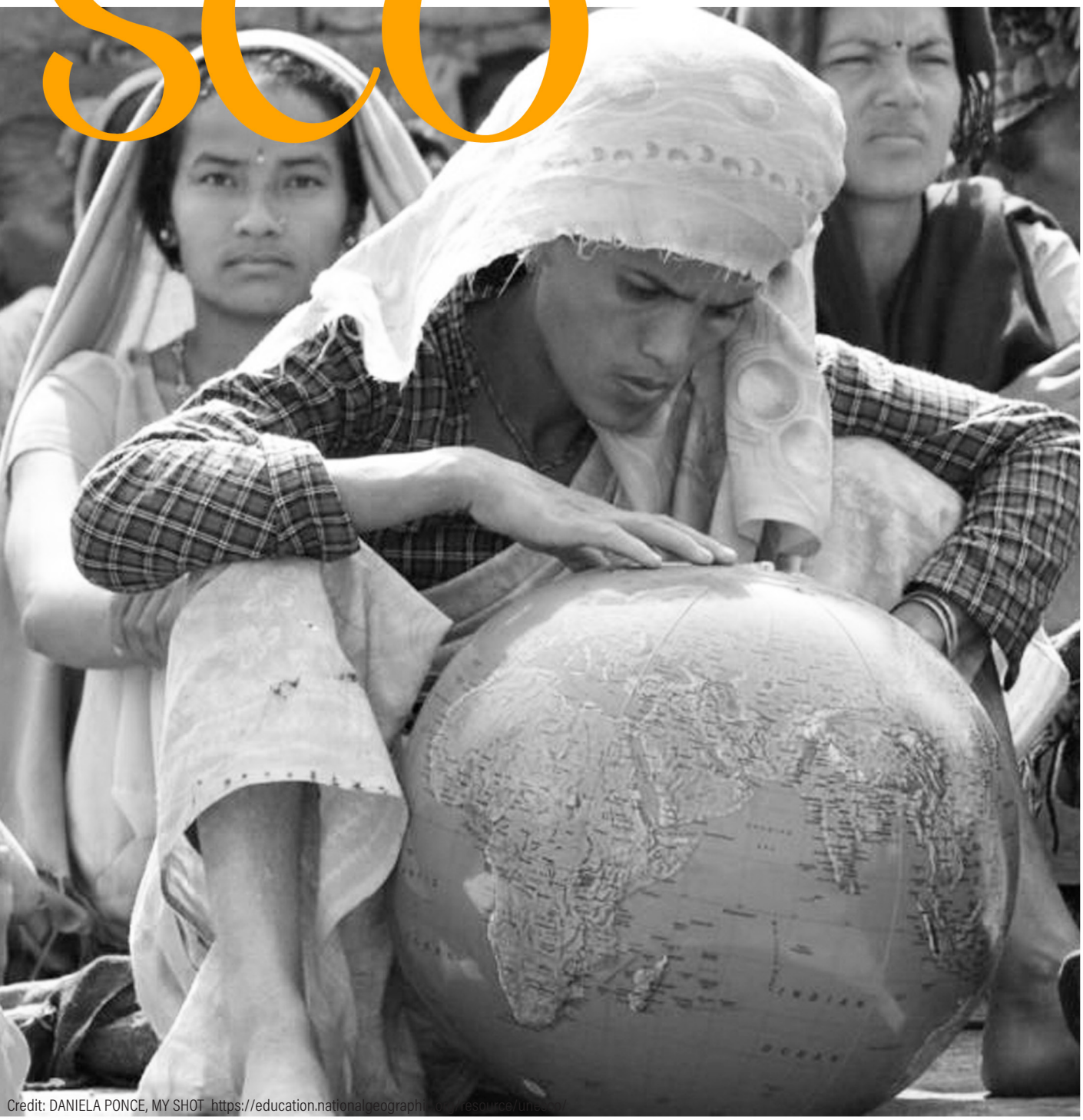
UNESCO

Georgia Tech Model of United Nations

Committee
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



Credit: DANIELA PONCE, MY SHOT https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/unesco/

General Assemblies

October 14-15, 2024

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Georgia Tech Model United Nations

#GTMUN2024

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INDEX

Letter from the Secretary General

Dear esteemed delegates,

Welcome to the twentyfifth edition of the Georgia Model of United Nations. I am incredibly excited to be your Secretary General for GTMUN 2024!

