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Rationale and Theoretical Foundation for a Model United Nations Class

Lori Zenuk-Nishide

Abstract

A Model United Nations (MUN) class culminating in a simulation with other learners in the community is based on the social constructivist theory that merges simulation-based learning (SBL) and problem-based learning (PBL), to enhance active-learning strategies. Constructivism as a paradigm posits that learning is an active process, where the learner is seen as an information constructor. Simulations benefit by using PBL frameworks to promote student-directed learning and problem-solving skills, in explaining a real world dilemma with multiple solutions. Problem-based learning benefits because simulations structure the information students receive, to focus learning on the intended curriculum and increase the strategies effectiveness. Research on PBL validates an increasing use of simulations in international relations programs. Simpson and Kaussler (2009) claim that simulations develop communication, analytical skills, convey issue based knowledge, and theoretical understanding. Unlike the traditional educational pedagogical model, MUN is built on constructivist theory, preparing students with an adequate skill-set needed to operate effectively in a globalized world.

KEYWORDS: Model United Nations; contextualized learning; social constructivist theory; problem-based learning; simulation-based learning

"Here we use the Socratic method: I call on you; I ask you a question; you answer it. Why don't I just give you a lecture? Because through my questions you learn to teach yourselves. By this method of questioning-answering, questioning-answering, we seek to develop in you the ability to analyze that vast complex of facts that constitutes the relationships of members within a given society."

Professor Kingsfield (in the Paper Chase)

Introduction

Model United Nations (MUN) is best described as an operational simulation as it simulates the works of an actually existing body, the United Nations (Muldoon, 1995). Participants assuming roles of ambassadors to countries, engage with contemporary issues of importance to the United Nations, negotiating to co-construct action plans, in the form of resolutions. Phillips and Muldoon (1996) describe MUN simulations as a way of teaching and learning about transnational issues, diplomacy and global governance. Model United Nations simulations originated after World War II in the United States, when the United Nations was formed. The United Nations Association of America (2012), reports over 400,000 students worldwide, annually participate in MUNs. The MUN simulation framework is highly flexible and can be delivered in a variety of contexts and learning levels. Around the world, MUN simulations can be found in high school and university curriculums for either short durations, semester or year long, with conferences often bringing together participants from across nations, regions or the world. There is a wealth of teaching and learning resources to support MUN programs through websites and other publications.

The decision to introduce MUN as a class at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies was influenced by that fact that MUN is researched-engaged teaching and learning with students developing as producers of knowledge, thus increasing their communicative competence and developing critical thinking in a global context. For internationalization, there is a need to prepare students for a culturally diverse and globally orientated workplace "for a world marked by the encounter with difference and an increasing demand for cross cultural communication" (Obendorf & Randerson, 2012). It is important for education to prepare students for the complexities of the international community as the world globalizes. Students must think critically, approach problems creatively, work across cultures, interact with opposing points of view, and collaborate to achieve a common goal. Globalization changes the way we live our lives every day. Therefore, our education should comprehend and adapt to these changes. Newmann and Twigg, (2000, p. 835) state that an educational process should cover the "full richness, complexity, drama, and importance of international affairs." Through MUN, students have to learn how to apply, examine, analyze, and then reapply, as well overcome obstacles in pursuit of their goals.

Instruction of international relations needs to convey that the discipline is not black and white, and not a technical skill- it is not something that can be simply tested. Traditional approaches with lectures and readings to international studies

education does not prepare students with a skill-set needed to operate effectively in a globalized world. Haack (2008, p. 395) believes that conventional teaching "obstructs the achievement of true deep learning." In addition, traditional curricula has a tendency to "interrogate the subject through questions aimed at a lower cognitive level." Course content is primarily descriptive and does not explain why an organization operates the way it does, or how the international system suppports cooperation. Crossley-Frolick (2010, p. 2) claims "teaching about international relations in today's world requires more pedagogical agility than ever" and "traditional lecture is limited in its capacity to capture the imagination of students." Barr and Tagg (l995, p. 13) support a change from a lecture-oriented "instructional paradigm" to a new "learning paradigm." Lantis (l995, p. 41) states the current standard falls short at developing "critical thinking skills, and eliciting discovery and construction of knowledge." Therefore the traditional educational pedagogical model is not a holistic, student-centered approach.

