



NMUN • NY

## HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL BACKGROUND GUIDE 2011

WRITTEN BY: Amina Rai, Louis-Alexandre Cazal, Andrea Wong and Sophie Crockett



NMUN • NY  
NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS  
nmun.org

## CONTACT THE NMUN

Please consult the FAQ section of [nmun.org](http://nmun.org) for answers to your questions. If you do not find a satisfactory answer you may also contact the individuals below for personal assistance. They may answer your question(s) or refer you to the best source for an answer.

NMUN Director-General (Sheraton)  
Holger Baer | [dirgen@nmun.org](mailto:dirgen@nmun.org)

NMUN Director-General (Marriott)  
Brianna Johnston-Hanks | [dirgen@nmun.org](mailto:dirgen@nmun.org)

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NMUN Secretary-General  
Ronny Heintze | [secgen@nmun.org](mailto:secgen@nmun.org)

### NMUN•NY 2011 Important Dates

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** To make hotel reservations, you must use the forms at [nmun.org](http://nmun.org) and include a \$1,000 deposit. Discount rates are available until the room block is full or one month before the conference – whichever comes first. **PLEASE BOOK EARLY!**

31 January 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm Attendance &amp; Delegate Count. (Count may be changed up to 1 March)</li> <li>• Make Transportation Arrangements - DON'T FORGET! (We recommend confirming hotel accommodations prior to booking flights.)</li> </ul>
15 February 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee Updates Posted to <a href="http://www.nmun.org">www.nmun.org</a></li> </ul>
1 March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hotel Registration with FULL PRE-PAYMENT Due to Hotel - Register Early! Group Rates on hotel rooms are available on a first come, first served basis until sold out. Group rates, if still available, may not be honored after that date. See hotel reservation form for date final payment is due.</li> <li>• Any Changes to Delegate Numbers Must be Confirmed to: <a href="mailto:outreach@nmun.org">outreach@nmun.org</a></li> <li>• Preferred deadline for submission of Chair / Rapp applications to Committee Chairs</li> <li>• All Conference Fees Due to NMUN for confirmed delegates. (\$125 per delegate if paid by 1 March; \$150 per delegate if received after 1 March. Fee is not refundable after this deadline.</li> </ul>
15 March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Copies of Each Position Paper Due via E-mail (See Delegate Preparation Guide for instructions).</li> </ul>
NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS	<p>The 2011 National Model UN Conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 - 21 April – Sheraton New York</li> <li>• 19 - 23 April – New York Marriott Marquis</li> </ul> <p>The 2012 National Model UN Conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 - 5 April – Sheraton New York</li> <li>• 3 - 7 April – New York Marriott Marquis</li> <li>• 30 March - 3 April – New York Marriott Marquis</li> </ul>

## POSITION PAPER INSTRUCTIONS

**Two copies of each position paper should be sent via e-mail by 15 MARCH 2011**

### 1. TO COMMITTEE STAFF

A file of the position paper (.doc or .pdf) for each assigned committee should be sent to the committee e-mail address listed below. Mail papers by 15 March to the e-mail address listed for your particular venue. These e-mail addresses will be active when background guides are available. Delegates should carbon copy (cc:) themselves as confirmation of receipt. Please put committee and assignment in the subject line (Example: GAPLEN\_Greece).

### 2. TO DIRECTOR-GENERAL

- Each delegation should send one set of all position papers for each assignment to the e-mail designated for their venue: positionpapers.sheraton@nmun.org or positionpapers.marriott@nmun.org.

This set (held by each Director-General) will serve as a back-up copy in case individual committee directors cannot open attachments.

*Note:* This e-mail should only be used as a repository for position papers.

- The head delegate or faculty member sending this message should cc: him/herself as confirmation of receipt. (Free programs like Adobe Acrobat or WinZip may need to be used to compress files if they are not plain text.)

- Because of the potential volume of e-mail, only one e-mail from the Head Delegate or Faculty Advisor containing all attached position papers will be accepted.

Please put committee, assignment and delegation name in the subject line (Example: Cuba\_U\_of\_ABC). If you have any questions, please contact the Director-General at dirgen@nmun.org.

nmun.org  
for more information

### COMMITTEE

### EMAIL - SHERATON

General Assembly First Committee .....	ga1st.sheraton@nmun.org
General Assembly Second Committee .....	ga2nd.sheraton@nmun.org
General Assembly Third Committee.....	ga3rd.sheraton@nmun.org
Human Rights Council.....	hrc.sheraton@nmun.org
ECOSOC Plenary .....	ecosoc.sheraton@nmun.org
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice .....	ccpcj.sheraton@nmun.org
Commission on the Status of Women .....	csw.sheraton@nmun.org
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific .....	escap.sheraton@nmun.org
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia .....	escwa.sheraton@nmun.org
United Nations Environment Programme .....	unep.sheraton@nmun.org
United Nations Population Fund .....	unfpa.sheraton@nmun.org
United Nations Children's Fund.....	unicef.sheraton@nmun.org
World Intellectual Property Organization .....	wipo.sheraton@nmun.org
African Development Bank .....	afdb.sheraton@nmun.org
Group of 20.....	g20.sheraton@nmun.org
Organization of American States .....	oas.sheraton@nmun.org
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.....	osce.sheraton@nmun.org
Security Council.....	sc.sheraton@nmun.org
Security Council 2.....	sc2.sheraton@nmun.org
International Court of Justice.....	icj.sheraton@nmun.org
Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference .....	npt.sheraton@nmun.org

### COMMITTEE

### EMAIL - MARRIOTT

General Assembly First Committee .....	ga1st.marriott@nmun.org
General Assembly Second Committee .....	ga2nd.marriott@nmun.org
General Assembly Third Committee.....	ga3rd.marriott@nmun.org
Human Rights Council.....	hrc.marriott@nmun.org
ECOSOC Plenary .....	ecosoc.marriott@nmun.org
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice .....	ccpcj.marriott@nmun.org
Commission on the Status of Women .....	csw.marriott@nmun.org
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific .....	escap.marriott@nmun.org
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia .....	escwa.marriott@nmun.org
United Nations Environment Programme .....	unep.marriott@nmun.org
United Nations Population Fund .....	unfpa.marriott@nmun.org
United Nations Children's Fund.....	unicef.marriott@nmun.org
World Intellectual Property Organization .....	wipo.marriott@nmun.org
African Development Bank .....	afdb.marriott@nmun.org
Group of 20.....	g20.marriott@nmun.org
Organization of American States .....	oas.marriott@nmun.org
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.....	osce.marriott@nmun.org
Security Council.....	sc.marriott@nmun.org
Security Council 2.....	sc2.marriott@nmun.org
International Court of Justice.....	icj.marriott@nmun.org
Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference .....	npt.marriott@nmun.org

### OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Entire Set of Delegation Position Papers .....	positionpapers.sheraton@nmun.org
(send only to e-mail for your assigned venue).....	positionpapers.marriott@nmun.org
Secretary-General .....	secgen@nmun.org
Director(s)-General .....	dirgen@nmun.org
NMUN Office .....	info@nmun.org

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2011 National Model United Nations (NMUN)! We are very pleased to be serving as your Directors and Assistant Directors for the United Nations Human Rights Council at the Sheraton and Marriott Venues this spring.

We would like to introduce ourselves, as we will be your first contacts for your questions or suggestions which we will be more than happy to receive.

Amina Rai, an experienced NMUN Director, holds a BA in Psychology and Gender Studies from the University of British Columbia and is living in England where she is pursuing her MPhil at the University of Cambridge. Currently she has suspended her studies to fulfill the sabbatical full time position as Cambridge University Graduate Union President. Her Assistant Director, Sophie Crockett, currently in England as well, is a second year undergraduate student at Royal Holloway, University of London studying Politics and International Relations. Louis-Alexandre Cazal holds a BA in Communication and Political Science from the University of Montreal. Alongside many years of experience as a NMUN director, he works as a communication and logistic consultant in Montreal.

This year's topics are:

1. Climate Change as a Human Rights Issue
2. The Human Rights Situation in Palestine and other Occupied Arab territories
3. Food Security and the Right to Food

The Human Rights Council constitutes the platform to promote and protect human rights around the globe. Delegates have the responsibility to apply available resources wisely and with respect to internationally diverse needs. These tasks require profound knowledge of the role of the Council, thematic issues, and specific regional situations.

Due to the length of time until the conference commences, committee topics are likely to be affected by current events. It is therefore important to observe these global developments in order to keep yourself updated on matters that would affect the Human Rights Council discussion. This guide will aid you in developing a basic understanding of the topics and provide you with a starting point for your future research. A part from this background guide, it is a worthwhile initiative to orient yourself with periodicals such as BBC, Reuters, Al-Jazeera, UN newsfeed and others. Whilst it is important that you stay within the spirit of your nation's policy, the committee staff will also want to see creative, unique and realistic solutions coming from the delegates.

Every delegation is required to submit a position paper prior to attending the conference. NMUN will accept position papers via e-mail by March 15, 2011. Please refer to the message from your Directors-General explaining NMUN's position paper requirements and restrictions, as adherence to these guidelines is of utmost importance.

Your experience in the Human Rights Council will be a combination of challenging and rewarding experiences. We know about the demanding preparation for the participation in your committee's work. Please do not hesitate to direct any questions toward your Director. With a high-level of effort and excitement, we are confident that the NMUN 2011 United Nations Human Rights Council will be a success. We look forward to meeting you in New York and wish you the best.

Sincerely yours,

*Sheraton Venue*  
Amina Rai  
Director  
Sophie Crockett  
Assistant Director

*Marriott Venue*  
Louis-Alexandre Cazal  
Director  
TBD  
Assistant Director

## Message from the Directors-General Regarding Position Papers for the 2011 NMUN Conference

At the 2011 NMUN New York Conference, each delegation submits one position paper for each committee it is assigned to. Delegates should be aware that their role in each committee impacts the way a position paper should be written. While most delegates will serve as representatives of Member States, some may also serve as observers, NGOs or judicial experts. To understand these fine differences, please refer to the Delegate Preparation Guide.

Position papers should provide a concise review of each delegation's policy regarding the topic areas under discussion and establish precise policies and recommendations in regard to the topics before the committee. International and regional conventions, treaties, declarations, resolutions, and programs of action of relevance to the policy of your State should be identified and addressed. Making recommendations for action by your committee should also be considered. Position papers also serve as a blueprint for individual delegates to remember their country's position throughout the course of the Conference. NGO position papers should be constructed in the same fashion as position papers of countries. Each topic should be addressed briefly in a succinct policy statement representing the relevant views of your assigned NGO. You should also include recommendations for action to be taken by your committee. It will be judged using the same criteria as all country position papers, and is held to the same standard of timeliness.

Please be forewarned, delegates must turn in material that is entirely original. *The NMUN Conference will not tolerate the occurrence of plagiarism.* In this regard, the NMUN Secretariat would like to take this opportunity to remind delegates that although United Nations documentation is considered within the public domain, the Conference does not allow the verbatim re-creation of these documents. This plagiarism policy also extends to the written work of the Secretariat contained within the Committee Background Guides. Violation of this policy will be immediately reported to faculty advisors and may result in dismissal from Conference participation. Delegates should report any incident of plagiarism to the Secretariat as soon as possible.

Delegation's position papers can be awarded as recognition of outstanding pre-Conference preparation. In order to be considered for a Position Paper Award, however, delegations must have met the formal requirements listed below. Please refer to the sample paper on the following page for a visual example of what your work should look like at its completion. The following format specifications are **required** for all papers:

- All papers must be typed and formatted according to the example in the Background Guides
- Length must **not** exceed two single spaced pages (one double sided paper, if printed)
- Font **must** be Times New Roman sized between 10 pt. and 12 pt.
- Margins must be set at 1 inch for whole paper
- Country/NGO name, School name and committee name clearly labeled on the first page; the use of national symbols is highly discouraged
- Agenda topics clearly labeled in separate sections

To be considered timely for awards, please read and follow these directions:

1. **A file of the position paper** (.doc or .pdf) **for each assigned committee** should be sent to the committee email address listed in the Background Guide. These e-mail addresses will be active after November 15, 2010. Delegates should carbon copy (cc:) themselves as confirmation of receipt.

2. Each delegation should also send **one set of all position papers** to the e-mail designated for their venue: [positionpapers.sheraton@nmun.org](mailto:positionpapers.sheraton@nmun.org) or [positionpapers.marriott@nmun.org](mailto:positionpapers.marriott@nmun.org). This set will serve as a back-up copy in case individual committee directors cannot open attachments. These copies will also be made available in Home Government during the week of the NMUN Conference.



Each of the above listed tasks needs to be completed no later than **March 15, 2010 (GMT-5) for delegations attending the NMUN conference at either the Sheraton or the Marriott venue.**

**PLEASE TITLE EACH E-MAIL/DOCUMENT WITH THE NAME OF THE COMMITTEE, ASSIGNMENT AND DELEGATION NAME (Example: AU\_Namibia\_University of Caprivi)**

*A matrix of received papers will be posted online for delegations to check prior to the Conference. If you need to make other arrangements for submission, please contact Holger Baer, Director-General, Sheraton venue, or Brianna Johnston-Hanks, Director-General, Marriott venue at [dirgen@nmun.org](mailto:dirgen@nmun.org). There is an option for delegations to submit physical copies via regular mail if needed.*

Once the formal requirements outlined above are met, Conference staff use the following criteria to evaluate Position Papers:

- Overall quality of writing, proper style, grammar, etc.
- Citation of relevant resolutions/documents
- General consistency with bloc/geopolitical constraints
- Consistency with the constraints of the United Nations
- Analysis of issues, rather than reiteration of the Committee Background Guide
- Outline of (official) policy aims within the committee's mandate

Each delegation can submit a copy of their position paper to the permanent mission of the country being represented, along with an explanation of the Conference. Those delegations representing NGOs do not have to send their position paper to their NGO headquarters, although it is encouraged. This will assist them in preparation for the mission briefing in New York.

Finally, please consider that over 2,000 papers will be handled and read by the Secretariat for the Conference. Your patience and cooperation in strictly adhering to the above guidelines will make this process more efficient and is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact the Conference staff, though as we do not operate out of a central office or location your consideration for time zone differences is appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

*Sheraton Venue*  
Holger Baer  
Director-General  
[holger@nmun.org](mailto:holger@nmun.org)

*Marriott Venue*  
Brianna Johnston-Hanks  
Director-General  
[briannaj@nmun.org](mailto:briannaj@nmun.org)

## Sample Position Paper

The following position paper is designed to be a sample of the standard format that an NMUN position paper should follow. While delegates are encouraged to use the front and back of a single page in order to fully address all topics before the committee, please remember that only a *maximum* of one double-sided page (or two pages total in an electronic file) will be accepted. Only the first double-sided page of any submissions (or two pages of an electronic file) will be considered for awards.

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*Delegation from*  
Canada

*Represented by*  
(Name of College)

### *Position Paper for General Assembly Plenary*

The topics before the General Assembly Plenary are: Breaking the link between Diamonds and Armed Conflict; the Promotion of Alternative Sources of Energy; and the Implementation of the 2001-2010 International Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa. Canada is dedicated to collaborative multilateral approaches to ensuring protection and promotion of human security and advancement of sustainable development.

#### **I. Breaking the link between Diamonds and Armed Conflict**

Canada endorses the Kimberly Process in promoting accountability, transparency, and effective governmental regulation of trade in rough diamonds. We believe the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) is an essential international regulatory mechanism and encourage all Member States to contribute to market accountability by seeking membership, participation, and compliance with its mandate. Canada urges Member States to follow the recommendations of the 2007 Kimberley Process Communiqué to strengthen government oversight of rough diamond trading and manufacturing by developing domestic legal frameworks similar to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. We call upon participating States to act in accordance with the KPCS's comprehensive and credible systems of peer review to monitor the continued implementation of the Kimberley Process and ensure full transparency and self-examination of domestic diamond industries. We draw attention to our domestic programs for diamond regulation including Implementing the Export and Import of Rough Diamonds Act and urge Member States to consider these programs in developing the type of domestic regulatory frameworks called for in A/RES/55/56. Canada recognizes the crucial role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the review of rough diamond control measures developed through the Kimberly Process and encourages States to include NGOs, such as Global Witness and Partnership Africa Canada, in the review processes called for in A/RES/58/290. We urge Member States to act in accordance with A/RES/60/182 to optimize the beneficial development impact of artisanal and alluvial diamond miners by establishing a coordinating mechanism for financial and technical assistance through the Working Group of the Kimberly Process of Artisanal Alluvial Producers. Canada calls upon States and NGOs to provide basic educational material regarding diamond valuation and market prices for artisanal diggers, as recommended by the Diamond Development Initiative. Canada will continue to adhere to the 2007 Brussels Declaration on Internal Controls of Participants and is dedicated to ensuring accountability, transparency, and effective regulation of the rough diamond trade through the utilization of voluntary peer review systems and the promotion of increased measures of internal control within all diamond producing States.