My first Model UN conference was GTMUN, six years ago, and it's given me a joy and passion for diplomacy that has lasted since. This year, the secretariat team has worked extraordinarily hard for months to assemble an incredible array of committees and topics to test your abilities and push you to grow as a delegate and as a future leader. As a person who was in your position six years ago, reading the GTMUN background guides, I know how it feels to prepare for a committee. Though this resouce is invaluable, I encourage you to go beyond in terms of studying about your topic(s) and your country's diplomatic position. I firmly believe that the greatest moments in Model UN happen when you have resiliently prepared through different resources to bring your member state's view into the committee. It is a sincere hope of mine that you enjoy the conference, and take the fullest advantage of what GTMUN has to offer, from public speaking skills, to critical thinking and policy creation. It is opportunities like these when you can connect with fellow, like-minded delegates to bring ideas into the table and construct the progress that people across the globe need, and that only the United Nations can deliver.

GTMUN is an amazing chance to brainstorm to solve current issues creatively and practicing being the leader of tomorrow. I wish you the best in preparing for and participating at the upcoming conference!

GTMUN XXV Secretary General
Jonah Isaza

https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-03311-3

Introduction to the Committee

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization promotes international cooperation and idea sharing to encourage global citizenship and understanding. UNESCO was founded in 1945 as the direct successor to the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation in the League of Nations, inspired by talks of unity among Allied Powers during World War II. Most known for its comprehensive list of 1,223 World Heritage Sites, the organization is split into five branches: education, natural sciences, social/human sciences, culture, and communication/information. Its five branches are interrelated and meant to promote peace, tolerance, and mutual understanding. UNESCO has two priority topics as of today, Priority Africa and Priority Gender Equality. Its Priority Africa program emphasizes sustainable development and partnerships with continental organizations like the African Union. Its Priority Gender Equality hopes to bridge social, economic and digital divides between men and women across the world.

Addressing the digital divide, Topic 1 is titled **"Improving digital literacy to reduce the technological disparity between developed and developing nations".**

Expanding towards cultural heritage and preservation, Topic 2 is titled **"Combating the illicit art trade at a global level".**

Position Papers

A position paper is a document which expresses a member state's policy or position regarding the topic(s) that will be discussed in the committee. It can also help as a forefront to ideas, perspectives, solutions, or approaches that a delegate expects to prioritize in committee. It is recommended that a position paper includes the following: **a) member state's view on the topic(s), b) information on how the nation has addressed (or not) the issue in the past, c) proposed solutions based on research and policy.**

Sample Position Paper

The United Mexican States
Committee: Commission on Narcotic Drugs
Topic Area: Heroin Trafficking

"My sole ambition is to rid Mexico of the class that has oppressed her and giving the people a chance to know what real liberty means. And if I could bring that about today by giving up my life, I would do it gladly"

Although "El Centauro del Norte" spoke these words during the Mexican Revolution more than a century ago, the Mexican people are far from knowing the meaning of "real liberty". Mexico is suffering the consequences of being a key player and a large contributor in a growing illicit drug market, which each year seems to be more diversified and more difficult to trace. Mexico's protagonic and problematic stance provoked former president, Felipe Calderón, to declare open a new theater of the War against Drugs in 2006, as a strategy to counter the violence of the cartels. The low-intensity conflict has left a toll of more than 150.000 deaths and 23.000 disappearances. These painful numbers have placed Mexico as the second most dangerous country in the world.

Currently, drug trafficking and organized crime industry in Mexico is like energy: it is not destroyed, but transformed from one form to another, since each cartel dismantled by the Mexican Government gives way to more small and irrepressible groups. The strategy of the war on drugs, which was based on punctual operations to eliminate the highest branches of the cartels, has not had the desired results.

Mexico recognizes that instead of addressing the problem by the branches, we must change our strategy and attack it from its roots. The first step is understanding that fiercely repressing the violence of the cartels only results in the bloodshed and loss of precious lives of innocent citizens. We invite fellow representatives to consider our modern history, experiences and learnings as a reference.

The United Mexican States notes the necessity to promote the enhancement of international cooperation and exchange of information with the purpose of strengthening the common front in the face of transnational organized crime. For this reason, we must take the responsibility of attending and repairing the social damage of vulnerable communities that are bonded with illicit drug markets. Furthermore, we must develop integral prevention programs against violence, exclusion and weakening of the social tissue, aiming towards the most vulnerable demographics.

