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General Assembly Third Committee
Background Guide 2019

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2019 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to welcome you to the General Assembly Third Committee. This year's staff are: Directors Nadine Moussa (Conference A) and Eileen Austin (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Aidan Killackey (Conference A) and Eedee-Bari Nuah Bawoh (Conference B). Eileen is a Staff Accountant for Danone North America in White Plains, New York. This will be her fifth year on staff. Nadine is a Communications Analyst for the Privy Council Office in Ottawa, Canada. This will be her fifth year on staff. Eedee-Bari is a graduate from the Nigerian law school, Lagos Campus, Victoria Island. This will be her first year on staff. Aidan is a student at the University of Washington completing a BA in political science with an emphasis in international security. This will be his first year on staff.

The topics under discussion for the General Assembly Third Committee are:

1. Inclusive Development for Persons with Disabilities
2. Combating Human Trafficking
3. Strengthening Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Assistance

The General Assembly, one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN), was created to act as the wholly representative and deliberative arm of the organization. The stated mandate of the Third Committee is the discussion of all matters related to social, humanitarian, and cultural affairs. Since its inception, this mandate has evolved to include a particular specialism as the primary forum for human rights issues. The Third Committee performs a central role within the UN system, providing an overarching forum of discussion for a wide variety of social, humanitarian, and cultural issues and is the largest representative body for human rights norm-setting.

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) on 1 March 2019 in accordance with the guidelines in the NMUN Position Paper Guide.

Two resources, available to download from the NMUN website, that serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions are the:

1. *NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide* - explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not start discussion on the topics with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. *NMUN Rules of Procedure* - include the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory NMUN Conduct Expectations on the NMUN website. They include the Conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the General Assembly Department, Dieyun Song (Conference A) and Maximilian Jungmann (Conference B), at usg.ga@nmun.org.

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Conference A

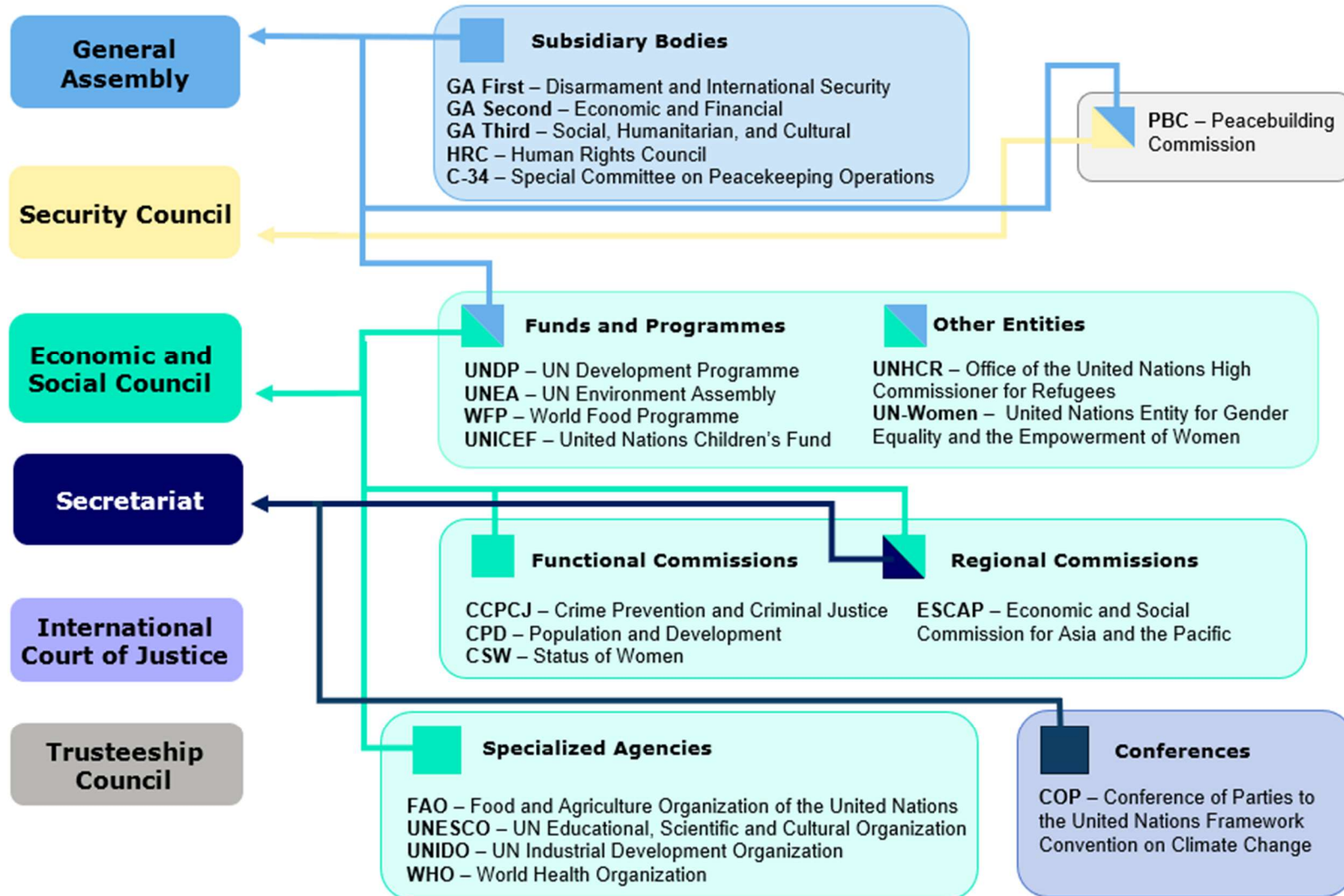Nadine Moussa, Director
Aidan Killackey, Assistant Director

Conference B

Eileen Austin, Director
Eedee-Bari Nuah Bawoh, Assistant Director

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United Nations System at NMUN•NY

This diagram illustrates the UN system simulated at NMUN•NY and demonstrates the reportage and relationships between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position, purpose, and powers within the UN system.

General Assembly

Security Council

Economic and Social Council

Secretariat

International Court of Justice

Trusteeship Council

Subsidiary Bodies

GA First – Disarmament and International Security
GA Second – Economic and Financial
GA Third – Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural
HRC – Human Rights Council
C-34 – Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations

PBC – Peacebuilding Commission

Funds and Programmes

UNDP – UN Development Programme
UNEA – UN Environment Assembly
WFP – World Food Programme
UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund

Other Entities

UNHCR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UN-Women – United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Functional Commissions

CCPCJ – Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
CPD – Population and Development
CSW – Status of Women

Regional Commissions

ESCAP – Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Specialized Agencies

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
UNESCO – UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO – UN Industrial Development Organization
WHO – World Health Organization

Conferences

COP – Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Committee Overview

Introduction

Following the Second World War, the United Nations (UN) was formed to act as a deliberative and co-operational forum for Member States to better prevent the outbreak of future hostilities.[1] The General Assembly, one of the six principal organs of the UN established under the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945), was created to act as the wholly representative and deliberative arm of the organization.[2] The large variance in the scope of its mandate led the General Assembly to allocate its work among six committees that would allow each to focus on a specific theme.[3] The stated mandate of the Third Committee is the discussion of all matters related to social, humanitarian, and cultural affairs.[4] Since its foundation, this mandate has naturally developed to also include a particular specialization as the primary forum for issues around human rights.[5] More than 50% of the resolutions adopted by the committee in recent years were submitted under the human rights agenda addressing a variety of subtopics, thereby making it the world's largest and most prominent forum for international human rights norm creation.[6] Over 90% of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are linked to human rights and labor standards, underlining the importance the human rights agenda for achieving the SDGs.[7] This overview will introduce the Third Committee through a contextualization of its work within the General Assembly structure, an overview of its governance and membership, and an analysis of its mandate and associated powers before examining its current priorities.

Governance, Structure, and Membership

In accordance with the *Charter of the United Nations*, the General Assembly is comprised of 193 UN Member States, as well as the Holy See and the State of Palestine as Observer States.[8] Furthermore, the work of the committee is supported by non-governmental and intergovernmental observers like the European Union and the International Criminal Court.[9] All main General Assembly committees begin their annual session in mid-September, following the drafting and allocation of agenda items by the General Committee to each specific committee, according to theme and content.[10] The Third Committee meets annually for eight weeks every October and November as part of the General Assembly's annual regular session.[11] Relevant reports of the Secretary-General are issued just before each corresponding agenda item, followed by an allotted time for questions for clarification or analysis.[12] As is the case for all General Assembly committees, the Third Committee adopts draft resolutions on each agenda item and a report to the General Assembly Plenary.[13] All documents require a simple majority to be adopted, unless the

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[1] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 55-60.

[2] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 55-60; UN General Assembly, *About the General Assembly*, 2017.

[3] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945; UN General Assembly, *Main Committees*, 2017.

[4] UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural*, 2017.

[5] UN DESA, *The UN General Assembly's Third Committee – social, humanitarian and cultural issues*, 2013; UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues: Draft proposals per agenda item*, 2017.

[6] UN HRC, *Institution-building of the United Nations Human Rights Council (A/HRC/RES/5/1)*, 2007; UN HRC, *Review of the work and functioning of the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/RES/16/21)*, 2011; UN DESA, *The UN General Assembly's Third Committee – social, humanitarian and cultural issues*, 2013.

[7] Danish Institute for Human Rights, *Human rights and the SDGs*, 2018.

[8] UN General Assembly, *Member States*, 2018.

[9] UN General Assembly, *List of non-Member States, entities and organizations having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly (A/INF/72/5)*, 2017.

[10] Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, pp. 37-38, 62.

[11] International Service for Human Rights, *Third Committee of the General Assembly: A Practical Guide for NGOs*, 2017, pp. 7, 11.

[12] Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, pp. 37-38, 65.

[13] Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, pp. 37-38, p. 62; UN General Assembly, *Reports to the Plenary*, 2018.

agenda item is considered an important question, like for example those on peace and security, which require a two-thirds majority.[14] Based on this, the Plenary then adopts the draft resolutions, either through a vote or by consensus, as recommended in the committee report.[15]

The President of the General Assembly (PGA) is the ceremonial head of the General Assembly, elected each year by a simple majority to a one-year nonrenewable term.[16] The PGA's duties are to facilitate the plenary sessions by directing discussion, managing the administration of meetings, and enforcing the General Assembly Rules of Procedure.[17] The PGA does not preside over all six General Assembly committees separately; rather, Chairs and Vice-Chairs are the facilitators of individual committees.[18] The PGA also performs executive duties such as meeting regularly with the Secretary-General, the President of the Security Council, and the President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); communicating with the press and the public; and, organizing high-level meetings for certain thematic issues.[19] Specifically, the Third Committee elects a bureau every year ahead of the session, made up of a Chair, three Vice-Chairs, and a Rapporteur.[20] The Third Committee at its 72nd session was chaired by Einar Gunnarsoon from Iceland.[21] The Vice-Chairs were Nebil Idris from Eritrea, Alanoud Qassim M. A. Al-Temimi from Qatar, and Dora Kaszas from Hungary, while the Rapporteur-designate was Andres Molina Linares from Guatemala.[22]

All General Assembly committees are supported by secretariats, which provide substantive and logistical support to the committees.[23] The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) serves as the primary substantive wing of the Third Committee's secretariat, acting as a natural focal point for human rights bodies, reports, and other publications.[24] Given the varied nature of its work, various other UN entities may serve as substantive secretariats for the Third Committee, such as the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Volunteers program, and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).[25] Furthermore, as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) provides an annual report to the Third Committee on its own recent sessions and discussions.[26] Independent Experts, Special Rapporteurs, and Working Groups that compile reports and advise the HRC will also engage in interactive dialogues with the Third Committee on a variety of subjects.[27]

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The Third Committee derives its direction from a variety of UN documents.[28] Articles 10-17 of the *Charter of the United Nations* are the principal guidelines for the substance and scope of all General Assembly

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[14] UN General Assembly, *About the General Assembly*, 2017.
[15] Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 62.
[16] Ibid., p. 16.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid., pp. 15, 18.
[19] Ibid., pp. 16-17.
[20] International Service for Human Rights, *Third Committee of the General Assembly: A Practical Guide for NGOs*, 2017, p. 12.
[21] UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues: Bureau of the 72nd Session*, 2018.
[22] Ibid.
[23] UN General Assembly, *Subsidiary Organs of the General Assembly*, 2018.
[24] UN OHCHR, *Human Rights – New York: Mainstreaming human rights*, 2017.
[25] UN General Assembly, *Organization of the work of the Third Committee: Note by the Secretariat (A/C.3/72/L.1/Rev.1)*, 2017.
[26] UN General Assembly, *Report of the Human Rights Council (A/72/53)*, 2017; International Service for Human Rights, *Third Committee of the General Assembly: A Practical Guide for NGOs*, 2017, p. 19.
[27] Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 65; UN DESA, *The UN General Assembly's Third Committee – social, humanitarian and cultural issues*, 2013.
[28] Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011; *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 10-17.

committees.[29] These articles state that the General Assembly has the authority to "initiate studies and make recommendations," as well as "receive and consider reports" from other organs of the UN, including the Security Council.[30] Article 1 also speaks of "promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all," which has been said to be the foundation of *the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) and the mandate of much of the Third Committee's work.[31] Nearly every international human rights instrument since the UDHR has built upon its core principles, thereby enlarging the Third Committee's mandate by extension.[32] The Third Committee used the UDHR as the groundwork to adopt additional and more specific international human rights instruments, chief among them the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR) (1966) and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) (1966).[33] These documents, along with the two optional protocols to the ICCPR make up what is known as the *International Bill of Human Rights*.[34] Both covenants differ from the UDHR in that they are legally binding multilateral treaties to those Member States that have either ratified or acceded to them.[35]

Under its overall mandate as the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee, the Third Committee spends a large portion of its time discussing matters relating to human rights and rights norm setting.[36] However, the Third Committee's work can encompass a broad variety of issues, including those beyond human rights, demonstrated during its 72nd session where topics included crime prevention and criminal justice, international drug control, and the advancement of women.[37]

As part of the General Assembly, the Third Committee strives for consensus in its work, and approximately 70% of its resolutions were adopted by consensus between the 60th and 70th session.[38] The work of the Third Committee is of a normative nature, in that it does not actually carry out the operations or tasks called for in its resolutions.[39] The Third Committee primarily works through the initiation of studies and the creation of nonbinding recommendations.[40] The task of operationalizing the Third Committee's recommendations is primarily delegated to the various agencies and offices of the UN Secretariat.[41] The Third Committee can request studies to be undertaken by relevant UN bodies such as OHCHR, UNHCR, UN-Women, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).[42] UN-Women, for example, delivered the "Report of the Secretary-General on violence against women migrant workers" (A/72/215) to the Third Committee on 25 July 2017, and UNODC similarly issued the "Report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation against the world drug problem" (A/72/225) on 19 July 2017, prepared in response to resolutions 70/130 (2017) and 71/211 (2017), respectively.[43] The Third

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[29] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 10-17.

