NMUN•NY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY SECOND COMMITTEE
BACKGROUND GUIDE 2014

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NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2014 National Model United Nations in New York (NMUN•NY) Conference and welcome to our committee, General Assembly Second Committee (GA Second). As part of the volunteer staff, we aim to facilitate, to the best of our abilities, your educational experience at the conference in New York.

Your Director for Conference A, Amanda Wong, holds a BA from Simon Fraser University in Political Science and is currently completing her MS in Environmental Management from the University of London. This is her third year on NMUN staff. Patrick Parsons, Director for Conference B, holds a BA in International Studies and a Bachelor of Science in Animal and Nutritional Science from West Virginia University and is currently completing a Juris Doctorate from American University's Washington College of Law. This is his fourth year on NMUN staff. Nicholas Gachet, Assistant Director for Conference A, is currently a BA student in economics at Universidad San Francisco de Quito. Nicholas has worked in the Central Bank of Ecuador in macroeconomic statistical information. Anke Schwarzkopf, Assistant Director for Conference B, is currently completing her BA in Political Science with a minor in International History and Public Law from the University of Erfurt. This is her second year on staff.

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

I.   External Debt Sustainability and Development
II.   Agriculture Development and Food Security
III. International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

The General Assembly Second Committee serves as the primary forum for discussion of international economic and financial issues at the United Nations. In an increasingly interconnected world economy, the Second Committee provides leadership in the creation of coherent and collaborative strategies to address global financial fragility and sustainable growth for all Member States.

This background guide serves as an introduction to the committee's topics. Accordingly, it is not mean as an all-inclusive source for research, but rather the groundwork for your own analysis and research. The references listed for each topic will provide you with the resources you need to start your own research. In preparation of the conference, each delegation will be submitting a position paper. Please refer to the following pages for details regarding the position paper submission process. 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 concerning your preparation for the Committee or the Conference itself, feel free to contact the substantive staff listed below or the Under-Secretaries-General for the General Assembly, Sonia Patel (Conference A) and Roger Tseng (Conference B): usg.ga@nmun.org

We wish you all the best for your preparation for the Conference and look forward to seeing you at the conference!

Sincerely,

Conference A
Amanda Wong, *Director*
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NMUN•NY Position Paper Guidelines

Due 1 March 2014

Each committee topic should be addressed in a succinct policy statement representing the relevant views of your assigned country, Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), or expert role. You should identify and address international and regional conventions, treaties, declarations, resolutions, and programs of action that are relevant to the policy of your country or NGO. You should also include recommendations for action to be taken by your committee. A delegate's role as a Member State, Observer State, or NGO should affect the way a position paper is written. To understand these differences, please refer to the Delegate Preparation Guide. It may also be helpful to view a Sample Position Paper.

A position paper should be submitted for each assigned committee.
- The two page position paper should cover all the topics in the background guide, not a separate paper for each topic.
- Do not submit papers for committees not assigned to your country/NGO (see matrix for Conf. A or Conf. B).
- No more than two delegates can represent a single country/NGO in a committee. If you assign two delegates to represent a country/NGO on a committee, they submit one position paper jointly, not separate position papers from each individual.

Please pay careful attention to the following guidelines when drafting and submitting your position papers. Only those delegations that follow the guidelines and meet the submission deadline will be eligible for position paper awards.

All papers must be typed and formatted according to the standards below:
- Length must not exceed two pages
- Margins must be set at 1 inch or 2.54 cm. for the whole paper
- Font must be Times New Roman sized between 10 pt. and 12 pt.
- Country/NGO name, school name, and committee name must be clearly labeled on the first page
- Agenda topics must be clearly labeled in separate sections
- National symbols (headers, flags, etc.) are deemed inappropriate for NMUN position papers

Please note that position papers must be comprised of entirely original writing. **The NMUN Conference will not tolerate plagiarism**, including copying from Committee Background Guides. Violation of this policy may result in dismissal from the conference. Although United Nations documentation is considered within the public domain, the conference does not allow the verbatim re-creation of these documents.

How to Submit Your Position Papers

Position papers need to be submitted by email in .pdf or .doc formats. As proof of submission, include yourself as an email recipient. Please use the committee name, your assignment, Conference A or B, and delegation/school name in both the email subject line and in the filename (example: GA1_Cuba_Conf A_State College).

1. Send one complete set of all position papers for each of your country/NGO assignments to the Deputy Secretary-General for the conference you are attending:

   Conference A: positionpapers.nya@nmun.org
   Conference B: positionpapers.nyb@nmun.org

2. Send a copy of your position paper for each assigned committee to the corresponding committee email address listed on the Committee Background Guides page.

Your delegation may wish to submit a copy of their position papers to the permanent mission of the country/NGO headquarters along with an explanation of the conference. This is encouraged if requesting a briefing.

Many, many papers will be read by the Secretariat. Your patience and cooperation in adhering to the above guidelines is greatly appreciated.

Abbreviations

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
BOPTEG	Balance of Payments Technical Expert Group
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CFS	Committee on World Food Security (*or* Committee on Food Security)
DGACM	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
DSA	Debt Sustainability Analysis
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
GA	General Assembly
GAFSP	Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme
GDP	gross domestic product
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action (*or* Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters)
HIPC	heavily indebted poor countries
HLTF	High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IDA	International Debt Association
IDNDR	International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRP	International Recovery Platform
ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
LDC	least developed countries
LLDC	Landlocked developing country
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MDRI	Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PGA	President of the General Assembly
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UCFA	Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNCIO	United Nations Conference on International Organization
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNISDR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (*or* Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction)[1]
WHO	World Health Organization

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[1] UNISDR is the Inter-Agency Secretariat that was established by the General Assembly in 1999 to support the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), adopted with the same resolution. Therefore, "UNISDR" indicates the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, and "ISDR" the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, i.e. a strategic and conceptual framework.

Committee History

"The Second Committee must show leadership in the design of coherent and coordinated approaches, at the national and international levels, to address the vicious cycle of low growth, rising unemployment, and financial sector fragility"[2]

Introduction

Delegates to the 1945 United Nations Conference on International Organization (UNCIO) in San Francisco set out to create a unique intergovernmental organization with ambitious goals that would serve as a forum for cooperation in global politics in the aftermath of world war, "which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind."[3] The political visionaries who drafted the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945) sought an organization that would improve the lives of those living in relative peace and "to reaffirm faith in the fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small."[4] The General Assembly was established as the main deliberative organ of the UN, and it was given a broad mandate to discuss virtually any matter in the scope of the Charter and make recommendations to Member States and the Security Council.[5] The General Assembly (GA) Second Committee (Second Committee) is a specific organ of the GA.[6] The Second Committee, also referred to as the "Economic and Financial" Committee, has a focus on economic growth and development.[7]

Mandate

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly is one of the five principal organs laid out in the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945).[8] Its mandate is laid out in Chapter IV of the Charter, with Article 10 stating that the body:

> "May discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of the present Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the present Charter, and, except as provided in Article 12, may make recommendations to the Members of the United Nations or to the Security Council or to both on any such questions or matters."[9]

One of the most important characteristics of the General Assembly is its universal nature and ability to discuss any issue within the UN system. This is core to the mandate of the General Assembly, and illustrated by the diversity and range of topics discussed within its Main Committees.

The issues considered by the Second Committee are "organized in ten clusters: macroeconomic policy, operational activities for development, financing for development, groups of countries in special situations, globalization and interdependence, eradication of poverty, information and communication technologies for development, agriculture and food security, sustainable development, and sovereignty of the Palestinian people over their natural resources."[10] Additional key issues they discuss include sustainable development, human settlements, poverty eradication, and gender-related issues, along with challenges related to "least developed countries" (LDCs) and landlocked developing countries (LLDCs).[11] The Second Committee has also discussed issues related to people settlements including such topics as the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian peoples in the Occupied Palestinian Territory over their natural resources and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan.[12]

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[2] UN General Assembly, *Speech of George Wilfred Talbot to the Second Committee delegates*, 2012.
[3] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Preamble.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.
[6] UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial Second Committee* [Website], 2012.
[3] Ibid
[8] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, art. 10.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 65; United Nations, *Delegates Handbook: Sixty-eighth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (ST/CS/63)*, 2013.
[11] Ibid
[12] Ibid

Governance, Structure and Membership

The General Assembly is comprised of all 193 Member States of the United Nations, as outlined in Article 9 of the Charter.[13] Each Member State has one vote, regardless of its population or geography.[14] Additionally, non-Member States, non-governmental organizations, and intergovernmental organizations have received invitations to participate as observers in the sessions and work of the General Assembly.[15] Decisions on important matters require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting; these questions include those on peace and security, admission of new members, and budgetary matters.[16] Though each Member State is granted one vote, there has been a special effort in recent sessions to achieve consensus on issues rather than going through a formal vote.[17]

The work of the General Assembly is distributed to its six committees, each examining different topics that affect the international community. The First Committee examines topics pertaining to international security and peace; the Second Committee examines economic and financial topics; the Third Committee examines social, cultural, and humanitarian affairs; the Fourth Committee examines special political questions and decolonization, the Fifth Committee handles administrative and budgetary issues of the United Nations; and the Sixth Committee examines legal questions in the General Assembly.[18] In addition to the six Main Committees of the General Assembly, a number of Boards, Commissions, Committees, Councils, and Working Groups work to support the advancement of the General Assembly's mandate.[19]

The UN Secretary-General is tasked with serving as "Chief Administrative Officer" of the organization, which includes providing support – both substantive and logistical – to committees.[20] All Main Committees receive logistical support from the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM).[21] For substantive support, including writing reports and undertaking research, the department within the Secretariat differs, depending on the thematic issue area of the committee.[22] For Second Committee, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) provides most of the substantive support.

The Second Committee, similar to other General Assembly Main Committees, has a bureau and a secretariat. The bureau is comprised of one Chairperson, three Vice-Chairs and one Rapporteur.[23] The current Chairperson is H.E. Mr. George Wilfred Talbot from Guyana.[24] The secretariat is composed of three secretaries (Main, Deputy and Assistant) and three assistants.[25]

Powers and Functions

The General Assembly assumes the role as the main deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the UN.[26] It provides a forum for multilateral discussions on a range of issues outlined in the Charter, specifically within Articles 10 – 22 that detail the functions and powers of the body as follows:

- The General Assembly is tasked with initiating studies and making recommendations to promote international cooperation in the political field, encouraging the development of international law, promoting the implementation of cultural, social, and human rights, and promoting fundamental freedoms

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[13] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, art. 9.

[14] Ibid., art. 18

[15] United Nations, *Observers* [Website], 2013

[16] United Nations, *About the General Assembly* [Website], 2013.

[17] United Nations, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly* [Website], 2013

[18] United Nations, *Main Committees* [Website], 2013

[19] United Nations, *Subsidiary Organs of the General Assembly* [Website], 2013

[20] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 65; United Nations, *Delegates Handbook: Sixty-eighth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (ST/CS/63)*, 2013.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] UN General Assembly, *Bureau of the 67th session* [Website], 2012.

[24] Ibid

[25] UN General Assembly, *Secretariat* [Website], 17th September 2012.

[26] United Nations, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly* [Website], 2013; United Nations, *Delegates Handbook: Sixty-eighth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (ST/CS/63)*, 2013.

free from discrimination (Article 13).[27]

- The General Assembly "receives and considers reports" issued by "the other principal organs established under the Charter as well as reports issued by its own subsidiary bodies" (Article 15).[28] The General Assembly Plenary receives recommendations from the six Main Committees.[29] Once the recommendations are sent to the Plenary Committee, the Plenary then votes on whether to adopt the resolutions as presented.[30] Any decisions reached by the Assembly are non-binding in international law; however, their decisions have enacted actions that have affected millions of people around the world.[31]

- The General Assembly additionally "approves the budget of the UN and decides on the scales of assessment, i.e., each Member State's share of the budget" (Article 17).[32]

- Should the Security Council fail to address a breach of international peace and security due to deadlocks between permanent members, the Assembly can consider the matter immediately, laid out in Article 11, but further codified with the adoption of General Assembly resolution 377(V) (1950) entitled "Uniting for Peace."[33]

Sessions
The General Assembly can meet via several different formats: in either "regular annual sessions," or "special sessions," within which includes "emergency special sessions."[34] The regular annual session begins on Tuesday of the third week of September and runs for one year – thus essentially, the General Assembly is "in session" for the entire year.[35] Special sessions are outlined in Chapter IV, Article 20 of the Charter.[36] These sessions have addressed topics that include settlement and decolonization, world health problems, international disarmament, gender issues, global development, and the environment.[37]

Discussions on issues of international peace and security which are not taken up by the Security Council, as detailed in Article 11 and the "Uniting for Peace" resolution have occurred under "emergency special sessions" and have occurred ten times. [38] The most recent "emergency special session" has held on and off meetings since April 1997, following the request from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to discuss the topic of Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.[39] The tenth emergency special session resumed on 15 January 2009 under the consideration of the President of the General Assembly, Dr. Ali Abussalam Treki, after three years of no debate.[40]

Elections
One important function of the General Assembly is the election of five non-permanent members of the Security Council, in addition to members of additional committees and bodies as well as the Secretary-General, upon recommendation by the Security Council.[41]

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[27] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, art. 12; United Nations, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly* [Website], 2013.
[28] Ibid., art. 15.
[29] Ibid., art. 4
[30] United Nations, *About the General Assembly* [Website], 2013
[31] Ibid.; Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 13.
[32] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 13; *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, art. 17.
[33] United Nations, *Uniting for Peace (377 V)* [Resolution], 1950
[34] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 14; United Nations, *UN Documentation: General Assembly – Introduction* [Website].
[35] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 14.
[36] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, art. 20
[37] United Nations, *Emergency Special Sessions* [Website], 2013
[38] Ibid.
[39] United Nations, *Tenth Emergency Special Session* [Website], 2013
[40] Ibid.
[41] United Nations, *Security Council: Current Members* [Website], 2013

Subsidiary Organs
Unlike other Main Committees, Second Committee does not have any subsidiary bodies reporting to it, as allowed per the Charter. The Second Committee does, however, hold dialogues with the UN Regional Commissions where the Executive Secretariats interact with Member States in order to confront issues of regional concern.[42] As a result of these dialogues, the Second Committee examines documents related to case studies and reports.[43] The regional commissions that participate in document elaboration and in dialogue include the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).[44]

Agenda
The General Assembly allocates agenda items to its Main Committees according to the respective thematic issues covered by each of the six Main Committees. However, there are some agenda items that are considered of such paramount importance, that they are not allocated and are considered only by the Plenary. These items include the Reports of the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, as well as special country-specific agenda items, such as the "Question of Palestine."[45]

Second Committee
The basic power of the Second Committee is to propose ideas in order to be discussed by the GA plenary on its specific topics including development, environment and humanitarian settlements issues. These proposals take the form of draft resolutions and are due for the review by the GA Plenary for voting.

