



FORUM: United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)

AGENDA: Addressing climate colonialism in Africa through the exploitation of lithium, cobalt, and other green energy minerals.

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Esteemed Delegates and Honorable Advisors,

It is my utmost honor and immense pleasure to welcome every single one of you to TTMUN'26.

Ever since its first session in 2015, TTMUN Conferences have been an undeniable portrayal of unity, collaboration, and resilience by the fellow members of the TTMUN Club. As the executive team of TTMUN'26, we have dedicated countless hours to organize the 11th annual session of TTMUN; while doing so, we have maintained the same passion and dedication with every step we have taken to sustain the quality of TTMUN. That being said, as the Secretary-General of TTMUN'26, I would like to thank my fellow executive team members and our remarkable advisor, Vesile Acar, whose support made it possible to organize this conference and host you here at our school on the 27th, 28th, and 29th of April. Yet, beyond its tradition, TTMUN'26 is shaped by its purpose.

Our mission in TTMUN Club is to foster mutual growth in a collaborative environment where we are not only discussing real-world issues but also work towards solutions. Therefore, in correlation with our mission, we have chosen the theme of TTMUN'26 to be "Bridging Divides in Human Rights". The significance of the theme lies in the unfortunate irony of the persistence of human rights violations. Today, our world is witnessing and turning a blind eye to human rights violations that the United Nations was initially established to ensure that the world would never witness and do so again. Acknowledging this, we, the youth shall not only wait for our turn to come tomorrow but shape it today. Hence, as the executive team, we hope for a fruitful conference where everyone, regardless of their role, contributes to the debates, lobbying, and discussions, bearing the urgency of our global reality in mind.

As we embark on this journey, this mission will be in action over the course of three days as the delegates will have the opportunity to be active in one of nine committees of TTMUN'26 with fifteen diverse agenda items that seek to solve the serious issues that our world is facing. While doing so, let's embrace the unparalleled value of collaboration, respect, and empathy for a better future. Finally, I hope that you have an incomparable MUN experience and once again as the Secretary General, I wholeheartedly welcome everyone to the TTMUN'26.

“All my hope is in youth!”

—Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

Yours sincerely,

Derin Halatçı - Secretary General

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is an international cooperative organization tasked with supervising and coordinating the global environmental efforts since 1972 after the UN General Assembly Resolution (2997 XXVII). From the day it was established, UNEP has developed many collaborations with governments, UN agencies, and non-governmental organizations to manage environmental issues that endanger humanity.



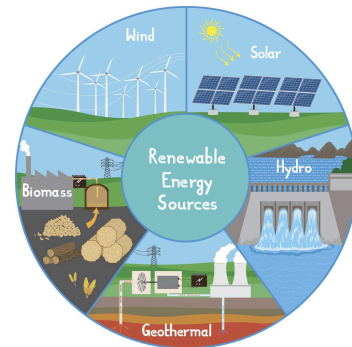
The United Nations Environment Programme and its partnerships encourage 193 Member States to create a world with greater awareness of the value of the environment and the Earth.

Through these efforts, by 2024-2025, a considerable proportion of the world's electricity capacity is expected to be met by renewable energy sources, including wind, solar, and other clean sources, instead of fossil fuels. However, under today's circumstances, climate colonialism has emerged. As a consequence of this global issue, the use of renewable sources may harm the socioeconomic structures and sovereignty of resources-rich regions such as Africa, which houses more than 30% of the world's critical green minerals, namely lithium, manganese, and rare earth elements.

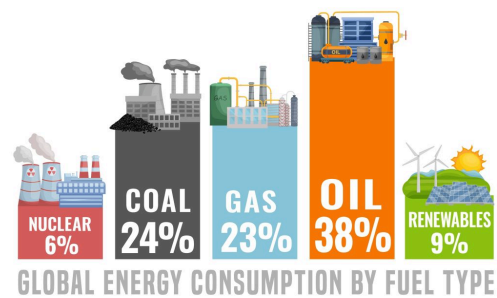
DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Climate colonialism is a modern form of colonialism practiced by the wealthy, industrialized countries of the Global North reap further advantages from global environmental and economic systems, while the Global South faces the consequences of climate change. These developed countries with high economic capacity are responsible for 92% of carbon emissions, whereas less developed regions of the Global South, which contain a significant portion of the renewable energy resources and critical minerals, are forced to struggle for their environmental and economic freedom. In this context, climate colonialism leads to injustice in access to and use of energy resources.

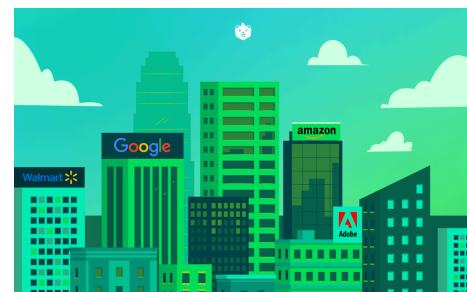
Renewable energy is defined as “energy derived from natural sources that are replenished at a higher rate than they are consumed.” by The United Nations. Renewable energy refers to unlimited energy sources derived from natural resources such as wind, solar, hydro, geothermal and biomass power. As opposed to fossil fuels, renewable energy sources do not give rise to greenhouse gas emissions and do not result in environmental impact.