TOPIC 1 Improving digital literacy to reduce the technological disparity between developed and developing nations

https://www.teachhub.com/technology-in-the-classroom/2019/10/technology-in-the-classroom-what-is-digital-literacy/

Key Terms and Acronyms

Internet Penetration Rate	*Percentage of a population that has access to the internet. Measured by taking the number of internet users in a country and dividing by the total population and then multiplying it by 100.*
Information and Communication Technologies:	*Diverse set of technological tools and resources used to transmit, store, create, share or exchange information. These technological tools and resources include computers, the Internet (websites, blogs and emails), live broadcasting technologies (radio, television and webcasting), recorded broadcasting technologies (podcasting, audio and video players, and storage devices) and telephony (fixed or mobile, satellite, visio/video-conferencing, etc.)*[2]
Geneva Declaration of Principles	*"This declaration states the commitment of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to build a "people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society" with equal access for all. It invokes the ideals of the Millennium Declaration, the Vienna Declaration, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other treaties as the bases of reason for its purpose. It recognizes the current uneven distribution of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and states its intent to eliminate the digital divide."*[3]
Geneva plan of action	*This action plan aims to promote the Information Society at multiple levels (national, regional, international) and identifies multiple stakeholders (governments, the private sector, civil society, international institutions). It highlights the advantages of the "unique two-phase structure"of the WSIS in implementing the action plan. The national targets primarily focus on connecting various public spaces (villages, universities, scientific and research centers, libraries, museums, hospitals) with Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) by 2015.*[4]
Tunis Commitment	*This document reaffirms the commitments made in the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva in 2003. Its key principles include harnessing the potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to enable sustainable development in harmony with the Millennium Development Goals.*[5]
Tunis Agenda	*This document addresses the financial mechanisms for the global development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and issues of internet governance. It calls for a "multi-stakeholder policy dialogue" and "multilingualization of the Internet." It also addresses implementation and follow-up to the goals set out by the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to harness the advantages of ICTs as a tool for global development. Implementation is detailed at national, regional, and international levels.*[6]

Introduction

In an increasingly digitized society, digital literacy requires an ever-increasing set of skills required to participate in the global economy and society. In a UN framework discussing digital literacy, the term digital literacy is defined as the "ability to access, manage, understand, integrate, communicate, evaluate and create information safely and appropriately through digital technologies for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship."[1] Though a rather broad description, the term encapsulates ideas from other means of literacy such as media and communication literacy. Having the necessary understanding of technology and how to use it is essential in the modern world.

Access to technology opens an immense wave of opportunities ranging from economic growth, education, and social development among others. Though technology has rapidly evolved over the last 50 years and spread throughout the globe, it has not necessarily spread equally. Currently there exists a considerable gap in access and ability to efficiently utilize a wide-range of technologies between developed and developing nations. This disparity only exacerbates existing inequalities and hinders development of many nations, most notably those considered LDC's or Least Developed Countries.

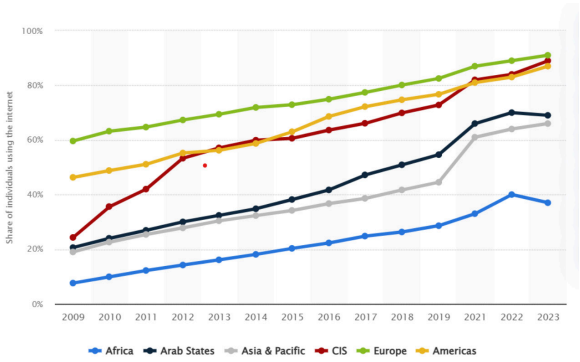


Figure 1: Global internet penetration rate from 2009 to 2023, by region. (CIS stands for Commonwealth of Independent states, former eastern european soviet block)[7]

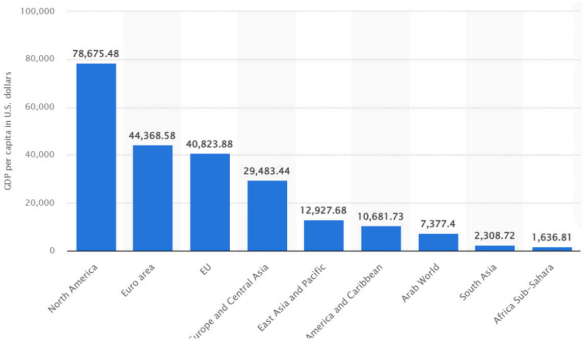


Figure 2:Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in selected global regions at current prices in 2023 (in US dollars) [8]

When resolving a technological disparity, there are two major issues, especially in developing countries. The first issue is a lack of infrastructure and financial support for technological advancements. Without adequate means to support infrastructure for new or existing technologies, developing nations struggle to incorporate such technologies into their economies and everyday lifestyles. When a country is unable to adequately support technology