One of the greatest successes of the committee came in 1983 when the Brundtland Commission was created with the adoption of Resolution 38/161, which originated in the Second Committee.[46] This Commission changed ideas about development, and merged clashing perspectives about economic growth and environmental protection.[47] Furthermore, the 1992 Rio Conference (also commonly referred to as the Earth Summit) was called for under Resolution 43/196 as a result of the committee's efforts.[48.] The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development has continued working with the Second Committee in order to prepare reports containing options for finding strategies to achieve sustainable development objectives.[49]

Recent Sessions

Sixty-Sixth Session
At the sixty-sixth session of the Second Committee, the body adopted forty-three draft resolutions.[50] Among these included issues related to South-South Cooperation, financial issues (debt, international financial systems), development, the role of women, eradication of poverty, information and communication technologies, globalization and interdependence, disaster reduction, and trade.[51] Under one draft resolution, the Second Committee discussed the issue of external debt sustainability and development, and made a call for the intensification of efforts in order to prevent and mitigate the costs of debt crisis (A/C.2/66/L.9).[52] This draft was discussed in General Assembly Plenary, but was not adopted as a resolution. However in another draft resolution (A/C.2/66/438/Add.3), the Second Committee intensified its efforts, adopting a text that reflected the key principles on the topic (A/C.2/66/L.9),

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[42] United Nations *Concept Note: Dialogue of Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions with the Second Committee of the General Assembly,* 2011, p. 1-2.
[43] United Nations, *Documents of Regional Commissions relevant to the agenda of the Second Committee of the 66th General Assembly* [Website], 2012.
[44] Ibid
[45] United Nations General Assembly, *Organization of the sixty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items (A/RES/67/1)* [Resolution], 2012
[46] Weiss, et al., *The United Nations and Changing World Politics*, 2007, P. 270.
[47] Ibid
[48] UN General Assembly, *United Nations conference on environment and development (A/RES/43/196)* [Resolution], 1988, p. 1-2
.
[49] United Nations, *Report of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (A/CONF.216/16),* 2012, P. 255,.
[50] UN General Assembly, *Economic and Financial. Second Committee* [Website], 2012.
[51] UN General Assembly, *List of draft proposals* [Website],2011.
[52] UN General Assembly, *External debt sustainability and development* [Draft Resolution], 2011, p. 3-8.

transforming it into Resolution 66/189, which stresses public and private sector along with Bretton Woods institutions to take appropriate measures in order to implement commitments related to external debt sustainability.[53]

Sixty-Seventh Session
During the sixty-seventh session, the Second Committee examined topics related to the new international economic order; international cooperation to reduce impact of natural disasters; transparency in fiscal policies; international migration; implementation of the United Nations conference on human settlements (Habitat II) outcome; industrial development cooperation; entrepreneurship for development; and sustainable development (implementation of *21*).[54] Specifically related to natural disaster impact reduction, the Second Committee adopted a draft resolution (67/437/Add.3), which became Resolution 67/209. One of the most important highlights of this resolution is the commitment within the *Hyogo Framework for Action* 2005-2015.[55]

Sixty-Eighth Session
The regular session of the General Assembly began 17 September 2013, with Second Committee meetings starting 9 October 2013. The draft program for the Second Committee was approved in the previous session the treatment of twelve main topics: information and communications technologies for development, macroeconomic policy questions, follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Review Conference, sustainable development, implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) among others. [56]

Conclusion

The Second Committee of the General Assembly has a great amount of responsibility. It focuses on economics and financial issues, however they have also influenced environmental and development topics such as the creation of the Earth Summit or the Brundtland Commission. It is a world forum where all Member States can discuss transcendental economic-financial policy questions along with human settlement and gender issues. This process will create documents (draft resolution, reports or additions) for them to be voted in the General Assembly Plenary.

Annotated Bibliography

Karns, M. & Mingst, K. (2010). *International Organizations: The Politics and Processes of Global Governance*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner.
> *Delegates will find a great amount of information related to administrative and practical actions of international organizations. A whole chapter is dedicated to the United Nations in which its explanations are concise in relation with the different organs that compose the UN. Delegates will find useful information related to the differences between the committees that compose the General Assembly.*

New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2013, September). *United Nations Handbook 2013-14*. Retrieved 24 October 2013 from: http://www.mfat.govt.nz/downloads/media-and-publications/UN-Handbook-2013-web%20PDF.pdf
> *The United Nations Handbook, published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade of New Zealand, is one example of an initiative undertaken by a UN Member State to contribute to strengthening the information available to the international community on the UN system. The handbook is one of the most comprehensive, if not the, most comprehensive, source of information on the aim, structure and membership of the organs of the United Nations. Delegates are recommended to utilize the handbook as a regular reference for all related entities within the UN system, which comprise the architecture addressing your topic.*

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[53] UN General Assembly, *External debt sustainability and development (A/RES/66/189)* [Resolution], 2011.
[54] UN General Assembly, *List of draft proposals* [Website], 2012.
[55] UN General Assembly, *International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/RES/67/209)* [Resolution], 2012.
[56] UN General Assembly, *Draft programme of work of the Second Committee for the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly (A/C.2/67/L.65)*, 2013, p.1-2.

Switzerland, Permanent Mission to the United Nations. (2011). *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United nations General Assembly.* Retrieved 25 October 2013 from: https://www.eda.admin.ch/etc/medialib/downloads/edazen/topics/intorg/un/missny/news.Par.0013.File.tmp/UN_PGA_Handbook.PDF

> *This publication is another example of a Member State initiated project aimed at providing comprehensive information on the United Nations with a particular focus on the General Assembly. This document is essential reading for any delegate on the General Assembly due to its specific and insightful overview of the working methods, structures and protocols related to the body. There is no one section that might be more helpful for delegates; all six chapters provide important information that will aid in the preparation for and negotiation at NMUN•NY 2014.*

United Nations. (2013). Functions and Powers of the General Assembly. *General Assembly of the United Nations* [Website]. Retrieved 30 July 2013 from: http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml

> *This website summarizes the functions and powers of the General Assembly. Written by staff of the General Assembly, it provides the basics of what the Plenary Committee examines and where the powers come from. Understanding the procedure and scope in which the General Assembly conducts business should remain in delegate's minds while they research, and the website provides delegates a point of quick reference and a destination that contains a plethora of documents to spark further research.*

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2013, January*). The UN General Assembly's Second Committee – Economic and Financial Issues* [Website]. Retrieved 29 July 2013 from: http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/news/ecosoc/un-ga-second-committee.html

> *In this source, delegates will find a historical perspective and the role of the Second Committee in regards to sustainable development issues. It also has quotes of the current Chairman mentioning much of the topics that the Second Committee will confront ahead, such as development and environment, which were essential into the Second Committee role along history. Besides this, this source could be a good introduction for new delegates that search for an introduction of current topics that the Second Committee is discussing.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-eighth session. (2013, February). *Preliminary list of items to be included in the provisional agenda of the sixty-eight regular session of the General Assembly: Note by the Secretary-General (A/68/50)*. Retrieved 1 July 2013 from: http://undocs.org/A/68/50

> *This is a key document in which delegates will find a list of items that are going to be discussed in the General Assembly 68th session. In relation to the Second Committee, there are topics related to macroeconomic policy questions, development and poverty, among others. This source will be useful do to the fact that it provides the symbol code and document numbers, which will facilitate delegate's research.*

United Nations. (2012). Second Committee: Documentation Per Agenda Item. *General Assembly of the United Nations* [Website]. Retrieved 1 July 2013 from: http://www.un.org/en/ga/second/documentslist.shtml

> *Delegates will find a list of documents related to the items that were discussed in the 67th session of the Assembly. This document could lead delegates to a more profound knowledge of the items that the Second Committee is discussing currently. Furthermore, it can help to connect decision of the Committee with other UN organs.*

Weiss T., D. Forsyth, R. Coate, and K. Pease. (2007). *The United Nations and Changing World Politics*. Colorado: West View Press.

> *This source is useful in understanding the role of the United Nations. Delegates can focus on topics related to the Second Committee mandate. This book contain broad and specific information on the UN, and more specifically, of the General Assembly actions on different aspects such as promotion of ideas, coordination and functioning of administrative processes. This book could be really useful for working paper elaboration.*

Bibliography

Karns. M. & Mingst. K. (2010). *International Organizations: The Politics and Processes of Global Governance*. Boulder. Colorado: Lynne Rienner.

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I. External Debt Sustainability and Development

"The international community must realise that no path to growth can be construed or fostered with unsustainable debt overhang. As such, any debt restructuring exercise should have as its core element a determination of real repayment capacity. If the real repayment capacity of any country is not properly addressed…[s]uch outcome would further affect growth and good faith creditors."[57]

Introduction

At the outset of the global recession in 2009, external debt of developing and transition states stood at $3.5 trillion with an annual growth rate of 3.5%.[58] By 2010, external debt grew by 12% to over $4 trillion with estimates of debt rising to $4.5 trillion through 2011.[59] Although external debt sustainability has long been viewed in the context of developing economies, global external debt totaled $69.6 trillion in 2011.[60] With developed states accounting for $65.1 trillion of global external debt in 2011 and debt estimated to have risen to $72.85 trillion in 2012, the problem of external debt sustainability becomes a pressing concern for both developed and developing states.[61]

External debt is defined as "the outstanding amount of those actual current, and not contingent, liabilities that require payment(s) of principal and/or interest by the debtor at some point(s) in the future and that are owed to nonresidents by residents of an economy."[62] In broad terms, external debt encompasses all debt liabilities of a state, public and private, to external creditors.[63] These debts, referred to as debt instruments, include both principal and interest liability and can be created through traditional, contractual arrangements between creditors and debtors, the force of law, and other events requiring future payment transfers.[64]

The accrual of external debt is a natural step in economic development.[65] Small levels of debt accumulation can initially increase development if borrowed funds are used for productive investment, such as infrastructure, productivity, and civil society.[66] Too much debt accumulation, however, leads to a long-term imbalance in what a country can pay, i.e. future repayment schedules outpace a country's economic growth and ability to repay.[67] As a country must use greater and greater levels of reserves and tax revenues to pay its previous debts, government expenditures towards development decrease.[68] Additionally, as a state amasses larger amounts of debt, its credit rating is often reduced and interest rates on further loans increase.[69] Interest rates largely govern which level of debt is sustainable; higher interest rates mean that higher levels of economic growth are required to meet future repayment schedules.[70] This nexus creates a dangerous situation for heavily indebted countries. High existing debt means that debt (borrowed to increase economic development) can only be borrowed at high interest rates; in turn, these states are rarely able to increase development sufficiently to meet these future payments.[71] In the end, these states must reduce government spending on development and civil society to repay those obligations.[72]

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[57] Group of 77, *Statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China by H.E. Mr. J.V. Bainimarama, Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji, Chairman of the Group of 77, at the Special High Level Meeting of Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on "External Debt Sustainability and Development: Lessons Learned from Debt Crisis and Ongoing Work on Sovereign Debt Restructuring and Debt Resolution Mechanisms (New York, 23 April 2013)*, 2013.

[58] UN General Assembly, *External debt sustainability and development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/66/164)*, 2011.

[59] UN General Assembly, *External debt sustainability and development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/67/174)*, 2012.

[60] United States, *World: Economy* [Website].

[61] Ibid.

[62] UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Finance Statistics, *External Debt Statistics Guide for Compilers and Users,* 2012, p. 7.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid., pp. 7-8.

[65] Ibid., p. 1.

[66] Pattillo, et al., *External Debt and Growth*, 2002.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Penalver & Thwaites, *Working Paper no. 307: Fiscal rules for debt sustainability in emerging markets: the impact of volatility and default risk*, 2006, pp. 3-4.

[70] Roubini, *Debt Sustainability: How to Assess Whether a Country is Insolvent*, 2001, pp. 3-4.

[71] Shabbir, *Does External Debt Affect Economic Growth: Evidence from Developing Countries*, pp. 4-5.

[72] Schclarek, *Debt and Economic Growth in Developing and Industrial Countries*, 2004, pp. 14-15.

External debt, then, can be viewed in a spectrum; initially it contributes to development, but too much external debt reduces development.[73] Though difficult to define, external debt "sustainability" is the theoretical point where the economic development created by debt provides sufficient future growth and income to repay that debt.[74] The current discussion of external debt sustainability and development ultimately centers on two key issues. First, how can standards and reporting measures be established to better inform policymakers what is the sustainable level of debt a state can accumulate? Second, what actions can be taken to reduce unsustainable debt levels to ensure that growth and development can occur unhampered by current debt obligations?

