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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL PLENARY BACKGROUND GUIDE 2012

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nmun.org/nmun_dc.html

Message from the Secretary-General Regarding Position Papers for the 2012 NMUN-DC Conference

At the 2012 NMUN-DC Conference, each delegation submits one position paper for each committee assignment. Delegates should be aware that their role in each committee impacts the way a position paper should be written. While most delegates will serve as representatives of Member States, some may also serve as observers or NGOs. To understand these fine differences, please refer to the Delegate Preparation Guide.

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

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

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

- Length must not exceed two single-sided pages
- Margins must be set at 1 inch for the whole paper
- Font must be Times New Roman sized between 10 pt. and 12 pt.
- Country/NGO name, school name, and committee name must be clearly labeled on the first page
- Agenda topics must be clearly labeled in separate sections
- National symbols (headers, flags, etc.) are deemed inappropriate for NMUN position papers

To be considered for awards, position papers need to be submitted by e-mail in .pdf or .doc formats by 1 October 2012. As proof of submission, include yourself as an e-mail recipient. Please use the committee name, your assignment, and delegation/school name in both the e-mail subject line and in the filename (example: GA1st_Cuba_Mars College).

1. Send one complete set of all position papers for each of your country/NGO assignments to the Secretary-General at secgen.dc@nmun.org.
2. Send a copy of your position paper for each assigned committee to the corresponding committee e-mail address listed below. Please note, the e-mail addresses will be active on 4 September 2012.

Committee	E-mail Address (after 4 Sept.)
General Assembly First Committee (GA1st)	ga1st.dc@nmun.org
Security Council (SC)	sc.dc@nmun.org
Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)	ecosoc.dc@nmun.org
Human Rights Council (HRC)	hrc.dc@nmun.org
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)	iaea.dc@nmun.org
World Health Organization (WHO)	who.dc@nmun.org

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

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

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact the Conference staff.

Sincerely,

Michael Aguilar
Secretary-General
NMUN-DC

Sample Position Paper

The following position paper is designed to be a sample of the standard format that an NMUN position paper should follow. Papers may be no longer than two single-sided pages. Only the first two pages of any submissions will be considered for awards.

Delegation from
Canada

Represented by
University of Jupiter

Position Paper for General Assembly Plenary

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

I. Breaking the Link between Diamonds and Armed Conflict

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

II. The Promotion of Alternative Sources of Energy

Canada is dedicated to integrating alternative energy sources into climate change frameworks by diversifying the energy market while improving competitiveness in a sustainable economy, as exemplified through our Turning Corners Report and Project Green climate strategies. We view the international commitment to the promotion of alternative sources of energy called for in the Kyoto Protocol and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Control (UNFCCC) as a catalyst to sustainable development and emission reduction. Canada fulfills its obligations to Article 4 of the UNFCCC by continuing to provide development assistance through the Climate Change Development Fund and calls upon Member States to commit substantial financial and technical investment toward the transfer of sustainable energy technologies and clean energy mechanisms to developing States. We emphasize the need for Member States to follow the recommendations of the 2005 Beijing International Renewable Energy Conference to strengthen domestic policy frameworks to promote clean energy technologies. Canada views dissemination of technology information called for in the 2007 Group of Eight Growth and Responsibility in the World Economy Declaration as a vital step in energy diversification from conventional energy generation. We call

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

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

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

Official Welcome

On behalf of the 2012 National Model United Nations Washington D.C. (NMUN-DC) Conference team we would like to welcome you to this year's conference. This year's Economic and Social Council committee staff includes Director Carrie Ann Starnes and Assistant Director Rima Gungor. Carrie Ann has a Masters in International Business and is concluding her Masters in Political Science. She works as a Presentation Specialist for Porsche Consulting, Inc. in Atlanta, GA, offering support to engineers assisting in Lean Enterprise transformation projects in a wide range of industries. Rima recently graduated from North Central College with a B.A. in Political Science and Philosophy as well as minors in International Relations and History. She volunteers for Rotary International, works as a database manager at Zacks Investment Research in Chicago, Illinois, and will be attending graduate school next fall.

