



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA BACKGROUND GUIDE 2013

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NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

nmun.org



17 - 21 March - Conference A
24 - 28 March - Conference B

POSITION PAPER INSTRUCTIONS

Two copies of each position paper should be sent via e-mail by 1 MARCH 2013

1. TO COMMITTEE STAFF

A file of the position paper (.doc or .pdf) for each assigned committee should be sent to the committee e-mail address listed here. Mail papers by 1 March to the e-mail address listed for your particular venue. Delegates should carbon copy (cc:) themselves as confirmation of receipt. Please use the committee name, your assignment, Conference A or B, and delegation/school name in both the e-mail subject line and in the filename (example: GA1st_Cuba_ConfA_MarsCollege).

2. TO DIRECTOR-GENERAL

- Each delegation should send one set of all position papers for each assignment to the e-mail designated for their venue: positionpapers.nya@nmun.org or positionpapers.nyb@nmun.org. This set (held by each Director-General) will serve as a back-up copy in case individual committee directors cannot open attachments.
Note: This e-mail should only be used as a repository for position papers.
- The head delegate or faculty member sending this message should cc: him/herself as confirmation of receipt. (Free programs like Adobe Acrobat or WinZip may need to be used to compress files if they are not plain text.)
- Because of the potential volume of e-mail, only one e-mail from the Head Delegate or Faculty Advisor containing all attached position papers will be accepted.

Please use the committee name, your assignment, Conference A or B, and delegation/school name in both the e-mail subject line and in the filename (example: GA1st_Cuba_Conf A_Mars College).

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ECOSOC Plenary	ecosoc.nya@nmun.org
Commission on the Status of Women	csw.nya@nmun.org
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	ccpcj.nya@nmun.org
Economic Commission for Africa	eca.nya@nmun.org
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	escwa.nya@nmun.org
United Nations Children's Fund	unicef.nya@nmun.org
United Nations Development Programme	undp.nya@nmun.org
United Nations Settlements Programme	unhabitat.nya@nmun.org
UN Conference on Trade and Development	unctad.nya@nmun.org
Human Rights Council	hrc.nya@nmun.org
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UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues	unpfii.nya@nmun.org
Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	ceirpp.nya@nmun.org
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Security Council B	scb.nya@nmun.org
Security Council C	scc.nya@nmun.org
International Atomic Energy Agency	iaea.nya@nmun.org

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Commission on the Status of Women	csw.nyb@nmun.org
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	ccpcj.nyb@nmun.org
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United Nations Development Programme	undp.nyb@nmun.org
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Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	ceirpp.nyb@nmun.org
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Security Council C	scc.nyb@nmun.org
International Atomic Energy Agency	iaea.nyb@nmun.org
Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations	c34.nyb@nmun.org

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Entire Set of Delegation Position Papers	positionpapers.nya@nmun.org
(send only to e-mail for your assigned venue)	positionpapers.nyb@nmun.org
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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2013 National Model United Nations (NMUN) Conference! It is our great pleasure to serve as your committee directors for the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). We look forward to working with all of you to ensure an enjoyable and educational experience at the Conference. Please allow us to first introduce ourselves. Allison Chandler will be the Director at Conference A and Sonia Mladin will be the Director at Conference B. Allison holds a Juris Doctor from Fordham University, School of Law, and a Bachelor of Arts in Latin American Studies from Vassar College. She currently works as a human rights fellow in Sierra Leone and is admitted to the New York State Bar. This is her fifth year at NMUN and third year on staff. Sonia received her Bachelor in Politics and International Relations with honours from the University of Manchester and is now in her second year of a Masters in Population Science and Development at Université Catholique de Louvain. This year will be her fifth year on staff at NMUN.

One of the five regional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, ESCWA has a significant influence in both the ESCWA region and the global community. ESCWA provides a framework enabling regional cooperation and integration to promote social and economic development of Western Asian region.

The topics under discussion for the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for this year are:

1. Promoting Sustainable Energy Production for Socio-Economic Development
2. Countering Socio-Economic Marginalization to Strengthen Post-Arab Spring Democracies
3. Towards Sustainable Water Management, Development, and Productivity

This background guide will serve as an introduction to the three topics before the Commission, but it is by no means comprehensive and should not be your only source of research. In order to understand these topics, we encourage delegates to consult a broad range of resources and grant special attention to your country's position. Given the current situation in the region, it is crucial to remain informed about current events and the work of ESCWA.

In preparation for the conference, each delegation will submit a position paper on the committee's topics. This position paper represents a significant part of your preparation and allows you to discuss your delegation's positions and solutions for each topic. It is important that your position paper follows the correct formatting, as described in this Background Guide. Position papers will be due March 1, 2013 and will be submitted to NMUN by email. More information about expectations and guidelines for the position paper may be found in the Background Guide and on the NMUN website. Please take note of the NMUN policies on the [website](#) and in the [delegate preparation guide](#) regarding [plagiarism](#), [codes of conduct/dress code/sexual harassment](#), [awards philosophy/evaluation method](#), etc. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory.

If you have any questions in preparation for the Conference, please feel free to contact the Commission's directors or the Under-Secretaries-General for the Economic and Social Council, Yvonne Jeffery (Conference A) and Harald Eisenhauer (Conference B).

We wish you the best in your preparation for the Conference and look forward to seeing you in March.

Conference A
Allison Chandler
Director

Conference B
Sonia Mladin
Director



Message from the Directors-General Regarding Position Papers for the 2013 NMUN Conference

For NMUN-New York 2013, each delegation submits one position paper for each assigned committee. A delegate's role as a Member State, Observer State, Non-Governmental Organization, etc. should affect the way a position paper is written. To understand these differences, please refer to the [Delegate Preparation Guide](#).

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

Delegation's position papers may be given an award as recognition of outstanding pre-Conference preparation. In order to be considered for a Position Paper Award, however, delegations must have met the formal requirements listed below and be of high substantive standard, using adequate language and showing in-depth research. While we encourage innovative proposals, we would like to remind delegates to stay within the mandate of their respective committee and keep a neutral and respectful tone. Similarly to the minus point-policy implemented at the conference to discourage disruptive behavior, position papers that use offensive language may entail negative grading when being considered for awards. Please refer to the sample paper following this message for a visual example of what your work should look like at its completion. The following format specifications are **required** for all papers:

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

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

1. **A file of the position paper** (.doc or .pdf format required) **for each assigned committee** should be sent to the committee email address listed in the Background Guide. These e-mail addresses will be active after November 15, 2012. Delegates should carbon copy (cc:) themselves as confirmation of receipt.
2. Each delegation should also send **one set of all position papers** to the e-mail designated for their venue, Conference A: positionpapers.nya@nmun.org or Conference B: positionpapers.nyb@nmun.org. This set will serve as a back-up copy in case individual committee directors cannot open attachments. These copies will also be made available in Home Government during the week of the NMUN Conference.

Each of the above listed tasks needs to be completed no later than **March 1, 2013 (GMT-5)**.

Please use the committee name, your assignment, Conference A or B, and delegation/school name in both the e-mail subject line and in the filename (example: GA1st_Cuba_ConfA_Mars College).

A matrix of received papers will be posted online for delegations to check prior to the Conference. If you need to make other arrangements for submission, please contact Hannah Birkenkötter, Director-General (Conference A), or Nicholas Warino, Director-General (Conference B), at dirgen@nmun.org. There is an option for delegations to submit physical copies via regular mail if needed.

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Conference A
Hannah Birkenkötter
Director-General
hannah@nmun.org

Conference B
Nicholas Warino
Director-General
nick@nmun.org

**Delegation from
The United Mexican States**

**Represented by
(Name of College)**

Position Paper for the General Assembly Plenary

The issues before the General Assembly Plenary are: The Use of Economic Sanctions for Political and Economic Compulsion; Democracy and Human Rights in Post-Conflict Regions; as well as The Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa. The Mexican Delegation first would like to convey its gratitude being elected and pride to serve as vice-president of the current General Assembly Plenary session.

I. The Use of Economic Sanctions for Political and Economic Compulsion

The principles of equal sovereignty of states and non-interference, as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, have always been cornerstones of Mexican foreign policy. The legitimate right to interfere by the use of coercive measures, such as economic sanctions, is laid down in Article 41 of the UN-charter and reserves the right to the Security Council.

Concerning the violation of this principle by the application of unilateral measures outside the framework of the United Nations, H.E. Ambassador to the United Nations Enrique Berruga Filloy underlined in 2005 that the Mexico strongly rejects “the application of unilateral laws and measures of economic blockade against any State, as well as the implementation of coercive measures without the authorization enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.” That is the reason, why the United Mexican States supported – for the 14th consecutive time – Resolution (A/RES/60/12) of 2006 regarding the *Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba*.

In the 1990s, comprehensive economic sanctions found several applications with very mixed results, which made a critical reassessment indispensable. The United Mexican States fully supported and actively participated in the “Stockholm Process” that focused on increasing the effectiveness in the implementation of targeted sanctions. As sanctions and especially economic sanctions, pose a tool for action “between words and war” they must be regarded as a mean of last resort before war and fulfill highest requirements for their legitimate use. The United Mexican States and their partners of the “Group of Friends of the U.N. Reform” have already addressed and formulated recommendations for that take former criticism into account. Regarding the design of economic sanctions it is indispensable for the success to have the constant support by all member states and public opinion, which is to a large degree dependent on the humanitarian effects of economic sanctions. Sanctions must be tailor-made, designed to effectively target the government, while sparing to the largest degree possible the civil population. Sanction regimes must be constantly monitored and evaluated to enable the world-community to adjust their actions to the needs of the unforeseeably changing situation. Additionally, the United Mexican States propose to increase communication between the existing sanction committees and thus their effectiveness by convening regular meetings of the chairs of the sanction committees on questions of common interest.

II. Democracy and Human Rights in Post-Conflict Regions

As a founding member of the United Nations, Mexico is highly engaged in the Promotion of Democracy and Human Rights all over the world, as laid down in the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR)* in 1948. Especially since the democratic transition of Mexico in 2000 it is one of the most urgent topics to stand for Democratization and Human Rights, and Mexico implements this vision on many different fronts.

In the Convoking Group of the intergovernmental Community of Democracies (GC), the United Mexican States uphold an approach that fosters international cooperation to promote democratic values and institution-building at the national and international level. To emphasize the strong interrelation between human rights and the building of democracy and to fortify democratic developments are further challenges Mexico deals with in this committee. A key-factor for the sustainable development of a post-conflict-region is to hold free and fair election and thus creating a democratic system. Being aware of the need of post-conflict countries for support in the preparation of democratic elections, the United Mexican States contribute since 2001 to the work of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), an intergovernmental organization operating at international, regional and national level in partnership with a range of institutions. Mexico’s foreign policy regarding human rights is substantially

based on cooperation with international organizations. The Inter American Commission of Human Rights is one of the bodies, Mexico is participating, working on the promotion of Human Rights in the Americas. Furthermore, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights is the regional judicial institution for the application and interpretation of the *American Convention of Human Rights*.

The objectives Mexico pursues are to improve human rights in the country through structural changes and to fortify the legal and institutional frame for the protection of human rights on the international level. Underlining the connection between democracy, development and Human Rights, stresses the importance of cooperation with and the role of the High Commissioner on Human Rights and the reform of the Human Rights Commission to a Human rights Council.

Having in mind the diversity of challenges in enforcing democracy and Human Rights, Mexico considers regional and national approaches vital for their endorsement, as Mexico exemplifies with its *National Program for Human Rights* or the *Plan Puebla Panama*. On the global level, Mexico is encouraged in working on a greater coordination and interoperability among the United Nations and regional organizations, as well as the development of common strategies and operational policies and the sharing of best practices in civilian crisis management should be encouraged, including clear frameworks for joint operations, when applicable.

III. The Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa

The United Mexican States welcome the leadership role the African Union has taken regarding the security problems of the continent. Our delegation is furthermore convinced that The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) can become the foundation for Africa's economic, social and democratic development as the basis for sustainable peace. Therefore it deserves the full support of the international community.

The development of the United Mexican States in the last two decades is characterized by the transition to a full democracy, the national and regional promotion of human rights and sustainable, economic growth. Mexico's development is characterized by free trade and its regional integration in the North American Free Trade Agreement. Having in mind that sustainable development is based not only on economic, but as well on social and environmental development, President Vicente Fox has made sustainable development a guiding principle in the Mexican Development Plan that includes sustainability targets for all major policy areas.

The United Nations Security Council has established not less than seven peace-keeping missions on the African continent, underlining the need for full support by the international community. In post-conflict situations, we regard national reconciliation as a precondition for a peaceful development, which is the reason why Mexico supported such committees, i.e. in the case of Sierra Leone. The United Mexican States are convinced that an other to enhance durable peace in Africa is the institutional reform of the United Nations. We therefore want to reaffirm our full support to both the establishment of the peace-building commission and the Human Rights Council. Both topics are highly interrelated and, having in mind that the breach of peace is most often linked with severest human rights' abuses, thus need to be seen as two sides of one problem and be approached in this understanding.

As most conflicts have their roots in conflicts about economic resources and development chances, human development and the eradication of poverty must be at the heart of a successful, preventive approach. Lifting people out of poverty must be seen as a precondition not only for peace, but for social development and environmental sustainability.

The United Mexican States want to express their esteem for the decision taken by the G-8 countries for a complete debt-relief for many African Highly-Indebted-Poor-Countries. Nevertheless, many commitments made by the international community that are crucial for Africa's sustainable development are unfulfilled. The developed countries agreed in the *Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development* (A/CONF.198/11) to increase their Official Development Aid (ODA) "towards the target of 0,7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) as ODA to developing countries and 0,15 to 0,20 per cent of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries". Furthermore, the United Mexican States are disappointed by the result of the Hong Kong Ministerial conference of the World Trade Organization, which once more failed to meet the needs of those, to whom the round was devoted: developing countries and especially African countries, who today, more than ever, are cut off from global trade and prosperity by protectionism.

Committee History

Introduction

The *Charter of the United Nations* includes in its statement of purpose “to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character,” and “to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.”¹ The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the UN entity with primary responsibility for global economic and social concerns, is thus authorized to set up regional commissions to carry out its work in the economic and social fields.²

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is one such regional commission, created as a “framework for the formulation and harmonization of sectoral policies for member countries, a platform for congress and coordination, a home for expertise and knowledge, and an information observatory.”³ In addition to ESCWA, ECOSOC has established four other regional commissions: the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic and Social Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).⁴ These commissions were created to achieve regional and sub-regional economic integration, support regional implementation of sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals, and promote intra- and inter-regional cooperation and knowledge sharing.⁵

Creation of ESCWA

ESCWA was the fifth and final regional commission to be created by ECOSOC, due to long-standing instability and political tensions within the region.⁶ In 1963, ECOSOC established an Economic and Social Office in Beirut, intended to serve as a regional body for the Middle East.⁷ In recognition of the fact that Member States in Western Asia did “not enjoy membership in any regional economic commission,” and that “such membership would be an important factor in accelerating their economic and social development,” ECOSOC *Resolution 1818 (LV)* established the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) in 1973.⁸ ECWA was initially mandated to raise economic activity, strengthen regional cooperation, and promote development efforts in the region.⁹ During this initial period, ECWA focused on building regional cooperation, established a development fund for the least developed countries, and provided institutional support; during this time, ECWA was the first regional commission to recognize water security as a priority issue.¹⁰ Following the global recession and falling oil prices in the early-1980s, ECWA began to place greater focus on social issues.¹¹ In 1985, ECOSOC *Resolution 1985/69* expanded the mandate to include a greater focus on social matters and renamed the body as the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).¹² The headquarters of ESCWA were located in Beirut, Lebanon from 1974 – 1982, before moving to Baghdad, Iraq (1982 – 1991) and Amman, Jordan (1991 – 1997), and finally returning to Beirut in 1997, which now serves as its permanent headquarters.¹³

Mandate & Membership

Mandate

ECOSOC *Resolution 1818 (LV)* mandated ESCWA to “[i]nitiate and participate in measures for [...] economic reconstruction and development” of the region.¹⁴ To carry out its work, ESCWA shall carry out investigations and studies of economic problems; collect and distribute economic, technological, and statistical information; and

¹ United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, art. 1.