Rationale for MUN in Japan

More than ever before, the Japanese government believes to remain internationally competitive in its economy, education and research, there is a need for its people to acquire English abilities. In July 2001, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) put forward a 'Strategic Plan to Cultivate "Japanese with English Abilities"' in its attempts to improve the country's English language teaching practices. In addition, concerned about international competitiveness, the government also hopes to connect Japan to the rest of the world, to be understood, and to enhance its international presence, through the use of English (MEXT, 2003). MEXT also proposed a set of goals-concerning the English language abilities of all Japanese nationals. For university graduates, they are required to be able to use English at work.

In Japan, there is a need to create environments where there is extended spoken interaction in English. Despite the fact English has the "role as world lingua franca, it does not take long for one to realize that Japan is not a country in which English plays a meaningful role as a language of international communication" (Honna, 1995, p. 57). Even in English classrooms, Japanese is mostly the language of communication (MEXT, 2011). According to ETS (2011), Japan historically scores the lowest among Asian nations' mean scores in the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score rankings. In 2010, Japanese language speakers ranked 104th of speakers of 113 languages. The Japan Times (2013) reported "it has been recommended that the

government invest 10 trillion yen in the education system to reform the way English, science, math and information and communication technology (ICT) are taught, under the slogan: "Realizing the world's top level academic capability." This paper outlines the rationale for MUN and the theoretical background, by examining a class taught in English at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies.

Theory Behind Model United Nations

Model United Nations is based on simulation-based learning (SBL) and problem-based learning (PBL) approaches derived from constructivist learning theory. John Dewy (1998), one of the founding fathers of constructivism rejected the notion that schools should focus on repetitive memorization. He proposed for education to be grounded in experiential learning, where students would engage in the real-world; where they would demonstrate their knowledge through creativity and collaboration. He believed students should be provided with opportunities to think from themselves and articulate their thoughts. Jonassen (1994) proposed eight characteristics that underline the constructivist learning environment:

1. Provide multiple representations of reality.
2. With its multiple representations reveal the complexity of the real world.
3. Emphasize knowledge construction inserted of knowledge reproduction.
4. Emphasize authentic tasks in a meaningful context.
5. Provide learning environments such as real-world settings or problem learning instead of predetermined sequences of instruction.
6. Encourage thoughtful reflection on experience.
7. Enable both context and content dependent knowledge construction.
8. Support collaborative construction of knowledge through social negotiation, not competition among learners for recognition.

Social constructivism was developed by Vygotsky (1978), who claimed it is not possible to separate learning from its social context.

Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level and, later on, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of

concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals. (p. 57)

Social constructivism emphasizes the collaborative nature of learning and the importance of cultural and social context. In this theory, cognitive functions are believed to originate in, and are explained as products of social interactions. It is the process by which learners are integrated into a knowledge community. Therefore learning is much more than the assimilation of new knowledge by learners. Teaching styles based on social constructivism adopt a student-centered approach, moving away from traditional, objectivist, didactic, and memory-oriented transmission models (Cannella & Reiff, 1994). Knowledge is believed to be acquired through involvement with content instead of repetition or imitation (Kroll & LaBoskey, 1996).

Models based on constructivist discovery learning include PBL and SBL. Bruner (1966, 1973, 1978), Vygotsky's student, believes that through inquiry that takes place in problem solving situations the learners draws on their own past experiences and knowledge to discover facts, relationships and new truths to be learned. Students interact with the world by exploring and manipulating objects, having questions and controversies, or performing experiments. As a result, students may be more likely to remember concepts. Students discover knowledge on their own. In addition, Bruner emphasizes the role of the teacher, language and instruction. He acknowledges that in problem solving different processes were used by learners. The processes varied from person-to-person and, social interaction was the foundation of good learning.