The NMUN-DC conference team has worked diligently throughout the year to prepare for this conference, and we sincerely hope that you will conclude the weekend at the conference with a greater knowledge and appreciation for global issues. This simulation provides an excellent environment for delegates to learn and improve important life skills such as tact, oration, and negotiation while practically applying and gaining academic knowledge. This background guide is only the preface to the research you will do independently and as such offers only a brief synopsis of the issues. We encourage you to absorb relevant current events and seek additional sources that will provide information specific to the perspective of the Member State you are assigned. We are privileged to play a role in your educational experience here at NMUN-DC and look forward to working with you all.

History of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is one of six principal bodies of the United Nations (UN). The Council was established by the Charter of the United Nations in 1946 and has a total of 54 Members. Membership is based on geographic representation with seats divided between Africa, Asia, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The UN General Assembly elects Members for three-year terms. Decisions in ECOSOC are made by a majority vote and the president of the Council is elected annually. The UN Charter allows ECOSOC to grant consultative status to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); currently over 2,500 NGOs have been given this privilege.

ECOSOC is one of the most important branches of the UN. It is the central institution that promotes the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Moreover, its role as an effective forum for promoting policy dialogues, encouraging development cooperation, and fostering peace through developments, makes ECOSOC an ideal environment in which to facilitate debate and create solutions to the major problems currently on the international community's agenda. In addition, ECOSOC is key to strengthening the role of the General Assembly (GA). ECOSOC's agenda for discussion includes subjects on promoting improved standards of living; social and economic progress; creating and finding solutions to international social, economic, and health problems; facilitating cultural cooperation; and encouraging mutual respect among states for human rights. Most of ECOSOC's work is performed through functional commissions on topics such as human rights, narcotics, population subjects, social development, statistics, the status of women, and science and technology. Because of its broad mandate, ECOSOC's purview extends to over 70% of the human and financial resources of the UN system. This broad mandate, along with its ability to convene at short notice, gives ECOSOC a unique ability and the financial resources to advance the implementation of the MDGs agenda. As part of its mandate, ECOSOC also conducts studies, formulates resolutions, and coordinates the activities of various UN organizations. Fourteen specialized agencies of the UN report to ECOSOC, including the functional commissions and five regional commissions.

The Council meets for four-week sessions every July. Along with these sessions, ECOSOC holds smaller regular meetings throughout the year with academics, representatives of the business sector, and over 3,200 registered NGOs. The larger sessions are held in alternative years in New York and Geneva. Each of these meetings allows ECOSOC to further its goals and offers hope for improving the development situation of many countries through economic, social, and cultural collaboration, programming, and knowledge sharing.

I. Addressing Youth Poverty

- How might public or private programs and regional initiatives target the youth population? What progress currently is there towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals? Have certain actions been more effective than others in reducing youth poverty specifically?
- Are there any regional examples with success stories that can be modeled or partnered with to further address the issue? What non-governmental organizations or United Nations Bodies have been involved in the effort to decrease youth poverty specifically? How effective have they been?
- In addition to the underlying unemployment caused by the global financial and economic crisis, what other factors are influencing poverty in youth populations? Can these causes be remedied? How does youth poverty prevent economic growth and social development?

The United Nations (UN) defines “youth” as people between the ages of 15 and 24 years old. This population, reaching over 1 billion in the past ten years, is growing and facing an increasingly difficult world. Youth are rarely included in the decision-making process or seen as a target group in the fight to eradicate poverty. Yet, the population of youth living in poverty exceeds 500 million. The potential human capital in the worldwide youth population is as of yet an untapped resource, and, as the next generation, youth are pivotal in alleviating the ongoing global problem of poverty. There are two schools of thought that dominate the current discourse on fighting youth poverty, specifically. The first is tactical and includes training programs, micro finance projects, employment initiatives targeted at youth populations, and other direct resource management strategies. The second is philosophical in nature: it considers the value of youth perspective, civic participation, and how other ideals might play a role in poverty reduction. The UN, Member States, private sector partners, and other non-governmental actors are increasingly involved in both approaches.