² United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, art. 67.

³ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *ESCWA in Brief*, 2009, p. 6.

⁴ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *ESCWA in Brief*, 2009, p. 3.

⁵ United Nations Regional Commissions, *About the Regional Commissions*, 2012.

⁶ Jolly and Emmerij, *UN Regional Contributions: Western Asia*, 2010, p. 1.

⁷ Jolly and Emmerij, *UN Regional Contributions: Western Asia*, 2010, p. 1.

⁸ United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Resolution 1818 (LV)*, 1973.

⁹ United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Resolution 1818 (LV)*, 1973.

¹⁰ Jolly and Emmerij, *UN Regional Contributions: Western Asia*, 2010, p. 1.

¹¹ Jolly and Emmerij, *UN Regional Contributions: Western Asia*, 2012, p. 3.

¹² United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Resolution 1985/69*, 1985.

¹³ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *ESCWA in Brief*, 2009, p. 5.

¹⁴ United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Resolution 1818 (LV)*, 1973.

perform advisory services within the region.¹⁵ In addition, ESCWA serves as a forum for Arab academics, which has allowed them to take more progressive approaches to topics such as gender, food and water security, and poverty reduction.¹⁶

Pursuant to ECOSOC *Resolution 1998/46*, ESCWA established the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) to oversee the work of UN agencies working within the region.¹⁷ Membership in the RCM includes the regional offices of 25 UN agencies, as well as the League of Arab States, World Bank and International Monetary Fund.¹⁸ The RCM is mandated to lead regional cooperation, maximize collective action within the region, and develop a common vision for economic and social policies within the region.¹⁹ Thematic working groups in the RCM currently focus on transitions to democracy, Millennium Development Goals, food security, and climate change.²⁰

Membership

ESCWA currently has seventeen members: Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.²¹ Each Member of ESCWA holds one vote in Commission matters and chairmanship of the Commission rotates among Members in alphabetical order.²² In addition, ESCWA may invite any Member State of the United Nations and Specialized Agencies to participate in deliberations as a non-voting observer.²³

ECOSOC *Resolution 1818 (LV)* initially limited membership in ESCWA to those Member States under the Economic and Social Office in Beirut.²⁴ ECOSOC can review applications of potential members on the recommendation of ESCWA.²⁵ Since 1973, ESCWA has expanded its membership to Egypt and the Palestinian Liberation Organization in 1977, and to the Sudan in 2008.²⁶ In 2012, ESCWA recommended that ECOSOC approve membership requests from Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia, acknowledging that the Terms of Reference “do not limit the geographical location of countries which may become members thereof or proscribe a member of one regional commission from being at the same time a member of another regional commission.”²⁷ ECOSOC approved the request at their coordination segment in July 2012.²⁸ In addition, ESCWA invited all Arab countries to become members and recommended the Commission be re-designated as the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Arab Region.²⁹ This proposed change reflects the difficulties in defining Western Asia as a region: it spans between Asia and Africa, and its Members reflect high disparities in geographical size, population, wealth, and development.³⁰

Governance and Activities

ESCWA is overseen by an Executive Secretary and Under-Secretary-General, who is appointed by the UN Secretary-General.³¹ The current Executive Secretary is Ms. Rima Khalaf of Jordan, appointed in 2010.³² ESCWA carries out its work through ministerial sessions, which are held every other year or at the request of ECOSOC, a

¹⁵ United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Resolution 1818 (LV)*, 1973.

¹⁶ Jolly and Emmerij, *UN Regional Contributions: Western Asia*, 2010, p. 4.

¹⁷ United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Resolution 1998/46*, 1998.

¹⁸ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *About the Regional Coordination Mechanism*, 2012.

¹⁹ United Nations Joint Inspection Unit, *United Nations System Regional Presence and Coordination*, 2002.

²⁰ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *About the Regional Coordination Mechanism*, 2012.

²¹ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *ESCWA in Brief*, 2009, p. 5.

²² United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia*, 2003, Rule 50.

²³ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia*, 2003, Rule 63.

²⁴ United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Resolution 1818 (LV)*, 1973.

²⁵ United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Resolution 1818 (LV)*, 1973.

²⁶ United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Resolution 2088 (LXIII)*, 1977; United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Resolution 2089 (LXIII)*, 1977; United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Resolution 2008/8*, 2008.

²⁷ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Report on the 27th Session*, 2012, p. 4.

²⁸ United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Concluding High-level Segment, Economic and Social Council Adopts Ministerial Declaration on Tackling Jobs Crisis, Promoting Sustained Growth, Development (ECOSOC/6532)*, 2012.

²⁹ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Report on the 27th Session*, 2012, p. 4.

³⁰ Jolly and Emmerij, *UN Regional Contributions: Western Asia*, 2010, p. 1.

³¹ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia*, 2003, Rule 20.

³² United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Office of the Executive Secretary*, 2012.

majority of countries, or the Chairman.³³ The most recent meeting was the 27th Session, held from May 7 – 10, 2012 at ESCWA headquarters.³⁴ The meeting was divided into two segments: the first, for senior officials, considered management issues, the reported activities of the Commission, and the draft strategic framework for 2014-2015. The second, a ministerial segment, consisted of three roundtables on: (1) the role of participation and social justice in achieving sustainable and balanced development; (2) preparations for the Rio+20 Conference in the Arab region; and (3) the current situation and future prospects for inclusive financing in the ESCWA region.³⁵ In 1989, ESCWA established an Advisory Committee, made up of the heads of diplomatic missions to the host country and a high-level representative of the host country, which facilitates communication between Member States and the ESCWA Secretariat.³⁶ In addition, ESCWA has established seven subsidiary bodies to assist the Commission on their programmatic work: Statistical Committee, Committee on Social Development, Committee on Energy, Committee on Water Resources, Committee on Transport, Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization, and the Committee on Women.³⁷ As with the other regional commissions, ESCWA reports to ECOSOC through its annual report and proposes resolutions for ECOSOC.³⁸

In addressing the economic and social issues of the region, ESCWA pursues five primary objectives, which include supporting economic and social development in the countries, promoting cooperation within the region, encouraging knowledge sharing and best practices among member countries, achieving regional integration within Western Asia, and supporting the needs and circumstances of the region within the outside world.³⁹ To achieve these objectives, ESCWA has established seven sub-programs within which their work is focused: (1) integrated management of natural resources for sustainable development; (2) integrated social policies; (3) economic development and integration; (4) information and communications technology for regional integration; (5) statistics for evidence-based policymaking; (6) advancement of women; and (7) conflict mitigation and development.⁴⁰

Conclusion

The ESCWA region stands at a crossroads, deeply affected by the global economic crisis, emerging from the Arab Spring protests, and struggling to balance the needs of a diverse group of Member States. ESCWA continues to play a critical role in the United Nations' work in Western Asia, both through promoting social and economic development and through a broader role in regional coordination. In the current context, delegates should consider how ESCWA could respond to these challenges to support the regions socio-economic needs. Further, delegates should think about how the expanded geographic focus reflects a changing role for ESCWA within the region.

³³ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia*, 2003, Rule 1.

³⁴ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Report on the 27th Session*, 2012.

³⁵ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Report on the 27th Session*, 2012, p. 1.

³⁶ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Resolution 175 (XV)*, 1989.

³⁷ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Governing Bodies*, 2012.

³⁸ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia*, 2003, Rule 13.

³⁹ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *ESCWA in Brief*, 2009, p. 5-6.

⁴⁰ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *ESCWA in Brief*, 2009, p. 10.

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United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2009). *ESCWA in Brief*. Retrieved August 2, 2012, from: <http://escwa.un.org/about/ESCWAinbrief.pdf>

This document provides a comprehensive introduction to the Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia. Expanding on the information provided on the website, this source outlines the membership, mandate, and structure of the Commission, as well as highlighting the key programs. In addition, the document highlights the role of ESCWA within the United Nations system and its coordination with other regional bodies.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2012). *ESCWA Weekly News*. Retrieved September 2, 2012, from: <http://escwa.un.org/information/weeklynews/exlmain.asp>

Issued weekly, this newsletter offers insight into key issues within the region, as well as providing statistical analysis, new research, and opinion pieces from ESCWA. Recent topics have included economic trends in the ESCWA region, employment indicators, ESCWA's participation in the Rio+20 Conference, and women's empowerment in Sudan. Delegates are encouraged to subscribe to the weekly newsletter in order to keep up-to-date with the work of the Commission.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2012, May 10). *Report on the Twenty-seventh session (E/ESCWA/27/9/Report)*. Retrieved August 2, 2012, from:

http://escwa.un.org/about/gov/sessions/editor/Download.asp?table_name=sess26_documents&field_name=ID&FileID=141

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia meets on a biennial basis, with the 27th session being held from 7 to 10 May 2012. This report covers the work of the 27th session, which included the draft strategic framework for 2014-2015; considering membership requests from Libya, Morocco and Tunisia; the role of participation and social justice; preparations for the Rio+20 Conference; and regional prospects for inclusive financing. The report includes a discussion of each agenda item, as well as all recommendations to be brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2003). *Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia*. Retrieved August 22, 2012, from:

<http://css.escwa.org.lb/english/ESCWARULEN.pdf>

The Terms of Reference for ESCWA, updated in 2003, provide delegates with a thorough introduction to the organization and work of the Commission. Along with Resolution 1818 (1973), this document will assist delegates in understanding the focus, mandate, and structure of ESCWA. The first section outlines the mandate and purpose of ESCWA, while the second section details the procedures that guide the Commission's work.

United Nations Economic and Social Council. (1973, August 9). *Resolution 1818 (LV)*. Retrieved August 2, 2012, from: <http://www.escwa.un.org/about/resolution.htm>

Resolution 1818, which created the Economic Commission for Western Asia in 1973, forms the legal basis for the operation of ESCWA, along with Resolution 1985/69, which recognized the important social dimension of ESCWA's work. Resolution 1818 provides the framework for ESCWA's operations and mandate, which will guide delegates' work at the NMUN Conference.

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I. Promoting Sustainable Energy Production for Socio-Economic Development

Introduction

In the past, in Western Asia traditional security problems were prioritized over renewable energies and policies to establish sustainable growth in the region, as they seemed to require more urgent action than energy. Even though transnational wars, civil wars and unstable bordering countries still occur, recently there has been an increase in focus on climate change issues in the region.⁴¹ The fourteen members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) vary considerably in terms of land area, population, economy and resources, but they share a substantial dependency on oil and gas exploitation.⁴² ESCWA Member States own about 51% of the worldwide oil deposit.⁴³ Therefore most of these countries depend heavily on oil and gas to satisfy their energy demands. Only 2% of the energy used by ESCWA Member States originates from renewable energy sources, compared to around 54% from oil and 44% from gas resources.⁴⁴

Despite having the resources to continue providing the world with fossil fuel for several decades more, the reliance on oil and gas and their volatile prices endanger the economic development of the region.⁴⁵ Recently, most Western Asian countries experienced a sharp rise in energy consumption, which even overtook the growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in most of them.⁴⁶ Many countries are therefore starting to invest in alternative energy sources to diminish their overreliance on oil through ambitious sustainable energy policies and research and development (R&D) programs.⁴⁷

Framing Sustainable and Socio-Economic Development in an Energy Context

Sustainable Development and Sustainable Energy Production

According to the World Commission on Environment and Development's seminal 1987 report, better known as the *Brundtland Report*, sustainable development is defined as "development that meets the present needs and goals of the population without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs."⁴⁸ As such, sustainable development consists of economic, social, and environmental elements. Social development is aimed particularly at the wellbeing of individuals and the society, which leads to a rise in social capital, institutional capital and organizational capital.⁴⁹ The economic aspect concerns the willingness of the people to invest in goods and services, which strengthen the income and production efficiency.⁵⁰ Environmental development is concerned with the benefits of nature and humans' reliance on it, and takes protective measures.⁵¹ Lastly, sustainable development demands the fulfillment of all three components.⁵²

Apart from the *Brundtland Report*, the international community possesses various other agreements and cooperation networks, such as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), more commonly referred to as Earth Summit. At the UNCED, energy was identified as a decisive element to eliminate poverty, create better health conditions, and to enhance economic growth.⁵³ First impulses towards sustainable development were introduced at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. The resulting *Rio Declaration* set aims towards environmental protection and the implementation of responsible development.⁵⁴ At the Johannesburg Summit in 2002, the General

⁴¹ Luomi, *Oil or climate politics: Avoiding a destabilizing Resource split in the Arab Middle East*, 2010, p. 4.

⁴² ESCWA, *Status of Energy Statistics and Indicators in the ESCWA Region*, 2009, p. 3.

⁴³ ESCWA, *Status of Energy Statistics and Indicators in the ESCWA Region*, 2009, p. 3.

⁴⁴ United Nations Development Programme, *Arab Regional Strategy for Sustainable Consumption and Production*, 2009, p. 5.

⁴⁵ ESCWA, *Status of Energy Statistics and Indicators in the ESCWA Region*, 2009, p. 4-5

⁴⁶ ESCWA, *Status of Energy Statistics and Indicators in the ESCWA Region*, 2009, p. 4-5; 16.

⁴⁷ Hertog, *Energy and sustainable policies in the CCG*, 2009, p. 1.

⁴⁸ Gobaisi, *The Tragedy of Energy Policy in the Arab Region: Solar Power versus Nuclear power*, 2010, p. 6.

⁴⁹ Gobaisi, *The Tragedy of Energy Policy in the Arab Region: Solar Power versus Nuclear power*, 2010, p. 6.

⁵⁰ Gobaisi, *The Tragedy of Energy Policy in the Arab Region: Solar Power versus Nuclear power*, 2010, p. 6.

⁵¹ Gobaisi, *The Tragedy of Energy Policy in the Arab Region: Solar Power versus Nuclear power*, 2010, p. 6.

⁵² Gobaisi, *The Tragedy of Energy Policy in the Arab Region: Solar Power versus Nuclear power*, 2010, pp. 6-7.

⁵³ United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20, *Outcome of the conference: The future we want*, 2012, p. 24.

⁵⁴ Heinrich Böll Foundation, *Outcomes of the Rio Earth Summit 1992 Process*, 1992.

Assembly reiterated the goals set ten years before and evaluated the progress made since the 1992 UNCED.⁵⁵ During Rio+20 in 2012, the discussion focused on urgent aims, such as enhancing energy efficiency, promoting a broader energy mix including a rising amount of renewable energies, an infrastructure to transport electricity and waste management.⁵⁶ Furthermore, 2012 is the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, which promotes universal access to energy and the protection of the environment.⁵⁷ The campaign aims to stimulate awareness towards energy matters such as energy security, energy affordability, and the sustainability of energy sources.⁵⁸

According to the Arab Forum for Environment and Development, the level of carbon emissions is remarkably low in the ESCWA region, whilst the increase of greenhouse gas emission is accelerating faster than in the rest of the world.⁵⁹ Most ESCWA Member States experience vast transformations due to urbanization, industrialization, population growth, and life style changes, which cause the escalating energy consumption.⁶⁰ Taking these facts into consideration, one crucial aim for the Western Asian region is to decouple rising energy consumption and increasing economic activity.⁶¹ Energy policy plans covering the relationship of energy consumption and economic growth need to be incorporated.⁶² Additionally, they need to aim towards a transition from the reliance on fossil fuels to an expansion of renewable energies to end the current mono-dependence.⁶³

There are several socio-economic problems within ESCWA Member States which hinder the energy sector from becoming sustainable.⁶⁴ Primarily, these refer to the degradation of air and water quality, the exhaustion of energy and mineral resources, and the exploitative mining of natural resources that generate environmental and socio-economic dilemmas, such as producing cheap energy versus protecting the environment.⁶⁵ In a system of weak sustainability, the predominant economic aim is capital, which compensates for the destruction of the environment.⁶⁶ The economic system takes all measures to gain capital without further examination of its impacts on society, the environment and the economy in future times.⁶⁷

Renewable Energies and their Implementation in the ESCWA region

In the field of renewable energies, some indicators have been developed to measure the progress towards sustainable development.⁶⁸ These factors contain the price of generated electricity, greenhouse gas emissions during the full lifecycle of the technology, availability of renewable sources, efficiency of energy conversion, land requirements, and water consumption.⁶⁹ Observing the current situation and the emergence of renewable energies in the ESCWA region, it becomes obvious that the potential to produce green energy is far from being fully used.⁷⁰ According to a study from 2010 of pre-existing applications of hydropower, wind energy, solar energy, biomass, and geothermal energy, only very few countries in the region have effective working power stations.⁷¹ Data shows that countries like Egypt and Morocco are very active in introducing an increased amount of wind and hydro-energy, whereas other countries like Algeria, Sudan, and Syria only recently began to implement technologies for wind or hydro-energy.⁷² Nevertheless, even in engaged regions further progress is needed to further reduce dependency on fossil fuels.⁷³

⁵⁵ United Nations General Assembly, *Ten-year Review of Progress Achieved in the Implementation of the Outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development*, 2001.