Bruner builds on the Socratic tradition of learning through dialogue, encouraging the learner to come to understand themselves through reflection. He believes attention to curriculum design is essential so that one area builds upon the other, following a spiraling process. Learning therefore is a process of discovery, where learners build their own knowledge with the active dialogue of teachers. He provides the following three principles of constructivistic learning instruction that it must be:

1. Concerned with the experiences and contexts that make the student willing and ready to learn.
2. Structured in a spiral organization, so that it can be understood by the student.
3. Designed to go beyond the information given. (1973)

Problem and Simulation Based Learning

The historical origins of PBL date back to the early 1970's at the Medical School of McMaster University in Canada (Rhem, 1998). Mayo et al. (l993) state PBL is a pedagogical strategy where teachers give real world situations, and provide resources, instruction, and guidance to students as they develop both content knowledge and problem solving skills. Therefore the ability to solve problems is more than just accumulating knowledge; it is the development of cognitive strategies that help students analyze complex situations to produce meaningful solutions. Hale (2006, p. 85) believes that problem based learning is an "innovative teaching method that has a great deal to offer…including increased inclusivity, deep learning, better retention of knowledge, development of critical and analytical skills, greater student interest and the development of employable skills."

Problem-based learning encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning. The PBL process follows the following format:

1. A PBL activity would involve students meeting as small groups to discuss a particular problem situation that has no easy or straightforward answer.
2. The problem situations they face will be messy, authentic and are likely to occur in real life.
3. The group would use their own knowledge and experience when discussing the problem and treat it as if they were personally asked to solve it.
4. From here the group would come up with a number of hypotheses that are likely to explain and solve the problem situation.
5. Once these hypotheses have been established the group then negotiates an area of exploration for each member and retires independently to carry out the research.
6. After sufficient time has elapsed to allow the research to be completed the group will meet again to discuss the problem in light of the information discovered by the group members.
7. Now the group will draw conclusions as to nature of the problem and the best fit solution, given the information known.
8. Finally, the group makes a professional presentation as to the solution and its consequences. (Central Queensland University of Australia, 2002, p. 2)

Simulations develop students' person-to-person and person-to-group interaction.

Dorn (l989) and Jones (l985) point out the goal of any interactive environment is to produce real world choices within the simulated reality: therefore the behavior is real. Rackaway and Goertzen (2008) claim student learning is enhanced because students use higher order thinking skills in the decision making process that may not be evident in traditional class settings. Dorn (1989) states in simulations students are motivated to learn and are able to get complicated concepts across. Sense of rapport among students enhances the classroom environment and simulations help them empathize with the difficult decisions they have to make. Asal and Blake (2006) mention by putting students in role-play situations, they need to make defensible decisions and often have to convince others to work with them. Simulations foster teamwork, critical thinking, negotiation and communication.

MUN at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies

The MUN class in Kobe City University of Foreign Studies's International Communication Course (ICC) takes place within a single semester, culminating in an inter-university three-day simulation, The Japan University English Model United Nations (JUEMUN). Students in the multinational MUN class in ICC meet weekly for thirteen 90-minute sessions in English, before taking part in JUEMUN near the end of the semester (Appendix A). This is followed by debriefing and reflection. Students develop skills in research and problem-based inquiry, and communication through presentation of institutional and organizational opinions and views, public speaking, debate, collaboration, negotiation, and caucusing (Figures 1 & 2).

Figure 2. Caucusing

Figure 1. Formal Debate

Model United Nations requires students to role-play, research and establish positions that may be very different form their own personally. Every student represents a country that is not their own. This ensures that they examine different viewpoints and develop empathy for alternative perspectives, forcing them to look at their own stereotypes and prejudices. The rules of procedure in MUN are very formal, reflecting the conduct in international diplomacy.

