



Mission Viejo High School MUN
34th Annual Conference
Vox Populi



3rd SCH-Conflict Diamonds

Hi delegates! I'm Madison Stein and I will be your head chair for 3rd SCH. I have been in Model United Nations for four years now. I'm a Netflix addict who loves to go to the beach and hang out with friends. I am in the IB program and take honors/AP classes. I also play soccer and work at Nekter. I look forward to meeting all of you at the conference and if you have any questions please feel free to email me at: mvhsmunsch@gmail.com

3rd SCH, or the United Nations Third Committee of the General Assembly, is one that focuses on Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural issues, hence the acronym of SCH. This is a committee where any UN member state may participate, but proceedings always focus on humanistic problems that may pertain to a particular region or may span multiple continents along with any intermediate range. This committee generally debates topics relating to human rights, refugee situations, and humanitarian crises.

Background:

Conflict diamonds are diamonds that are illegally traded to finance war efforts mainly in Central and Western Africa. Conflict diamonds are often referred to as blood diamond or war diamonds. These diamonds became prominent in the 1990s during the Sierra Leone conflict when about 4% of the world's diamond production were conflict diamonds. There have been other situations in which blood diamonds have also been used in Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola and other places to finance conflicts. Many diamonds are sold by warlords and rebels to obtain weapons during times of war. Though some conflicts have resolved, conflict diamonds are still used.

UN Involvement:

The United Nations, governments, the Global Diamond Industry, and NGOs such as Global Witness and Partnership Africa Canada worked together to create the Kimberley Process Certification System to help eradicate conflict diamonds. This system was formally adopted in 2003 and guards against conflict diamonds entering the legitimate diamond supply chain. Furthermore, the United Nations General Assembly has urged countries to finalize an international certification scheme for the valuable gems and to implement the plan as quickly as possible. The Assembly also adopted a resolution calling for the full implementation of existing Security Council measures targeting the illicit trade in rough diamonds that play a role in fuelling conflict. The resolution also encourages the Kimberley Process to resolve outstanding issues related to initiatives established in 2000 by Southern African diamond-producing countries to stem the flow of rough diamonds used by rebels to finance armed conflict aimed at overthrowing legitimate governments. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) was also established, where members are required to certify that all rough diamond exports are produced through legitimate mining and sales activities and are "conflict-free." Each shipment carries a certificate that details where the diamonds came from, how they were mined, where they were cut and polished, the parties involved, and their ultimate destination. The idea is that members of the Kimberley Process cannot trade with non-members.



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Possible solutions:

Though the Kimberley Process has been established, it has yet to demonstrate itself capable of stopping the trade because of a lack of political will among member states. While diamonds have been used to fund conflict, the problem is not the diamonds themselves, but the rebels who exploit diamonds (along with other natural resources) to achieve their illicit goals. As a result, it is vital to resolve conflicts in war-torn areas to stop the sale of diamonds to fund these conflicts. The Kimberley Process should be enforced more efficiently by placing embargos on states who do not comply with or use the Kimberley Process. Consumers can also have an effect by demanding details about the diamonds being sold in order to reduce the amount on conflict diamonds being bought. There needs to be a push for more awareness, acknowledgement, and support for stopping conflict diamonds. This can be done through the media, seminars, schools, etc.

Bloc Positions:

Eastern Europe: Eastern Europe claims to want to see an end to the illegal diamond trade, but some countries benefit from the illegal diamond trade. Eastern Europe trades small arms and other weapons to rebel groups in Africa in exchange for rough diamonds. On paper, many Eastern European countries support the Kimberley Process and have signed the agreement.

Asia: Although most Asian nations do not have national issues with conflict diamonds, they would like to see the illegal diamond trade eliminated. Thirteen Asian nations have signed the Kimberley process.

Africa: Seeing that many African nations are currently dealing with the issues surrounding conflict diamonds, African governments are against the increase of conflict diamonds and the illegal diamond trade. But, most African nations do not have the financial resources or the governmental infrastructure to make any significant strides towards eliminating the illegal diamond trade. Also, many governments are currently dealing with internal rebellions and civil wars, which are aggravated by the conflict diamonds.

South America: South America is currently dealing with the issues surrounding conflict diamonds on their own continent. Countries such as Brazil, Venezuela, and Guyana have diamond mines, and are exporters of rough diamonds, but all three nations have significant black markets for conflict diamonds. Many of these governments lack legal processes to stop the illegal diamond trade; they generally recognize the problems that the illegal trade creates, especially in terms of conflict.

Middle East: The Middle East does not have a particularly firm stance concerning conflict diamonds. Overall, the Middle East would like to see a solution to the illegal diamond trade, but no Middle Eastern nation has taken an active role in investigating the issue. Today only Israel, United Arab Emirates, Turkey, and Lebanon have signed and adhere to the Kimberley Process.



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Questions to

Consider:

Preventing conflict diamonds from entering the consumer market is a concern to diamond-selling countries. It is also a major concern to the international community. Why? Is it a direct concern to your country?

How did conflict diamonds play a role in these conflicts?

How did the international community try to end the violence?

Does your country participate in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme? If not, why?

Why might members of the diamond industry not want to join? What are the benefits of joining KPCS?

Works Cited

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