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**Topic A: “Contamination of Clear Water  
by the Residues of Textiles”**



# Welcoming letter

Dear Delegates,

In the name of the UNEA committee of the CFMUN X Edition, it is with great pleasure that we give a warm welcome to each one of you to this Model United Nations. We are thrilled to have you join us for this exciting event where we will discuss and find innovative solutions to global challenges.

Over the next few days, we will embark on a journey of diplomacy, collaboration, and intellectual growth. As delegates, you will represent various nations, bringing forth your perspectives and ideas. Your presence here today signifies your commitment to making a positive impact on the world.

Sincerely,  
Sofía, Regina & Valeria

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# I. Committee Background

The United Nations Environment Assembly, known as UNEA, was created in 2012, as a result of years of international effort to set the global environmental agenda, provide overarching policy guidance, and define policy responses to address emerging environmental challenges.

It undertakes policy review, dialogue, and the exchange of experiences, sets the strategic guidance on the future direction of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) by decisions and solutions taken in the Assembly that defines UNEP's work program, and fosters partnerships for achieving environmental goals and resource mobilization.

## II. Introduction to the Topic

Water pollution due to human activity is an actual problem that has become alarming over time. All textiles processes require water. However, factories usually dispose of all the chemicals used in the process into rivers and other bodies.

From large quantities of rubbish to chemical waste, they are destroying our rivers, lakes, streams, and mainly the ocean. For instance, several rivers in Asia, where the majority of clothing factories are located, have experienced a transformation from clear to black due to the presence of chemicals and pollution, and the fish that once thrived there have perished.

According to UN recent studies, 2 million tons of waste, of which 20% is textile waste, are thrown into the sea, lakes, and streams a day.

The washing of synthetic materials has caused more than 14 million tons of microplastics to end up at the bottom of the oceans. Leaving a devastating impact on issues of pollution and animal extinction.

### III. Evolution of the Topic

The textile industry is a significant environmental challenge and one of the most polluting industries in the world. This industry is related to fast fashion, which involves the production of large quantities of inferior clothing in factories where workers endure inhuman conditions such as extended working hours beyond the legal limit, sudden reschedules, working in unsanitary conditions, and receiving low wages. These garments are designed for mini trends, and once another trend emerges, they cease to be functional and are discarded.

The production of clothes, footwear, and household textiles contributes to water pollution. Textile production uses a significant amount of water, and the industry is responsible for high water consumption, also known as the water footprint.

The excess of water needed to make the clothes only increases the pollution. In the EU, textile consumption required an average of 9 m<sup>3</sup> of water per person.

In 2015, the textile sector used 79 billion cubic meters of water to make clothes and fabric.

Water pollution is attributed to two primary factors, namely the chemicals present in textiles, which are disposed of in rivers in countries where clothes are produced. Additionally, the release of microfibers from washing clothes also contributes to this issue, as some microplastics are also found in the ocean.

The textile industry has a substantial impact on the environment, including greenhouse gas emissions, land use, microplastic pollution, and waste generation.



## IV. Relevant events

### A. Panorama

The production of clothes has grown significantly in the last few years due to a social and environmental problem called 'fast fashion,' which is largely due to the mini trends that constantly change. Nonetheless, this has terrible consequences for the planet, such as the water pollution, being textile dyeing the second-largest polluter of water worldwide, and the fashion industry producing 20% of the world's wastewater.

- This problem is not only environmental but also social, so it is necessary to raise awareness.
- This problem will continue destroying many ecosystems, so it is crucial to act now.
- The water isn't an infinite resource, and it is key for human, animals and plants life.

- One piece of clothing can use thousands of liters of water.
- Fashion damages in several ways such as energy use, water pollution, worker exploitation and produces waste.

## **B. Points of view**

- Bangladesh is one of the largest producers of clothes for fast fashion brands nowadays and in consequence of that the rivers are no longer clean and now have a black color even the animals that lived there are not there anymore.
- Also, one of the most affected continents is Asia, especially China, which in 2013 recognized that textiles used in the production of clothes have damaged people's health, even causing cancer.

# V. UN and External Actions

## A. UN Actions

- Concerned about this situation, 10 different organizations of the UN established the UN Environment Assembly for Sustainable Fashion during the 2019 UN Environment Assembly in Nairobi.
- Having regard to the Commission communication of 30 March 2022 entitled 'EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles'
- Having regard to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Since January 2019 UNEP has been leading consultation workshops with stakeholders to inform and define priorities.

- A sustainable fashion communication, this strategy is focused on increasing awareness and policy breakthroughs. “ So far, this has led to a new communication commitment added to the upgraded UNFCCC Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action” (UN Environment Program, 2023).

## **B. External Actions**

- “Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Vietnam have united to reduce pollution from the textile sector.
- \$43-million initiative will support Textile-producing Nations Unite to reduce chemical waste, s. f.)”

- Having regard to the Commission communication of 11 March 2020 entitled “A New Circular Economy Action Plan” – For a Cleaner and More Competitive Europe, and to Parliament’s resolution of 10 February 2021 thereon.
- The government of Kenya and the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) organized on June 3rd an Action Hub event called Using the Clothes We Need to Project the Nature We Need.

## VI. Conclusion

The contamination of clear water by the residues of textiles is a concerning issue that highlights the environmental impact of the textile industry. This contamination arises as a result of the release of chemicals, dyes, and microplastics during the process of textile production and washing.

The presence of textile residues in clear water can lead to water pollution, which has far-reaching consequences for aquatic ecosystems and human health. Chemicals and dyes can disrupt the balance of water bodies, affecting the survival and reproduction of aquatic organisms. Microplastics, on the other hand, can accumulate in water bodies, posing a threat to marine life and potentially entering the food chain.

Efforts to address this issue are crucial to ensure the preservation and protection of clear water.

## VII. Committee Focus

When considering the possible solutions to the committee's topic, the following points must be considered:

- What policies and regulations can be implemented to enforce responsible textile manufacturing practices and reduce water pollution?
- What are the best practices for proper disposal of textile waste to prevent it from entering water bodies?
- Is your country doing something to try to solve this matter?
- What technologies or innovations can be implemented in textile production to minimize the use of harmful chemicals and dyes?
- In what manner can the committee assist those who are impacted by water pollution in their respective nations?

## VII. Participation List

- Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
- Principality of Andorra
- Argentine Republic
- Kingdom of Bahrain
- Central African Republic
- People's Republic of China
- The union of the Comoros
- Arab Republic of Egypt
- The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- French Republic
- Republic of Guinea
- Republic of Haiti
- Republic of India
- Republic of Iraq
- Italian Republic
- Republic Kiribati
- New Zealand
- Russian Federation
- Kingdom of Spain
- Republic of Sudan
- Kingdom of Tonga





- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- United Mexican States
- United States of America
- Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

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