WHO
CHAIR REPORT

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Message from chairs:

Dear Delegates,

We, Lamees AlNaji and Dima Saleh, extend a warm welcome to the World Health Organization committee (WHO) at the sixteenth annual Model United Nations Conference hosted by Dhahran Ahliyya! Serving as your chairs in this committee is an honor, and we are excited to facilitate your collaborative efforts in finding effective solutions to ongoing challenges. Witnessing the brilliance of your ideas, the refinement of your communication skills, and your collective commitment to instigating change is a prospect that fills us with enthusiasm.

Our MUN journey commenced in the 8th grade, and over the years, we've played roles as admins, delegates, and now chairs. This progression has afforded us valuable experience, making us empathetic to the nerves that may accompany this experience, especially for newcomers. Rest assured, we are here to provide guidance and support for anything you may need. Our responsibility is to orchestrate a vibrant, fruitful, and diplomatic conference this year, culminating in the creation of robust resolutions that contribute to humanity's efforts in addressing global concerns.

This conference provides a unique opportunity for you to step into the shoes of world leaders and high-ranking decision-makers. We encourage you to engage actively with your fellow delegates, recognizing that this is not only a chance to network and establish lifelong connections but also an environment in which you can enhance your communication, leadership, and teamwork skills.

We are confident that you will make the most of this opportunity and gain valuable insights. Do not hesitate to reach out if you have any concerns about the process or if you require assistance with your research.

Best regards,
Lamees AlNaji and Dima Saleh

Committee Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) is made up of three parts: the World Health Assembly (WHA), the Executive Board, and the Secretariat. The World Health Assembly was set up soon after the WHO was created on April 7, 1948. Its main role is to create the organization's rules. As per the WHO constitution, the WHA is now the highest law-making body of the organization. It has the power to make different rules, such as requirements for quarantines, standards for tests, and public health practices. The WHA can make laws on any topic that falls under the World Health Organization's authority.

Topic 1: *The Ethics of Genetic Modification with the Use of Emerging Technologies.*

Definition of Key Terms

- **Ethics:** The branch of philosophy that deals with moral principles and values, guiding proper conduct and decision-making.

- **Genetic:** Relating to genes, heredity, or genetics.

- **Modification:** The act or process of making changes or alterations to something.

- **Genetic Modification:** The deliberate alteration of the genetic material of an organism, typically through the introduction of foreign genes, for the purpose of achieving desired traits or characteristics.

- **Emerging:** Coming into view or becoming apparent; developing or evolving.

- **Technology:** The application of scientific knowledge, skills, and tools to create products, systems, or methods to solve problems and achieve specific goals.

Background Information

Genetic modification also known as genetic engineering involves introducing a gene from one organism into the genome of another organism to introduce desirable characteristics. Genetic Modification is a technology that involves inserting DNA into the genome of an organism. The ethics of using new technologies to change genes involve important considerations. Genetic modification is commonly divided into three types: adding, removing, and replacing genes. Each method has its own advantages and difficulties. Adding new genes to an organism's DNA is one way to modify it. On one hand, gene editing can help with medical issues and improve crops. However, it also raises questions about people's choices and the possible unintended effects on the environment and health. There are worries about fairness, with concerns that only some people or countries might benefit. People also have different opinions based on their beliefs and cultures. It's crucial to have rules to make sure gene editing is done carefully and doesn't harm people or nature. Everyone needs to be part of the conversation, and we should work together internationally to make fair decisions about these powerful technologies.

Major Parties and Organizations Involved

1. United States: The United States has been a key player in genetic research and biotechnology. Ethical debates in the U.S. often revolve around issues like CRISPR gene editing, designer babies, and the use of genetic information in healthcare.

2. China: China has been actively involved in genetic research, and its scientists have made significant advancements, particularly in CRISPR technology. China's approach to genetic modification has raised ethical concerns globally, especially regarding human germline editing.

3. European Union: Different European countries may have varying perspectives, but the European Union often works to establish common guidelines and ethical standards. The EU has been engaged in debates about genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and gene editing in agriculture and healthcare.

4. United Kingdom: The UK has been at the forefront of genetic research and has contributed significantly to the development of gene-editing technologies. Ethical discussions in the UK often center around issues like gene therapy and the use of genetic information in reproductive technologies.

5. Japan: Japan has been involved in genetic research and technology development. The country's perspectives on the ethical use of genetic modification have been influenced by cultural and societal norms.