[30] Ibid., Art. 13, 15.

[31] UN OHCHR, *Fact Sheet No. 2 (Rev.1), The International Bill of Human Rights*, 1966; UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.

[32] Ibid.

[33] UN OHCHR, *Fact Sheet No. 2 (Rev.1), The International Bill of Human Rights*, 1966; UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966; UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966.

[34] UN OHCHR, *Fact Sheet No. 2 (Rev.1), The International Bill of Human Rights*, 1966.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p.65.

[37] UN General Assembly, *Reports to the Plenary*, 2018.

[38] International Service for Human Rights, *Third Committee of the General Assembly: A Practical Guide for NGOs*, 2017, p. 30.

[39] UN General Assembly, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly*, 2018.

[40] Ibid.

[41] UN OHCHR, *Human Rights – New York: Mainstreaming human rights*, 2017; Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 65.

[42] UN General Assembly, *Organization of the work of the Third Committee: Note by the Secretariat (A/C.3/72/L.1/Rev.1)*, 2017.

[43] UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues: Documents per agenda item*, 2018; UN General Assembly, *International cooperation against the world drug problem: Report of the Secretary-General*

Committee can also call for conferences to highlight certain issues, with a notable recurring example being the World Conference on Women, originating from the Third Committee resolution 3276 (XXIX) (1974), and monitored regularly through follow-up reviews every five years.[44]

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

The Third Committee began its 72nd session in October 2017, with Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Liu Zhenmin, emphasizing the importance of inclusiveness for achieving the advancement of youth, women, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups.[45] UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad al Hussein, stressed the need to turn international human rights standards into programs on the ground, drawing attention to massive migration from Myanmar to Bangladesh, ongoing conflict in Syria, and gender-related killings in Central America.[46]

In January 2018, in line with implementing human rights standards on the ground, the General Assembly adopted a multitude of resolutions based on the report of the Third Committee highlighting issues including trafficking of persons, persons with disabilities, and development.[47] For instance, resolution 72/195 urges Member States to increase efforts against trafficking in persons, while resolution 72/167 calls on Member States to strive for greater realization of the right to development at both the international and national levels.[48] Further, the Third Committee drew attention to the situation of women and girls with disabilities, urging Member States to implement the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and its Optional Protocol.[49]

The reasons for increasing discussion on issues under the human rights agenda vary, but differing opinions on human rights questions as well as various ways to address the issue are part of it.[50] A big question under debate that will need to be discussed further is whether resolutions on the human rights situation within single Member States are the suitable way to address a human rights issue.[51] During the 72nd session, several Member States continued to voice their rejection of country-specific mandates to address human rights issues, with some calling for cooperation rather than politicization to address the matter.[52] Against that backdrop, the Third Committee approved four draft resolutions on the human rights situations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the Syrian Arab Republic, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the autonomous Republic of Crimea and city of Sevastopol.[53] The resolutions highlighted human rights issues including eliminating all discrimination and rights violations against women and girls in Iran, addressing the lack of access to food and medical care in the DPRK, as well as limits on freedom of expression and the use of inhuman treatment in Crimea.[54] In a departure from past

(A/72/225), 2017; UN General Assembly, *Violence against women migrant workers: Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/215)*, 2017.

[44] UN General Assembly, *Conference of the International Women's Year (XXIX) (A/RES/3726 (XXIX))*, 1974; UN-Women, *World Conferences on Women*, 2018.

[45] UN DPI, *Third Committee Opens Session to Calls for Greater Inclusion of Youth, Women, Persons with Disabilities in Decisions Affecting their Lives (GA/SHC/4195)*, 2017.

[46] UN DPI, *International Human Rights Standards Must Translate to Programmes on Ground, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Tells Third Committee (GA/SHC/4205)*, 2017.

[47] UN General Assembly, *Resolutions of the 72nd Session*, 2018.

[48] UN General Assembly, *Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons (A/72/195)*, 2018; UN General Assembly, *The Right to Development (A/72/167)*, 2018.

[49] UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto: situation of women and girls with disabilities (A/72/162)*, 2018.

[50] UN DPI, *Sanctions, Harsh Rhetoric Eroding Human Rights in Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Expert tells Third Committee, as Mandate-Holders Present Findings (GA/SHC/4212)*, 2017.

[51] UN DPI, *Third Committee Approves Five Drafts on Situations in Syria, Iran, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, amid Debate over Merits of Country-Specific Texts (GA/SHC/4220)*, 2017.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

practice, the Committee approved the draft on the situation in the DPRK without its customary vote on the matter, while recording votes for the other three draft resolutions.[55]

Considering other social and human rights issues, the Third Committee adopted five draft resolutions on children's rights, assistance to refugees, persons with disabilities, social development, and terrorism.[56] The Third Committee also considered the question of the right of peoples to self-determination, continuing the work of the previous years.[57] While the General Assembly adopted a resolution on the issue in general, it also considered the question of mercenaries and the Palestinian people in two more resolutions.[58] The committee considered the annual report of the HRC and approved draft resolutions on a variety of human rights questions.[59] This included human rights in relation with extreme poverty, right to peace, right to food, right to development, right to privacy in the digital age, as well as the freedom of religion and belief.[60]

Conclusion

The Third Committee continues to perform a central role within the UN system, providing an overarching forum of discussion for a wide variety of social, humanitarian, and cultural issues and as the largest representative body for human rights norm setting.[61] Particularly within the context of the adoption of the SDGs and its mandate, the Third Committee's work continues to be integral to improving human rights situations around the world.[62] Delegates should aim to understand the historical precedents the Committee has set through its work on human rights and humanitarian issues, as well as how these achievements continue to contextualize and influence the work it does today across a broad spectrum of topics and situations.[63]

Annotated Bibliography

Charter of the United Nations. (1945). Retrieved 30 July 2018 from:
http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/
> *The Charter is the fundamental document that underpins and informs all of the subsequent work of the United Nations. Delegates should understand the document as the foundational blueprint of the UN, both in terms of its structure and powers, but also its guiding ideals and objectives. Although much subsequent work has expanded upon the core principles of the Charter, it is essential that delegates understand the primary document and its context. Of particular interest is Article 17, which outlines the primary functions and powers of the General Assembly.*

International Service for Human Rights. (2017). *Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly: A Practical Guide for NGOs*. Retrieved 7 July 2018 from:
https://www.ishr.ch/sites/default/files/article/files/ishr_3rd_com_handbook_eng_web.pdf
> *This handbook by the International Service for Human Rights provides an overview of the Third Committee's work and structure. It also highlights the Third Committee's relationship with other UN bodies and stakeholders, as well as the role of regional and political groups. This is a valuable source for delegates looking to familiarize themselves*

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[55] Ibid.
[56] UN DPI, *Concluding Intense Session, Third Committee Approves 5 Draft Resolutions on Children's Rights, Assistance to Refugees, Persons with Disabilities (GA/SHC/4224)*, 2017.
[57] UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues: Status of action on draft proposals*, 2018.
[58] Ibid.
[59] UN General Assembly, *Report of the Human Rights Council (A/72/53)*, 2017.
[60] UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues: Draft proposals per agenda item*, 2018.
[61] UN DESA, *The UN General Assembly's Third Committee – social, humanitarian and cultural issues*, 2013.
[62] UN DPI, *Speakers call for Prioritizing Education, Health in Quest to Level Gender Playing Field, as Third Committee Holds Debate on Women's Advancement (GA/SHC/4198)*, 2018.
[63] UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues: Draft proposals per agenda item*, 2018.

with the work of the Third Committee and how it falls in the overall General Assembly and United Nations architecture.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2018). *Universal Human Rights Instruments* [Website]. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/universalhumanrightsinstruments.aspx
> *This website provides a list of universal instruments relating to human rights issues like prevention of discrimination, rights of women, and rights of persons with disabilities. Given that the Third Committee is the largest and most prominent international forum for human rights protection, this source is a helpful tool that outlines the legal framework of human rights for delegates. This is a useful guide for delegates as the instruments are separated by category and so delegates can quickly access international instruments related directly to the human rights issues they are looking for.*

United Nations, Department of Public Information. (2018). *Meetings Coverage and Press Releases: General Assembly* [Website]. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: https://www.un.org/press/en/content/general-assembly
> *This website includes the latest meetings coverage and press releases from the General Assembly. It is a straightforward and easy to navigate, and includes links to the different General Assembly committees, including the Third Committee. This is a useful source for delegates looking for updates on General Assembly meetings and progress or for press releases concerning particular topics.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Third Committee. (2018). *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues: Documents of the 72nd Session* [Website]. Retrieved 7 July 2018 from: https://www.un.org/en/ga/third/index.shtml
> *This website provides links to documents of the Third Committee's seventy-second session, including the allocation of agenda items and the reports to the plenary. The page is easy to understand, and in addition to accessing the documents, it can be used to navigate to other webpages that provide further information about the committee, such as press releases. This will be useful starting point for delegates as they prepare for the conference.*

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I. Inclusive Development for Persons with Disabilities

"I realize that I am very lucky, in many ways. My success in theoretical physics has ensured that I am supported to live a worthwhile life. It is very clear that the majority of people with disabilities in the world have an extremely difficult time with everyday survival, let alone productive employment and personal fulfilment. … [W]e have a moral duty to remove the barriers to … unlock the vast potential of people with disabilities."[64]

Introduction

15% of the world's population, or one billion people, live with disabilities.[65] Approximately 80% of persons with disabilities live in developing countries.[66] Although disability is common and persons with disabilities are both beneficiaries and agents of development, they are often excluded from development, face discrimination, and do not fully enjoy their human rights.[67] The United Nations (UN) defines disability as including "all types of impairments: physical, psychosocial, intellectual or mental, as well as sensory conditions with and without functional limitations."[68] Since the 1970s, the UN has included social and cultural aspects in its definition of disability, and frames disability as the interaction between individuals' impairments and their environment.[69] In line with this understanding, the UN has called for Member States and other stakeholders to address disabling barriers that exclude persons with disabilities from their communities, development, and human rights.[70]

Many persons with disabilities also face intersecting and aggravating discrimination due to other factors, such as gender, youth, or old age.[71] Women, for example, are more likely to have a disability than men, and they face increasing limited autonomy regarding healthcare.[72] Furthermore, limitations on the political participation of persons with disabilities further exclude persons with disabilities from development and undermine the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda).[73] For example, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) estimated that almost all children with disabilities in developing countries are unschooled, which undermines the realization of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, quality education.[74] The lack of educational opportunities in turn limits career opportunities, hindering SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth.[75] A profound material inequality

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[64] WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. ix.
[65] Ibid.
[66] UN General Assembly, *High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities (A/RES/66/124)*, 2011, p. 1.
[67] UN General Assembly, *Realizing the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond (A/RES/69/142)*, 2015, p. 1.
[68] UN-Women, *Making the SDGs Count for Women and Girls with Disabilities*, 2017, p. 2.
[69] UN General Assembly, *Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/48/96)*, 1994, pp. 3-4; Waldschmidt, *Disability Goes Cultural: The Cultural Model of Disability as an Analytical Tool*, 2017, p. 21.
[70] UN CRPD, *General Comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community (CRPD/C/GC/5)*, 2017.
[71] UN General Assembly, *Inclusive development for persons with disabilities (A/RES/71/165)*, 2016, p. 1; UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto: situation of women and girls with disabilities (A/RES/72/162)*, 2017, p. 2.
[72] UN General Assembly, *Sexual and reproductive health and rights of girls and young women with disabilities: Note by the Secretary-General (A/72/133)*, 2017; UN-Women, *Making the SDGs Count for Women and Girls with Disabilities*, 2017, p. 2.
[73] UN DESA, *Relationship between Development and Human Rights*; UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006, pp. 1-2; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[74] UN CSocD, *Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda (E/CN.5/2008/6)*, 2007, p. 2; UN ECOSOC, *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2017/66)*, 2017, p. 7.
[75] UN ECOSOC, *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2017/66)*, 2017, pp. 10-11.

exists as persons with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty in both developed and developing countries, partially due to the cost of caring for their impairment.[76]

In the *Declaration on the Right to Development* (1986)*,* the UN recognizes that the individual is the central subject to development and that participation in development is itself a right.[77] Realizing inclusive development and using societies' resources to benefit all individuals, including those with disabilities, reaffirms that right.[78] Mainstreaming disability in development is achieved through progressively remove disabling barriers, realizing the 2030 Agenda, and promoting the equal enjoyment of human rights.[79] Doing so requires disability be included in all aspects of development, instead of addressing disability as an add-on policy area.[80] Member States and the General Assembly Third Committee play vital roles in involving persons with disabilities in the policymaking process.[81]

International and Regional Framework

Chapter IX of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945) highlights the importance of promoting improved economic and social conditions for all persons through international cooperation through the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).[82] The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948), which acknowledges that all persons are entitled to the equal enjoyment of human rights, is the starting point for the relevant international framework.[83] On 16 December 1966, the General Assembly adopted the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) and the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR) through resolution 2200 (XXI).[84] ICESCR outlines rights necessary for social development, including the right to equal work and pay, the right to healthcare and education, and the right to take part in community life.[85] The ICCPR articulates the right to participate in public affairs and political processes, and reaffirms that all persons must be recognized as such before the law.[86] While the international community has achieved significant progress in establishing fundamental frameworks, further implementation and execution of the existing instruments are still required to fully achieve the zero discrimination towards persons with disabilities.[87]

The General Assembly adopted the *Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons* through resolution 3447 (XXX) on 9 December 1975, which was followed by the *World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons* in 1982.[88] The Declaration explicitly recognized that persons with disabilities are entitled to human rights on an equal basis, and the Programme of Action builds on that by articulating necessary changes to realize inclusive development.[89] Changes included involving persons with