#### **II. The Promotion of Alternative Sources of Energy**

Canada is dedicated to integrating alternative energy sources into climate change frameworks by diversifying the energy market while improving competitiveness in a sustainable economy, as exemplified through our Turning Corners Report and Project Green climate strategies. We view the international commitment to the promotion of alternative sources of energy called for in the Kyoto Protocol and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Control (UNFCCC) as a catalyst to sustainable development and emission reduction. Canada fulfills its obligations to Article 4 of the UNFCCC by continuing to provide development assistance through the Climate Change Development Fund and calls upon Member States to commit substantial financial and technical investment toward the transfer of sustainable energy technologies and clean energy mechanisms to developing States. We emphasize the need for Member States to follow the recommendations of the 2005 Beijing International Renewable Energy Conference to strengthen domestic policy frameworks to promote clean energy technologies. Canada views

dissemination of technology information called for in the 2007 Group of Eight Growth and Responsibility in the World Economy Declaration as a vital step in energy diversification from conventional energy generation. We call upon Member States to integrate clean electricity from renewable sources into their domestic energy sector by employing investment campaigns similar to our \$1.48 billion initiative ecoENERGY for Renewable Power. Canada encourages States to develop domestic policies of energy efficiency, utilizing regulatory and financing frameworks to accelerate the deployment of clean low-emitting technologies. We call upon Member States to provide knowledge-based advisory services for expanding access to energy in order to fulfill their commitments to Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Canada urges States to address the concerns of the 2007 Human Development Report by promoting tax incentives, similar to the Capital Cost Allowances and Canadian Renewable and Conservation Expenses, to encourage private sector development of energy conservation and renewable energy projects. As a member of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership, Canada is committed to accelerating the development of renewable energy projects, information sharing mechanisms, and energy efficient systems through the voluntary carbon offset system. We are dedicated to leading international efforts toward the development and sharing of best practices on clean energy technologies and highlight our release of the Renewable Energy Technologies Screen software for public and private stakeholders developing projects in energy efficiency, cogeneration, and renewable energy. Canada believes the integration of clean energy into State specific strategies called for in A/62/419/Add.9 will strengthen energy diversification, promote the use of cogeneration, and achieve a synergy between promoting alternative energy while allowing for competitiveness in a sustainable economy.

### **III. Implementation of the 2001-2010 International Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa**

Canada views the full implementation of the treatment and prevention targets of the 2001-2010 International Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Especially in Africa, as essential to eradicating malaria and assisting African States to achieve Target 8 of Goal 6 of the MDGs by 2015. We recommend Member States cooperate with the World Health Organization to ensure transparency in the collection of statistical information for Indicators 21 and 22 of the MDGs. Canada reaffirms the targets of the Abuja Declaration Plan of Action stressing regional cooperation in the implementation, monitoring, and management of malaria prevention and treatment initiatives in Africa. To fully implement A/RES/61/228, Canada believes developed States must balance trade and intellectual property obligations with the humanitarian objective of the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health. We continue to implement Paragraph 6 of the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health into our compulsory licensing framework through the Jean Chrétien Pledge to Africa Act. We urge Member States to support compulsory licensing for essential generic medicines by including anti-malarial vaccines and initiating domestic provisions to permit export-only compulsory licenses to domestic pharmaceutical manufacturers, similar to Canada's Access to Medicines Regime. Canada calls upon Member States to establish advanced market commitments on the distribution of pneumococcal vaccines to developing States in cooperation with PATH and the Malaria Vaccine Initiative. We emphasize the need for greater membership in the Roll Back Malaria initiative to strengthen malaria control planning, funding, implementation, and evaluation by promoting increased investment in healthcare systems and greater incorporation of malaria control into all relevant multi-sector activities. Canada continues to implement the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) New Agenda for Action on Health to reduce malaria infection rates among marginalized populations in Africa, increase routine immunizations rates, and reduce infection rates of other neglected infections. Canada will achieve the goal of doubling aid to Africa by 2008-2009 by providing assistance to the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. We urge Member States to increase donations to intergovernmental organizations and NGOs that support malaria programming in Africa, exemplified by CIDA's contribution of \$26 million to the Canadian Red Cross. We continue our efforts to provide accessible and affordable vector control methods to African States through the Red Cross' Malaria Bed Net Campaign and the African Medical Research Foundation Canada by supplying insecticide-treated mosquito nets and Participatory Malaria Prevention and Treatment tool kits.



## Committee History for the Human Rights Council

*“Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free.”<sup>1</sup>*

### **Introduction**

The discourse regarding human rights has received significant momentum in the last decade as the global community has become increasingly vigilant in recognizing the importance of agency and rights of all people. Further affirmed in the above statement from Nobel Laureate, the Dalai Lama, human rights are considered a necessary precursor for peace.<sup>2</sup> Leading the dialogue on human rights, the United Nations has sustained its commitment to human rights through various initiatives – most significantly is the creation of the Human Rights Council.

The UN Human Rights Council (HRC) is the successor of the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR).<sup>3</sup> The UNCHR was created in 1946 as a subsidiary body to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Whilst the global community favored the fundamental principles driving the UNCHR, criticism perpetuated regarding the membership of the Commission and their entitlement to monitor human rights violations all the while avoiding scrutiny of their own human rights offenses.<sup>4</sup>

In acknowledging the positive contributions of the Commission on Human Rights and “the need to preserve and build on its achievements and to redress its shortcomings,” on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 60/251 establishing the Human Rights Council.<sup>5</sup> The creation of the Human Rights Council was guided by the “principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, constructive international dialogue and cooperation, with a view to enhancing the promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development.”<sup>6</sup>

Since its establishment in 2006, the Human Rights Council has adopted a sequence of useful services and measures focused on examining human rights concerns and redressing their specific underlying issues.<sup>7</sup> Namely, the Council created the Universal Periodic Review, the Advisory Committee, Complaints Procedures and Special Procedures.<sup>8</sup>

### **The Universal Periodic Review, Advisory Committee and Complaints Procedures**

The Universal Periodic Review is an operational process in which the human rights record of the United Nations’ 192 Member States are reviewed and assessed once every four years.<sup>9</sup> Created by the UN in the same resolution in which the Council was established, the UPR is the only such mechanism of its kind that examines the human rights records.<sup>10</sup> The objective of the Review is three-fold; firstly, it has the ability to increase accountability of current human rights violations. Secondly, it would provide technical assistance to States when required and allow a stronger network between States in sharing best practices.<sup>11</sup> Thirdly, in accounting for transparency and identification on human rights violations, the UPR has the opportunity to improve human rights situations globally.<sup>12</sup> The reviews are conducted by the UPR Working Group composed of the 47 Council members and operate as “a cooperative mechanism, based on an interactive dialogue with the full involvement of the country concerned and with consideration given to its capacity-building needs.”<sup>13</sup> Each year 48 States are reviewed with the goal of having

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<sup>1</sup> Official Web Site of the Nobel Prize, *The Nobel Peace Prize 1989, The 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama*, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Official Web Site of the Nobel Prize, *The Nobel Peace Prize 1989, The 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama*, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/251, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, *Troubles Plague UN Human Rights Council*, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/251, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/251, 2006.

<sup>7</sup> UN Human Rights Council, *HRC Resolution 5/1: Human Rights Council Institution-building package*, 2006.

<sup>8</sup> UN Human Rights Council, *HRC Resolution 5/1: Human Rights Council Institution-building package*, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> UN Human Rights Council, *Universal Periodic Review Fact Sheet*, 2008.

<sup>10</sup> UN Human Rights Council, *Universal Periodic Review Fact Sheet*, 2008.

<sup>11</sup> UN Human Rights Council, *Universal Periodic Review Fact Sheet*, 2008.

<sup>12</sup> UN Human Rights Council, *Universal Periodic Review Fact Sheet*, 2008.

<sup>13</sup> General Assembly Resolution, *Human Rights Council A/RES/60/251*, 2006.

all States reviewed by 2011.<sup>14</sup> The potential of the UPR is significant as noted by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon – the UPR “has great potential to promote and protect human rights in the darkest corners of the world.”<sup>15</sup>

The Advisory Committee supersedes the former Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and operates as a think-tank responsible for providing Council with substantive information, expert advice and research.<sup>16</sup> The Advisory Committee is made of 18 human rights experts that operate within their personal capacity in proposing direction to the Council.<sup>17</sup>

The HRC Complaints Procedure was adopted into the Council in June 2007 as mandated by the General Assembly Resolution 60/251 to address “consistent patterns of gross and reliably attested violations of all human rights and all fundamental freedoms occurring in any part of the world and under any circumstance.”<sup>18</sup> The HRC Complaints Procedure replaces the pre-existing Commission’s 1503 Procedure and operates as a formal complaint procedure that is “impartial, objective, efficient, victims-oriented and conducted in a timely manner.”<sup>19</sup> The Complaints Procedure service is based on two Working Groups, the Working Group on Communications and the Working Group on Situations, which are composed of an expert from each regional group – the Working Group on Communications and the Working Group on Situations.<sup>20</sup> The Working Group on Communications focuses on managing the confidential material and examining incoming and recurring reports of human rights offenses.<sup>21</sup> The Working Group also seeks out, when necessary, responses from the State under investigation.<sup>22</sup> Once the case is investigated, the Working Group on Communications furthers the case to the Working Group on Situations.<sup>23</sup> The Working Group on Situations examines the case, the State’s response and recommendations put forward by the Working Group on Communications and then in using its expert membership, presents the Human Rights Council with a thorough report addressing the initial complaint, responses, recommendations and necessary measures to address the stated violation.<sup>24</sup>

### ***Special Procedures***

The Special Procedures unit of the Human Rights Council should be of particular focus for delegates as the topics provided for delegates are mandated country and thematic issues. Aside from the topics put before the NMUN-HRC committee, it is important to note the context and work of other thematic and country-specific mandates posed before Special Procedures as well as the operations of HRC’s Special Procedures.<sup>25</sup>

Originally falling under the scope and mandate of the Commission of the Human Rights, the framework of “Special Procedures” transitioned under the Human Rights Council.<sup>26</sup> Special Procedures refer to either specific country matters or thematic issues affecting the global community. The current 31 thematic and 8 country mandates are provided mechanisms of treatment through the Special Procedures branch of the HRC.<sup>27</sup> Such treatment is delivered through research, advice, or technical cooperation by the mandate holder or a working group (usually made of up five members from each region).<sup>28</sup> In researching or investigating the mandate, the expert or working group may from time to time conduct a country visit to research a specific country matter or a thematic issue at a national level.<sup>29</sup> As a result of such a visit, the expert or working group would then produce a country report submitted to the

<sup>14</sup> UN Human Rights Council, *Universal Periodic Review Fact Sheet*, 2008.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Human Rights, *Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Universal Periodic Review*, 2010

<sup>16</sup> United Nations Press Release, *Human Rights Council Elects Advisory Committee Members and Approves a Number of Special Procedures Mandate Holders*, 2008

<sup>17</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Advisory Committee*, 2010.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Complaints Procedures*, 2010

<sup>19</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Complaints Procedures*, 2010

<sup>20</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Complaints Procedures*, 2010

<sup>21</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Complaints Procedures*, 2010

<sup>22</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Complaints Procedures*, 2010

<sup>23</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Complaints Procedures*, 2010.

<sup>24</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Complaints Procedures*, 2010.

<sup>25</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *United Nations Special Procedures: Facts and Figures*, 2007.

<sup>26</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council*, 2010.

<sup>27</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Human Rights and Climate Change*, 2010.

<sup>28</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council*, 2010

<sup>29</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council*, 2010

HRC.<sup>30</sup> A short synopsis of their country report is featured in the Special Procedures Bulletin.<sup>31</sup> In ensuring the integrity of the system, and enforcing the neutrality and objectivity of the experts and working groups, the Special Procedures experts and working group are held accountable by the HRC Special Procedures Internal Advisory Procedures.<sup>32</sup> In October 2010, a report was published examining the contribution of the Special Procedures mandate holders.<sup>33</sup> The report discussed that whilst the work of the mandate holders effectively examine human rights violations, the need to properly address such issues require the greater coordination of cooperation and collaboration by all States involved or implicated in addressing a certain mandate.<sup>34</sup>

### **Membership**

The Council consists of forty-seven Member States that are elected for three-year terms through secret ballot by the majority of the General Assembly members.<sup>35</sup> Whilst all members of the United Nations are eligible for election on to the Council, voting for a state's membership is dependent on the track record of the state's commitment and contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights.<sup>36</sup> If in the case an elected member of the Council is in breach of upholding human rights within their state, the Council has the ability to suspend their membership based on a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting in the General Assembly.<sup>37</sup> The membership of Council is based on fair geographical representation in which regional groups are provided an allotted number of representatives for the Council.<sup>38</sup> The regional representation numbers as determined by the General Assembly are as follows: Group of African States, thirteen; Group of Asian States, thirteen; Group of Eastern European States, six; Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, eight; and Group of Western European and other States, seven.<sup>39</sup>

As noted earlier in the introduction, the governance of human rights within the United Nations has dealt with its fair share of criticism. With the creation of the Human Rights Council, criticism persisted in regards to make up of the membership and focus of the Council's agenda.<sup>40</sup> UN Member States such as the United States of America, were unwilling to consider HRC as a newly improved UN body for human rights and controversy emerged in their refusal to apply for Council membership due in part to their concern of States with a track record of human rights abuses becoming members of the newly established HRC.<sup>41</sup> However, the new U.S. administration favoured membership on the Council with hopes to reform the HRC into what the United States would deem an effective human rights governance body.<sup>42</sup> Thus, the United States was elected on to the HRC for a three-year term in 2009.<sup>43</sup>

Debate persists on whether or not the HRC can rise above persisting criticisms and function as an ethical, accountable and transparent UN organ overseeing human rights. The neutrality of the Council has been routinely questioned in noting the large regional bloc of Africa and Asia, holding twenty-six of the forty-seven votes, and thus whether serious human rights offenses will be tackled objectively and whether focus on country mandates, such as on Israel, is in fact targeted subjective attacks or meaningful enactment of human rights offenses being brought to light.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council*, 2010

<sup>31</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Special Procedures Bulletin Sixteenth Issue*, January – March 2010.

<sup>32</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Coordination Committee of Special Procedures*, 2010.

<sup>33</sup> Human Rights Council, *Review of the Human Rights Council: Contribution of the Special Procedures mandate holders*, 2010.

<sup>34</sup> Human Rights Council, *Review of the Human Rights Council: Contribution of the Special Procedures mandate holders*, 2010.

<sup>35</sup> General Assembly Resolution, *Human Rights Council A/RES/60/251*, 2006.

<sup>36</sup> General Assembly Resolution, *Human Rights Council A/RES/60/251*, 2006.

<sup>37</sup> General Assembly Resolution, *Human Rights Council A/RES/60/251*, 2006.

<sup>38</sup> General Assembly Resolution, *Human Rights Council A/RES/60/251*, 2006.

<sup>39</sup> General Assembly Resolution, *Human Rights Council A/RES/60/251*, 2006.

<sup>40</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, *Righting the Wrongs of UN's Top Human Rights Body*, 2009.

<sup>41</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, *Righting the Wrongs of UN's Top Human Rights Body*, 2009.

<sup>42</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, *Righting the Wrongs of UN's Top Human Rights Body*, 2009.

<sup>43</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, *Righting the Wrongs of UN's Top Human Rights Body*, 2009.

<sup>44</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, *Righting the Wrongs of UN's Top Human Rights Body*, 2009.

## **Conclusion**

The Human Rights Council is subject to review in 2011.<sup>45</sup> During that time, the UN will determine if the Council has fulfilled its mandate in “promoting universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind and in a fair and equal manner.”<sup>46</sup> Delegates are encouraged to take this opportunity to work effectively within the HRC and develop stronger mechanisms of human rights governance, technical oversight, substantive research and affirmed objective and ethical reporting mechanisms for the HRC. Does the HRC have the capacity to address the topics put before the committee effectively and successfully? What further mechanisms are required to be put in place to ensure success in addressing human rights violations? How can HRC members better ensure neutrality and unbiased approaches towards specific countries when addressing human rights concerns? Delegates are encouraged to tackle these questions whilst researching their country’s position in the HRC. Undoubtedly, the importance of a human rights body such as the HRC is pivotal and ensuring its growth, progression and credibility should be of paramount importance to delegates.

## **I. Climate change as a human rights issue**

*“Given the nature and magnitude of the challenge, national action alone is insufficient. No nation can address this challenge on its own. No region can insulate itself from these climate changes. That is why we need to confront climate change within a global framework, one that guarantees the highest level of international cooperation.”<sup>47</sup>*

### **History and definition of Climate Change at the United Nations**

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) defines climate change as “a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.”<sup>48</sup> In Rio de Janeiro, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) agreed on the convention and set forth several subsequent Conferences of the Parties (COP).<sup>49</sup>

While the scientific, economic and humanitarian aspects of climate change were largely discussed in the UN system since 1995, the human rights dimension was first brought to the attention of the United Nations in 2008.<sup>50</sup> The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) based resolution 7/23 of 28 March 2008 on the fourth assessment report of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).<sup>51</sup> In this report, the IPCC determined that global warming was the main cause of climate change.<sup>52</sup>

As a consequence of this first resolution, a study (A/HRC/10/61) was published by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in 2009 putting the different aspects of climate change in a human rights perspective.<sup>53</sup> The study not only covered the relationship between climate change and human rights but also provided an in depth study of the implications of the environmental changes on specific right, specific human groups and “relevant obligations under international human rights law”.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> United Nations General Assembly Resolution, *Human Rights Council A/RES/60/251*, 2006.

<sup>46</sup> United Nations General Assembly Resolution, *Human Rights Council A/RES/60/251*, 2006.