6. Canada: Canada has a growing biotechnology sector, and ethical considerations surrounding genetic modification are part of public discourse. Discussions often involve issues such as genetic privacy, consent, and the potential impacts on biodiversity.

7. Australia: Australia is actively engaged in genetic research and has discussions around

ethical considerations related to gene editing, genetically modified organisms, and the use of genetic information in healthcare.

8. India: India has a burgeoning biotechnology sector, and ethical discussions involve considerations about the impact of genetic technologies on diverse populations, consent, and potential socio-economic implications.

History and Timeline of Events

1970	- Genetic engineering techniques began to develop in the 1970s, with the discovery of recombinant DNA technology. - Early debates centered around the potential risks and benefits of manipulating genetic material.
1980	- The Asilomar Conference in 1975 laid the foundation for ethical guidelines in genetic engineering. - In the 1980s, various countries started implementing regulations to oversee genetic research and applications.
1990	- The Human Genome Project, initiated in 1990, aimed to map and sequence the entire human genome. - Ethical concerns arose regarding the potential misuse of genetic information and the implications for privacy.
Early 2000	- The cloning of animals and the isolation of human embryonic stem cells raised ethical questions about the manipulation of life. - Debates intensified over the creation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and their impact on ecosystems.
Later 2000	- The development of the CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing technology in the mid-2010s revolutionized genetic engineering. - Ethical discussions focused on the potential for precise gene editing in humans, animals, and plants.
2015	- The International Summit on Human Gene Editing in 2015 addressed the ethical implications of editing the human germline. - The summit recommended caution and outlined criteria for responsible

	use.
2018	- The birth of twin girls in China in 2018, whose genomes were edited using CRISPR-Cas9, sparked international outrage and renewed ethical concerns.
2020	- Ethical discussions continue to evolve as genetic technologies advance. - Topics include the potential for designer babies, editing the germline, unintended consequences, and equitable access to genetic therapies.

Relevant UN Treaties and Documents

1. Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights (2005): Provides an ethical framework for life sciences, emphasizing principles such as human dignity, rights, and the precautionary principle.

2. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (1992): Addresses the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, including the potential impacts of biotechnology.

3. Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2000): Specifically deals with the safe transfer, handling, and use of living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from biotechnology.

4. International Declaration on Human Genetic Data (2003): Focuses on the protection of human genetic data, highlighting privacy, consent, and fair use principles.

5. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR): Outlines fundamental human rights, not specific to genetic modification.

6. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (2007): Recognizes the rights of indigenous peoples, particularly relevant when genetic modification involves traditional knowledge and resources.

7. UNESCO's Declaration on the Responsibilities of the Present Generations Towards Future Generations (1997): Emphasizes ethical considerations and responsibilities related to future generations, applicable to emerging technologies.

Possible Bloc Solutions

- Countries that are not willing to ethically make use of Genetic Modification with the Use of Emerging Technologies
- Countries that are willing to ethically make use of Genetic Modification with the Use of Emerging Technologies to develop and promote technology safeguards and verification mechanisms to ensure the peaceful use of these genetic modifications.

Previous Attempts to Solve this Issue

   - Organizations such as UNESCO and the World Health Organization (WHO) have issued guidelines and declarations to provide a framework for ethical considerations in genetic modification.

   - Many countries have established national bioethics committees or commissions to address ethical issues related to biotechnology, including genetic modification. These committees bring together experts from various fields to assess and provide guidance on ethical concerns.

   - Research institutions and universities often have ethical review boards that evaluate the ethical implications of research projects, including those involving genetic modification. Researchers are required to obtain ethical approval before conducting experiments involving genetic engineering.

   - Recognizing the importance of involving the public in decisions about genetic modification, some initiatives have employed methods of public engagement and deliberation. This includes forums, citizen juries, and surveys to gather public input on the ethical considerations of genetic modification technologies.

   - In some cases, there have been calls for moratoriums or bans on certain types of genetic modifications, especially those with significant ethical concerns or potential risks. Such measures are aimed at providing time for thorough ethical consideration and public discourse.

   - Efforts are ongoing to establish international collaborations and conventions to address ethical issues in genetic modification collectively. This includes discussions on issues such as the regulation of gene editing technologies and the creation of international standards for ethical practices.

Possible Solutions

1. Public Engagement and Education:

- Promote public understanding and awareness of genetic modification technologies through education and outreach programs.

- Encourage public participation in decision-making processes related to genetic modification, ensuring diverse perspectives are considered.