The problem-based task in the MUN class in 2013 was carried out with 17 students on five-committees with 3-4 students from different regional blocs. Students as country delegates were assigned to 5-regions in the world. Students were from four different nationalities (11 Japanese, 4 Americans, 1 Mongolian, and 1 Italian student) and there were 13 non-native speakers of English. Students practiced the rules of procedure, made speeches, debated formally and informally; individually made country speeches; co-wrote and presented working papers; draft resolutions; wrote and presented amendments, and practiced voting procedures. Every student wrote a country position paper (Appendix B). The teacher scaffolded the students learning with content, procedures and skills (Zenuk-Nishide, 2009).

Technology in the MUN is as an enabler of learning. In addition to researching, students use computer mediated technologies such as social networks, email for caucusing, negotiation, support and collaboration. The JUEMUN website has platforms for students to interact as individual countries, in their agenda committees, or in regional blocs. They can also contact the organizers. Matthys and Klabbers (2004) though point out that face-to-face contact in MUN, just like in the United Nations is critical- but virtual learning environments complement a simulation. Students freely email their teachers for support:

> I'm writing with regard to my committee issue in MUN: Gender Equality. I'm still searching the Internet. However, I've got little information of it so far. Although there are gender inequality problems in Afghanistan in reality, most of them are caused by conflicts and regional restrictions. I mean I could not find any details of the gender equality directly and mainly caused by natural disasters. The only information I've got is that women in Afghanistan sometimes lose their husbands due to natural disasters, and they have to struggle to provide for their families without adequate education or training. I know I need to search more, but anyway could I ask for your advice and help? (Email from Student Delegate

of Afghanistan to a teacher)

The collaborative nature of the MUN class relies on each student's participation to make it successful. If a country is absent or not prepared it detracts from the performance of other delegates, as they are being denied information. The students have a responsibility to their community. Model United Nations is an environment where students support the learning of others.

The JUEMUN conference was organized by faculty, at three Japanese universities in Kansai in 2010 including the author, to support their students learning in a global context. The JUEMUN (2011) website states the simulation's mission:

> The JUEMUN organizing committee is dedicated to advancing the understand-ing of the United Nations and contemporary international issues in English. JUEMUN's mission is to positively affect the lives of the participants and prepare them to be better global citizens through quality educational experiences that emphasize collaboration and cooperative resolution of conflict. We envision a world comprised of civically engaged people who strive for peaceful, multi-lateral conflict resolution and equitable, sustainable human development. At JUEMUN events, university-aged students from around the world will experience cooperative, hands-on learning allowing them to confront a topic in English with the perspective of their assigned country or organization. Through these experiences, during preparation and in committee sessions, participants will develop an appreciation of differing viewpoints, the frustration of negotiation, the rewards of cooperation and a broader view of the human side of international relations and diplomacy.

Each JUEMUN agenda is chosen after careful and extensive deliberation, and discussion by the faculty advisors. The agenda deals with an issue of great importance to the world today that needs to be addressed with comprehensive and innovative solutions; that serve as a basis for resolutions in the future.

Teachers of participating universities in addition to preparing and bringing their students to JUEMUN, share roles at the event as expert advisors to the students chairs and delegates; meet with the press, visitors, and guest speakers to the event. The simulated organ or committees within the organ vary from year to year depending on the issues under debate. Each student is given a country by faculty that maintains the

balance of regional blocs in the United Nations. JUEMUN is growing annually with 97 participants in 2013, from 18 different countries. The conference is hosted by three universities on a rotational basis, allowing for more than one stakeholder.

After the simulation, there is time in-class for debriefing and reflection. Participants answer an open questionnaire on the activity and learning application; their reactions and feelings; and their learning and ideas for improvement. There is also time given to verbally reflect on the experience. The student's comments are given to the JUEMUN committee and used to improve the author's class for the following year.