with necessary infrastructure but other countries can, a technological disparity can emerge. Figure 1, which depicts the internet penetration rate of 6 major global regions from 2009 to 2023, can be used to display this gap while incorporating an understanding of the importance of infrastructure as a factor of this gap. As seen in Figure 1, all of the listed major global regions have seen steady increases in internet penetration rates throughout 2009-2023. But the gaps that existed in 2009, where the greatest penetration rate was Europe at 59.6% and the lowest was Africa at 7.6%, still existed in 2023 and even now. Despite improvement in the penetration rate in regions such as Africa, seeing their internet penetration rate increase to 37% in 2023, the gap between Africa and Europe's penetration rates increased by 2%. So despite good progress made in less developed regions, such as Africa, to improve infrastructure and access to the internet, there still exists a large technological gap between themselves and more developed regions such as Europe. In order to understand the importance of infrastructure when technological disparities form, it's necessary to understand how infrastructure is critical to the ability to access and utilize existing and new technology which, in this example is internet access. The infrastructure required to access the internet includes all of the cell towers, underground fiber optic cables, as well as sources of electricity such as power plants among other things. In order to improve one's internet penetration rate all of this infrastructure has to improve whether in quantity, quality, or both. Infrastructure isn't limited just to what has been mentioned and is important to many factors that affect technological disparities besides just access to the internet. The need for infrastructure is a considerable challenge for any country trying to close a technological gap.

As mentioned earlier there were two key issues when addressing a technological disparity. The first was infrastructure that was covered above. The second issue concerns education and knowledge of how to efficiently use technology; in essence digital literacy. Without the necessary means to efficiently and effectively use the technology that developing countries have access to, the benefits of the technology aren't maximized. The inability to maximize benefits prevents developing nations that might have the necessary infrastructure from further addressing the technological gap. As of 2023 Malaysia invested an estimated 14 billion U.S. dollars into its infrastructure such as constructing highways, ports, and energy facilities[9]. However despite these investments and good progress the education system in Malaysia has struggled to keep up with development. According to PISA testing done in 2018, "54 percent of Malaysian students achieved minimum proficiency in reading, 59 percent in math, and 63 percent

in science" while OECD averages were in the 70s for all listed subjects (OECD, 2019)[10]. In terms of tertiary level education, only about 40% of the population of the age group that officially corresponds to tertiary level of education were enrolled in tertiary education[11]. For comparison Canada, a more developed country who has a similar population then Malaysia but had 5 times the GDP of Malaysia in 2023, had a tertiary enrollment rate of about 78% of appropriate aged students[12]. The struggles of the Malaysian education system and lack of higher education has harmed the Malaysian economy by depriving it of domestic workers with the necessary skills to sustain technologically developed industries. Examples such as these highlight how the ability to educate one's population about technology has become as important as building the infrastructure for the technology itself. In numerous developing countries they have begun to take steps to not only import and build infrastructure but also improve digital literacy and education through a number of means and methods.

An important question to ask in light of the existing technological disparity between many developed and developing nations is, "why is this gap significant?". Comparing Figures 1 and 2 can be used to help answer this question. Figure 2 shows the GDP per capita (in US dollars) of different world regions in 2023. GDP per capita has long been used as a measure of a country's standard of living as well as economic power. Also, take note that internet penetration and technology isn't the only determinant of GDP per capita but one of many variables that can affect it. When comparing Figure 1 and Figure 2 a few things become apparent. One important thing to notice is that the Arab world and Africa both have one of the three lowest internet penetration rates and GDP per capita, with Africa being the lowest on both lists. A second trend to acknowledge is that North America and European countries have some of the highest internet penetration rates as well as some of the greatest GDP per capita. These observations suggest that there exists a positive correlation between internet penetration and GDP per capita.This correlation supports the idea that more developed states will have more successful economies and a better standard of living than the less developed states. Furthermore, technological gaps are significant because of gaps in a country's ability to access and develop new technology, such as internet access leads to some countries having advantages over less developed countries in global trade and markets and having better means to improve and diversify domestic markets, which can contribute to a higher GDP per capita. For example, compare the success of Germany and Nigeria's automotive industries. Germany is significantly more developed than that of Nigeria and is a

global leader in automotive development and production with the industry annually contributes over 500 billion U.S. dollars to their GDP and directly provides over 800,000 jobs[13]. Meanwhile, the Nigerian total GDP as of 2022 was 472.62 billion U.S. dollars, which is less than what the German automobile industry generates annually[14]. The significantly more developed German automobile industry has the necessary infrastructure as well as an educated workforce to drive an automotive industry that fuels close to an eighth of the German total GDP. However, the less developed Nigeria suffers from a technological disparity with Germany and many other states. Examples such as these show how technological gaps between developed and developing nations can have significant impacts on the economic success and well-being of the respective states. In this committee, the goal is to come to a consensus on how to improve digital literacy in order to respond to the technological disparity between developed and developing countries.

A Volkswagen production line in Wolfsburg, Germany.

History

Though this trend of uneven development has been present for decades it wasn't until the 1990s when a 'term' was assigned to this technological gap between developed and developing nations.