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[76] UN DPI, *"Strong link" between disability and poverty, says UN rights expert*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[77] UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the right to development (A/RES/41/128)*, 1986, Art. 1-2.
[78] UN DESA, *Division for Inclusive Social Development*.
[79] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto (A/RES/70/145)*, 2015, p. 1.
[80] UN DESA, *Best Practices for Including Persons with Disabilities in All Aspects of Development Efforts*, 2011, p. 5.
[81] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006, Art. 4.
[82] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. IX.
[83] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948, Art. 2.
[84] UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966; UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966.
[85] UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966, Art. 6-7, 12-15.
[86] UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966, Art. 7, 16, 25-26.
[87] Schulze, *Understanding the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2010, p. 14.
[88] UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (A/RES/3447 (XXX))*, 1975; UN General Assembly, *World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: Report of the Secretary-General (A/37/351/Add.1)*, 1982, p. 27.
[89] Ibid.

disabilities in development policymaking and passing legislation for the equalization of opportunities.[90] More recently, the General Assembly adopted the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol in 2006 to create a viable framework that clarified the obligation that states, as duty-bearers, have to persons with disabilities, as rights-holders, as well as that of the international community.[91] In support of this, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), for instance, partnered with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to develop *From Exclusion to Equality*, a handbook to assist parliamentarians in drafting legislation to implement the CRPD.[92]

The *Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development* (1995) calls for social integration to create a "society for all" by protecting legal rights, improving social protection, and making the physical environment accessible for persons with disabilities.[93] The *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (2015) also mainstreams disability throughout its development-financing and planning framework.[94] For example, noting that in many countries persons with disabilities work for small-scale firms that often lack access to finance, the Agenda calls for Member States to commit themselves to working with development banks to provide credit to small-scale firms to protect employees' rights without discrimination.[95]

The 2030 Agenda includes persons with disabilities in seven of the 17 SDGs.[96] Realizing disability-inclusive development will help realize SDG 1 on eliminating poverty; SDG 3 on good health and well-being; SDG 4 on quality education; SDG 5 on gender equality; SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth; SDG 10 on reduced inequalities; and SDG 11 on building sustainable cities and communities.[97] For instance, education is a potent engine of societal development and personal economic security.[98] Reducing barriers in education, such as the placement of children with psychosocial disabilities into segregated schools, will promote persons with disabilities to be included in development.[99] Such efforts will reduce inequalities as persons with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty, face unemployment, and not attend school.[100] In its work, the Third Committee has recognized that including persons with disabilities is necessary to realize the 2030 Agenda.[101]

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[90] UN General Assembly, *World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: Report of the Secretary-General (A/37/351/Add.1)*, 1982, pp. 37-57.

[91] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, Catalina Devandas-Aguilar (A/HRC/28/58)*, 2015, p. 4; UNDP, *Applying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in UNDP Programming*, 2012, p. 12.

[92] UN DESA et al., *From Exclusion to Equality: Realizing the rights of persons with disabilities*, 2007.

[93] UN, *Report of the World Summit for Social Development (A/CONF.166/9)*, 1995, pp. 6, 10-11.

[94] UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015.

[95] Ibid., p. 6.

[96] UN General Assembly, *Realization of internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities and progress made in the implementation of the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other international agreed development goals for persons with disabilities: Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/214)*, 2016, p. 4, 14-15.

[97] UN ECOSOC, *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2017/66)*, 2017, pp. 2-8, 10-13; UN General Assembly, *Realization of internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities and progress made in the implementation of the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other international agreed development goals for persons with disabilities: Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/214)*, 2016, pp. 14-15.

[98] UN DESA, *Toolkit on Disability in Africa*, 2017, pp. 3-4.

[99] UN DESA, *Toolkit on Disability in Africa*, 2017, pp. 3-4; UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006, Art. 24.

[100] UN CSocD, *Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda (E/CN.5/2008/6)*, 2007, p. 2; UN General Assembly, *Rights of persons with disabilities: Note by the Secretary-General (A/70/297)*, 2015, pp. 9-12.

[101] UN General Assembly, *Inclusive development for persons with disabilities (A/RES/71/165)*, 2016, p. 5.

Role of the International System

The Third Committee has long focused its attention on implementing the disability framework to realize inclusive development.[102] On 19 December 2016, the General Assembly adopted resolution 71/165 entitled "Inclusive development for persons with disabilities."[103] Within its provisions, this resolution affirmed the role of North-South, South-South, and triangular cooperation to support national disability efforts, urged stakeholders to improve accessibility through universal design, and encouraged contributions to the trust fund for the United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD).[104] Resolution 72/161 of 19 December 2017 established the International Day of Sign Languages to raise awareness of the importance of sign language as an accessible communication format for persons with hearing impairments.[105] Further, General Assembly resolution 72/162, adopted on the same day, called for the further and full ratification of the CRPD.[106] During its current and 74th sessions, the General Assembly is due to receive three reports from the Secretary-General on mainstreaming disability in development.[107]

Since its establishment in 2006, the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) has been active in promoting the rights of persons with disabilities through its resolutions, the Universal Periodic Review process, through which it monitors the human rights situation within individual Member States, and its special rapporteurs.[108] On 27 June 2014, the HRC adopted resolution 26/20 to establish the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities.[109] The Special Rapporteur is mandated to engage in dialogue with relevant stakeholders, including Member States, UN agencies, and disabled persons organizations (DPOs), to report on the status of the rights of persons with disabilities, and to make recommendations on the promotion of their rights.[110] Recent reports to the HRC and General Assembly have centered on legal capacity and supported decision making, sexual and reproductive rights of girls and young women with disabilities, and disability-inclusive politics.[111] The Special Rapporteur also sends letters to Member States covering ongoing human rights violations and potentially negative legislation to encourage states to act.[112] Such communication becomes public, allowing civil society to magnify the Special Rapporteur's work in their own advocacy.[113]

To enhance interagency cooperation, various UN agencies, including the International Labour Organization (ILO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), created the UNPRPD to realize disability-inclusive development and facilitate consultation with civil society DPOs.[114] The UNPRPD supports efforts within Member States to directly and indirectly benefit persons with disabilities

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[102] UN General Assembly, *Realizing the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond (A/RES/69/142)*, 2015, p. 5.

[103] UN General Assembly, *Inclusive development for persons with disabilities (A/RES/71/165)*, 2016.

[104] Ibid.

[105] UN General Assembly, *International Day of Sign Languages (A/RES/72/161)*, 2017.

[106] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto (A/RES/70/145)*, 2015, p. 2; UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto: situation of women and girls with disabilities (A/RES/72/162)*, 2017, pp. 3-4.

[107] UN General Assembly, *Realizing the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond (A/RES/69/142)*, 2015, p. 5; UN General Assembly, *Inclusive development for persons with disabilities (A/RES/71/165)*, 2016, p. 7; UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto: situation of women and girls with disabilities (A/RES/72/162)*, 2017, p. 7.

[108] UN HRC, *Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/HRC/RES/26/20)*, 2014; UN HRC, *Human Rights Council adopts outcome of Universal Periodic Review of Australia, Georgia and Saint Lucia*, 2016; UN HRC, *Universal Periodic Review*, 2018.

[109] UN HRC, *Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/HRC/RES/26/20)*, 2014, pp. 1-2.

[110] Ibid.

[111] UN HRC, *Annual reports*, 2018.

[112] UN HRC, *Progress so far: An overview of 3 years of mandate*, 2018.

[113] Ibid.

[114] UNDP, *UNPRPD Strategic and Operational Framework*, 2012, p. 1.

by building capacity along its eight thematic priorities.[115] Priorities include ratification of the CRPD, reversing stigma, increasing access to justice, and improving disability-specific statistics.[116] Since 2012, the UNPRPD Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) has spent $11 million of the $23 million raised on programmes to strengthen the voices of persons with disabilities and DPOs.[117] In Viet Nam, for instance, the UNPRPD MDTF financed a capacity-building project that increased the ability of DPOs to monitor implementation of the CRPD by improving their abilities to collect citizen feedback in order to evaluate the quality of social services.[118]

UN Country teams (UNCTs), which are made up of the UN agencies operating within countries, can use their expertise to assist Member States in implementing the CRPD.[119] For example, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which is part of the UNCT in Malaysia, identified a lack of information on stigma toward children with disabilities and worked with the government, civil society, and universities to study public attitudes.[120] Based on the research, UNICEF developed recommendations for itself, the government, and other stakeholders in its 2017 report, *Childhood Disability in Malaysia*.[121] For example, it recommended that educators and healthcare providers receive periodic training to ensure they are implementing best practices for accessible healthcare and education.[122]

Civil society organizations (CSOs), including DPOs, are important stakeholders for disability-inclusive development.[123] For example, Disability Rights International, an advocacy group based in the United States, raises awareness of disability rights and works with the UN for official recognition of those rights.[124] At its suggestion, the Committee for the Rights of Persons with Disability stated that children with disabilities have the right to grow up in a family.[125] The International Disability Alliance (IDA) is made up of 14 regional and global NGOs and works with the UN and Member States to advocate for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the 2030 Agenda.[126] In 2017, IDA signed a memorandum of understanding to promote implementation of the CRPD with another organization, Handicap International, which contributed to the drafting of the CRPD, reflecting the continued and integral role that civil society has in disability-inclusive development.[127]

Reasonable Accommodations and Universal Design

The physical and social environments we live in may be a disabling barrier, limiting the opportunities of persons with disabilities to participate in development.[128] For instance, the lack of Braille signs may exclude persons with visual impairments from education and employment opportunities.[129] To address

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[115] Ibid., pp. 9-14.
[116] Ibid., p. 9.
[117] UNDP, *UN Partnership to promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Multi-Donor Trust Fund (UNPRPD MDTF)*, 2018.
[118] UNDP, *UNPRPD Fund: 2017 Annual Report*, 2018, pp. 15-16.
[119] UNDG, *The United Nations Country* Team, 2016; UNDG, *Including the rights of persons with disabilities in United Nations Programming at country level*, 2011, p. 3.
[120] UNICEF Malaysia, *Childhood Disability in Malaysia*, 2017, p. 4.
[121] Ibid., pp. 85-99.
[122] Ibid., p. 99.
[123] Schulze, *Understanding the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2010, p. 6.
[124] Disability Rights International, *Our Work*, 2014.
[125] Disability Rights International, *Our Work*, 2014; Disability Rights International, *UN Disability Committee recognizes groundbreaking rights for children*, 2017; Disability Rights International, *Comments and suggested revisions: Draft General Comment No.5 (living independently)*, 2017; UN CRPD, *General comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community (CRPD/C/GC/5)*, 2017.
[126] International Disability Alliance, *International Disability Alliance in Brief*, 2018.
[127] Schulze, *Understanding the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2010; International Disability Alliance, *International Disability Alliance and Handicap International Sign Memorandum of Agreement*, 2017; UN WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 262.
[128] UN WHO & World Bank, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 37.
[129] Human Rights Watch, *"I Am Equally Human": Discrimination and Lack of Accessibility for People with Disabilities in Iran*, 2018.

such barriers, Member States obligated themselves in the CRPD to provide reasonable accommodations and to implement universal design.[130] Reasonable accommodation is the "necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden" to ensure the equal rights of persons with disabilities.[131]

At a national level, Member States have undertaken different policy initiatives to eliminate barriers. Some Member States have prohibited employers from terminating employees with disabilities for taking advantage of reasonable accommodation, such as extended leave for medical reasons relating to impairment.[132] Persons with disabilities in rural areas also face a lack of physically accessible public services, compounded by a lack of accessible and affordable transportation.[133] Innovative ways of providing social services, such as mobile health clinics, can overcome this lack of accessible transportation by bringing services directly to persons with disabilities.[134]

In addition to employment and public services, persons with disabilities are often excluded from policymaking due to physical and communication barriers.[135] The UN has taken progressive measures to improve access to its facilities, for example by establishing the Accessibility Centre at its headquarters in 2013.[136] The Centre provides assistive devices and technologies for delegates to follow and participate in negotiations.[137] Reasonable accommodations will help realize CRPD obligations to include persons with disabilities in policymaking.[138]

Implementing universal design is also one way to mainstream disability in development specifically.[139] For example, urban transportation infrastructure that incorporates universal design allows persons with disabilities to access cities' "engines of growth," thus contributing to SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities.[140] The General Assembly called for universal design to be incorporated in the planning and construction of cities' communication and transportation systems in resolution 71/165 of 2017.[141]

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[130] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006.

[131] Ibid., Art. 2.

[132] United States of America, *Enforcement Guidance: Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the Americans with Disabilities Act*, 2002.

[133] UN General Assembly, *Sexual and reproductive health and rights of girls and young women with disabilities: Note by the Secretary-General (A/72/133)*, 2017, pp. 17-18.

[134] UN ECOSOC, *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2017/66)*, 2017, pp. 4-6; UN General Assembly, *Sexual and reproductive health and rights of girls and young women with disabilities: Note by the Secretary-General (A/72/133)*, 2017, pp. 17-18; Yu et al., *The scope and impact of mobile health clinics in the United States: a literature review*, 2017, pp. 178-179.

[135] UN CRPD, *Women and girls with disabilities (CRPD/CSP/2018/3): Note by the Secretariat*, 2018, p. 2.

[136] UNDP, *Applying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in UNDP Programming*, 2012, p. 14; UN DPI, *Ban inaugurates accessibility centre at UN Headquarters*, 2013; UN DPI, *Improving system for person with disabilities good for all says US advocate on tour of UN accessibility centre*, 2014; UN General Assembly, *Towards the full realization of an inclusive and accessible United Nations for persons with disabilities (A/RES/70/170)*, 2015; UN General Assembly, *Towards the full realization of an inclusive and accessible United Nations for persons with disabilities: Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/344)*, 2016.

[137] UNDP, *Applying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in UNDP Programming*, 2012, p. 14; UN DPI, *Ban inaugurates accessibility centre at UN Headquarters*, 2013; UN DPI, *Improving system for person with disabilities good for all says US advocate on tour of UN accessibility centre*, 2014; UN General Assembly, *Towards the full realization of an inclusive and accessible United Nations for persons with disabilities (A/RES/70/170)*, 2015.

[138] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006, Art. 4.

[139] UN General Assembly, *Realization of internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities and progress made in the implementation of the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other international agreed development goals for persons with disabilities: Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/214)*, 2016, p. 7.

[140] UN DESA, *Sustainable development goal 11*; UN HABITAT, *Cities are engines for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2018.