2. Regulatory Frameworks

- Establish robust regulatory frameworks to govern genetic modification research and applications, ensuring ethical guidelines are followed.

- Regularly update regulations to keep pace with rapidly advancing technologies and scientific knowledge.

3. International Collaboration

- Foster international cooperation and coordination to develop shared ethical standards and guidelines for genetic modification.

- Facilitate information exchange to ensure that global perspectives are considered in the ethical discourse.

4. Transparency and Accountability

- Require transparency in genetic modification research and applications, including open sharing of methodologies and results.

- Establish mechanisms for accountability to hold individuals and organizations responsible for ethical violations.

5. Informed Consent

- Prioritize informed consent for individuals involved in genetic modification studies, ensuring they understand the potential risks and benefits.

- Develop standardized processes for obtaining consent, especially in cases involving vulnerable populations.

Questions to Consider

1. How can we ensure informed consent and autonomy for individuals and communities undergoing genetic modifications?

2. What strategies can be implemented to address disparities in access to genetic modification technologies, promoting equitable availability across socio-economic groups?

3. What potential environmental consequences may arise from widespread genetic modifications, and how can these be mitigated to prevent ecological harm?

4. In ensuring the safety of genetic modifications, especially considering long-term effects, what safeguards should be put in place to protect individuals and future generations?

5. How can diverse cultural and ethical perspectives on genetic modification be respected, and should there be global ethical standards to guide these practices?

6. In the pursuit of genetic enhancements, how do we balance technological capabilities with preserving the fundamental aspects of human dignity?

7. What regulatory frameworks and oversight mechanisms should be established to govern the development and application of genetic modification technologies on a global scale?

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Topic 2: *Revolutionizing Healthcare Systems with the Use of Digital Platforms*

Definition of Key Terms

- **Revolutionizing:** Signifies a significant and disruptive transformation in a specific field or system, such as healthcare, through innovative advancements.

- **Healthcare Systems:** Encompasses organized structures, institutions, resources, and policies involved in delivering healthcare services to individuals and populations, involving various stakeholders like providers, professionals, regulatory bodies, insurers, and pharmaceutical companies.

- **Digital Platforms:** Online or technology-based systems facilitating interactions, transactions, and information exchange, including mobile apps, websites, EHRs, telemedicine, wearable devices, AI tools, and data analytics platforms in healthcare. These platforms aim to enhance efficiency, accessibility, quality, and personalization of healthcare services through digital technologies.

Background Information

The landscape of healthcare is undergoing a profound transformation driven by the integration of digital platforms into traditional healthcare systems. Historically, healthcare has grappled with challenges such as rising costs, access disparities, and inefficiencies in service delivery. However, the advent of digital technologies, including mobile devices, telecommunication networks, artificial intelligence, and big data analytics, offers unprecedented opportunities to address these challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated the adoption of digital health solutions, highlighting the importance of remote care delivery and virtual consultations. Governments are recognizing the potential of digital health to improve healthcare outcomes and are implementing policies to incentivize adoption and safeguard patient data. As consumers demand greater control over their healthcare journey, digital platforms empower patients with tools to manage their health proactively. However, ethical and regulatory considerations surrounding data privacy and security remain paramount. Looking ahead, continued collaboration, innovation, and investment are essential to maximizing the benefits of digital platforms in revolutionizing healthcare delivery.

Major Parties and Organizations Involved

1. United States: The United States has been at the forefront of digital healthcare innovation. Numerous organizations, including tech giants like Google, Apple, and Microsoft, along with healthcare providers and startups, have been working on digital platforms to improve patient care, electronic health records (EHRs), telemedicine, and remote monitoring solutions.

2. United Kingdom: The UK has been actively promoting the use of digital platforms in healthcare. The National Health Service (NHS) has implemented various digital initiatives, such as the NHS App, which allows patients to access their medical records, book appointments, and order repeat prescriptions. The NHS also encourages the use of telemedicine and remote patient monitoring technologies.

3. Canada: Canada has made significant strides in digital healthcare transformation. The country has been investing in digital health infrastructure, including electronic medical records, telehealth services, and virtual care platforms. The Canadian government has been actively collaborating with healthcare organizations and technology companies to improve access to care and patient outcomes.

4. Australia: Australia has been focusing on digital health initiatives to enhance healthcare delivery. The Australian Digital Health Agency has been leading efforts to implement the My Health Record system, which provides patients with secure access to their health information. The country also encourages telehealth services and has been investing in digital health infrastructure to improve healthcare access and coordination.