In a research report done by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration called "Falling Through the Net: A Survey of the 'Have Nots' in Rural and Urban America (1995)", the US Department of revealed a widespread imbalance of access to information and communication technologies (ICT's) based on race, gender, and location in the U.S.[16] The term that was later used to describe this phenomenon was known as the 'digital divide'. The digital divide refers to the uneven distribution of information and communication technologies in society.[17] The term has been subsequently used since the mid- 90s to not just describe the phenomena of uneven distribution of technology in America but also the uneven distribution between developed and developing countries.

In response to the growing 'digital divide' between developed and developing nations, the UN held a World Summit on the Information Society. This summit was broken up into two separate phases, one

in Geneva in 2003 and the second in Turin in 2005. The ultimate goal of the summit was to acknowledge and respond to the growing digital divide among the nations of the world.

The objective of the first phase was to "develop and foster a clear statement of political will and take concrete steps to establish the foundations for an information society for all, reflecting all the different interests at stake".[18] During this phase, steps were taken such as the Geneva Declaration of Principles and Geneva Plan of Action. The Geneva Declaration of Principles outlined the key principles necessary to creating an inclusive global Information Society. It highlighted key ideas such as improving access to Information and Communication technologies, especially in less developed countries, as well as development of communications infrastructure and improvements in global education systems to address a digitizing world.

In addition to recognizing the issues related to technological development, the Geneva Plan of Action constructed a roadmap on how to address these issues. Many of the solutions were organized into action lines in section C.[19] Which laid out key issues and then described who was best suited to address these issues and what goals they should seek to accomplish. An example from action line C2, that focuses on the development of information and communication infrastructure, was the construction of the East Africa Submarine Cable System (EASSy) from 2003 to 2010. The cable stretches over 10,000 km reaching from South Africa to Sudan, and linking with many of the countries along the route, during the project, funding was received from the World Bank. This cable system provided a solution to the need for a cost-effective and reliable internet connection in a region of Africa who relied on the U.S., Europe, and Asia for high capacity internet links and transmissions.[20] The action lines provided by the Geneva Plan of Action have been used to sponsor and design projects such as the EASSy, especially in lesser developed regions and countries. These two documents provided an outline for future consensus on how to approach the digital divide and provided ideas on how to address the issue.

The second phase took place in Turin in 2005 and focused on reaffirming the goals of the Geneva Declaration of Principles and reviewed the methods and mechanisms necessary to achieve goals laid out in the Geneva Plan of Action. The Tunis Agenda focused on concepts including emphasizing the need to reduce the digital divide through the increased proliferation of ICT's as well as encouraging more cooperation among governments, international organizations, and companies among other groups. While the Tunis Agenda restated many of the ideas presented in the Geneva Plan of

Action, the Tunis Commitment focused on trying to support the action lines designed in the Geneva Plan of Action. One institution born of the Tunnis Commitment (par. 72-78) was the Internet Governance forum (IGF).[21] The IGF is a platform that was created to discuss public policy issues concerning the internet due to conflict and disagreement by countries and other entities on how to address issues and solutions presented in the Geneva conference in 2003. The Tunnis Commitment also specified and designed financial mechanisms to help address the digital divide such as Universal Service Funds and including ICT development in bilateral aid programs among others. Efforts made by the conventions in both Geneva and Turin had crucial impacts on the digital divide today and the proliferation of ICT's. For example the total number of internet users globally has increased from 1 billion total users in 2005 to 5.4 billion as of 2023.[22]

Though the actions taken by the Geneva and Turin summits have had a clear, positive impact on resolving the digital divide between developed and less developed states, there still exist clear disparities between these sets of states in terms of education, infrastructure, and proliferation of ICT's.

Current Developments

As mentioned in the introduction, developing infrastructure and improving digital literacy through education are the two keys to closing the digital divide between developed and developing nations. Without both of these keys to success, developing nations will greatly struggle to diminish the divide. If a country were to invest and develop infrastructure without adequately improving digital literacy, many processes and opportunities provided by the infrastructure would go to waste. This is a result of workers and a population that aren't adequately skilled or knowledgeable enough about the infrastructure and the technology. This leads to the infrastructure either not being used or being used ineffectively and thus the infrastructure only has a minimal impact on reducing the digital divide whereas if the population had been educated better then their benefits would be much greater. On the flip side, if a developing country

invests heavily in education and improving digital literacy without investing in the necessary infrastructure, the skills of the workers will go to waste as they don't have the technology that they were educated to utilize. In some situations, this can lead to brain drain as educated workers move to more developed countries in order to utilize the infrastructure of those countries. So, if both developing infrastructure and improving digital literacy aren't both properly addressed, developing countries will continue to struggle to reduce the digital divide. But simply because one key to success is less effective without the other doesn't mean that countries are giving up but rather trying to find innovative ways to effectively address each respective issue.

