

Žilina Model United Nations 2022

**UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENTAL
PROGRAMME**

TOPIC: Tackling Nuclear Waste in Oceania

March 2022

MICHAL KISEL & DOROTA KRESÁŇOVÁ

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS
2. UNDERSTANDING THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE
3. NUCLEAR TEST SITES ALL AROUND THE WORLD
4. IMPACT IN OCEANIA
 - a. Failed compensation and initiative
5. POSSIBILITY OF A NATURAL CATASTROPHE
6. POINTS TO CONSIDER
7. SOURCES

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS

Dear Delegates,

It is our greatest honor to welcome you to ZAMUN's 2022 United Nations Environmental Program committee. As your chairpersons, we can promise that we will make every effort to keep the debates on the highest possible level and provide you with a genuinely unforgettable experience.

For now, we would like to ask you for cooperation. Drafting this document, we wish to bring you closer to the discussed matter. Therefore, we highly recommend perusing those contents carefully. However, the study guide should not remain your only source of knowledge. We strongly encourage you to expand your research as it will help you represent your country and, possibly, get awarded.

Another task waiting for you is to prepare the position paper - a document containing a detailed overview of the government's policy regarding the discussed topic. We also encourage you to write an opening speech, which every delegate will present at the beginning of the debates.

We are looking forward to seeing you in March!

Sincerely,

Michal & Dory

Ps: memes are very much in order

UNDERSTANDING THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE

During the second world war, the Axis powers had a very important member – Japan. Japanese activities in Korea, Manchuria and French Indochina were ruthless and cruel. The empire did it all, from slavery, raping to experiments on humans. However, Japan greatly overestimated their power. On the 7th of December in 1941 they launched an attack on the US by attacking Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. This triggered the USA to join the war effort and eventually break Japan down to its knees. The Manhattan project made a bomb the size and power of which had never been seen before and in August 1945 they bombarded Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by these bombs. Both cities and their populations were wiped out and those who survived were badly burned. It was because of these attacks that Japan capitulated, finally ending the war. It wasn't too long after the second world war ended when the cold war started. The polarization between the west and the east grew every day and all permanent members of the newly formed UNSC realized the great potential of thermonuclear and hydrogen bombs. The most notable arms race was between the USSR and the USA and their respective allies over which bloc would create the strongest, deadliest and biggest bomb. The third country to ever make such a weapon was the UK. With valuable colonial possessions such as Australia, New Zealand, India, Micronesia and others, the Brits were able to test their bombs without needing permission from other countries. France followed this trend and started testing their arsenal in Algeria, French Polynesia and other territories belonging to their dominion. However, we must not forget about other countries with nuclear arsenal. The nuclear arms race in southeast Asia between India and Pakistan.

After its height during 1960's with the Cuban missile crisis, Suez canal crisis and the Tsar bomb detonation, the nuclear arms race started to decline until it ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. With decolonization, new countries

started to emerge, and they were not happy with all the nuclear debris their former colonizers had left. The world started to fully comprehend the effect of nuclear weaponry and in 1968, nations of the world signed the Nuclear Non-proliferation pact which came into effect in 1970. This treaty bans all countries from acquiring new nuclear arsenal and puts a definite ban on all nuclear testing. However, the damage had already been done.

There were also a few instances of countries disposing of their nuclear arsenal, most notably Belarus and Ukraine after the dissolution of the USSR when they inherited the arsenal left over from soviet times. They successfully disposed of their nuclear warheads and arsenal in return for peace insurances – whether it was worth it is up for another debate though. The last one was South Africa in 1989.

After the signing of the NNP, there has been only one country which obtained nuclear arsenal – the DPRK. Their first test of nuclear weapons was conducted in 2006 and the last up to date was in 2017.

NUCLEAR TEST SITES ALL AROUND THE WORLD

Every nuclear nation had to first test their newly acquired weaponry in order to know its potential. Since most of the nuclear nations had their colonies overseas, they conducted their tests there. Funny enough, no tests were conducted in Europe. Most of these tests were conducted in isolated environments, so that no population could be harmed, however the nations did not account for the effects these tests had on the environment. The most harmful ones were carried out in the pacific and Indian oceans. One of the most toxic and damaging bombs were dropped in the Marshall Islands vaporizing entire islands and leaving extreme amounts of nuclear debris. With no place dedicated to store it, the US promised to build a tomb for almost 88 000 cubic meters of nuclear debris on the Majuro Atoll. The engineers who designed the tomb didn't take into account that the subsoil on the atoll was pure sand and that the debris would leak into the open sea creating a massive environmental catastrophe. With the strengthening tides coming with the climate

change, stronger waves hit the sarcophagus every year and the threat of all debris leaking into the pacific ocean is very real.



(map of all nuclear test sites all around the world)

POINTS TO CONSIDER

To what extent did the **inactivity** of nuclear states **to mitigate the problem** affect the nature in Oceania?

Is money an adequate compensation for the harm done?

Can the effects be restored or are they permanent?

Which countries should be held responsible?

How to enforce compensation?

How far do effects reach?

SOURCES

<https://www.atomicarchive.com/almanac/test-sites/testing-map.html>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LLCF7vPanrY&ab_channel=aConcernedHuman

<https://www.latimes.com/projects/marshall-islands-nuclear-testing-sea-level-rise/>

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Manhattan-Project>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyhZcWy1Ero>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_arms_race