

UNESCO

United Nations Educational,
Scientific, and Cultural Organization



LASALLECUNMUN
2026

“Without Fear: Preventing School
Shootings Through Global Action”

BACKGROUND GUIDE





Distinguished Delegates,

It is an honour for me and my chair to welcome you to this committee at this model LASALLECUNMUN2026M. my name is José Armando Macías Zamora, and this year I will be the President of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. I decided to be president this year because I like international relations and diplomacy.

I am 17 years old, and currently in my senior year of high school. I have lived in Cancun my whole life, a city I love and that has marked my life as the person I want to be when I get older. During eleventh grade, I had the opportunity to be an exchange student in British Columbia, which got me into contact with new people, learning about different cultures, and broadening my perspective on the world. I want to live in Mexico the rest of my life. My plan for university is to continue my studies at Anáhuac Cancún. I am passionate about watching sports and my favourite teams are the Ravens and FC Barcelona. Also, I really enjoyed skiing during my exchange program. In the winter season, I tried to get to the resort every weekend. This is my first Model United Nations as a chair, and I enjoy MUN because it allows me to meet more people and learn from their perspectives.

I hope that throughout this committee, we can work together to make education safer for everyone and create solutions that help students feel protected at school. This is an opportunity not only to discuss and propose ideas, but also to learn from each other's experiences and perspectives. Remember, Model United Nations is not just about debating; it is also about collaborating, sharing knowledge, and having a meaningful experience. I am confident that we will form a strong team, and I look forward to seeing the amazing work you will accomplish. Please contact me if you need questions or have any doubts.

All the best.

José Macías

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COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION

UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, is a specialized agency dedicated to strengthening our shared humanity through the promotion of education, science, culture, and communication.

We set standards, produce tools, and develop knowledge to create solutions to some of the greatest challenges of our time, and foster a world of greater equality and peace.

Protecting biodiversity, responding to artificial intelligence, advancing quality education, safeguarding heritage, and ensuring access to reliable information are some examples of the work that UNESCO does with its 194 Member States across the globe.

Topic: “Education Without Fear: Preventing School Shootings through Global Action”

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, schools, which once were considered safe spaces for learning, have become scenes of increasing violence across the world. In the United States, where school shootings are most frequent, the National Center for Education Statistics reported over 300 shootings since 2000, a figure that sadly rises each year. In Mexico, massive school shootings are not usual; there has been an increase in violence between students and firearm possession. Europe has also seen a rise in school-related violence, showing that no region is immune. UNESCO suggests that one of the main causes behind this trend is a combination of social isolation, mental health issues, and easy access to weapons, amplified by exposure to violent media and the lack of intervention programs.

This directly undermines the right to education and highlights the urgent need for global cooperation to ensure that schools remain places of learning, growth, and safety.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Violence in schools has existed for centuries; modern school shootings became a global concern during the late 20th century. The issue gained international attention after the Columbine High School massacre in 1999 (U.S.), where 13 people were killed. This tragedy highlighted worldwide debates on mental health, gun control, and school safety.

Since then, other major incidents have occurred, such as the Virginia Tech shooting (2007), the Rio de Janeiro school attack (2011), and several cases in Europe and Asia. Although less

frequent in Latin America, the 2017 Monterrey school shooting in Mexico showed that no country is completely immune.

Recognizing that violence threatens the right to education, the United Nations and UNESCO have promoted initiatives like the Safe Schools Declaration (2015) to ensure that learning environments remain safe, inclusive, and peaceful for all students.

CURRENT SITUATION

The current situation of school shootings in the United States is one of the most urgent challenges for national security and global education. Although violence in schools occurs everywhere, the frequency and scale of school shootings in the U.S. are unmatched. Since 2000, there have been over 300 incidents, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, and the numbers keep rising each year. This increase raises concern both nationally and internationally. Today, several factors shape the issue, including widespread access to firearms due to high civilian gun ownership and inconsistent regulations across states. These issues make it hard to create uniform gun control measures. Many shooters, often students or former students, get firearms directly from their homes. Mental health issues, social isolation, bullying, and exposure to violent media also create an environment where at-risk students may go unnoticed or untreated. Despite schools trying to improve safety through lockdown drills, surveillance systems, and controlled entry, these measures do not fully prevent attacks and have raised worries about their psychological effects on students.

The United Nations and UNESCO have expressed strong concern about the rise in armed violence in learning environments. Their recommendations highlight the importance of early intervention programs, accessible mental health services, and stronger efforts to build inclusive and supportive school communities. While recognizing that firearm regulation is a domestic issue, UNESCO points out that improving gun control could greatly lower the risk of school shootings. The organization also supports implementing international frameworks like the Safe Schools Declaration to protect students' right to education and to reinforce the global commitment to safe learning spaces.

In recent years, notable cases like the Parkland shooting in 2018 and the Uvalde tragedy in 2022 have intensified discussions about gun control, school safety, law enforcement response, and mental health systems in the U.S. These incidents have triggered nationwide protests led by students, encouraged some states to adopt stricter regulations, and drawn significant international criticism. Countries like Canada and Australia often reference the U.S. as they strengthen their own gun policies, using it as an example of the consequences of

weak regulation. If the issue is not addressed, the United States could face long-term consequences such as increased psychological distress among students, a decline in trust in educational institutions, deeper political divides, and ongoing global pressure. Ultimately, the ongoing problem of school shootings endangers not only the physical safety of students but also their basic right to learn in an environment free from fear.

COUNTRY BOX

Republic of Argentina
Commonwealth of Australia
Federative Republic of Brazil
Canada
People's Republic of China
Republic of Colombia
Republic of Finland
French Republic France
Federal Republic of Germany
Japan
United Mexican States
Kingdom of Morocco
Kingdom of Norway
Russian Federation
Republic of Korea
Kingdom of Spain
Kingdom of Sweden
Swiss Confederation
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United States of America

GUIDE QUESTIONS

- I. What is my country's official stance regarding gun control and firearm regulation?
- II. How has my country been affected (directly or indirectly) by gun violence, school shootings, or similar public safety issues?
- III. What actions, laws, or programs has my country implemented that could be relevant to preventing or addressing school shootings?
- IV. How does my country view the role of mental health, social media, and bullying in contributing to school shootings or youth violence?

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