⁵⁶ United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), *Outcome of the conference: The future we want*, 2012, pp. 24-26, 34, 41.

⁵⁷ United Nations General Assembly, *International Year of Sustainable Energy for all*, 2011.

⁵⁸ United Nations General Assembly, *International Year of Sustainable Energy for all*, 2011.

⁵⁹ Arab Forum for Environment and Development, *Green Economy in a changing Arab World, 2011*, p. XXVI.

⁶⁰ Arab Forum for Environment and Development, *Green Economy in a changing Arab World, 2011*, p. XXVI.

⁶¹ Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, p. 104.

⁶² Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, p. 104.

⁶³ Sathaye, *Renewable Energy in the Contest of Sustainable Development*, 2011, p. 717.

⁶⁴ ESCWA, *Framework for Environmental Economic Accounting in the ESCWA region*, 2009, p. 7.

⁶⁵ ESCWA, *Framework for Environmental Economic Accounting in the ESCWA region*, 2009, p. 7.

⁶⁶ Sathaye, *Renewable Energy in the Contest of Sustainable Development*, 2011, p. 713.

⁶⁷ Sathaye, *Renewable Energy in the Contest of Sustainable Development*, 2011, p. 713.

⁶⁸ Sathaye, *Renewable Energy in the Contest of Sustainable Development*, 2011, p. 715.

⁶⁹ Sathaye, *Renewable Energy in the Contest of Sustainable Development*, 2011, p. 715.

⁷⁰ El-Khayat, *Renewable Energy Potential in the Arab Region*, 2011, p. 7.

⁷¹ El-Khayat, *Renewable Energy Potential in the Arab Region*, 2011, p. 7.

⁷² El-Khayat, *Renewable Energy Potential in the Arab Region*, 2011, p. 6-7.

⁷³ El-Khayat, *Renewable Energy Potential in the Arab Region*, 2011, pp. 6-7.

The ESCWA region is a very dry and hot region, which is a decisive factor for energy demand and production.⁷⁴ The link between climate conditions and energy demand shows primarily that the main consumption is caused by air conditioning, and secondarily that solar energy is a very effective way to produce green energy.⁷⁵ The sun-belt in which the Arab region is largely located possesses sunshine durations from 7.5 to 10.7 hours per day.⁷⁶ Some countries like Egypt, Oman, and Morocco also have the prerequisites to wind energy as they experience wind speeds of up to 11 meter per second. Considering that 6-8 m/s are sufficient to affordably generate electricity, the conditions are excellent for using wind to produce energy in the ESCWA region.⁷⁷

As part of noticeable projects launched in the ESCWA region, Morocco created the greatest photovoltaic home system to obtain electricity from solar activity, which was installed in about 8% of rural households.⁷⁸ This not only improves the access to energy and energy security in undersupplied regions, but also guarantees the reliability of access. This kind of project improves the quality of life and economic development especially in rural areas. Another project is the low carbon initiative, like the carbon-neutral Masdar City in Abu Dhabi and the Bahrain World Trade Centre.⁷⁹ The aim is to build cities which do not need external energy production thanks to their energy efficient construction and the imbedded energy production technologies.⁸⁰

Research and Cooperation on Alternative Energy resources

The first step of the implementation and promotion of renewable energies requires further R&D projects.⁸¹ According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) most Western Asian countries spend currently just about 0.1% of their GDP on research.⁸² Current research projects concentrate on increasing energy efficiency, biogas and solar energy applications, heating ventilation, and air-conditioning efficiency.⁸³ There is, however, a lack of strategic orientation and long-term focus future-orientated solutions.⁸⁴

Technology transfer is crucial to facilitate the development of existing technologies and provide profitability. Extended transnational cooperation benefits all participants and is regarded as the “key element in the development of the R[enewable] E[nergies] market in the region“ by the Economic and Social Council because of the similarities between many countries in the ESCWA region.⁸⁵ This would distinctively transform the current conditions in many countries, which are characterized by a lack of technical knowledge and industrial capacities.⁸⁶

As the ESCWA region is highly suitable for implementing green energy technologies, various initiatives have been founded to promote sustainable development.⁸⁷ The Arab Initiative for Sustainable Development (AISD) was created in cooperation with ESCWA, the Council of Arab Ministers Responsibility for the Environment (CAMRE) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).⁸⁸ AISD accentuates the difficulties Arab countries face in

⁷⁴ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region*, 2010, p. 10.

⁷⁵ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region*, 2010, p. 10.

⁷⁶ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region*, 2010, p. 12.

⁷⁷ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region*, 2010, p. 13.

⁷⁸ UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Arab Climate Resilience Initiative Climate Change: Economic challenges and Opportunities in the Arab Regions*, 2009, p. 8.

⁷⁹ UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Arab Climate Resilience Initiative Climate Change: Economic challenges and Opportunities in the Arab Regions*, 2009, pp. 8-9.

⁸⁰ UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Arab Climate Resilience Initiative Climate Change: Economic challenges and Opportunities in the Arab Regions*, 2009, pp. 8-9.

⁸¹ UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Arab Climate Resilience Initiative Climate Change: Economic challenges and Opportunities in the Arab Regions*, 2009, p. 17.

⁸² UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Arab Climate Resilience Initiative Climate Change: Economic challenges and Opportunities in the Arab Regions*, 2009, p. 17.

⁸³ UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Arab Climate Resilience Initiative Climate Change: Economic challenges and Opportunities in the Arab Regions*, 2009, p. 14.

⁸⁴ UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Arab Climate Resilience Initiative Climate Change: Economic challenges and Opportunities in the Arab Regions*, 2009, p. 14.

⁸⁵ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region: an approach for climate change mitigation*, 2010, p. 21.

⁸⁶ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region: an approach for climate change mitigation*, 2010, p. 21.

⁸⁷ ESCWA/ League of Arab States, *Progress achieved on Energy for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region*, 2005, p. 14.

⁸⁸ ESCWA/ League of Arab States, *Progress achieved on Energy for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region*, 2005, p. 18.

regards to sustainable development, stresses the urgency of implementing suitable technologies to develop the region's potential, and outlines approaches towards the modification of energy resources.⁸⁹ The main tasks include the transfer to cleaner energy production and the more efficient use of oil and natural gases.⁹⁰ Furthermore, agreements like the *Abu Dhabi Declarations on Environment and Energy* from 2001 and 2003, and the ESCWA Regional Promotional Mechanism for Sustainable Energy Systems (RPMSES) stress the willingness of the region to promote sustainable development, while striving for more secure energy sources and universal energy access.⁹¹

Besides all the positive characteristics and implications of renewable energies, there exist several negative side-effects. Concerning renewable energies such as hydro-energy, solar, and wind energy, there are only few reports about negative effects on human beings and nature.⁹² A problematic issue is that wind turbines cause disturbances for people and animals nearby.⁹³ Another issue is the construction of dams which has, in some regions, lead to rare illnesses like schistosomiasis and Rift Valley Fever. Additionally, in countries with a prevalence of the tsetse fly, the construction of dams can further increase the number of flies and thus result in more cases of malaria.⁹⁴

Only some ESCWA Member States have set official goals for the introduction of renewable energy sources. Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, and Morocco have set ambitious targets for 2020 regarding the importance of green energy within their energy producing sector.⁹⁵ Other countries have pledged in the *Global Status Report 2012* to produce a certain amount of wind, hydro-, solar, and other renewable energies.⁹⁶ Nevertheless, some countries have not yet set an achievable aim, while energy production generally needs supplemental extension to provide energy security for the whole population.⁹⁷

Energy Subsidies as Obstacles to Development

In many Member States, especially in those that exploit gas or oil themselves, the prices for these resources are extremely low.⁹⁸ The production of fossil fuels is subsidized which means that energy from fossil fuels stays cheap and affordable for the consumer.⁹⁹ These governmental policies do not only result in unreflecting and unnecessary consumption of energy by individuals and industry, but also burden the governments' budgets with elevated costs as the number of energy consumers rises and the use of electronic devices expands.¹⁰⁰ This results in oil and gas prices that are far below the world average and, thus, cause critical irregularities. Such prices below average promote the increased use of limited resources instead of supporting the development and application of new and lasting sources.¹⁰¹ Renewable energies face enormous obstacles such as the cost-intensive inventions needed to establish their prerequisites, the reluctance of investors, and the critical reservations of the consumers.¹⁰² As a result, the hidden costs of fossil fuels, the harm to humans' health and the environment, and international price volatilities require increased attention.¹⁰³ Studies illustrate that the destruction of the environment will cost 2.1 to 7.4% of the

⁸⁹ ESCWA/ League of Arab States, *Progress achieved on Energy for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region*, 2005, p. 18.

⁹⁰ ESCWA/ League of Arab States, *Progress achieved on Energy for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region*, 2005, p. 18.

⁹¹ ESCWA/ League of Arab States, *Progress achieved on Energy for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region*, 2005, pp. 18-19.

⁹² Haines, *Policies for accelerating access to clean energy, improving health, advancing development, and mitigating climate change*, 2007, p. 1267.

⁹³ Haines, *Policies for accelerating access to clean energy, improving health, advancing development, and mitigating climate change*, 2007, p. 1267.

⁹⁴ Haines, *Policies for accelerating access to clean energy, improving health, advancing development, and mitigating climate change*, 2007, pp. 1268-1269.

⁹⁵ Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century, *Renewables 2012: Global Status Report*, 2012, p. 105- 106.

⁹⁶ Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century, *Renewables 2012: Global Status Report*, 2012, p. 105- 106.

⁹⁷ Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, p. 95.

⁹⁸ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region*, 2010, p. 20.

⁹⁹ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region*, 2010, p. 20.

¹⁰⁰ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region*, 2010, p. 24.

¹⁰¹ Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, pp. 106- 107.

¹⁰² Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, pp. 88- 93.

¹⁰³ Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, p. 92.

GDP for various countries if they continue to exploit resources without foresight.¹⁰⁴ Estimations counted losses of 4.8% of the GDP in Egypt for 1999 and 3.7% of the GDP in Morocco for 2000.¹⁰⁵

The sudden termination of fossil fuel subsidies does not seem to be a realistic approach to the issue, as ESCWA members are hardly able to immediately switch to green energy.¹⁰⁶ Yet the promotion of a more efficient and environment-friendly use of energy is futile as long as traditional energy resources receive massive subsidies.¹⁰⁷ Initiatives supporting renewable energies and education on more efficient energy consumption need to attract both industry and investors alike.¹⁰⁸ Therefore there is a need for governmental incentives that remove barriers to renewable energy caused by public subsidies, whereas incentives for fossil fuels need to be steadily reduced.¹⁰⁹

Nuclear Energy

A significant competitor to renewable energy is nuclear energy, as it is a viable and lasting source of energy production which produces about as little carbon emissions as renewable energies.¹¹⁰ Though currently no ESCWA Member State possesses nuclear power plants, many are highly interested in developing nuclear energy.¹¹¹ The United Arab Emirates has shown interest in nuclear energy and maintains close relations with the United States of America to realize this plan.¹¹² At the same time, many states of the region express concerns about the Iranian nuclear program.¹¹³ In the ESCWA region, the issue of nuclear energy is very difficult, because security questions and fears of non-peaceful use of nuclear materials arise frequently.¹¹⁴ As there are many countries opposing nuclear programs in Western Asia, their implementation is risky and hard to realize within the current political context.¹¹⁵

To move away from the dependency on oil and gas, nuclear energy sources seem to play a crucial role, as renewable energies still require considerable research.¹¹⁶ Lack of knowledge and technology concerning nuclear energy in the ESCWA region could easily be solved by bilateral or multilateral cooperation.¹¹⁷ Agreements on international cooperation have already been signed.¹¹⁸ Kuwait and France concluded a contract in 2010 about a civil nuclear energy project, which includes French technical support to Kuwait's power stations.¹¹⁹ Between 2004 and 2008, Egypt signed cooperation treaties with Russia and China to develop a nuclear energy program.¹²⁰ Nevertheless, some difficulties remain because not all the steps of the production process, from acquiring uranium resources to storage and waste management, can be fully accomplished through cooperation.¹²¹

A major difficulty of nuclear energy, which also questions its sustainability, is the problem of waste management.¹²² Since sustainable development requires an environment-friendly policy and the protection of future generations, nuclear energy raises several issues.¹²³ Nuclear energy is a very promising and efficient source of energy in the

¹⁰⁴ Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, p. 92.

¹⁰⁵ Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, p.92.

¹⁰⁶ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region*, 2010, pp. 20-21.

¹⁰⁷ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region*, 2010, p. 20.

¹⁰⁸ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region*, 2010, p. 20.

¹⁰⁹ ESCWA, *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region*, 2010, pp. 20-21.

¹¹⁰ Jeridi Bachelieri, *Renewable Energy in the CCG Countries: Resources, Potential, and Prospects*, 2012, p. 15.

¹¹¹ Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, p. 80.

¹¹² Wuppertal Institute for Climate, *Environment and Energy, Energy Systems in OPEC Countries of the Middle East and North Africa: System Analytic Comparison of Nuclear Power, Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency*, 2009, p.18.

¹¹³ Wuppertal Institute for Climate, *Environment and Energy, Energy Systems in OPEC Countries of the Middle East and North Africa: System Analytic Comparison of Nuclear Power, Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency*, 2009, pp.18, 145.

¹¹⁴ Wuppertal Institute for Climate, *Environment and Energy, Energy Systems in OPEC Countries of the Middle East and North Africa: System Analytic Comparison of Nuclear Power, Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency*, 2009, pp.16-20.

¹¹⁵ Wuppertal Institute for Climate, *Environment and Energy, Energy Systems in OPEC Countries of the Middle East and North Africa: System Analytic Comparison of Nuclear Power, Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency*, 2009, pp. 16-20.

¹¹⁶ Hertog, *Energy and sustainable policies in the CCG*, 2009, pp. 14-15.

¹¹⁷ Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, p. 80.

¹¹⁸ Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, p. 80.

¹¹⁹ United Press International, *France, Kuwait sign nuclear power deal*, 2010.

¹²⁰ World Nuclear Association, *Emerging Nuclear Energy Countries*, 2012.

¹²¹ Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, p. 80.

¹²² Gelil, *Energy*, 2011, p. 80.