In an effort to more closely consider the youth population, several UN organizations have created programming and released reports to this regard. The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization honored the Year of the Youth in 2010-2011, which sought to engage youth populations in community activities and increase commitment and public and private investment in youth education and participation. To compliment these efforts, the United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development has released articles to the press emphasizing the importance of investing in youth populations specifically in rural areas to mitigate poverty. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) oversees several projects that target youth poverty. The Rural Youth Poverty Reduction Project for Jamaica, for example, is set to last from 2010-2012 and has a budget of \$1 million. This project will enable youths in rural areas to generate income through agriculture, thereby lowering the incidence of poverty. According to the UNDP, the idea is to provide skills, training, and “increased access to post harvest production facilities to improve the agriculture value added” to youths that are not in school. Similarly, the UNDP’s policy support in Liberia centers on youth-focused community-based recovery and development.

Action is not isolated within each project to a single Member State. The multilateral project *Tackling Poverty Together* was formed together by the National Council of Swedish Youth Organizations, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and several youth organizations from the countries of Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Kenya, Zambia, Ghana, and Liberia; it represents a cross-functional approach, a hybrid of the tactical and the philosophical. The goal was to promote the influence of young people on national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). The resulting policy recommendations in the PRSPs of the seven countries not only engaged youth populations in the decision-making process, but also provided them with hands on experience. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also target youth to increase civic engagement and provide practical experience. For example, the International Youth Foundation is an international NGO that works to engage youth worldwide on three platforms: learning, working, and leading. This NGO offers employment programs specifically for youth in impoverished communities.

Impoverished youth are likely to become impoverished adults. Because this age group supplies the labor force and future leaders soon to replace an ageing population, countries should focus on ending the cycle of poverty in vulnerable populations. In the wake of the recent global economic crisis, unemployment is widespread and investment is low. No economy is immune from the effects of the crisis and youth in developing as well as developed countries face unfavorable circumstances. In cases where employment opportunities are low or income is insufficient, youth are forced to abandon education early to secure additional household income. Other youths are

bidding time in the academic system to avoid the reality of endemic underemployment (the leading cause of brain drain). For these reasons it is important that Member States work together to encourage communities and educational institutions to cooperate.

II. Role of Family Planning in Social Development

- What kinds of family planning initiatives are currently in place in your state?
- What role can the United Nations, international bodies, transnational corporations, and other institutions play in family planning? How could the private sector support public programs?
- What policy changes need to be made to further encourage family planning?
- What role does family planning play in helping Least Developed Countries develop socially?

Progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has stagnated in several areas. Family planning is one policy mechanism that can reinvigorate the achievement of these goals. Social policies that reduce health risks are investments in future populations and cost avoidance for the present. It is proven that these policies effectively address overpopulation issues, decrease transmission of disease, decrease instances of child and maternal mortality, and it is a cost effective investment. Family planning also affects society through its impact on economic development. According to the United Nations (UN), the need for family planning is growing and will increase by 40% over the next 15 years. The UN favors gender and rights oriented solutions to family planning, meaning access to family planning and essential care are human rights and the benchmarks for gender equality. Currently only roughly 15% of developing countries consistently make any of these methods available to women.

