRODUCTION – POLITICAL SITUATION

Equatorial Guinea has been under Spanish rule for over 180 years. It's considered to be the smallest country in the African continent.

The economy running in this country is mainly based on the exportation of oil discovered in last decades; but this massive increase of the income hasn't made people's life better. Their social, economical and sanitary condition has been and is still improving very slowly because most of the money is redirected to the country counters.

People living in this country have very small rights because the political system keeps reducing this rights in order to earn more money underpaying people jobs.

As it's presented, the political situation in this country isn't really good and its main issue is the power it concentrated in just one person – PRESIDENT TEODORO OBIANG NGUEMA MBASOGO. He has been on power since 1979. It doesn't matter if the country is seen as a constitutional democracy, it's president continues to exert almost total control over the political system and has discouraged political opposition.

COUNTRY POSITION

As said before the economical and political system is totally corrupted. This corruption

tendency can be found even under Equatorial Guinea's health system.

As the government cares just about economical interests it has never and will never have the necessity to improve the whole medical system because this has been used and it still is to calm political personal proposals.

As an example we can surely take the medical center "La Paz" in Bata that has been requested personally by our president. This center has been built using state funds, but, as the "Virgen de Guadalupe" centre, it functions as a private entity of President Obiang and his wife. Just to give a shot to how bad the situation is we want to tell that a hospitalization in the "La Paz" center is equivalent to two and a half months' salary. Worse is the situation with the intensive care unit because for just one night it would be necessary the amount of money earned in six months without eating. That is using our standard salaries.

That is why we can consider the whole system as undeniably politicized, the ideological loyalty to the ruling regime takes precedence over competency and the quality of patient care.

Some actions that the regime has taken to fight against horrible diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV, malaria and onchocerciasis have been possible only because of the political pressures specifically made to cover political gaps or to provide economical benefits to individuals allied with the government.

The incapability of the political system to coordinate the health system is due to two simple causes. The first is fact that the real technology is hidden to prevent the economical destruction. The second cause is that even though slowly the modern structures (ex. "La Paz" or "Virgen de Guadalupe") are growing, the country still recognizes a national association of witches and healers known as ASOMETRAGE.

There is no way to get a realistic picture of the overall health situation and that's why our country doesn't have any good health statistic system at all.

The only thing we really know is that the total mortality rate is very high but because there are no statistic systems we can't tell approximate the number.

Finally as a conclusion we want the whole world to know that there is no way to talk about our state as one that has a good health system and that's because our all political system is corrupted.

PROPOSED ACTIONS AND SOLUTIONS

We already know what to do to fix our situation. The government should change and the whole health system should be autonomous ruled by competent people so that it would care more about people's necessities.

Some other actions that we think should be done are the following:

- Increasing the annual health care budget by a factor of 10, from 0.59% in 2010 and 0.52% in 2011, to 5% annually, and guarantee the availability of these funds.
- Establishing universal standards of practice for all health professions, introducing essential ethical and legal instruments, monitoring the quality of knowledge of health care professionals, updating when necessary, and fighting against illegal practices.
- Providing well-educated human resources and adequate material resources to hospitals.
- Organizing a rigorous, sustained, and monitored campaign against the major endemic diseases (malaria, Tuberculosis, trypanosomiasis, onchocerciasis, etc.) and

sexually transmitted diseases.

- Strengthening and expanding the education and information programs to the population and fight against HIV/AIDS. Guaranteeing free access to antiretroviral treatment for individuals living with HIV.
- Establishing a program of school healthcare, with specific structures organized for care and permanent monitoring of the state of health of school children and students.
- Creating specialized technical control centers to provide disease outbreak alerts, to distribute medicines and medical supplies, and to disseminate health information.
- Redefining the nature and sectors of bilateral and multilateral health assistance.
- With the means currently available to the country, creating a universal social security system, one that will stop functioning as a black box for the ruling class and can start covering all Equatoguineans, regardless of their financial limitations.
- Parallel to these actions, and in partnership with other sectors of the government, developing decent housing, providing access to drinking water and sanitation, and promoting healthy nutrition and eating habits among the population should all become priorities.

Because of our difficult situation we are desperately asking the whole international community to help us change our internal situation. It is still to be considered something really difficult to do and that's why we are concerned that it would be a really long process. We believe that it would be really necessary to convoke a international committee to decide Equatorial Guinea's. This kind of action would be really important because it could start a totally new reformation of the way in which the UN could help the whole world to find a new standard in the quality of life and in the way people would be

represented. The new representatives would be a different type of politicians, who would consider the truth as the only real value to keep.

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Topic B: Biotechnology Capacity Building

Introduction

Biotechnology in recent decades has become a crucial point for the development of new resources useful to the growth of the States that are engaged in research and resolution of problems including an increased production of food or vaccines for many of the diseases regarding humans.

In fact, thanks to biotechnology it's possible to develop plants resistant to many diseases and climatic conditions, as well as having a higher energy supply than the natural version of the same plant.

Moreover there are many other fields in which biotechnology is used to improve the life of man, for example the use of plants such as corn which can be employed in place of petroleum for the production of industrial chemicals or fuel.

Also very important in biotechnological techniques are the use of DNA for the recognition of maternity or paternity of a baby and the DNA analysis for the study of fossils and footprints (in criminology). [reference 2]

To date, developing countries are unable to manage the limited resources at their disposal to achieve a successful development in the fields in which they invest.

In an ECOSOC conference in 2001 was found that these countries do not have sufficient resources to establish a stable line of growth in biotechnology.

Later, there were defined three points with which each developing country would have to work to develop long-term projects in biotechnology: firstly it's necessary to complete the work of training and public awareness on the population, secondly the definition of the main areas of development that the state should develop, and finally the establishment of national institutions for the development and acquisition of new technologies.

