

- An asteroid collision would cause nuclear winter and undermine public health in sub-Saharan Africa, so the United States should pursue a space program designed to intercept asteroids.
- Globalization and trade liberalization increase poverty and ill health in sub-Saharan Africa, so the United States should pull out of the World Trade Organization.
- A worldwide economic collapse would undermine public health in sub-Saharan Africa, so the United States should balance the U.S. federal budget.
- International terrorism, if it continues to spread, will cause violence and death in sub-Saharan Africa, so the United States should expand its campaign against state-sponsored terrorism in the Middle East.

As this list illustrates, an affirmative team could choose any serious international problem and argue that its solution would benefit public health in sub-Saharan Africa. The matrix of affirmative possibilities would be endless. Given the specific wording of the resolution, however, there is no authority for the affirmative team to specify changes in policies elsewhere in the world (other than in sub-Saharan Africa). The affirmative advantage must come from public health assistance to sub-Saharan Africa. A debatability standard on the sub-Saharan Africa resolution requires that the affirmative interpretation of the resolution maintains fair limits on the topic; if any change in U.S. foreign policy is topical, the resolution is undebatable.

Debatability asks whether it would be better for debate (more equitable or fair) to accept the affirmative or the negative interpretation of the terms at issue. This standard usually requires the debaters to show which kinds of cases would be included and excluded by the competing standards. The most debatable definitions are those that create some bright line allowing a reasonable number of cases to be debated. A negative interpretation would be viewed as unreasonable if no cases (or only a few cases) would be topical by such a standard. An affirmative interpretation would be viewed as unreasonable if it would enable hundreds of cases to be debated; the preparation burden created for the negative would be unmanageable.

The most limiting standard suggests that the better definition is the one that is most precise. If the affirmative team provides a definition of *substantially* as tangible rather than imaginary, it would be inferior to a negative definition saying that the word means an increase of at least 90 percent. Whatever one thinks of the latter definition, it is certainly more precise than the vague definition offered by the affirmative. The problem with this standard is that it offers no real explanation as to why precision is better than abstraction. One could define an orange as a piece of fruit in the citrus family that has a diameter of 2.7 inches. This definition is certainly precise, but precision provides no guarantee of appropriateness or accuracy.