

Sexuality, Politics and Policy module

Hypothetical UN debate handout

Prepare a statement on behalf of your country in response to the following:

The United Nations is proposing a large new worldwide HIV program to support member governments to respond to HIV, including working with affected populations (including sex workers, men who have sex with men and injecting drug users). It would consist of agreed targets against a range of indicators, which will be measured by the UN.

The United States has already decided that instead of supporting the new UN campaign, it will fund a large program of its own addressing sexual and reproductive health (including HIV). The program is based on a policy which precludes any funding being used to promote abortion or condoms.

What is the best way forward?

Country background

United States: Highly developed country, predominantly Christian population with strong conservative Christian lobby groups, abortion is legal (with restrictions on availability), government sex education in schools weighted towards abstinence approach, homosexuality is legal but rights are restricted, sex work is illegal.

South Africa: Middle-income country, multiple religions, very high HIV prevalence, abortion is legal, national policy establishes the right to access reproductive technologies freely, homosexuality is legal, considering decriminalisation of sex work.

Australia: Highly developed country, predominantly Christian population though secular government, abortion is legal, effective domestic HIV prevention programs based on condom promotion, recognition in overseas aid program of need to involve and work with populations most affected by HIV, homosexuality is legal, sex work is legal in some states (with certain conditions). Australia's new government has a policy of increasing the proportion of its aid support to multilateral bodies like UNAIDS.

Nigeria: Low-income country, predominantly Muslim population, high HIV prevalence, abortion is illegal, homosexuality is illegal and punishable by death, sex work is illegal. Nigeria is already a recipient of a large amount of US overseas aid funding for HIV.