The approach to assessment reflects the constructivist mode of teaching and learning. Research skills, output as well as creative problem solving is rewarded. In the MUN, assessment has been designed to evaluate and encourage the development of a range of skills and knowledge in the preparation and the final simulation. The assessment is both formative and formal. Students produce documents (including an analysis of their topic to the agenda, written country briefs, position papers, draft resolutions and amendments to resolutions), give speeches, debate, negotiate and caucus throughout the semester, and are provided with feedback in both group and one-on-one sessions. Components of formal assessment of candidates' performance include, in-class simulation participation and the JUEMUN simulation (50%); and a collated, annotated and indexed binder of research, with annotations and written documents, and a reflective essay (50%).

PBL, Simulations and the MUN

Problem-based learning offers a self-directed learning process, where learners decide what to study based on a problem and this drives their learning. The main focus of PBL is the problem that is authentic with no right answer. Students work together in groups with the help of the teacher who facilitates the process. Students share their existing knowledge and understanding discuss what they need to learn, discuss their progress, evaluate their work and decide next steps. Maxwell et al. (2004) state the MUN simulation itself structures and focuses their learning, providing experiential learning through parliamentary procedure where students decide how to run the meeting, to make speeches, debate and negotiate to co-create working papers that become draft resolutions (Appendix C).

In JUEMUN 2013, the topic before the General Assembly Plenary was: "Strengthening Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance and Relief for Natural

Disasters", focusing on displacement, food security, children, protection, emergency preparedness, and gender equality. The problem Merrill (2005) states comes before the concepts, requiring information gathering and reflection both the process and the content. Students in the MUN class committee groups collaborate to research and teach others about their agenda topic. Not only do students have to study the agenda, they also have to study their country and its policy to the items on the agenda, culminating in a position paper. Students at every level are active in the learning process rather than being passive recipients of information (Pfeiffer, 1994). Students in preparing for both the simulation and JUEMUN, the simulation work out problems together based on Vygotsky's (l978) social constructivism. Group interdependency through MUN agenda committees, regional blocs and all the countries as a whole share learning and knowledge. Through and experimental learning cycle of proposing how to solve a problem students acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Conclusion

Consensus exists pedagogically about the value of MUN simulations in both scaffolding student knowledge of global affairs and international organizations and in skill development in parliamentary procedure, research negotiation, debating, and public speaking (Hazelton & Jacob, 1983; Karns, 1980). For internationalization, there is a need to prepare undergraduates for a culturally diverse and globally orientated world. The MUN offers students a chance to simulate the world where they can debate and produce knowledge representing previously unfamiliar viewpoints, paradigms and beliefs. Student feedback shows that MUN at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies is a highlight of many students' undergraduate studies. They enjoy the high degree of engagement due to the diplomatic nature of the simulation, looking at a real world problem from a transdisciplinary as well as intercultural points of view, student research, and a chance to debate with students from other universities and countries (Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2008; Zenuk-Nishide & Acar, 2011; Zenuk-Nishide & Tatsuki, 2011). By the end of the class, the students are truly experts on the agenda for the country they represent; this is empowering.

Implementing a MUN simulation collaborating with a wider community beyond the walls of the classroom is dependent on institutional support and resources. It represents significant investment of staff time and energy in order to organize and deliver PBL and SBL. There is both pedagogic value and challenges in delivering an MUN program. As Obendorf and Randerson (2012, p. 12) state MUN "supports the

acquisition of skills and curricular content as embedding core skills of academic and future vocational relevance including knowledge production research and analysis and collaboration." Model United Nations is built on social constructivism supporting active engagement of the student in the learning process, providing high motivation because students have the opportunity to experiment with the learning process.

