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GENERAL ASSEMBLY SECOND COMMITTEE BACKGROUND GUIDE 2015

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NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS





THE 2015 NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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Dear Delegates,

We are pleased to welcome you to the 2015 National Model United Nations Washington, D.C. Conference (NMUN•DC)! This year's General Assembly Second Committee (GA2) staff is: Director Christopher McKenna and Assistance Director Analeigh Willett. Christopher is a graduate of Boston University School of Public Health and will be starting medical school in 2016. Analeigh is a senior completing a triple degree in International Relations, Political Science, and Spanish Translations with a minor in Economics at West Virginia University.

The topics under discussion for GA2 are:

- I. Strengthening International Strategies for Disaster Reduction
- II. Addressing External Debt Sustainability
- III. International Trade and Development

The General Assembly Second Committee is the primary forum for the discussion of economic and financial topics at the United Nations. Current issues being discussed include economic growth and development, macroeconomic policies, sustainable development, globalization and interdependence, and poverty eradication. The globalization of trade has further reinforced the need for a body to ensure that all Member States are represented in international discussions.

We hope you will find this Background Guide useful as it serves to introduce you to the topics for this committee; however, it is not meant to replace further research. We highly encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in full detail and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography as part of your research to expand your knowledge on these topics and prepare to discuss solutions with fellow delegates. Prior to the conference, each delegation will submit a [position paper](#) based on their preparation (due 1 October). 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.

The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) are available for download from the NMUN website. This document includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure. It is thus an essential instrument in preparing for the conference and a reference during committee.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for this committee or the Conference itself, you are welcome to contact Under-Secretaries-General Lauren Shaw (usglauren.dc@nmun.org) and Katrena Porter (usgkat.dc@nmun.org).

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

Sincerely,

Christopher McKenna, *Director*
Analeigh Willett, *Assistant Director*

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Committee Overview

Introduction

The General Assembly (GA) is one of the main organs of the United Nations (UN) and is further divided into six different committees.¹ Each of these committees focuses on a special topic and debates issues prevalent in today's world that relate to those special topics, ranging from international security to socio-economic issues, as well as budgetary and financial needs.²

History

United States of America President Franklin D. Roosevelt coined the term “United Nations” on 1 January 1942 in the *Declaration by United Nations*, which pledged to continue to fight and defeat the Axis Powers during World War II.³ Articles 55-60 of the *Charter of the United Nations* address international economic and social cooperation and vest authority in the GA to carry out those provisions; as the economic and financial committee of the GA, those responsibilities are accordingly delegated to the GA Second Committee (GA2).⁴ Historically, the Second committee has also been tasked with issues related to Member States in “special situations” including Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Least Developed Countries (LLDCs), and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).⁵ The GA2 thus works diligently to improve the economic status of a broad range of states and increase international cooperation on matters that form the basis for global economic and financial interactions.⁶

Related to this work, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) created the Human Development Index (HDI), which is defined as “a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and have a decent standard of living.”⁷ The HDI is the geometric mean of normalized indices for each of those three dimensions.⁸ The HDI has been useful in the GA2's understanding of the holistic development of a country as a means of measuring development outcomes per its mandate, while not focusing solely on the economic growth.⁹

Mandate

The GA is mandated with discussing “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.”¹⁰ This provides the framework of discussion for all committees of the GA. Since Articles 55-60 of the *Charter of the United Nations* outline the GA's responsibility on economic cooperation, the Second Committee's mandate would include discussion relevant to any issues presented in those articles.¹¹ Those issues and discussions include broad matters like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the post-2015 development agenda as well as more specific issues including external debt and resource sovereignty in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.¹²

Governance, Structure and Membership

193 members of the UN are included within the GA and all have one vote.¹³ Only observer states such as Palestine or the Holy See do not get to vote in the GA, though in some instances, when a Member State does not pay its dues

¹ Encyclopedia Britannica, *United Nations General Assembly*.

