

# **King's Christian Collegiate Model United Nations**

## **The Council of Panem - The Hunger Games**



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**CGW4Ua**

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Dear King's MUN 2023 delegates,

I am truly honored as this year's Secretary General of King'sMUN to welcome you to our 9th annual conference and our first in person conference since the COVID-19 pandemic. The secretariat has been working hard throughout this school year to deliver you an incredible conference with a variety of unique committees, experienced chairs, and an overall successful day of debate.

MUN is a reenactment of United Nations conferences at the high school and university level, where representatives from all over come together to discuss the most pressing issues that plague our world today. Students take on the positions of various countries, characters, or political figures in order to create resolutions for both real and fictional issues and crises.

Throughout my time participating in Model United Nations, I have developed many valuable skills that I will take with me throughout my life. It has improved my confidence when public speaking as well as my ability to problem solve. Furthermore, MUN is valuable to me as it promotes lifelong connections with new people as you meet many other delegates who share your passions while in committee sessions. I truly believe that skills that you will learn through your participation in MUN will help you throughout your high school journey, in everyday life, and beyond.

Contrary to popular belief, MUN is truly for everyone. At King'sMUN, we provide a variety of committees to ensure that we have something that everyone will enjoy debating about. From the world's most pressing issues discussed in UNSC and UN Women to Indigenous affairs and from the gods on Mount Olympus to the prohibition in the 1920s, we strive to ensure that we can appeal to the passions of a variety of delegates. Everyone is welcome at King's MUN, whether you have no experience or have been to a multitude of conferences, there is a place for you here.

Once again, I am thrilled to welcome all delegates, new or returning, back in person to King'sMUN. I, as well as the rest of the secretariat, are looking very forward to seeing you on Saturday, February 25. Whether this is your first conference or your last, I hope you are able to engage in fruitful debate and have an amazing time at King's MUN 2023.

Sincerely,  
Athena Ponte  
Secretary General  
King's MUN 2023

## **History of the UN**

As World War II came to an end in 1945, the majority of the nations were devastated and seeking peace and unity. Representatives from 50 countries met together at the United Nations Conference hosted in San Francisco, California for two whole months to create a system and plan for positive progression. During these two months they drafted and signed the UN Charter which assembled the United Nations, with the main purpose of preventing another world war from taking place. Over 75 years later, nations representatives today are still working on actions to continue to fulfill the goals of those original members in 1945. The United Nations have created 17 sustainable development goals that they are aiming to accomplish by the year 2030, and are goals that will push our world as a whole to grow and be better.

## **The Council of Panem**

### **History & Purpose**

Panem is a sovereign state that was established after a series of ecological disasters and a global conflict prompted the destruction of modern civilization. Panem sits primarily in North America, including a main federal district, the Capitol, along with thirteen other neighboring districts. For the majority of Panem's presence, their government has run in an authoritarian-totalitarian dictatorship, with the outlying districts submissive to the Capitol as well as being expected to provide economic and material services in exchange for protection and security supplied from the Capitol's army of Peacekeepers. The districts were faced with years of brutal oppression from the Capitol which erupted in a civil war known as the First Rebellion, led by District 13. (Ryan) The failure of this uprising created a brutal annual event known as the Hunger Games, established as a consistent reminder of the failed past of insurgency and to prevent this attempted mistake from ever happening again. Public executions and whippings, severe restrictions on civil rights, and mass surveillance became consistent in Panem and for the years to follow.

Both before and during the First Rebellion and up until at least the 10th annual Hunger Games, Panem was led by President Ravinstill. President Snow was the most recent dictator of Panem and served in this position for over 25 years, until the eruption of the Second Rebellion against the Capitol following the Quarter Quell, also known as the 75th Hunger Games. After the overthrow of Snow's regime, Panem was reconstituted into a democratic constitutional republic, led by Commander Paylor, and eventually led to her being elected the new President of Panem. Throughout the trilogy, Panem is portrayed to be the dominant society in North America, although no other nations or civilized societies have been mentioned, so it is unknown if any exist at all.

The name Panem derives from the Latin phrase *Panem et circenses*, which translates to 'bread and circuses'. This phrase is often used to demonstrate using entertainment to distract public attention from more important and serious matters. Furthermore, by the government providing ample food and entertainment, the citizens would give up their political rights. According to the Capitol, the current population of Panem is 4,556,778, although when counting up the total population in the Capitol as well as all the individual districts, that would mean that the actual population sits at 1,905,286.

For over 75 years now, the state of Panem has exhibited extreme instability within their government and their relations to their people. This committee addresses the concerns of the people of Panem and how to best attend to them. This includes working to rebuild Panem into a more equitable society, and a change in government that recognizes the problems within their structure, and how to address it more head-on, as opposed to distracting their people with media and entertainment, and annually forcing members of each district into a "game" of murder.