[141] UN General Assembly, *Inclusive development for persons with disabilities (A/RES/71/165)*, 2016, p. 6; UN General Assembly, *Realization of internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities and*

Although disability-inclusive infrastructure can be achieved at little additional cost, it has not been realized.[142] International financial institutions, such as the World Bank, can be active participants in financing accessible infrastructure projects.[143] For example, the World Bank contributed to mainstreaming disability by financing a plan of action for accessible transport in Morocco.[144] Additionally, Member States have also passed laws requiring all buildings accessible to the public, not only those related to political participation and especially new constructions, must be also built to be accessible for those with disabilities.[145]

Legal Capacity and Autonomy

Equal recognition before the law is a prerequisite to secure other rights and enjoy the protection of law.[146] Legal capacity is the ability to both have and exercise rights and duties.[147] Due to their perceived inability to make decisions due to impairment, persons with disabilities may be placed in substituted decision-making regimes, in which a legal representative, medical professional, or court makes decisions on their behalf.[148] Such systems limit the autonomy of persons with disabilities and their ability to exercise legal capacity.[149] Women, children, older persons with disabilities, and persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities are at particular risk of placement into such decision-making systems.[150] Having enforceable rights is a precondition for individuals' participation in development.[151] Without enforceable rights, such as that to education, to employment, or to vote, persons with disabilities face ready discrimination and exclusion from their communities.[152] They additionally face increased violence and discrimination, compounded by limited access to justice.[153] Article 12 of the CRPD obligates states to move from substituted decision-making to supported decision making, which provides assistance without limiting legal capacity.[154] UN DESA and the IPU suggest that parliamentarians should actively seek feedback from persons with disabilities, share best practices across nations, and re-evaluate national law within the framework of the CRPD.[155]

The General Assembly adopted resolution 72/162 of 19 December 2017 and called for effective measures to realize legal capacity, specifically for women and girls in all aspects of life.[156] In her report on legal capacity, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities enumerated some

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[142] *progress made in the implementation of the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other international agreed development goals for persons with disabilities: Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/214)*, 2016, p. 15.

[142] UN General Assembly, *Realization of internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities and progress made in the implementation of the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other international agreed development goals for persons with disabilities: Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/214)*, 2016, p. 15.

[143] World Bank, *For Persons with Disabilities, Accessible Transport Provides Pathways to Opportunity*, 2015.

[144] World Bank, *Integrating Disability into World Bank Operations*, 2015.

[145] UN General Assembly, *Sexual and reproductive health and rights of girls and young women with disabilities: Note by the Secretary-General (A/72/133)*, 2017, pp. 17-18.

[146] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/HRC/37/56)*, 2017, pp. 4-5.

[147] Ibid., p. 5.

[148] Schulze, *Understanding the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2010, p. 83; UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/HRC/37/56)*, 2017, pp. 5-7.

[149] Ibid.

[150] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/HRC/37/56)*, 2017, pp. 5-6.

[151] UN DESA, *Relationship between Development and Human Rights*; UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/HRC/37/56)*, 2017, p. 4.

[152] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/HRC/31/62)*, 2016, p. 7; UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/HRC/37/56)*, 2017, p. 7.

[153] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/HRC/37/56)*, 2017, p. 7.

[154] Schulze, *Understanding the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2010, p. 83.

[155] UN DESA et al., *From Exclusion to Equality: Realizing the rights of persons with disabilities*, 2007, pp. 89-91.

[156] UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto: situation of women and girls with disabilities (A/RES/72/162)*, 2017, p. 4.

potential measures, including community-based based approaches, which give persons with disabilities a support system of individuals they trust and choose, and law reform to ensure the legal capacity of persons with disabilities is recognized by law.[157] However, legal reforms to directly increase legal capacity or indirectly increase autonomy are not without controversy.[158] Persons with disabilities may be institutionalized because the cost of independent assistance is deemed too expensive.[159] During the drafting of the CRPD, States parties and DPOs also disagreed on the severity of impairment at which persons with disabilities had reduced ability to exercise their legal capacity.[160] Under the rights-based approach of the CRPD, however, the use of guardianship and institutionalization should be as limited as possible.[161]

Eliminating Disabling Cultural and Attitudinal Barriers

Disabling cultural barriers contribute to legal and environmental barriers.[162] Societies that do not value the rights of persons with disabilities or their contribution to development are unlikely to implement policies that make development accessible.[163] Negative cultural attitudes and stereotypes also reduce the effectiveness and enforcement of disability-inclusive policies that are adopted.[164] For example, even in countries which are adopting universal design standards as a matter of law, misinformation about universal design, particularly about its cost-effectiveness, limits implementation.[165] Awareness-raising measures, such as government-led information campaigns or partnerships with the media and DPOs meant to combat negative stereotypes of persons with disabilities by educating society of their rights and capabilities, are vital in removing cultural and attitudinal barriers.[166]

The UN plays an active role in awareness-raising through the creation of international days, years, and decades.[167] For example, the *World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons* followed the International Year of Disabled Persons (1981) and was followed by the UN Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992).[168] During the Decade, the UN engaged in its own awareness-raising and used the Decade's Voluntary Fund to finance programs with the Member States, highlighting its role as a partner to Member States.[169] The fund continues to exist as the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability (UNVFD), and continues to support CSOs such as Handicap International, which used UNVFD funds to enable persons with disabilities in five African countries to access Internet resources to support awareness-raising measures.[170] A mid-decade review showed it was successful at raising awareness of the rights of persons

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[157] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/HRC/37/56)*, 2017, p. 20.
[158] Schulze, *Understanding the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2010, pp. 83-84; Knight, Activists angry as Germany passes contentious disability law, *Deutsche Welle*, 2016.
[159] Knight, Activists angry as Germany passes contentious disability law, *Deutsche Welle*, 2016.
[160] Schulze, *Understanding the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2010, p. 84-85.
[161] Ibid.
[162] UN General Assembly, *Sexual and reproductive health and rights of girls and young women with disabilities: Note by the Secretary-General (A/72/133)*, 2017, p. 8.
[163] Emens, *Disabling Attitudes: U.S. Disability Law and the ADA Amendments Act*, 2012.
[164] Emens, *Disabling Attitudes: U.S. Disability Law and the ADA Amendments Act*, 2012, p. 206; UN ILO, *The right to decent work of persons with disabilities*, 2007, p. 13.
[165] Yusof & Jones, *Universal Design Practice in Malaysia: Architect's Perceptions of its Terminology*, 2014, pp. 352-354.
[166] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006, Art. 8.
[167] UN General Assembly, *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/48/96)*, 1994, pp. 4-5.
[168] Ibid.
[169] UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the World Programme of Action Concerting Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons: Report of the Secretary-General (A/42/561)*, 1987, pp. 5-6.
[170] UN DESA, *United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability*; UN DESA, *United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability – Activities Supported*.

with disabilities, despite resource constraints.[171] Through the Third Committee, Member States can build off past successes and fulfill their awareness-raising obligations under Article 8 of the CRPD.[172]

Conclusion

Due to the advocacy of persons with disabilities, the UN has taken inclusive development for persons with disabilities seriously.[173] The Third Committee needs to expand on past progress promoting accessible and enabling physical and virtual environments, legal systems and policy, and social and cultural attitudes.[174] Recognizing intersecting discrimination and the diversity of experiences of persons with disabilities will reaffirm the right that each individual has to participate in and benefit from development.[175] The CRPD obliges Member States to promote the participation of persons with disabilities in policies that affect them.[176] Doing so will build on the progress of the CRPD and the 2030 Agenda to more fully realize inclusive development for persons with disabilities.[177]

Further Research

Delegates are faced with a multifaceted problem: how to make development inclusive for persons with disabilities. What can different stakeholders do to promote inclusive development? How can the international community share best practices and standards? What is the role of CSOs, and how can the Third Committee empower them? How can the obligation to include persons with disabilities in the decision-making process be fulfilled nationally, regionally, internationally, and at the UN? What more can the international community do to raise awareness of the rights and capabilities of persons with disabilities, and how will changing public perceptions support policy changes?

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Schulze, M. (2010). *Understanding the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Handicap International. Retrieved 12 August 2018 from:
http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/documents/hi_crpd_manual2010.pdf
>   *This report from Handicap International was written by Marianne Schulze, an Australian-Austrian human rights expert who was tasked with implementing the CRPD in Austria. Using the CRPD and the copious documents produced by the ad hoc committee that drafted it, this is a history of disability rights before and after the Convention. This history includes recommendations that the International Disability Caucus, a group of DPOs, made during its drafting. Likewise, the text provides a thorough explanation for the entire text of the Convention, which provides valuable clarification of its purpose and potential insight for developing ways to build off the CRPD and protect the rights requisite for social and inclusive development.*

United Nations. (1995). *Report of the World Summit for Social Development (A/CONF.166/9)*. Retrieved 10 August 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/CONF.166/9
>   *The World Summit for Social Development was a groundbreaking gathering that brought together heads of states and governments who adopted the Copenhagen Declaration on*

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[171] UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the World Programme of Action Concerting Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons: Report of the Secretary-General (A/42/561)*, 1987, p. 3.
[172] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006, Art. 3.
[173] UN General Assembly, *Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/48/96)*, 1994, pp. 3-4.
[174] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006, Art. 8.
[175] UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the right to development (A/RES/41/128)*, 1986, Art. 1-2.
[176] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006, Art. 3.
[177] UN General Assembly, *Realization of internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities and progress made in the implementation of the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other international agreed development goals for persons with disabilities: Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/214)*, 2016.

Social Development. The Declaration, contained in the report, provides a strong basis for understanding the context of disability-inclusive development in social development. Persons with disabilities are still at the margins of participation in and benefiting from international development, and the Declaration illustrates a moral basis and policy framework for including all vulnerable peoples in development.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2018) *United Nations Enable Newsletter* [Website]. Retrieved 9 July 2018 from:
https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/resources/united-nations-enable-newsletter.html
This website is a portal to all newsletters published by the Secretariat for the CRPD. These newsletters summarize the work that the Convention of State Parties to the CRPD and other UN agencies and bodies do on disability issues in an easy-to-read format that will facilitate specific topics for future research. For example, a recent issue of the newsletter included the Background Notes for the eleventh session of the Convention of State Parties to the CRPD which covered the topics of political participation and equal representation before the law, women and girls with disabilities, and other topics discussed at round-table meetings in June 2018. Practical for delegates research, the newsletters include hyperlinks for ease of discovery.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2017). *Making the SDGs Count for Women and Girls with Disabilities* [Issue Brief]. Retrieved 9 July 2018 from:
http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/6/issue-brief-making-the-sdgs-count-for-women-and-girls-with-disabilities
By contextualizing the problems that women and girls with disabilities face in the SDGs, this issue brief published by UN-Women illustrates how disability and gender are cross-cutting issues, particularly in employment and health. In addition to highlighting the disproportionate burden placed on women and girls with disabilities, it notes what type of corrective action needs to be taken, such as awareness-training and increased funding. Additionally, the issue brief references a variety of sources from policy groups, academia, and UN agencies such as the ILO and the World Health Organization (WHO) that will prove to be useful in gender-mainstreaming delegates' research.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-first session. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*. Adopted without reference to a Main Committee (A/61/611). Retrieved 7 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/61/106
The CRPD is critical to achieving inclusive development for persons with disabilities. Although explained in part in this guide, it is necessary to read this Convention to understand the connection between human rights and development in a disability context. To that end, the definitions for "discrimination on the basis of disability," "reasonable accommodation," and "universal design," found in Article 2 are clarifying. The CRPD also assigns specific obligations to Member States, obligations in which the Third Committee is situated to boost international cooperation and capacity-building.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-first session. (2016). *Realization of internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities and progress made in the implementation of the outcome document of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Disability and Development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/214)*. Retrieved 9 July 2018 from: http://www.undocs.org/A//71/214
Near the expiration of the Millennium Declaration*, the General Assembly adopted resolution 69/142 to report on the realization of international development goals for persons with disabilities. This report includes actions that Member States, UN system, and civil society have taken to realize the MDGs in the context of disability-inclusive development. The Secretary-General also reported on what steps were (and may still be) necessary to "[o]perational[ize] the 2030 Agenda from a disability perspective." Many of these suggestions reference topics included in this guide, thus this report provides a wide variety of policy and programming ideas that warrant careful research on the part of delegates.*

United Nations, Human Rights Council, Twenty-eighth session. (2015). *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, Catalina Devandas-Aguilar (A/HRC/28/58)*. Retrieved 9 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/HRC/28/58

> *This is the first report submitted by Catalina Devandas-Aguilar, who was appointed Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities by the HRC. While her other reports have maintained specific thematic focuses, this one summarizes the history of disability rights developments within the UN, and specifically the HRC. It also explains the functions and mandate of the Special Rapporteur, which may enhance delegates' understanding of how committee can use this position to inform their work.*

United Nations, Human Rights Council, Thirty-seventh session. (2017). *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/HRC/37/56)*. Retrieved 9 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/HRC/37/56

> *Special Rapporteur Catalina Devandas-Aguilar submitted this report on law reform and legal capacity to the HRC in 2017. This subject is vital to address as is noted in paragraph 13, recognition before the law is "the right to have rights." This report is particularly useful for understanding what limits the legal recognition of persons with disabilities as persons, as well as what steps will need to be taken to realize disability-inclusive law reform. It is embellished with examples taken from her visits to Member States, useful for developing further polices and writing position papers.*

United Nations, Human Rights Council. (2018) *Annual Reports* [Website]. Retrieved 9 July 2018 from: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Disability/SRDisabilities/Pages/Reports.aspx

> *In 2014, the HRC adopted resolution 26/20 to appoint a Special Rapporteur to report annually on the rights of persons with disabilities to the General Assembly and HRC. This website provides easy access to all of the existing reports, each on a particular theme. These reports summarize the work of the Special Rapporteur, which includes conducting country visits and consultations with stakeholders, as well as contains the Special Rapporteur's thematic suggestions to Member States. The thematic reports address the key topics that the Third Committee needs to address in order to realize disability-inclusive development, and the country visits provide elucidating examples of specific policies that may be emulated internationally.*

United Nations, World Health Organization & World Bank. (2011). *World Report on Disability*. Retrieved 27 July 2018 from: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/70670/WHO_NMH_VIP_11.01_eng.pdf