Unfortunately, the government action itself is not sufficient without support from the industrialized countries which have advanced and efficient techniques.

A prominent example of the introduction of biotechnology into a country with the necessary information, training, and international participation consists in the introduction of GM maize into South Africa.

In fact, thanks to the development of special seeds in United States and the proper education of the population of South Africa, in 2009 it appeared that approximately 64% of maize used in South Africa was genetically modified.

There are also some problems at the base of the difficulty in establishing a capacity for autonomous development of biotechnology in developing countries: surely these problems include the difficulty in establishing goals compatible with the domestic economy and policy or the appropriation of funds necessary for the establishment of laboratories and research centers (funds that mustn't come from abroad, in order to keep economic independence from industrialized countries).

Fundamental for the construction of efficient development of biotechnology is the definition of regulations that manage the use of biotechnology in order to ensure the safety of the population.

However, it isn't easy to formulate specific laws that protect intellectual property and at the same time that may allow a wide dissemination of these technologies. [reference 1]

An example of FDA regulation on the matter is the necessity to set down the rules on labeling of all GM foods in cases where these have characteristics significantly different from natural products.

This again in order to inform consumers about the processes and ingredients used in the biotechnology-derived product (biosafety). [reference 2]

Of significant importance are the problems of ethical and cultural development that biotechnology brings.

First, some people think that, as regards the manipulation of the genome of plants and animals, there should be no interference in the normal course of nature.

However, the transplantation of human organs is considered ethic although it's as unnatural as the genetic manipulation.

In addition, some think it is necessary to reflect on the possibilities that biotechnology offers, in fact, not everything that can be done must necessarily be done.

To this issue we can also link those related to uncertainty about the environmental impact of long-term interventions at the level of the plant genome and the fact that the knowledge in this field belong to too few experts (often employees of multinational companies) to convince the entire population about the real risks of biotechnology.

Finally there are also many concerns about the role that corporations play in the management of these technologies, especially with regard to the difficulties this could cause to small and medium farmers and the possible dependence that developing countries may develop with use of sterile seeds. [reference 3]

Therefore, we have to consider an international cooperation among the industrialized countries and also among the developing ones, in order to respond to the points and issues raised previously with an international solution that can lead to a real development of biotechnology in all countries that still do not benefit from these technologies.

History and Background of Equatorial Guinea:

With the passage under Spanish control of much of the territory around 1900, Equatorial Guinea has managed to develop a strong economy based on agriculture, particularly through the cultivation and export of cocoa and other products (such as rice, bananas, and timber).

Only in 1968, under pressure from the United Nations, Spain granted independence to Equatorial Guinea which, with a referendum, approved the constitution and a presidential government.

Despite the introduction of a constitution, over the years have followed many dictators who led the country to a state of misery and repression leading to the loss of infrastructure and services for the people.

Since 1979, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo assumes the role of president with a coup and he will continue to serve in the years thanks to pilot-operated and suspicious elections.

The fundamental economic activities in Equatorial Guinea is the extraction and export of petroleum hydrocarbons and significantly above the earnings from agriculture and the timber market.

Although the large turnover from the market for oil, Equatorial Guinea does not invest funds for diversification and enhancement of other national economic activity, becoming even more vulnerable to crises in the energy sector which would defeat the country of most of the annual revenue.

In order to create a more favorable climate for the development of enterprises and private companies, the State launched a series of rules regarding the privatization of the distribution of oil, the liberalization of trade rules, the reduction of tariffs and trade restrictions in addition to the formation of new jobs and the development of education. [reference 4]

Equatorial Guinea is part of the CEMAC, which is a community of 6 central African states whose goal is the economic and social development through a common market and the establishment of regulations that ensure stability and equal opportunity for the member states. [reference 6]

Another important organization in which Equatorial Guinea join is NEPAD, an international organization that aims to develop an entire region of Africa, with the introduction of relevant political, economic and cultural community agreements.

Among the many measures taken for the economic growth of the African zone, there is one regarding the assimilation and adaptation of existing biotechnologies and the establishment of specialized research centers, especially with regard to agricultural and pharmaceutical fields.

This organization, already supported by many international development agencies, is committed to provide the African region funds and tools to build a biotechnology capacity and promote the entry of mainland into the world market through the improvement of product quality. [reference 10]

Our country has trade relations with many others countries, including Spain, USA, France, England. From the United States Equatorial Guinea imports mainly industrial machinery and electrical, as well as medical equipment, metals and chemicals.

This, however, isn't equal to the value in oil that our state exports in the U.S, of about 2.2 billion U.S. dollars.

But there are new business partners, first of all China, which started in the last decade in our country a large number of public and infrastructural projects and, but with imports from their country of raw materials and cheap labor.

China has also signed a cooperation agreement with the humanitarian delivery in our country of personnel and medical equipment. In a few years even many Chinese private enterprises have been established in the territory. [references 5/7/8]

Possible suggestions and solutions

Equatorial Guinea, as it was directly involved to the establishment of a biotechnology capacity, suggests that the world community gives a strong contribution to international organizations such as NEPAD.

If the necessary resources will be allocated, especially from industrialized weights, many developing countries will be able to manage their own biotechnological resources, with related products and benefits.

Our country also wants to draw the attention of the international community on another interesting project that is of international concern: the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICEGB).

This non-profit research center (with offices in Italy, India, and South Africa) provides a research environment and training of the highest standard in the field of genetic biotechnology to provide solutions in pharmaceutical and food areas in developing countries.

Therefore Equatorial Guinea considers essential the support of these organizations to which we must provide all the assistance necessary to achieve the goals set, because we believe that only sharing community policies we can come to concrete results.

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