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YUNMUN
Yeshiva University National Model UN

Rachel Hirt
African Summit: Welcome Paper
YUNMUN XXXVII

Dear Delegates of AS,

Welcome to YUNMUN XXXVII! My name is Rachel Hirt, and I am so excited to serve as Chair of the African Summit this year!

A little about me: I'm in my second year at Stern College, majoring in Political Science with a minor in Mathematics, and I plan to attend law school after I graduate. I grew up in Lawrence, NY, attended SKA for high school, and spent an incredible year studying in Jerusalem at MMY. I first participated in YUNMUN as a delegate during my senior year of high school, after founding the YUNMUN club at SKA, and this is now my second year on staff! Outside of Model UN, I write and edit for the YU Undergraduate Law Review, play on the YU tennis team (Go Macs!), and am a scholar at the Lieberman-Mitzner Center for Public Service and Advocacy.

Now onto business: Established in 1963 amid the wave of African decolonization, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) sought to protect the sovereignty of newly independent African states and promote unity and cooperation across the continent. In 2002, the OAU was replaced by the African Union (AU) to take a more active role in addressing challenges such as economic underdevelopment, conflict, and regional instability. Today, the AU has 55 member states, and the African Summit serves as a forum to discuss and develop solutions to shared continental challenges in development, peace, security, and regional integration.

This year, delegates to the African Summit will be tackling two pressing issues facing the continent. First, although many African economies have long struggled with underdevelopment and instability, the continent itself possesses extraordinary natural wealth. Africa is rich in critical minerals essential to growing industries such as electric vehicles, batteries, and renewable energy technologies. Yet much of the economic value these resources generate is captured

abroad, where raw minerals are often exported for processing and manufacturing. Delegates will consider how African nations can develop domestic industries to retain more of these economic benefits while balancing foreign investment needs with environmental and labor concerns.

Our second topic will address the unequal burden of refugee crises across Africa. Decades of conflict and political instability in countries such as Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have displaced millions of people, many of whom have sought refuge in neighboring countries. These host nations face significant financial and logistical pressures from the influx of hundreds of thousands of refugees, often while grappling with their own economic and political challenges. Moreover, as the consequences of these crises extend beyond the continent, African nations must consider their responsibility to address displacement within the region and mitigate its impact on countries abroad. Delegates must consider how African nations can more equitably share the financial and logistical responsibilities of hosting refugees while balancing humanitarian obligations with national sovereignty and security.

Your task is to research and understand your country's position on these issues and work collaboratively with your fellow delegates to develop meaningful, realistic resolutions. Please stick to your country's views, think creatively, engage thoughtfully, and, most importantly, have fun! Please make sure to review parliamentary procedure and properly cite all sources in your position papers. You may use AI to check and correct grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and mechanics of text you have already written. AI may not generate, rewrite, or restructure your content. Whether this is your first YUNMUN or you're a returning delegate, I can't wait to meet you all and make this an incredible conference! If you have any questions at all or just want to chat, feel free to reach out to me at rhirt1@mail.yu.edu.

Sincerely,

Rachel Hirt

Chair, African Summit

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