5. European Union (EU): The EU has been promoting digital health initiatives across its member states. The European Commission has launched the European Health Data Space initiative to facilitate the sharing of health data and promote digital health innovation. The EU also supports projects and partnerships to advance digital health technologies and

interoperability within member countries.

6. World Health Organization (WHO): The WHO has been actively involved in promoting the use of digital platforms in healthcare. It has established the Digital Health Department, which focuses on harnessing digital technologies to achieve universal health coverage and improve health outcomes globally. The WHO provides guidance, standards, and technical support to countries in adopting digital health solutions.

7. Health Information Exchanges (HIEs): Health Information Exchanges are organizations that facilitate the secure sharing of patient health information among healthcare providers. They play a crucial role in integrating and exchanging data across different healthcare systems, enabling better care coordination and continuity.

8. Technology Companies and Startups: Various tech companies and startups worldwide are driving digital healthcare innovation. Companies like Google, Apple, Microsoft, IBM, and Amazon have been developing technologies and platforms to improve healthcare access, data management, telemedicine, and patient engagement.

History and Timeline of Events

1960s-1980s	-1960s: The concept of electronic health records (EHRs) begins to emerge, primarily as simple databases for storing patient information. -1970s: Development of early medical databases and digital storage systems, although adoption is limited due to technological constraints and cost.
1990's	-1990s: The widespread adoption of the internet sparks interest in digital healthcare solutions. Websites begin offering health information and forums for discussions. -1996: The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is enacted in the United States, setting standards for the electronic exchange of healthcare information.
2000's	-Early 2000s: Telemedicine gains traction, allowing remote consultations between patients and healthcare providers via video conferencing and other digital means. -2009: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act includes provisions for the adoption of electronic health records, providing incentives for healthcare providers to implement digital systems.
2010's	-2010s: Mobile health (mHealth) applications become increasingly popular, allowing patients to track their health metrics, access medical information, and communicate with healthcare professionals using smartphones and wearables. -2010: Apple introduces HealthKit, a platform for integrating health data from various apps and devices. 2016: The adoption of electronic health records becomes widespread in

	many developed countries, although interoperability issues persist.
2020's	-2020s: The COVID-19 pandemic accelerates the adoption of digital healthcare solutions, including telemedicine, remote monitoring, and digital diagnostics, to reduce in-person contact and improve healthcare access. -2020: Regulatory barriers to telemedicine are relaxed in many countries to facilitate remote healthcare delivery during the pandemic. -2021: Investment in digital health startups reaches record levels as demand for remote care and digital solutions continues to grow. -2022: Expansion of remote monitoring and AI integration in clinical decision-making advance healthcare capabilities. Mental health apps gain popularity, providing virtual therapy options. -2023: Governments refine telehealth regulations while remote surgical procedures become more prevalent. Virtual reality therapy emerges as a promising mental health treatment. -2024: Achievements in interoperability improve data sharing among healthcare systems. Genomic medicine progresses with advancements in gene editing and personalized treatments. Efforts focus on establishing ethical frameworks for AI in healthcare.

Relevant UN Treaties and Documents

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): Although not a treaty, the UDHR establishes the right to health as a fundamental human right. It emphasizes the importance

of access to healthcare and the obligation of states to ensure the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health for all individuals, which includes leveraging digital platforms for healthcare delivery.

2. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR): Article 12 of the ICESCR recognizes the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. States parties to the covenant are obligated to take steps necessary for the prevention, treatment, and control of diseases, including the use of technological advancements such as digital platforms to enhance healthcare services.

3. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Goal 3 of the SDGs aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. Target 3.8 specifically calls for achieving universal health coverage, including access to quality essential healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all. Digital platforms play a crucial role in achieving these targets by improving healthcare access and delivery.

4. United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection: These guidelines emphasize the importance of protecting consumers' interests in accessing healthcare services. They underscore the need for transparency, accountability, and fairness in healthcare transactions, including those facilitated through digital platforms.

5. United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD): The CRPD recognizes the rights of persons with disabilities, including their right to the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination. Digital healthcare platforms can help promote accessibility and inclusivity in healthcare services for persons with disabilities.

Possible Bloc Solutions

- Countries that are reluctant to revolutionize healthcare systems by embracing digital platforms and prefer adhering to traditional medical practices.
- Countries that are actively pursuing the revolutionization of healthcare systems through the adoption and integration of digital platforms.