Fossil fuels are non-renewable energy sources that contribute to climate change and global warming by producing high levels of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide. Fossil fuels are formed from the fossilized plant and animal remains that decomposed over millions of years; notwithstanding that around 80% of today’s energy sources are still sourced from fossil fuels. Furthermore, the widespread use of fossil fuels leads to air, water, and environmental pollution, as well as socioeconomic challenges in the regions where they are produced, with the most commonly used types being coal, petroleum (crude oil), and natural gas. Consequently, differing from renewable energy sources, fossil fuels are not sustainable in the long term.



Multinational corporations refer to large companies that operate in different countries and are at the center of the exploitation, production, and trade of essential green minerals. Some of the corporations that belong to this category such as Glencore, China Molybdenum, and Rio Tinto, which are actively involved in mining operations in regions that are considered to be rich in renewable sources. Due to their economic influence, multinational corporations are at the center of the processes that determine the benefits derived from natural resources.



UN agency refers to a specialized organization within the United Nations system established to address specific global challenges, such as health, environmental protection, economic development, and humanitarian aid. These agencies operate at the international level by coordinating efforts among member states, providing technical expertise, implementing programs, and promoting policies aimed at achieving sustainable development and global cooperation. Through their activities, UN agencies play a crucial role in addressing transnational issues and supporting countries in overcoming social, economic, and environmental challenges.



International cooperation refers to the collaborative efforts of countries, international organizations, and other stakeholders to address global challenges and achieve common goals. It involves the coordination of policies, sharing of resources and knowledge, and joint implementation of initiatives in areas such as environmental protection, economic development, and humanitarian assistance. Through international cooperation, states work collectively to promote stability, sustainability, and equitable outcomes on a global scale.



Sustainable development represents a model that meets the needs of the present while taking into consideration the needs of future generations, in order that they are not limited in their ability to meet their own needs. Sustainable development is based on three key principles, as specified by the United Nations: economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection. According to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, if one of these principles collapses, the model is considered incomplete. This plan of action

aims to provide access to appropriate work, as well as high-quality healthcare and education. Moreover, where development is sustainable, environmental pollution and global warming will be reduced through the use of natural resources.

Environmental justice is an approach for addressing environmental injustice. Environmental justice focuses on the fair dispersion of environmental benefits and difficulties among all people, without regard to their nationality, religions, political affiliation, or socioeconomic status. This method, based on human rights, states that no group, specifically less developed and marginalized societies, should not be affected more than the developed as well as industrialized countries by global warming, climate change, environmental pollution, and environmental challenges. Therefore, environmental justice emphasizes the crucial role and responsibility of high-income nations in addressing global environmental issues and promoting sustainable development.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Climate colonialism is a consequence of patterns of exploitation that began in the 15th century during the colonial period. During this time, developed and industrialized countries of the Global North exploited the resources and captured economic systems in regions of the Global South in order to use for their own benefits themselves. At present, the effects of



this inequality are widely observed in global climate systems, where regions that have contributed most to environmental degradation through greenhouse gas emissions in the Earth's atmosphere, continue to exploit the benefits from renewable energy sources and critical green minerals. In the meantime, less developed countries (LEDCs), in the Global South, face the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of climate change.

Africa houses over 30% of the world's critical minerals, namely lithium, cobalt, manganese, and rare earth minerals, which play crucial roles in renewable energy sources such as solar panels, batteries and electric cars. Despite this high proportion of renewable sources, African countries struggle with ecological damage, pollution, as well as displacement of local communities due to mining activities that ensure the extraction of critical minerals. Additionally, as the governments of exploiting countries have power in decision-making, the sovereignty of the exploited countries and their economic benefits from natural resources are limited.



Since 2009, developed countries have agreed to mobilize an annual amount of \$100 billion to support developing regions in strengthening their fight against climate change and environmental pollution, as well as limiting greenhouse gas emissions. The Green Climate Fund is implemented via bilateral, regional, and multilateral channels, as well as private sources, using various mechanisms such as grants, loans and even insurance.



Subsequently, in 2022, developed nations achieved the pledge for the first time by providing a total of \$115.9 billion in climate finance to developing countries. Nevertheless, only a limited amount of the funding reached less economically developed countries (LEDCs), with approximately a quarter going to Africa, whereas loans, which primarily benefit middle-income countries, made up the strongest funding category.