¹²³ Gobaisi, *The Tragedy of Energy Policy in the Arab Region: Solar Power versus Nuclear power*, 2010, pp. 28-29.

long-term perspective, but the expenditures on research, resource exploitation, and waste management are enormous. Member States need to carefully assess its advantages, dangers, and sustainability.¹²⁴

Energy and the Millennium Development Goals

Many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) are not attainable without widespread access to energy, even though energy is not directly included in the MDGs.¹²⁵ Poverty reduction is closely interlinked with the access to energy, as the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development confirmed.¹²⁶ Switching from traditional sources to renewable energies does not only open up opportunities for energy security, but also generates jobs through economic growth that is stimulated by sustainable energy resources.¹²⁷ There is also a gender perspective to energy access. Women often suffer most from the lack of access to energy as they need to collect non-commercial fuels such as wood for fire and cooking.¹²⁸ Furthermore, they are exposed to indoor fumes and pollution caused by cooking without electricity, which may result in serious health issues.¹²⁹ Thus MDG 1 and 3, which regard the reduction of extreme hunger and poverty, and gender equality and the empowerment of women, respectively, are hardly attainable without a general access to energy.¹³⁰ Energy security also impacts on the realization of other MDGs. MDG 2, namely universal access to primary education, could be achieved more easily if there existed more possibilities to convey knowledge to children through the use of modern technologies.¹³¹ MDGs 4, 5 and 6, which are all related to health and the provision of medical care, would also benefit from wider access to energy as hospitals and their staff could better fulfill their jobs through the use of electronic medical appliances.¹³² As socio-economic development is one of the primary aims of the promotion of alternative energy production, MDG 7 is of utmost importance since it is narrowly related with the fulfillment of environmental sustainability.¹³³ Alternative sources of energy harm the environment less and energy efficiency generally benefits the environmental situation.¹³⁴

Access to energy, which is closely linked with sustainable energy in Western Asia, is an unmistakable prerequisite to the development and socio-economic prosperity of the region.¹³⁵ Considering specific problems of the Western Asian region such as urbanization and a massive population growth, the need to provide all inhabitants with clean water, sufficient food and a possibility to earn money is directly related to the access to energy.¹³⁶ In most countries of the region, geographical and climate conditions, such as high temperatures or water scarcity, lead to a higher demand of energy because of the need for air conditioning or water pumps and pipelines. As such, the guarantee of energy security is a major and urgent issue which is narrowly interlinked with the MDGs.¹³⁷

Conclusion

Most ESCWA Member States are conscious of the necessity of advancing sustainable energy and aim to link socio-economic development with renewable energies. Nevertheless, many countries still lack realistic strategies for reducing dependency on fossil fuels and for investing in innovative energy sources. Even though some countries have set goals regarding renewable energies, these are often unambitious. Many ESCWA members still lack a

¹²⁴ Hertog, *Energy and sustainable policies in the CCG*, 2009, pp. 14-15.

¹²⁵ Haines, *Policies for accelerating access to clean energy, improving health, advancing development, and mitigating climate change*, 2007, p. 1272.

¹²⁶ United Nations, *The Energy Challenge for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*, 2005, p. i.

¹²⁷ United Nations, *The Energy Challenge for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*, 2005, p. i.

¹²⁸ Flavin, *Energy for Development: The Potential Role of Renewable Energy in Meeting the Millennium Development Goals*, pp. 12, 30.

¹²⁹ United Nations General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*, 2000.

¹³⁰ Flavin, *Energy for Development: The Potential Role of Renewable Energy in Meeting the Millennium Development Goals*, p. 12.

¹³¹ United Nations General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*, 2000.

¹³² Flavin, *Energy for Development: The Potential Role of Renewable Energy in Meeting the Millennium Development Goals*, pp. 31-33.

¹³³ United Nations, *The Energy Challenge for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*, 2005, p. 8.

¹³⁴ United Nations, *The Energy Challenge for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*, 2005, p. 8.

¹³⁵ Flavin, *Energy for Development: The Potential Role of Renewable Energy in Meeting the Millennium Development Goals*, p. 11.

¹³⁶ UNDP, *Geo5 Global Environment Outlook: Summary for West Asia on the Eve of Rio+20*, 2012, p. 1-2.

¹³⁷ UNDP, *Geo5 Global Environment Outlook: Summary for West Asia on the Eve of Rio+20*, 2012, p. 1-2.

sustainable and determined plan to guarantee the supply of their populations with alternatives to the use of decreasing oil and gas deposits.

The role ESCWA is playing is still unanswered as there are hardly any existing agreements apart from bilateral contracts. How can ESCWA further support the process towards sustainable energy production in the region? Which bilateral and multilateral cooperation with neighboring countries and within the ESCWA system would be advisable and effective? Which measures does ESCWA need to consider to motivate the countries to invest in sustainable energies and thus advance socio-economic development? Besides governmental actors, how could private investors and corporations be included in the process? Which measures could states implement in order to make R&D of alternative energy resources attractive and profitable to private investors?

Annotated Bibliography

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia / League of Arab States. (2005). *Progress achieved on Energy for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region*. Retrieved August 3, 2012 from http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd14/escwaRIM_bp.pdf.

This study by the Joint Technical Secretariat emphasizes the necessity to produce more, cleaner, and cheaper energy in the Arab region as green energy is not affordable for certain groups of the population. The region has already invested in solar and wind resources and also contributes to clean energy in Western Asia. The paper accentuates the most important facts about energy access, the improvement and developments achieved and the initiatives working on the topic to sustainable energy.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2009). *Status of Energy Statistics and Indicators in the ESCWA Region*. Retrieved August 5, 2012 from <http://css.escwa.org.lb/SD/928/STATUSESCWA1.pdf>.

The conclusions of ESCWA about the status of sustainable energy are illustrated through various statistics which show clearly the actual situation of the region concerning energy demand, production and methods. Furthermore it makes the role of oil obvious and stresses the relations between several factors such as economic and social matters, the climate change and security of Western Asia in order to emphasize the need to collaborate further bilaterally and multilaterally.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (2010). *Promoting Large Scale renewable Energy applications in the Arab region: an approach for climate change mitigation*. Retrieved August 4, 2012 from <http://www.uncclearn.org/sites/www.uncclearn.org/files/unescwa01.pdf>.

The consciousness of the difficulties and the circumference of the task the ESCWA Member States face are clearly outlined in this report. Therefore the challenges concerning knowledge, technology and finances to realize the aim of increasing sustainable energy are stressed as well as various kinds of renewable energies and their possible advantages and disadvantages. The report gives a very informative and broad overview of the status of the process on promoting sustainable energy by supporting the regional approaches.

Flavin, Christopher et al. (N.D.). *Energy for Development: The Potential Role of Renewable Energy in Meeting the Millennium Development Goals*. Retrieved August 23, 2012 from <http://www.worldwatch.org/brain/media/pdf/pubs/ren21/ren21-1.pdf>.

This paper shows the close relation between energy and the accomplishment of the majority of the Millennium Development Goals. Energy as a requisite is evaluated and well illustrated as a crucial part to be able to successfully fulfill the MDGs and concurrently provide universal access of energy and socio-economic development.

Gelil, I. A. et al. (2011), Energy. In: Abaza, Hussein et al. (2011). *Arab Environment: Green Economy*. Retrieved August 6, 2012 from <http://www.afedonline.org/Report2011/PDF/En/chapter%203%20Energy.pdf>.

An overview of the main energy resources are provided by this report and the biggest consumers in the Arab states are evaluated. Besides, statistics and diagrams illustrate the most important information and factors within the energy sector and several case studies exemplify attempts made and obstacles found by several countries in the ESCWA region.

Hertog, S. et al. (2009). *Energy and sustainable policies in the CCG*. Retrieved August 23, 2012 from <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/government/research/resgroups/kuwait/documents/Hertog%20paper.pdf>.

Hertog provides an overview of the various aspect of moving towards sustainability of energy and concurrent socio-economic development. The various options are explained and well-illustrated with accompanying statistics and figures to support his findings. Apart from renewable energies the option of using nuclear energy is well elaborated as well as the more efficient use of energy and the resulting possibility of achieving universal access to energy without massively increasing the production.

Luomi, M. (2010). *Oil or climate politics: Avoiding a destabilizing Resource split in the Arab Middle East*. In: Briefing paper 58, The Finnish Institute of International Affairs. Retrieved August 8, 2012 from http://www.ciaonet.org.proxy.nationallizenzen.de/pbei/fiia/0018702/f_0018702_16001.pdf.

The paper describes the changing priorities of the last years towards renewable energies as climate change and its impacts become more visible. It estimates the importance of the oil industry and identifies the oil and gas resources as an obstacle to the implementation of alternative energy sources. Measures to advance the situation are suggested and the necessary cooperation between similar nations in the ESCWA region is accentuated. Furthermore the entanglement of water and energy problems and policies are evaluated.

Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century. (2012). *Renewables 2012: Global Status Report*. Retrieved September 25, 2012 from <http://www.map.ren21.net/GSR/GSR2012.pdf>.

This report is released by Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (REN21), which is a policy network to promote the implementation of renewable energies. Its aim is to support and cooperation concerning knowledge to maintain the growth and the development of renewable energies.

The Secretary-General's High-level Group on Sustainable Energy for All. (2012). *Sustainable Energy for All: A Framework for Action*. Retrieved August 23, 2012 from http://www.unep.org/civil-society/Portals/59/Documents/13_GMGSE/Greenroom/presentations/wednesday/energy_forum/Sustainable_Energy_for_AllA_Framework_for_Action.pdf.

The initiative of the Secretary-General regarding sustainable energy is introduced and emphasizes the most important aims to envisage for the countries and the necessary measures to take. Furthermore various involved institutions, such as the national governments, external sponsors, civil society and private investors and their tasks are examined.. The source provides a good overview of required measures and possible solutions to lacking development measures in order to guarantee a sustainable energy supply. Finally short case studies further explain the situation and exemplify earlier statements and suggestions.

United Nation Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2009). *Framework for Environmental Economic Accounting in the ESCWA region*. Retrieved August 4, 2012 from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/publications/edit/upload/sd-09-3.pdf>.

The source introduces a framework to develop transnational institutions to account for the relations between economic development and environmental protection. It emphasizes the need to link these two issues and stresses the contributions these aims can have on each other. This includes cooperation also in terms of developing new sustainable, environmental friendly energy sources, and to respond to the increasing demand in the region.

Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy. (2009). *Energy Systems in OPEC Countries of the Middle East and North Africa: System Analytic Comparison of Nuclear Power, Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency*. Retrieved August 23, 2012 from http://www.wupperinst.org/uploads/tx_wiprojekt/OPEC-Energy-Systems_report.pdf.

The paper by the Institute exemplifies the current situation concerning renewable energies, nuclear approaches and development by examining the situation of the United Arab Emirates, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Algeria. These examples provide a very good overview of the different problems the countries are regarding and the measure the countries take to improve the situation and to promote development of energy access and dependencies.

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II. Countering Socio-Economic Marginalization to Strengthen post-Arab Spring Democracies

Introduction

The Arab Spring movement began on December 17, 2010 when a Tunisian fruit and vegetable seller, Mohamed Bouazizi, set himself on fire to protest the confiscation of his cart by the police in the town of Sidi Bouzid.¹³⁸ Within weeks, his act had triggered demonstrations across the country, and set in motion demonstrations and protests across the region.¹³⁹ Although the circumstances and actions varied across the region, the protestors shared a common voice calling for political, social, and economic reforms.¹⁴⁰ Major regime change took place in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen, with an ongoing civil war in Syria; major protests occurred across the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) region, with calls for government reform.¹⁴¹ Throughout the movement, traditionally marginalized groups, such as women and youth, were brought to the forefront in calling for necessary reforms to combat their marginalization.¹⁴² In spite of this, the subsequent transitions have often failed to account for socio-economic factors necessary to support post-Arab spring transitions.

Overview of Arab Spring Protests and its Impact on Socio-Economic Marginalization

The protests in Sidi Bouzid quickly spread across Tunisia, led by youth frustrated with high unemployment, price inflation, corruption, and lack of political freedoms, and the movement quickly began calling for political change.¹⁴³ On January 14, 2011, President Ben Ali's rule ended when he fled to Saudi Arabia.¹⁴⁴ The National Constituent Assembly (NCA) held elections on October 23, 2011, with women winning approximately one-quarter of seats.¹⁴⁵ The most recent draft of the new constitution, released in August 2012, has been criticized for language restricting the rights of women and potentially limiting freedom of expression; the process is expected to be finalized in February 2013.¹⁴⁶ Inspired by the events in Tunisia, protests in Egypt began on January 25, 2011, focused on legal and political freedoms, management of resources, and economic issues such as high unemployment, low minimum wage, and food price inflation.¹⁴⁷ President Mubarak resigned on February 11, 2011 and was subsequently put on trial and sentenced to life in prison.¹⁴⁸ Egypt held presidential elections in May 2012, electing Mohamed Mursi as President. A Constituent Assembly of Egypt was formed in June 2012, replacing the earlier constituent assembly, and is expected to present a new constitution in late 2012.¹⁴⁹

In Yemen, protests began in January 2011 against unemployment, poor economic conditions, and government attempts to modify the constitution.¹⁵⁰ These demands quickly escalated to force President Saleh from office; following elections in February 2012, former vice president Hadi took control of the government.¹⁵¹ Protests began in Libya on February 15, 2011 in Benghazi, which escalated into clashes with security forces and a nation-wide rebellion.¹⁵² Ultimately, the conflict developed into a fully-fledged civil war and called for action by the international community. The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1970, which referred the situation to the International Criminal Court to investigate and prosecute crimes against humanity, as well as implementing an arms embargo and targeted asset freeze and travel ban.¹⁵³ In March 2011, the Security Council took further action to enable the protection of civilians and Resolution 1973 established a no fly zone, as well as authorizing Member

¹³⁸ National Public Radio, *Timeline: The Major Events of the Arab Spring*, 2012.

¹³⁹ National Public Radio, *Timeline: The Major Events of the Arab Spring*, 2012.

¹⁴⁰ Benchea and Zaharia, *The Arab World at a Crossroads: Facing the Economic and Social Challenges*, 2012, p. 612.

¹⁴¹ Blight, Pulham, and Torpey, *Arab spring: an interactive timeline of Middle East protests*, 2011.

¹⁴² ESCWA, *High-Level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy*, 2012, 2012, p. 14.

¹⁴³ Anderson, *Demystifying the Arab Spring: Parsing the Differences Between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya*, 2011, p. 299.

¹⁴⁴ Penner Angrist, *Morning in Tunisia: The Frustrations of the Arab World Boil Over*, 2011, p. 77.

¹⁴⁵ Patel, *Pathway to Tunisia's Constitutional Future*, 2012.

¹⁴⁶ Patel, *Pathway to Tunisia's Constitutional Future*, 2012.

¹⁴⁷ Trager, *Letter from Cairo: The People's Military in Egypt?*, 2011, p. 83.

¹⁴⁸ National Public Radio, *Timeline: The Major Events of the Arab Spring*, 2012.

¹⁴⁹ Bradley, *Alarm Raised Over Egypt Constitution*, 2012.

¹⁵⁰ Blight, Pulham, and Torpey, *Arab spring: an interactive timeline of Middle East protests*, 2011.

¹⁵¹ National Public Radio, *Timeline: The Major Events of the Arab Spring*, 2012.

¹⁵² National Public Radio, *Timeline: The Major Events of the Arab Spring*, 2012.

¹⁵³ United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1970*, 2011.

States to “take all necessary measures [...] to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack.”¹⁵⁴ Rebel forces took control of the capital city in late August 2011 and the United Nations recognized the National Transitional Council as the new government of Libya; the former leader Gaddafi was subsequently captured and killed in October 2011.¹⁵⁵ The intervention by NATO has been criticized for going beyond the limits of the Security Council resolutions and blurring the lines between protection of civilians and regime change.¹⁵⁶ In September 2011, the UN established the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), a political mission to aid the post-conflict transition.¹⁵⁷

Public demonstrations in Syria began on March 15, 2011, as part of the Arab Spring movement, and eventually developed into a nationwide uprising. The protests have focused on removing President Assad from power, as well as improving human rights and socio-economic conditions in the country.¹⁵⁸ The situation has continued to escalate and the international community has characterized the conflict as a civil war.¹⁵⁹ On February 23, 2012, Kofi Annan was appointed as the UN-Arab League Special Envoy to Syria and oversaw the creation of a six-point peace plan.¹⁶⁰ In April 2012, the Security Council established a peacekeeping mission, United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS), authorizing 300 unarmed military observers and civilian staff to monitor the ceasefire and support the implementation of the six-point plan.¹⁶¹ On July 20, 2012, Resolution 2059 extended the mandate for 30 days, with a provision that the Council would only consider further extensions if there is a confirmed cessation in the use of heavy weapons and a reduction in the level of violence.¹⁶² These conditions were not met and the UNSMIS mandate ended on August 19, 2012; as of October 1, 2012, the UN is represented by a small liaison office in Syria.¹⁶³ Mr. Annan resigned on August 2, 2012 and was replaced on August 17, 2012 by Lakhdar Brahimi.¹⁶⁴

Further protests have occurred across the region, including in Iraq, Palestine, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan.¹⁶⁵ While these demonstrations have not risen to the level of full government change, they have enacted pressure on respective governments to change their policies.¹⁶⁶ Leaders in Iraq and Sudan have announced that they will not seek re-election after their current terms, while the governments of Jordan, Morocco, and Oman undertook political reforms to appease protestors.¹⁶⁷ In Saudi Arabia, following calls for equal representation and women’s empowerment, King Abdullah announced that women would be allowed to vote in the 2015 municipal elections, as well as run for the Consultative Assembly.¹⁶⁸

Role of Socio-Economic Marginalization

The Arab Spring movement had diverse effects across the ESCWA region, but it shares a few common characteristics: demands for political change and high levels of dissatisfaction with socio-economic conditions.¹⁶⁹ Although the economic conditions vary within the region, the economies can be roughly divided into three main categories: (i) resource rich, labor-abundant countries, such as Iraq, Syria, and Yemen; (ii) resource rich, labor-importing countries, such as Libya and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries; and (iii) resource poor countries, such as Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia.¹⁷⁰ In spite of these differences, the region has been characterized by common challenges, such as social inequalities, poor living standards, food insecurity, and high

¹⁵⁴ United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1973*, 2011.