> *This report jointly produced by WHO and the World Bank was designed to provide data for policymakers to enact policies and programmes to implement the CRPD and improve the lives of people with disabilities. Filled with statistics, it provides a relevant primer for understanding the variety of experience of persons with disability by clarifying the relation between disability and disadvantage, in order to identify and redress disabling barriers. WHO and the World Bank break down their nine policy recommendations into concrete actions that different stakeholders, such as the UN, governments, and civil society, can take, which is relevant guidance when considering the mandate of the Third Committee. Echoing the CRPD, this report acknowledges significant role of disabled persons as stakeholders in realizing inclusive development.*

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II. Combating Human Trafficking

Introduction

Human trafficking is an offense that is rampant in almost all parts of the world.[178] It is a threat to the basic fundamentals of human life, such as dignity, physical integrity, human rights, and sustainable development.[179] It is an issue that the United Nations (UN), and particularly the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee has focused on in recent years, as evidenced by its resolution 72/195, adopted in 2017.[180] Although there have been measures taken to combat human trafficking in the past, it is still a deep concern on the international, regional, and national levels.[181] Due to worldwide migration flows, instances of human trafficking have been on the rise.[182] The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) has stated that all states have the responsibility to try to prevent human trafficking, and this can be done by investigating any cases that occur, and to bring perpetrators of human trafficking to justice.[183] It is further stated that states violate their citizens' human rights and fundamental freedoms when they do not work to prevent human trafficking.[184] The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that in 2016 alone, 40.3 million people were subjected to modern slavery.[185] Furthermore, human trafficking is a $150 billion industry worldwide.[186]

The General Assembly has defined human trafficking as "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation."[187] The majority of trafficked individuals are trafficked into forced labor, which the ILO defines as "all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily."[188] The term modern slavery is used more broadly to refer to a wide range of situations in which individuals are being exploited and cannot leave due to fear, abuse, threats, or coercion; it encompasses human trafficking and forced labor, as well as forced marriage and debt bondage.[189]

The fundamental issue behind human trafficking is that it is a violation of human rights, including the right to life, liberty, and security; the right to the freedom of movement; and the right not to be subjected to cruel and unusual punishment.[190] Groups that have been particularly victimized are women and children.[191] Both groups have become victims of sexual exploitation and modern slavery through human trafficking, and women are often forced into domestic servitude.[192] Men have also been victims of human trafficking, and have been forced into slavery in many different sectors, which include but are not limited to agriculture, construction, or manufacturing industries.[193] Economic disparity has been a common factor

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[178] UN General Assembly, *Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons (A/RES/72/195)*, 2017.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid.
[182] Ibid.
[183] UN ECOSOC, *Implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (E/RES/2017/18)*, 2017.
[184] Ibid.
[185] ILO & Walk Free Foundation, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, 2017, p. 9.
[186] Polaris, *The Facts*, 2018.
[187] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime: Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (A/RES/55/25)*, 2000.
[188] ILO, *CO29 - Forced Labour Convention 1930*, 1930.
[189] ILO & Walk Free Foundation, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, 2017, p. 9.
[190] UN OHCHR, *Human rights and human trafficking*, 2014, p. 7; Napolitano, Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking, *Human Trafficking: A Human Rights Violation,* 2016.
[191] UN OHCHR, *Human rights and human trafficking*, 2014, p. 7.
[192] Ibid.
[193] ILO & Walk Free Foundation, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, 2017, p. 33.

in these groups of marginalized people.[194] Individuals who are suffering from poverty may turn to illegitimate groups in order to migrate to build better lives for themselves.[195] These individuals are exploited in their time of need and are forced into slavery or servitude.[196] There is a lot being done to combat human trafficking, especially in the field of technology.[197] Law enforcement has been able to utilize social media and mobile phones to find traffickers and trace their movements.[198] Furthermore, organizations have been able to use the Internet to raise global awareness on the issue and provide support for victims.[199] This has been done through developing informational databases and expanding through social media.[200]

International and Regional Framework

The General Assembly Third Committee works to combat human trafficking by upholding the values that are stated in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR), adopted in 1948.[201] The UDHR acts as the standard of human rights that all states should bear in mind, although it is not legally binding.[202] Articles 1-4 of the UDHR set the groundwork for human trafficking conversations by reiterating that all people have the right to their own life and security, and that there is no situation in which a person can be held in slavery or servitude.[203] Furthermore, the Third Committee also supports the *Convention on the Rights of the* Child, which was adopted in 1989.[204] The Convention highlights the further care and rights that need to be afforded to children, with a continuous evaluation and improvement of the rights of all children being necessary.[205] The Convention states that no child should be separated from their parents against their will, and that it is the responsibility of all States to prevent and combat the illicit taking and transferring of children without return.[206]

Additionally, the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which was adopted in 2011, continues to defend children by stating that States have an obligation to ensure that children are not subject to human rights violations.[207] The Third Committee continues its efforts to combat human trafficking through supporting the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, adopted in 1979, which affirms that women and men should enjoy equal conditions of life by not having their human rights violated, and that it is necessary to ensure that this is recognized globally in law.[208]

The *United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons*, which was adopted in 2010, sets an important framework for the international community working to eradicate human trafficking.[209] This document identifies the risk factors that are associated with human trafficking, including gender-based violence, socio-economic disparity, and discrimination.[210] People who exhibit these risk factors

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[194] ILO & Walk Free Foundation, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, 2017, p. 33.
[195] Ibid., p. 31.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Zagorianou, Technology and human trafficking, *Universal Human Rights Student Network*, 2015.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Ibid.
[201] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217A (III))*, 1948.
[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid.
[204] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of the Child (A/RES/44/25)*, 1989.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid.
[207] UN General Assembly, *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (A/RES/66/138)*, 2011.
[208] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979.
[209] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (A/RES/64/293)*, 2010.
[210] Ibid.

often become victims of human trafficking since they are marginalized and desperate for help.[211] This document aligns with the mandate of the Third Committee, which is to uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms, in that it reiterates the idea that human trafficking is fundamentally a human rights issue, and there is a need to protect victims and punish the perpetrators.[212] The Third Committee has also discussed combating human trafficking, and further ideas are presented in the *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, adopted in 2000, which points out the negative impact that transnational organized crime has on the economy and society.[213] Additionally, this document reiterates the importance of addressing the issue of combating human trafficking, particularly the trafficking of women and children, and the importance of bringing perpetrators to justice in its *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* (2000).[214] Finally, the *Forced Labour Convention*, which was adopted by ILO in 1930, is a founding document on forced labor and the consequences that should be enacted on any state or party that submits any persons to forced labor or slavery.[215] Often, victims of human trafficking are sold into slavery or servitude.[216] This document also defines the responsibility of states within this crime, and what the responsibilities of states are when forced labor has been uncovered.[217]

The Third Committee's work is also grounded in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda), which was adopted in 2015 and contains the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the international framework for UN organs and states to achieve higher development standards by 2030.[218] The SDGs extend further to uphold human rights through SDGs 5, 8, and 16.[219] These three goals set out to achieve equality among genders, both socially and economically, while also promoting health and well-being for all people.[220] SDG 5 points to human trafficking as a form of gender discrimination and violence against women.[221] SDG 8 focuses on the rights of all people to decent and stable work.[222] This is strongly connected to human trafficking since victims of human trafficking are often exploited due to their need for a stable job; thus, ensuring that all people have access to decent work would contribute to the effort to end human trafficking.[223] SDG 16 aims for a peaceful and inclusive society, which means ensuring access to health care and education for all children, making them less vulnerable to trafficking.[224]

Role of the International System

The Third Committee plays an important role in facilitating international discussions on issues of trafficking, adopting resolutions to identify key concerns, and according to its resolution 72/185 (2017), has emphasized that human trafficking is one of the most critical challenges that currently faces the international community, and that a more widespread international response is needed in order to ensure the human rights of all people.[225] It further states that bilateral and multilateral cooperation is necessary

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[211] Ibid.
[212] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (A/RES/64/293)*, 2010.
[213] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (A/RES/55/25)*, 2000.
[214] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (A/RES/55/25)*, 2000; UN General Assembly, *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime: Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (A/RES/55/25)*, 2000.
[215] ILO, *CO29 - Forced Labour Convention 1930*, 1930.
[216] ILO & Walk Free Foundation, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, 2017, p. 31.
[217] ILO, *CO29 - Forced Labour Convention 1930*, 1930.
[218] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[219] Ibid.
[220] Ibid.
[221] UNICEF USA, *The Sustainable Development Goals that Aim to End Human Trafficking*, 2016.
[222] Ibid.
[223] Ibid.
[224] Ibid.
[225] UN General Assembly, *Globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights (A/RES/72/185)*, 2017.

when addressing migration to protect and ensure the human rights of all migrants.[226] Although the priority is to prevent human trafficking from occurring, millions of people still fall victim every year.[227] It is estimated that 40.3 million people around the world are victims of human trafficking, and 75% of these victims are women.[228] When human trafficking does occur, the Third Committee reiterates the importance of catching and prosecuting the perpetrators, and believes that a comprehensive international response is necessary in order to have a lasting effect, as stated in its resolution 72/195.[229] The Third Committee finds that victims of human trafficking are also often victims of gender-based violence and discrimination, and that the marginalization of these groups leaves them vulnerable to become victims of human trafficking.[230] Hence, it is imperative that the victims receive the help and guidance that they need in order to re-acclimate themselves into society once they have been rescued.[231] When victims are acclimated back into society, they will need guidance so that they do not fall victim again.[232] The Third Committee suggests legal guidance to help the victims to take action against the traffickers, as well as protecting their identity in society and the media.[233]

Forced displacement of large numbers of people presents many challenges, the most important being that there are less options for safe and regular migration to areas that will allow them to work and have a prosperous life.[234] Without safe options for migration, people often fall victim to human trafficking, since perpetrators exploit their needs and utilize them for trafficking instead of helping.[235] There is a wide range of actors that work on combating human trafficking, such as the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), which frequently calls upon all Member States to protect marginalized groups, especially women and children.[236] OHCHR identifies these groups as most vulnerable in conflict-affected areas, particularly when fleeing from a conflict zone.[237] Additionally, victims of gender-based violence tend to migrate to leave the unpleasant situation that they are in, and OHCHR puts an emphasis on the importance of prosecuting perpetrators of human trafficking.[238]

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) states that combating human trafficking will need to be a global effort, since human trafficking is a profitable business that is exploitative of people and involves criminal networks that cross borders.[239] Also, it is very difficult to trace the perpetrators since they utilize the resources of their criminal networks to commit human trafficking outside the scope of law enforcement.[240] The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reiterates the importance of providing displaced persons an adequate shelter and resources to help re-acclimate them back into society.[241] Furthermore, it is understood that there is a large burden, financial or otherwise, placed on the States that have taken in displaced people and victims of human trafficking.[242] UNHCR believes that it is important for all states to share this burden, in order to better help the victims

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[226] Ibid.
[227] ILO & Walk Free Foundation, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, 2017, p. 5.
[228] Polaris, *The Facts*, 2018.
[229] UN General Assembly, *Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons (A/RES/72/195)*, 2017.
[230] Ibid.
[231] Ibid.
[232] UN ECOSOC, *Recommended principles and guidelines on human rights and human trafficking (E/2002/68/Add.1)*, 2002.
[233] Ibid.
[234] UN General Assembly, *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/RES/71/1)*, 2016.
[235] Ibid.
[236] UN OHCHR, *Trafficking in persons, especially women and children: protecting victims of trafficking and persons at risk of trafficking, especially women and children in conflict and post-conflict situations (A/HRC/RES/32/3)*, 2016.
[237] Ibid.
[238] Ibid.
[239] IOM, ACP-EU Migration Programme Meets to Counter Human Trafficking, Migrant Smuggling, 2017.
[240] Ibid.
[241] UN General Assembly, *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/RES/72/150)*, 2017.
[242] Ibid.

who need it.[243] The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has partnered with the European Union (EU) to launch the Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT).[244] This is a targeted action that has been implemented in 13 target countries in order to implement national counter-trafficking and counter-smuggling efforts through an approach that encompasses prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnerships.[245]

The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) is a global police organization that aims to make the world a safer place.[246] They work to provide access to the necessary tools and services that police departments around the world need to successfully do their jobs.[247] INTERPOL states that human trafficking is a multi-billion dollar form of transnational organized crime, and cooperation with local and non-governmental organization is imperative to ensure that victims receive the right support.[248]

Civil society also plays an important role in preventing and addressing human trafficking, as well as raising public awareness on the issue. For example, Free the Slaves, a non-governmental organization (NGO) that works to bring awareness to the issue of modern-day slavery, points out that although slavery has been outlawed, it has not yet been eradicated.[249] Some of the main goals of Free the Slaves are to help free victims, and help States bring perpetrators to justice.[250] There are millions of people that leave the impoverished areas where they live to search for a better life in a more developed area or state.[251] Traffickers often pose as legitimate recruiters who then exploit people who are uncomfortable or do not speak the local language.[252] The Global Alliance against Traffic in Women (GAATW) is a network of NGOs that aim to help victims of and prevent human trafficking.[253] Although the international community agrees that slavery is wrong, not everyone can agree on what should be done to prevent it.[254]

Combating Trafficking Amongst all Segments of the Population

Different segments of the global population fall victim to human trafficking and forced slavery in different ways.[255] For example, women account for 57% of the total global amount of forced labor victims, while men account for 43%.[256] Children account for nearly 20%, which includes working separately or together with their parents.[257] The aspects of society that are associated with human trafficking are sexual exploitation, gender discrimination, and a cultural tolerance of violence against women and children.[258]

Women
Women currently represent the majority of victims of human trafficking and are most commonly trafficked into sexual exploitation or domestic servitude.[259] Their increased vulnerability to trafficking is strongly connected with gender inequality, including social, economic, and political inequality.[260] These inequalities cause an unequal access to educational opportunities, and a lower quality of health and well-being.[261]

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[243] Ibid.
[244] UNODC, *Overview*, 2018.
[245] UNODC, *Overview*, 2018.
[246] INTERPOL, *Overview,* 2018.
[247] Ibid.
[248] INTERPOL, *Trafficking in Human Beings*.
[249] Free the Slaves, *Fighting for Freedom*, 2018.
[250] Ibid.
[251] Free the Slaves, *Slavery Today*, 2018.
[252] Ibid.
[253] Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women, *Basic Principles of GAATW*.
[254] O'Connell Davidson, Editorial: The presence of the past: lessons of the history for anti-trafficking work, *Anti-Trafficking Review*, 2017.
[255] ILO & Walk Free Foundation, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, 2017, p. 32.
[256] Ibid.
[257] Ibid.
[258] UN General Assembly, *Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons (A/RES/68/192)*, 2013.
[259] European Parliament, *The gender dimension of human trafficking*, 2016.
[260] UN OHCHR et al., *Prevent, Combat, Protect: Human Trafficking*, 2011, p. 29.
[261] Ibid.