Though Member State perspectives may vary, generally, according to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, family planning refers to the “educational, comprehensive medical or social activities, which enable individuals, including minors, to determine freely the number and spacing of their children and to select the means by which this may be achieved.” Methods of family planning include but are not limited to: oral contraceptives, intrauterine devices, immunizations, female condoms, and implanted hormone devices for females, and condoms and vasectomies for males (a vasectomy is a short, low risk, reversible procedure that prevents sperm from combining with semen). These types of activities have been proven to have significant effects on poverty eradication and maternal and infant mortality rates. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) explains that, “over 200 million women want to use safe and effective family planning methods, but are unable to do so because they lack access to information and services or the support of their husbands and communities.” It can be said that this is a matter of life and death in many parts of the world as maternal health is directly affected by access to family planning support. Almost 25% of unwanted pregnancies result in abortion, many of which are unsafe and have serious effects on a woman’s health after the procedure. Over 74,000 of these abortions result in maternal fatality. As explained in the Cairo Programme of Action, it is because of the health risks that the UN does not support abortion and promotes instead preemptive, voluntary forms of contraception to avoid it. Further, abortion as a method of avoiding unwanted pregnancies does not prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases such as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

In many countries, though family planning in the form of contraception is accepted, it is not publically supported. Often countries do not have the resources to make contraceptives widely available to the general population or societies are not accepting of some or all methods of contraception. For example, in patriarchal societies males are significantly less likely to embrace male contraceptive methods. Additionally, the lack of acceptance of contraception and family planning is because in many of these countries, especially those with rural or agriculture-based communities, the labor provided by large families is seen as a necessity for subsistence. UNFPA strongly encourages all countries to make a greater political and financial commitment to family planning under the Cairo Programme of Action, which includes engaging the private sector and civil society. The participation and financial support of many actors including public-private partnerships, non-governmental organizations, and efforts at the community level are imperative. From the country perspective, family planning policies are far-reaching and can be addressed in more than one ministry, governmental department, or task force simultaneously.

Thailand demonstrates well how family planning programs can be introduced as part of public initiatives aimed to reduce poverty. Fewer than 5% of the sexually active populations in developing countries use male methods as the primary form of family planning; however, in Thailand, programs are making it more accepted by overcoming the stigma of contraceptives through community engagement and government action. One program, for example,

increased the geographic area and populations covered by government programs to include previously excluded social demographics, by using new groups to promote male contraceptives. As part of this program, retailers, informal retailers, the education system, religious leaders, and children were each engaged to promote male contraceptives. Such a widespread program helped desensitize the population to the stigmas attached to male contraceptives. Also, another program was established to address maternal health and infant mortality by encouraging the use of female oral contraceptives through educating women on how fewer children meant healthier children. Overall, through programs like these, Thailand has been able to reduce its growth rate from 3.3% to 0.5% and reduce the average number of children per household from 7 to 1.5.

Learning from Thailand, this committee should bear in mind that no single method of contraception, health services education, or support will be sufficient in any scenario. The UN supports using a “constellation” of approaches to comprehensively meet the growing need. Above all, this committee must understand that increasing family planning is not only a health issue. The positive effects of education and safe medical environments are limited without access to supplies and every effort may be thwarted without programs that broaden social acceptance; therefore, sensitivity to culture is paramount. Costs, social taboos, religious beliefs and access to contraceptive supplies will make coverage uneven but, the more diverse the strategies, the more likely it is that family planning will gain traction.

III. Women’s Economic Empowerment

- What impact do women have on the international economy?
- What can be done to provide equal economic environment for women, especially those in the developing world?
- With poverty being an obvious obstacle in developing countries, what kind of solutions or programs can be implemented to lessen poverty’s negative effects?

The United Nations Population Fund defines women’s empowerment through five major components: women’s sense of self-worth; their right to have and determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more social and just economic order, nationally and internationally. The United Nations defines economic empowerment as the capacity of women and men to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from growth processes in ways which recognize the values of their contributions, respect their dignity, and make it possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth. Taken together, these five components and the definition of economic empowerment are particularly applicable to the economic sphere where women’s economic empowerment can be achieved by targeting initiatives to expand women’s economic opportunity; strengthening women’s legal status and rights; and ensuring women’s voices, inclusion, and participation in economic decision-making. In the last several decades, the world has become a more equal place for women in many countries in terms of economic empowerment. Women play a vital role in the economy of the international community; however, there are some areas of the world that are still far behind in terms of the economic empowerment of women. Women often face persistent discrimination and social inequality, with some women experiencing multiple levels of discrimination and exclusion because of factors such as ethnicity or social status; this committee must work to address this issue.