What could make the MUN more real for student delegates than getting a message from Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's (2013) for their participation in a Model United Nations simulation:

> Your participation in this Model UN comes at a time when the international community increasingly recognizes the power of young people to change our world…empowering young people are part of our effort to enlist youth in helping to address the turmoil and uncertainty that grip much of our world. From tense transitions and armed conflict, to economic and environmental distress across the globe, we are being tested every minute of every day. I am calling on governments to help us stop moving from crisis to crisis and instead address the underlying causes and inter-relationships. At the same time, we know that lasting solutions to global problems no longer lie in the hands of governments alone. The United Nations of the 21st century is advancing through networks and coalitions. We need you to be a full partner in our campaign for a better world. I have met countless people over the course of my career whose dedication to public service could be traced back to when, at your age, they attended a conference where students debated international issues under the blue UN flag. I count on you to use the negotiating skills you learn in Model UN to help navigate the real-world problems we face. Join forces with likeminded individuals and groups to promote understanding and generate positive change.…Continue to draw on the experience to help and inspire others. This will enrich you as individuals and enhance our common future.

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Appendix A: MUN Class Syllabus

1.	Model UN Background; UN Background; Country Selection and Workshop; Agenda Research
2.	Workshop: Rules of Procedure; Formal/Informal Debate & Session (Country and Agenda 1)
3.	Workshop: Policy Research & Session (Country and Agenda 2 & 3)
4.	Workshop: Position Paper Writing & Session Agenda Session 1
5.	Workshop Working Paper & Resolution; Agenda 1 Session (Debate on Working Paper)
6.	Agenda 1 Session (Formal Informal Debate on Resolution) Workshop
7.	Agenda 1 Session Move Closure of Debate & Voting (Description & Schedule) Workshop
8.	Agenda 2 Formal Speeches; caucusing on Policies & Working Papers
9.	Agenda 2 Resolution & Amendments
10.	Agenda 3 Voting & Closing Debate
11.	Agenda 3 Formal Speeches; Caucusing on Policies & Working Papers
12.	Agenda 3 Resolution & Amendments
13.	Final Preparation for JUEMUN
14.	JUEMUN Debriefing
15.	Course Reflection

Appendix B: Delegate's Position Paper

Delegation from Kenya

Position Paper for General Assembly Plenary

The topic before the General Assembly Plenary is strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance and relief for natural disasters, focusing on displacement, food security, children, protection, emergency preparedness and gender equality. Kenya, the country suffering from natural disasters such as floods and droughts, fully supports The Hyogo Framework for Action for reduction of disaster losses and highly appreciates all the humanitarian assistance from Member States and United Nations organizations.

Kenya has been frequently hit by a series of droughts. Eighty percent of people who have been affected by natural disasters in Kenya suffer from droughts. To prevent more people from being affected by natural disasters, a nation-wide hazard and risk mapping exercise is currently underway in Kenya. Also, at the individual level, institutions and agencies are working on their own studies to address the civilians' needs. However, these progresses have not translated into effective practice on the ground so far and there is need for more unified systematic efforts to assess the risk of disasters in Kenya. Emphasizing the importance of collaboration of Member States, Kenya suggests building a system of sharing data, solutions and technologies among countries where the same type of natural disasters frequently happen.

Regarding people, Kenya has a large number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in our world's largest refugee camp, Dadaab Refugee Camp, and the number of refugees and IDPs is still growing despite the insufficient support for all of them. Because of increasing droughts and famine, more civilians in Kenya and refugees from neighbor countries will have to be exposed themselves to danger during and after such natural disasters in the near future. Expressing its appreciation for what has been done for refugees and IDPs in Kenya by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Member States, Kenya would like to call once more upon supporting them with food, water and housing facilities for all individuals who have been affected by natural disasters.

Kenya also expresses concern about people who could be refugees or IDPs in the near future. Kenya has worked to spread a disaster risk reduction manual for schools and it has been successful in terms of giving knowledge of dealing with natural disasters. However, it has not been put into practice completely due to a lack of managers with the technical capacities. Education on natural disasters and an ability to handle them are essential for all the people to prevent themselves from being displaced. Kenya welcomes more practical educational supports regarding natural disasters from Member States to encourage civilians' independence and capacity building.