Without this access, women become vulnerable to human traffickers, who prey on their desperation for a better life.[262] Women are often lured into trafficking with false promises of economic opportunity.[263] Violence is closely linked to the trafficking of women; one study revealed that 60% of 207 female human trafficking victims had experienced domestic violence before being trafficked.[264] Experiencing violence increases the risk of women being more vulnerable to trafficking as they try to remove themselves from their violent situation.[265] SDG 5 calls for the elimination of violence against women in all forms, which would reduce the amount of women who become victims of human trafficking.[266]

Today, 71% of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation are women and girls.[267] Women in this situation are often trapped in a cycle of violence and fear escaping.[268] In addition to fearing violence, many women also fear seeking help from authorities due to the often illegal nature of their work.[269] Trafficking victims who come forward often risk deportation or arrest for prostitution if there are no legal protections in place.[270] One approach to preventing the trafficking of women has been increasing awareness on trafficking among at-risk women.[271] The UN General Assembly states that more public awareness of the issue globally will help in the efforts to eliminate the demand of sex trafficking.[272]

Children
The UN General Assembly firmly believes that children must receive the best possible start in life, as this is an essential foundation for human development.[273] The trafficking of children represents a violation of various human rights, including the right to life, liberty, and security.[274] Child victims of human trafficking are often exploited and forced to work in laborious jobs, such as in sweatshops or on construction sites.[275] Some are forced into war or are used in brothels or as sex workers.[276]

Children end up trafficked for many reasons, including dropping out of school to work to support their families.[277] Desperate for work, children and their families are vulnerable and will fall victims to human trafficking under the guise of receiving help in getting a stable job.[278] As stated by UNICEF USA, there are ways to help prevent the risk factors that are associated with child victims of human trafficking.[279] In order to protect children from human trafficking, it is necessary to address poverty stricken areas and work with governments to help parents work and make enough money to support their families so that children do not need to be sent into the workforce.[280] According to the General Assembly, when working toward the protection of all children and their rights, the best interests of children should be considered first, before any other decisions are made.[281] Government responsibility at the highest level is the ideal way to prevent

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[262] Ibid.
[263] Ibid.
[264] European Parliament, *The gender dimension of human trafficking*, 2016.
[265] Ibid.
[266] UNICEF USA, *The Sustainable Development Goals that Aim to End Human Trafficking*, 2016.
[267] ILO & Walk Free Foundation, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, 2017, p. 5.
[268] Working Group on Trafficking in Persons, *Non-punishment and non-prosecution of victims of trafficking in persons: administrative and judicial approaches to offences committed in the process of such trafficking (CTOC/COP/WG.4/2010/4)*, 2010.
[269] Ibid.
[270] Ibid.
[271] UN General Assembly, *Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons (A/RES/67/190)*, 2012.
[272] Ibid.
[273] UN General Assembly, *A world fit for children (A/RES/S-27/2)*, 2002.
[274] Napolitano, Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking, *Human Trafficking: A Human Rights Violation,* 2016.
[275] UNICEF, *Child Trafficking*, 2018.
[276] Ibid.
[277] Ibid.
[278] Ibid.
[279] Ibid.
[280] Ibid.
[281] UN General Assembly, *Optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (A/RES/54/263)*, 2001.

future child trafficking, and for saving those who are already victims.[282] This responsibility includes developing and strengthening policies that address child labor issues, particularly illicit trafficking.[283]

Men
Although men make up a smaller percentage of overall trafficking victims, the proportion of male trafficking victims has increased in recent years; a decade ago, men made up 13% of trafficking victims, but now represent 21%.[284] Male migrants are especially vulnerable to falling victim to human trafficking and forced labor, essentially becoming indentured servants when finding work through labor brokers who charge high fees that the workers can never pay back.[285] This group is largely composed of men who seek employment by whatever means necessary in order to provide for their families.[286] This causes workers to remain in dangerous situations, with poor working conditions.[287] In Thailand, for example, in order to provide for their families, men seek out traffickers to help take them over the border to find work, only to be exploited and sold into slavery to work on these fishing boats.[288] There is a shortage of workers for these fishing boats which results in forcing men into slavery indefinitely.[289] It is the responsibility of state governments to criminalize human trafficking in all forms, including labor exploitation.[290] Furthermore, while condemning the practice of human trafficking, it is necessary to respect the human rights of the victims and continue to protect and support them through their process of re-acclimating into society.[291]

Addressing the Risks and Harnessing the Potential of Technology

The Internet has become a useful tool to promote technological communication and has been a resource to prevent and combat human trafficking.[292] It has been a way for law enforcement to not only track perpetrators, but also assist victims.[293] There are many technological tools that benefit law enforcement when trying to save victims and catch perpetrators.[294] There have been platforms that were created to aid law enforcement in investigating, communicating among each other, and training opportunities.[295] Also, law enforcement is able to utilize GPS technology, social media networks, and smart phone access to identify traffickers and trace their every move.[296] INTERPOL has utilized two tools, I-24/7 and I-link, which have helped increase communication among departments, while also allowing for collaboration in their investigations.[297] These tools allow for law enforcement agencies around the world to be connected and share information, which helps streamline the investigation of human trafficking cases.[298] The Third Committee has stressed the importance of international cooperation among states, especially in the collection, organization, and dissemination of statistics of indicators of human trafficking, as stated in General Assembly resolution 61/80, adopted in 2007.[299]

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[282] The Hague Global Child Labour Conference 2010, *Roadmap for achieving the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016*, 2010.
[283] Ibid.
[284] Wulfhorst, Human traffickers preying more on children, men, laborers: global study, *Reuters*, 2016.
[285] Solidarity Center, *Labor Migration and Human Trafficking*, 2018.
[286] Ibid.
[287] Ibid.
[288] Urbina, Sea Slaves: the Human Misery that Feeds Pets and Livestock, *The New York Times*, 2015.
[289] Ibid.
[290] UN General Assembly, *Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons (A/RES/64/178)*, 2010.
[291] Ibid.
[292] UN General Assembly, *Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons (A/RES/72/195)*, 2017.
[293] Ibid.
[294] Zagorianou, Technology and human trafficking, *Universal Human Rights Student Network*, 2015.
[295] Ibid.
[296] Ibid.
[297] Ibid.
[298] Ibid.
[299] UN General Assembly, *Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons (A/RES/61/180)*, 2007.

Although technology and the Internet are useful tools in combating human trafficking, these tools can also be utilized by the perpetrators to facilitate human trafficking.[300] Particularly, the Internet has been used to recruit, control, and exploit victims, especially women and children.[301] The Internet has also been utilized as a tool for fostering sex trafficking and selling women as brides, and other forms of sexual exploitation and violence.[302] It is important to train law enforcement and other relevant officials on how to identify the ways that the Internet is being used to facilitate human trafficking and sexual exploitation.[303] Utilizing technology to facilitate human trafficking is more likely in developed countries, since there is more and easier access to the technology.[304] The expansion and prevalence of the Internet have fostered global criminal networks, allowing for international communication and payment and more global reach.[305]

Conclusion

Human trafficking is an offense that is a violation of human dignity, physical integrity, basic human rights, and sustainable development.[306] Although women and children make up the majority of victims of this crime, men are also susceptible.[307] Whether it be migrant workers who were manipulated into becoming indentured servants, women who were sold into sex slavery, or children who were sold into slavery to financially support their families, people all around are potential victims of human trafficking.[308] Although trafficking has been outlawed, it has not been fully eradicated.[309] There is much more work that needs to be done to fully eradicate modern slavery and human trafficking violations from society.[310]

Further Research

When researching this topic, delegates can consider what else can be done to empower women and children in this discussion on combating human trafficking. Also, how can the Third Committee work with civil society organizations (CSOs) to implement measures to prevent and combat human trafficking? Are there other ways that the Third Committee and other UN and non-state actors can utilize the available technology that to prevent human trafficking? Delegates should also consider how their Member State can contribute to this topic, and what their Member State has accomplished in the past in this field. How can these accomplishments be brought before the committee and applied on a greater scale?

Annotated Bibliography

Hague Global Child Labour Conference 2010. (2010). *Roadmap for achieving the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016*. Retrieved 11 August 2018 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---ipec/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_ipec_pub_13453.pdf
> *This document set out specific goals for Member States and UN organs to work on in all aspects of the topic of combating human trafficking. Although the end-date provided has already passed, this document still contains relevant information on the topic of human trafficking, in particular, statistics and plans of action that can still be implemented. This is a document that delegates should take into consideration when working on the topic, because it shows that work that has already been done and illustrates the progress that has been made.*

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[300] UN General Assembly, *Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons (A/RES/72/195)*, 2017.
[301] Ibid.
[302] UN OHCHR, *Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, including the right to development (A/HRC/11/L.6)*, 2009.
[303] Ibid.
[304] Zagorianou, Technology and human trafficking, *Universal Human Rights Student Network*, 2015.
[305] Ibid.
[306] UN General Assembly, *Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons (A/RES/72/195)*, 2017.
[307] ILO & Walk Free Foundation, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, 2017, p. 32.
[308] IOM, *January: US Human Trafficking Awareness Month*, 2017.
[309] Free the Slaves, *Fighting for Freedom*, 2018.
[310] UN General Assembly, *Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons (A/RES/72/195)*, 2017.

International Criminal Police Organization. (n.d.) *Trafficking in human beings*. Retrieved 9 August 2018 from: https://www.interpol.int/Crime-areas/Trafficking-in-human-beings/Trafficking-in-human-beings

> *This fact sheet released by INTERPOL contains a statistical analysis of human trafficking and how it affects different regions around the world. As one of the more prominent international organizations, INTERPOL provides a wide-ranging view on the topic, with global figures and a historical account of the issue. It also provides information on different support and training programs that are currently being utilized by the organization to combat human trafficking. Delegates will be able to gain a good understanding of the law enforcement side of the topic, since one of the priorities of the Third Committee is to see traffickers brought to justice.*

International Labour Organization. (1930). *CO29 – Forced Labour Convention, 1930.* Retrieved 6 August 2018 from:
https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C029

> *This is one of the founding documents of the topic of human trafficking and modern slavery. It provides an outline of the issue of human trafficking and the suggestions of how to combat it. It contains articles and suggestions that all States should implement and utilize domestically. This document is a good resource for delegates to understand for how long this topic has been debated, and shows the work that has been done, and areas and that can be and need improvement.*

International Labour Organization & Walk Free Foundation. (2017). *Global estimates of modern slavery*. Retrieved 6 August 2018 from: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_575479.pdf

> *This report is a comprehensive analysis of human trafficking and modern slavery. It contains many statistics on human trafficking and the global population. There is also a complex analysis of these statistics and their relevance to society today. This will be a useful resource for delegates to understand the magnitude of this global problem, since the global reach of this problem is made apparent through the research put forth by the organization, and the research is put into perspective of the committee's priorities.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights et al. (2011). *Prevent, Combat, Protect: Human Trafficking* [Report]. Retrieved 11 August 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/media/publications/en/uncommentaryeutraffickingdirective2011.pdf?la=en&vs=947

> *As an example of the work that can be produced through collaboration of UN organs and NGOs, this report provides a detailed analysis of human trafficking and how to combat and prevent it. The report contains many sections that reflect the mandates of all the committees that authored it, proving that although each committee has a different scope, there are global problems that span the mandates of multiple committees. Delegates will find historical statistics, analysis, and possible solutions to combating human trafficking. This resource can be a guide for delegates on not only the topic, but also on how to collaborate and utilize the international system when trying to solve a problem.*

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2017). *Implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (E/RES/2017/18)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/E/RES/2017/18

> *This is a resolution adopted by ECOSOC which details the proposed plan of action to combat human trafficking. This resolution describes a comprehensive approach to combating human trafficking and shows the importance of inter-agency and multilateral cooperation among Member States and UN bodies. It also reiterates the idea that it is the responsibility of all Member States to uphold basic human rights of all its citizens. Delegates will find that this source is a great example of how combating human trafficking is a topic that affects many UN bodies, and that collaboration is necessary to make any progress toward solving this issue.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Fifty-fifth session. (2000). *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime: Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (A/RES/55/25)*. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/55/25

> *This protocol explores the idea of stopping transnational organized crime. It shows how vast the topic of combating human trafficking really is, and how there are many different factors that go in to solving this problem. Delegates will be able to use this resolution to research the many ways to make an impact on this topic, particularly when discussing the effects that human trafficking have on society and the economy.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1

> *As one of the most prevalent documents adopted by the General Assembly in recent years, the 2030 Agenda has become the outline for UN bodies when conducting their meetings and adopting resolutions. The 17 different goals that have been written cover a wide range of topics that the General Assembly has identified as the most pressing issues of our time. Delegates will find that goals 3, 5, and 10 have an impact on the Third Committee and specifically this topic since they are closely associated with human rights. Delegates will also realize that there are many goals that are not directly related to this topic, but do have an impact through the way that the Third Committee is working to implement them.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-second session. (2017)*. Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons (A/RES/72/195)* [Resolution]. Adopted on the report of the Third Committee (A/72/440). Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/72/195

> *As one of the more recent resolutions adopted by the General Assembly Third Committee, this source shows how prevalent this topic is on the agenda of the Third Committee. This resolution reiterates the idea of a comprehensive and international response to the problem and calls upon all Member States, UN bodies, and CSO to recognize World Day against Trafficking in Persons, to bring awareness to the topic. This resolution will show delegates which actions are being taken to combat human trafficking and will serve as a guide during their research.*

United Nations, Human Rights Council, Thirty-second session. (2016). *Trafficking in persons, especially women and children: protecting victims of trafficking and persons at risk of trafficking, especially women and children in conflict and post-conflict situations (A/HRC/RES/32/3)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/32/3