The World Bank has identified 33 developing countries in which women and girls in poor households are particularly vulnerable to the effects of the global economic and food crises. Of these countries, 15 are in sub-Saharan Africa and are seeing a dangerous mix of slower economic growth and fewer girls in school. To address this issue, one of the biggest international frameworks concerning the economic empowerment of women is the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Adopted in 1995, the Platform has been reevaluated and updated during the Beijing +10 in 2000 and the Beijing +15 in 2010 conferences. The Beijing Declaration seeks to accelerate the empowerment of women and remove all of the obstacles to women’s active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural, and political decision-making. During the 2010 session, a strong emphasis was placed on the sharing of experiences and good practices, as well as overcoming remaining obstacles and new challenges—all related to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In consideration of these obstacles and the Secretary-General’s background note for the High-level Event on the MDGs, several innovative approaches toward the advancement of the economic empowerment of women now exist.

These approaches encompass economic opportunity, legal status and rights, inclusion, and participation. Improving women's economic opportunities can take many forms, including: eliminating gender gaps in employment; developing women's entrepreneurship opportunities and capacity; improving women's access to finance; and improving women's livelihoods. For example, Goldman Sachs recently created the 10,000 Women Initiative that provides 10,000 underserved women, predominantly in developing and emerging markets, with a business and management education. In India, the Management of Enterprise and Development of Women program works to build sustainable livelihoods for women through core businesses. The initiative was converted into a privately held company owned and run by the women themselves. This change had led to improved living standards and social status for women in local communities through the creation of a sustainable business, which is managed by women for their own benefit. It also empowered women in the workforce and helped to develop their entrepreneurial skills. These efforts have had an extremely positive impact on Indian woman in these communities, more than philanthropy alone.

Studies show that putting earnings into the hands of women is both economically beneficial and has the ability to accelerate development and the process of overcoming poverty. According to a United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund report, statistics show that while men only reinvest about 30-40% of their income into their families, women and girls reinvest 90% of their income into their families. As stated, the economic empowerment of women is a prerequisite for sustainable development, pro-poor growth, and the achievement of all the MDGs. Therefore the international community must find solutions to the obstacles women face in terms of economic empowerment. Expanding on women's engagement in economic activity can only have a positive impact on their status within the household, society, and their ability to participate in decision-making. This provides a platform for tackling the wider social and cultural obstacles that block women's overall empowerment.

Annotated Bibliography

Committee History of the Economic and Social Council

Sustainable Development Policy and Practice. (2010). *New ECOSOC President Outlines 2011 Agenda*. Retrieved on May 1, 2012, from: <http://uncsd.iisd.org/news/new-ecosoc-president-outlines-2011-agenda/>.

This article discusses the 2011 agenda of the ECOSOC. It outlines areas of importance such as partnerships with NGOs, the need for further collaborations with ECOSOC's functional commissions, and renewed efforts to help areas affected by natural disasters. In order to understand the focus of ECOSOC and help determine which topics ought to be focused on, delegates are encouraged to consider and review this document.

United Nations. (2011). UN economic and social council, resolutions, decisions. *UN News Center*. Retrieved on May 1, 2012, from: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/>.

Published by the UN, this Web site summarizes the establishment of the ECOSOC. It also describes the way meetings are run and how they are divided. Finally, it discusses the financial role of ECOSOC with regards to the UN system.

UN News Centre. (2012). *UN Economic and Social Council high-level segment ends with call for partnerships*. Retrieved on July 14, 2012 2012, from:

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42439&Cr=ecosoc&Cr1=>

This news article from the UN News Centre summarizes the proceedings and outcomes of the high-level segment of the Council's 2012 meeting. It details how the segment concluded with the adoption of a ministerial declaration related to issues of employment. Additionally, the declaration calls for a focus on building and maintaining partnerships to strengthen national programs and achieve national and international goals. Delegates should also use this source as a starting point to learn more about the outcomes of the other segments of the Council's meeting as they become available.