<sup>47</sup> Ban, *Opening address of the High-Level Event on Climate Change*, 2007

<sup>48</sup> United Nations, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, 1992, Art 1.1

<sup>49</sup> United Nations, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – Meetings Archive*, 2010

<sup>50</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Resolution 7/23 – Human rights and Climate change*, 2008

<sup>51</sup> International Panel on Climate Change, *IPCC Fourth Assessment Report: Climate Change*, 2007

<sup>52</sup> International Panel on Climate Change, *Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – Summary for Policymakers*, 2007

<sup>53</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, p. 3

<sup>54</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, p. 1

Within the same month of receiving the study, on 25 March 2009, the UNHRC adopted resolution 10/4 “Human Rights and climate change.”<sup>55</sup> This resolution reaffirmed the concerns previously expressed in Resolution 7/23 of the Council and further stressed the importance of implementing the UNFCCC and furthering the cooperative processes set forth by Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the secretariat of the UNFCCC.<sup>56</sup> The main point of the resolution remained the planning of a panel discussion on the relationship between climate change and human rights, held on 15 June 2009 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.<sup>57</sup> During this discussion, delegates highlighted how a human rights approach to climate change “(a) focused the debate on climate change more directly on the real-life effects on the lives of individuals and communities; (b) directed attention to the situation of the most vulnerable and to the need to ensure that their rights are protected; (c) empowered individuals and communities and gave them a voice in decision-making processes, (d) introduced an accountability framework holding governments accountable for reducing the vulnerability of their populations to global warming; (e) strengthened policy-making, drawing attention to the interactions between climate and human rights policies and promoting policy coherence and a more holistic, coordinated and effective global response to climate change.”<sup>58</sup>

### ***Climate change consequences on specific Human Rights***

In the study made by the OHCHR in 2009, it is recognized that although no universal human rights treaty refers to a specific right to “safe and healthy environment,” the United Nations human rights bodies recognize the relationship between a safe and healthy environment and the enjoyment of human rights.<sup>59</sup>

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states in its third article that “everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person”.<sup>60</sup> In the study conducted by the OHCHR, the right to life is identified as the first one to suffer consequences from climate change because defending that right is closely related to the fulfillment of other human rights.<sup>61</sup> For example, it is held that “weather related disaster” may cause an “increase in hunger and malnutrition and related disorders impacting on child growth and development”.<sup>62</sup> The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) dedicated its Human Development Report 2007/2008 to the challenges faced by humanity in a changing climate.<sup>63</sup> Revolving around the idea that “it is the poor who are bearing the brunt of climate change” the UNDP report details the various consequences of climate change on human life as we know it, and underlines the already present consequences of climate change on the right to life.<sup>64</sup>

The right to adequate food is one of the most basic human rights explicitly mentioned in numerous treaties and conventions.<sup>65</sup> Article 25 paragraph 1 of the UDHR states, “everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and

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<sup>55</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Resolution 10/4 – Human rights and Climate change*, 2009

<sup>56</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Resolution 10/4 – Human rights and Climate change*, 2009, Art. 4.

<sup>57</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Human Rights Council Panel Discussion on the Relationship Between Climate Change and Human Rights – Summary of Discussions*, 2009

<sup>58</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, *Human Rights Council Panel Discussion on the Relationship Between Climate Change and Human Rights – Summary of Discussions*, 2009

<sup>59</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraphs 16 to 19

<sup>60</sup> United Nations, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948, art 3

<sup>61</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 24

<sup>62</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraphs 22 and 23

<sup>63</sup> United Nations Development Program, *Human development report 2007/2008 – Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world*, 2008

<sup>64</sup> United Nations Development Program, *Human development report 2007/2008 – Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world*, 2008, chapter 3

<sup>65</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 25

necessary social services”.<sup>66</sup> This basic definition of the right to adequate food is reinforced in treaties and conventions such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.<sup>67</sup> The right to adequate food is also implied in general provisions on an adequate standard of living of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.<sup>68</sup> The IPCC already established a link between climate change and the potential for food production in its Fourth Assessment Report.<sup>69</sup> In the report, the IPCC establishes that changing temperatures are already affecting crops productivity and will continue to diminish production capacity, thereby increasing world hunger.<sup>70</sup> The World Food Program (WFP) has already published several documents on the matter.<sup>71</sup> In a 2009 report entitled *Climate Change and Hunger – Responding to the Challenge*, the WFP proposes several paths to preventing and solving the food crisis caused by climate change and also makes alarming predictions on the impact climate change can have on the world’s food supply.<sup>72</sup>

Closely linked to the right for adequate food, the right to water is also impacted by climate change and also recognized by several treaties and conventions as a fundamental human right.<sup>73</sup> The main concern regarding the right to water comes from the consequences of global warming on snow covers, glaciers and other weather extremes.<sup>74</sup>

The OHCHR also recognizes the impact of climate change on the right to health.<sup>75</sup> Appearing in article 25 paragraph 1 of the UDHR, the right to health is also covered by article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and is referred to in five other core international human rights treaties.<sup>76</sup> On this specific issue, the study highlights environmental and non-environmental consequences, particularly a change in

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<sup>66</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948, Art 25, paragraph 1

<sup>67</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)*, 1966, Art. 11  
United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 1989, Art. 24 (c)

United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*, 2006, Art. 25 (f) and Art. 28 paragraph 1

<sup>68</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, 1979, Art. 14, paragraph 2 (h)

United Nations General Assembly, *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)*, 1965, Art. 5 (e)

<sup>69</sup> International Panel on Climate Change, *IPCC Fourth Assessment Report: Climate Change – Synthesis Report*, 2007, p. 48

<sup>70</sup> International Panel on Climate Change, *IPCC Fourth Assessment Report: Climate Change – Working Group II: Impacts, Adaption and Vulnerability*, 2007, p. 280

<sup>71</sup> United Nations World Food Program, *Climate Change*, 2010

<sup>72</sup> United Nations World Food Program, *Climate Change and Hunger – Responding to the Challenge*, 2009

<sup>73</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 28

<sup>74</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 29

<sup>75</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 31

<sup>76</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)*, 1966, Arts. 7 (b) and 10

United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, 1979, arts. 12 and 14, paragraph 2 (b)

United Nations General Assembly, *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)*, 1965, Art. 5 (e) (iv); United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 1989, Art. 24

United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*, 2006, Art. 16 paragraph 4, 22, paragraph 2, and 25.

United Nations General Assembly, *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW)*, 1990, Arts. 43, paragraph 1 (e), 45, paragraph 1 (c), and 70



“health status” in populations affected by an increase in diseases and viral infections.<sup>77</sup> The other main concern is the renewed stress put on worldwide health systems due to the massive increase in the need for healthcare.<sup>78</sup> The World Health Organization started publishing a report addressing climate change as a health issue.<sup>79</sup>

The fifth human right as identified by the OHCHR as likely to be affected by climate change is the right to adequate housing. This issue is especially relevant to states where geography will be directly affected by the rise in sea level caused by the melting of ice caps.<sup>80</sup> The Alliance Of Small Island States (AOSIS) has addressed the issue on numerous occasions and continues to lobby in various international institutions.<sup>81</sup> Climate change will also impact weather patterns, as the expected increase in the number of tropical cyclones is also a phenomenon that will directly impair “years of positive development in a matter of hours”.<sup>82</sup> As members of AOSIS are likely to be deeply impacted by climate change, the organization has been very active in fighting climate change, starting with the fight against climate change with the 1994 conference of Barbados, which resulted in the Barbados Programme of Action.<sup>83</sup>

In the series of rights identified by the OHCHR, the right to self-determination covers as general a spectrum of issues as the right to life.<sup>84</sup> Stated in articles 1-2 and 55 of the Charter of the United Nations, this right is further defined by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights establishes that “all peoples have the right of self-determination,” by virtue of which “they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.”<sup>85</sup> The study further states that the realization of this collective right is “an essential condition for the effective enjoyment of individual human rights.”<sup>86</sup> One of the tangible consequences of climate change will be the ability of citizens of small island states to enjoy preserving a life they are familiar with and their right to self-determination. Because of the rising sea levels, small island states are becoming more and more threatened. Since entire populations will lose their homelands, the problem of relocation and coexistence some place new, where they are unlikely to share a common culture, political system, values or history, becomes an issue of self-determination.

### ***Climate change consequences on specific groups***

As typical when studying a matter of human rights, specific groups of the human population are given special attention. Those groups are said to be more vulnerable due to poverty, gender, age, minority status and disability.<sup>87</sup> The study led by the OHCHR identifies women, children and indigenous people as part of those groups and most likely to be deprived of certain human rights due to climate change.

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<sup>77</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 32

<sup>78</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 33

<sup>79</sup> United Nations World Health Organization, *WHO – Climate Change*, 2010

<sup>80</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 35-38

<sup>81</sup> Alliance Of Small Island States, *Alliance Of Small Island States – About*, 2010

<sup>82</sup> Alliance Of Small Island States, *Alliance Of Small Island States – Issues*, 2010

<sup>83</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States*, 1994

<sup>84</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraphs 39-41

<sup>85</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)*, 1966, United Nations General Assembly, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)*, 1966, Art 1.1

<sup>86</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 39

<sup>87</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 42

Women are typically more affected than men during episodes of climate-related disasters due to preexisting discrimination based on gender.<sup>88</sup> Several women organizations are actively working on the issue of climate change such as the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), the Gender and Climate Network or the League of Women Voters (LWV).<sup>89</sup> In 2008 the Commission on the Status of Women during its 52<sup>nd</sup> session recognized climate change as an emerging issue for women.<sup>90</sup>

The second group identified by the report of the OHCHR consists of children. Pursuant to the definition of human populations that need to be further protected when it comes to human rights, children are especially vulnerable due to their natural weakness when it comes to health issues induced by natural events and an increase in diseases, malnutrition and deprivation of their right to education.<sup>91</sup> The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) published a report focusing on children and climate change in 2007 in which it details the risks faced by children.<sup>92</sup>

The last group identified as more vulnerable to climate change by the OHCHR report consists of indigenous populations.<sup>93</sup> Vulnerability to climate change for this segment of the human population comes from the traditional environment in which they live, often considered more fragile than the rest of the human habitat.<sup>94</sup>

The Inuit populations of the Arctic circle has garnered much attention in the media as they begin to wrestle with how climate change will affect their lives. The traditional livelihood of the tribes depends on hunting and fishing species that are indigenous to the polar climate of the northern part of Canada.<sup>95</sup> With the increase of temperature that is a direct consequence of climate change, these species are no longer as available as they once were, therefore most Intuits are already being forced to abandon their traditional way of life.<sup>96</sup>

### ***The obligation of protecting human rights in the context of climate change***

Since climate change and its consequences have been recognized as a real threat to human rights, the next step in the analysis of the issue is the question of the protection of those rights and of the accountability when it comes to human rights violation due to climate change.

To successfully analyze the question of the protection of those rights, the international and the national level of protection must be considered. Even though numerous international treaties exist, individuals rely on their own state for the protection of their rights.<sup>97</sup>

On the international level, the protection of human rights depends on the body of human rights treaties recognized by the United Nations. Enforcing those treaties and providing sufficient measures for the protection of human rights can only be achieved through international cooperation. The defense of human rights while facing the consequences of climate change is difficult to achieve in a legal perspective due to three major difficulties: establishing the causal

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<sup>88</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 45

<sup>89</sup> The NGO Committee on the Status of Women, *Women's organizations working on women and climate change*, 2010

<sup>90</sup> United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, *Gender perspectives on climate change*, 2008

<sup>91</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 48-50

<sup>92</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, *Climate Change and Children*, 2007

<sup>93</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 51 - 54

<sup>94</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 51

<sup>95</sup> CTV News, Inuit must adapt to climate change: Study, 2010

<sup>96</sup> CTV News, Inuit must adapt to climate change: Study, 2010

<sup>97</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 72

link between a cause of climate change and the alleged consequence for one or several human rights, determining that a human induced effect on climate is the cause for the damage and proving that the alleged violation is indeed due to a present effect of climate change while the world is currently dealing with mere projections of future effects.<sup>98</sup>

### **Conclusion**

While the international community is now very familiar with the concrete effects of global warming and climate change, the issues related to human rights remain confined to the sphere of international negotiations and vulnerable groups of humans. When the UNHRC decided to put the issue on its agenda in 2008, it intended to integrate the human rights aspect of climate change in every aspect of the work done by the UN system through the UNFCCC in order to achieve the vast majority of the work before any major issue arise.

The question before the international community now is to decide which mechanisms should be put in place in order to deal accordingly with future problems and also how will it be possible to decide if a violation of human rights is to be attributed to climate change. As we have seen before, the question of accountability will be the most difficult aspect to be dealt with since the very nature of climate change is global and its cause can hardly be determined on a national or local level, hence eliminating the possibility of attributing the responsibility to an identified state in most cases.

## **II. The human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories**

*“Human rights defenders in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) are subjected to acts of harassment, restrictions on freedom of movement, stigmatisation, abductions, and long periods of arbitrary detention usually under administrative detention orders, illegal searches of their homes and offices and killings.”<sup>99</sup>*

### **Introduction**

A report from the Human Rights Watch dated January 2009 confirmed that both Palestine and Israel have been violating international humanitarian law. Palestinian hostilities towards Israel have slowed down but not ceased. The Israeli government continues to severely restrict the flow of essential goods and supplies for restoration into the Gaza strip, meaning civilians are unable to repair their destroyed homes, schools, roads and hospitals.<sup>100</sup> The people of Palestine and Israel suffer a great deal from human rights violations through a history of wars and religious disagreements. With the creation of the Israeli state, these disagreements have only seemed to have intensified. Hostility between the Jewish and Arab populations started to emerge in the late 1800's with the increasing immigration of European Jews to the Middle East and the British territory of Trans-Jordan.<sup>101</sup> Since then, tensions have only risen, and with increasing western influence in the middle-east human rights violations have skyrocketed and reports on abuses in several Arab states have risen significantly as well.<sup>102</sup>

The question of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict has become so controversial in the past few years partly also because of the justice system and the different cultural regulations. For example, what one country classifies as abuse the other classifies as their justice system.<sup>103</sup> Mechanisms such as torture and the death penalty are not only acceptable but commonly used in most middle-eastern countries.<sup>104</sup> For this reason, in the General Assembly meeting held in February 2010 many representatives believed that common humanitarian law, such the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should be reinforced more rigidly to attempt to re-instate peace in the region.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights and Reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General A/HRC/10/61*, 2009, paragraph 70

<sup>99</sup> Front Line Defenders. 2010. *The Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT)*

<sup>100</sup> Human Rights Watch, 2009, *The Complete Coverage of Israel/Gaza*

<sup>101</sup> Globalissues.org, 2006, *The Middle East Conflict – a brief background*

<sup>102</sup> Middle East Report., 2003, *Israel, the US and "Targeted Killings"*

<sup>103</sup> Israel/Palestinian Centre for Research and Information, 2008, *Israeli-Palestinian negotiations for a culture of peace*

<sup>104</sup> Amnesty International, 2010, *Abolish the Death Penalty*

<sup>105</sup> United Nations General Assembly. (2010). *General Assembly Requests Secretary General to submit further report on*

### ***Palestinian human rights violations***

According to the UN, there are several reports of human rights violations coming from both the Israeli government and Hamas' military organization. "Israel remains the occupying Power in Gaza and judged by UN standards Israel is in serious violation of its legal obligations. The collective punishment of Gaza by Israel is expressly prohibited by international humanitarian law and has resulted in a serious humanitarian crisis."<sup>106</sup> As a result of Israel's increasing military offences and occupation of certain territories, Palestinian resistance augmented and created resentment towards the ineffectiveness of the Fatah movement. The Fatah is a significant political party and the biggest group within Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). It was established in 1958 by Yasser Arafat and is lead now by Mahmoud Abbas. Hamas seized the opportunity to oppose Mahmoud Abbas, committing various international war crimes against members of the Fatah. An example of these crimes include when "members of Hamas stormed the homes of Fatah members with guns and weapons, wounding and sometimes killing selected targets and civilians."<sup>107</sup> This shows that both sides have become very difficult to negotiate with one another and hence, it is within the power of the committee to decide how to promote peace talks and what measures have be taken against the human rights violations and how to reinstate peace in the region.

### ***The humanitarian crisis in Gaza***

Currently, there are serious humanitarian crises in the region of the Gaza Strip. Since Israel air strikers launched a deadly series of attacks in December 2008, the death of civilians has increased dramatically.<sup>108</sup> According to the January 2008 report of the special rapporteur to the UN, John Dugard, there have been "regular military incursions, the closure of crossings, the reduction of fuel and the threat to the banking system have produced a humanitarian crisis in Gaza."<sup>109</sup>

This has repeatedly occurred since then as well, as Israel is still using air strikes, killing a Hamas commander and wounding several other people. There have also been several attempts to reinstate democracy and free elections in the country but many were opposed to it as they did not want to put their popularity to test and so, consequently, it was cancelled.<sup>110</sup>

On the 31st of May 2010, Israeli Defence Forces boarded and seized 6 ships of the Gaza Freedom Flotilla. The flotilla was carrying humanitarian aid, medical supplies and construction material. The intention of the Free Gaza Movement who helped organize the flotilla was to break Israel's blockade of the Gaza Strip. According to Israeli Authorities the blockade was enforced to prevent Hamas from being able to acquire weapons.<sup>111</sup> However, UN Human Rights Chief Navi Pillay accused Israel of violating warfare rules by enforcing the blockade and impeding people from entering in and out with goods and humanitarian aid.<sup>112</sup> The blockade of Gaza meant that 1.5 million people have relied on less than a quarter of the volume of imported supplies they received in December 2005.<sup>113</sup> Israel said it would allow only basic humanitarian supplies into the Strip.<sup>114</sup> With the exception of "special humanitarian cases," most imported goods are refused entry to the region.<sup>115</sup> Thus, due to the outrage and reaction of the international community towards the attack, the Israeli security cabinet then voted to ease the land blockade. The government released a statement that read: "*It was agreed to liberalize the system by which civilian goods enter Gaza and expand the inflow of materials for civilian projects that are under international supervision.*"<sup>116</sup>

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*investigations into violations during Gaza Conflict (GA/10917).*

<sup>106</sup> Dugard, 2008, *Report of the Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Palestinian territories occupied since 1967.*

<sup>107</sup> Centre for Human Rights, 2007, *Palestine*

<sup>108</sup> Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009, *Terror in Gaza: Twelve months since the Hamas takeover*

<sup>109</sup> Human Rights Council, 2010, *General debate on Human Rights Situation in Palestine*

<sup>110</sup> The Independent, 2010, *Israel kills senior Hamas rocket maker*

<sup>111</sup> Fox News, 2009, *U.N. Human Rights Chief: Israel's Blockade of Gaza Strip Is Illegal*

<sup>112</sup> Fox New, 2009, *U.N. Human Rights Chief: Israel's Blockade of Gaza Strip Is Illegal*