Previous Attempts to Solve this Issue

- Electronic Health Records (EHRs): Many countries have implemented electronic health record systems to digitize patient information and medical records. EHRs streamline data management, improve communication among healthcare providers, and enhance patient care coordination.

- Telemedicine and Telehealth: Telemedicine technologies allow healthcare providers to deliver medical services remotely, enabling patients to consult with doctors, receive diagnoses, and even undergo treatment without physically visiting a healthcare facility. Telehealth encompasses a broader range of remote healthcare services, including remote monitoring, teleconsultation, and telepsychiatry.

- Health Information Exchanges (HIEs): Health information exchanges facilitate the secure sharing of patient information among healthcare organizations and providers. HIEs improve care coordination, reduce medical errors, and enhance the efficiency of healthcare delivery by ensuring that relevant patient data is readily accessible to authorized healthcare professionals.

- Mobile Health (mHealth) Applications: Mobile health applications, or mHealth apps, leverage smartphone technology to provide users with access to healthcare information, tools, and services. These apps enable users to track their health metrics, monitor chronic conditions, access educational resources, and even receive virtual consultations with healthcare providers.

- Health Analytics and Big Data: Healthcare organizations are increasingly utilizing

health analytics and big data techniques to analyze large volumes of healthcare data and derive actionable insights. These insights can inform decision-making, improve care quality, optimize resource allocation, and identify trends and patterns in population health.

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning: AI and machine learning technologies are being employed to automate repetitive tasks, personalize treatment plans, predict patient outcomes, and enhance diagnostic accuracy. AI-powered solutions hold the potential to revolutionize

Possible Solutions

1. Infrastructure development:
- Improve internet connectivity and bandwidth in underserved areas.
- Invest in upgrading healthcare facilities with necessary hardware and software.
2. Policy and regulation:
- Develop clear regulations and standards for digital healthcare solutions.
- Encourage interoperability among different systems through policy frameworks.
3. Education and training:
- Provide training programs for healthcare professionals on using digital platforms effectively.
- Educate patients on how to access and utilize digital healthcare services.
4. Financial Incentives:
- Offer financial incentives for healthcare providers to adopt and implement digital platforms.
- Provide subsidies or grants to healthcare organizations for investing in digital infrastructure.
5. Public-Private Partnerships:
- Foster collaborations between public healthcare agencies and private technology

companies.

- Establish joint initiatives for developing and deploying digital healthcare solutions.

6. User Experience Improvement:

- Design user-friendly interfaces for digital platforms to enhance accessibility for both healthcare professionals and patients.
- Incorporate feedback mechanisms to continuously improve the user experience.

7. Data Security and Privacy:

- Implement robust data security measures to protect patient confidentiality and privacy.
- Comply with regulations such as GDPR and HIPAA to ensure proper handling of sensitive health information.

8. Integration with Existing Systems:

- Integrate digital platforms with existing healthcare IT systems, such as electronic health records and billing systems.
- Ensure seamless interoperability to facilitate smooth data exchange and workflow integration.

Questions to Consider

1. What is the current status of digital platform integration in healthcare systems globally?

2. What are the key challenges hindering the adoption of digital platforms in healthcare?

3. What successful examples of digital platform implementation exist, and what lessons can we learn from them?

4. What technological infrastructure is necessary to support the integration of digital platforms in healthcare systems?

5. How can we ensure interoperability among different digital platforms and existing healthcare systems?

6. What measures should be taken to address cybersecurity concerns and protect patient data?

7. What regulatory barriers exist that may impede the adoption of digital platforms in healthcare?

8. What legal considerations need to be addressed regarding the use of digital platforms in healthcare, such as liability issues and compliance with data protection laws?

9. What training and support mechanisms are needed to help healthcare providers effectively utilize digital platforms?

10. How can we address concerns about job displacement or changes in healthcare delivery models resulting from digital platform integration?

11. How can digital platforms be designed to empower patients to take an active role in managing their health?

12. What strategies can be implemented to ensure equitable access to digital healthcare services, particularly for underserved populations?

13. What are the broader societal implications of revolutionizing healthcare systems with digital platforms, and how can we ensure that these changes align with societal values and priorities?

14. How do we define and measure the success of digital platform integration in healthcare systems?

15. What key performance indicators (KPIs) should be tracked to assess the impact of digital platforms on healthcare quality, efficiency, and patient outcomes?

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