I. Addressing Youth Poverty

Kahn, AR. (2005). Employment and Millennium Development Goals: Analytics of the Linkage. *The Bangladesh Development Studies*, 31 (1/2): 1-24.

This report will help delegates understand how employment, underemployment, and unemployment factor into the achievement of the MDGs. Definitions that seem clear to most delegates are also explained here in more depth using four case studies. The core consideration is MDG #1.

United Nations. (2012). *DESA: Young people continue to be the hardest hit by the job crisis*. Retrieved on June 10, 2012, from:

<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/news/social/youth-education-employment-and-empowerment-key-to-global-progress.html>.

This press release, published on May 4, 2012, draws attention to the ongoing issue of youth poverty. The content in this article makes the issue of youth poverty relevant for delegates and reiterates that it is a current issue affecting the daily lives of millions. It also explicitly introduces the ECOSOC as the forum of discussion for the topic.

United Nations. (2010). *DESA: The Role of Young People in Poverty Reduction*. Retrieved on June 9, 2012, from: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/publications/TPTPublication.pdf>.

This 17-page report delves into the Tackling Poverty Together project. The project is a multilateral effort to involve youth in the decision making process. Delegates in the African Union should read this document in its entirety to gain an understanding of an ideal approach; however, it is a good resource for all delegates. The layout of this report is dynamic and provides many statistics pertaining to the presence and impact of youth poverty.

United Nations. (2012). *DESA: Youth education, employment and empowerment key to global progress*. Retrieved on June 10, 2012, from:

<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/news/social/youth-education-employment-and-empowerment-key-to-global-progress.html>.

This Web site details the speech Ban Ki Moon, Secretary-General of the UN, gave at the Global Colloquium of University Presidents at Columbia University, entitled "From Youth Explosion to Global Transformation: Unleashing the Power of Youth People." Although it does not specifically mention the role of youth in eradicating poverty, Ban Ki Moon challenges leaders to consider the youth population an untapped resource. Additionally, Ban Ki Moon places particular emphasis on educating girls to empower youth and improve economies.

United Nations. (2012). *UNESCO: Social and Human Sciences: UNESCO: Acting with and for Youth*. Retrieved on June 9, 2012, from: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/>.

This part of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Web site provides a succinct overview of the role UNESCO is playing in raising awareness about the importance of engaging the youth population. The links on this page will give delegates an idea of more projects that target youths. Delegates will also find a link to more information on the International Year of Youth on this page.

II. Role of Family Planning in Social Development

Osoimehin, B. The Guardian. (2012). *Poverty Matters Blog: Family planning summit could mark turning point for maternal health*. Retrieved on June 11, 2012, from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters>.

The author of this source informs readers that the London Summit will focus on maternal health and family planning. Delegates should read this brief blog and follow the developments of the summit. This article highlights how the choice of whether or not to have children will empower women and save lives.

United Nations. 2012. *Economic and Social Affairs: Global efforts for Family Planning*. Retrieved on June 10, 2012, from: http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/news/population/family_planning.html.

Though this source does not provide a summary as one might expect from the title, it does provide useful statistics on the demand and shortages of contraceptives. It also highlights recent efforts from across the UN system that would supplement the material in the background guide. The most interesting piece of information, although not highlighted in this guide, is the disparity in access between the developed and lesser-developed economies in terms of access to reproductive health services.

United Nations. (2012). *UNFPA: Calling for Greater Attention to Family Planning*. Retrieved on June 10, 2012, from: <http://www.unfpa.org/public/cache/offfonce/home/news/pid/7561>.

This statement is by Ms. Purnima Mane, United Nations Population Fund Deputy Executive Director, at the Commission on Population and Development side-event "Family Planning: Key to Saving Lives." This document provides some light background information on the Cairo Conference, explaining that 179 Member States met in Cairo to discuss reproductive rights as human rights. This context informs delegates of just how long family planning has been an issue. Delegates should look to this document for debate directives and ideas for recommendations.