<sup>113</sup> BBC News, 2010, *Guide: Gaza under blocaked.*

<sup>114</sup> BBC News, 2010, *Guide: Gaza under blocaked.*

<sup>115</sup> BBC News, 2010, *Guide: Gaza under blocaked.*

<sup>116</sup> [Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010, Security Cabinet Decision.](#)

The lists of approved items include all food items, toys, stationary, kitchen utensils, mattresses, clothes, and towels. Even though the decision does not affect the sea blockade, many view it as progress towards establishing peace in the region.<sup>117</sup>

On the other hand, according to a Human Rights Watch Report, since 2007, both Palestinian territories have shown signs of serious abuses from their own security forces, as well as the relentless abuses from their neighbours, Israel. Palestinian authorities, as well as Hamas, have tightened regulations over the past years and as a result, there has been increased deterioration of human rights and common laws.<sup>118</sup>

On the 29th of September, the Human Rights Council adopted 6 resolutions following up the report on the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the flotilla attack. In the resolution produced, the council supported and encouraged the immediate implementation of investigations on violations of human rights law and international humanitarian law resulting from the attacks on the flotilla carrying humanitarian assistance. The council was disappointed with Israel's lack of cooperation and condemned their attempts to prevent independent and credible investigations from taking place.<sup>119</sup>

***West bank and Jerusalem:***

*“Abuses by West Bank security forces have continued over the past year, with a special focus on Hamas and its supporters, real or suspected. The Preventive Security and General Intelligence Service have been most responsible for arbitrary detentions as well as ill-treatment and torture.”<sup>120</sup>*

Settlements between the West Bank and Jerusalem have been discussed since the beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict. “It was widely expected that the human rights situation would improve in the West Bank following the exclusion of Hamas from the Government of the West Bank. This initially signalled a new rapprochement between Israel and the emergency Government of President Abbas.”<sup>121</sup> Currently, the West Bank has an unelected emergency government established under Mr. Fayyad, Abbas' technocrat appointed to smooth the bureaucratic path towards creating a formal government.<sup>122</sup>

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2010, four Israeli citizens were killed in the West Bank near the city of Hebron. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, condemned the attack and urged that those responsible be brought to justice. She stated that the perpetrators could be held accountable under international criminal law. Peace talks between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas commenced on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 2010. This is the first time in two years that such talks have come into effect.<sup>123</sup>

Israel's continuing occupation of the West Bank has caused much upheaval, which many argue could lead to a “one-state solution.” According to an interview Mahmoud Abbas gave the English newspaper, The Guardian, he insists he “did not allow any return to armed resistance; offered direct negotiations with Israel in exchange for a complete three-month settlement freeze; he claimed he had come close to a comprehensive agreement with former Israeli leader Ehud Olmert that went beyond anything negotiated by Yasser Arafat under President Bill Clinton; and defended Egypt's construction of an underground wall to prevent smuggling into the Hamas-controlled Gaza strip.”<sup>124</sup>

The West Bank remains occupied by the state of Israel. There are countless Israeli settlements, 10,000 Israeli troops and abundant roadblocks and checkpoints that render ordinary life impossible for the area's 2.5 million

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<sup>117</sup> BBC News, 2010, *Guide: Gaza under blocaded*.

<sup>118</sup> Human Rights Watch, 2008, *Internal Fight: Palestinian Abuses in Gaza and the West Bank*, p. 22.

<sup>119</sup> Human Rights Council, 2010, “*Council adopts texts on follow-up on Report of Fact-Finding Mission on flotilla attack and on Committee of Independent Experts on Gaza conflict*”.

<sup>120</sup> Human Rights Watch, 2008, *Internal Fight: Palestinian Abuses in Gaza and the West Bank*, p. 22.

<sup>121</sup> Dugard, 2008, *Report of the Rapporteur on the Human Rights situation in Palestinian territories occupied since 1967*.

<sup>122</sup> The Economist, 2010, *Under threat from all sides - Democracy is flagging in both the Palestinian territories*.

<sup>123</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2010, *UN human rights chief joins condemnation of deadly West Bank Attack*.

<sup>124</sup> The Guardian, 2010, “*Mahmoud Abbas: Israel's West Bank occupation leading to one-state solution*”.

Palestinians.<sup>125</sup> In accordance with a release from the Israeli Defence Forces website, there have been established many violence checkpoints throughout the West Bank. “These checkpoints were intended to stem the flow of weapons and terrorist activity which were rampant at the time. Checkpoints consist of a series of barriers at which passing individuals are screened and checked for weapons or weapons-making material, and are manned by IDF soldiers or Border Patrol soldiers.”<sup>126</sup>

The main concern is the increase in poverty in the West Bank. Many reports, including one by the British organization Save the Children, show that families forced from their homes in the West Bank are suffering the effects of poverty, often food deprived and lacking in medicine and humanitarian assistance. “The European Commission funded study found that in "Area C" - the 60 per cent of the West Bank under direct Israeli control - the poorest sections of society are suffering disproportionately because basic infrastructure is not being repaired due to Israel's refusal to approve the work.”<sup>127</sup>

### ***Debate on human rights***

Since the beginning of the conflict there have been many incidents regarding human rights violations and torture allegations. According to the Palestinian minister who spoke in the general debate on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 2010 “Israel continued its expansion of settlements and illegal construction on Arab land confiscated by force, which could only lead to the suffering of Arab people. Palestine would not go back to negotiations without an immediate and unconditional cease of all of Israel’s settlement activities.”<sup>128</sup>

However, Israel has been intervening and using methods such as the blockade on sea and land to ensure no more attacks from Hamas occur. In addition to the terrorist group already limiting significantly the freedom of press and freedom of speech in early 2007, they have also violated the rights of Fatah supporters to peacefully assemble in protest of the current rule.<sup>129</sup>

In the light of the current attack of the flotilla boat and the continuous reports on human rights violations by Palestinian security, there are many things to discuss. The Turkish foreign minister urged the U.N. Security Council in an emergency session on 31 May 2010, to condemn Israel's raid on a humanitarian aid flotilla bound for the Gaza Strip and to set up a U.N. inquiry to hold accountable those responsible for it.<sup>130</sup> Meanwhile, U.S. diplomats sought to prevent the council from authorizing a U.N. investigation into the Israeli raid, saying Israel should be given a chance to conduct a credible investigation first. Hence, what should the committee do to come to a consensus regarding this issue?<sup>131</sup>

### ***Questions to consider***

What is the future of the Arab-Israeli conflict in terms of human rights violations? Will the situation improve or worsen? And how does that affect the relationship between Israel and other middle-eastern nations? What are the possible solutions to the human rights violations by Palestinian Security in the region of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and what is the best way to prevent more atrocities from happening in the region of Palestine? What is the best way to reduce the impact the Israeli blockade has had on the Gazan citizens and what can the committee do in order to encourage peace talks and end the hostility between both nations?

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<sup>125</sup> New York Times. 2010, “*Outlines Emerge of Future State in the West Bank*”.

<sup>126</sup> Israeli Defence Forces. (2010). *Improved Security Situation Leads to Decrease in Number of Checkpoints in the West Bank*.

<sup>127</sup> Al Jazeera, 2010, *West Bank poverty 'worse than Gaza'*

<sup>128</sup> United Nations Office at Geneva. (2010). *Human Rights Council holds general debate on human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories*.

<sup>129</sup> Human Rights Watch: *Civilian Protection and Middle East Armed Groups: In Search of Authoritative Local Voices*

<sup>130</sup> The Washington Post, 2010, *Turkey urges U.N. Security Council to condemn Israeli attack on aid flotilla*.

<sup>131</sup> The Washington Post, 2010, *Turkey urges U.N. Security Council to condemn Israeli attack on aid flotilla*.



### III. Food Security and the Right to Food

*“For the first time, more than one billion people are hungry . . . Food and nutritional security are the foundations of a decent life, a sound education for children and, indeed, the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals. As a cohesive UN system and as members of the international community, it is our collective responsibility to address the multiple demands of food insecurity so that all people can enjoy their right to food.”*  
— United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon<sup>132</sup>

#### **Introduction**

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), “food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”<sup>133</sup> Food provides the energy needed for physical activity, mental activity, and the maintenance of good health.<sup>134</sup> Proper nutrition is therefore vital for human growth and development, especially in childhood, during which children require enough energy both to maintain their body systems and to grow.<sup>135</sup> Presently, the world produces more than enough food for every nation to be food-secure and for every person to have the benefit of a healthy diet.<sup>136</sup> Yet, in spite of ample supply, approximately one billion people are regularly unable to meet their daily caloric needs, while the diets of two billion lack vitamins or minerals that are essential to good health.<sup>137</sup> Food security has been regarded as a significant concern since the mid-1990s; however, notwithstanding the world’s best efforts, hunger is on the rise.<sup>138</sup>

#### **The Global Food Crisis**

A recent, significant challenge to food security arrived in 2008 when global food prices increased dramatically.<sup>139</sup> Between December 2007 and June 2008, food prices rose by nearly 60 percent.<sup>140</sup> Staple crops were particularly affected during this period; the price of both wheat and soybeans rose by 75 percent, while the price of rice rose by 177 percent.<sup>141</sup> Significant gains that had been made in the fight against poverty and hunger were jeopardized, and an even greater burden was placed upon the world’s least developed countries.<sup>142</sup> For instance, low-income food-deficit countries in Africa saw their cereal import bill rise from \$6.5 billion US in 2002-2003 to \$14.6 billion US in 2007-2008.<sup>143</sup> Before the rise in prices, it was estimated that 854 million people were already undernourished; that figure has since risen to well above one billion.<sup>144</sup> While food prices have started to stabilize, the crisis is not over. Experts from FAO, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) predict that high prices will persist for most food crops through 2015.<sup>145</sup>

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) emphasizes that the current food crisis did not arise only out of recent factors.<sup>146</sup> Rather, the food crisis was “also the consequence of deep-rooted long-term trends arising from changing demographic and consumption patterns and years of system failures of development strategy on many fronts,” at both the national and international levels.<sup>147</sup> Over the past two decades, demand for food has been rising in proportion with the general trends of population growth, rising income, and diet

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<sup>132</sup> High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Progress report: Synopsis*, 2009.

<sup>133</sup> FAO, *Trade reforms and food security: Conceptualizing the linkages*, 2003, p. 29.

<sup>134</sup> Leathers and Foster, *The world food problem: Toward ending undernutrition in the Third World*, 2009, p. 29.

<sup>135</sup> Leathers and Foster, *The world food problem: Toward ending undernutrition in the Third World*, 2009, p. 28.

<sup>136</sup> Bassett and Winter-Nelson, *The atlas of world hunger*, 2010, p. 1.

<sup>137</sup> Bassett and Winter-Nelson, *The atlas of world hunger*, 2010, p. 1.

<sup>138</sup> FAO, *Trade reforms and food security: Conceptualizing the linkages*, 2003, p. 27.

<sup>139</sup> United Nations, *Global food security crisis: Background*, 2009.

<sup>140</sup> Leathers and Foster, *The world food problem: Toward ending undernutrition in the Third World*, 2009, p. 85.

<sup>141</sup> Leathers and Foster, *The world food problem: Toward ending undernutrition in the Third World*, 2009, p. 85.

<sup>142</sup> United Nations, *Global food security crisis: Background*, 2009.

<sup>143</sup> UNCTAD, *Addressing the global food crisis*, 2008, p. 5.

<sup>144</sup> United Nations, *Global food security crisis: Background*, 2009.

<sup>145</sup> Clapp and Cohen, *The global food crisis: Governance challenges and opportunities*, 2009, p. 13.

<sup>146</sup> UNCTAD, *Addressing the global food crisis*, 2008, p. 6.

<sup>147</sup> UNCTAD, *Addressing the global food crisis*, 2008, p. 6.

diversification.<sup>148</sup> However, agricultural investment has declined. The percentage of public spending in developing countries devoted to agriculture fell by 50 percent between 1980 and 2004.<sup>149</sup> Funding for farm credit, crop distribution, and reserve programs has been reduced or abolished.<sup>150</sup> Simultaneously, agricultural investment by the governments of developed nations and by multilateral institutions has diminished.<sup>151</sup> In 1980, the World Bank allocated \$7.7 billion US to agricultural lending; in 2004, that amount was only \$2 billion US.<sup>152</sup> During the same period, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) cut agricultural aid by 75 percent.<sup>153</sup> Lowered agricultural investment has “eroded” the ability of developing countries to maintain agricultural production.<sup>154</sup> In India, for example, the production of cereals has fallen by 17 kilograms per capita over the past ten years.<sup>155</sup> Demographic demand for food continues to rise while harvests continue to wane, resulting in higher prices and a supply-and-demand imbalance that will be rectified only through long-term strategies.<sup>156</sup>

Prices have also been distorted by speculation and export restraints. In an increasingly globalized world, food prices have become interdependent upon other economic trends. Following the collapse of the US subprime market in 2007, speculators looked amid market volatility to invest in assets with rising prices.<sup>157</sup> A general shift in portfolios toward food assets has only “[fed] the price rise spiral.”<sup>158</sup> Meanwhile, a further reduction in food supply has followed from hoarding within nations in conjunction with bans or tariffs on exports.<sup>159</sup> While nations have employed such protectionist tactics to address local needs, they have regrettably contributed to the distortion of markets on a greater scale.

In general, high energy prices have raised the cost of food production, and ultimately the cost of food, by increasing the costs of agricultural inputs.<sup>160</sup> But the relatively new food versus fuel debate is adding another dimension to a growing association between food and energy, as high energy prices have also increased demand for biofuels.<sup>161</sup> The use of inputs such as corn, sugar, and vegetable oils for biofuel production has the immediate effect of reducing food supply, resulting in higher prices.<sup>162</sup> Also of note is that almost all biofuels are produced from materials that could also be used as human food or livestock feed; biofuel opponents argue that these materials “should be used to feed people rather than fuel vehicles.”<sup>163</sup>

Outside of the realm of purely human influence, natural causes are also contributing to world hunger. Land degradation, whether through erosion or chemical and physical changes to soil, is the environmental issue that stands to have the greatest impact upon future food production.<sup>164</sup> Scientists are currently debating the potential effects of global warming upon agriculture.<sup>165</sup> If sea levels continue to rise, agricultural land in coastal areas may become flooded; changing weather patterns may also influence average crop yields worldwide.<sup>166</sup> Natural disasters appear to be increasing in frequency.<sup>167</sup> Drought has become the single most common cause of food shortages worldwide, and has been particularly harmful for such countries as Ethiopia.<sup>168</sup> Most recently, the world has witnessed a catastrophe in Pakistan. Beginning in late July 2010, severe monsoon rains precipitated a sequence of

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<sup>148</sup> High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Comprehensive Framework for Action*, 2008, p. 1.

<sup>149</sup> Clapp and Cohen, *The global food crisis: Governance challenges and opportunities*, 2009, p. 20.

<sup>150</sup> Clapp and Cohen, *The global food crisis: Governance challenges and opportunities*, 2009, p. 21.

<sup>151</sup> Clapp and Cohen, *The global food crisis: Governance challenges and opportunities*, 2009, p. 21.

<sup>152</sup> Clapp and Cohen, *The global food crisis: Governance challenges and opportunities*, 2009, p. 21.

<sup>153</sup> Clapp and Cohen, *The global food crisis: Governance challenges and opportunities*, 2009, p. 21.

<sup>154</sup> Clapp and Cohen, *The global food crisis: Governance challenges and opportunities*, 2009, p. 21.

<sup>155</sup> UNCTAD, *Addressing the global food crisis*, 2008, p. 6-7.

<sup>156</sup> UNCTAD, *Addressing the global food crisis*, 2008, p. 7.

<sup>157</sup> UNCTAD, *Addressing the global food crisis*, 2008, p. 7.

<sup>158</sup> UNCTAD, *Addressing the global food crisis*, 2008, p. 7.

<sup>159</sup> UNCTAD, *Addressing the global food crisis*, 2008, p. 7.

<sup>160</sup> UNCTAD, *Addressing the global food crisis*, 2008, p. 8.

<sup>161</sup> UNCTAD, *Addressing the global food crisis*, 2008, p. 8.

<sup>162</sup> Westhoff, *The economics of food: How feeding and fueling the planet affects food prices*, 2010, p. 11.

<sup>163</sup> Westhoff, *The economics of food: How feeding and fueling the planet affects food prices*, 2010, p. 9, 33.

<sup>164</sup> Leathers and Foster, *The world food problem: Toward ending undernutrition in the Third World*, 2009, p. 181.

<sup>165</sup> Leathers and Foster, *The world food problem: Toward ending undernutrition in the Third World*, 2009, p. 189.

<sup>166</sup> Leathers and Foster, *The world food problem: Toward ending undernutrition in the Third World*, 2009, p. 189.

<sup>167</sup> United Nations World Food Programme, *WFP – Fighting Hunger Worldwide*, 2010.

<sup>168</sup> United Nations World Food Programme, *WFP – Fighting Hunger Worldwide*, 2010.

floods that have continued to devastate the country.<sup>169</sup> Prior to the disaster, Pakistan was considered food-secure, but the floods “have caused the most colossal wipeout of a national food system in recent history.”<sup>170</sup> One million hectares of agricultural land have been lost, and countless livestock and poultry have drowned.<sup>171</sup> Regaining food security will doubtlessly be an extraordinary challenge to long-term recovery, which cannot truly begin until the floodwaters have subsided.