International Framework

As the primary international organizations with expertise in global finance and economics, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank cooperate to address both the issue of debt sustainability standards and reduction of existing external debt. In April 2005, the World Bank and the IMF initiated the *Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries*.[75] Under the Framework, Debt Sustainability Analysis (DSA) is "regularly" performed to guide a state's borrowing decisions.[76] DSA encompasses of three elements: analysis of its "projected debt burden over the" following "20 years and vulnerability to external and policy shocks;" assessment of the risks of debt distress in the 20-year period based on its "policies and institutions; and recommendations for a borrowing and lending strategy" that "limit the risk of debt distress."[77] Debt distress — categorized as "low risk, moderate risk, high risk, or in debt distress" — measures the difficulty in repaying external debts.[78] Similarly, the strength of a state's policies and institutions are classified as strong, medium, or poor based on the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment index.[79] This three-pronged Framework thus projects the long-term debt accumulation of a state, vulnerability of that debt to distress and the ability of the state to manage those shocks, and combines that information into a recommendation on future borrowing and management of debt.[80]

Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative
Information from the Framework on debt sustainability is also combined with other IMF assessments of a state's macroeconomic stability and fiscal policy for use in determining access to IMF financing and debt limits on IMF supported programs.[81] The World Bank also uses the information to determine the availability of grants and loan assistance to low-income states.[82] One such program that relies on that information is the "Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative," a joint program of the IMF and World Bank. Although the HIPC Initiative was formed in 1996 and predates the Framework by nearly ten years, the HIPC Initiative now relies on debt sustainability statistics to meet its goal of "ensuring that no poor country faces a debt burden it cannot manage."[83] Under the HIPC Initiative's two-step process, interim debt relief is provided to eligible states followed by full debt relief for states that meet further conditions.[84] The first step, referred to as the "decision point," establishes eligibility criteria.[85] The criteria at the decision point are as follows: be eligible to borrow from the World Bank's International Development Agency and the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (both programs provide interest-free or subsidized loans and grants to the poorest countries); hold an unsustainable debt burden that cannot be addressed through traditional debt relief mechanisms; establish a record of reform and sound economic policies; and develop a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.[86] Once a country makes significant progress in meeting those criteria, the Executive Boards of the World Bank and IMF decide its eligibility for interim debt relief. If approved, the international community works to reduce a country's debt to a sustainable level that is primarily based on the findings of the Debt Sustainability

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[73] Pattillo, Poirson & Ricci, *What are the Channels Through Which External Debt Affects Growth?*, 2004.
[74] Ibid.
[75] International Monetary Fund, *Debt Sustainability Analysis Low-Income Countries* [Website], 2013.
[76] World Bank, *How to do a Debt Sustainability Analysis for Low-Income Countries*, 2006, p. 2.
[77] International Monetary Fund, *The Joint World Bank-IMF Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries*
       [Website], 2013.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] International Monetary Fund, *Debt Sustainability Analysis Low-Income Countries* [Website], 2013.
[81] International Monetary Fund, *The Joint World Bank-IMF Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries*
       [Website], 2013.
[82] Ibid.
[83] World Bank, *The Enhanced HIPC Initiative – Overview* [Website].
[84] International Monetary Fund, *Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative* [Website], 2013.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid.

Framework.[87] To complete the second step, the "completion point," a state must: 1) "establish a further record of good" economic governance; 2) "implement reforms agreed to at the decision point;" and 3) adopt and "implement [the] Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for at least one year."[88] After meeting the completion point criteria, full and irrevocable debt relief (committed to in the interim at the decision point) is granted.[89] As of 2013, 36 post-decision point states had received $76.4 billion.[90] Of those 36, 35 are post-completion point countries and one is an interim country between decision point and completion point.[91]

Since 2011, the pace of the HIPC Initiative has slowed as the majority of eligible states have completed both steps in the process.[92] Adding to this reduced pace, in December 2011, eligibility criteria for entering the HIPC Initiative were restricted.[93] These restrictions eliminated Bhutan, Kyrgyzstan, and the Lao People's Democratic Republic because their external debt was below the new threshold restrictions.[94] Despite the new restrictions, Eritrea, Nepal, Somalia, and the Republic of Sudan remain eligible to enter the HIPC Initiative; Nepal has, however, indicated that it does not wish to participate and receive assistance from the program.[95] Although the specific reasons for Nepal's non-participation are not clear, they highlight potential downsides that countries face by entering the program.[96] Requirements for the completion point include macroeconomic stability indicators and implementation of structural reform measures.[97] These structural reforms often target the social sector and public expenditures.[98] For example, in accordance with each state's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the HIPC requires that government spending be realigned to priority areas consistent with the Strategy Paper.[99] Additionally, some governments associate a stigma with HIPC status. In 2001, Ghana received debt relief under the HIPC Initiative.[100] Highlighting this concern, former Ghanaian Finance Minister Yaw Osafo Maafo recently contested claims that Ghana's current government spending and debt accumulation could once again meet the requirements for HIPC Initiative Eligibility.[101] Arguing that Ghana is now a middle-income country far removed from the threshold requirements of the HIPC Initiative, Maafo reiterated his position that, "the HIPC initiative is to provide debt relief and low-interest loans to very poor countries in the world and Ghana is not inclusive."[102]

The Paris Club
Likewise, as the activity of the HIPC Initiative wanes, meetings of the Paris Club have also recently dwindled.[103] The Paris Club is an informal group of financial officials from 19 creditor states that was born out of the Latin American debt crisis in the 1950s.[104] In 1956, the French government hosted a crisis meeting between Argentina, its creditors, and western governments in Paris.[105] Initially, the Paris Club only sought to prevent loan defaults by providing temporary debt relief to countries with short-term liquidity problems.[106] Under that mode of action, however, debt was only recapitalized at new interest rates, increasing the long-term debt burden of states for the sake of short-term relief.[107] Recognizing this problem, the Paris Club shifted its approach in the early 1980s to reduce long-term debt burden in addition to short-term liquidity problems.[108] When that approach still did not

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[87] International Monetary Fund, *Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative* [Website], 2013.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] World Bank, *HIPC At-A-Glance* [Website], 2013.
[91] International Monetary Fund, *Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative* [Website], 2013.
[92] UN General Assembly, *External debt sustainability and development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/67/174)*, 2012.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Pant and Subedi, *The HIPC Initiative, MDRI and Nepal: A Re-examination*, 2006, pp. 45-46.
[97] Ibid., pp. 47-48.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid., p. 48.
[100] Ghanaian News Agency, *Ghana Can Relapse Into Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) – Yaw Osafo Maafo*, 2013.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] UN General Assembly, *External debt sustainability and development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/67/174)*, 2012.
[104] The Paris Club, *Club de Paris – Paris Club* [Website].
[105] Cosio-Pascal, *The Emerging of a Multilateral Forum for Debt Restructuring: The Paris Club*, 2008, pp. 5-6.
[106] Vilanova & Martin, *The Paris Club*, 2001, p. 1.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.

produce ideal results, the Paris Club began concessional debt restructuring 1987.[109] In general, concessional debt restructuring by creditors involves refinancing debt at terms below market value.[110] Although creditors ultimately lose money under these terms, they agree to concessions to achieve some level of repayment rather than full default.[111] Under the pre-1987 system, credit terms were negotiated on a case-by-case basis, but 1987 marked the beginning of standard rescheduling terms.[112] The 1987 terms, deemed the Venice Terms, provided longer grace periods and maturity dates for the poorest states of Sub-Saharan Africa.[113] In subsequent years, the Toronto Terms of 1988 granted 33% debt relief, the London Terms of 1991 granted 50% debt relief, the Naples Terms of 1994 granted 67% debt relief, the Lyons Terms in 1996 granted 80% reduction only for states that received relief under the Naples Terms and qualified for the HIPC Initiative, and the most recent Cologne Terms of 1999 granted 90% or high debt forgiveness for states to reach sustainability thresholds under the HIPC Initiative.[114] To date, the Paris Club has concluded 429 agreements with 90 states in excess of $573 billion.[115]

Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative
The most recent international framework for supporting debt sustainability is the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI). The MDRI was first proposed in June 2005 by the Group of Eight (G8) as a means for assisting states in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).[116] Under the G8's proposal, the IMF, the International Development Association of the World Bank, and the African Development Fund cancel 100% of their debt claims on low-income countries.[117] To preserve the financial stability of these institutions, international donors match this cancelled debt "dollar-for-dollar".[118]

Formally launched in 2006, one year after the G8's proposal, the MDRI functions in some part as a continuation of the HIPC Initiative.[119] Debt cancellation under the MDRI is available to states that have reached their completion point in the HIPC Initiative, and, additionally, to non-Initiative states with a per capita income below $380 and outstanding debt to the IMF, African Development Fund, and the Inter-American Development Bank at the end of 2004.[120] In 2007, involvement in the MDRI expanded when the Inter-American Development Bank agreed to provide debt relief to the five HIPC Initiative states in the western hemisphere.[121] Before this change, only African HIPCs were included in the initiative because only the African Development Fund's involvement was involved as a partner in the program.[122] As an extension of the HIPC Initiative, the MDRI is available to the 35 HIPC countries that have met their completion point, and the secondary criteria of MDRI further includes Cambodia and Tajikistan.[123] Like the HIPC Initiative, countries must also demonstrate acceptable macroeconomic policies, implement a poverty reduction strategy, and manage public expenditures.[124]

To better understand the integrated role that the HIPC Initiative, MDRI, and other forms of debt relief play, it is instructive to consider country debt levels before and after each form of debt relief. Before any form of debt relief occurred, the 36 post-decision point HIPCs amassed approximately $140 billion in debt.[125] After traditional forms of debt relief (like the early role of the Paris Club) were applied those debt stocks were reduced to $117 billion.[126]

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[109] Vilanova & Martin, *The Paris Club*, 2001, p. 1.
[110] Dippelsman & Kitili, *IMF Committee on Balance of Payments Statistics Balance of Payments Technical Expert Group (BOPTEG): Issues Paper (BOBTEG) #29 Concessional Debt*, 2004, p. 4.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Vilanova & Martin, *The Paris Club*, 2001, p. 4.
[113] Ibid., p. 4.
[114] Ibid., pp. 4-5.
[115] The Paris Club, *Club de Paris – Paris Club* [Website].
[116] International Monetary Fund, *The Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative* [Website], 2013.
[117] Ibid.
[118] International Monetary Fund, *Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI): Update on Debt Relief by IDA and Donor Financing to Date*, 2007, p. 1.
[119] World Bank, *HIPC At-A-Glance* [Website], 2013.
[120] International Monetary Fund, *The Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative* [Website], 2013.
[121] World Bank, *Debt Relief and Development* [Website], 2013.
[122] Ibid.
[123] International Monetary Fund, *The Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative* [Website], 2013.
[124] Ibid.
[125] World Bank, *HIPC At-A-Glance* [Website], 2013.
[126] Ibid.

After HIPC Initiative relief, debts were cut in half to $58 billion.[127] Finally, after the MDRI, debt stocks stood at $12 billion—a 90% reduction from original debt.[128] Fulfilling the G8's goal in creating the MDRI, this increased economic stability and reduced financial obligation of states to longstanding debt has allowed greater investment in development and fulfillment of the *Millennium Development Goals*.

Role of the United Nations System

Although the World Bank's and the IMF's efforts to provide debt relief work in conjunction with the United Nations (UN) system, the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, and other bodies of the UN also work to address debt sustainability and development. During its 67th session, the General Assembly emphasized the pressing importance of debt sustainability in achieving "national and international development goals" including the *Millennium Development Goals* in resolution 67/197.[129] While recognizing the benefit of the *Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries* and the IMF's and World Bank's efforts to create debt sustainability indicators, General Assembly resolution 67/198 encouraged both institutions to consider a broader range of factors in their analysis.[130] These factors included fundamental changes in a country's stability including natural disasters, conflicts, and global economic and financial conditions, particularly in the context of export potential for commodity dependent developing countries.[131] Ultimately, those factors should recognize that debt sustainability depends on "economic growth, mobilization of national and international resources, export prospects of debtor countries, responsible debt management, sound macroeconomic policies, transparent and effective regulatory frameworks, and success in overcoming structural development problems," factors that all contribute to an international environment that supports development.[132]

Following the setbacks of the ongoing financial crisis, General Assembly resolution 67/198 also resolved that debt relief efforts should be strengthened to prevent the mistakes of previous debt crises whereby states accumulated unsustainable levels of debt to prevent short-term default.[133] While international institutions have made great strides in improving the current financial lending framework, the General Assembly called for more coordinated policies with an emphasis on flexible, concessional, fast-disbursing, and front-loaded assistance to quickly allow states to meet financial gaps to ensure that efforts to meet the MDGs continue.[134]

The *United Nations Millennium Declaration* (A/RES/55/2), adopted 8 September 2000, specifically confronted the issue of debt sustainability in paragraphs 15 and 16 by calling for measures "to deal comprehensively and effectively with the debt problems of low- and middle-income developing countries…to make their debt sustainable in the long-term."[135] Those goals have taken the form of two specific targets within Millennium Development Goal 8, "Develop a Global Partnership for Development." The first target focuses on addressing the "special needs of least developed countries," thus acknowledging the success of debt relief initiatives in reducing the external debt of HIPCs, while at the same time recognizing that 20 developing countries remain at risk of debt distress.[136] Likewise, the second relevant target is to "deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries," noting that while developing countries' debt to gross domestic product (GDP) ratios improved during the global economic downturn, slower growth in the near-term could weaken debt ratios.[137] In the 2013 *Millennium Development Goals Report*, the UN highlighted the success in reaching the latter target.[138] While the report predominately focuses on the relation of trade access to debt, it recognizes that debt service ratios (the ratio of debt payments owed to a country's export earnings) are one-quarter their 2000 level.[139] In simpler terms, for every $100 in export revenue, developing

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[127] World Bank, *HIPC At-A-Glance* [Website], 2013.
[128] Ibid.
[129] UN General Assembly, *International financial system and development (A/RES/67/197)* [Resolution], 2013.
[130] UN General Assembly, *External debt sustainability and development (A/RES/67/198)* [Resolution], 2013.
[131] UN General Assembly, *Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development (A/RES/67/199)* [Resolution], 2013.
[132] UN General Assembly, *External debt sustainability and development (A/RES/67/198)* [Resolution], 2013.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.
[135] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)* [Resolution], 2000.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.
[138] United Nations, *The Millennium Development Goals Report*, 2013, p. 63.
[139] Ibid.

countries now owe $25 less in external debt. This reduction demonstrates a diminished financial burden on developing countries since the inception of the MDGs.[140]

Key Policy Options

The UN has continuously called on the international community to provide debt relief to foster development and as described previously, various international mechanisms have done so through debt restructuring, loan forgiveness, and macroeconomic reforms. In the vein of the debate on the post-2015 development agenda, the international community shall confront how best to engage in external debt sustainability in support of sustainable development goals.