> *This resolution, adopted by the HRC, states the necessity for all Member States to protect the human rights of all persons, but especially women, children, and other vulnerable groups. Member States are urged to work together to achieve the goal of ending human trafficking. It is also stated that it is necessary to punish the offenders of human trafficking and any other people that are involved in the act. Delegates will be able to use this document to understand this topic from a humanitarian point of view, since that is the mandate of the HRC, whereas the mandate of the Third Committee is to consider reports that come from other bodies such as the HRC.*

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-ed_norm/---ipec/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_ipec_pub_13453.pdf

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III. Strengthening Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Assistance

Introduction

Disasters have been responsible for the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives and over $1.5 trillion in economic losses in just the last decade.[311] A disaster is defined by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) as "a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope with using its own resources."[312] There are various kinds of disasters, ranging in severity, frequency, and cause.[313] A small-scale disaster occurs only within a specific community, while a large-scale disaster is one occurring within a society requiring national or international assistance.[314] When it comes to disaster relief and assistance, humanitarian aid is important to save lives and alleviate suffering when emergencies begin, during emergencies, and after emergencies.[315] In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, when the capacity of the affected community to respond and address the immediate, short-term needs of the local population is limited, national and international actors may be requested to help and provide disaster relief.[316]

The current international system of humanitarian and disaster relief is struggling to maintain its level of relief assistance due to the increasing humanitarian crises that have occurred in recent years.[317] As stated in its resolution 63/141 (2017), the Third Committee has reported that international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters is needed due to the frequent occurrences of natural disasters happening in the world today.[318] About 325 disasters have been recorded and registered since 2016, resulting in an estimated amount of 199.6 million people affected with an average of 25.3 million people displaced per year.[319] From the occurrence of El Niño in 2015 and 2016, which affected over 23 countries in East Africa, South Africa and Central Africa, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, it has been stated that these hazards have been influenced by climate change.[320] Over 700,000 people have lost their lives due to disasters over the last decade, with 23 million having been displaced or left homeless.[321]

The United Nations (UN) places emphasis on disaster risk reduction to prepare for disasters and increase resilience in communities, but immediate response in the event of a disaster is critical to reduce the damage caused by natural hazards like earthquakes, floods, and droughts.[322] According to the UNISDR, the current model of disaster risk reduction cannot be sustained, and success in this field can be measured by accountable institutions, resourced local governments, functional judicial systems, and reduced poverty and social inequality.[323] This is essential in approaching a time where disasters will become a threat to the world's economy and sustainable development.[324] The Third Committee acknowledges the unprecedented number of people that are affected by humanitarian emergencies,

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[311] UNISDR, *UNISDR Strategic Framework 2016-2021*, 2017, p. 4.
[312] UNOOSA, *The 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction Officially Opens*, 2017.
[313] Ibid.
[314] UNISDR, *Terminology on Disaster risk reduction*, 2008.
[315] Humanitarian Coalition, *From Humanitarian to Development Aid*, 2016.
[316] UNISDR, Terminology on Disaster risk reduction, 2008.
[317] UNISDR, *UNISDR Strategic Framework 2016-2021*, 2017, p. 4.
[318] UN General Assembly, *International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (A/RES/63/141)*, 2017.
[319] Ibid.
[320] UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, 2015.
[321] Ibid.
[322] UNISDR, *Terminology*, 2017; UNISDR, *History*.
[323] UNISDR, *UNISDR Strategic Framework 2016-2021*, 2017, p. 4.
[324] UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction, *Report of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (A/CONF.206/6)*, 2005.

which is adding to underdevelopment and poverty.[325] Furthermore, it reiterates the importance of aligning on an efficient transition between disaster relief to rehabilitation of the area and further development to build up society after a disaster has occurred.[326] In this effort, the country in which the disaster occurred is responsible for rehabilitation of the area and caring for the victims.[327]

International and Regional Framework

The first international documents on humanitarian and disaster relief assistance go back to the early *Geneva Conventions* from the mid-19th century, which were established by what is now the International Committee for the Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC).[328] The early *Geneva Conventions* from the times before World War II focused mostly on the status of humanitarian support to wounded soldiers during wars since they were not well protected before.[329] In 1949, five years after the end of World War II, two new *Geneva Conventions* addressing international humanitarian law were adopted, which are still in force today, and the existing two from before World War II were ratified by a great number of Member States.[330] Over time, three Protocols were adopted to amend the *Geneva Conventions*, with the third Protocol from 2005 introducing the "red crystal," an emblem that is supposed to make it easier to recognize neutral humanitarian workers.[331] In addition to the *Geneva Conventions*, the General Assembly adopted resolution 49/59 in 1994, which introduced the *Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel*.[332] The Convention and its protocol from 2005 seek to better protect humanitarian workers and especially UN personnel.[333] In addition to the General Assembly, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) contributed to the development of the international framework on humanitarian assistance, especially through the adoption of its resolution 2009/3 from 2009, which focuses on strengthening coordination among various humanitarian entities to ensure effective support to those who need it.[334]

In the field of disaster relief assistance, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2816 (1971) and thereby established the United Nations Disaster Relief Office (UNDRO), which helps Member States to better prepare for disasters and ensure improved disaster relief assistance.[335] In 1987, the General Assembly adopted resolution 42/169, in which it decided to work on the introduction of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Risk Reduction and asked for international cooperation to improve humanitarian and disaster relief assistance.[336] Reaffirming resolution 42/169, the General Assembly adopted resolution 44/236 in 1989, which officially introduced the International Decade for Natural Disaster Risk Reduction.[337] General Assembly resolution 46/182 was adopted in 1991 to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance by introducing general guiding principles on

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[325] UN General Assembly, *Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (A/RES/72/133)*, 2017.
[326] Ibid.
[327] UN General Assembly, *Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations (A/RES/46/182)*, 1991.
[328] Jurkowski, *Geneva Conventions*, 2017.
[329] Ibid.
[330] Ibid.
[331] Ibid.
[332] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel (A/RES/49/59)*, 1994.
[333] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel (A/RES/49/59)*, 1994; UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel: Optional Protocol (A/RES/60/42)*, 2005.
[334] UN ECOSOC, *Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (E/RES/2009/3)*, 2009.
[335] UN General Assembly, *Assistance in cases of natural disasters and other disaster situations (A/RES/2816/20)*, 1971; World Conference on Disaster Reduction, *Hyogo Framework for Action – 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters*, 2005.
[336] UN General Assembly, *International decade for natural disaster reduction (A/RES/42/169)*, 1987.
[337] UN General Assembly, *International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (A/RES/44/236)*, 1989.

humanitarian assistance and emphasizing the importance of a number of prevention and preparation activities, such as early warning systems for natural disasters.[338]

The *Hyogo Framework for Action* (2005) focuses largely on resilience and disaster risk reduction, yet it also includes several clauses on humanitarian and disaster relief assistance, in which the Declaration asks for better preparedness and regular trainings to ensure effective relief assistance in the case of humanitarian and natural disasters.[339] General Assembly resolution 63/141 from 2008 specifically focused on international cooperation to improve humanitarian assistance when natural disasters occur.[340] The resolution included both elements that seek to improve immediate assistance in case of disasters and foster the long-term development of affected regions.[341] It thus paved the way for General Assembly resolution 64/76 from 2010, which raised awareness for strengthened actions on humanitarian and disaster relief assistance by the international community and called upon Member States to ensure "safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel," especially in armed conflicts and post-conflict areas.[342] Last but not least, the *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* from 2015, building on the *Hyogo Framework for Action* and other significant documents on disaster risk reduction, established the current international framework on the prevention of and preparations for the potential effects of disasters on populations and consequently also better disaster relief assistance.[343]

Role of the International System

The General Assembly Third Committee plays a pivotal role when it comes to setting international norms and discussing the strengthening of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance.[344] At its 72nd session in 2017, the General Assembly adopted three resolutions that included important clauses on strengthening humanitarian and disaster relief assistance.[345] General Assembly Resolution 72/131 (2017) seeks to strengthen the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance by the UN through several measures, such as urging Member States to become parties to the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel* and encouraging increased cooperation between different UN entities to improve the safety and security of UN personnel.[346] General Assembly resolution 72/132 (2017) focuses on "international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters" and thereby seeks to strengthen both disaster relief and long-term prevention and preparation to reduce the effects of disasters.[347] General Assembly resolution 72/133 (2017) was adopted to improve the "coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations" and requested Member

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[338] UN General Assembly, *Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations (A/RES/46/182)*, 1991.

[339] World Conference on Disaster Reduction, *Hyogo Framework for Action – 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters*, 2005, p. 12.

[340] UN General Assembly, *International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (A/RES/63/141)*, 2009.

[341] Ibid.

[342] UN General Assembly, *Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (A/RES/64/76)*, 2010.

[343] UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, 2015.

[344] UN General Assembly, *Social, Cultural & Humanitarian Issues (Third Committee)*.

[345] UN General Assembly, *Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel (A/RES/72/131)*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (A/RES/72/132)*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (A/RES/72/133)*, 2017.

[346] UN General Assembly, *Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel (A/RES/72/131)*, 2017, p. 7, 11.

[347] UN General Assembly, *International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (A/RES/72/132)*, 2017.

States and all other relevant humanitarian actors to "promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in all stages of humanitarian response."[348]

ECOSOC's work on strengthening humanitarian and disaster relief assistance is mostly coordinated through its Humanitarian Affairs Segment, which "brings together UN Member States, UN organizations, humanitarian and development partners, and development partners, the private sector and affected communities."[349]

The primary responsibility for responding to natural and human-caused disasters rests with Member States.[350] However, since emergencies have grown in complexity and are often beyond the relief capacity of national authorities, the UN and its numerous organizations assist Member States to deliver necessary humanitarian assistance.[351] Within the UN system, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) of the UN Secretariat serves as the main coordinator of international humanitarian relief operations.[352] Through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), OCHA leads and coordinates the efforts of UN as well as non-UN humanitarian organizations with the purpose of providing timely and effective assistance to those in need.[353] With the purpose of establishing clear leadership and accountability within complex humanitarian responses, a cluster approach was introduced.[354] Each cluster, consisting of both UN and non-UN humanitarian actors, focuses on different sectors or areas of humanitarian response within its area of expertise, which in turn contributes to strengthened system-wide preparedness and response capacity.[355] The Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), who leads IASC and oversees all UN humanitarian responses to emergencies, can decide to appoint the so-called humanitarian coordinator in the respective country affected by a natural disaster or conflict.[356] Depending on the specific situation, the humanitarian coordinator makes suggestions for which clusters need to be activated to deliver the most appropriate response.[357]

As the leading agency with regard to the protection of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) leads three clusters and coordinates its actions closely with other actors in the field to ensure integrated responses to emergency situations.[358] First, together with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNHCR offers protection and assistance to those affected by emergencies in order to make sure that their human rights are guaranteed in accordance with the international human rights and humanitarian law.[359] Second, IOM and UNHCR are responsible for the coordination and management of refugee camps.[360] And third, together with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), UNHCR coordinates a cluster responsible for providing emergency shelters and all needs related to adequate housing.[361]

Other key actors in the field of emergency relief are the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Among other aspects, UNDP focuses on climate and disaster resilience and crisis response and

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[348] UN General Assembly, *Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (A/RES/72/133)*, 2017, p. 11.
[349] UN ECOSOC, *Humanitarian Affairs Segment*.
[350] UNOCHA, *Humanitarian Coordination Leadership*.
[351] UN DPI, *Deliver Humanitarian Aid*.
[352] Ibid.
[353] UNHCR, *Cluster Approach (IASC)*.
[354] IOM, *IOM in Humanitarian Operations and Clusters*, 2018; UNHCR, *Cluster Approach (IASC)*.
[355] UNOCHA, *Humanitarian Coordination Leadership*.
[356] UNHCR, *Cluster Approach (IASC)*.
[357] Ibid.
[358] Ibid.
[359] IOM, *IOM in Humanitarian Operations and Clusters*, 2018; UNHCR, *International coordination architecture (humanitarian and development)*; UNICEF, *UNICEF's role in emergencies*, 2006.
[360] UNHCR, *International coordination architecture (humanitarian and development)*.
[361] UNHCR, *Shelter cluster (IASC)*.

is active in numerous regions in the world, including Iraq and South Sudan, to help "affected communities return to sustainable development as soon as possible, while building resilience to future shocks."[362] The work of WFP and FAO is centered around food and agriculture, with WFP focusing largely on distributing goods to vulnerable and affected groups and FAO working with a more long-term focus to combat food insecurity and other related issues.[363] WFP has now provided emergency relief assistance in "conflict, post-conflict or disaster situations" for more than 50 years and continues to support populations in preparing and responding to disasters.[364]

In addition to the UN system, numerous civil society organizations (CSOs) and private entities contribute to the strengthening of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance through providing concrete services to affected populations.[365] Among all CSOs, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC) plays a critical role in the international system since their key focus is on helping those affected by conflicts or disasters, providing them with resources and services to meet their basic needs, and improving their health conditions.[366] In the field of health, Doctors Without Borders provides humanitarian assistance through delivering health care and helping to put humanitarian issues on the international community's agenda through reports on worsening humanitarian situations across the globe.[367]

Early Recovery and Sustainable Solutions

Upon the occurrence of any crisis, an Early Recovery Humanitarian Mechanism approach can be an effective step in disaster aid relief, especially when it is in alignment with development principles to manage the situation and save lives.[368] This approach can be described as a multidimensional process of recovery, and, if done through increased national and international regulations, focuses a great deal on improving and strengthening resilience capacity to help solve long standing problems such as impacts from natural disasters and negative impacts from conflicts.[369]

Providing Immediate Relief
After a disaster, responders must work to meet the immediate needs of the affected population, including providing access to sustainable livelihoods such as food, potable water, clothing, shelter, financial support, reintegration of victims into the community, legal rights, economic empowerment, and immediate medical attention.[370] Access to food in the immediate aftermath of a disaster is critical to ensuring people's health and survival.[371] According to WFP, disasters have resulted in hunger, and this has affected food security, and economic and physical access to food supplies and nutrition.[372] For example, in countries like the Philippines, Bangladesh, Niger, and Zambia, droughts have been common with very harsh consequences affecting the dietary diversity of such countries, leading to a reduction in food consumption.[373] In ensuring food security when responding to disasters, states and humanitarian actors must work toward establishing sustainable agricultural practices, as well as support all national and local preparedness planning.[374]

Long-term Solutions
Meaningful humanitarian action in disasters requires integrating disaster risk reduction strategies and preventative measures in immediate relief, such as urban planning and capacity-building efforts at the