### *International Efforts*

Following the Bangladeshi famine of 1972, the first World Food Conference was convened by the General Assembly in November 1974 and “entrusted with developing ways and means whereby the international community, as a whole, could take specific action to resolve the world food problem within the broader context of development and international economic cooperation.”<sup>172</sup> Attended by representatives from 135 states, the Conference adopted the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition, as well as twenty resolutions on diverse topics.<sup>173</sup> Numerous international conferences have since been held, including the 1996 World Food Summit, which saw the adoption of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action, and the 2002 World Food Summit, at which states reevaluated and renewed their commitment to the goals established in 1996.<sup>174</sup> Among these goals was a pledge to halve the number of the world’s undernourished people by 2015, which was later reiterated through the first of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000.<sup>175</sup> Most recently, during the 2009 World Summit on Food Security, world leaders unanimously adopted a declaration that refocuses their endeavour towards achieving food security upon five principles.<sup>176</sup> The Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security encompass investment in country-owned plans; better strategic coordination; a comprehensive approach to food security that incorporates both short- and long-term strategies; the sustained involvement of the multilateral system; and the continued dedication of all partners to agriculture, food security, and nutrition.<sup>177</sup>

Within the structure of the United Nations, the World Food Programme (WFP) is one of the most important initiatives that seeks to eliminate food insecurity. As the largest humanitarian agency devoted to fighting global hunger, WFP prioritises ensuring food security during and shortly after times of emergency, while also providing general assistance to food-insecure countries.<sup>178</sup> It aims to increase self-sufficiency at the national level and to support long-term solutions to global hunger.<sup>179</sup> Armed with a similar mandate but with different tools, FAO operates as a forum for nations to meet and to discuss policy.<sup>180</sup> It also contributes legal, technical and educational expertise to supplement food security projects on the ground.<sup>181</sup>

In response to the current global food crisis, the United Nations Chief Executives Board established the High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (HLTF) in April 2008.<sup>182</sup> Chaired by the Secretary-General, HLTF meets every two months and unites the leadership of UN specialized agencies, funds and programmes with representatives from the UN Secretariat, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), OECD, and the World Trade Organization (WTO).<sup>183</sup> In 2008, HLTF published a Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA), which comprises two sets of actions to tackle the global food crisis.<sup>184</sup> The first set of actions addresses “the immediate needs of vulnerable populations.”<sup>185</sup> It includes the improvement of emergency food assistance, nutrition

<sup>169</sup> Leeder, *Flood-hit Pakistan struggles to rebuild its food system from scratch*, 2010.

<sup>170</sup> Leeder, *Flood-hit Pakistan struggles to rebuild its food system from scratch*, 2010.

<sup>171</sup> Leeder, *Flood-hit Pakistan struggles to rebuild its food system from scratch*, 2010.

<sup>172</sup> World Food Conference, *Report of the World Food Conference*, 1974, p. 2.

<sup>173</sup> World Food Conference, *Report of the World Food Conference*, 1974, p. 2, 5, 8.

<sup>174</sup> United Nations, *Key Conference Outcomes in Food*, 2010.

<sup>175</sup> United Nations, *Millennium Development Goals*, 2010.

<sup>176</sup> World Summit on Food Security, *Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security*, 2009.

<sup>177</sup> World Summit on Food Security, *Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security*, 2009.

<sup>178</sup> United Nations World Food Programme, *WFP – Fighting Hunger Worldwide*, 2010.

<sup>179</sup> United Nations World Food Programme, *WFP – Fighting Hunger Worldwide*, 2010.

<sup>180</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *FAO Home*, 2010.

<sup>181</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *FAO Home*, 2010.

<sup>182</sup> United Nations, *Global Food Security Crisis: Background*, 2009.

<sup>183</sup> United Nations, *Global Food Security Crisis: Background*, 2009.

<sup>184</sup> High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Comprehensive Framework for Action*, 2008, p. ix.

<sup>185</sup> High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Comprehensive Framework for Action*, 2008, p. ix.

interventions and safety nets; the bolstered support of smallholder farmer food production; the adjustment of trade and tax policy; and the management of macroeconomic implications such as inflation.<sup>186</sup> The second set of actions “builds resilience and contributes to global food and nutrition security.”<sup>187</sup> It includes the expansion of social protection systems, the sustainment of smallholder farmer food production growth, the improvement of international food markets, and the development of an international biofuel consensus.<sup>188</sup> Further, the CFA also aims to strengthen systems for gathering information and monitoring the progress associated with the actions it has recommended.<sup>189</sup>

### ***Food as an International Human Right***

A human rights-based perspective of food security holds that all people have the right to the satisfaction of their basic needs. Governments are responsible for fulfilling this right and they are accountable to their citizens, who actively participate in the process of human development, rather than being relegated to passivity.<sup>190</sup> As a basic need, food constitutes a fundamental human right that has been firmly established in international law.<sup>191</sup> As with other human rights, states have an “obligation to *respect, protect* and *fulfil* (meaning to *facilitate* and — as a matter of last recourse — *provide for*) the progressive realisation of . . . the right to adequate food.”<sup>192</sup> Article 25 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights contains the most basic stipulation, stating that “everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”<sup>193</sup>

The right to food was later reaffirmed in different forms, including the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which recognizes “the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.”<sup>194</sup> The 160 states that have ratified the Covenant also agreed to take the requisite measures to improve the means by which food is produced, conserved, and distributed, with a specific goal of ensuring a distribution system that is both equitable and reflective of need.<sup>195</sup> The Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition, adopted by the World Food Conference in 1974 and ratified by 192 states, again reiterates the right to food: “Every man, woman and child has the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition in order to develop fully and maintain their physical and mental faculties.”<sup>196</sup> It acknowledges that society already has the resources, organisation, and technology needed to guarantee this right, and it explicitly reaffirms the duty of all states, especially developed states, to work toward the eradication of hunger.<sup>197</sup>

The right to food has also been established for specific groups of individuals. It is included in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the 2007 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.<sup>198</sup> Further, the 1949 Geneva Conventions also ensure the right to food for individuals involved in warfare or other armed conflict.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Comprehensive Framework for Action*, 2008, p. 5.

<sup>187</sup> High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Comprehensive Framework for Action*, 2008, p. ix.

<sup>188</sup> High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Comprehensive Framework for Action*, 2008, p. 5.

<sup>189</sup> High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Comprehensive Framework for Action*, 2008, p. 5.

<sup>190</sup> FAO, *The right to food guidelines: Information papers and case studies*, 2006, p. 157.

<sup>191</sup> FAO, *The right to food guidelines: Information papers and case studies*, 2006, p. 156.

<sup>192</sup> FAO, *The right to food guidelines: Information papers and case studies*, 2006, p. 156.

<sup>193</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (A/RES/3/217 A), 1948.

<sup>194</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *International Standards*, 2007.

<sup>195</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *International Standards*, 2007.

<sup>196</sup> World Food Conference, *Report of the World Food Conference*, 1974, p. 6.

<sup>197</sup> World Food Conference, *Report of the World Food Conference*, 1974, p. 6.

<sup>198</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *International Standards*, 2007.

<sup>199</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *International Standards*, 2007.

### *Previous Actions of the Human Rights Council (HRC)*

Since its inception, HRC has continuously advocated for the understanding of food as a human right, and through its resolutions, it has called upon UN Member States to fulfil their responsibility of guaranteeing that right to their respective citizens.<sup>200</sup> As a body designed to promote and address violations of human rights, HRC also has the ability to employ special procedures to monitor human rights situations within specific nations or globally.<sup>201</sup> In April 2000, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) adopted Resolution 2000/10, which appointed a Special Rapporteur on the right to food.<sup>202</sup> The Special Rapporteur's mandate was initially intended to last three years, but it was later extended by both UNCHR and subsequently by HRC.<sup>203</sup> The role of the Special Rapporteur is largely one of promotion, research, and reporting to HRC and the United Nations General Assembly.<sup>204</sup> Recent reports have examined the impact of trade negotiations at the WTO upon the right to food, the impact of intellectual property rights upon the right to food, and the contribution of the private sector to the advancement of the right to food.<sup>205</sup> The current Special Rapporteur, Olivier De Schutter, has dedicated much of his attention to the extent to which national and international responses to the global food crisis have incorporated the right to food.<sup>206</sup>

### *Case Study: Cuba*

Due to its overwhelming magnitude, the global food crisis may appear difficult to address and nearly impossible to resolve. However, the successful resolution of Cuba's domestic food crisis during the 1990s readily promises the possibility of a brighter future for the world's presently food-insecure nations. Prior to 1989, the Cuban agricultural system had been highly industrialized, in accordance with the communist ideology of industrialization that purported to liberate farmers from the menial nature of manual labour and to produce an ample supply of inexpensive food.<sup>207</sup> As a country without substantial reserves of oil, Cuba necessarily conformed with "a model of externally assisted agricultural modernization," importing a wide variety of essentials such as petrol, machinery, chemical fertilizers and pesticides from other socialist countries.<sup>208</sup> In return, it exported goods and resources including sugarcane, tobacco and fruits at highly inflated prices.<sup>209</sup> This arrangement pushed Cuba far from agricultural self-sufficiency; in 1988, it imported 90 percent of fertilizers and pesticides, along with 57 percent of food needs and 80 percent of its machinery and spare parts.<sup>210</sup>

In the wake of the disintegration of the Soviet Bloc in 1989 and the subsequent tightening of the American embargo, Cuba was confronted with a serious economic and agricultural crisis.<sup>211</sup> Having lost its major trade partners, Cuba saw its GNP fall from \$19.3 billion US to \$10.0 billion US between 1989 and 1993.<sup>212</sup> On the world market, Cuban goods sold for only a fraction of what Soviet allies had paid.<sup>213</sup> Even more troubling was the loss of inputs upon which the Cuban agricultural system depended. Cuba was suddenly faced with a 53 percent reduction in imports of oil, a 50 percent reduction in imports of grain, and a 70 percent reduction in availability of fertilizers and pesticides.<sup>214</sup> Industries closed and agricultural production plummeted, resulting in a critical food shortage. It is estimated that in the early 1990s, average daily caloric and protein intake by the Cuban population was as much as 30 percent below that of the 1980s.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Special Rapporteur on the right to food*, 2007.

<sup>201</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Special Rapporteur on the right to food*, 2007.

<sup>202</sup> Commission on Human Rights, *The right to food (E/CN.4/RES/2000/10)*, 2000.

<sup>203</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Special Rapporteur on the right to food*, 2007.

<sup>204</sup> Commission on Human Rights, *The right to food (E/CN.4/RES/2000/10)*, 2000.

<sup>205</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Special Rapporteur on the right to food*, 2007.

<sup>206</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Special Rapporteur on the right to food*, 2007.

<sup>207</sup> Wright, *Sustainable agriculture and food security in an era of oil scarcity: Lessons from Cuba*, 2009, p. 3.

<sup>208</sup> Wright, *Sustainable agriculture and food security in an era of oil scarcity: Lessons from Cuba*, 2009, p. 4.

<sup>209</sup> Wright, *Sustainable agriculture and food security in an era of oil scarcity: Lessons from Cuba*, 2009, p. 4.

<sup>210</sup> Wright, *Sustainable agriculture and food security in an era of oil scarcity: Lessons from Cuba*, 2009, p. 4.

<sup>211</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. 6.

<sup>212</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. 6.

<sup>213</sup> Wright, *Sustainable agriculture and food security in an era of oil scarcity: Lessons from Cuba*, 2009, p. 4.

<sup>214</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. xvi, 6.

<sup>215</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. xvi.

Swiftly, the Cuban government took action, declaring the beginning of an emergency “Special Period in Peace Time” in 1990 as the country struggled to find alternatives to a defunct system.<sup>216</sup> Slowly, Cuba worked toward a self-sufficient and sustainable agricultural model.<sup>217</sup> Local and largely biological substitutes were found for the chemical inputs — pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers — to which Cuba no longer had access.<sup>218</sup> Animals were used in place of machinery.<sup>219</sup> As an incentive for farmers, the government abolished many state farms in favour of collective ownership, or rent-free lease, by workers themselves; anything that a collective produced beyond a state-established quota could be sold for profit at farmers markets.<sup>220</sup> Additionally, prompted by higher prices for produce due to limited supply, as well as a state decree that all unused urban land be cultivated, Cuban farmers began an urban agricultural movement.<sup>221</sup> With strong government support, urban agriculture “exploded to near epic proportions,” helping urban families to achieve food security through the proliferation of food crops, farm animals and produce stands throughout Cuban cities.<sup>222</sup>

By the late 1990s, though the nation continued to experience occasional shortages of certain food items, the Cuban food crisis was over.<sup>223</sup> Cuba’s success at the domestic level certainly offers a myriad of suggestions for strategies that may prove effective either within other countries or on a global scale, including organic farming techniques, fair prices for produce, redistribution of land, and an emphasis on local production.<sup>224</sup> Cuba also demonstrates the commendable results of approaches to development that actively consider human rights. Throughout the crisis, the Cuban government adhered to the principle that “everybody eats” — for instance, milk in short supply would go to children, and never to the production of products such as butter or cheese.<sup>225</sup> Further, the health of all Cubans was a prime concern, and it became a motivator towards ecological agriculture and pest management methods.<sup>226</sup> Perhaps most significantly, Cuba confirms that the Millennium Development Goal to halve the proportion of the hungry by 2015 is not unattainable.<sup>227</sup> It is a target that can surely be reached “by a firm political commitment to prioritize basic food rights and a semi-regulatory market approach.”<sup>228</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The current global food regime assumes that food insecurity is an economic problem that will be solved by policies of an economic nature. The prevailing notion is that “economic growth, via market mechanisms, provides the most suitable solution for curbing poverty and achieving food security.”<sup>229</sup> However, the coexistence of both food abundance and widespread hunger suggests that “a purely market-based approach to food security” has fallen short of creating “a just global food system.”<sup>230</sup> Indeed, the food price crisis of 2008 confirmed the existence of fundamental problems within the world’s food systems, which Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described as “dysfunctional” for having “fail[ed] too many people and many of our most vulnerable nations.”<sup>231</sup>

As hunger persists, new measures must be taken to address the faults inherent to extant structures for food production and distribution. To an extent, Cuba’s example advances a framework for an alternative food system paradigm.<sup>232</sup> Is this paradigm feasible for other countries? Are there further alternatives that could be effective on a global scale?

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<sup>216</sup> Wright, *Sustainable agriculture and food security in an era of oil scarcity: Lessons from Cuba*, 2009, p. 5.

<sup>217</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. 91-92.

<sup>218</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. xvi.

<sup>219</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. xvii.

<sup>220</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. xvii.

<sup>221</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. xviii.

<sup>222</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. xviii.

<sup>223</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. xviii.

<sup>224</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. xix.

<sup>225</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. 278.

<sup>226</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. 279.

<sup>227</sup> Wright, *Sustainable agriculture and food security in an era of oil scarcity: Lessons from Cuba*, 2009, p. 239.

<sup>228</sup> Wright, *Sustainable agriculture and food security in an era of oil scarcity: Lessons from Cuba*, 2009, p. 239.

<sup>229</sup> Schanbacher, *The politics of food: The global conflict between food security and food sovereignty*, 2010, p. viii.

<sup>230</sup> Schanbacher, *The politics of food: The global conflict between food security and food sovereignty*, 2010, p. viii.

<sup>231</sup> High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Progress Report: Synopsis*, 2009.

<sup>232</sup> Funes et al., *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*, 2002, p. xviii.



World leaders have frequently promised to achieve global food security, but the number of people affected by hunger continues to grow. How effective have the efforts of the international community been? How can they be improved? What contributions can HRC make? What can be done to ensure the completion of the first MDG by 2015? Is the CFA, in conjunction with the Five Rome Principles, the most efficient route to food security?

Delegates should also examine the state of food security in their own countries, asking themselves: does my state produce enough food for all its people? Does it have shortages? If so, how are they addressed, and could they be better addressed? Does my state have surpluses of food? If so, how could those surpluses be better used for the world at large? How has my state contributed to achieving global food security? Have international agencies intervened to improve food security within my state? Is my state a producer of biofuels? Does my state have a stance on the food-fuel debate?

In considering these and other questions, it is important to recall that HRC's work towards food security is founded upon the concept of food as a human right. The progressive realization of the right to food is a critical component of HRC's fight to realize all human rights for every person., and it represents part of a broader goal that should not be forgotten despite the turmoil of the present day.

## **Annotated Bibliography**

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[http://www.cfr.org/publication/19395/righting\\_the\\_wrongs\\_of\\_the\\_uns\\_top\\_human\\_rights\\_body.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/19395/righting_the_wrongs_of_the_uns_top_human_rights_body.html)

*This article discusses the concerns and criticisms of the Human Rights Council and the reservations of the United States of America. Whilst this information is no longer as applicable to current times, it does raise important points in ways to improve the Human Rights Council and navigate through reforms. Some of the reforms mentioned in this article focus on ways to equalize the power within certain regional blocks, establishing bilateral relations across regional representation, and maintaining strong linkages with other human rights bodies.*

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*The Council on Foreign Relations is an independent think tank organization that reports frequently on the human rights and the role of the United Nations. This article in particular focuses on the criticisms of the Human Rights Council and the concerns in questioning the UN's successful transition from the problematic Commission to the Council. Delegates should be abreast with the criticisms and concerns of the HRC and use such information to help guide their research in determining best viable options in addressing the Committee's topics.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2010). *Human Rights and Climate Change*. Retrieved October 20, 2010 from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/climatechange/index.htm>

*To understand how the various operations of human rights work together and address particular thematic issues, delegates are recommended to take the opportunity to navigate through the UN with the thematic issue in mind instead of focusing on the country of representation. This website provides a solid example in the inter-linkages of the UN and human rights in addressing Climate Change. It also provides solid information in explaining the work of the HRC in relation to a thematic issue such as climate change.*

Official Web Site of the Nobel Prize. (2010). *The Nobel Peace Prize 1989, The 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama*. Retrieved August 22<sup>nd</sup> from [http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/1989/lama-lecture.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1989/lama-lecture.html).