¹⁵⁵ National Public Radio, *Timeline: The Major Events of the Arab Spring*, 2012.

¹⁵⁶ Doyle, *The Folly of Protection: Is Intervention Against Qaddafi’s Regime Legal and Legitimate?*, 2011, p. 248.

¹⁵⁷ United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 2009*, 2011.

¹⁵⁸ International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect, *Crisis in Syria*, 2012.

¹⁵⁹ International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect, *Crisis in Syria*, 2012.

¹⁶⁰ Annan, *Six-point proposal of the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States*, 2012.

¹⁶¹ United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 2043*, 2012.

¹⁶² United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 2059*, 2012.

¹⁶³ BBC News, *UN Syria observer mission over, says Security Council*, 2012.

¹⁶⁴ BBC News, *UN Syria observer mission over, says Security Council*, 2012.

¹⁶⁵ Al Jazeera English, *Spotlight: The Arab awakening*, 2011.

¹⁶⁶ National Public Radio, *Timeline: The Major Events of the Arab Spring*, 2012.

¹⁶⁷ Al Jazeera English, *Spotlight: The Arab awakening*, 2011.

¹⁶⁸ National Public Radio, *Timeline: The Major Events of the Arab Spring*, 2012.

¹⁶⁹ MENA-OECD Investment Programme, *Socio-Economic Context and Impact of the 2011 Events in the MENA Region*, 2011, p. 2.

¹⁷⁰ MENA-OECD Investment Programme, *Socio-Economic Context and Impact of the 2011 Events in the MENA Region*, 2011, p. 9.

unemployment rates.¹⁷¹ A 2010 study found that 35% of the ESCWA region reported dissatisfaction with their standard of living, linked to low per capita GDP, lack of public services, and absence of political voice.¹⁷² In addition, the proportion of people unable to buy enough food increased or remained constant across the region, with particularly high increases in Egypt and Sudan.¹⁷³ Across the region, nearly two-thirds of the working population is engaged in the informal sector, in jobs requiring low skill levels and offering low wages, no protection, and limited opportunities for advancement to better employment.¹⁷⁴

These effects were particularly felt among traditionally marginalized groups, such as youth, women, and disabled citizens.¹⁷⁵ For example, youth unemployment in the Arab world was reported at 23.4%, more than double the overall unemployment rate for the region.¹⁷⁶ Women also face high unemployment rates, as well as being more limited to employment in the informal sectors.¹⁷⁷ Surprisingly, the rates of unemployment among women and youth increase with levels of education, reaching as high as 51% among secondary and tertiary school graduates in Tunisia.¹⁷⁸ This problem heightened feelings of dissatisfaction with governments perceived as “incapable of permitting participation in the political process, providing job opportunities, fighting corruption or reducing high levels of unemployment and poverty.”¹⁷⁹ The Arab Spring movement represented an opportunity for these marginalized populations, particularly women and youth, to voice these concerns and demand a greater voice in reshaping both the political systems, but also the economic and social structures that have allowed their exclusion.¹⁸⁰

Linking Social and Economic Reforms to Good Governance

The concept of social and economic marginalization has evolved within the international community since the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995.¹⁸¹ The *Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development*, agreed upon by all Member States attending the 1995 summit as the final outcome document, states as its goal the creation of a “society for all,” which “must be based on respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, cultural and religious diversity, social justice and the special needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, democratic participation and the rule of law.”¹⁸² Socio-economic marginalization can be defined as the process by which individuals and groups are prevented from “full participation in social, economic and political life and from asserting their rights.”¹⁸³ Groups are excluded from participation in society and economic structures based on their identity, such as gender, age, or disability, which further limits their access to political processes and participatory democracy.¹⁸⁴

Institutional Framework

The framework for socio-economic reforms can be found in the international human rights framework and the internationally agreed development goals. Human rights with an impact on socio-economic circumstances are grounded primarily in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)* and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)*.¹⁸⁵ The *UDHR*, drafted to complement the *UN Charter's* provisions on human rights, serves as a foundation identifying the basic rights to which all humans are entitled; the document is roughly divided into guarantees of civil and political rights and social, economic, and cultural rights.¹⁸⁶ Among the rights elaborated in the *UDHR*, those most relevant to this topic include the right to work and the right to

¹⁷¹ Breisinger, Ecker and Al-Riffai, *Economics of the Arab Awakening*, 2011, p. 1.

¹⁷² Breisinger, Ecker and Al-Riffai, *Economics of the Arab Awakening*, 2011, p. 1.

¹⁷³ Breisinger, Ecker and Al-Riffai, *Economics of the Arab Awakening*, 2011, p. 1.

¹⁷⁴ ESCWA, *Policy Issues in the ESCWA*, 2012, p. 5.

¹⁷⁵ ESCWA, *Literature Review on Social Exclusion in the ESCWA Region*, 2007, p. 20.

¹⁷⁶ Benchea and Zaharia, *The Arab World at a Crossroads: Facing the Economic and Social Challenges*, 2012, p. 612.

¹⁷⁷ Chatham House, *The Economics of the Arab Spring*, 2011, p. 16.

¹⁷⁸ Benchea and Zaharia, *The Arab World at a Crossroads: Facing the Economic and Social Challenges*, 2012, p. 612.

¹⁷⁹ Atassi, *What the People Want*, 2011, p. 31.

¹⁸⁰ Samad and Mohamadieh, *Revolutions of the Arab Region*, 2011, p. 114.

¹⁸¹ World Summit for Social Development, *Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development*, 1995.

¹⁸² World Summit for Social Development, *Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development*, 1995, para. 66.

¹⁸³ ESCWA, *Literature Review on Social Exclusion in the ESCWA Region*, 2007, p. 3.

¹⁸⁴ ESCWA, *Literature Review on Social Exclusion in the ESCWA Region*, 2007, p. 4.

¹⁸⁵ United Nations General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948; United Nations General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, 1966.

¹⁸⁶ United Nations General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948.

education.¹⁸⁷ The *ICESCR* was adopted in 1966, to provide further commitments towards economic, social, and cultural rights.¹⁸⁸ The core provisions include an expanded right to work, which includes the right to “just and favorable” working conditions; the right to education; and the right of each individual to an “appropriate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.”¹⁸⁹

While these foundational documents include provisions of non-discrimination, which ensure their applicability to all groups, further human rights treaties have addressed the specific needs of certain groups and populations. The first such treaty was the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, which was adopted in 1979 to prevent discrimination against women and encourage their fullest participation in political and public life.¹⁹⁰ *CEDAW* includes provisions guaranteeing rights to education, employment, and economic and social benefits.¹⁹¹ The *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)*, adopted in 1989, extends similar provisions to all persons under the age of 18, including the “right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.”¹⁹² Most recently, in 2006, the United Nations adopted the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)* to ensure that such persons are capable of accessing the full range of rights and full participation in society.¹⁹³ In addition to specific recognitions for women and children with disabilities, the treaty incorporates the full range of economic and social rights, such as education, work and employment, and an adequate standard of living and social protection.¹⁹⁴ Implementation of economic, social, and cultural rights, as opposed to civil and political rights, requires the State Party to “take steps, [...] to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights in the present Covenant by all appropriate means.”¹⁹⁵

The international human rights framework is complemented by the international development agenda, most notably the *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)*.¹⁹⁶ Adopted in 2000, the *MDGs* established a framework of eight international goals, each with specific targets, to be achieved by 2015.¹⁹⁷ These goals include: (1) the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; (2) universal primary education; (3) gender equality and empowerment of women; (4) reduction in child mortality rate; (5) improving maternal health; (6) combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; (7) environmental sustainability; and (8) creating a global partnership for development.¹⁹⁸ Achieving the *MDGs* serves as both a means and a measure of eliminating socio-economic marginalization by combating poverty, empowering women and youths, and improving the universal standard of living.¹⁹⁹ Despite setbacks caused by political tensions and the global economic crisis, the ESCWA region has made significant progress towards achieving the *MDGs*.²⁰⁰ Particular successes have been seen in the areas of health and education, while poverty eradication remains a central concern.²⁰¹ In addition, there continues to be a divergence between the GCC countries, which are on track to meet the *MDG* targets, and the Arab Least Developed Countries and conflict-affected countries, which are struggling to achieve the *MDGs*.²⁰²

Participatory Democracy and Good Governance Measures

¹⁸⁷ United Nations General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948, art. 23, 26.

¹⁸⁸ United Nations General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, 1966.

¹⁸⁹ United Nations General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, 1966, art. 6-7, 11, 13.

¹⁹⁰ United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, 1979.

¹⁹¹ United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, 1979, art. 10, 11, 13.

¹⁹² United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 1989, art. 27.

¹⁹³ United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2006.

¹⁹⁴ United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2006, art. 6-7, 24, 27, 28.

¹⁹⁵ United Nations General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, 1966, art. 2.

¹⁹⁶ United Nations General Assembly, *Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration*, 2001.

¹⁹⁷ United Nations General Assembly, *Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration*, 2001.

¹⁹⁸ United Nations General Assembly, *Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration*, 2001.

¹⁹⁹ ESCWA, *Literature Review on Social Exclusion in the ESCWA Region*, 2007, p. 21.

²⁰⁰ ESCWA, *Third Arab Report on the Millennium Development Goals*, 2010, p. xiii.

²⁰¹ ESCWA, *Third Arab Report on the Millennium Development Goals*, 2010, p. xiii.

²⁰² ESCWA, *Third Arab Report on the Millennium Development Goals*, 2010, p. xiii.

The concept of governance, roughly defined as “the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented),” has become a key component of the development agenda.²⁰³ Good governance is defined not as a specific system of government, but rather through eight major characteristics that should be incorporated: (i) participation; (ii) consensus-oriented action; (iii) accountability; (iv) transparency; (v) responsiveness; (vi) efficacy and efficiency; (vii) equitable and inclusive practices; and (viii) the observation of the rule of law.²⁰⁴ The United Nations system supports the development of good governance and rule of law through the development of strong, participatory government institutions and through democratic transitions.²⁰⁵ The rights to social and economic development are necessarily linked to questions of good governance and participatory democracy, both as a desired outcome and as a means to achieving these objectives.²⁰⁶ Through strengthening social and economic inclusion, citizens are better equipped to engage in the decision-making processes and society is better equipped to “enhance values of freedom, security and democracy.”²⁰⁷ As the ESCWA region looks to move forward from the Arab Spring, it will be necessary to incorporate social and economic reforms that will counteract ongoing forms of exclusion and strengthen the development of democratic governance.

Post-Arab Spring Transitions & Socio-economic Reforms

In the aftermath of the Arab Spring movements, the ESCWA region faces a new wave of opportunities for reform, democratic transitions, and counteracting marginalization.²⁰⁸ This moment “opens up the prospect of building more inclusive economies, societies, and political systems and guaranteeing basic rights previously denied.”²⁰⁹ As the region develops new governance structures and drafts new constitutional frameworks, achieving democratic governance will rely on the development of a more inclusive socio-economic framework.²¹⁰

Building on the opportunities provided by the current transitions, ESCWA continues to promote social and economic inclusion as one aspect to support the development of strong governance institutions.²¹¹ In this context, “[p]articipation and social and economic development are inextricably linked insofar as creating an enabling environment for individuals and societies to feel empowered and make sound decisions related to the process of improving their lives.”²¹² In order to strengthen the social and economic structures, ESCWA has encouraged four areas of improvement: (i) improved monitoring of inequality; (ii) promoting employment and public services; (iii) expanding social protection and integration; and (iv) expanding participation and social accountability.²¹³ In January 2012, ESCWA hosted the *High-Level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy*, which was convened by the five regional commissions to share lessons learned from transition, developing inclusive policies, and effective institution building.²¹⁴ Opening the meeting, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon highlighted four priorities for democratic transitions in the region: (i) real and genuine reform; (ii) inclusive dialogue; (iii) placing women at the center of the region’s future; and (iv) heeding the voices of youth.²¹⁵

Youth

For Arab youths, the self-immolation of Tunisian Mohamed Bouazizi represented their collective anger and caused “a rebellion by an entire generation over the miserable conditions and the multifaceted exclusion of youth in Arab countries.”²¹⁶ Although youth exclusion is a worldwide problem, before the Arab Spring, the ESCWA region was particularly affected by high rates of youth exclusion.²¹⁷ In spite of reforms that improved access to education, there are still high rates of illiteracy and few students in secondary and tertiary education.²¹⁸ Further, the “inability to

²⁰³ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *What is Good Governance?*, 2012.

²⁰⁴ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *What is Good Governance?*, 2012.

²⁰⁵ United Nations, *Global Issues: Governance*, 2012.

²⁰⁶ ESCWA, *About Participatory Development*, 2012.

²⁰⁷ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Participatory Dialogue*, 2007.

²⁰⁸ ESCWA, *High-Level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy*, 2012, p. 1.

²⁰⁹ Clark, *After the Arab Spring, toward political and economic inclusion*, 2011.

²¹⁰ ESCWA, *Participatory Development and Conflict Resolution*, 2012, p. 3.

²¹¹ ESCWA, *Policy Issues in the ESCWA Region*, 2012, p. 3.

²¹² ESCWA, *Policy Issues in the ESCWA Region*, 2012, p. 16.

²¹³ ESCWA, *Policy Issues in the ESCWA Region*, 2012, p. 19.

²¹⁴ ESCWA, *High-Level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy*, 2012, p. 1.

²¹⁵ Ki-moon, Keynote Address at the High-Level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy, 2012.

²¹⁶ ESCWA, *Youth Exclusion in the ESCWA Region*, 2011, p. 11.

²¹⁷ ESCWA, *Youth Exclusion in the ESCWA Region*, 2011, p. 2.

