

Hello Delegates,

my name is Kayla Haririan and I will be your chair this year at the MVHS annual MUN Conference! I am a junior at Mission Viejo High School and this is my third year involved in MUN. MUN has helped me understand many of the challenges facing the world today and has helped with my communication skills. Aside from MUN, I play soccer here at Mission as I am on the MVHS Girls Varsity Soccer Team. I am also involved in volunteering at the Laguna Hills Recreational Hospital on the weekends to help elders in my community. If you have any questions about the conference please feel free to email me at mvhsmunsc@gmail.com

I. Background of Crisis in Puerto Rico:

On the evening on September 20, 2017, Hurricane Maria- a Category 5 storm that directly hit the island with winds over 150 mph and deadly rainfall and flooding- created the most dire of effects for the Puerto Rican people. The island, an unincorporated territory of the United States located in the northeast Caribbean Sea and home to 3.4 million US citizen, were immediately in danger as Maria made landfall and took a disastrous path that bisected the island from the Southeast to the Northwest. The aftermath of Maria's destruction is still significantly pervasive months after the storm.

Of the many Caribbean nations devastated by Maria's path of destruction, many officials declare the dire conditions in Puerto Rico to a full-blown humanitarian crisis as nearly all of the 3.4 million residents need assistance recovering from the storm. Over 50 people have died as a result of the worst natural disaster the island has seen in the last century. However, with virtually no electricity, running water, and almost 90% of the nation's crops destroyed leaving the nation with massive economic damage, it can be projected that this death toll as a result of Maria's wrath will continue to rise. Furthermore, waterborne illnesses are on the rise in Puerto Rico in the wake of Hurricane Maria, and as a result many health professionals are concerned that the storm's aftermath could lead to a massive epidemic on the destroyed island. Puerto Rico Public Affairs officials have already reported deaths from leptospirosis, a bacterial disease typically spread through contact with contaminated water, which is a prevalent issues with the lack of clean drinking water available to citizens.

The Security Council of the United Nations should be the model for helping in global issues such as the rebuilding of an entire nation. It is our goal to create effective and efficient solutions to rebuild the nation of Puerto Rico and assist their citizens in this dire time of need.

II. U.N. Involvement in Crisis in Puerto Rico & Assistance in Rebuilding Efforts:

Historically, the United Nations has been quite involved in assisting nations plagued by the horrors of natural disasters. The United Nation's efforts to address the urgent needs of affected member states in the wake of the September 2017 destruction is no different. In a statement issued by his spokesperson, UN Secretary-General António Guterres voiced his sadness at the destruction caused across the Caribbean region by Hurricane Maria in a context

“where many islands are already working to respond to the devastation and suffering arising from Hurricane Irma earlier this month.” Various UN agencies have been assisting Puerto Rico and many other nations periled by the storms in order to help begin the efforts to rebuild these nations. However, the case in Puerto Rico is unique, as the entire island is virtually destroyed. The United Nations has created a \$15.1 million regional humanitarian response plan, covering the urgent needs of the most vulnerable populations impacted. Yet, there is more that must be done to rebuild the vast number of critically affected areas in Puerto Rico immediately and in the long-term if they hope to become sustainable ever again in the future.

III. Possible Solutions for Rebuilding Puerto Rico:

Devising and implementing solutions and actions for national recovery in the wake of a natural disaster is nothing short of complicated. Although the devastation in Puerto Rico is horrendous, the member states of the United Nations can come together to relieve the suffering nation. First, this tragedy, despite complete destruction, can possibly be seen as a foundational way to rebuild the sustainable nature of Puerto Rico’s economy. With the complete downfall of the electrical network throughout the nation after the hurricane, rebuilding this system with renewable energy resources will not only assist in the rebuilding of Puerto Rico’s infrastructure so their economy can operate, but also will affect long term change in the sustainable nature of their nation.

Moreover, the poor citizens of Puerto Rico have been hardest hit by Hurricane Maria. With a large amount of mortality rates and many living in hazard-prone areas, it is essential that we create solutions to prevent the outbreak of illnesses that have already spread throughout the nation. One possible solution to preventing a troublesome health epidemic could include NGO’s going into Puerto Rico and providing health services to those in need. However, this is only a small fix. Rather, policy should focus on rebuilding the national infrastructure as soon as possible to prevent their potential reliance on emergency aid. Solutions should look towards rebuilding housing and public infrastructure to higher standards of safety in order to minimize human and economic losses in future events and helps soften the fear and trauma of survivors as they re-emerge into social and economic life.

Additionally, one imperative item that should be considered in creating all solutions when working with the people of Puerto Rico is to execute *their* vision for the rebuilding of *their* nation. The solutions created should align with national goals for rebuilding.

IV. Bloc Positions for Rebuilding Puerto Rico:

Because the rebuilding of a nation is primarily focused on economic growth, the blocs have been split into tiers of Developed versus Developing Nations. However, blocs can also be established geographically as well and this can be implemented via delegate discretion.

1. ***Nations with Advanced Economies-*** These nations will have the financial ability to support programs for economic rebuilding in Puerto Rico. They also may have knowledge and insight into solutions that align with successful fulfillment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals as they can apply to Puerto Rico.
2. ***Economies in Transition-*** Many of these nations may have also been victims of natural disasters in their past, so they may have keen insight and solutions into educational and economic programs that have and have not been successful in their nations. Although, they may not have the financial ability to support Puerto Rico's development since they are most likely focusing on their own infrastructural growth, they may have suggestions for program models that can help in the rebuilding of Puerto Rico.

V. Questions to Consider for Rebuilding Puerto Rico:

1. How can the Security Council implement solutions in Puerto Rico without infringing on the nation's independent sovereignty all while aligning policies for rebuilding with the goals of the nation itself?
2. What is the feasibility of the solutions your nation would like to implement?
3. Should the Security Council focus primarily on short term interventions or long term solutions?
4. Should solutions focus strictly on economic rebuilding or should plans for social well-being of the citizens who were affected by the hurricane also be considered?
5. What does it mean to rebuild Puerto Rico "better" than it was before? How can we use this concept in guiding our proposed solutions?
6. How does this natural disaster lead into a greater conversation about the U.N Sustainable Development Goals and climate change?

VI. Works Cited for Rebuilding Puerto Rico:

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