*As stated by the Dalai Lama, the status of peace is conditional upon the prevalence of human rights. The Dalai Lama's speech on peace is both inspiring and motivating for delegates to read and understand the importance of human rights. Whilst this website focuses on the speeches of*

*Nobel Prize winners, it may be helpful to delegates formulating their opening lines for speeches prepared for the committee.*

United Nations General Assembly. (2006). *Human Rights Council (A/RES/60/251)*. Retrieved August 16<sup>th</sup> from [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/a.res.60.251\\_en.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/a.res.60.251_en.pdf)

*A pivotal decision by the United Nations to create the Human Rights Council, this particular source is an important informational guide to the framework and intent of the Council. The Resolution also marks the end of the Commission of the Human Rights and adopts the HRC under the General Assembly instead of the Economic and Social Council. The Resolution is a testament to the new vision of addressing human rights through greater focus on mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review, the Advisory Committee, the Special Procedures unit etc. Delegates should use this Resolution as a first point of reference to understanding the Human Rights Council.*

United Nations Human Rights Council. (2008). *Advisory Committee*. Retrieved September 30<sup>th</sup> from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/advisorycommittee.htm>

*Explaining the establishment of the Advisory Committee, important texts and reports, this website is a helpful tool for delegates conducting research on their country policy or thematic human rights issue. The website also operates as a central unit for important texts, information of the latest committee meeting and archived reports. Delegates should access this website for helpful information in their country policy research.*

United Nations Human Rights Council. (2010). *Complaints Procedure*. Retrieved September 17<sup>th</sup> from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/complaints.htm>

*Based on the UN Human Rights Council: Institution Building report, the HRC created the new Complaints Procedure to address gross human rights violations in any part of the world and under any circumstance. This website provides valuable information regarding the Complaints Procedure system and the HRC's commitment in addressing human rights violations. The information provided also overviews the 1503 procedure that was under the Commission preceding the Council.*

United Nations Human Rights Council. (2010). *Review of the Human Rights Council: Contribution of the Special Procedures mandate holders*. Retrieved October 5, 2010 from

[http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/docs/HRCReview\\_ContributionSPMandateHolders.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/docs/HRCReview_ContributionSPMandateHolders.pdf)

*This review report focuses on the work of the Special Procedures mandate holders and their recommendation to improving their work on the mandates. The review calls for greater collaboration and cooperation and pledged commitments to addressing human rights issues. The review also calls for the greater provision of resources and budgetary support to oversee the work of the mandate holders successfully.*

United Nations Human Rights Council. (2008). *Universal Periodic Review Fact Sheet*. Retrieved September 16, 2010 from <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/UPRFactSheetFinal.pdf>

*As laid out by General Assembly Resolution 60/251, the Universal Periodic Review is an important measure of accountability and transparency for human rights reporting. The thorough system is a cooperative approach for countries to report on national human rights issues. This fact sheet provides useful information explaining the mechanism and system of the UPR.*

United Nations Human Rights Council. (2010). *Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council*.

Retrieved October 2, 2010 from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/index.htm>

*The Human Rights Council routinely updates their website with important information including reports, bulletins, press releases etc. The Special Procedures site is an excellent resource for delegates interested in thoroughly researching the mandated topics. It also includes links to reports and resolutions in regards to the mandated topics that are outlined by category – thematic or country focused.*

United Nations Human Rights Council. (2010). *Special Procedures Bulletin Sixteenth Issue, January – March 2010*. Retrieved October 18, 2010 from

[http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:soFY0ldPM7UJ:www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/docs/16th\\_Issue\\_JanMarch2010.pdf+special+procedure+bulletin+sixteenth+issue+UN&hl=en&gl=uk](http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:soFY0ldPM7UJ:www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/docs/16th_Issue_JanMarch2010.pdf+special+procedure+bulletin+sixteenth+issue+UN&hl=en&gl=uk)

*The Special Procedures Bulletin provides the latest information on the country visits, important and relevant human rights violations, and synopses of HRC sessions. The bulletins provide an entryway into understanding the thematic issues and the status of Member States. Routinely published and distributed, delegates should use these bulletins as a first source of information and understanding of the work of the HRC.*

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2010). *Universal Periodic Review*. Retrieved September 20<sup>th</sup> from <http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/upr/pages/uprmain.aspx>

*Whilst the Universal Periodic Review is not a focal point for delegates preparing for NMUN HRC 2011, it can be considered a helpful resource. The UPR includes country reports and national human rights mechanisms that are reported by the countries themselves. Delegates may find informative resources on this website that lists the basic information of the Review and information regarding the reporting countries.*

United Nations Press Release (2008). *Human Rights Council Elects Advisory Committee Members and Approves a Number of Special Procedures Mandate Holders*. Retrieved September 20<sup>th</sup> from

<http://www.unhcr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/0/6B7007A33E763D6DC1257418006BFCAE?opendocument>

*A pivotal part of the Human Rights Council is the Advisory Committee that provides expert advice to the Council after thorough information and investigation. The work of the Advisory Committee would be particularly useful in delegate research as it is the body also mandated to identify Special Procedures issues. This press release reports on the critical time in which the Special Procedures mandates were identified and chose as well as delegate response. Much research and work of the Advisory Committee is used as the primary source of information by the HRC.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, (2010). *Coordination Committee of Special Procedures*. Retrieved October 10<sup>th</sup> from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/ccspecialprocedures.htm>

*The Coordination Committee of the Special Procedures provides the necessary accountability and transparency for the Special Procedures mandate holders. The committee also acts as a coordinating body for mandate holders, civil society and the UN human rights network. The website provides an excellent resource for reports of meetings between the committee and the mandate holders.*

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*This report is extremely comprehensive and thorough in explaining the role, mandate and objectives of the UN HRC Special Procedures. The report also reports on the Special Procedures mandate holder's working models, methods of communication, and successes in collaboration and State cooperation. Included in this document are appendices with information on relevant resolutions with each of the mandates as well.*

## ***I. Climate Change as a Human Rights issue***

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*In this study conducted by the Canadian television network CTV, the aspects of the traditional way of life of the Inuit population of Canada are explained. Authors find that the impacts of climate change are even more obvious for those populations and can lead to grave consequences for the future of an entire culture. In order to go further on that issue, delegates should also refer to the stories related to this specific article.*

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*The Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC is the main document on which the UNHRC based its resolution declaring climate change as a human rights issue. In this report, the phenomenon of global warming was recognized as a real phenomenon beyond doubt. The report is divided in three parts written by the three working groups of the organization. A summary report is also available.*

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*The report of the OHCHR published in 2009 is following resolution 7/23 of the council in which the UNHRC first acknowledged climate change as a human rights issue. In accordance with the resolution, the report is establishing a first inventory of the various consequences of climate change and the implications it can have in terms of human rights protection.*

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2010). *Human rights and climate change*. Retrieved August 16, 2010, from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/climatechange/index.htm>

*The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has set up a web portal for every human rights issue considered under the UN system. This webpage provides with basic background information regarding climate change and human rights as well as links to several key documents. This page should be the starting point for delegates' research on the matter.*

United Nations, Gateway to the UN System's Work on Climate Change (2010). Retrieved August 1, 2010, from <http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/climatechange/gateway>

*This website regroups all the information available on the topic of climate change within the UN System. From declarations of the Secretary-General to resolutions passed by the General Assembly and ECOSOC, it also encompasses all the treaties, conventions and protocols related to the issue. The website also offers the reports of various bodies of the UN such as UNDP.*

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United Nations (2010), *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. Retrieved August 1, 2010, from <http://unfccc.int/>

*Set up over a decade ago, the UNFCCC is recognized as the main organ of the UN System in any affairs related to climate change. Born in 1992 with the Earth Summit of Rio de Janeiro, the UNFCCC deals with environmental, sociological and economical issues related to climate change. Its main mission is to gain consensus amongst members of the convention on the issues at hand. Under this convention, protocols such as the Kyoto protocol of 1997 are to be adopted to update and further advance the objectives of the convention.*

United Nations (1992), *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, Retrieved August 16, 2010, from [http://unfccc.int/essential\\_background/convention/background/items/2853.php](http://unfccc.int/essential_background/convention/background/items/2853.php)

*This document is the text of the original Convention on Climate Change as signed in 1992 by the attendant of the conference of Rio de Janeiro. The convention established the first iteration of the Framework on Climate Change which later evolved with subsequent protocols voted during Conference of the Parties to the convention.*

United Nations (2010), *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – Meetings Archive*. Retrieved August 16, 2010, from <http://unfccc.int/meetings/archive/items/2749.php>

*The UNFCCC has rendered public the notes and decisions of all its meetings. Since maintaining this archive is a continuous work, the documents available go as far back as 1996 at the time. Delegates will be able to retrace the history of various issues before the UNFCCC as well as see the evolution of the specific issue of human rights and climate change throughout the years of existence of the convention.*

United Nations Human Rights Council (2008), *Resolution 7/23 – Human rights and Climate change*. Retrieved August 16, 2010, from [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/climatechange/docs/Resolution\\_7\\_23.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/climatechange/docs/Resolution_7_23.pdf)

*Resolution 7/23 of the UNHRC is the first resolution by which climate change was recognized as a human rights issue. The UNHRC has since developed its work on the matter by ordering several discussion panels and reports and by furthering the integration of the results of its work in the UNFCCC. Following this resolution, the report of the OHCHR became the main document establishing the link between climate change and human rights violations.*

United Nations Human Rights Council (2009), *Resolution 10/4 – Human rights and Climate change*. Retrieved August 16, 2010, from [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/climatechange/docs/resolution10\\_4.doc](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/climatechange/docs/resolution10_4.doc)

*Resolution 10/4 of the UNHRC is the second resolution addressing the issue of climate change from a human rights perspective. In this resolution, the UNHRC acknowledges the conclusion of the OHCHR and further accentuates the need for an integration of the human rights aspects of climate change in the work of the UNFCCC. It also led to the creation of a Discussion Panel on the Relationship Between Climate Change and Human Rights.*

United Nations Human Rights Council (2009), *Human Rights Council Panel Discussion on the Relationship Between Climate Change and Human Rights – Summary of Discussions*. Retrieved August 16, 2010, from [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/climatechange/docs/Panel\\_SummaryDiscussions.doc](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/climatechange/docs/Panel_SummaryDiscussions.doc)

*The Panel Discussion on the Relationship Between Climate Change and Human Rights was held in 2009 after the adoption of resolution 10/4 by the UNHRC. The discussion was aimed at furthering the study of*



*the results of the OHCHR report. Using this document summarizes the main interventions and comments of the discussion. Delegates will be able to preview the different points of view on the matter.*

United Nations General Assembly (1979), *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*. Retrieved October 10, 2010, from <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

*Adopted in 1979 and enforced in 1981, the Convention is set to establish the rights of women for all members of the United Nations. A highly controversial matter in certain part of the world, certain countries have ratified the convention not without certain objections. In the matter of climate change, NGOs such as The NGO committee on the status of women use the convention to further underline the increased vulnerability of women.*

United Nations General Assembly (2006), *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*. Retrieved October 10, 2010, from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>

*This convention was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 December 2006 and entered into force on 30 March 2007 and as of September 2010 has 147 signatories and 94 parties. The CRPD started to take form in 1987 when a panel of expert recommended that a convention addressing the specific issue of the rights of persons with disabilities should be adopted by the United Nations. The text covers a large spectrum of rights, from health to education. As for the CEDAW, the CRPD is used by groups defending the rights of persons with disabilities to underline the vulnerability of this part of the population in regards to climate change.*

United Nations General Assembly (1966), *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)*. Retrieved October 10, 2010, from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm>

*The ICCPR was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966 and entered in force on 23 March 1976. With the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) it forms the International Bill of Human Rights. Following the same structure as the UDHR, the ICCPR, has the main provisions of the Covenant concern the Rights to Physical Integrity, Liberty and Security of person, Procedural fairness and rights of the accused, Individual liberties and political rights.*

United Nations General Assembly (1965), *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)*. Retrieved October 10, 2010, from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/icerd.htm>

*The convention was adopted on 21 December 1965 by the United Nations General Assembly and entered in force on 4 January 1969. The document remains a little controversial since it urges its parties to outlaw hate speech and criminalize membership in racist organizations. The most noticeable asset of this convention is defined in article 14 and consists of an individual complaints mechanism that allows individuals to ask for a liaison from the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.*

United Nations General Assembly (1966), *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)*. Retrieved October 10, 2010, from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cescr.htm>

*The ICESCR was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966 and entered in force 3 January 1976. The Covenant is the third part of the International Bill of Human Rights with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.*

United Nations General Assembly (1990), *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW)*. Retrieved October 10, 2010, from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cmw.htm>

*The ICRMW was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 1990 and entered into force on 1 July 2003. The Convention is one of the most comprehensive international treaties in the realm of migration and human rights. It regarded as a vital instrument of international law meant to protect one of the most vulnerable groups of people: migrant workers, regardless of their situation. The convention sets universal standards in terms of migrants' access to fundamentals such as education and access to health systems in addition to human rights.*



United Nations General Assembly (1948), *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Retrieved October 10, 2010 from <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>

*The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948. The Declaration was created in direct response to the experience of the Second World War and represents the first global initiative to ensure basic fundamental rights to which all human beings are entitled. Its articles have been elaborated in subsequent international treaties, regional human rights instruments, national constitutions and laws.*

United Nations World Food Program (2010), *Climate Change*. Retrieved August 16, 2010, from <http://www.wfp.org/climate-change>

*This web page of the World Food Program's site provides basic background information on the issues of climate change related to the right to food. Delegates will find several publications by WFP on the matter as well as educational material related to hunger and climate change. The site also provides updated news for new reports and publications.*

United Nations World Food Program (2009), *Climate Change and Hunger – Responding to the Challenge*, Retrieved August 16, 2010, from <http://www.wfp.org/content/climate-change-and-hunger-responding-challenge>

*This report published in 2009 by the World Food Program constitutes one of the main publications on the matters related to climate change and the right to adequate food. In the report, the WFP proposes several paths to the prevention and solving of a worldwide food crisis based on what are considered alarming predictions. While considering the implications of climate change for the right for food*

## **II. The human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories**

Al Jazeera.com. (N.D.) *Middle East*. Retrieved August 2010 from <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/>

*This website, being an online version of the famous Middle-Eastern newspaper, gives you a very useful different approach to the topic at hand, with different news articles, bulletins, videos and photos that can be browsed.*

Al Jazeera.com. (2003). *The history of Palestinian revolts*. Retrieved August 1, 2010 from <http://web.archive.org/web/20051215061527/http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/9A489B74-6477-4E67-9C22-0F53A3CC9ADF.htm>

*The article printed in the newspaper website gives an explanation and description of historical revolts in Palestine and how that "one root cause for Palestine's succession of revolts was the carving up of land by the colonial powers in the early 19th century."*

Al Jazeera.com. (2010). *West Bank poverty 'worse than Gaza'*. Retrieved August 2010 from <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2010/06/201062916845576597.html>

*The article points out issues surrounding the lack of access to water and shelter in portions of the West Bank. It also points out how conditions in some areas have reached a true crisis.*

Amnesty International. (2010). *Abolish the Death Penalty* Accessed August 2010 from <http://www.amnesty.org/en/death-penalty>

*This site discusses the relationship between the death penalty and human rights. It is a useful site to gain insight on the issues surrounding the international enforcement of the death penalty,*

BBC News. (2010). *Guide: Gaza under blockade*. Retrieved November 6, 2010 from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/7545636.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7545636.stm)

*This article provides an overview of the blockade and its effects on the Gaza region. Here one can also find information on agriculture, businesses and other sectors and how they specifically have been affected by the blockade.*

Centre for Human Rights. (2007). *Palestine* <http://www.pchrgaza.org/portal/en/>. Accessed August 2010 from <http://www.pchrgaza.org/portal/en/>

*The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO)*

*based in Gaza City dedicated to protecting human rights, promoting the rule of law and upholding democratic principles.*

Dugard, J. (2008). *Report of the Special Rapporteur, Human Rights Situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab Territories*. Retrieved on August 1, 2010 from

<http://domino.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/22f431edb91c6f548525678a0051be1d/f71be9fae0abbe1c852573ec006dde2e>

*The report gives a detailed and full view of the current situation in Palestine. This includes the occupation of the occupied Palestinian territory, the occupation of Gaza, Israel's actions against Gaza, Human Rights in the West Bank and Jerusalem and the treatment of arrested persons and convicted prisoners as well as the progress made on peace talks and settlements.*

ForeignPolicy.com. *Middle East Channel*. Retrieved on August 1, 2010 from: <http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/>

*This online version of the American magazine allows you to browse through the different articles, blog entries and discussions available. This is a very well-respected, award-winning magazine that will be useful for obtaining extra information on this topic.*

Frontline Defenders. (2010). *The Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT)*. Retrieved on August 2, 2010 from <http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/palestine>

*The website gives a brief overview of the occupation of Palestine and how human rights defenders are being treated in the region. The website also gives links to current news in the region, press releases, frontline reports and finished cases.*

Human Rights Council. (2010). *General Debate on Human Rights Situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories*. Retrieved on August 6, 2010 from

<http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/AD2C33FFC411C15B852576EE006A6BE7>

*These are the speeches from all countries present in the meeting on 22 March. "The recommendations of that report had not been fully implemented underscoring the need for them to be applied in order to end the culture of impunity." (HRC10/041E)*

The Independent. (2010). *Israel kills senior Hamas rocket maker*. Retrieved August 6, 2010 from

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/israel-kills-senior-hamas-rocket-maker-2040269.html>

*In this article Ibrahim Barzak discusses the death of Issa Batran. His death occurred as a result of Israel's three-week war in Gaza that ended in January 2009.*

Israeli Defense Forces. (N.D.) *Israel Defense Forces*. Retrieved on September 2010 from

<http://dover.idf.il/IDF/English/>

*The Israeli Defense Forces website allows one to get a one-sided view on Israeli work and reasoning behind their actions in Palestinian territory. The website has very useful articles and different information options like multimedia, articles, documentaries, etc.*

Israel/Palestinian Centre for Research and Information. (2008). *Israeli-Palestinian negotiations for a culture of peace*. Retrieved on August 6, 2010 from <http://www.ipcri.org/files/cop.pdf>