United Nations. (2012). *UNFPA: Reproductive Health*. Retrieved on June 10, 2012, from: <http://www.unfpa.org/rh/planning.htm>.

This is the most important source for this topic. It addresses four topics: [family planning saves lives](#); [contraceptive use rises, but unmet needs remain](#); [widening the options](#); and [moving forward](#). The details contained within these topics provided the basis for much of this background document. It is a must read for delegates as an introduction to the issue.

United Nations. (2012). *UNFPA: Population Statistics*. Retrieved on June 10, 2012, from: http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/popfacts/popfacts_2010-1.pdf

This source contextualizes the different most current and prevalent impact areas of family planning, such as maternal and infant health and mortality. With only a basic knowledge of the MDGs, delegates can use this source to make broader connections between the topic and the goals. Though, this document is very short, the concise delivery of information is still very informative, particularly in regards to maternal health.

III. Women's Economic Empowerment

DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET). (2011). *Women's Economic Empowerment*. New York, NY: DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET), pp. 1-31.

This issue paper outlines why women's economic empowerment matters and its importance to the international community. The paper also details why donors are encouraged to support this cause and the benefits that would result from financial backing. It also discusses the necessity for women to have access to assets and services like water, land, technology, and credit to increase productivity and reduce poverty.

Golla, A., Malhotra, A., Nanda, P., and Mehra, R. (2011). *Understanding and Measuring Women's Economic Empowerment: Definition, Framework, and Indicators*. New York, NY: International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), pp. 1-10.

This publication is an excellent source for data and charts on women's economic empowerment. It provides excellent technical information on how this empowerment is measured and what the indicators are. The publication also provides a comprehensive definition of women's economic empowerment as well as addressing the issues concerning the advancement of women, which include poverty, social status, and cultural obstacles.

Negash, A. (2006, December). *Economic Empowerment of Women*. Retrieved on May 1, 2012, from http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/focusareas/global_ethics/economic-empowerment.html.

This article by Almaz Negash, a fellow in Global Leadership and Ethics at the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, discusses women's economic role within the world's population and the inequality, which often accompanies it. The article also states that, in poor countries mothers have the most influence on their children, not fathers. According to this article, unless women are given the same opportunities as men, societies will suffer from slow economic growth for decades to come. Negash emphasizes that societies, governments, and NGOs all need to come together in order to really provide a safe and positive environment for the economic empowerment of women.

The World Bank Group. (2010). *Global Private Sector Leaders Forum: An Initiative of the World Bank Group Gender Action Plan: Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

This publication by the World Bank Group discusses what global leaders around the world are doing to further women's economic empowerment within the international community. The publication provides research and project-based evidence to support the business case for giving women opportunities in the private sector. Leaders interviewed in this publication provide new ideas on how to further women's economic opportunities and the challenges faced when encountering traditional norms of society.

The World Bank Group. (2007). *Why is Women's Economic Empowerment Important for Development?* Retrieved on May 1, 2012, from:

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTGENDER/0..contentMDK:21983335~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:336868,00.html>.

This publication by the World Bank Group offers several reasons why the economic empowerment of women is important. It cites that women hold the power in terms of economic development and why it is intelligent to invest in women. The publication also describes why women reinvest their money far beyond themselves and spread it among their families and communities.

United Nations Development Fund. (2008). *Innovative Approaches to Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment: Paper for the Partnership event on September 25, 2008: MDG3 - gender equality and empowerment of women - : A prerequisite for achieving all MDGs by 2015*. New York, NY: UNDP.

This paper, published by the United Nations Development Fund, analyzes every component involved in women's economic empowerment. It contains several examples of projects being carried out around the world to further women in an economic environment, especially in developing countries. The paper gives a comprehensive outline of what women's economic empowerment is and how gender equality can be achieved through the MDGs.