Expansion of the HIPC Initiative and the MDRI
The HIPC Initiative has reduced debt stocks by roughly $58 billion and the MDRI by another $46 billion.[141] Despite their success both initiatives have been limited in scope. The addition of the Inter-American Development Bank as a partner in the MDRI increased the geographic scope of the initiatives, but recent changes in eligibility criteria have further limited the availability of debt cancellation and restructuring. The international community must now analyze whether these restrictions are needed to promote and incentivize sustainable debt promotion, or alternatively if the programs should be expanded via less restrictive criteria and increased partnership with regional development institutions.

Increased Paris Club Involvement
While the bulk of the Paris Club's recent work has involved the HIPC Initiative, as that initiative draws down, the Paris Club seeks to refocus on its traditional role as an informal creditors club coordinating the resolution of debt crises between creditors and debtor states.[142] To further strengthen that role, the Paris Club has implemented the "Evian Approach;" this approach requires that states be only provided debt relief in exceptional circumstances of imminent default when no alternatives financing or policy modifications exist.[143] This requirement ensures that states only resort to debt restructuring as a last resort when all other efforts to achieve debt sustainability have been exhausted.[144] The requirement also allays concerns that debt cancellation (in non-emergency situations) can incentivize unsustainable debt accumulation. Although this moves the Paris Club closer to its original function—its founding occurred as a result of Argentina's pending debt default—the move will undoubtedly reduce total debt cancellation and restructuring by creditors. Moving forward, the international community must better determine when exceptional circumstances exist and strike a balance between access to debt restructuring and only incentivizing sustainable debt accumulation.

Stabilization Role of Credit Rating Agencies
In his report to the General Assembly (A/68/203), Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon highlighted possible roles for the international financial system to enhance debt sustainability.[145] One such function is the role that credit rating agencies can serve in stabilizing the spillover and contagion effects of credit rating decisions.[146] When a country's credit rating is downgraded (as a result of unsustainable debt), interest rates on future borrowing increase for that country. However, if that country is closely integrated into a regional financial structure, like the Eurozone, the financial instability of a credit downgrade spills over to that entire financial structure.[147] Similarly, if a country defaults on its debt, that financial shock is felt not only by domestic banks and bondholders but the "contagion" spreads as foreign governments and investors are not repaid for loans.[148] In an increasingly integrated international economy, spillover and contagion effects pose a threat to all states. Credit rating agencies can play an important role as warning indicators of financial instability. With timely indications of debt distress preemptive debt concessions with creditors can be negotiated instead of unexpected defaults and spreading contagion.

[140] United Nations, *The Millennium Development Goals Report*, 2013, p. 63.
[141] World Bank, *HIPC At-A-Glance* [Website], 2013.
[142] The Paris Club, *Paris Club looks to the future* [Website], 2013.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid.
[145] UN General Assembly, *External debt sustainability and development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/68/203)*, 2013.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Arezki, et al*., Sovereign Rating News and Financial Markets Spillovers: Evidence from the European Debt Crisis*, 2013, pp. 3-5.
[148] The Economist, *Financial contagion: Fear of fear itself* [Website], 2011.

Conclusion

The success of current debt programs for eligible countries is unmistakable, amounting to a 90% reduction in external debt using all current measures and programs for debt relief.[149] Yet that success raises an important question: how can those successes be expanded beyond the 39 countries eligible or currently participating in the HIPC Initiative?[150] The MDRI makes a minimal expansion of the program, with the addition of two states, but further expansion could lead to greater success in achieving the MDGs. At the same time, debt relief and cancellation require concessions from creditors that often endanger the financial stability of those creditors.

Can the success of the Paris Club in negotiating concessions be replicated, or is an expanded role of the Club feasible? Alternatively, could an expansion of debt relief programs be achieved by similar means of the MDRI in which donor states match debt cancellation dollar-for-dollar? In a broader context, should the discussion of debt sustainability involve a wider scope—is there a role for credit ratings agencies in preventing the unsustainable debt nexus; should the accumulation of odious debt from illegitimate regimes receive special status; and should the use of austerity measures or stimulus funding be further analyzed in reducing unsustainable debt? Although the discussion of external debt must first narrowly center on methods to more accurately determine debt sustainability, the discussion on reducing unsustainable levels and preventing further accumulation of unsustainable debt remains broad and expansive.

Annotated Bibliography

Cosio-Pascal, E. (2008). *The Emerging of a Multilateral Forum for Debt Restructuring: The Paris Club*. Retrieved 2 July 2013 from: http://unctad.org/en/Docs/osgdp20087_en.pdf
> *In 1952, the Paris Club was formed out of debt crisis negotiations between Argentina and its creditors. Today, the Paris Club is an informal group of financial officials from 19 of the largest world economies. As a foremost provider of global financial services (war funding, debt restructuring, debt relief, and debt cancellation) delegates should use this document to understand how the Club functions to better understand its role in achieving external debt sustainability.*

International Monetary Fund. (2013). *Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative* [Website]. Retrieved 2 July 2013 from: http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/hipc.htm
> *The HIPC Initiative is one of the oldest international programs to address unsustainable external debt. Acting under the goal of ensuring that no poor country faces a debt burden it cannot manage, the Initiative has provided $75 billion in debt service to 36 states (30 in Africa). This factsheet is key to delegates' understanding of the Initiative as it explains the two-step process for participating states to receive assistance.*

International Monetary Fund. (2013). *Debt Sustainability Analysis Low-Income Countries* [Website]. Retrieved 3 August 2013 from: http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/dsa/lic.aspx
> *In 2005 the Executive Boards of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank joined together to create the Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries. The primary aim of this Framework is to provide Debt Sustainability Analysis to policymakers to guide their future borrowing decisions. This online database of individual country analyses is important for delegates to not only understand how a sustainability analysis is completed (and how it could potentially be improved) but to also understand his or her country's current debt sustainability.*

Pattillo, C., H. Poirson, & L. Ricci. (2002). External Debt and Growth. *Finance & Development*, Volume 39 (2). Retrieved 2 July 2013 from: http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2002/06/pattillo.htm
> *This publication provides a straightforward guide to the economics behind external debt and development. Namely, the guide details how increasing levels of debt must eventually be reconciled by reduced government spending — a reduction that usually leads to reduced development. Although an expert knowledge of economics is not required of delegates, a basic*

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[149] World Bank, *HIPC At-A-Glance* [Website], 2013.
[150] International Monetary Fund, *Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative* [Website], 2013.

understanding of the principles in this document is key to better understanding the mechanics of debt sustainability.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-sixth session. (2011, July 20). *External debt sustainability and development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/66/164)*. Retrieved 2 July 2013 from: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/66/164
> *Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/144, the Secretary-General prepared this report for the General Assembly Second Committee's discussion of external debt sustainability and development. This report is important for delegates for two reasons. First, it provides analysis of recent global and regional trends in external debt. Second, and perhaps more important to delegates, it describes current international actions to promote debt sustainability and recommendations for future actions regarding official development assistance and credit rating agencies.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-seventh session. (2013, February 12). *External debt sustainability and development (A/RES/67/198)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 5 August 2013 from: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/67/198
> *This resolution marks the most current discussion by the General Assembly on debt sustainability and development. Although it contains significant approval of current practices and approaches, it also envisions areas of improvement—particularly the need for haste in addressing debt sustainability under the context of the Millennium Development Goals. This document is highly important for delegates to understand where the current discussion of debt sustainability stands and how the topic can move forward.*

United Nations, Task Force on Finance Statistics. (2012). *External Debt Statistics: Guide for Compilers and Users* [Website]. Retrieved 2 July 2013 from: http://www.tffs.org/edsguide.htm
> *The Task Force on Finance Statistics was created under the auspices of the United Nations Statistical Commission in 1992. Chapter 2, The Measurement of External Debt: Definition and Core Accounting Principles, provides delegates a basic technical understanding of external debt. Chapter 14, Debt Sustainability, and subsequent chapters on the work of international agencies are also crucial for delegates to understand how sustainability is measured and how international organizations are addressing unsustainable external debt.*

Vilanova, J. & Martin, M. (2001). *The Paris Club*. Retrieved 4 August 2013 from: http://www.dri.org.uk/pdfs/EngPub3_Paris_Club.pdf
> *The work of the Paris Club has fluctuated in each decade of its existence to meet the ongoing financial needs of the international community. In its early formation, there were no international frameworks to address external debt. Filling that void, the Paris Club began a successive series of negotiating terms culminating in its support of the HIPC Initiative. As that initiative slows, delegates should consider what role the Paris Club could play (remembering that it is an informal group fully independent of the United Nations) in future debt relief efforts.*

World Bank. (2012). *Global Development Finance: External Debt of Developing Countries*. Retrieved 2 July 2013 from: http://data.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/gdf_2012.pdf
> *This World Bank report begins by providing a broad overview of global trends in both short and long-term debt flow and accumulation. Additionally, the report briefly explains debt restructuring actions by the Paris Club Creditors with seven countries through the Heavily Indebted Poor Country Initiative. Although the data is based on 2010 information, the information is important to delegates as it provides detailed analysis of the debt profiles of 129 developing countries.*

World Bank. (2013). *HIPC At-A-Glance* [Website]. Retrieved 3 August 2013 from: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/Resources/468980-1256580106544/HIPC_Spring2013_ENG_web.pdf
> *Although this is a short document, this presentation provides a wealth of statistics on the HIPC Initiative and the MDRI. Understanding which states are eligible for each initiative and what institutions and donors support each program is important for understanding is an expansion in*

either regard is possible. Delegates should also pay particular attention to the information on debt reduction under each program in assessing the success of current international actions.

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II. Agriculture Development and Food Security

"Future food production systems will not only depend on, but must contribute positively to, healthy ecosystems and resilient communities."[151]

Introduction

The urgent need to examine the relationship between food security and agriculture development and the rising consciousness to prioritize the topics on the international agenda arose with the food crisis, which emerged in 2008.[152] The definition of food security was determined at the World Food Summit in 1996 as the situation "when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."[153] To achieve this goal, United Nations (UN) Member States face a multitude of obstacles to solve due to expected population rises from 6 billion to around 9 billion by 2050.[154] As the average income is also increasing, higher food consumption and food variety are expected.[155] Basing on current assumptions including population growth, growth of income, and diet change, the agricultural sector would need to increase production up to 70% to eliminate food scarcity.[156]

International Framework

The increased activity of international, national, and regional actors, reacting on the alarming situation during the world food crisis, led to numerous treaties and agreements, including: The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948), the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) (1976), the *Rome Declaration on World Food Security* (1996) and the *World Food Summit Plan of Action* (1996), the *Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later* (2002), the *Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security* (2009); the High-Level Task Force (HLTF) *Comprehensive Framework for Action* (2008) and the *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action* (2010), *Agenda 21* (1992), *the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation* (2002), and various regional frameworks.[157]

The right to food as an undeniable right has been established in various agreements and treaties, among them the UDHR, which declared in Article 25 that every human being carries a right to a worthy life concerning health and well-being, including food.[158] Furthermore, with the implementation of the ICESCR, all signatories are obliged to work on the realization of the right to food.[159] In 1999 the right to food was further defined as a right declaring that "every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has the physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement."[160]

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[151] Nellemann, et al., *The environmental food crisis – The environment's role in averting future food crises. A UNEP rapid response assessment*, 2009, p. 31.

[152] McKeon, *Global Governance for World Food Security: A Scorecard Four Years After the Eruption of the "Food Crisis"*, 2011, p. 7.

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[159] UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/21/2200)*, 1966.

[160] UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, *The Right to Adequate Food (Art. 11) [Substantive Issues Arising in the Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights] (E/C.12/1999/5)*, 1999.