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[362] UNDP, Climate and Disaster Resilience, 2018; UNDP, *Crisis Response*, 2018.
[363] FAO, *What we do*, 2018; WFP, *Emergency Relief*, 2018.
[364] WFP, *Emergency Relief*, 2018.
[365] ICRC, *What we do*.
[366] Ibid.
[367] Doctors Without Borders, *What we do*.
[368] Ibid.
[369] Ibid.
[370] WFP, *How Disasters affect Hunger*, 2018.
[371] Ibid.
[372] Ibid.
[373] Ibid.
[374] FAO, *Prepare and Respond.*

initial stage of humanitarian relief.[375] This has been established by humanitarian actors looking at the need to integrate prevention, preparedness, and disaster risk reduction into humanitarian responses, and linking relief to rehabilitation and development.[376] IFRC has worked on achieving disaster preparedness, obtaining disaster responses, rehabilitation of disaster victims, and development of disaster affected areas.[377] Another example is the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), which works on facilitating life-saving assistance to people affected by crises, by providing timely funding, and enabling humanitarian organization and their partners to act quickly when tragedy strikes.[378] They also assist in steering resources to communities that do not receive the attention they need.[379] These actors have also approached emergency relief to embrace exercises that advance early recovery of victims, regenerate livelihoods in the affected communities, and strengthen capacities of local communities.[380] UNISDR, while working toward reducing exposure to natural hazards, has helped to reduce the vulnerability of people and property, procured wise management of land and the environment, and worked toward early warning for adverse events.[381] UNDP also supports urban and community risk management in alignment with the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction,* while implementing DRR at local community level.[382] This has served as an effective means to use knowledge and culture in reducing and managing risks.[383] UNDP supports capacity development of the local communities and national stakeholders and conducts comprehensive disaster assessments.[384] UNDP also works on disaster and climate risk preparedness and has embarked on early warning in a bid to reduce loss from disaster.[385]

Long-term solutions for disaster relief take the form of integrating disaster preparedness in policies of countries and programs organized in local communities to protect against the consequences of disasters.[386] It is also important to have policies and programs that aim at promoting regional disaster cooperation, establishing public awareness, and designating training centers to work on building disaster-resistant communities.[387] For long-lasting solutions, sensitization and environmental rehabilitation can be undergone to help the indigenous people of the community get involved in environmental choices. At the same time, cultural specifics and diversity of their own community can be taken into account, because they are at the tail end of the impacts of disaster and conflicts in term of persons affected.[388] Sensitization of the local community can be done through natural resource management trainings constructed within the community and seminars organized for the people living within the community, to keep the indigenous people informed of the level or rate of development expected in their communities and enable them to actively partake in preserving developments within their community.[389]

Natural Disasters vs. Conflicts

Humanitarian and disaster relief assistance is critical to saving lives regardless of the cause of the disaster, be it natural or manmade.[390] In the case of natural disasters, the Third Committee advocates for Member States to work in coordination with the UN in order to implement local administrative rules that

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[375] Tamminga, *Sustainable Humanitarian Action: Bridging relief to development*, 2011, p. 2.

[376] Ibid, p. 2.

[377] UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, 2015.

[378] Ibid.

[379] Ibid.

[380] Dara Impact Matters, *Humanitarian Response Index*, 2011.

[381] UNISDR, *What is Disaster Risk Reduction*.

[382] UNDP, *Climate and Disaster resilience*.

[383] UNDP, *Urban and community risk management*.

[384] UNDP, *Actionable Risk Information*.

[385] UNDP, *Disaster Risk Reduction*.

[386] Doctors Without Borders, *What we do*.

[387] Ibid.

[388] UNHCR, *Environmental Guidelines*, 2005, p. 49.

[389] Ibid.

[390] UN General Assembly, *Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (A/RES/72/133)*, 2017.

would allow for quick responses to disasters and access to critical resources.[391] Generally, when natural disasters occur in less developed countries with poor infrastructure, there is a higher rate of casualties, displaced people, and social disruption.[392] Moreover, in developed countries, though there often is sounder infrastructure, it is not indestructible to natural disasters.[393] A way to ensure as little damage as possible when a natural disaster occurs, is prevention.[394] Building capacity and training citizens before a crisis occurs, allows for a greater recovery effort and a lower number of casualties.[395]

Humanitarian aid is also needed in conflict zones.[396] Civilians are often the victims of attacks and cities are destroyed.[397] Access to water, food, and health assistance is severely restricted.[398] A major tenet to protecting civilians in conflict zones is to ensure access to medical care and humanitarian assistance.[399] Humanitarian aid workers face obstacles each time they enter into conflict zones, the major obstacles include inability to access the civilians in need because of fighting, and because the aid workers are falling victims to attacks themselves.[400] For example, in Yemen, numerous humanitarian workers are unable to assist victims because of military checkpoints, where they are refused entrance.[401] Humanitarian workers need to be respected and protected and it is imperative that they have access to the proper transportation and equipment.[402] In overcoming these obstacles, caravans carrying humanitarian workers and health supplies should be giving safe and unhindered access to reach people in need.[403]

Case Study: Nepal

Nepal suffered from a 7.8 magnitude earthquake in April 2015.[404] This natural disaster resulted in 9,000 deaths, and destroyed over 887,000 houses.[405] Moreover, there was intense damage to public infrastructure.[406] The first responders to this natural disaster were local members of the community and citizens from all over the country.[407] Further relief was deployed by the UN, non-governmental organizations, and the government of Nepal such as the United States Agency for International Development, the United States Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, and the UN Humanitarian Air Service.[408] Through the assistance of these actors, thousands of volunteers, and the use of donations that were made to the efforts, life-saving aid was delivered to the affected areas.[409] The Nepal Earthquake Flash Appeal was launched to protect and provide assistance to over 2.8 million people.[410] Nepal was able to enjoy an easier transition back into their preexisting infrastructure since they had capitalized on existing capacity by implementing preparedness efforts.[411] Success in these efforts can be attributed to the quick and well-focused provision of health services to victims, while WFP provided funds

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[391] UN General Assembly & ECOSOC, *Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations: Report of the Secretary-General (A/55/82-E/2000/61)*, 2000.
[392] Council on Foreign Relations, *Natural Disasters and Humanitarian Assistance to 2020: Relief and Recovery on a Global Scale*, 2012.
[393] Ibid.
[394] Ibid.
[395] Ibid.
[396] UNOCHA, *5 ways to better protect civilians in conflict zones*, 2018.
[397] Ibid.
[398] Ibid.
[399] Ibid.
[400] Ibid.
[401] UN DPI, *Humanitarian actors need safe, unhindered access to help Yemen avert famine – UN aid chief*, 2017.
[402] Ibid.
[403] UN Security Council, *Protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/RES/2286(2016))*, 2016.
[404] Center for International Disaster Information, *2015 Nepal Earthquake*, 2017.
[405] Ibid.
[406] Ibid.
[407] Ovesen & Heiselberg, *The Humanitarian Response to the 2015 Nepal Earthquake*, 2016.
[408] Ibid.
[409] Ibid.
[410] Ibid.
[411] Ibid.

to help maintain food security.[412] The UN and other international actors provided international assistance in terms of funding made available to manage the humanitarian crisis.[413] OHCHR was involved in monitoring the human rights situation and observing international humanitarian law.[414] They achieved a strengthened national capacity to protect and promote human rights in Nepal where impunity on the sides of the government and the people of Nepal was diminished.[415]

Conclusion

Disasters, whether they stem from natural hazards or conflict, cause some of the most devastating tragedies that this world can see.[416] The Third Committee has worked to promote international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of disasters, with the hope of strengthening both disaster relief and long-term prevention and preparation to reduce the effects of disasters.[417] Furthermore, the Third Committee seeks to improve immediate assistance in case of disasters and foster the long-term development of affected regions.[418] Although many efforts have been made in this field, there is still work to be done in order to strengthen and humanitarian and disaster relief assistance.[419]

Further Research

Through their research, delegates should understand how the Third Committee aids in the humanitarian efforts in conflict zones. Moreover, questions like the followings should be considered: How can short-term efforts in humanitarian relief be incorporated into the afflicted areas to have a lasting effect? What can we learn from the humanitarian efforts that were deployed in Nepal after the earthquake in 2015? How can the Third Committee work with other UN and international actors in order to make accomplishments in this field? It is also important for delegates to research how the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* has been implemented thus far in strengthening humanitarian and disaster relief assistance, and what can further be accomplished in this regard.

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> *In this outcome document of a workshop, the Council on Foreign Relations summarizes the discussion of a number of key experts on disaster and humanitarian assistance. It starts with a general description of the threats natural disasters pose to populations across the world and then delves into resilience building and developing appropriate responses to such events. Delegates will find this resource particularly useful in preparing for the conference as it provides them with concrete examples on how humanitarian and disaster relief assistance can be strengthened and what key actors in the field belief is necessary to better protect populations from such events.*

International Red Cross and Red Crescent. (n.d.). *What we do* [Website]. Retrieved 16 September 2018 from: https://www.icrc.org/en/what-we-do

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[412] USAID, *Nepal Earthquake - fact sheet*, 2015.
[413] Ibid.
[414] UN OHCHR, *OHCHR in Nepal (2006 – 2007)*, 2018.
[415] Ibid.
[416] UNISDR, *UNISDR Strategic Framework 2016-2021*, 2017, pg. 4.
[417] UN General Assembly*, International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (A/RES/72/132)*, 2017.
[418] UN General Assembly, *International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (A/RES/63/141)*, 2009.
[419] UN General Assembly*, International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (A/RES/72/132)*, 2017.

This website lists all activities of the ICRC on humanitarian and disaster relief assistance. As the ICRC is one of the key civil society actors on the topic and often works in close cooperation with numerous UN entities, it is of outmost importance to understand what the organization does to help those in need. By reading the website and learning more about the different activities of the ICRC, delegates will receive a better understanding of how the cooperation between the UN and civil society works in the field and what the key activities of the ICRC are.

Jurkowski, S. (2017). *Geneva Conventions* [Website]. Cornell Law School. Retrieved 14 September 2018 from: https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/geneva_conventions

This website summarizes how the international framework on international humanitarian law, especially the different Geneva Conventions*, developed over time. It thus offers important insights into the key documents on humanitarian relief and assistance and helps delegates to develop a good understanding of what the international framework has achieved and where opportunities for improvement exist. As a consequence, delegates will benefit from reading this resource, especially if they seek to reflect on the different options they have at the conference when writing their working papers.*

Ovesen, P. & S. Heiselberg. (2016). The Humanitarian Response to the 2015 Nepal Earthquake. *UN Chronicle*, LIII (1). Retrieved 10 September 2018 from: https://unchronicle.un.org/article/humanitarian-response-2015-nepal-earthquake

This article provides a detailed overview over the humanitarian response to the earthquake in Nepal in 2015. It explains in detail how different UN entities and CSO worked together to provide the best possible disaster relief assistance to the affected population. Consequently, it constitutes a great learning opportunity for delegates to understand how disaster relief assistance has been conducted in previous years, what worked well, and what current opportunities for improvement are. The website will therefore be of great value for delegates to prepare their own positions for the conference.

United Nations, Department of Public Information. (n.d.). *Deliver Humanitarian Aid* [Website]. Retrieved 16 September 2018 from: http://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/deliver-humanitarian-aid/

This website provides a detailed overview over the key actors on humanitarian assistance, such as the WFP and the WHO, introduces the cluster approach that the UN follows in the field of humanitarian aid. It explains in a concise and comprehensible manner what the key UN entities in the field do to strengthen humanitarian assistance. Therefore, the website constitutes an important starting point for delegates' research that can help them to identify helpful sources and findings in their preparations for the conference.

United Nations Development Programme. (2018). *Crisis Response* [Website]. Retrieved 16 September 2018 from: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/crisis-response.html

This website summarizes UNDP's actions to support affected populations in times of crisis and to help them in returning back to sustainable development. In addition to brief summaries on the different pillars of their work in the field, the website offers examples from UNDP's activities in a variety of regions. As a consequence, this source at the same time helps delegates to gain a deeper understanding of the key actors in the field and gives them concrete insights into how the work of the UN looks on the ground.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session. (2015). *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*. Retrieved 16 September 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/69/283

The Sendai Declaration is one of the most important framework documents on strengthening disaster risk reduction and overall preparedness to prepare populations from disasters and ensure effective and timely support to those affected. As a consequence, it includes numerous significant implications for disaster relief assistance,

because the Declaration for instance urges Member States to allocate more financial resources to reduce the effects of disasters on populations through effective preparations and better crisis management. Consequently, this document constitutes a pivotal resource for delegates to understand the current international framework and to develop through understanding of current challenges in the field.

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (n.d.). *History* [Website]. Retrieved 14 September 2018 from: https://www.unisdr.org/who-we-are/history

> *This website provides an excellent chronological overview over the various measures of the international community to enhance the international framework and concrete actions on disaster risk reduction and disaster relief and assistance. It gives very concise summaries on major events, such as the introduction of the* International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction *and lists the General Assembly resolutions for the respective developments. Accordingly, this document helps delegates to better understand the international framework on disaster relief and assistance and thus develop their own positions on how the framework could be improved.*

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2015). *UNISDR Strategic Framework 2016-2021* [Report]. Retrieved 16 September 2018 from: https://www.unisdr.org/files/51557_strategicframework.pdf

> *The* UNISDR Strategic Framework *summarizes UNISDR's priorities and areas of work for the upcoming years, until 2021. Accordingly, it helps to understand what UNISDR currently does and what the key actors on disaster risk reduction have planned for the upcoming years, especially with regards to the implementation of the Sendai Framework. As a consequence, this short and concise document helps delegates to get a better overview over the topic and develop their own positions based on recent developments in the international community.*

World Conference on Disaster Reduction. (2005). *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* [Report]. Retrieved 15 September 2018 from: https://www.unisdr.org/2005/wcdr/intergover/official-doc/L-docs/Hyogo-framework-for-action-english.pdf

> *The* Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 *constitutes a significant pillar in the current international framework on disaster risk reduction and played an important role in preparing the* Sendai Declaration. *It includes very specific goals on disaster risk reduction, which include disaster relief assistance, as well as numerous detailed implementation mechanisms. Therefore, delegates will benefit from reading this pivotal document and gain a better understanding of how the current framework on disaster relief assistance has developed over time.*

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