²¹⁸ ESCWA, *Youth Exclusion in the ESCWA Region*, 2011, p. 23.

provide the young with educational and training opportunities remains the major weakness of the educational systems in the ESCWA region.²¹⁹ Although the youths were at the forefront of the Arab Spring movement, their participation has not carried over into the transitional processes.²²⁰ In supporting democratic transitions in the ESCWA region, Member States will need to address the social and economic marginalization of the youth population, particularly concerns such as “economic growth, basic freedoms, the rights of women and issues related to youth and minorities.”²²¹ In October 2011, ESCWA sponsored the *Forum of Young Women and Men in the Arab Region: Agents of Change on the Road to Democracy*.²²² This meeting brought together youth leaders to focus on five major themes: (1) equality of citizens; (2) Arab activists’ experiences; (3) transition to democracy: social, political, and legislative challenges; (4) economic challenges in the transition to democracy; and (5) the role of donors and multilateral financial institutions.²²³

Women

Across the region, “[d]efying their stereotype as victims of oppressive patriarchies, Arab women have made their presence a defining feature of the Arab spring.”²²⁴ Prior to the protests, women’s rights varied greatly across the region, but they have been often vocal political participants, particularly in Egypt and Tunisia.²²⁵ In spite of their involvement, women have seen their voices silenced in the post-uprising transitions and they lack a substantive role in discussions about new government structures.²²⁶ In Egypt, there are no women represented on the constitutional drafting committee and there is only one woman in the new cabinet.²²⁷ In Tunisia, women’s rights are excluded from the new constitution, with one draft defining women’s role as “complementary to men” rather than full and equal participants in social, economic, and political life.²²⁸ There is concern that the rise of Islamist regimes will further marginalize women by implementing social and economic policies limiting women to the private sphere.²²⁹

At the *High-level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy*, participants highlighted that women faced new obstacles “due to the degradation of the socio-economic situation.”²³⁰ In order to discuss these concerns, ESCWA has scheduled an *Expert Group Meeting on ‘Innovative Approaches for Promoting Women’s Political Representation in the ESCWA Region’* to be held in October 2012.²³¹ These approaches will need to go beyond mere quotas for women’s participation, but ensure women’s full involvement in the social, economic, and political spheres through policies that promote women’s education, workforce participation, and economic equality.²³² In addition, in July 2012, ESCWA hosted *Barriers Hindering Women’s Economic Participation in the ESCWA Region*, which addressed the major causes of socio-economic marginalization, including structures for school-to-work transition, the mismatch between women’s skills and the labor market, and mainstreaming gender needs throughout ESCWA’s work.²³³

Conclusions

More than a year after the Arab Spring uprisings began, their effect is far from complete. As the ESCWA region continues to work towards transition and stability, steps must be taken to address the continued exclusion of marginalized groups, particularly women and youth. In order to build strong, participatory democracies, the ESCWA Member States must ensure that all citizens are able to fully participate in decision-making, social, and economic structures.²³⁴ This approach will require that States “transition from considering citizens a threat to

²¹⁹ ESCWA, *Youth Exclusion in the ESCWA Region*, 2011, p. 23.

²²⁰ ESCWA, *High-Level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy*, 2012, p. 22.

²²¹ ESCWA, *High-Level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy*, 2012, p. 22.

²²² ESCWA, *ESCWA Weekly News*, 2011, p. 1.

²²³ ESCWA, *Forum of Young Women and Men in the Arab Uprisings*, 2012, p. 4.

²²⁴ The Economist, *Women and the Arab awakening: Now is the time*, 2011.

²²⁵ Al-Ali, *Gendering the Arab Spring*, 2012, p. 27.

²²⁶ ESCWA, *High-Level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy*, 2012, p. 21.

²²⁷ The Economist, *Women and the Arab awakening: Now is the time*, 2011.

²²⁸ Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Tunisia: UN expert group calls on new Government to protect and strengthen achievements on equality and women’s human rights*, 2012.

²²⁹ Heideman and Youssef, *Reflections on Women in the Arab Spring*, 2012, p. 6.

²³⁰ ESCWA, *High-Level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy*, 2012, p. 16.

²³¹ ESCWA, *Upcoming Meetings*, 2012.

²³² Al-Ali, *Gendering the Arab Spring*, 2012, p. 31.

²³³ ESCWA, *What’s New Archive*, 2012.

²³⁴ ESCWA, *High-Level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy*, 2012, p. 4.

security to recognizing them as the fundamental basis of State legitimacy. To this end, constitutional reforms must focus on rethinking the relationship between the State and citizens and focus on building a people-centered State based on inclusive economies and social justice.”²³⁵

In preparation for the Conference, delegates should consider what steps their government has taken to address social and economic marginalization at both the regional and national levels. Has your Member State implemented the existing human rights and development framework and are those rights protected in new constitutional frameworks? Following the Arab Spring uprisings, what can be done to ensure that women and youths are able to fully access the social and economic spheres? What steps can be taken by the international community and by countries in transition to support a more inclusive social and economic structure?

²³⁵ ESCWA, *High-Level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy*, 2012, p. 4.

Annotated Bibliography

Benchea, L. and Zaharia, R. (2012). *The Arab World at a Crossroads: Facing the Economic and Social Challenges*. Retrieved August 3, 2012, from

http://leidykla.vgtu.lt/conferences/BM_2012/social_and_economics/608_615_Benchea.pdf

This paper addresses the economic and social effects of the Arab Spring transitions, while identifying important differences between national contexts. The authors provide a comprehensive review of economic conditions and academic research, while focusing on developing strong national and regional policies. Highlighting the demographic and economic problems that created the underlying causes of the protests, the paper proposes appropriate policies addressing labor markets, globalization, and educational opportunities.

Al-Zubaidi, L. (Ed.) (2011). *Perspectives: People's Power: The Arab World in Revolt*. Beirut: Heinrich Böll Stiftung. Retrieved October 19, 2012, from <http://www.ps.boell.org/web/119-568.html>

Incorporating essays from academics, activists, and journalists, this publication offers a comprehensive discussion of the causes and outcomes of the Arab Spring uprisings. Articles address the social, economic, and political factors that contributed to the development of the movement, the important role played by women and youth groups, the demands made by protestors, and the impact on international politics. This source will provide a strong understanding of the diverse impacts of the different movements across the region, as well as the opportunities for change in the immediate aftermath.

Human Rights Watch. (2012). *World Report: 2012*. Retrieved September 6, 2012, from <http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2012>

The World Report provides an in-depth discussion of the human rights conditions of more than 90 countries around the world. This report will serve as a valuable resource for understanding the precise challenges and human rights concerns in all seventeen Member States of ESCWA. In addition, the World Report for 2012 focuses on the effect of the Arab Spring and the opportunities to seek change and rule of law within the region.

International Federation for Human Rights. (2012). *Women and the Arab Spring*. Retrieved September 5, 2012, from <http://arabwomenspring.fidh.net/>

This website provides a discussion of the role of women in the Arab Spring movement and their role in the ongoing transitional process. In addition to highlighting the challenges faced by women in the region, the website offers a more in-depth look at the status of women's rights in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Syria, Yemen, Algeria, and Morocco. Further, the report advocates for national governments and parliaments to implement "20 measures for equality," which includes steps towards women's participation, constitutional reforms, protections against violence against women, and support for women's economic and social rights.

United Nations Development Program Regional Bureau for Arab States. (N.D.). *Arab Human Development Reports*. Retrieved September 5, 2012, from <http://www.arab-hdr.org/>

The Arab Human Development Reports complement the work of the global Human Development Reports by providing a uniquely regional approach to the development agenda. In addition to statistical analysis, the reports introduce approaches to human rights, poverty, education, economic reform, and health concerns. Rather than annual reports, the Arab HDR is a series of thematic reports addressing the key challenges and policy concerns. Key reports delegates should consider include "Creating Opportunities for Future Generations" (2002), "Towards the Rise of Women in the Arab World" (2005), and "Challenges to Human Security in the Arab Countries" (2009).

UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States. (2011). *Arab Youth: Civic Engagement & Economic Participation (LB/2011/SS/PI/70)*. Retrieved August 2, 2012, from

http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/pdf/YCE%20_EN.pdf

Published by UNESCO, this report examines the regional challenges raised by a growing youth population, combined with high unemployment and poverty rates. Recognizing the new

opportunities provided by the Arab Spring transitions, the authors explore ongoing barriers to economic participation and civic engagement, and the impact on democratic structures. In particular, Section II introduces national and regional policies that can be utilized to strengthen youth participation, engagement, and empowerment within the region.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2012). *About Participatory Development in Western Asia*. Retrieved September 3, 2012, from <http://pdwa.escwa.org.lb/page.php?id=1>

Through its Social Participatory Development (SPD) section, ESCWA has undertaken a mission to address the challenges of social exclusion through civic engagement and participation strategies. This website offers a wealth of information relating to the work of the SPD section, including links to reports, publications, and advocacy documents developed by ESCWA. While some of the documents are in Arabic, delegates should be able to find English translations or summaries of the key work product.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2012). *E-forum No. 4: Democracy and Participation*. Retrieved August 2, 2012, from <http://pdwa.escwa.org.lb/page.php?id=54>

Running from 4 June – 30 July 2012, this E-forum provides a discussion of participation of marginalized groups and the incorporation of social and economic issues in the post-Arab Spring transition. The forum offers an in-depth discussion of the socio-economic dimensions of the Arab Spring movement, participation of women and youth groups, and current approaches to addressing ongoing marginalization. Although the discussion is largely in Arabic, delegates can use an online translator to view comments from a range of stakeholders and interested actors.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2012, February 27). *Policy Issues in the ESCWA Region: The Role of Participation and Social Justice in Achieving Sustainable and Balanced Development (E/ESCWA/27/4)*. Retrieved August 7, 2012, from http://escwa.un.org/about/gov/sessions/editor/Download.asp?table_name=sess26_documents&field_name=ID&FileID=108

This report, prepared for ESCWA's 27th Session in May 2012, addresses the existing social and economic challenges in the Arab Region. . Focusing on concerns over high unemployment, poverty, and food insecurity, the report highlights the importance of inclusion and equity in achieving development goals, as well as the relations between political, economic, and social policies. In addition to providing foundational knowledge in the underlying issues, the report introduces current approaches that ESCWA and Member States are utilizing to address this topic.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2012, April 12). *Report of the High-Level Meeting on Reform and Transitions to Democracy (E/ESCWA/OES/2012/WG.1/Report)*. Retrieved September 11, 2012, from <http://escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1222>

Held in Beirut in January 2012, this meeting brought together leadership from the five regional commissions to share their experiences in democratic transitions and institutional reform. Focusing on the Arab Spring transitions in the ESCWA region, the meeting provides relevant background to the topic as well as proposals for further action to be taken. In addition to the report, the ESCWA website offers links to videos of the presentations, which include discussions of building more inclusive policies, transitional justice, and the role of women.

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III. Towards Sustainable Water Management, Development, and Productivity

*Water is personal, water is local, water is regional, water is statewide. Everybody has a different idea, a different approach, a different issue, a different concern. Water is the most personal issue we have.*²³⁶

Introduction

The year 2013 will be the United Nations International Year of Water Cooperation and its objective will be to raise awareness on the issues that countries are facing related to water as well as opportunities for improving cooperation and finding long-term solutions.²³⁷ Water is the element that binds and touches on all aspects of our human life. It is essential not only for the environment but also for the dynamics of economics and all aspects of human health.²³⁸ Its importance becomes visible when analyzing the contribution that water has in sustaining the environment as well its value in our societies.

Implementing the right to water for human consumption, as recognized by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly resolution 64/292, faces three major water management problems.²³⁹ The first concerns the right to extract and use water from specific sources; the second pertains to the right to degrade the quality of water at its source; and the third regards the right to alter the natural environment through extracting or degrading a water source.²⁴⁰ In terms of protecting and restoring the environment, there is also the issue of tapping into international water courses.²⁴¹ All these issues have considerable social, political, economic, and environmental repercussions. At the same time, scholars have underlined that the most important international goal set thus far is Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 7 on environmental sustainability, whose point (c) is to “[h]alve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.”²⁴²

The importance of water issues becomes even greater in Western Asia, where residents are among the largest consumers of water per capita in the world.²⁴³ This is due to a lack of incentives to save water, which is why the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is preoccupied by the lack of proper management of demand and the fact that prices do not reflect the actual availability of this resource in the region.²⁴⁴ Consequently, overexploitation of groundwater has led to the drying up of many natural sources, as was the case with most sources in the oasis of Palmyra in Syria.²⁴⁵ The approach to water management based on supply has not achieved sustainability and security, and many Member States now favor a more integrated approach to water management and protective measures, to ensure sustainable development.²⁴⁶

The basic concept of "sustainable development" began to take shape during the 1980s. It was given concrete form in the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, better known as the *Brundtland Report*, which famously defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”²⁴⁷ The concept gained further momentum during the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, where sustainable development was placed at the core of the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* and its plan of action, *Agenda 21*.²⁴⁸

²³⁶ Marks, *Aqua Shock: The Water Crisis in America*, 2009, p. 114.

²³⁷ United Nations General Assembly, *Resolution 65/154. International Year of Water Cooperation: 2013, 2011*.

²³⁸ Gleick, *Basic Water Requirements for Human Activities: Meeting Basic Needs*, 1996.

²³⁹ United Nations General Assembly, *Resolution A/RES/64/292: The human right to water and sanitation*, 2010.

²⁴⁰ Gleick, *The World's Water 2000-2001: The Biennial Report On Freshwater Resources*, 2000, p. 10.

²⁴¹ Gleick, *The World's Water 2000-2001: The Biennial Report On Freshwater Resources*, 2000, p. 10.

²⁴² Wescoat and White, *Water for Life: Water Management and Environmental Policy*, 2003; United Nations General Assembly, *Resolution 55/2. United Nations Millennium Declaration*, 2000.

²⁴³ Allam, H., El-Dorgham, A., Imam, S., *Global Outlook on SCP Policies Taking action together*, 2012, p. 3.

²⁴⁴ UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook GEO-4: Environment for Development*, 2007, p. 266.

²⁴⁵ UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook GEO-4: Environment for Development*, 2007, p. 268.

²⁴⁶ UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook GEO-4: Environment for Development*, 2007, p. 267.

²⁴⁷ World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). *Our common future*. 1987, p. 43.

²⁴⁸ United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, *Agenda 21*, 1992, Chapter 18.

International questions pertaining to sustainable water management

During the last quarter of the twentieth century, several predictions were made forecasting the levels at which the world quantity of water would diminish between the years 2000 and 2025, with some even going as far as attempting to foresee water levels up to 2075.²⁴⁹ Analyzing these reports, researchers have observed two tendencies. Firstly, early predictions have severely underestimated future demands for water resources due to their relatively strict extrapolation of current needs.²⁵⁰ The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has estimated that freshwater usage grew six fold between 1900 and 1995, which is more than double the rate of population growth.²⁵¹ The same 1999 report published by UNEP approximated that a third of the world's population lived in an area where the situation was critical – meaning water usage was more than 10% of re-generable sweet water use.²⁵² Meanwhile, in the most recent volume of the *World Water Series*, Volume 7, attention is drawn to trans-boundary aquifers whose management and importance has mostly been overshadowed by the management of transnational river basins, despite the fact that, actually, 99% of the world's accessible freshwater comes from underground water basins.²⁵³

However, at the turn of the millennium, the special Commission of the World Water Council (WWC), an international think tank representing over 350 organizations in over 70 countries, gave its view on the issue in a report entitled “Our Vision: Water and Life.”²⁵⁴ Their report concluded that the Earth could provide six times more water for human use than it did 100 years ago and that the problem we are facing is not due to a lack of resources but to an acute water mismanagement crisis, which has led to billions of people suffering along with the environment.²⁵⁵ They attribute the problems to poor political management but recognize that approximately 80% of the world's population's need for drinkable water could be met along with 50% of the need of water for sanitation purposes.²⁵⁶ As of 2012, the need for better political cooperation and stakeholder involvement was still present as mentioned in the *Ministerial Declaration* of the 2012 World Water Forum in which 176 government delegations also prioritized “the acceleration of the implementation human rights related to access to safe drinking water” and underlined the importance of understanding the linkages between water, food and energy.²⁵⁷

Regarding water management, five solutions or “keys” were found during the second World Water Forum of 2001 in Bonn, which is one of the most renowned events organized yearly by the WWC. First, it is quintessential to ensure water access for the poor.²⁵⁸ Second is decentralization, where local level decisions coincide with national policies to the extent that these meet communities' needs.²⁵⁹ The last three keys made reference to new partnerships, better long-term cooperation between neighboring countries, as well as stronger and clearer government initiatives.²⁶⁰ Progress has been made thus far, and part of the goal was met early with the United Nations announcing that in 2010, 89% of the world's population had access to potable water, which is 1% more than the 88% aimed for in the MDG number 7.²⁶¹ With other water-related goals far from being resolved, new solutions are still being developed. The 7th volume of the *World Water Series*, for example, allocates a quintessential role to corporate water management in the private sector, declaring that it needs to be more resource-conscious and cooperate better with governments and communities.²⁶²

The year 2012 also saw the 20th anniversary of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. One of the major outcomes of the Rio Earth Summit, *Agenda 21*, introduced the concept of Integrated Approaches to Water Resources Management (IWRM).²⁶³ Within the UN System, IWRM is defined as “a process that encourages the development and

²⁴⁹ Alcamo et al., *Global change and global scenarios of water use and availability: An Application of Water*, 1997; Rosengrant, M., X. Cai, and S. Cline, *Global Water Outlook to 2025 Averting an Impending Crisis*, 2002.