In 1996, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) assembled the first World Food Summit to talk about measures aimed at stopping hunger and malnutrition.[161] The *Rome Declaration on World Food Security* and the *World Food Summit Plan of Action* are considered the basis of the international approach towards food security by declaring common aims on the different levels of food security and related subjects such as poverty reduction and stable environments.[162] The follow-up World Food Summit in 2002 adopted the *Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later*, acknowledging the achievements of the countries since the last summit and calling upon all actors including governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector to intensify efforts to strengthen food security by creating the International Alliance Against Hunger.[163] The World Summit in Rome in 2009 stressed the importance of fulfilling the aims of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the goals of the World Food Summits in 1996 and 2002, while also implementing the *Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security* to coordinate the international, national, and regional efforts to combat food insecurity.[164]

The HLTF released in 2008 the *Comprehensive Framework for Action*, followed by the *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action* (UCFA) in 2011, consisting of ten aims for a more equal and secure distribution of food and nutrition.[165] According to the UCFA, strong partnerships, good governance, and functioning institutions on all levels are indispensable to enhance sustainable and effective programs on food security and agriculture development.[166]

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) in 2012 also discussed the progress and failure of key, relevant policy frameworks, such as *Agenda 21* and the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation*.[167] The assessment showed that various achievements that would have been due in 2000 have not or have only been partially achieved, including waste reduction and sustainable water management.[168] Participating countries reaffirmed the existing challenge of providing globally sufficient food while acknowledging food security as a pressing issue for current and future generations.[169]

Regional activity on this topic has been particularly important to enhance food security and access to food in the most affected regions.[170] The African Union agreed in 2003 on the *Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security* (2003) containing the dual aims of reforming the agricultural sector and intensifying cooperation among African organizations on the topic.[171] The Southern African Development Community (SADC) implemented their approach with the *Dar-es-Salaam Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security* (2004) in the SADC Region in 2004, emphasizing the reliance of the region on agricultural production and the need to invest in agricultural modernization, sustainable development, and technology.[172] The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum passed in 2012 the *Kazan Declaration on APEC Food Security* (2012) containing ambitions to increase food production, improve access to food, and facilitate food trade.[173] The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) emphasized in the *Liliendaal Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security* (2009) the importance of smallholder farms and the role of biofuels and energy production.[174] Furthermore, the CARICOM developed the *Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan* (2011), containing short and long-term measures to be realized until 2026.[175] The

[161] FAO, *What is the World Food Summit?* [Website], 2005.
[162] FAO, *Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action*, 1996.
[163] FAO, *Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later*, 2002.
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[165] Committee on World Food Security, *Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (CFS 2012/39/5 Add.1)*, 2012, p. 11.
[166] UN High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action*, 2010, p. 4.
[167] UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture*, 2011, pp. 1-3; UN Conference on Environment and Development, *Agenda 21: Programme of Action for Sustainable Development,* 1992; UN World Summit on Sustainable Development, *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation*, 2002;.
[168] UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture*, 2011, pp. 1-3.
[169] United Nations, *Report of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (A/CONF.216/16)*, 2012, p. 22.
[170] UN High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action*, 2010, p. 4
[171] African Union, *Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa (Assembly/AU/Decl.4- 11 (II))*, 2011.
[172] Southern African Development Community, *Dar-es-Salaam Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in the SADC Region*, 2004.
[173] Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation, *Kazan Declaration on APEC Food Security*, 2012.
[174] Caribbean Community, *Liliendaal Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security*, 2009.
[175] Caribbean Community, *Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan 2012-2026*, 2011.

Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa of the FAO organized a number of regional forums discussion the topic, at which in 2011 the participating countries acknowledged the importance of climate change, agricultural development, and food security and recommended that all countries further intensify efforts on agricultural modernization, cooperation, and research.[176]

Role of the United Nations System

Within the UN system exists a large variety of organizations dealing with the topic such as the FAO, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the Secretary-General's HLTF, the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Development Programme, the UN Conference on Trade and Development, and many more.[177]

The General Assembly annually addresses this topic and has recently adopted resolutions, including resolution 66/220 of 28 March 2012 on "Agriculture development and food security," resolution 66/158 of 27 March 2012 on "the right to food," and resolution 66/188 of 14 February 2012 on "Addressing excessive price volatility in food and related financial and commodity markets".[178] The General Assembly Second Committee and the Economic and Social Council met this February on a "Special Joint Meeting under the premises of Food Security and Nutrition: Scaling up the Global Response."[179] The purpose of the meeting was the coordination and intensification of international efforts.[180] The meeting acknowledged the achievements of various organizations and cooperation, such as the CFS on its contributions to establish a global governance system on food security or the implementation of the Agricultural Market Information System in 2011 with the aim to reduce food price volatility, raise transparency and coordinate international responses in the field.[181]

At one of the most notable international meetings, the World Summit on Food Security in 2009, countries emphasized the need for multilateral cooperation and of strengthening UN institutions.[182] Furthermore, they called upon more effective and coordinated support of UN agencies and the reform of the FAO to improve international responses to the needs of Member States.[183] In addition, the HLTF has been created as a coordinating instrument and catalyst for the UN system's work on food security and nutrition.[184] The HLTF promotes the realization of the Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action that contains short and long-term measures of food security and also aims for sustainable agriculture, gender equity, human rights, and improved ecosystem management.[185]

Apart from UN involvement, international cooperation is led by the world's largest economies through the Group of 8 (G8), Group of 20 (G20), and joint action on economic and technological development in developing regions, especially in Latin America and Africa.[186] The G8 was explicitly active by initiating the G8 Summit in L'Aquila in July 2009, where participating countries adopted the five principles for sustainable global food security and provided funds to promote sustainable agriculture development and safety nets for the most vulnerable populations.[187] The G20, during its meeting in 2009, established the "Global Agriculture and Food Security

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[176] FAO, *Declaration of the Second Forum on Climate Change in the Near East "Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security,"* 2011.

[177] United Nations, *Global Issues: Agriculture* [Website]; United Nations, *Global Issues: Food* [Website].

[178] UN General Assembly, *The Right to Food (A/RES/66/158)* [Resolution], 2012; UN General Assembly, *Agriculture Development and Food Security (A/RES/66/220)* [Resolution], 2012; UN General Assembly, *Addressing Excessive Price Volatility in Food and Related Financial and Commodity Markets (A/RES/66/188)* [Resolution], 2012.

[179] UN General Assembly, *Special Meeting on Food Security and Nutrition: Joint Summary by the President of the Economic and Social Council and the Chairperson of the Economic and Financial Committee*, 2013.

[180] Ibid.

[181] Ibid.

[182] FAO, *Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security,* 2009, p. 6.

[183] Ibid.

[184] UN General Assembly, *Agriculture development and food security: progress on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on Food Security: Report of the Secretary-General (A/66/277)*, 2011, p. 15.

[185] Ibid., p. 11.

[186] The Global Mechanism, *The International Responses to Global Food Security*, 2011, p. 6; UN High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action*, 2010, p. 37.

[187] The Global Mechanism, *The International Responses to Global Food Security*, 2011, p. 4.

Programme" (GAFSP) as a multilateral mechanism to supervise the transfer of the acquired funds.[188] The conference in L'Aquila, as the initial impetus for the creation of funds and organizations and further meetings, such as the World Food Summit, where states reiterated the agreements from L'Aquila, now called the Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security.[189]

Additionally, regional approaches were launched, such as the European Union's European Development Fund that offers community aid for development in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific countries; the United States' initiative "Feed the Future," which provides funds for agricultural development and food security; and the African Agriculture Fund, which coordinates and encourages the private sector to adapt diverse agricultural production and modernization measures in Africa.[190]

The Millennium Development Goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda

In 2000, the UN adopted the *United Nations Millennium Declaration* (A/RES/55/2) that includes targets for the elimination of food scarcity and for agriculture development.[191] The topic of food security is articulated as the goal of halving the proportion of people suffering from hunger between 1990 and 2015.[192] Furthermore, the number of underweight children below the age of five and the percentage of the undernourished population are both indicators to measure the success of this target.[193] The goal on environmental sustainability also needs to be regarded as agriculture relies on natural factors, which are highly sensitive to environmental changes.[194] As water scarcity increases, climate change worsens, greenhouse gas concentrations accelerate, and biodiversity decreases, the conditions for productive agriculture deteriorate.[195] In order to feed the increasing world population, agricultural output is required to grow by 70%.[196] Today, it is commonly agreed that the MDG target to reduce the proportion of people suffering from hunger is highly unlikely to be reached by 2015.[197] Considering the possibility that the MDG on food security will not be accomplished, the importance of aims concerning the topic within the post-2015 framework must be stressed.[198] Moreover, the post-2015 development agenda needs to combine food security with sustainability, while also incorporating problems such as food loss and waste, water scarcity, low carbon agriculture, and climate change.[199]

Gender Responsive Policymaking

Gender responsive policymaking is an important aspect of this topic given the important implications that an individuals' gender can have in terms of the way in which they interact with or are impacted by agricultural development and food security. Broadly speaking, one explanation of the term gender is:

> "Gender is not another word for women. Gender is about both women and men, their socially defined roles, responsibilities, and the power and other relations between them. Like race, ethnicity, and class, being male or female shapes individuals' opportunities to participate in the economy and society. Looking at gender in the sustainable development sectors means assessing males' and females' different needs for and uses of the infrastructure, services and other benefits of each sector, as well as the different barriers to their access, mobility, and economic

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[188] The Global Mechanism, *The International Responses to Global Food Security*, 2011, pp. 4-9.

[189] Ibid., 2011, p. 4; World Food Summit on Food Security, *Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security*, 2009

[190] The Global Mechanism, *The International Responses to Global Food Security*, 2011, pp. 9-10.

[191] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*, 2000; Cassmann, *What do we need to Know About Global Food Security?*, 2012, p. 81.

[192] African Development Bank, et al., *Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals: MDG Report 2013 Food security in Africa: Issues, challenges and lessons*, 2013, p. 14.

[193] Hanson, *Food Security, Inclusive Growth, Sustainability, and the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2013, p. 17.

[194] Cassmann, *What do we need to Know About Global Food Security?*, 2012, p. 81.

[195] Ibid.

[196] FAO, *The Hague Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change: "Climate-Smart" Agriculture - Policies, Practices and Financing for Food Security, Adaptation and Motivation*, 2010, p. iii.

[197] UN High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, *Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security*, 2013, p. 45; FAO, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World: Economic growth is necessary but not sufficient to accelerate reduction of hunger and malnutrition*, 2012, p. 8.

[198] Hanson, *Food Security, Inclusive Growth, Sustainability, and the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2013, p. 17.

[199] Ibid., pp. 17-8.

opportunities. This type of information provides the basis for selecting, designing, and implementing interventions that address needs and constraints and provide benefits to both women and men."[200]

Women and men "have different gender-based roles and responsibilities in their own lives, families, households, and communities," which in turn means they have "different knowledge of, access to, and control over natural resources, and different opportunities to participate in decisions regarding natural resource use."[201]

There is a gender gap in terms of the impact of the food crisis on men and women, illustrating the need for policies and programs which address the unique concerns of all people.[202] During the recent food crisis, both the vulnerability of women and women-led households became explicitly evident.[203] The agricultural and service sectors are characterized by female employment, as around 62% of all workers in agriculture are women.[204] Most women are part of smallholder farms and usually are the primary person responsible for the nutrition of the family.[205] Women are regularly confronted with discrimination in their role as a food producer and food consumer, meaning that they are significantly hindered in their ability to access food as it depends on the power to produce, purchase, and access food.[206] These obstacles are followed by serious consequences for families concerning women's responsibilities of food acquisition, selection, and preparation.[207] Thus, gender-based discrimination hinders food production and the achievement of food security including gender-based knowledge and roles that would benefit the process to eliminate food scarcity.[208]

Food Crisis and Price Volatility

The international food crisis in 2007 and 2008 represents a turning point in international governance concerning food security.[209] This crisis was intensified and worsened by the recent financial and economic crises, which particularly affect developing countries that are more dependent on food imports to ensure sufficient food supply.[210] The main causes that unleashed the crisis were harvest deficits caused by drought, rising oil prices, and speculation on the food market.[211] The crisis led to a transgression of the historical mark of over one billion undernourished people globally for the first time since 1970.[212] Crossing this mark is especially worrisome, as it mainly affected the most vulnerable and impoverished population that already spent a significantly higher proportion of their income on food.[213] This effect was further magnified, as the rise of international food prices did not result in a higher income for rural farmers since markets were ill-functioning.[214] The food crisis illustrated the deficient international governance on the topic of food security and entrained the creation of a multitude of international institutional initiatives.[215] The widespread opinion in 2008 predicted that the peak of food prices had been reached, and prices would soon return to pre-crisis level.[216] Contrary to this prediction, prices have remained elevated in many countries;

[200] World Bank, *Gender & Sustainable Development* [Website].
[201] Population Reference Bureau, *Women, Men, and Environmental Change: The Gender Dimensions of Environmental Policies and Programs*, 2001.
[202] IFAD, *Gender equality and women's empowerment: Policy*, 2012; FAO, IFAD & ILO, *Gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment: Differentiated pathways out of poverty*, 2010.
[203] Asian Development Bank, *Gender Equality and Food Security: Women's Empowerment as a Tool against Hunger*, 2013, p. 12.
[204] African Development Bank, et al., *Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals: MDG Report 2013 Food security in Africa: Issues, challenges and lessons*, 2013, pp. 9-10.
[205] UN General Assembly, *Agriculture development and food security: progress on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on Food Security: Report of the Secretary-General (A/66/277)*, 2011, p. 10.
[206] UN High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action,* 2010, p. 13.
[207] International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, et al., *Gender in Agriculture: Sourcebook*, 2009, p. 12.
[208] Ibid., pp. 13-15.
[209] Asian Development Bank, *Gender Equality and Food Security: Women's Empowerment as a Tool against Hunger*, 2013, p. 8.
[210] Ibid., pp. 8-9.
[211] United Nations, *Report on the World Social Situation 2011: The Global Social Crisis*, 2011, p. 62.
[212] UN High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action,* 2010, p. 1.
[213] Ibid.
[214] UN High-Level Task Force, *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action*, September 2010, p. 1.
[215] McKeon, *Global Governance for World Food Security: A Scorecard Four Years After the Eruption of the "Food Crisis"*, 2011, p. 7.
[216] Ibid., p. 2.

furthermore, the World Bank predicts that such prices will be sustained for some years to come.[217] This development leaves both consumers and producers with a highly insecure and critical situation: producers face a lack of stability to calculate expected selling prices while consumers suffer from volatile purchasing prices.[218] Since the currently high prices are partially due to long periods of underinvestment in food security, agriculture, and rural development, but also due to climate change, economic speculations, the emergence of biofuels, and accelerating oil prices, further international and national policy measures to mitigate the effects are crucial.[219]

Latest Developments Concerning Food Security

Recent progress made in other industries, compounded with subsequent consequences, have emerged as having a high probability of greatly affecting food security.[220]

Biofuels
The emergence of biofuels as a clean and sustainable way to replace fossil fuels also represents a competing factor for food production.[221] Biofuels are generally known as a clean product, characterized as renewable and expelling less carbon-dioxide emissions, but competing with food production to provide sufficient nutrition globally.[222] Nevertheless, research predicts that by 2050 around 10% of liquid transportation fuels will consist of biofuels, utilizing approximately 36% of the currently produced crops, which will certainly be reduce the global food supply.[223]

Genetically Modified Organisms
Responding to current critical issues regarding agriculture and food security, the recent developments in the field of genetic modifications might be a promising solution.[224] While changing a plant's genes by selecting promising genetic markers to improve crops in quality and resistance has already become a regular process, scientists are currently attempting to increase the nutritional content of crops through biofortification.[225] The research in this field has led to the successful implementation of drought-tolerant maize in Sub-Saharan Africa and flood-tolerant rice in Southeast Asia.[226] Nevertheless, there is growing opposition towards genetic modifications, predominately from the European continent and bolstered by negative media attention.[227] Criticism of genetically modified food is mainly based on the fear that this modification might have negative effects on human health and nature.[228] The WHO is highly engaged in the process to develop genetically modified foods with benefits such as increasing food production efficiency and an improved nutritional content.[229] Despite the high expectations towards genetically modified foods, the WHO is also supervising the possible risks and danger the modification might cause for humans and nature.[230] One danger the WHO has highlighted is the chance that the genetic modification of food will affect the natural environment as modified genes might be transferred to wild plants due to cross-pollination.[231] The stability of the modified genes cannot be secured, and biodiversity is at risk as the stronger and more resistant genetically modified plants eradicate natural food sources.[232] The topic is controversially debated, and further

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[217][217] McKeon, *Global Governance for World Food Security: A Scorecard Four Years After the Eruption of the "Food Crisis"*, 2011, p. 2.

