

# MOCK UNITED NATIONS

## SECONDARY LEVEL

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**MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL # 6:** Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

### Activity Snapshot:

In a simulation, students will represent different countries in the United Nations to debate and vote on a resolution that asks industrial nations to contribute more funds toward the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

### Rationale:

The sixth Millennium Development Goal addresses the devastation being caused by HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, particularly in the developing world. AIDS, especially, is wiping out whole families and an entire generation of parents, leaving grandmothers to care for their grandchildren. In many cases, AIDS orphans become heads of households and care for younger siblings, even though they are still children themselves. Although HIV/AIDS is a global issue, it most seriously affects those living in poverty because they lack access to life-saving medicines. Not only is HIV/AIDS a contributor to poverty, in some cases it is actually reversing progress that has been made to alleviate extreme poverty. By putting themselves in the place of global leaders, students will think about the decision-making process at the national and international levels in matters of unified mobilization.

### Objective:

- Students will learn how the United Nations works.
- By representing and researching a country, students will learn about the devastation of HIV/AIDS and how it hinders development in some of the poorest countries in the world.

**Time:** Three to four 60-minute periods (or more, if time requires)

**Materials:** Research time on the Internet, materials to create flags (option: print the flags from the Internet)

### Online resources:

The United Nations: An Introduction for Students: [www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/unintro/unintro.asp](http://www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/unintro/unintro.asp)

Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS): [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)

The Global Fund: [www.theglobalfund.org](http://www.theglobalfund.org)

UNAIDS Country Information: [www.unaids.org/en/Regions\\_Countries/Countries/default.asp](http://www.unaids.org/en/Regions_Countries/Countries/default.asp)

UN General Assembly Session on HIV/AIDS: [www.un.org/ga/aids/coverage/index.html](http://www.un.org/ga/aids/coverage/index.html)

Millennium Campaign: [www.millenniumcampaign.org](http://www.millenniumcampaign.org)

### Steps:

Research and Introduction

1. Explain to students how the United Nations works based on information you read in “The United Nations: An Introduction for Students” at [www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/unintro/unintro.asp](http://www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/unintro/unintro.asp). This should be a quick overview so that students understand the basics of this international organization. (Note: Depending on prior knowledge of the United Nations, this step may require a whole class.)
2. Working in pairs, students will be randomly assigned to countries. Ideally, there will be an equal representation of African, Asian and developed countries (you can select the countries in advance and

place names in a hat). Each pair must represent a different country.

3. Share the following resolution with your students and let them know this will be the basis of their debate and it will be the resolution on which they will vote as members of the General Assembly at the United Nations.

Be it resolved that all UN member nations commit 0.25 per cent of their gross national income to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. This amount will be separate from each country's foreign aid contributions (or Official Development Assistance). Member nations that do not comply will forfeit their voting rights in the General Assembly for a period of six months

4. Give students sufficient class time (and homework time) to do research based on the following criteria:
  - a. Information about the Global Fund
  - b. General information about the country they are representing (population, GDP/GNI, political situation, etc.)
  - c. Specific information about the HIV/AIDS situation (infection rates, access to anti-retroviral drugs, deaths, AIDS orphans, etc.) in the country and the national response to HIV/AIDS
  - d. Information about global support and barriers to address HIV/AIDS as a global pandemic

### Presentation

5. Ask students to prepare an official statement (2-3 minutes) that will tell the General Assembly (all the other student-represented countries) about their national stance on the resolution. The official statement should provide all the elements of their research on the four areas listed above. It should end with a "[Name of country] supports/does not support this resolution." These presentations will likely take up an entire period.
6. Encourage students to take notes on these official statements for the debate the next day (i.e., each pair will want to keep track of what the representatives from the other countries are saying in relation to the resolution so that they may speak for or against these statements during the debate. Students should make a list of questions they want to ask or remarks they want to make to certain representatives.).

### Debate and vote

7. In the third period, open up the floor to allow students to debate the resolution. Begin by reading the resolution out loud and then allow country delegates to ask questions of each other based on their own official statement or one they've heard from another country.
8. Fifteen minutes before the class period ends, bring the debate to a close. Give students five minutes to confer with their partner on what their final stand will be on the resolution. Then read the resolution one last time and ask countries to vote. Each country only gets one vote (each pair should vote the same way). Ask them to stand if they:
  - a. Agree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Undecided
9. Record and then count the number of people standing next to each of the three categories. The one with the highest number of votes wins. If the votes are highest in the "Disagree" or "Undecided" category, the resolution fails. This means that the resolution dies right there. If the highest number of votes is in the "Agree" category, the resolution passes. This means the United Nations General Assembly has decided to move the resolution to action.
10. Make an official announcement on whether the resolution passes or fails.
11. Hold a class discussion to debrief what they've learned. Discuss the following:
  - a. How easy or difficult is it to come to an international consensus? Why?

- b. Do governments stop to think of the human cost of their decisions?

**Extension and ideas for running a debate:**

Set up the room with desks in a horseshoe style so that students can speak directly to each other from their chairs/desks. Encourage students to print off or reproduce the flag for their countries to place on their desks. On the day of the presentations and debate, they can come dressed in attire that is culturally or nationally specific (Note: This should be built in to their research).

Record some of the highlights of this simulation and, with the principal's permission, ask one or two of the students to read them as part of morning announcements at school or at an assembly. They can read the resolution and announce whether it passed or failed.

Create a scrapbook with all official statements, flags, the resolution, the final decision and any pictures taken. Put it in the library for other students in the school to look through.

**Closure:**

In discussions afterward, students will be able to draw connections between the reality of AIDS for children in the developing world and how it impacts the global community.

**Assessment Suggestions:**

- Research reflected through preparation for the Model United Nations
- Presentation skills during reading of official statement and debate