LXXII
SEVENTY-SECOND SESSION

UNESCO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TOPIC A:
ART AND ENTERTAINMENT AS WEAPONS OF WAR

War is typically associated with direct conflict (i.e. trench warfare, nuclear weaponry, guns, bombs, etc…), yet all of these direct interactions are heightened due to contributions from artistic expression. One of the most common applications of art during war is the creation of propaganda in which mainly films and posters are created in order to recruit troops and ethnically or religiously stereotype the other side. Other ways art and conflict are associated include the acts of destroying culturally significant artwork in order to demoralize opponents, looting and the reselling of art to help finance wars and buy weaponry, and the creation of art to both promote peace and raise funds for soldiers. The different possibilities of applying artistic expression make it difficult to control in times of conflict and have led to millions of culturally significant artifacts being lost, destroyed, or sold. Propaganda and the stereotypes it creates have led to racial prejudices that bleed into modern society, but the application of art in conflict instills a sense of nationalistic pride so great that it is too crucial to not utilize.

I resonate with this topic deeply as art has played a huge role in my life. It may seem odd that I am a microbial biology major passionate about art, but art and science intertwine quite a bit. Some of the earliest scientists were associated with anatomy, which relies heavily on being able to accurately draw the human body. As I continued to explore my passion with art, I realized that its broad definition has allowed for its application in conflict quite often. Art really can be anything—including songs, celebrities, pop culture, social media, etc. This ability to be so easily twisted has allowed for art to be a defining characteristic in national and individual identity. Each and every one of us has a way of expressing ourselves, and in doing so are contributing to a greater national identity rooted in a history of artistic propaganda.

This topic is important because it highlights the complex dynamics and consequences of wars. By examining the role of art in the context of war, we gain insights into the broader socio-political implications of conflicts beyond physical fighting. Understanding how art has been utilized as a tool for propaganda, destruction, looting, and healing enables us to grasp the relationship between culture, creativity, and times of turmoil. Such discussions prompt us to critically analyze the ethics and consequences of using artistic expression as a means to shape public opinion, perpetuate stereotypes, or finance warfare. Moreover, exploring the aftermath of war and the role of art in post-conflict recovery emphasizes the healing potential of creative outlets and the power of cultural preservation. By delving into this topic, we foster a deeper appreciation for the interplay between art, war, and society, ultimately promoting a more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics surrounding armed conflicts and their lasting impact on individuals and communities.

As you begin to explore this topic more and research into solutions, I encourage you to start with looking into the creation of propaganda and the destruction of culturally important objects. These two tactics of conflict are the most prevalent and will be a good stepping stone into other sectors of creative warfare. In detail, what has your country done with propaganda specifically and what stereotypes do they tend to create? Then, has your country purposefully destroyed others' cultural heritage and have they lost any themselves? These two main points are to get you thinking about the economic and social importance of art and from there discern a policy that relates on how to protect and create a national identity rooted in artistic expression during conflict.

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TOPIC B:
BIOTERRORISM IN THE ERA OF CLIMATE CHANGE

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the proliferation of biological weapons and the programs and research associated with them became widespread. Soon, many terrorist groups had access to these weapons of mass destruction and used biological agents such as anthrax and ricin to target small populations. After the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, terrorism became much more of a global concern and regulations for the controlling of active terrorist groups increased. Since then, many assumed that the threat of biological terrorism was practically over—COVID-19 proved this to be incorrect. As climate change progresses and the temperature of the globe warms, the ranges in which pathogens can spread increase rapidly. As humans get infected more often the overuse of drugs weakens immune systems and makes it easier for more life threatening pathogens to infect. The susceptibility of the global population to COVID-19 proved that our immune systems are indeed weakening, from this revelation came the concern that terrorist groups could start a pandemic themselves. There are many contemporary examples of easily accessed plant related diseases such as Coccidioidomycosis, Candida Auris, and Phytophthora infestans which grow in arid environments. This accessibility to biological diseases that easily linger in hospitals and spread rapidly matched with the accessibility to DNA altering technology such as CRISPR make the potential for a terrorist group to design their own biological weapon possible.

This topic is important because studying the intersection of bioterrorism and climate change is vital to comprehend the evolving risks, vulnerabilities, and impacts associated with the time we live in. From the nearly decade-long drought in California to the Australian wildfires of 2019, there is no doubt that the world we live in is permanently altered. As our world changes, so do the in-

teractions that we have with the microorganisms in it. These bacteria were on Earth long before humans were, and are able to adapt much quicker to the increasingly harsh environment. Being able to understand the risks associated with climate change and bacteria and the ease in which bioterrorism can now happen will better prepare future generations to propose effective climate and national security strategies.

My inspiration for this topic comes from taking an introductory biology course my freshman year at UC Berkeley. In this course, I learned about the life cycle of numerous fungi as well as the increasing of their environmental niches (ranges) due to increased global temperatures. We were also introduced to the fungi Cordyceps which was the inspiration for the show "The Last of Us" due to its ability to infect insects, control their limbs, control their brains, and eventually kill the insect when it reached a desirable location for the fungi to grow. This insane phenomenon had me questioning what other terrifying fungal related pathogens had the potential to infect human kind as their ranges increased with climate change. The answer is, a lot. From this research I also learned that the access to these pathogens is quite easy and it is a concern for many nations that terrorist groups will attempt to create a pandemic for susceptible populations.

Bioterrorism as a whole has been occurring for millenia. As early as 600 BCE, conquerors were using purgative herbs to kill their enemies during sieges. Biological weaponry was also prominently used during the Vietnam war with the deployment of rinderpest and Agent Orange to decimate livestock and agriculture for the Vietnamese economy. I encourage you to think about the different vulnerable sectors of your own country to biological attack and how these vulnerabilities are only being heightened due to climate change. From these vulnerabilities, find ways in which your country has or is able to strengthen them and improve the overall health of humankind.

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