[218] African Development Bank, et al., *Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals: MDG Report 2013 Food security in Africa: Issues, challenges and lessons*, 2013, p. 17.

[219] The Global Mechanism, *The International Responses to Global Food Security, 6 April 2011, p. 3.; The Global Mechanism, The International Responses to Global Food Security*, 2011, p. 3; Brinkmann, *Food Insecurity and Violent Conflict: Causes, Consequences, and Addressing the Challenges*, 2011, p. 11.

[220] CIGAR, *Climate, agriculture and food security: A strategy for change*, 2009, p. 4.

[221] FAO, *Food Security and Agricultural Mitigation in Developing Countries: Options for Capturing Synergies*, 2009, p. 11.

[222] CIGAR, *Climate, agriculture and food security: A strategy for change*, 2009, p. 41.

[223] Hanson, *Food Security, Inclusive Growth, Sustainability, and the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2013, pp. 15-16.

[224] Godfrey, et al., *Food Security: The Challenge of Feeding 9 Billion People*, 2010, p.815.

[225] CIGAR, *Climate, agriculture and food security: A strategy for change*, 2009, p. 25; Uphoff, *Supporting food security in the 21st century through resource-conserving increases in agricultural production*, 2012, p. 4.

[226] CIGAR, *Climate, agriculture and food security: A strategy for change*, 2009, p. 26.

[227] Dexia Asset Management, *Food Scarcity - Trends, Challenges, Solutions*, 2011, p. 16.

[228] Ibid.

[229] World Health Organization, *20 Questions on Genetically Modified Foods*, p. 8.

[230] Ibid.

[231] Ibid., p. 3.

[232] Ibid.

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development will be necessary, as according to the UN and World Bank modified food currently possesses little potential to solve the critical issue of providing sufficient food for all people globally.[233]

Climate Change
Food production and agriculture suffer enormously from climate change, but, on the other hand, agriculture also contributes to climate change by producing greenhouse gas emissions.[234] While the environmentally harmful part of agriculture is mainly caused by energy input during the production process, the negative impact of climate change on agriculture is far more extensive.[235] This double effect caused the General Assembly in 2011 to call upon its Member States to combine a green and climate-smart approach with measures to promote food security and sustainable agricultural development.[236] Furthermore, the World Summit on Food Security acknowledged that climate change represents a significant threat especially for developing countries.[237] The necessity of research on development strategies and measures to mitigate climate change and to respond to changing conditions on all levels should be promoted.[238]

Population growth, climate change, and unsustainable resources lead to an extensive change of condition in various regions and in addition, endanger food security globally.[239] Agriculture will face modified conditions concerning rainfall and temperature, leading to droughts, floods, heat waves, frosts, and other extreme modes of weather.[240] Considering the dependency of agriculture on weather and the effects on food security, the necessity of implementing further concepts, principles, and technologies to combat these phenomena is more than evident.[241]

Conclusion

The international community faces difficult and critical issues concerning global supply and access to sufficient food in order to guarantee healthy and diverse nutrition. The topic is not only characterized by a remarkable difference between developed and developing countries, but also includes a vast variety of topics including climate change, gender issues, technological development, population growth, and sustainable development of agriculture.

The questions delegates should consider when approaching the topic are diverse. How can the UN respond to the estimated need to produce up to 70% more food? To what extent should approaches to reduce food scarcity be included in the post-2015 development agenda? How can the gapping distribution of over-supply in developed countries and under-supply in developing countries be solved? What investments should be taken to make agriculture more effective? How does agriculture in urban and rural regions differ and which necessities concerning investment, regulatory measures, and development does this difference create? Which measures and regulations should be implemented to avoid further food crises?

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[233] Dexia Asset Management, *Food Scarcity - Trends, Challenges, Solutions*, 2011, p. 16.

[234] Godfrey, et al., *Food Security: The Challenge of Feeding 9 Billion People*, 2010, p. 813.

[235] Bogdanski, *Integrated Food-Energy systems for Climate-Smart Agriculture*, 2012, p. 2.

[236] UN General Assembly, *Agriculture development and food security: progress on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on Food Security: Report of the Secretary-General (A/66/277)*, 2011, p. 20.

[237] FAO, *Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security*, 2009, p. 2.

[238] Ibid., p. 5.

[239] Commission on Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change, *Achieving Food Security in the Face of Climate Change: Final Report from the Commission on Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change*, 2012, p. 6.

[240] Ibid., p. 11.

[241] Uphoff, *Supporting food security in the 21st century through resource-conserving increases in agricultural production*, 2012, p. 2.

The report on the Progress of the Millennium Development Goals with specific emphasize on Food Security in Africa includes an evaluation of the continent most affected by food scarcity and the effects of current developments and changes. The report is a highly useful update to recent improvements and deteriorations on the topic of food security and agricultural development, also with connections to gender equality and environmental development. It especially concentrates on the latest changes on the African continent as one of the most affected regions of food insecurity.

Asian Development Bank. (2013). *Gender Equality and Food Security: Women's Empowerment as a Tool against Hunger*. Retrieved 31 July 2013 from: http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/pub/2013/gender-equality-and-food-security.pdf
The report concentrates on the gender aspect of food security. It evaluates the role, the difficulties, and importance of women within the development towards increased global food supply and access. The difficulties women face as food producers, food distributors, and food consumers are demonstrated, and furthermore, the areas of discrimination women are confronted with are assessed. The report contextualizes the necessity to include the role of women into assessments and reform strategies in order to address food security in a sustainable way, which also advances the agricultural sector.

Commission on Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change. (2012). *Achieving Food Security in the Face of Climate Change: Final Report from the Commission on Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change*. Retrieved 30 June 2013 from: http://ccafs.cgiar.org/sites/default/files/assets/docs/climate_food_commission-final-mar2012.pdf
The report of the Commission includes helpful insight on the relation of food security and climate change, with an explicit emphasize on sustainability. The mutual influence is illustrated by short and precise explanations combined with examples on the current situation of the topic in various countries. The report illustrates past and current developments with charts and tables, facilitating the situation in the different regions of the world and concerning the various aspects of food security and agriculture.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2009). *Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security*. Retrieved 30 June 2013 from:
http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/wsfs/Summit/Docs/Final_Declaration/WSFS09_Declaration.pdf
The Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security in 2009 summarizes the aims UN Member States set after the food crisis in 2008. The Declaration provides a good overview of the most important issues in food security and represents one of the most relevant documents on the topic. Additionally, the document includes the consensual ambitions of the present countries and the most important aims for the upcoming years.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2013). *Climate-Smart Agriculture - Sourcebook*. Retrieved 30 June 2013 from: http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3325e/i3325e.pdf
The report acknowledges the narrow connection of climate change, agriculture, and food security and thus provides a broad overview of affected subtopics of the matter. Related subjects such as water management, energy resources, conservation of genetic resources, and others are addressed. Many problematic issues are illustrated and possible solutions and further developments are evaluated. Apart from the global perspective the regional problems, institutions and programs are also taken into account.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2013). *The State of Food and Agriculture*. Retrieved 30 June 2013 from: http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3300e/i3300e.pdf
This document is another evaluation by the FAO addressing the need for high quality agriculture and food production to guarantee healthy and complete nutrition. This report concentrates on the changes in a population's nutrition while agriculture and food supply develop. It highlights the importance of the quality and not only the quantity of food including accessibility and diversity as a main prerequisite of a healthy, daily diet. The reports indicate the need to discuss food and agriculture in general, as well as to concentrate on the conditions and characteristics of food as the most essential requirement for the sustainable development of agriculture and the elimination of food scarcity.

Hanson, C. (2013, May). *Food Security, Inclusive Growth, Sustainability, and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Background Research Paper Submitted to the High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*. Retrieved 1 August 2013 from: http://www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Hanson_Food-Security-Inclusive-Growth-Sustainability-and-the-Post-2015-Development-Agenda.pdf

> *The paper covers various aspects relating to food security and demonstrates the connection of the different topics. It broadly argues in favor of including food security as an important part of the post-2015 development agenda by evaluating the relation of food loss and waste, climate and agriculture, and water and agriculture. It clearly explains the importance of food security as part of the post-2015 agenda as being connected to other topics within that framework.*

McKeon, N. (2011). *Global Governance for World Food Security: A Scorecard Four Years After the Eruption of the "Food Crisis"*. Retrieved 30 June 2013 from: http://www.boell.de/downloads/global-governance-for-world-food-security.pdf

> *The paper provides an overview of the political aspects of the topic of food security. It assesses the necessity of good governance in order to fight food scarcity. Furthermore, the author relates the topic of food security to human security as the lack of food or the lack of access to food regularly leads to rioting and political and economic instability. Apart from including problems such as price volatility, land grabbing, climate change, and energy, the author evaluated recent developments and their impact on politics and state sovereignty.*

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> *The World Summit on Food Security in 2009 accomplished a unanimously adopted Declaration on the fight against hunger and ambitions to reach food security internationally. The assessment of the Secretary-General provides an analysis of the development and achievements since 2009 and evaluates long and short time measures. Furthermore, it discusses the various actors and organizations cooperating and engaging on the topic of food security.*

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> *The Framework illustrates the current situation on food securities and the development considering improvements and possible risks in the near future. Furthermore, it explains the necessity of immediate actions to prevent food insecurities and hunger by supporting the most vulnerable populations. Apart from long-term measures with international and economic context, environmental problems are also introduced and analyzed within the Framework. The cooperation on the regional, national, and international level is presented, and the necessity of cooperation on the various levels is emphasized.*

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III. International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

"The accumulation of disaster risks and losses are hurting the economies of rich as well as poor countries. It's urgent and critical for sustainability to make mitigation and risk reduction politically significant activities."[242]

Introduction

Natural and human induced disasters have a devastating impact on human society.[243] In 2011, 32 reported natural disasters caused the death of more than 30,770 people, made 244.7 million people victim, and caused $336.1 billion in damages.[244] In 2011, the top ten countries ranking in disaster mortality represented 89.9% of total global disaster mortality.[245] Seven out of the top ten countries of people killed in natural disasters are in Asia, and the five countries most often affected were the Philippines, the United States, China, India, and Indonesia.[246] Rapid urbanization will continue to have impacts and further increase exposure to disaster risk.[247]

The term "natural disasters" refers to the consequences of events triggered by such natural hazards as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, tsunamis, floods, and drought that overwhelm local capacity and can cause widespread human, material, economic, or environmental losses.[248] Disasters also often follow natural hazards and the severity thereof depends on the impacts on society and the environment.[249] Each decision and action dictates the vulnerability and resilience of a disaster.[250] The intent of disaster risk reduction (DRR) is to reduce the damage associated with natural disasters, including earthquakes, floods, droughts, and cyclones.[251] Furthermore, protection includes activities aimed at obtaining full respects for the rights of the individual under the spirit of any relevant bodies of law, such as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948).[252]

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly (GA) launched the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction in 1989 with the vision to enable all communities to become "resilient to the effects of natural, technological, and environmental hazards, reducing the compound risks they pose to social and economic vulnerabilities within modern societies."[253] The intent of this is to reduce loss of life, property damage, and social and economic disruption caused by natural disaster.[254]

International and Regional Frameworks

The impacts of natural disasters are compounded by its impacts on people and the socioeconomic development of a region.[255] Certain international laws focusing on humanitarian actions and standards guide the discussion for an international framework on disaster reduction.[256] The *Charter of the United Nations* (1945) is guided in its preamble to promote faith in fundamental human rights, and, under Article 1, to achieve international cooperation solving problems in economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character.[257] The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) under Article 3 states that "everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of persons," Article 17 states that "everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others," while Article 25(1) states that "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his