*PCRI is a joint institution of Israelis and Palestinians dedicated to the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It also seeks to develop new concepts in order to influence decision via a two-state approach. This document proposes an agenda including ideas on government responsibility for the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.*

Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (N.D.) *Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. Retrieved September 2010 from [www.mfa.gov.il/](http://www.mfa.gov.il/)

*The Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs website shows all the Israeli policies for different issues which become useful when analysing different solutions to the topics at hand.*

Mideastweb. (2009). *Israel and Palestine: A Brief History - Part I*. Retrieved on August 2, 2010 from

<http://www.mideastweb.org/briefhistory.htm>

*The website gives a history of the conflicts in the region from the early history to the modern historical conflicts and humanitarian issues. This history goes from the British mandate, to the*

*1967 6-Day War and the Oil Embargo ending in The First Intifada in 1987. This serves as a background history to grasp the full historical context of the conflict in Palestine.*

Bronner, E. (2010). "Outlines Emerge of Future State in the West Bank". New York Times.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/31/world/middleeast/31mideast.html>

*This article discusses challenges facing the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank. It also discusses a few signs of progress on the issues surrounding Palestinian Refugees and their ability to return to their homes. Finally a general reflection on the outlines produced at the Palestinian-Israeli summit meeting held this year in Washington, DC is presented.*

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Retrieved on September 26, 2010 from

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/WelcomePage.aspx>

*This website is very useful for finding up to date news, reports and press releases on different issues, as well as resolutions and speeches from various ministers within the Human Rights Council.*

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in occupied Palestinian territory Accessed September 26, 2010

<http://www.ochaopt.org/>

*This website shows all the weekly reports from the office as well as news and online background studies on the topic. There is an online report centre, a database of the office, photos, presentations, videos, etc.*

Palestinian State Information Service (N.D.) *Palestinian State Information Service*. Retrieved August 2010 from

<http://www.sis.gov.ps/english/index.html>

*This website provides official governmental information, surveys, polls and media coverage. It is responsible for monitoring, organizing, coordinating and developing media and information activities.*

Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group. (2007). *Fatah and Hamas Human Rights Violations in the Palestinian Occupied Territories*. Retrieved on August 17, 2010 from

[http://www.phrmg.org/Fatah%20and%20hamas%20abuses%20since%20June%202007%20report%20\\_2\\_.pdf](http://www.phrmg.org/Fatah%20and%20hamas%20abuses%20since%20June%202007%20report%20_2_.pdf)

*This report is from Elizabeth Freed detailing human rights abuses in Palestinian Occupied Territories. It describes Hamas' political group through the eye of the Palestinian Human Rights monitoring group.*

The Guardian. (N.D.) *Gaza: World News*. Retrieved September 2010 from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/gaza>

*The English newspaper website will keep you updated on current news and conflicts in Gaza. It also contains reports, opinion articles from scholars or important people, and videos that would be valuable to watch.*

The Guardian. (2010). "Mahmoud Abbas: Israel's West Bank occupation leading to one-state solution". Retrieved

September 2010 from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jan/31/mahmoud-abbas-israel-west-bank>

*This interview provides some useful insight on the situation in the West Bank. This article discusses the current state of the peace negotiations and possible mediated talks in the future.*

United Nations General Assembly. (2010). *General Assembly Requests Secretary General to submit further report on investigations into violations during Gaza Conflict (GA/10917)*.

*This is a press release that discusses the Fact-Finding Mission in the Gaza Conflict. It reflects upon the draft resolution introduced by Nassir Abdulaziz-Nasser of Qatar. It also discusses proposed actions that should be taken on the draft resolution.*

The Washington Post. (2010). *Turkey urges U.N. Security Council to condemn Israeli attack on aid flotilla*.

Retrieved on August 2, 2010 from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/31/AR2010053102860.html>

*This article presents the request made by Ahmet Davutoglu to hold those responsible for the flotilla responsible for their actions. It also includes portions of the statements from this emergency session.*

World Food Programme. (N.D.) *Occupied Palestinian Territory*. Retrieved on September 2010 from <http://www.wfp.org/countries/occupied-palestinian-territory>

*This website helps give an overview of the humanitarian work being done in the Palestinian territories. It gives an overview of the situation, shows future projects, latest news, their activities and facts and figures as well as other information.*

World Health Organization: (N.D.) *World Health Organization*. Retrieved on September 2010 from <http://www.who.int/en/>

*This website is useful for looking at health reports and different crisis situations the organization is dealing with. It is important the Human Rights Council cooperates with other UN organizations to ensure the best possible solution to the problem is achieved.*

### **III. Food Security and the Right to Food**

Bassett, T. J., & Winter-Nelson, A. (2010). *The atlas of world hunger*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*In the spring of 2003, Bassett taught a development geography course at the University of Illinois. The class project that year ultimately inspired an atlas that attempts to determine both where the world's hungry are and the reasons for their hunger. Bassett and Winter-Nelson's main objective is "to show the geography of hunger in order to discuss conditions that place people at risk," in an effort to "contribute to international efforts to reduce world hunger." The maps reinforce the understanding of food insecurity by providing a graphic representation that strongly demonstrates the prevalence of hunger throughout the world.*

Clapp, J., & Cohen, M. J. (Eds.). (2009). *The global food crisis: Governance challenges and opportunities*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

*Clapp and Cohen have compiled a series of papers that speak to the origins and consequences of the food crisis, paying special attention to issues of governance. Part 1 examines the structural and economic causes of the food crisis, while part 2 considers the challenges to governance that the food crisis has posed and the proposals for action that governments consider. Part 3 investigates longer-term ecological concerns and governance responses, and part 4 is an excellent discussion of strategies that will promote food security and sustainable agriculture.*

Commission on Human Rights. (2000). *The right to food (E/CN.4/RES/2000/10)*. Retrieved August 19, 2010 from [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/E/CHR/resolutions/E-CN\\_4-RES-2000-10.doc](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/E/CHR/resolutions/E-CN_4-RES-2000-10.doc).

*In 2000, the Commission on Human Rights acknowledged its commitment to eradicating world hunger by appointing a Special Rapporteur on the right to food. While the role of the Special Rapporteur has since evolved, the position remains an integral part of the rights-based battle against food insecurity. The original appointment and mandate of the Special Rapporteur are described in resolution 2000/10.*

Eide, W. B., & Kracht, U. (Eds.). (2005). *Food and human rights in development, volume I: Legal and institutional dimensions and selected topics*. Oxford: Hart Publishing.

*Central to the work of HRC in combatting food insecurity is the concept of food as a human right, which is developed considerably in this volume. Topics in this volume include the evolution of the right to food, the interpretive role of human rights instruments, and the relationships between the right to food and other human rights. The right to food is also situated within the broader context of the importance of rights-based development in an age of economic globalization.*

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2010). *FAO Home*. Retrieved September 2, 2010 from <http://www.fao.org>.

*Mandated with improving nutrition, agricultural productivity, the lives of rural populations, and world economic growth, FAO is a crucial part of the UN's work towards food security. FAO collects data and information, shares policy expertise, provides a forum in which nations may freely meet, and contributes knowledge to support field projects worldwide. Delegates should use this Web site to become familiar with FAO's role and with the contributions of their respective countries to FAO.*

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2006). *The right to food guidelines: Information papers and case studies*. Rome: FAO.

*In 2004, FAO adopted the Voluntary Guidelines on the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, which firmly situate food security within a human rights framework. Significantly, the relevant deliberations constituted "the first time that human rights had been discussed in substance within FAO. It was also the first time that countries [had] negotiated on what should be done to implement and realize a recognized economic, social and cultural right." To aid discussion, the FAO Secretariat published numerous information papers, which remain pertinent to the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines and have therefore been reproduced.*

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2003). *Trade reforms and food security: Conceptualizing the linkages*. Retrieved August 19, 2010 from <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/005/y4671e/y4671e00.pdf>.

*While there has been extensive research into the relationships between trade liberalization, economic openness, and poverty, such work has not explicitly taken food security into account. Through this publication, FAO examines that missing link and presents a framework for understanding the connections between economic reforms and food security at both the national and household levels. Focus is placed primarily upon the benefits that trade reforms could create for the agricultural sector.*

Funes, F., García, L., Bourque, M., Pérez, N., & Rosset, P. (Eds.). (2002). *Sustainable agriculture and resistance: Transforming food production in Cuba*. Milford, CT: Food First Books. (Original work published 2001)

*Funes et al. have assembled a comprehensive guide, translated from the Spanish original, to the Cuban food crisis and its subsequent resolution. The first group of papers details Cuba's agricultural history, giving the context for the events of the 1990s. The second group of papers describes the alternative practices that Cuba adopted to establish a new agriculture. Finally, the last group of papers provides examples and case studies that show with specificity the various results of Cuba's new approach to agriculture.*

High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis. (2008). *Comprehensive Framework for Action*. Retrieved August 5, 2010 from <http://www.un.org/issues/food/taskforce/Documentation/CFA%20Web.pdf>.

*In response to the food crisis, HLTF created the Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA). It is important to be familiar with the CFA because it "represents the consensus view of the United Nations system . . . on how to respond to the global food crisis in a coherent and coordinated way." The CFA lays out sets of actions that address the food crisis from both short- and long-term perspectives. HLTF intends to facilitate the interpretation and use of these actions at the national level, though with adaptations specific to each country.*

High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis. (2009). *Progress Report: Synopsis*. Retrieved August 19, 2010 from [http://un-foodsecurity.org/sites/default/files/UNHLTF\\_Progress\\_Report\\_Synopsis\\_ENG\\_web.pdf](http://un-foodsecurity.org/sites/default/files/UNHLTF_Progress_Report_Synopsis_ENG_web.pdf).

*Established in 2008, HLTF is a temporary body whose purpose is "to enhance the efforts of the UN system and the international financial institutions in response to the global food security crisis." In 2009, HLTF published a progress report that details the work undertaken by member agencies and the impact that this work has had. The report allows for assessment of HLTF's added value "as a mechanism for intensifying and coordinating" the work that was already being done by member agencies. The full version of the Progress Report is also available through HLTF's website.*



Human Rights Council. (2007). *Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food* (A/HRC/6/2). Retrieved August 19, 2010 from [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/E/HRC/resolutions/A\\_HRC\\_RES\\_6\\_2.pdf](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/E/HRC/resolutions/A_HRC_RES_6_2.pdf).

*As an important part of the HRC's effort to ensure food security for all, the Special Rapporteur has unique duties and abilities. As defined by resolution 2000/10 of the UNCHR, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food was to last three years. The mandate, which was subsequently extended by both the UNCHR and the HRC as its successor, is described in this resolution.*

Leathers, H. D. & Foster, P. (2009). *The world food problem: Toward ending undernutrition in the Third World*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.

*Leathers and Foster provide a three-part, textbook approach to the concept of food security. The first section examines malnutrition as a global phenomenon, focussing upon the measurement and impact of undernutrition, while the second section thoroughly catalogues various causes of undernutrition. The last section may be of particular interest, as it investigates diverse policy approaches that may ameliorate undernutrition. Categorized by effect, such as "policies that address the demographic causes of undernutrition" and "policies that reduce the price of food through subsidised consumption," this section may provide ideas for different approaches to ensuring global food security.*

Leeder, J. (2010, September 7). Flood-hit Pakistan struggles to rebuild its food system from scratch. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/asia-pacific/flood-hit-pakistan-struggles-to-rebuild-its-food-system-from-scratch/article1699020/>.

*In late July 2010, heavy monsoon rains initiated a series of catastrophic floods throughout Pakistan that would continue for months. Over 17 million people have been affected by the disaster, and the country's economy has been severely damaged due to the destruction of infrastructure. Leeder's article focusses upon Pakistan's destroyed food system, illustrating the shocking impact that a natural disaster can have upon even a food-secure nation.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2007). *International Standards*. Retrieved August 5, 2010 from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/food/standards.htm>.

*The right to food has long been recognized by the international community. This Web site presents a comprehensive list of international conventions, declarations, and agreements that include one or more provisions for the right to food. It is a useful summary of previous international efforts to address food insecurity from a rights-based perspective.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2007). *Special Rapporteur on the right to food*. Retrieved September 21, 2010 from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/food/overview.htm>.

*Since its inception, HRC has worked toward the realization of every person's right to food through resolutions and the work of the Special Rapporteur. This Web site provides a convenient list of HRC's resolutions that have addressed food security, with links to the full text of each document. It also details the official mandate of the Special Rapporteur.*

Schanbacher, W. (2010). *The politics of food: The global conflict between food security and food sovereignty*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

*It is clear that global hunger and malnutrition are on the rise despite international efforts. Schanbacher examines and criticizes the extant global food system, arguing that the prevailing "food security model is founded on, and reinforces, a model of globalisation that reduces human relationships to their economic value." He recommends the alternative food sovereignty model, which "considers human relations in terms of mutual dependence, cultural diversity, and respect for the environment," and supports the conception of food as a human right.*

United Nations. (2008). *Global Food Security Crisis: Background*. Retrieved August 5, 2010 from <http://www.un-foodsecurity.org/background>.

*HLTF was formed in response to the food crisis, and its official Web site can be found at this location, which contains information on HLTF's background, structure, and recent activities. The "Countries" section focusses upon HLTF's activities within 30 food-insecure countries that have*

*been selected because their people are especially in need of assistance. Links and information are given for each of these countries, providing a snapshot of HLTF's important role on the ground through some of its member agencies.*

United Nations. (2010). *Key Conference Outcomes in Food*. Retrieved September 10, 2010 from <http://www.un.org/en/development/devagenda/food.shtml>.

*Over the past several decades, many international conferences have been held to address the problem of food insecurity. This Web site is a summary of some of the most important conferences to date; this is a good starting point for establishing familiarity with important international efforts that have already been taken. Links to an official website and report for each conference are provided.*

United Nations. (2010). *Millennium Development Goals*. Retrieved September 6, 2010 from <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>.

*In 2000, the General Assembly's Member States adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration. Through this document, they reaffirmed their commitment to the principles of the United Nations Charter and established goals for global development to be met by 2015. The first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) aims "to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger." The official Web site contains links to reports and statistics that track international progress with regard to this goal.*

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2008). *Addressing the global food crisis: Key trade, investment and commodity policies in ensuring sustainable food security and alleviating poverty*. New York: United Nations.

*The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) deals primarily with issues of trade, development, and investment in developing countries as they look to integrate into the world economy. UNCTAD holds that the food crisis should be seen as an opportunity to address the inherent imbalances that exist within the world's agricultural systems. Operating from a trade and development perspective, UNCTAD has published this collection of policy measures and actions that will help to alleviate the food crisis and rectify the weaknesses of global agriculture production and trade.*

United Nations General Assembly. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/3/217 A)*. Retrieved August 19, 2010 from <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>.

*In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A landmark document, the Declaration set forth 30 articles affirming equal and inalienable rights for all human beings. Of note is Article 25, which clearly establishes food as a human right.*

United Nations World Food Programme. (2010). *WFP — Fighting Hunger Worldwide*. Retrieved September 9, 2010 from <http://www.wfp.org>.

*WFP is the largest humanitarian organization in the world that fights hunger. It is a multilateral programme that provides food aid to those who are most in need, especially during refugee and other emergency situations. Its Web site contains not only official reports, news releases, and publications, but also interesting modules that are an excellent introduction to the problem of malnutrition and the work that WFP does to address it.*

Westhoff, P. (2010). *The economics of food: How feeding and fueling the planet affects food prices*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

*What causes fluctuations in food prices? Westhoff's book focusses on several of the most important factors, including biofuel production, energy prices, government policies, natural and environmental causes, economic growth, and speculation. He examines the debates surrounding these factors from both sides, aiming solely to facilitate informed decision-making through the better understanding of world food markets.*

World Food Conference. (1974). *Report of the World Food Conference*. Retrieved September 9, 2010 from <http://www.eclac.cl/cumbres/3/43/FAORLC-41001WorldFoodConference.doc>.

*The first World Food Conference was held in Rome in 1974, in response to the famine that had devastated Bangladesh in 1972. The final report from the conference lists participants and adopted resolutions. It also includes the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition, which reaffirms the right to food and the obligation of states to ensure that right, while also detailing measures that should be taken to address food insecurity.*

World Summit on Food Security. (2009). *Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security*. Retrieved September 21, 2010 from <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/Meeting/018/k6050e.pdf>.

*In November 2009, world leaders met in Rome to address global hunger at the World Summit on Food Security. The end result of the conference was a declaration that set forth five principles for sustainable global food security. The declaration represents the international community's latest efforts to combat hunger and especially to meet the objectives set forth in the first Millennium Development Goal.*

Wright, J. (2009). *Sustainable agriculture and food security in an era of oil scarcity: Lessons from Cuba*. London: Earthscan.

*As a country without significant reserves of oil, Cuba faced an economic and agricultural crisis when it lost the support of its main trade partners in the early 1990s. In detailing the measures that Cuba took to overcome the crisis even without oil, Wright reveals that there are important lessons to be learned. She attempts to show that the global food crisis could perhaps be solved through the use of alternative methods and approaches that have been hugely successful at the national level.*



# Rules of Procedure Human Rights Council

## ***Introduction***

1. These rules shall be the only rules which apply to the Human Rights Council (hereinafter referred to as “the Commission”) and shall be considered adopted by the Commission prior to its first meeting.
2. For purposes of these rules, the Plenary Director, the Assistant Director(s), the Under-Secretaries-General, and the Assistant Secretaries-General, are designates and agents of the Secretary-General and Director-General, and are collectively referred to as the “Secretariat.”
3. Interpretation of the rules shall be reserved exclusively to the Director-General or her or his designate. Such interpretation shall be in accordance with the philosophy and principles of the National Model United Nations and in furtherance of the educational mission of that organization.
4. For the purposes of these rules, “President” shall refer to the chairperson or acting chairperson of the Council.

## I. SESSIONS

### **Rule 1 - *Dates of convening and adjournment***

The Council shall meet every year in regular session, commencing and closing on the dates designated by the Secretary-General.