One example involves new methods of education on digital literacy through online programs. Numerous developing nations have been promoting the use of digital learning curricula to provide remote ways for workers to improve their digital literacy and obtain certificates in a wide berth of subjects and topics. Some states such as India even created their own online programs and curriculums to provide technological education throughout the country. However, the most popular curriculums are provided by Microsoft, ICDL and IC3. ICDL's program has awarded over 17 million certificates, offers over 40 languages, and has testing facilities across the globe.[24] ICDL has also partnered with the Bank of Rwanda and Singapore Academy of Law to improve the countries workforces and teach necessary skills in a digital workspace.[25] Examples such as ICDL and programs like it provide means for many workers in developing countries to gain skills while still working by doing these online courses that are designed to be flexible and at your own pace. Unfortunately, a major drawback of these types of programs is that they require suitable infrastructure and access to the internet and technology to take the course. This drawback is a great example of the dynamic between infrastructure and education where the lack of infrastructure stifles education and progress. For these reasons among others India's program was eventually shut down and now most of the curriculums used in India are those provided by companies such as Microsoft and ICDL. Despite some of the shortcomings of this style of education to improve digital literacy, these types of programs are a great example of finding innovative ways to try and improve digital literacy in developing countries.

Another example focuses on improving infrastructure in the mobile banking sector in Kenya. Starting in 2007 Safricom introduced its M-Pesa online banking system. The system was designed to focus on mobile banking and provide small farmers and citizens easy ways to transfer and access their money. This has

helped promote digitized transactions and increased the flow of goods and services in economies using M-Pesa.[26] By digitizing marketplaces and increasing the availability of mobile banking, states have seen economic growth which can then decrease digital divides by providing money for necessary investments like infrastructure and education. Since its introduction GDP per capita in Kenya has seen massive growth when compared to previous years as evidenced by Figure 3 below. Note that this growth is not completely attributed to the introduction to M-Pesa but the mobile banking system has undeniably had a positive effect on GDP per capita in the country by providing many more people with a means to access and transfer money hence involving them more in the economy and increasing trade and money circulation. And as the Internet has become more available over time in Africa, the online banking system has managed to reach more people. One of the greatest strengths of this system is that it requires minimal infrastructure and little digital literacy to learn how to use. Because of this, the system has managed to address the two key issues that affect the digital divide and offer solutions that benefit the entire economy of Kenya.

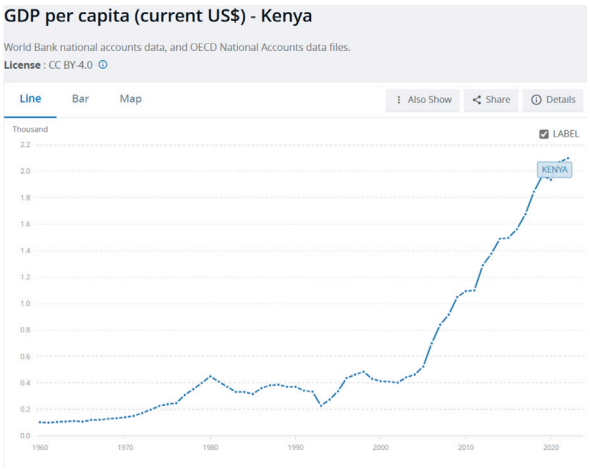


Figure 3: GDP per capita - Kenya

Directives/ QARMAS

Being the knowledgeable and esteemed members of the United Nations and this distinguished UNESCO committee, the responsibility of finding an equitable yet efficient solution to persisting technological disparity between the developed and less developed nations of the world falls upon your shoulders. For this committee, it would be in the interest of participating delegates to consider these questions when preparing your approach to this issue and committee:

- *Is your country considered a developed country or LDC?*

- *What actions has your state taken to address technological disparities domestically and internationally? (Hint: look for partnerships, deals, and legislature concerning ICT's, education, and general technological development)*

- *How could more developed nations be incentivized to aid in the development, especially when it comes to infrastructure and education, of less developed nations?*

- *How has your nation, in the context of this issue, historically addressed this issue and what elements of your nation's culture, history, etc. lend itself to generating unique ideas and potential solutions to this issue.*

- *Remember your country's specific context and mindset on the issue in order to provide for an accurate embodiment of them in your delegation. Note that no hate of any kind will be tolerated, including racism, sexism, or any other prejudices.*

- *How can you prevent neo-colonialism when development countries are investing in the infrastructure of LDCs?*