Under any circumstances, all individuals should be protected and respected in terms of a fundamental human right. Kenya continues directing our efforts toward humanitarian support for all individuals suffering from natural disasters and expresses the desirability of cooperation of Member States.

Appendix C: Co-constructed Resolution

United Nations   **GA/JUEMUN13/**

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General Assembly   **JUEMUN**   Distr: General

7 July 2013

Original: English

Japan University English Model United Nations

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United Nations General Assembly
The Committee on Displacement

**Strengthening the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance and Relief for
Natural Disasters**

Recognizing the inherently unique nature of the problems facing internally displaced persons (IDPs) and those beyond the borders of their countries (refugees) and how, consequently, the solutions may be radically different,

Remembering the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement recognized by Member States as the principle framework outlining IDPs' rights,

Further remembering targets 8B, 8C, 8D, and 8F of the Millennium Development Goals, which seek to address the special needs of developing countries, including the response to natural disasters,

Even further remembering resolution A/HCR/51/75 ("Resolution on refugees and related matters") which affirms the rights of refugees to seek asylum and encourages governments to provide fair procedures and respectful treatment to those refugees,

Also recalling resolution A/HRC/14/37 ("Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs") which called for the analysis of the root causes of internal displacement as well as the needs and human rights of IDPs, and also called for the provision of government resources for the purpose of assisting IDPs,

Bearing in mind that many of the 27 million IDPs are displaced due to natural disasters according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center,

Also bearing in mind that, according to the UNHCR, many of the 10.5 million refugees worldwide are displaced due to natural disasters,

Strongly reaffirming the points laid out by the United Nations Convention on Human Rights concerning the basic human rights of all people, especially for those displaced due to natural disasters,

Seeking the development of national legal frameworks and policies on internal displacement;

1. *Recommends* to member states that have not ratified the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees to ratify it;
2. *Further recommends* to member states who are harboring refugees to treat them according to the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees;
3. *Encourages* member states that are a country of origin of natural disaster refugees, member states harboring refugees from natural disasters, and member states that are not harboring refugees from natural disasters to assist in the repatriation of said refugees in ways including but not limited to:
   a. Improving transportation infrastructure affected countries, including but not limited to:
      i. Roads, railroads, trains, buses, harbors, etc;
   b. Improving coordination and management of financial, technological, and human resources;
   c. Increasing financial aid in response to natural disasters and their aftermath;
   d. Member States which host refugees due to natural disasters offer fair and just opportunities to allow those refugees to apply for temporary residency, for no less than one year, within their host country in the event that the natural disaster has rendered their previous place of living uninhabitable;
4. *Recommends* the establishment of common guidelines geared towards internally displaced persons based on a regular, multi-sectorial, transnational convention guided by the principles set upon by a local secretariat designated by a specialized United Nations agency;
5. *Stresses* the significance of pre-disaster preparedness by:
   a. Supporting member-states' education through raising public awareness and information dissemination starting from the local communities;
   b. Requesting governments to draft an infrastructure planning blueprint during post-disaster crisis;
   c. Calling for a systematic database identification system which can facilitate resident information through a network of coordination between the UN, local governments, and national governments utilizing the Internet and archives;
6. *Reaffirms* the need for efficient post-disaster management of internally displaced persons by:
   a. Inviting government to construct a cooperation mechanism through improving on operational capacity for response;
   b. Appealing to the international community for an appropriate aid and financial resources through the instrumentation of non-government organizations in form of loans and official development assistance (ODA);
   c. Underlining the need, not only for financial but also technical obligation in situations wherein a 0.7 percent GNI is unattainable which was agreed to in the Monterrey Conference in 2002;
   d. Recommending that member states accept international aid in the wake of a natural disaster, inclusive of food and medicine supplies, while respecting the sovereignty of member states.