## **Topic #1: Overthrowing the Capitol**

Ever since the existence of Panem, it has been infected with corruption, discrimination, and social hierarchy. Throughout the trilogy, but more specifically in the first two novels, there are many clear examples of corruption and abuse of power on the Capitol's end, and its negative effects on the state and its people. The key form of malfeasance exhibited by the Capitol through the series is the annual Hunger Games. Not only are these games filled with murder and tragedy, the people of all twelve districts have no choice but to be a part of this alongside their own who get selected to participate. On top of the 23 deaths that come along with this event, members

from their own districts are pinned up against each other, as there can only be one left standing in the end. The capitol's gamemakers continuously create obstacles throughout the duration of the game to keep people moving and active. This is because they do not want someone to win by hiding alone, but to put themselves out there and truly fight to survive in this game of life or death. Simply put, the tributes are forced to play by the Capitol's rules in order to survive.

As well as the Capitol's manipulation of the people of Panem through their annual Hunger Games, the government is quick to brutally reprimand their citizens for any act that could be perceived as an act of rebellion. The main way they do this is once a perceived act of rebellion takes place, that person is captured and has their tongue cut out. They are referred to as *avox* which in Latin translates to 'without a voice'. The Capitol continues to do this to remind the people of Panem that they truly have no voice or say, and that when they try to fight back against that, they will only get hurt. These avox people become servants for the Capitol and are not allowed to be spoken to unless they are being given orders. This adds to the more literal concept that no one cares what they have to say, and that their voices are not valued. (Book Analysis)

Lastly, as exhibited throughout all of the Capitol's and more specifically President Snow's regime, they rule the districts by fear. At the reaping every year, there is a mutual fear between the people that either they will get chosen, or someone that they love will. Many choose to joke about it instead, because if you don't, it will become real. Even within the career districts, there can only be one tribute left standing in the end. The odds will never be in their favor.

The annual Hunger Games amongst many other acts of punishment from the Capitol, are their way of retribution for the uprising that took place 75 years ago. Yet all of these punishments are literal and have major repercussions, the deeper meaning behind all of it is much more complex. The continuous theme of this corrupt regime of the Capitol is one that is shown to constantly terrorize and ruin their people, and a situation that is soon to erupt.

In order to successfully overthrow the Capitol, delegates should consider different angles to focus on when creating a plan to abolish the Capitol once and for all. This includes focusing on eradicating the Hunger Games and the manipulative message that comes with it. This could also be bringing all twelve districts together to form one big alliance against the Capitol, or mass rebellion along with intense preparation including stocking up on food, weapons, equipment, and all essentials needed. Analyze and assess all options and create a plan that will be most effective and in the best interest of the people of Panem and their future success.

**Further Questions:**

1. What do you think is the most reasonable way to overthrow the Capitol? Consider the perspectives of all twelve districts, as some are treated differently than others by the Capitol.
2. What went wrong in the uprising last time, and is something that needs to be changed for the future insurgency?
3. In the meantime, what can be done within the people of Panem to protect yet continue to educate each other from the fear and hurt of the Capitol?
4. What is holding the people of Panem back from going full force into this revolution?

**Topic #2: Rebuilding a new Panem**

As a result of all of the major industries being privately owned by the wealthy families in the Capitol under state oversight, Panem operates as a semi-feudal fascist state. Each district is assigned their own specific industry, and the citizens of these districts are given little freedom in terms of career choice. Free markets outside of the Capitol, such as the Hob in District 12, are illegal, although some black market exchanges are tolerated and can go unnoticed. With the exception of Districts 1, 2, 4, and 5, the districts live in extreme poverty. All business and trades between the districts are generally forbidden, as most of the goods that each district produces are sent to the Capitol. Law enforcement is provided from the Panem government through a military force known as the Peacekeepers. With most of these peacekeepers coming from District 2, each District's garrison is headed by a Head Peacekeeper, who is responsible for enforcing the laws of Panem and helping control both Panem's military and air forces. Following the overthrow of the Snow regime in *Mockingjay*, Panem was reconstructed into a constitutional republic, with Commander Paylor as the new President. It is evident throughout all three novels how Panem criticizes American society through exploring themes of fear, oppression, and revolution. While *The Hunger Games* offers an evident appraisal of the violence, consumerism and exploitation of a capitalist society, its profit driven purposes cannot be ignored. Panem is a complex fascist society within a totalitarian government setup. The books are based on a dystopian world integrated with real concepts much similar to the world we live in now. The inequality between

rich and poor, media obsession, limited health care, and starvation not only are indisputable within the books, but also force you to look deeper into today's society. (Vassiliadis) The citizens of Panem are victims of extreme oppression, and this continues to negatively progress as you move down the list of districts in numerical order, district 12 being the worst.