²⁵⁰ Gleick, *The World's Water 2000-2001: The Biennial Report On Freshwater Resources*, 2000, p. 29.

²⁵¹ UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook 2*, 1999.

²⁵² UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook 2*, 1999.

²⁵³ Gleick, *The World's Water Volume 7: The Biennial Report on Freshwater Resources*, 2012, p. 3.

²⁵⁴ WWC, *World Water Council: Water, a global priority*, 2010, p. 4.

²⁵⁵ Cosgrove and Rijsberman. *World Water Vision: Making Water Everybody's Business*, 2000, p. 60.

²⁵⁶ Cosgrove and Rijsberman. *World Water Vision: Making Water Everybody's Business*, 2000, p. 18.

²⁵⁷ International Committee of the 6th World Water Forum, *Global Water Framework: Draft Forum Synthesis*, 2012, p. 9.

²⁵⁸ International Conference on Freshwater. *Water – Key to Sustainable Development the Bonn Keys*, 2001

²⁵⁹ International Conference on Freshwater. *Water – Key to Sustainable Development the Bonn Keys*, 2001

²⁶⁰ International Conference on Freshwater. *Water – Key to Sustainable Development the Bonn Keys*, 2001

²⁶¹ UNICEF/WHO. *Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation: 2012 Update*, 2012, p. 2.

²⁶² Gleick, *The World's Water Volume 7: The Biennial Report on Freshwater Resources*, 2012, p. 25.

²⁶³ United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, *Agenda 21*, 1992, Chapter 18.

coordinated management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximize the economic well-being and social results in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.”²⁶⁴ On the occasion of the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, progress made was analyzed. It was concluded that, although since 1992, 80% of Member States had started reforming their water management systems in accordance with the *Agenda 21* recommendations, there was a perceived increase of risks and competition regarding water access.²⁶⁵ Many country respondents reported that improvements to the institutional framework have led to a better water resource management. Also, at the moment just over half of the world’s countries are engaged in “implementation of transboundary agreements for specific river basins.”²⁶⁶ In consequence, the General Assembly *Resolution 66/288* calls for cooperation at the international level in order to accelerate the adoption of measures aimed at reducing water pollution and increase water quality.²⁶⁷

Water Resource Management in Western Asia

In Western Asia, over 60% of surface water comes from outside the region.²⁶⁸ At the moment, efforts are being made to improve degraded lands; yet they will open only 2.8% of the land in the Arabian Peninsula and 13.6% in the Mashreq.²⁶⁹ However, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have made significant progress in environmental governance since the 1987 *Brundtland Report*, through the establishment of environmental institutions, by adopting regulations to protect the environment, developing strategies for sustainable development and the environment, and adhering to many multilateral environmental agreements.²⁷⁰ Still, the continued population growth, military conflicts, and rapid development have resulted in a significant increase in environmental challenges and pressure on natural resources.²⁷¹ The key environmental issues in the region are the lack of freshwater, land degradation, the conservation of coastal and marine ecosystems, urban management, and peace and security.²⁷² As such, waterborne diseases and sharing of international water sources have become very unstable issues.²⁷³ Published 20 years after the *Brundtland Report*, UNEP’s 2007 *Global Environmental Outlook 4 (GEO-4)* saluted the world’s progress in mainstreaming the environment significantly more into political considerations everywhere in the world. Despite these developments, problems persist as actions and institutional provisions have systematically demonstrated shortfalls and as answers are still being developed.²⁷⁴ For example, 16 years after the severe environmental damage caused by the Gulf War, ecosystems, particularly in Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, still show clear signs of the effects of conflict – and this situation has worsened during the 2003 invasion of Iraq.²⁷⁵ Moreover, the construction of military fortifications, the laying and removal of landmines, and the movement of military vehicles and troops has seriously upset the environment.²⁷⁶ In the desert, this has accelerated soil erosion and created dust and sand storms.²⁷⁷ Also, decades of neglect have created a series of serious environmental problems in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), where water resources are highly polluted by solid and liquid waste.²⁷⁸

At the turn of the millennium, reports were conducted to evaluate the management of water resources in Western Asia. One such report written in preparation for UNEP’s *GEO-2000* stated that the rapid increase of the region’s population was inversely proportional with the per capita share of locals; as a consequence, the water deficit in the area would increase considerably over the next decade and a half.²⁷⁹ The same report painted a grim view of

²⁶⁴ UN. *Integrated Water Resources Management*, 2012.

²⁶⁵ UN Water, *UN-Water Status Report on the Application of Integrated Approaches to Water Resources Management*, 2012; UN, *Integrated Water Resources Management*, 2012.

²⁶⁶ UN Water, *UN-Water Status Report on the Application of Integrated Approaches to Water Resources Management*, 2012, p.16.

²⁶⁷ UN Water, *UN-Water Status Report on the Application of Integrated Approaches to Water Resources Management*, 2012; United Nations General Assembly, *GA Resolution 66/288: The Future We Want*, 2012, p. 24.

²⁶⁸ UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook GEO-4: Environment for Development*, 2007, p. 266.

²⁶⁹ UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook GEO-4: Environment for Development*, 2007, p. 269.

²⁷⁰ *GEO-4, Wars Still Scar West Asia’s Environment*, 2007.

²⁷¹ UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook GEO-4: Environment for Development*, 2007, p. 270.

²⁷² UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook GEO-4: Environment for Development*, 2007, p. 269

²⁷³ UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook GEO-4: Environment for Development*, 2007, p. 269.

²⁷⁴ UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook GEO-4: Environment for Development*, 2007, p. 269.

²⁷⁵ UNEP, *Global Environment Outlook GEO-4: Environment for Development*, 2007, p. 268.

²⁷⁶ *GEO-4, Wars Still Scar West Asia’s Environment*, 2007.

²⁷⁷ *GEO-4, Wars Still Scar West Asia’s Environment*, 2007.

²⁷⁸ *GEO-4, Wars Still Scar West Asia’s Environment*, 2007.

²⁷⁹ *GEO-2000, Alternative Policy Study: Water Resource Management in West Asia*, 1999.

Western Asian water resources with groundwater resource use being exponentially larger than the recharging rate.²⁸⁰ This meant that many Member States in the region, such as Jordan and Syria, already had nearly depleted their groundwater basins as a result exhausting most surface level water sources. To counteract these shortages, desalination and wastewater processing plays an ever-increasing role in water management; but there has also been a perceived policy shift towards sustainable consumption and production.²⁸¹ Consequently, during the 2008 meeting of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment, which was attended by almost half of the Member States represented in Western Asia, the *Arab Regional Strategy for Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)* was endorsed, especially focusing on energy and water use.²⁸² It was the Marrakech process, developed in 2003, which provided quintessential support for the implementation of *SCP* policies, including the Green Growth Initiative in Asia.²⁸³ This was created in response to the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation's (JPOI)* call for a 10-year framework of programs aimed at supporting initiatives promoting sustainable development.²⁸⁴

The *GEO-2000* report stated that these effects of water resource depletion were also partially due to institutions' poor coordination and inadequate technical knowledge of water affairs.²⁸⁵ For this reason the "cross-cutting" theme chosen for regional preparatory discussions for the 2012 *GEO-5* was "environmental governance", with two main focuses on freshwater usage and climate change.²⁸⁶ As such, in 2012, *GEO-5* advises a shift in policy so that it will tackle underlying causes of water scarcity and environmental degradation, rather than their effects. This can be done by ensuring that positive drivers for change are emphasized in order to neutralize negative drivers, such as urbanization, population growth, and certain socio-economic policies.²⁸⁷ However, there is also a fear that in light of underground water resource depletion, governments might react hastily when trying to counteract rising rates of unfulfilled water demands.²⁸⁸ One possible course of action – as governments lack funding – could be the privatization of urban water system and sanitation services. Yet this could raise prices adversely, thus impeding access to water for an increasing proportion of the population.²⁸⁹

In one of their regional analyses, ESCWA recognizes that there has been an insufficient implementation of IWRM in the region. According to the brief, there was a wide array of reasons for this failure, including "lack of awareness and public funds, fragmented water related institutional infrastructure, absence of comprehensive national water policies, outdated legislation, deterioration of water quality, inconsistency in water resources data, the insufficiency of basic data and the demand for water [being] irrationally high."²⁹⁰ In response to these deficiencies, ESCWA supports IWRM as the key to the water problem.²⁹¹ As such, IWRM is closely linked with poverty reduction in the region, empowering the marginalized, and promoting overall good governance.²⁹² The remaining question, however, is to what extent governments in the region can afford a successful implementation of the IWRM system. It was GCC Member States who were reported to make the most progress in the area, and this is due to the fact that they have the funds to pay for certain technological advancements and research.²⁹³ Meanwhile, the rest of the countries in the region have very limited options, varying from having to accept foreign grants or loans (which generally limit their own governments' powers through multiple clauses), and simply having to do without adequate IWRM integration.²⁹⁴ In consequence, it has been oil-rich countries like Saudi Arabia who have invested the most in technologies such as desalination, as they were able to compensate for these high costs through their national low energy prices and petrodollars.²⁹⁵ Other countries may have to rely on international organizations, such as the

²⁸⁰ GEO-2000, *Alternative Policy Study: Water Resource Management in West Asia*, 1999.

²⁸¹ GEO-2000, *Alternative Policy Study: Water Resource Management in West Asia*, 1999.

²⁸² Allam, H., El-Dorgham, A., Imam, S., *Global Outlook on SCP Policies Taking action together*, 2012, p. 5; UNEP, *Arab Regional Strategy for Sustainable Consumption and Production*, 2009, p. 2.

²⁸³ UNDESA and UNEP, *Proposed Input to CSD 18 And 19 on a 10 Year Framework Of Programmes On Sustainable Consumption and Production (10yfp On SCP)*, 2010, p. 5.

²⁸⁴ UNEP, *Marrakech Process*, 2012.

²⁸⁵ GEO-2000, *Alternative Policy Study: Water Resource Management in West Asia*, 1999.

²⁸⁶ UNEP, *GEO-5: Summary for West Asia on the Eve of Rio+20*, 2012.

²⁸⁷ UNEP, *GEO-5: Environment for the future we want*, 2012, p. 374.

²⁸⁸ UNEP, *GEO-5: Environment for the future we want*, 2012, p. 374.

²⁸⁹ Rosengrant, Cai, and Cline, *Global Water Outlook to 2025 Averting an Impending Crisis*, 2002, p.10.

²⁹⁰ ESCWA, *Enhancing The Application Of Integrated Water Resources Management In The ESCWA Region*, 2004, p. 10.

²⁹¹ ESCWA, *Enhancing The Application Of Integrated Water Resources Management In The ESCWA Region*, 2004, p. 12.

²⁹² ESCWA, *Enhancing The Application Of Integrated Water Resources Management In The ESCWA Region*, 2004, p. 10.

²⁹³ ESCWA, *Enhancing The Application Of Integrated Water Resources Management In The ESCWA Region*, 2004, p. 13.

²⁹⁴ ESCWA, *Enhancing The Application Of Integrated Water Resources Management in the ESCWA Region*, 2004, p. 11.

²⁹⁵ ESCWA, *Enhancing The Application Of Integrated Water Resources Management in the ESCWA Region*, 2004, p. 12.

World Bank. Its platform has recently become more and more focused on renewable energy and sustainable development, and, hence, on offering support for the implementation of sustainable water management practices.²⁹⁶

Member States can also discuss and cooperate on regional water issues through the ESCWA Committee on Water Resources. Its sessions offer delegations a forum to develop recommendations and solutions.²⁹⁷ An example of the topics debated at the Committee's Ninth Session is the specifics of a regional legal framework that would improve cooperation on water issues in the Arab region. The committee's recommendations touched on issues such as continuing ESCWA's support to the Technical Scientific and Advisory Committee of the Arab Ministerial Council in implementing its programs.²⁹⁸

Case Study: Yemen's Ministry of Water and Environment

With the support of the World Bank Group (WBG), in 2003 Yemen created the Ministry of Water and Environment, whose purpose was to oversee three national agencies (one for general water resources management, one for rural water supply and the National Water and Sanitation Agency), as well as a set of completely new and self-sufficient wastewater systems.²⁹⁹ Prior to 2003, the focus had been mostly on short-term answers such as improving the water supply infrastructure, but through the 2003 *Water Resource Sector Strategy* the focus changed to four core areas: agricultural use of water; stake-holder involvement; the urban water supply; and the sustainable management of aquifers.³⁰⁰ What followed was the *Country Water Resources Assistance Strategy*, which paved the way for Yemen to adopt its own *National Water Sector Strategy and Investment Program* in 2005.

Through its experience in Yemen, the WBG recognizes that there is a need to adapt expectations of change to available resources, especially in arid poor countries.³⁰¹ There is also a need to "shift the dialogue" from project investment to the creation and implementation of economic incentives that will not only align providers with users, but also align interactions between the two with the national strategy.³⁰² The WBG also underlines that the project was threatened by overshooting of national agencies and that success thus far was due in a large part to stakeholder involvement.³⁰³ The importance of the issue in the region was underlined during the 25th ESCWA Ministerial Session in 2008 in Yemen, when members asked the ECOSOC to focus research regarding vulnerability to climate change in the region on fresh-water resources.³⁰⁴

Improving water productivity in Western Asia

Research activities, if tailored to dry areas prevalent in many ESCWA Member States, can considerably improve water productivity in the region.³⁰⁵ A first outcome of research activities is supplemental irrigation for rain-fed farming which implies supplementing rainwater with irrigation water.³⁰⁶ This technique improves yields considerably and thus leads to a higher level of wheat production per water-unit, comparable with fully irrigated areas.³⁰⁷ In steppe areas (an area generally too dry to support the growth of trees, but wet enough not to be considered a desert), research has shown that rain harvesting, an ancient practice, can increase yield per crop unit by diminishing the effects of droughts and ensuring a better spread water coverage. Areas such as the Maaqqar in Jordan have successfully been using this technique to grow olive trees for a decade and a half.³⁰⁸ However, these two technologies depend immensely on farmers' resources, but also on policy, which might make land-ownership uncertain.³⁰⁹

²⁹⁶ World Bank Group, *Sustaining Water for All in a Changing Climate*, 2010, p. 88.

²⁹⁷ ESCWA, *Ninth Session of the ESCWA Committee on Water Resources*, 2011, p. 2.

²⁹⁸ ESCWA, *E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/8/Report : The Committee On Water Resources On Its Ninth Session*, 2011.

²⁹⁹ World Bank Group, *Sustaining Water for All in a Changing Climate*, 2010, p. 88.

³⁰⁰ World Bank Group, *Sustaining Water for All in a Changing Climate*, 2010, p. 87.

³⁰¹ World Bank Group, *Sustaining Water for All in a Changing Climate*, 2010, p. 88.

³⁰² World Bank Group, *Sustaining Water for All in a Changing Climate*, 2010, p. 90.

³⁰³ World Bank Group, *Sustaining Water for All in a Changing Climate*, 2010, p. 90.

³⁰⁴ ESCWA, *Report on the Twenty-Fifth Session*, 2008.

³⁰⁵ Oweiss and Hachum, *Water Productivity in Agriculture: Limits and Opportunities for Improvement*, 2003, p. 186.

³⁰⁶ Oweiss and Hachum, *Water Productivity in Agriculture: Limits and Opportunities for Improvement*, 2003, p. 186.

³⁰⁷ Oweiss and Hachum, *Water Productivity in Agriculture: Limits and Opportunities for Improvement*, 2003, p. 186.

