

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to YUNMUN XXXI! My name is Ben Tarko, and I'm honored to be serving as your chair of the United Nations African Summit committee this conference.

I'm originally from sunny Los Angeles, California and that is where I currently reside. I attended Yeshivat Hakotel for a year, and I am now in my second year at YU majoring in Biology. I've been part of YUNMUN since I was a delegate in 12th grade, and further served as an Administrative Assistant for the Security Council last year.

While YUNMUN this year will certainly look very different from YUNMUN in the past, I am confident that together, we can learn, collaborate, and have some fun along the way.

The African Union was first established as a body with 32 member states from the continent of African in 1963, known as the Organization of African Union (OAU). During the 1990s, the OAU underwent several shifts in structure and was re-established as the African Union in 1999, and the Lome Summit in 2000 adopted the Constitutive Act of the African Union, establishing the responsibilities and powers of the body.

Currently, the AU's purpose is to work towards a peaceful, prosperous, and integrated Africa through advancing development on the African continent, promoting and protecting human rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, and defending common African positions of interest. The AU has a variety of different structural bodies within its purview; while most Model UN conferences simulate the Assembly of the AU (comparable to the General Assembly Plenary of the United Nations), the AU also contains an African Court of Justice, regional peacekeeping capabilities, and Specialized Technical Committees as established through the aforementioned Constitutive Act.

Also, note that African Summit will be operating as a technology committee. Please familiarize yourself with technology committee procedure, which can be found on the YUNMUN website.

If you have any questions, concerns, please feel free to reach out to me at [btarko@mail.yu.edu](mailto:btarko@mail.yu.edu) I'm looking forward to hearing from all of you and reading your position papers.

As you prepare for this year's conference, please keep in mind that you are representing your country's views and not your own. Please remember to include citations, and keep in mind that all papers will be submitted through Turnitin, so be wary of plagiarism.

All the best,

Benjamin Tarko

Chair, United Nations African Summit

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