The large-scale conflict in *The Hunger Games* centers on the injustice against the citizens of Panem within a dystopian society. Katniss' story is one of many that represents all of the struggles that the citizens of Panem throughout all districts are forced into, while also attempting to break free from a system that dehumanizes people and restricts their desire for freedom and a humane standard of living. *The Hunger Games* is a sophisticated trilogy that explores a number of themes and issues, including poverty, wealth, power, violence, reality television, and unpacks how this can shape a society. (Sparknotes)

Delegates should consider five potential main steps that could contribute to rebuilding a more equitable Panem. These steps are building a proper constitution, rebuilding the country, the institution of free travel and free markets, reparations, and instituting a new political system. Of course The Hunger Games are not only meant to entertain the politicians, but they are also the Capitol's way of, as Katniss worded it, "Reminding us how totally we are at their mercy." Panem's citizens know that if they desire any kind of comfortable life with good housing and plentiful food, they must not only participate in the Games, but also be the last one standing. Wealth in this Dystopian nightmare of a country is not earned by fulfilling the needs of others, but results from pleasing politicians through the *murder* of others.

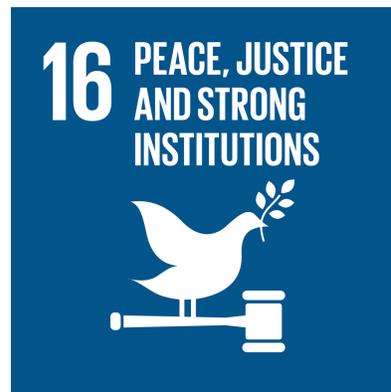
### **Further Questions:**

1. How do you think Panem can be rebuilt in a more equitable way? What steps should be followed and what needs to be prioritized to do so successfully?
2. How can Panem successfully transition to a constitutional republic, ensuring that inequality and authoritarian regimes do not become prevalent ever again, and that The Hunger Games will not take place? Consider both short-term and long-term goals.
3. How can Panem be reformed to ensure that citizens are given a voice in the new government style the country will have?
4. What are the main individual factors holding the people of Panem back from reforming their home into a peaceful and proper state?

## Connections to SDGs and Targets

Within SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities, target 10.1, reduce income inequalities is one that Panem has an abundance of room for improvement on. Between the districts, there is an obvious income discrepancy. It is evident throughout the books that the Capitol favors certain districts over others. Districts such as districts 1, 2, 4, and 5 are wealthier, while districts such as districts 11 & 12 are financially unstable, and the majority of their citizens are living in poverty or close to it. As well, SDG target 10.3, ensure equal opportunities and end discrimination is key as the opportunities provided for those in the Capitol in comparison to those living in the twelve districts are very different. An example of this is that the residents of the Capitol do not have to participate in the annual Hunger Games, whereas 24 tributes from these 12 districts are forced every year to fight to the death. Target 1.3 under SDG 1 of no poverty is to implement social protection systems to help eradicate poverty. This is a target that during the time of Snow's reign was impossible as he did not care about the wellbeing of those in the districts that were flooded with poverty, and gladly continued to drown the Capitol in food and encourage gluttony amongst those who lived there. (Burbage) Now with commander Paylor in power there is more hope that all people will be supported and fairly and equally represented as her actions have proven that she is a people person and is willing to fight for others. Target 16.1 under SDG 16 of Peace, Justice, and strong institutions seems like an obviously relatable topic; reduce violence everywhere. The Capitol's peacekeepers are often known for their public executions and whippings at any sight of potential backlash against the government, creating fear throughout all the districts in Panem. As well under SDG 16, target 16.2 is to protect children from abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and violence. It is clear how none of the children who live in any of the 12 districts are safe from any kind of abuse and violence, whether it is mental or physical, there is no way to prevent these children from damage. The potential risk of having your name drawn for the Hunger Games adds to the possible risk of violence. Target 2.1 under SDG 2 of zero hunger is one that requires attention and reassessment. The target is universal access to safe and nutritious food. Many families do not have the finances to buy nutritious food, and because the access to markets is close to zero, it becomes difficult for families to even make trades for the food they need. Lastly, SDG 17, partnership for the goals and target 17.14 enhance policy coherence for sustainable development, ties together all the necessities to rebuilding Panem into

a more equitable society. Consistency within both its people and its government are essential for these targets to be met. A step before that that is a must would be a stronger government system which seems to be on the right track as Commander Paylor is beginning to take on a more powerful role in Panem's society and within its people.



## **List of Delegates**

- Commander Paylor
- Katniss Everdeen
- Peeta Mellark
- President Snow
- Haymitch Abernathy
- Caesar Flickerman
- Johanna Mason
- Finnick Odair
- Effie Trinket
- Gale Hawthorne
- District 1
- District 2
- District 3
- District 4
- District 5
- District 6
- District 7
- District 8
- District 9
- District 10
- District 11
- District 12/13

*Works Cited*

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