³⁰⁸ Oweiss and Hachum, *Water Productivity in Agriculture: Limits and Opportunities for Improvement*, 2003, p. 187.

³⁰⁹ Oweiss and Hachum, *Water Productivity in Agriculture: Limits and Opportunities for Improvement*, 2003, p. 187.

Another option would be deficit reduction, which implies allowing for a small level of water deficiency, and, hence, lower yields in exchange for a higher per water-unit yield.³¹⁰ Studies have shown that a 50% reduction of supplemental irrigation will lead to an only 15% decrease of yield.³¹¹ But this technique too has its shortcomings, as it requires a certain level of knowledge and skillset regarding rainfall distribution and the moisture-stress levels of plants.³¹² Most importantly, however, is that a curvilinear water production-yield relationship has been found. This means that past a certain point the amount of, for example, wheat produce relative to the amount of water used diminishes considerably. This is extremely important in Western Asia, as the limitations in agricultural productivity pertain mostly to water availability rather than land.³¹³ As such, it is important to obtain higher productions per unit of water than per unit of land.

Existing irrigation technologies have become more and more automated and autonomous.³¹⁴ This is because they were mainly developed in industrialized countries where there was a need to replace expensive labor costs.³¹⁵ This, however, is not what is primarily needed in Western Asia, a region where labor costs are low but technological ones are considerably bigger in comparison to the country's GDP. The region rather needs a small-scale adaptation of techniques, so that they better suit the needs of local farmers whose resources are limited.³¹⁶

Conclusion

When studying water resource management in the 21st century, it is essential to identify those additional research and administrative policies that promise sustainable development. In Western Asia, this can be achieved by increasing financing for research that will produce regionally adequate solutions for water management. Implementation of the IWRM is quintessential in this process, and its success can lead to a more economic per capita usage of water resources and a less dry future for coming generations. Equally important in this logic is the focus on underlying problems of water management and productivity, rather than simply tackling each issue as it arises, which is often more costly on the long-term from a socio-economic viewpoint.

There are many questions, however, that remain, regarding sustainable water management, development, and productivity in Western Asia – and beyond. How can the financial difficulties certain countries in the region face when attempting better water management policies and systems be dealt with effectively? What policy focus point shifts are required by countries to achieve sustainable water management? How can a change in financial resource allocation that will support more costly long-term answers and not temporary solutions be achieved? How can local stakeholders become more involved in the decision-making process? Since water resources do not depend on national boundaries, how can collaboration between neighboring countries be improved so that the best outcome for all stakeholders can be achieved?

³¹⁰ Oweiss and Hachum, *Water Productivity in Agriculture: Limits and Opportunities for Improvement*, 2003, p. 186.

³¹¹ Oweiss and Hachum, *Water Productivity in Agriculture: Limits and Opportunities for Improvement*, 2003, p. 186.

³¹² Oweiss and Hachum, *Water Productivity in Agriculture: Limits and Opportunities for Improvement*, 2003, p. 186.

³¹³ Oweiss and Hachum, *Water Productivity in Agriculture: Limits and Opportunities for Improvement*, 2003, p. 179.

³¹⁴ Oweiss and Hachum, *Water Productivity in Agriculture: Limits and Opportunities for Improvement*, 2003, p. 195.

³¹⁵ Oweiss and Hachum, *Water Productivity in Agriculture: Limits and Opportunities for Improvement*, 2003, p. 196.

³¹⁶ Oweiss and Hachum, *Water Productivity in Agriculture: Limits and Opportunities for Improvement*, 2003, p. 196.

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Hassing, J. et al (2009). *IWRM in Action*. The United Nations World Water Development Report 3: Water in a Changing World. Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved August 9, 2012 from:

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001818/181891e.pdf>.

With a foreword written by the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, this report offers delegates a holistic overview of water management processes and policies. As such the key areas under discussion here are the forces behind the pressure on water resources and the evaluation of the state of the resource. The paper also provides a set of answers, which will help alleviate the problem at an international level.

Rosengrant, M., X. Cai, and S. Cline, *Global Water Outlook to 2025 Averting an Impending Crisis*, A 2020 Vision for Food, Agriculture, and the Environment Initiative, Washington: International Food Policy Research Institute 2002.

Published by the International Food Policy Research Institute, one of 15 centers supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, in cooperation with the International Water Management Institute, this source offers a more critical view of current issues in water management. Delegates will find here a variety of possible scenarios based on statistics, which present an array of possible crises, which can be set off by an unbalance in the water-environment-food production relationship. Along with an explanation of why these crises may occur, the document also provides policy key, which may help avoid them.

United Nations Environment Programme (2012). *The UN-Water Status Report on the Application of Integrated Approaches to Water Resources Management*: UNEP. Retrieved August 09, 2012 from

http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/pdf/un_water_status_report_2012.pdf.

In this report written with the support of various United Nations Bodies such as UNDP or FAO, the subject of water resources management and relevant integrated approaches are discussed. The paper introduces the issue within the RIO and RIO+20 context and then goes on to give a detailed account of regional and country specific issues, such as local perceptions of integrated management processes and infrastructure requirements. This source offers delegates a great general introduction to the topic as it makes reference to most key issues surrounding water management at an international level.

United Nations General Assembly. (2000). *Resolution 55/2. United Nations Millennium Declaration*, adopted at the 8th Plenary Meeting, 18 September 2000. Retrieved August 21, 2012 from:

<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf>.

This is the Resolution in which the GA's 8th Plenary adopted the MDGs. Along with stating all the goals, the resolution contains an expressed desire to promote gender equality, support youth in finding employment, encourage drug availability in developing countries at lower prices, develop partnerships to address poverty and ensure that technological advancements become available to everyone.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2010). *ESCWA Water Development Report 3 Role Of Desalination In Addressing Water Scarcity (E/ESCWA/Sdpd/2009/4)*, New York: United Nations. Retrieved August 9, 2012 from: <http://undocs.org/e/escwa/sdpd/2009/4>.

As part of the ESCWA Water Development Report series, this paper offers an in-depth description of the desalination process and its importance in the region. Consequently, delegates will find here an overview of the water resources in the region, including the levels of demand contrasted with the supply available, as well as a discussion surrounding the costs of desalination, financial or otherwise, and means of reducing them.

UNEP. (2000). *GEO-2000: Alternative Policy Study: Water Resource Management in West Asia*. Retrieved September 13, 2012, from: <http://www.grid.unep.ch/geo2000/aps-wasia/index.htm>.

Conducted by the Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Drylands in association with the Arabian Gulf University, this study summarizes the water management needs of Western Asia. As such, it offers ample statistical data as well as three scenarios, which can help policy makers

decide on adequate courses of actions. Delegates will find this source useful, as it gives an account of progress made in the region until 2000 and attempts to predict further developments, predictions which can now be compared with recent result published in more recent GEO reports.

UNEP. (2012). West Asia. In: *GEO-5: Environment for the future we want*. Malta: UNEP, 373-399. Retrieved September 09, 2012 from: http://www.unep.org/geo/pdfs/geo5/GEO5_report_full_en.pdf.

Written as part of the GEO series, GEO-5 report is the most recent one published. Delegates will find this source in its entirety as an excellent introduction to all current environmental issues. More relevant to the topic is chapter 14, which regards West Asia, and the policy changes needed to be made in the region so that sustainable development may be attained. As such, the chapter includes country statistics and data and graphs pertaining to the level of progress achieved and the areas that still need attention. In terms of policy appraisals, the source offers an elaborate overview of water system management in the region.

Water Issues Team of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2004). *Enhancing The Application Of IWRM In The ESCWA Region*. Beirut: UN-ESCWA. Retrieved August 09, 2012 from: <http://css.escwa.org.lb/sdpc/1131/ESCWARegionalTrainingManual-Summary.pdf>.

Covering three main sections: Water Use, Water Management Tools and Water Governance, this document focuses on the IWRM (IWRM) framework. Within the three sections, delegates will find ample details about what IWRM is, and the importance of such a framework within ESCWA, as it offers a solution for regional and national sustainable water management.

World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). (1987). *Our common future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Retrieved August 09, 2012 from: <http://www.un-documents.net/a42r187.htm>.

Also known as the Brundtland report this paper was used as the basis for the Earth Summit in 1992, the report popularized the term "sustainable development" and has in particular given the commonly accepted definition of the concept. With 12 main chapters, the report focuses on topics such as urbanization, food security, energy and industry, and ecosystems. Delegates will find particularly interesting chapter 2 which sets out key issues in sustainable development, as well as chapter 12 which sets the grounds for institutional and legal changes that would further humanity's common needs.

World Bank Group. (2010). *Sustaining Water for All in a Changing Climate*. Washington: WBG. Retrieved August 09, 2012 from: http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2010/10/14/000334955_20101014040753/Rend/er/PDF/571250WP00Box31LIC10sustainingwater.pdf.

This is an important source as it was published by the World Bank Group, who is one of the main financial backers of sustainable water management projects and systems in non-oil rich countries in the region. Here delegates will find several summaries of projects that the World Bank has supported, the achievements they had, and the lessons they learned.

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Rules of Procedure

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Introduction

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

I. SESSIONS

Rule 1 - Dates of convening and adjournment

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

Rule 2 - Place of sessions

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

II. AGENDA

Rule 3 - Provisional agenda

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

Rule 4 - Adoption of the agenda

The agenda provided by the Director-General shall be considered adopted as of the beginning of the session. The order of the agenda items shall be determined by a majority vote of those present and voting.

The vote described in this rule is a procedural vote and, as such, observers are permitted to cast a vote. For purposes of this rule, those present and voting means those Member States and observers, in attendance at the meeting during which this motion comes to a vote. Should the Commission not reach a decision by conclusion of the first night's meeting, the agenda will be automatically set in the order in which it was first communicated.

Rule 5 - Revision of the agenda

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

For purposes of this rule, the determination of an item of an important and urgent character is subject to the discretion of the Director-General, or his or her designate, and any such determination is final. If an item is determined to be of such a character, then it requires a two-thirds vote of the Commission to be placed on the agenda. The votes described in this rule are substantive votes, and, as such, observers are not permitted to cast a vote. For purposes of this rule, —the members present and voting — means members (not including observers) in

attendance at the session during which this motion comes to vote.

Rule 6 - Explanatory memorandum

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

III. SECRETARIAT

Rule 7 - Duties of the Secretary-General

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

Rule 8 - Duties of the Secretariat

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

Rule 9 - Statements by the Secretariat

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

Rule 10 - Selection of the President

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

Rule 11 - Replacement of the President

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

IV. LANGUAGE

Rule 12 - Official and working language

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

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

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

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

V. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 14 - Quorum

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

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

Rule 15 - General powers of the President

In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him or her elsewhere by these rules, the President shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the Commission, direct the discussions, ensure observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. The President, subject to these rules, shall have complete control of the proceedings of the Commission and over the maintenance of order at its meetings. He or she shall rule on points of order. He or she may propose to the Commission the closure of the list of speakers, a limitation on the time to be allowed to speakers and on the number of times the representative of each member may speak on an item, the adjournment or closure of the debate, and the suspension or adjournment of a meeting.

Included in these enumerated powers is the President's power to assign speaking times for all speeches incidental to motions and amendment. Further, the President is to use her/his discretion, upon the advice and at the consent of the Secretariat, to determine whether to entertain a particular motion based on the philosophy and principles of the NMUN. Such discretion should be used on a limited basis and only under circumstances where it is necessary to advance the educational mission of the Conference and is limited to entertaining motions.

Rule 16 – Authority of the Commission

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

Rule 17 – Voting rights on procedural matters

Unless otherwise stated, all votes pertaining to the conduct of business shall require a majority of the members present and voting in order to pass.

For purposes of this rule, the members present and voting mean those members (including observers) in attendance at the meeting during which this rule is applied. Note that observers may vote on all procedural votes; they may, however, not vote on substantive matters (see Chapter VI). There is no possibility to abstain on procedural votes.

Rule 18 - Points of order

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may rise to a point of order, and the point of order shall be immediately decided by the President in accordance with the rules of procedure. A representative may appeal against the ruling of the President. The appeal shall be immediately put to the vote, and the President's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the members present and voting. A representative rising to a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

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

Rule 19 - Speeches

No representative may address the Commission without having previously obtained the permission of the President. The President shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak. The President may call a speaker to order if his remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

In line with the philosophy and principles of the NMUN, in furtherance of its educational mission, and for the purpose of facilitating debate, the Secretariat will set a time limit for all speeches which may be amended by the President at his/her discretion. Consequently, motions to alter the speaker's time will not be entertained by the President.

Rule 20 - Closing of list of speakers

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

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

Rule 21 - Right of reply

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

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

Rule 22 - Suspension of the meeting

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

Rule 23 - Adjournment of the meeting

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

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

Rule 24 - Adjournment of debate

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. Two representatives may speak in favor of, and two against, the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote. The President may limit the time to be allowed to speakers under this rule.

Rule 25 - Closure of debate

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

Rule 26 - Order of motions

Subject to rule 18, the motions indicated below shall have precedence in the following order over all proposals or other motions before the meeting:

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

Rule 27 - Proposals and amendments

Proposals and amendments shall normally be submitted in writing to the Secretariat. Any proposal or amendment that relates to the substance of any matter under discussion shall require the signature of twenty percent of the members of the Commission [sponsors]. The Secretariat may, at its discretion, approve the proposal or amendment

for circulation among the delegations. As a general rule, no proposal shall be put to the vote at any meeting of the Commission unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations. The President may, however, permit the discussion and consideration of amendments or of motions as to procedure, even though such amendments and motions have not been circulated. If the sponsors agree to the adoption of a proposed amendment, the proposal shall be modified accordingly and no vote shall be taken on the proposed amendment. A document modified in this manner shall be considered as the proposal pending before the Commission for all purposes, including subsequent amendments.

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

Rule 28 - Withdrawal of motions

A motion may be withdrawn by its proposer at any time before voting has commenced, provided that the motion has not been amended. A motion thus withdrawn may be reintroduced by any member.

Rule 29 - Reconsideration of a topic

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

VI. VOTING

Rule 30 - Voting rights

Each member of the Commission shall have one vote.

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

Rule 31 - Request for a vote

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

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

Rule 32 - Majority required

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

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

on substantive votes.

Rule 33 - Method of voting

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

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

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

Rule 34 - Explanations of vote

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

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

Rule 35 - Conduct during voting

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

For purposes of this rule, there shall be no communication amongst delegates, and if any delegate leaves the Commission room during voting procedure, they will not be allowed back into the room until the Commission has convened voting procedure.

Rule 36 - Division of proposals and amendments

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

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

Rule 37 - Amendments

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

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

Rule 38 - Voting on amendments

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

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

Rule 39 - Order of voting on proposals

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

Rule 40 - The President shall not vote

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

VII. CREDENTIALS

Rule 41 - Credentials

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

Rule 42 - Authority of the General Assembly

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

VII. PARTICIPATION OF NON-MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

Rule 43 - Participation of non-Member States

The Commission shall invite any Member of the United Nations that is not a member of the Commission and any other State, to participate in its deliberations on any matter of particular concern to that State.

A sub-commission or sessional body of the Commission shall invite any State that is not one of its own members to participate in its deliberations on any matter of particular concern to that State. A State thus invited shall not have the right to vote, but may submit proposals which may be put to the vote on request of any member of the body concerned.

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

Rule 45 - Participation of national liberation movements

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

Rule 46 - Participation of and consultation with specialized agencies

In accordance with the agreements concluded between the United Nations and the specialized agencies, the specialized agencies shall be entitled: a) To be represented at meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary organs; b) To participate, without the right to vote, through their representatives, in deliberations with respect to items of

concern to them and to submit proposals regarding such items, which may be put to the vote at the request of any member of the Commission or of the subsidiary organ concerned.

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

Representatives of non-governmental organizations/intergovernmental organizations accorded consultative observer status by the Economic and Social Council and other non-governmental organizations/intergovernmental organizations designated on an ad hoc or a continuing basis by the Commission on the recommendation of the Bureau, may participate, with the procedural right to vote, but not the substantive right to vote, in the deliberations of the Commission on questions within the scope of the activities of the organizations.