- *How can you ensure that the sovereignty of nation-states is protected?*

TOPIC 2
Combating the illicit art trade at a global level

https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/french-dealers-launch-campaign-against-new-eu-regulations-seeking-to-curb-illicit-art-trade-1234698816/

Key Terms and Acronyms

Illicit art trade	*The buying and selling of art through extralegal means, including counterfeit or poached materials, stolen or looted goods, and cultural heritage previously bought illegally. Though difficult to quantify, the illicit art trade likely accounts for 2-5% of the global art trade each year.*
Counterfeit	*Replica of an original object, usually a work of art, valuable material, or currency. The replica is sold intentionally at a much higher price than its production cost as a form of stealing.*
Poaching	*The illegal hunting of an animal for its fur, hides or bones, usually in a protected area and on an endangered species.*
Cultural heritage	*Artifacts, monuments, sites and museums with historical or aesthetic significance. Because tangible cultural heritage can be stolen, it is often subjected to illicit trade. Historically, cultural heritage has been exploited by colonial powers to create new historical sites depicting other regions of the world.*
Repatriation	*The return of a stolen or looted artifact to its country of origin, as a form of reparations.*
Money Laundering	*The disguise of financial resources from their original source, so that they can be used in the future either legally or illegally. Money laundering is often paired with the evasion of industry-specific regulations or general asset taxation.*
Freeport	*A type of special economic zone where goods are stored in order to wait for a buyer. Freeports get their name from their proximity to actual nautical ports or airports.*
Non-Fungible Token (NFT)	*A digital file, usually of an artwork or photo, that has an identifiable owner due to blockchain technology.*

Introduction

The global antiquities trade market totaled 65 billion United States dollars (USD) in 2023, despite the large value, it is less than that pre-pandemic level.[40] Furthermore, due to the increase of digitalization, online art sales now constitute 20% of the total. The illicit art trade is estimated to cost 2-6 billion USD yearly, although an exact number is hard to find.[29] Thus, the illicit art trade is either the third or fourth largest illegal trade in the world by monetary value, after narcotics and arms, as well as (possibly) counterfeit goods, according to many law enforcement agencies, including Interpol.[32] However, several art associations and journals have criticized the factoid, stating that quantifying the severity of global crime by market value is inherently misleading and lacking priorities.[32] For example, human trafficking and narcotics cause thousands of deaths per year just during transactions, not to mention overdoses or casualties from weapons. However, it is important to note that cultural heritage is often confiscated by dictatorships and terrorist groups to fund arms production and sales, providing a monetary stream for other illegal activities. Other motivations include tax evasion and money laundering, and denial of resources from reaching the general public.[28]

History

Over the course of the 20th and 21st centuries, there have been numerous actions taken regarding the illegal art trade, and art trade in general. Most notably, the 1970 convention on the illicit trafficking of cultural objects has been passed in over 140 countries, covering the locations of almost the whole art market (including the illicit art market). The agreement has its greatest impact in museums, where different identification requirements exist for items purchased before and after 1970. While not providing many exact legal requirements, the agreement establishes an ethical framework that the countries within the document follow. After half a century, a few problems persist in the enforcement of these agreements. The greatest emphasis exists on rewarding people who find or return cultural heritage properly through monetary incentives, but little punishment exists for illicit traders themselves, especially those at the higher end of the market. This timeline shows the developments of the past 60 years, emphasizing bilateral and multilateral agreements:

1963- British Museum Act of 1963:
Prohibits the return of museum artifacts to their country of origin except in cases of damage or duplication

1970- Convention on the illicit trafficking of cultural objects:
Led by countries in Asia and Africa, concerned for the black market sale of their historical artifacts. Bulgaria, Ecuador and Nigeria ratified in 1972

1972 - Antiquities and Art Treasures Act
The first of its kind, this act was passed in India to protect long-term the cultural wealth of antiquities from India. The act was passed after the 1970 UNESCO convention in order to combat illicit trafficking

1978 - Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation (ICPRCP):
Added a retroactive effect to the 1970 convention. Deals especially with looted or stolen artifacts from the colonial era

1983 - The United States adopts the 1970 convention, passing bilateral agreements with Colombia, China and Italy
The United States was the first "market country" to pass the agreement, since previous countries were the sources of major looting and illicit dealership of cultural heritage. France did not ratify the agreement until 1997, while Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Japan and Germany waited until after the turn of the century

1995 - INTERPOL establishes its stolen works of art database
This online tool depicts over 50,000 lost items, which are identified by nations and authorized individuals to be added to the database by experts.