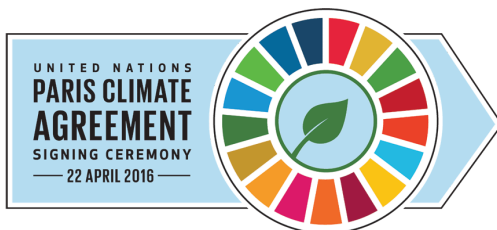
CURRENT SITUATION

The worldwide demand for critical green minerals, including lithium, cobalt, and rare earth elements, has increased significantly in recent years, resulting from the growing need to integrate renewable energy sources into technological developments. While regions are working to reduce fossil fuel use, shift towards renewable energy, and achieve climate change goals, Africa's abundant renewable energy reserves have become globally central, particularly for developed and industrialized countries. However, despite Africa's crucial role in renewable energy production, Africa is one of the regions most



severely affected by the drought and poverty consequences of the climate crisis, and has also experienced poor working conditions in mining operations. These conditions have led to a significant increase in forced displacement, as well as social and economic challenges.

Furthermore, governments with decision-making power control mining operations in Africa. However, this control is not aimed at strengthening or improving mining activities in the country, but at restricting the sovereignty and economic independence of the regions whose rich reserves they exploit. Even though different international agreements and financial initiatives, such as the Paris Agreement, Agenda 21, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Global Judicial Institute on the Environment, the Green Climate Fund, and the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD+), have been implemented, significant gaps in environmental justice are still observed today.

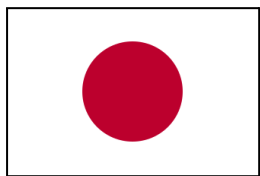


MAJOR PARTIES INVOLVED



The Global North,

represents countries with advanced economic and technological capacity and a high level of industrialisation, including the United States, Canada, European countries, Japan, and Australia. Over the years, Global North countries have contributed significantly to greenhouse gas emissions owing to early industrialization. Regarding climate colonialism, the role of the Global North is crucial as the major consumer of critical green minerals, which are essential for renewable energy technologies. The Global North manages a considerable level of economic and social power, and is regarded as an authority in making decisions globally.



The Global South,

refers to nations that are less developed in terms of economic and technological capacity, with limited industrial capacity, and includes regions in Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia. These countries have historically emitted less greenhouse gases into the atmosphere but are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change. In the context of climate colonialism, the Global South plays a crucial role as the primary source of critical green minerals, including lithium, manganese, and rare earth elements which are required for the development of renewable energy technologies. However, these countries face challenges in maintaining their economic independence, deriving the benefits from their natural resources, and protecting their environments and communities.



The African Union (AU),

as a regional organization, comprises 55 member states in Africa, established to promote economic coordination, political cooperation, and sustainable development in the region. The African Union (AU) aims to enhance the unity in African countries whilst protecting their sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nations. In relation to climate colonialism, the African Union plays a fundamental role in representing the collective interests of African states, especially in advocating for the management of the environment, resources and mining operations, as well as the participation of African countries in making decisions globally related to climate change and the use of renewable energy.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),

is an international environmental treaty established in 1992 to address climate change and its impacts. It provides a global framework for cooperation among Member States to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable development, and serves as the foundation for major international agreements such as the Paris Agreement. The UNFCCC plays a key role in facilitating negotiations, setting climate targets, and promoting financial and technical support for developing countries. Furthermore, UNFCCC aims to ensure that global climate action is carried out in an equitable manner, taking into account the responsibilities and capabilities of different nations.



RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS

UN Guidance for Action on Critical Energy Transition Minerals

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/un_guidance_for_action_on_cetm.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Climate Finance

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/climate_finance_report.pdf

Agenda 21

<https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/publications/Agenda21.pdf>

The Paris Agreement

https://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf

UNDP - Promoting environmental justice

<https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-06/Environmental%20justice-Guidance%20Note.pdf>

SOLUTION ALTERNATIVES

One possible solution is to enhance international cooperation through stronger regulatory frameworks that ensure fair and sustainable resource management. This includes the establishment of binding agreements, increased transparency in supply chains, and the active involvement of UN agencies and relevant stakeholders. By promoting accountability and shared responsibility among states, this approach aims to reduce environmental degradation and ensure more equitable distribution of benefits derived from green energy minerals.

Another key solution involves investing in capacity building and supporting sustainable development initiatives in the Global South. This can be achieved through financial assistance, technology transfer, and knowledge sharing provided by developed countries and international organizations. Strengthening local institutions and empowering domestic industries would enable resource-rich countries to manage their natural resources more effectively, thereby reducing dependency and mitigating the impacts of climate colonialism.

USEFUL LINKS

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

<https://www.unep.org/>

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

<https://www.undp.org/>

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

<https://www.un.org/en/desa>

African Union

<https://au.int/>

Green Climate Fund

<https://www.greenclimate.fund/>

UNEP - Financing the Responsible Supply of Energy Transition Minerals for Sustainable Development

https://www.unep.org/resources/report/financing-responsible-supply-energy-transition-minerals-sustainable-development?utm_source=chatgpt.com

The List of the Global North and South Countries

<https://socses.org/global-south-countries/>

<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/global-north-countries>

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