



INTRODUCTION

The *Issues at AMUN Handbook* is published to assist Representatives in their preparations for the American Model United Nations (AMUN) Conference. When combined with students' own research on the nations they represent and the topics of discussion, this handbook provides Representatives with all the substantive information they will require to function effectively at the simulation. Its sister handbook, *AMUN Rules and Procedures*, provides an overview of the Committee/Council rules and Conference logistics with which Representatives need to familiarize themselves for the simulation.

The following pages contain brief overviews of the topics to be discussed in the Committees, Councils, Commissions and International Court of Justice at the 2013 Conference. These are intended as a guideline and basis for Representatives' further research of the issues involved. In keeping with this goal, each overview includes a bibliography to guide Representatives to appropriate sources of additional information.

The overviews provide background on each topic and states some areas of current United Nations (UN) and international activity on the topic. In many cases, the overviews will frame the topic in terms of a few, limited aspects of a complex issue. For example, the general issue of "the environment" has dozens of sub-issues — in such a case, the overview may direct Representatives to concentrate their research on "Ozone Depletion" and "Limiting the Destruction of the Rain Forests," only two of the many subsidiary issues. This format allows Representatives to go into greater detail in their preparations, without the need to research all aspects of a multifaceted main issue.

AMUN's philosophy in providing these topic overviews is to give Representatives *direction* in their research, but to leave the work up to them. **These overviews are not intended to be the sole source of Representatives' research on the topics prior to the Conference.**

In addition, "Chapter One - The United Nations" provides essential background information to give all Representatives a common orientation to the history of the UN. This section begins with the origins of the UN and covers some important points about the organization. Finally, the chapter focuses on problems confronting the UN today.