1998 - Bilateral agreement between Italy and Libya:
Focus on colonial return of artifacts to the origin country (or compensation). First agreement between a former colonial power and its colony, establishing a precedent for other countries

2000 - Red List Database from the International Council of Museums:
This database categorizes artifacts that are at risk, focused on prevention rather than punishment. More failsafes and protections are implemented to curb illegal trafficking of these cultural objects

2023 - INTERPOL seized 11,000 works of art from 14 countries:
Spain led the operation, arresting 60 people Stolen works included religious artifacts, rare books, old coins, sculptures and jewelry. The INTERPOL stolen works of art database was used, successfully matching missing art pieces with those seized.[28]

Current Developments

Improved technology has helped international law enforcement track the illicit trade of cultural objects, but has also made it less risky to buy or sell online. For third party agents, it is easier to connect buyers and sellers at a lower risk. Due to an uptick in the illicit art trade on its site, Facebook banned the sale of historical artifacts online in 2020. Meanwhile, terrorist groups continue to destroy cultural heritage, or, if they are opportunistic, sell artifacts from older museums on the black market. These actions echo the notorious destruction of the Buddhas of Bamiyan in Afghanistan, which were destroyed by the Taliban in 2001. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) finances 15% of its revenue from looting the Museum of Raqqa in Syria.

Currently, some countries pass country-specific regulations for their art imports, due to concerns about terrorism or other violent uses of revenue. So-called "rules of origin" often become complex and vary heavily from country to country.

Case studies

About 3,500 freeports exist worldwide, where the ultra-wealthy store unsold goods while waiting for a buyer. Their expansion to the art market is natural due to the high security and secluded conditions of freeports, making low level art theft impossible but increasing the ability for the wealthy to avoid taxes or launder money

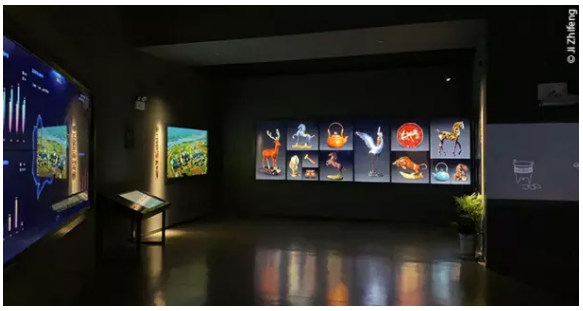
India

Remains of the Khana Mihirer Dhipi site, neighbouring Chandraketugarh, both part of an archaeological settlement dating back to the second century BC.

In India, a once legal method of stealing cultural wealth under colonialism has now moved from the British royalty to private coffers of art dealers. Shipped by sea, many artifacts are actually found by local fishermen and tradesmen and sold to art dealers, who drastically upsell artifacts to museums or private owners. Despite the 1972 measure to protect cultural heritage, an estimated 50,000 objects left

India before 1989, and the loss of cultural heritage continues. How should UNESCO support heritage education in regions of the world rich with cultural artifacts?

China



A virtual exhibition hall at the Digital Museum of Copper and Bronzes in Tongling, China.

In 2016 the medium-sized city of Tongling in northern China worked with archaeology experts to create a Digital Museum of Copper and Bronzes (DMCB), focused on stolen artwork located in museums across the globe. Due to a lack of international regulations for repatriation of artworks and materials, this unique approach allows everyone in the world to appreciate Chinese artifacts, regardless of geographical location. Although over 90% of people surveyed wanted the works to return to China, repatriation is unlikely without a bilateral agreement with the United Kingdom. How might digital museums democratize the ability to appreciate art? As a consequence, will the demand for illicit art trade decrease as accessibility improves?

Argentina

The Argentine capital of Buenos Aires has long been used as a hub from European art dealers and investors to transport pre-Columbian artifacts across the Atlantic Ocean. Over 88% of the works have been stolen from Peru, while 9% are taken from Ecuador. The pre-Columbian art market has risen rapidly in the past fifteen years, exemplified by exhibits in Buenos Aires and Madrid as well as a permanent installation in Santiago. Because pre-Columbian art has only recently gained popularity, it is hard for dealers and law enforcement alike to determine the market value of certain works of art. What regional or continental efforts are most successful at halting illicit transportation of cultural heritage?

Directives/ QARMAS

- *How do we address freeports specifically as places where the highest-end art pieces change ownership?*

- *In the 50th year anniversary report, an author stated that "those who have discovered objects often prefer to destroy them or put them in the black market". How should UNESCO reward countries that comply with existing legislation?*

- *Under what contexts should the return of museum artifacts to their country of origin be encouraged?*

- *How should bilateral agreements be emphasized and how should further multilateral/ global agreements be included in combating the illicit art trade?*

- *What internet tools should be introduced to encourage citizen participation against the illicit art trade? Should the INTERPOL database be expanded?*

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