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[242] UNISDR, *UNISDR welcomes G20 backing for disaster risk financing* [Website], 2012.
[243] Guha-Sapir, et al., *Annual Disaster Statistical Review 2011*, 2012.
[244] Ibid.
[245] Ibid.
[246] Ibid.
[247] UNISDR, *Towards a Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2012.
[248] Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, *Human Rights and Natural Disasters: Operational Guidelines and Field Manual on Human Rights Protection in Situations of Natural Disaster*, 2008.
[249] UNISDR, *What is disaster risk reduction?* [Website].
[250] Ibid.
[251] Ibid.
[252] Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, *Human Rights and Natural Disasters: Operational Guidelines and Field Manual on Human Rights Protection in Situations of Natural Disaster*, 2008.
[253] UNISDR, *What is the international strategy?* [Website].
[254] UN Economic and Social Council, *Activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (E/1999/80)*, 1999.
[255] Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, *Human Rights and Natural Disasters: Operational Guidelines and Field Manual on Human Rights Protection in Situations of Natural Disaster*, 2008.
[256] Ibid.
[257] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 1.

family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control".[258] However, humans must work together to reduce risks in order to protect the well-being of individuals and to ensure that a certain standard of living can be achieved.[259] Natural disasters often threaten these rights and steps to reduce natural disasters can also reduce the associated hazards and vulnerabilities.[260]

Similar to the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948), the *International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights* (1966) reaffirms the idea that people can only exercise their freedoms if such conditions whereby these freedoms can be exercised are created.[261] Individuals cannot exercise these fundamental freedoms if it is threatened by disasters.[262] In addition, the *International Convent on Economic, Social, and Culture Rights* (1966) enshrine the right that people have to certain liberties and that these liberties can only be exercised under a condition free from fear.[263]

One of the key pieces of leading the disaster reduction discussion is the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters and the Hyogo Declaration* (2005).[264] The Hyogo Framework established three strategies: the integration of disaster risk reduction into sustainable development policies and planning; development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms, and capacities to build resilience to hazards; and the systemic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programs.[265] In addition, five main priorities of action were drafted: make disaster risk reduction a priority, know the risks and take action, build understanding and awareness, reduce risk, and be prepared and ready to act.[266] The ultimate outcome by 2015 is to see a reduction of disaster losses in terms of human, socioeconomic, and environment capital of communities and countries.[267] A 2010-2011 interim report released by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) (also referred to as the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction), the a steady increase in the participation of countries submitting annual reports regarding the framework's implementation.[268] There has been an increase in the number of reports submitted by governments from 27 in 2007 to over 100 in 2011.[269]

The *Aqaba Declaration* (2013) is one regional framework guiding Arab states in handling the issue of disaster risk reduction in cities.[270] In the first Arab conference for disaster risk reduction, states recognized the vulnerability of Arab cities.[271] As such, the Declaration calls for greater linkage between sustainable development principles with urban development planning, strong disaster management policies, more DRR investment, and engagement of civil society in increasing awareness.[272]

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[258] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.
[259] Rawinji, *Claiming the Human Right to Protection From Disasters*, 2013.
[260] Ibid.
[261] UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: Second Optional Protocol Aiming at the Abolition of the Death Penalty (A/RES/44/128)*, 1989.
[262] Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, *Human Rights and Natural Disasters: Operational Guidelines and Field Manual on Human Rights Protection in Situations of Natural Disaster*, 2008.
[263] United Nations, General Assembly, *Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/63/117)*, 2008.
[264] UNISDR, *Summary of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2000-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters*, 2005.
[265] Ibid.
[266] UNISDR, *Hyogo Framework for Action 2000-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters*, 2007.
[267] UNISDR, *Summary of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2000-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters*, 2005.
[268] UNISDR, *Hyogo Framework for Action 2000-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters – Midterm Review 2010-2011*, 2011.
[269] Ibid.
[270] UNISDR, *Aqaba declaration on disaster risk reduction in cities* [Article], 2013.
[271] Ibid.
[272] Ibid.

Role of the United Nations System

In the 1980s, the General Assembly recognized the increasing incidents and impacts of natural disasters, and, as such, the GA on 11 December 1987 adopted resolution 42/169 to designate the 1990s as the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.[273] The resolution requested for Member States to work with the UN on the initiative, while also coordinating technical efforts, especially in developing countries.[274] In 1999, the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction forum was held in Geneva to wrap up the decade initiative.[275] Though the number of disasters was still large, the forum also shared various practices regarding items such as early warning systems and public awareness policies that have decreased the effects of natural disasters.[276] The forum saw the adoption of the strategy *A Safer World in the Twenty-First Century: Risk and Disaster Reduction* and the *Geneva Mandate on Disaster Reduction*.[277]

In December 1999, the *United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction* (ISDR) was adopted through resolution 54/219.[278] The ISDR was created as the successor to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. Some of the ISDR's programs includes the integration of DRR into sustainable development policies and planning, developing, and strengthening mechanisms to build resilience to hazards and incorporating risk reduction into emergency preparedness and response.[279] In 2005, the international community met at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction with the intent of the conference being to build a strategy in reducing vulnerabilities and risks to hazards.[280] As a result, the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters and the Hyogo Declaration* was drafted.[281] Furthermore, the *International Recovery Platform* was established to help implement the Framework.[282]

Resolution 61/198, adopted in 2006, established the *Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction*, which is seen as the main global forum for disaster risk reduction.[283] Since 2007, the forum has met every two years bringing together Member States, UN bodies, and other intergovernmental organizations and institutions to discuss DRR.[284] Under resolution 62/192, the forum's mandate is to assess the implementation of the Hyogo Framework, enhance awareness of DRR, share best practices, identify gaps and recommend actions.[285] The last session was held in 19-23 May 2013 and covered topics related to gender, heritage, risk financing, urban risk and planning, and vulnerable populations.[286]

In 2011, the United Nations System Chief Executive Board for Coordination met and drafted the *United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience* (2011). The action plan committed to ensure timely, coordinated effort and high quality assistance to all countries where disaster losses pose a threat to people's health and development, make disaster risk reduction a priority for the UN system and organization within, and ensure disaster risk reduction for resilience is central to post-2015 development agreements and targets.[287] There have also been discussions on a post-2015 strategy as the *Hyogo Framework* draws to an end.[288] Under resolution 66/199, the UN General Assembly requested UNISDR to develop a post-2015 framework at the Global Platform in 2013, which

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[273] UN Economic and Social Council, *Activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (E/1999/80)* [Resolution], 1999.
[274] UN General Assembly, *International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (A/RES/42/169)* [Resolution], 1987.
[275] UNISDR, *International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) programme forum 1999 – proceedings*, 1999.
[276] Ibid.
[277] Ibid.
[278] United Nations, *General Assembly, International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements (A/RES/54/219)* [Resolution], February 3, 2000.
[279] UNISDR, *Our Mandate* [Website], 2013.
[280] United Nations, *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters*, 2007.
[281] Ibid.
[282] International Recovery Platform, *About IRP* [Website], 2013.
[283] UN General Assembly, *International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/RES/61/198)* [Resolution], 2007.
[284] UNISDR, *Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction* [Article], 2013.
[285] UN General Assembly, *International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/RES/62/192)* [Resolution], 2008.
[286] UNISDR, *Global Platform 2013* [Website], 2013.
[287] UNISDR, *United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience*, 2013.
[288] UNISDR, *Towards a Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction* [Report], 2012.

could be adopted at the Global Platform in 2015.[289] Furthermore, at the Rio+20 conference, Member States highlighted DRR and climate change adaptions in setting the sustainable development goals.[290] The post-2015 Hyogo strategy intends to follow and work closely with the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals.[291]

The GA recognizes the significance of disaster reduction and has passed a resolution annually since 1999.[292] Under resolution 54/219 in February 2000, the GA followed up on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction by maintaining observance of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction on the second Wednesday of October and maintained its commitment to follow-up on the issue annually.[293] In addition, the Secretary–General has also produced a report every year on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction since 2001.[294]

Key Issues and Remaining Challenges

Human population has grown very slowly throughout history; however, since the second half of the 20th century, the global population has been growing rapidly and with great magnitude.[295] Population growth entails increased exposure and vulnerability to the impact of various hazards.[296] There is a general consensus that this rapid increase in population has an influence climate change and other climate effects such as heat waves, precipitation patterns, and extreme weather conditions.[297] Furthermore, identified risks associated with planning need to be addressed in a preemptive matter as increased population settlements have also increased the need for risk management.[298] For example, governments need to ensure that building standards are adequate, especially since many cities are located near earthquake fault lines.[299] Poor planning not only increases the risk for a disaster to occur, but also the degree of impact and level of damage of the disaster.[300] There has been an increase of economic assets and earning potential in recent years.[301] As such, the loss of economic assets and jobs from disasters has also increased particularly in higher income countries, where more economic assets are held.[302] However, such economic losses have even greater impacts on low and middle-income countries where resources for recovery are less readily available.[303] Since 1981, economic loss from disasters has surpassed the rate of GDP per capita growth in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development countries.[304]

Disaster reduction also has impacts on the basic sustenance of life, including food security and particularly for the poor.[305] Three out of four people in developing countries live in rural areas and are dependent on agriculture for food security.[306] Recurrent disasters often derail people from development and can concrete a cycle of perpetual poverty.[307] In addition, high food prices threaten the health and well-being of poor people.[308] The Horn of Africa is

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[289] UN General Assembly, *International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/RES/66/199)* [Resolution], 2012.

[290] UNISDR, *Post-HFA-About* [Website], 2013.

[291] Ibid.

[292] UNISDR, *UN Resolutions and* Reports [Website], 2013.

[293] UN General Assembly, *International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: Successor Arrangements (A/RES/54/219)* [Resolution], 2000.

[294] UNISDR, *UN Resolutions and* Reports [Website], 2013.

[295] UNISDR, *Linkage Between Population Dynamics, Urbanization Processes and Disaster Risks: A Regional Vision of Latin America* [Report], 2012.

[296] Ibid.

[297] Ibid.

[298] Ibid.

[299] UN Economic and Social Council, *Resilient Cities: Disaster Risk Reduction in an Urbanizing World* [Report], 2010.

[300] UNISDR, *Linkage Between Population Dynamics, Urbanization Processes and Disaster Risks: A Regional Vision of Latin America* [Report], 2012.

[301] UNISDR, *Towards a Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction* [Report], 2012.

[302] Ibid.

[303] Ibid.

[304] Ibid.

[305] UN World Food Programme, *Disaster Risk Management in Food and Agriculture* [Report], 2008.

[306] Ibid.

[307] Ibid.

[308] Ibid.

the only region in the world still facing malnutrition and this is directly attributed to their long-term drought issues.[309]

Public awareness is one of the most efficient ways of recognizing risks in order to promote a culture of prevention.[310] Though past disasters have created some awareness, targeting communities at risk and recognizing their vulnerabilities can further facilitate disaster reduction. This includes facilitating the work of governments at the local and regional level.[311] However, the tools and guidelines are often still lacking.[312] Political awareness and willingness of governments to share best practices and information is still required, and, though laws surrounding DRR can be effective, governments must take initiative in finding methods that are effective and able to be implemented.[313] Furthermore, at ISDR's conception in 1999, there was recognition that technology would play a major role in disaster reduction.[314] Such steps have included remote sensors for disaster reduction, geographical information systems in disaster reduction, global positioning systems, mathematical modeling, disaster reduction policy for technology, and communications in disaster reduction.[315] PreventionWeb, a subsidiary of UNISDR, is one technological resource that harnesses the information related to disaster reduction.[316]

In reviewing the *Hyogo Framework* and in preparation of the drafting a post-2015 strategy, the ISDR has recognized that a practical and consultative debate discussing goals, targets, indicators, and ways to measure progress is still required.[317] Furthermore, the discussion needs to expand beyond a technical discussion and provide more focus on strategic targets to ensure relevance and measurability.[318] Predictions by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change have indicated that the world will be very different by 2030 if action is not taken, and, as such, there is an emphasis on climate change management.[319] In addition, there is an overall recognition that the post-MDG and post-Hyogo processes need to understand and work in conjunction and learn from its successes and weaknesses.[320] The recent nuclear disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactors is has demonstrated the need to review best practices and learned lessons.[321]

Case Study: Japan

On 11 March 2011, Japan was hit with a major earthquake of 9.0 on the Richter magnitude scale, and subsequently a 15-meter tsunami disabled the cooling unit of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactors.[322] For up to six days, radioactive particles were being released and four reactors were written off.[323] It took two weeks for the reactors to be stabilized and a complete shutdown was not completed until December 2011.[324] This earthquake was a rare double quake phenomenon that lasted for three minutes, and caused the death of over 19,000 individuals with the displacement of many more individuals through the destruction of coastal ports, towns, and over a million buildings.[325] There were also hundreds of aftershock quakes with a magnitude of up to 7.1.[326]

The power plant was built approximately 11 kilometers from the coast and 13 meters above sea level.[327] The original design of the plant assumed that a tsunami of 3.1 meters would hit based on an assessment of a Chilean tsunami,

[309] IFRC, *Food Security* [Website].
[310] UNISDR, *International Strategy for Disaster Reduction: Latin America and the Caribbean* [Report], 2001.
[311] Institute of Resource Governance and Social Change, *Civil Society Roles in Governing Disaster Reduction: Case Study from National and Local Levels in Indonesia*, 2013.
[312] UNISDR, *International Strategy for Disaster Reduction: Latin America and the Caribbean* [Report], 2001.
[313] IFRC, *Better Laws, safer communities? Emerging themes on how legislation can support disaster risk reduction*, 2013.
[314] UNISDR, *Coping Study on Technology for disaster reduction* [Article], 1999.
[315] Ibid.
[316] UNSIDR, *PreventionWeb.net Homepage* [Website], 2013.
[317] UNISDR & WMO, *Disaster risk and resilience: Thematic Think* Piece, 2012.
[318] Ibid.
[319] Actalliane, *Sustainable Environment in the post-2015 development framework*.
[320] NGOVoice, *DRR and development post-2015*, 2013.
[321] World Nuclear Association, *Fukushima Accident 2011*, 2013.
[322] Ibid.
[323] Ibid.
[324] Ibid.
[325] Ibid.
[326] Ibid.
[327] Ibid.

which occurred in the 1960s.[328] In 2002, the designs were revised to 5.7 meters, which still left the area vulnerable with the 15-meter tsunami wave.[329] When the reactors were built in the 1960s, it was considered acceptable given the available information on disaster risks.[330]

As a result, the world community has reviewed the risks associated with nuclear power plants residing in earthquake prone zones and scientists have called for these areas to be "atomic power free zones."[331] Though the earthquake itself was not the cause of damage on the reactors, the associated tsunami that it triggered was did cause damages to the nuclear reactors.[332] Though the damage has been costly, learned lessons from the disaster can help the global community through learned lessons behind the cause of the disaster, its impacts and also post-disaster management cleanup efforts.[333]

Conclusion

The international strategy on disaster reduction has been an ongoing effort by governments, UN bodies, international organizations, and NGOs to take preventative steps in order to minimize the impacts of natural and human induced hazards. In that time, governments have shared best practices, taken learned lessons from disasters and also taken the time to share technology in order to anticipate ways to better anticipate the needs for disaster risk reduction. However, the effects and risks associated cannot always be correctly estimated, as in the case in Japan where the impacts were underestimated. Moving ahead, the international community needs to examine further steps that can be taken to mitigate risks despite the inherent danger and unpredictability of the environment.