### **Rule 2 - *Place of sessions***

The Council shall meet at a location designated by the Secretary-General.

## II. AGENDA

### **Rule 3 - *Provisional agenda***

The provisional agenda shall be drawn up by the Secretary-General and communicated to the Members of the Council at least sixty days before the opening of the session.

### **Rule 4 - *Adoption of the agenda***

The agenda provided by the Secretary-General shall be considered adopted as of the beginning of the session. The order of the agenda items shall be determined by a majority vote of those present and voting. Items on the agenda may be amended or deleted by the Council by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting.

*The vote described in this rule is a procedural vote and, as such, observers are permitted to cast a vote. For purposes of this rule, —those present and voting<sup>1</sup> means those delegates, including observers, in attendance at the meeting during which this motion comes to a vote.*

### **Rule 5 - *Revision of the agenda***

During a session, the Council may revise the agenda by adding, deleting, deferring or amending items. Only important and urgent items shall be added to the agenda during a session. Permission to speak on a motion to revise the agenda shall be accorded only to three representatives in favor of, and three opposed to, the revision. Additional items of an important and urgent character, proposed for inclusion in the agenda less than thirty days before the opening of a session, may be placed on the agenda if the Council so decides by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting. No additional item may, unless the Council decides otherwise by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting, be considered until a committee has reported on the question concerned.

*For purposes of this rule, the determination of an item of an —important and urgent character<sup>1</sup> is subject to the discretion of the Secretariat, and any such determination is final. If an item is determined to be of such a character, then it requires a two-thirds vote of the Council to be placed on the agenda. It will, however, not be considered by the Council until a committee has reported on the question. The votes described in this rule are substantive vote, and, as such, observers are not permitted to cast a vote. For purposes of this rule, —the members present and voting — means members (not including observers) in attendance at the session during which this motion comes to vote.*

**Rule 6 - Explanatory memorandum**

Any item proposed for inclusion in the agenda shall be accompanied by an explanatory memorandum and, if possible, by basic documents.

III. SECRETARIAT

**Rule 7 - Duties of the Secretary-General**

1. The Secretary-General or her/his designate shall act in this capacity in all meetings of the Council.
2. The Secretary-General shall provide and direct the staff required by the Council and be responsible for all the arrangements that may be necessary for its meetings.

**Rule 8 - Duties of the Secretariat**

The Secretariat shall receive, print, and distribute documents, reports, and resolutions of the Council, and shall distribute documents of the Council to the Members, and generally perform all other work which the Council may require.

**Rule 9 - Statements by the Secretariat**

The Secretary-General, or her/his representative, may make oral as well as written statements to the Council concerning any question under consideration.

**Rule 10 - Selection of the President** The Secretary-General or her/his designate shall appoint, from applications received by the Secretariat, a President who shall hold office and, *inter alia*, chair the Council for the duration of the session, unless otherwise decided by the Secretary-General.

**Rule 11 - Replacement of the President** If the President is unable to perform her/his functions, a new President shall be appointed for the unexpired term at the discretion of the Secretary-General.

IV. LANGUAGE

**Rule 12 - Official and working language**

English shall be the official and working language of the Council.

**Rule 13 - Interpretation (oral) or translation (written)**

Any representative wishing to address any body or submit a document in a language other than English shall provide interpretation or translation into English.

*This rule does not affect the total speaking time allotted to those representatives wishing to address the body in a language other than English. As such, both the speech and the interpretation must be within the set time limit.*

V. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

**Rule 14 - Quorum**

The President may declare a meeting open and permit debate to proceed when representatives of at least one third of the members of the Council are present. The presence of representatives of a majority of the members of the Council shall be required for any decision to be taken.

*For purposes of this rule, —members of the Council means the total number of members (not including observers) in attendance at the first night's meeting.*

**Rule 15 - General powers of the President**

In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him or her elsewhere by these rules, the President shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the Council, direct the discussions, ensure observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. The President, subject to these rules,

shall have complete control of the proceedings of the Council and over the maintenance of order at its meetings. He or she shall rule on points of order. He or she may propose to the Council the closure of the list of speakers, a limitation on the time to be allowed to speakers and on the number of times the representative of each member may speak on an item, the adjournment or closure of the debate, and the suspension or adjournment of a meeting.

*Included in these enumerated powers is the President's power to assign speaking times for all speeches incidental to motions and amendment. Further, the President is to use her/his discretion, upon the advice and at the consent of the Secretariat, to determine whether to entertain a particular motion based on the philosophy and principles of the NMUN. Such discretion should be used on a limited basis and only under circumstances where it is necessary to advance the educational mission of the Conference. For purposes of this rule, the President's power to —propose to the Council entails her/his power to —entertain motions, and not to move the body on his or her own motion.*

#### **Rule 16**

The President, in the exercise of her or his functions, remains under the authority of the Council.

#### **Rule 17 - Points of order**

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may rise to a point of order, which shall be decided immediately by the President. Any appeal of the decision of the President shall be immediately put to a vote, and the ruling of the President shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the members present and voting.

*Such points of order should not under any circumstances interrupt the speech of a fellow representative. Any questions on order arising during a speech made by a representative should be raised at the conclusion of the speech, or can be addressed by the President, sua sponte, during the speech. For purposes of this rule, —the members present and voting mean those members (not including observers) in attendance at the meeting during which this motion comes to vote.*

#### **Rule 18**

A representative may not, in rising to a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

#### **Rule 19 - Speeches**

1. No one may address the Council without having previously obtained the permission of the President. The President shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak.
2. Debate shall be confined to the question before the Council, and the President may call a speaker to order if her/his remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.
3. The Council may limit the time allowed to speakers and all representatives may speak on any question. Permission to speak on a motion to set such limits shall be accorded only to two representatives favoring and two opposing such limits, after which the motion shall be put to the vote immediately. When debate is limited and a speaker exceeds the allotted time, the President shall call her or him to order without delay.

*In line with the philosophy and principles of the NMUN, in furtherance of its educational mission, and for the purpose of facilitating debate, if the President determines that the Council in large part does not want to deviate from the limits to the speaker's time as it is then set, and that any additional motions will not be well received by the body, the President, in her/his discretion, and on the advice and consent of the Secretariat, may rule as dilatory any additional motions to change the limits of the speaker's time.*

#### **Rule 20 - Closing of list of speakers**

Members may only be on the list of speakers once but may be added again after having spoken. During the course of a debate the President may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Council, declare the list closed. When there are no more speakers, the President shall declare the debate closed. Such closure shall have the same effect as closure by decision of the Council.

*The decision to announce the list of speakers is within the discretion of the President and should not be the subject of a motion by the Council. A motion to close the speakers list is within the purview of the Council and the President should not act on her/his own motion.*

**Rule 21 - Right of reply**

If a remark impugns the integrity of a representative's State, the President may permit that representative to exercise her/his right of reply following the conclusion of the controversial speech, and shall determine an appropriate time limit for the reply. No ruling on this question shall be subject to appeal.

*For purposes of this rule, a remark that —impugns the integrity of a representative's State is one directed at the governing authority of that State and/or one that puts into question that State's sovereignty or a portion thereof. All interventions in the exercise of the right of reply shall be addressed in writing to the Secretariat and shall not be raised as a point of order or motion. The reply shall be read to the Council by the representative only upon approval of the Secretariat, and in no case after voting has concluded on all matters relating to the agenda topic, during the discussion of which, the right arose.*

**Rule 22 - Suspension of the meeting**

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the suspension of the meeting, specifying a time for reconvening. Such motions shall not be debated but shall be put to a vote immediately, requiring the support of a majority of the members present and voting to pass.

**Rule 23 - Adjournment of the meeting**

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the meeting. Such motions shall not be debated but shall be put to the vote immediately, requiring the support of a majority of the members present and voting to pass. After adjournment, the Council shall reconvene at its next regularly scheduled meeting time.

*As this motion, if successful, would end the meeting until the Council's next regularly scheduled session the following year, and in accordance with the philosophy and principles of the NMUN and in furtherance of its educational mission, the President will not entertain such a motion until the end of the last meeting of the Council.*

**Rule 24 - Adjournment of debate**

A representative may at any time move the adjournment of debate on the topic under discussion. Permission to speak on the motion shall be accorded to two representatives favoring and two opposing adjournment, after which the motion shall be put to a vote immediately, requiring the support of a majority of the members present and voting to pass. If a motion for adjournment passes, the topic is considered dismissed and no action will be taken on it.

**Rule 25 - Closure of debate**

A representative may at any time move the closure of debate on the item under discussion, whether or not any other representative has signified her/his wish to speak. Permission to speak on the motion shall be accorded only to two representatives opposing the closure, after which the motion shall be put to the vote immediately. Closure of debate shall require a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting. If the Council favors the closure of debate, the Council shall immediately move to vote on all proposals introduced under that agenda item.

**Rule 26 - Order of motions** Subject to rule 23, the motions indicated below shall have precedence in the following order over all proposals or other motions before the meeting:

- a) To suspend the meeting;
- b) To adjourn the meeting;
- c) To adjourn the debate on the item under discussion;
- d) To close the debate on the item under discussion.

**Rule 27 - Proposals and amendments**

Proposals and substantive amendments shall normally be submitted in writing to the Secretariat, with the names of twenty percent of the members of the Council who would like the Council to consider the proposal or amendment. The Secretariat may, at its discretion, approve the proposal or amendment for circulation among the delegations. As a general rule, no proposal shall be put to the vote at any meeting of the Council unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations. The President may, however, permit the discussion and consideration of amendments or of motions as to procedure, even though such amendments and motions have not been circulated. If the sponsors agree to the adoption of a proposed amendment, the proposal shall be modified accordingly and no vote shall be

taken on the proposed amendment. A document modified in this manner shall be considered as the proposal pending before the Council for all purposes, including subsequent amendments.

*For purposes of this rule, all —proposals shall be in the form of working papers prior to their approval by the Secretariat. Working papers will not be copied, or in any other way distributed, to the Council by the Secretariat. The distribution of such working papers is solely the responsibility of the sponsors of the working papers. Along these lines, and in furtherance of the philosophy and principles of the NMUN and for the purpose of advancing its educational mission, representatives should not directly refer to the substance of a working paper that has not yet been accepted as a draft resolution. After approval of a working paper, the proposal becomes a draft resolution and will be copied by the Secretariat for distribution to the Council. These draft resolutions are the collective property of the Council and, as such, the names of the original sponsors will be removed. The copying and distribution of amendments is at the discretion of the Secretariat, but the substance of all such amendments will be made available to all representatives in some form.*

**Rule 28 - Withdrawal of motions**

A proposal or a motion may be withdrawn by its sponsor at any time before voting has commenced, provided that it has not been amended. A motion thus withdrawn may be reintroduced by any representative.

**Rule 29 - Reconsideration of a topic**

When a topic has been adjourned, it may not be reconsidered at the same session unless the Council, by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, so decides. Reconsideration can only be moved by a representative who voted on the prevailing side of the original motion to adjourn. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the motion, after which it shall be put to the vote immediately.

*For purposes of this rule, —those present and voting means those representatives, including observers, in attendance at the meeting during which this motion is voted upon by the body.*

## VI. VOTING

**Rule 30 - Voting rights**

Each member of the Council shall have one vote.

*This rule applies to substantive voting on amendments, draft resolutions, and portions of draft resolutions divided out by motion. As such, all references to —member(s) do not include observers, who are not permitted to cast votes on substantive matters.*

**Rule 31 - Request for a vote**

A proposal or motion before the Council for decision shall be voted upon if any member so requests. Where no member requests a vote, the Council may adopt proposals or motions without a vote.

*For purposes of this rule, —proposal means any draft resolution, an amendment thereto, or a portion of a draft resolution divided out by motion. Just prior to a vote on a particular proposal or motion, the President may ask if there are any objections to passing the proposal or motion by acclamation, or a member may move to accept the proposal or motion by acclamation. If there are no objections to the proposal or motion, then it is adopted without a vote.*

**Rule 32 - Majority required**

1. Unless specified otherwise in these rules, decisions of the Assembly shall be made by a majority of the members present and voting.
2. For the purpose of tabulation, the phrase “members present and voting” means members casting an affirmative or negative vote. Members which abstain from voting are considered as not voting.

*All members declaring their representative States as “present and voting” during the attendance role call for the meeting during which the substantive voting occurs, must cast an affirmative or negative vote, and cannot abstain.*

**Rule 33 - Method of voting**

1. The Council shall normally vote by a show of placards, except that a representative may request a roll call, which shall be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the members, beginning with the member whose name is randomly selected by the President. The name of each present member shall be called in any roll call, and one of its representatives shall reply “yes,” “no,” “abstention,” or “pass.”

*Only those members who designate themselves as —present or —present and voting during the attendance roll call, or in some other manner communicate their attendance to the President and/or Secretariat, are permitted to vote and, as such, no others will be called during a roll-call vote. Any representatives replying —pass, must, on the second time through, respond with either —yes or —no. A —pass cannot be followed by a second —pass for the same proposal or amendment, nor can it be followed by an abstention on that same proposal or amendment.*

2. When the Council votes by mechanical means, a non-recorded vote shall replace a vote by show of placards and a recorded vote shall replace a roll-call vote. A representative may request a recorded vote. In the case of a recorded vote, the Council shall dispense with the procedure of calling out the names of the members.
3. The vote of each member participating in a roll call or a recorded vote shall be inserted in the record.

#### **Rule 34 - Explanations of vote**

Representatives may make brief statements consisting solely of explanation of their votes after the voting has been completed. The representatives of a member sponsoring a proposal or motion shall not speak in explanation of vote thereon, except if it has been amended, and the member has voted against the proposal or motion.

*All explanations of vote must be submitted to the President in writing before debate on the topic is closed, except where the representative is of a member sponsoring the proposal, as described in the second clause, in which case the explanation of vote must be submitted to the President in writing immediately after voting on the topic ends.*

#### **Rule 35 - Conduct during voting**

After the President has announced the commencement of voting, no representatives shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual process of voting.

#### **Rule 36 - Division of proposals and amendments**

Immediately before a proposal or amendment comes to a vote, a representative may move that parts of a proposal or of an amendment should be voted on separately. If there are calls for multiple divisions, those shall be voted upon in an order to be set by the President where the most radical division will be voted upon first. If objection is made to the motion for division, the request for division shall be voted upon, requiring the support of a majority of those present and voting to pass. Permission to speak on the motion for division shall be given only to two speakers in favor and two speakers against. If the motion for division is carried, those parts of the proposal or of the amendment which are involved shall then be put to a vote. If all operative parts of the proposal or of the amendment have been rejected, the proposal or the amendment shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

*For purposes of this rule, —most radical division means the division that will remove the greatest substance from the draft resolution, but not necessarily the one that will remove the most words or clauses. The determination of which division is —most radical is subject to the discretion of the Secretariat, and any such determination is final.*

#### **Rule 37 - Amendments**

An amendment is a proposal that does no more than add to, delete from, or revise part of another proposal.

*An amendment can add, amend, or delete operative clauses, but cannot in any manner add, amend, delete, or otherwise affect perambulatory clauses.*

#### **Rule 38 - Order of voting on amendments**

When an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal shall be voted on

first and then the amendment next furthest removed there from, and so on until all the amendments have been put to the vote. Where, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter shall not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted on.

*For purposes of this rule, —furthest removed in substance means the amendment that will have the most significant impact on the draft resolution. The determination of which amendment is —furthest removed in substance is subject to the discretion of the Secretariat, and any such determination is final.*

**Rule 39 - Order of voting on proposals**

If two or more proposals, other than amendments, relate to the same question, they shall, unless the Council decides otherwise, be voted on in the order in which they were submitted.

**Rule 40 - The President shall not vote**

The President shall not vote but may designate another member of her/his delegation to vote in her/his place.

## VII. CREDENTIALS

**Rule 41 - Credentials**

The credentials of representatives and the names of members of a delegation shall be submitted to the Secretary-General prior to the opening of a session.

**Rule 42**

The Council shall be bound by the actions of the General Assembly in all credentials matters and shall take no action regarding the credentials of any member.

## VII. PARTICIPATION OF NON-MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**Rule 43 - Participation of non-Member States**

1. The Council shall invite any Member of the United Nations that is not a member of the Council and any other State, to participate in its deliberations on any matter of particular concern to that State.
2. A committee or sessional body of the Council shall invite any State that is not one of its own members to participate in its deliberations on any matter of particular concern to that State.
3. A State thus invited shall not have the right to vote, but may submit proposals which may be put to the vote on request of any member of the body concerned.

*If the Council considers that the presence of a Member invited according to this rule is no longer necessary, it may withdraw the invitation again. Delegates invited to the Council according to this rule should also keep in mind their role and obligations in the committee that they were originally assigned to. For educational purposes of the NMUN Conference, the Secretariat may thus ask a delegate to return to his or her committee when his or her presence in the Council is no longer required.*

**Rule 45 - Participation of national liberation movements**

The Council may invite any national liberation movement recognized by the General Assembly to participate, without the right to vote, in its deliberations on any matter of particular concern to that movement.

**Rule 46 - Participation of and consultation with specialized agencies**

In accordance with the agreements concluded between the United Nations and the specialized agencies, the specialized agencies shall be entitled: a) To be represented at meetings of the Council and its subsidiary organs; b) To participate, without the right to vote, through their representatives, in deliberations with respect to items of concern to them and to submit proposals regarding such items, which may be put to the vote at the request of any member of the Council or of the subsidiary organ concerned.

**Rule 47 - Participation of non-governmental organization and intergovernmental organizations**

Representatives of non-governmental organizations/intergovernmental organizations accorded consultative observer status by the General Assembly and other non-governmental organizations/intergovernmental organizations designated on an ad hoc or a continuing basis by the Council on the recommendation of the Bureau, may participate,

with the procedural right to vote, but not the substantive right to vote, in the deliberations of the Council on questions within the scope of the activities of the organizations.