Questions to consider for further research include: How will future plans in disaster management and risk reduction fit in a post-2015 world and what can governments do to implement effective plans and changes? What can the international community learn from past disasters when considering options for the future? How can key crosscutting issues be mainstreamed and integrated throughout a future plan? What are the major achievements and challenges in reducing disaster risks for women? How best can, people with disabilities participate in risk assessments, training and education, decision-making, and in awareness raising? What are some measures for greater social cohesion, community empowerment for reduce risks of disasters and build resilience in communities? How can we improve the understanding of the benefit of disaster risk management among the private sector? How can the post-2015 development agenda (post MDGs), proposed sustainable development goals, and a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction coming together at the community level?

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> *Natural disasters and human rights are closely linked issues. There is recognition that when disaster strikes, low-income individuals are more likely to feel the effects as they are displaced from their homes and services and aid may not be readily available. This report provides a breakdown for how natural disasters are linked to human rights and how the rights of individuals impacted by disasters can be addressed.*

Guha-Sapir D. Vos, Below & Ponserre. (2012, July). *Annual Disaster Statistical Review 2011*. Université Catholique de Louvain. Retrieved 27 July 2013 from: http://cred.be/sites/default/files/2012.07.05.ADSR_2011.pdf
> *This collaborative report between the World Health Organization and Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters provides a global report on the various disasters that occurred in 2011. The reader can review both the types of disasters, the associated impacts on physical bodies, and*

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[328] World Nuclear Association, *Fukushima Accident 2011*, 2013.
[329] Ibid.
[330] Ibid.
[331] Wolf, *New Findings on Fukushima Nuke Disaster*, 2011.
[332] Ibid.
[333] Nakayama & McKinley, *Fukishima's Future*, 2013.

also areas most impacted by disasters. In addition, the report provides a comprehensive summary for how each region around the work has been impacted by disasters.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2013). *Better laws, safer communities? Emerging themes on how legislation can support disaster risk reduction.* Retrieved 2 July 2013 from: http://www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/49635/IFRC_better-laws-safer-communities_2013.pdf
> *One of the key aspects of risk management is prevention. With urbanization, lawmakers need to pay extra attention to the laws governing development in order to build communities and cities that can withstand the risks associated with disasters. This report from the International Federation of Red Cross examines how local, regional, and national levels of government can implement policies and legislations for the development of communities to ensure that they are safe and have reduced risks.*

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (1999). *Coping Study on Technology for disaster reduction* [Article]. Retrieved 27 July 2013 from: http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/30200
> *Technology has been recognized to be a key component in preventing and minimizing the risks and damages associated with disaster. This report provides a comprehensive discussion about the role technology has in disaster risk reduction and management through concrete examples of how different technology has aided in disaster situations. Delegates will find this document useful in developing concrete solutions to the issue of disaster prevention.*

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2013). *Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)* [Website]. Retrieved 2 July 2013 from: http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/hfa
> *The Hyogo Framework is the international framework that drives the issue of disaster risk reduction. This link to the Hyogo framework's operating site provides delegates with a summary of the HFA and its priorities in tackling the issue of DRR. Delegates can also review the associated documents and action items that have been produced as a result of the HFA. In addition, the site offers some post-2015 framework and strategies.*

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2013). *PreventionWeb: Serving the information needs of disaster reduction community* [Website]. Retrieved 2 July 2013 from: http://www.preventionweb.net/english/
> *Prevention Web is a compilation of resources and articles associated with disasters and risk management. The site lists specific country profiles and their associated action items that have been taken to address the issue of disasters and risk prevention. In addition, PreventionWeb tracks themes and issues related to DRR and the impacts of the environment on people.*

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2013). *United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience*. Retrieved 2 July 2013 from: http://www.preventionweb.net/files/33703_actionplanweb14.06cs.pdf
> *This is the international strategy on DRR created by the UN as a preemptive approach to risk management. This plan incorporates all partners that are involved in the DRR process. There is also a particular focus on a post-2015 strategy for countries and a particular focus on resilience and how this can be achieved given the unpredictability of natural disasters. As a key aspect of this topic, delegates should explore DRR on the strategy and actions that have been taken to move DRR forward.*

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2013). *UN Resolutions and Reports* [Website]. Retrieved 2 July 2013 from: http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/resolutions-reports
> *This is a listing of all Secretary-General Reports and General Assembly resolutions related to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, International Cooperation to Reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon and Natural Disaster and Vulnerability. As this is a topic that has been discussed annually by the GA, delegates may find it useful to see what action has already taken by the UN to resolve the issue. There is also a listing of the all the Secretary-General reports on the issue of disaster and risk reduction and these reports help to guide the vision of the UN and any outstanding issues that need to be addressed by the international community.*

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2013). *What is Disaster Risk Reduction?* [Website]. Retrieved 2 July 2013 from: http://www.unisdr.org/who-we-are/what-is-drr

> *Delegates will find this to be a simple introduction to the issue of disaster risk reduction with a summary of the international definition and approach for DRR. The link provides a video for delegates to review, and the video summarizes what natural disasters include and the associated impacts of natural disasters in the last 10 years. This source will assist delegates in establishing a basic understanding and framework for the topic to be discussed.*

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2012, March). *Towards a Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction* [Report]. Retrieved 27 July 2013 from: http://www.unisdr.org/files/25129_towardsapost2015frameworkfordisaste.pdf

> *With the commencement of the initial goals set out by the Hyogo Framework and the Millennium Development Goals, world leaders and Members States are looking forward at establishing post-2015 goals. With an understanding of successful action items and learned lessons, this source examines some of the areas of focus in developing new goals. Delegates are encouraged to explore the post-2015 discuss in order to develop a better understanding of past issues and future aims.*

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Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly Second Committee (GA 2nd)

Introduction

1. These rules shall be the only rules which apply to the General Assembly Second Committee (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee") and shall be considered adopted by the Committee 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 Deputy Secretary-General, and are collectively referred to as the "Secretariat."

3. Interpretation of the rules shall be reserved exclusively to the Deputy Secretary-General or her/his designate. Such interpretation shall be in accordance with the philosophy and principles of the National Model United Nations (NMUN) 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 Committee, which can be any member of the Secretariat or their designate.

5. The practice of striving for consensus in decision-making shall be encouraged. NMUN also acknowledges it may sometimes be necessary for a Member State to abstain or vote against a resolution it cannot support for policy reasons.

I. SESSIONS

Rule 1 - *Dates of convening and adjournment*

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

Rule 2 - *Place of sessions*

The Committee 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 Deputy Secretary-General and communicated to the members of the Committee at least sixty days before the opening of the session.

Rule 4 - *Adoption of the agenda*

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

> *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 Committee 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 Committee 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 Committee so decides by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting. No additional item may, unless the Committee 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 Deputy Secretary-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 Committee 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 Committee.

2.   The Secretary-General, in cooperation with the Deputy Secretary-General, shall provide and direct the staff required by the Committee and be responsible for all the arrangements that may be necessary for its meetings.

Rule 8 - *Duties of the Secretariat*

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

Rule 9 - *Statements by the Secretariat*

The Secretary-General or her/his designate, may make oral as well as written statements to the Committee 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 Committee 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 or her/his designate.

Rule 12 - *Official and working language*

English shall be the official and working language of the Committee during scheduled sessions (both formal and informal) of the Committee.

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. The language should be the official language of the country you are representing at NMUN.*

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 Committee are present. The presence of representatives of a majority of the members of the Committee shall be required for any decision to be taken.

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

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 Committee, direct the discussions, ensure observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, put questions to vote and announce decisions. The President, subject to these rules, shall have complete control of the proceedings of the Committee and over the maintenance of order at its meetings. He or she shall rule on points of order. The President may propose to the Committee the closure of the list of speakers, a limitation on the speakers time 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 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 Committee*

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

Rule 17 - *Voting rights on procedural matters*

Unless otherwise stated, all votes pertaining to the conduct of business shall require a favorable vote by the 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). Every delegation must cast a vote in procedural votes. Further, there is no possibility to abstain or pass 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 (on her/his own accord), 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 Committee 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 Committee through a vote if the President, at his or her discretion, decides to allow the Committee to decide. In no case shall the speakers time be changed during the first scheduled session of the Committee. Consequently, motions to alter the speaker's time will not be entertained by the President. The content of speeches should be pertinent to the agenda as set by the Committee.*

Rule 20 - *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 Committee, declare the list closed. Once the list has been closed, it can be reopened upon by a vote of the Committee. 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 Committee.

> *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 Committee. A motion to close the speakers list or reopen (if the list has already been closed) is within the purview of the Committee 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 Committee 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. The right of reply will not be approved should it impugn the integrity of another State.*

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. Delegates should not state a purpose for the suspension.

> *This motion should be used to suspend the meeting for lunch or at the end of the scheduled committee session time. Delegates should properly phrase this motion as "suspension of the meeting," and provide a length of time when making the motion.*

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 Committee shall reconvene at its next regularly scheduled meeting time.

> *As this motion, if successful, would end the meeting until the Committee'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 Committee.*

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 Committee favors the closure of debate, the Committee 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:

1. To suspend the meeting;

2. To adjourn the meeting;

3. To adjourn the debate on the item under discussion;

4. 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 Committee [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 Committee 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 Committee 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 Committee 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 Committee. These draft resolutions are the collective property of the Committee 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. Should delegates wish to withdraw a working paper or draft resolution from consideration, this requires the consent of all sponsors.*

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 Committee, 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. The President may limit the time to be allowed to speakers under this rule.

Rule 30 - *Invitation to silent prayer or meditation*

Immediately after the opening of the first plenary meeting and immediately preceding the closing of the final plenary meeting of each session of the General Assembly, the President shall invite the representatives to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

VI. VOTING

Rule 31 - *Voting rights*

Each member of the Committee 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 32 - *Request for a vote*

A proposal or motion before the Committee for decision shall be voted upon if any member so requests. Where no member requests a vote, the Committee 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. Adoption by "acclamation" or "without a vote" is consistent not only with the educational mission of the conference but also the way in which the United Nations adopts a majority of its proposals.

Rule 33 - *Majority required*

1. Unless specified otherwise in these rules, decisions of the Committee 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 34 - *Method of voting*

1. The Committee 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, when requested a second time, 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 Committee 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 Committee 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 35 - *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. Only delegates who are sponsors of a draft resolution that has been adopted with an unfriendly amendment, whom subsequently voted against the draft resolution may explain their vote.

Rule 36 - *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 among delegates, and if any delegate leaves the Committee room during voting procedure, they will not be allowed back into the room until the Committee

has convened voting procedure. Should a delegate who is also serving as Head Delegate leave the room, they may reenter but they may not retake their seat and participate in the vote.

Rule 37 - *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 an 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 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 38 - *Amendments*

An amendment is a proposal that does no more than add to, delete from, or revise part of another proposal. Permission to speak on the amendment shall be given only to two speakers in favor and two speakers against.

> *An amendment can add, amend, or delete entire operative clauses, but cannot in any manner add, amend, delete, or otherwise affect preambular clauses or sub-clauses of operative clauses. The President may limit the time to be allowed to speakers under this rule. These speeches are substantive in nature.*

Rule 39 - *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 40 - *Order of voting on proposals*

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

Rule 41 - *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 42 - *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 43 - *Authority of the General Assembly*

The Committee 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 COMMITTEE

Rule 44 - *Participation of non-Member States*

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

A sub-committee or sessional body of the Committee 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 Committee 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 Committee according to this rule should also keep in mind their role and obligations in the Committee that they were originally assigned to. For educational purposes of the NMUN Conference, the Secretariat may thus ask a delegate to return to his or her committee when his or her presence in the Committee is no longer required. Delegates may request the presence of a non-member of their committee simply by informing the President that this is the desire of the body, there is no formal procedural process.*

Rule 45 - *Participation of national liberation movements*

The Committee 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.

> *National liberation movements are only represented at NMUN in two ways: (1) if their delegation has been assigned explicitly the national liberation movement itself; or (b) should the Security Commission wish to hear from a representative of the movement in their deliberations, the Secretariat shall provide the appropriate representative.*

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 Committee 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 Committee or of the subsidiary organ concerned.

> *NMUN does not assign delegations to Specialized Agencies.*

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 Committee 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 Committee on questions within the scope of the activities of the organizations.

> *NMUN will assign delegations an NGO instead of a Member State upon request.*