² UNGA, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly*.

³ United Nations, *History of the United Nations*.

⁴ United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, Chapter IX, 1945.

⁵ UNGA, *Economic and Financial – Second Committee*, 2014.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ UNDP, *Human Development Index (HDI)*.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, Chapter IV, 1945.

¹¹ United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, Chapter IX, 1945.

¹² UNGA, *Economic and Financial – Second Committee*, 2014.

¹³ UNGA, *About the General Assembly*.

it can technically be barred from voting.¹⁴ The GA, and its component committees, is the “main deliberative policymaking and representative organ of the UN.”¹⁵ As such, they are also the primary UN bodies with universal representation, making them central to virtually all UN discussions.¹⁶ Much of the authority vested in the GA2 is also vested within the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), both of which are supported by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.¹⁷

Functions and Powers

The Second Committee addresses socio-economic policy issues and problems.¹⁸ It focuses on the economic and financial issues of Member States, as well as the international community, while upholding and supporting the economic growth of Member States.¹⁹ Importantly, while the Second Committee addresses external economic issues, it is the Fifth Committee that is tasked with internal financial activities such as the determination of the UN budget.²⁰ With the threat of financial instability constantly looming, the GA2 shifted its focus to emphasize stability and sustainability in global financial markets.²¹ As the expiration of the MDGs nears, GA2 is also significantly involved in the process of drafting the post-2015 development agenda.²²

In addition to a general focus on economic development, the Second Committee’s agenda is perennially tasked with the question of the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory over their resources.²³ Work on this issue narrowly pertains to macroeconomic and socioeconomic areas that are essential to improving the quality of life for the Palestinian people.²⁴

Recent Sessions

The 68th session of the Second Committee primarily focused on economic growth and development and dealt specifically with macroeconomic policy questions, guidelines and frameworks.²⁵ As the GA is currently undergoing a reform period, much of the work completed by the Second Committee coincides with those changes and reforms.²⁶ The primary reason for this reform is to increase the efficiency of the committee.²⁷ Many working methods and practices that are now very common within the Second Committee have been updated and are slowly changing.²⁸ This, in turn, is expected to improve the quality of debate and the quality of the resolutions that the committee produces.²⁹ This revitalisation of the Second Committee has also impacted the decisions that are coming out of the committee and even shifted the focus of its agenda and program of work. To help decrease the workload placed upon the UN Secretariat during the review of substantive reports, an interactive “question time” will be set aside.³⁰ The hope is that this process will help decrease the amount of proposals by increasing the confidence through thematic agendas and proposals that inspire more cooperation within the body and among Member States.³¹

¹⁴ UNGA, *Countries in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions under the terms of Article 19 of the UN Charter; UNGA, Non-member States*.

¹⁵ UNGA, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly*.

¹⁶ UNGA, *About the General Assembly*.

¹⁷ UN-DESA, *Who We Are*.

¹⁸ United Nations, *Main Committees*.

¹⁹ UNGA, *Economic and Financial – Second Committee*, 2014.

²⁰ UNGA Fifth Committee, *Administrative and Budgetary*, 2013.

²¹ UNGA, *Economic and Financial – Second Committee*, 2014.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ UNGA, *Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/RES/68/77)*, 2013.

²⁴ UNGA, *Economic and Financial – Second Committee*, 2014.

²⁵ UNGA, *Resolutions – 68th Session*.

²⁶ UNGA, *Economic and Financial – Second Committee*, 2014.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

Conclusion

With the ongoing transition from the MDGs to the post-2015 development agenda, the Second Committee is committed to not only revitalising the committee's work itself, but also with completing the work of the MDGs and adjusting their agenda to help address the new goals established for the post-2015 world.³² Through collaboration with other UN agencies, the Second Committee can promote sustainable development and make meaningful improvement in peoples' lives through sound economic and social policies.³³

Annotated Bibliography

United Nations. (1945). *Charter of the United Nations, Chapter IX: International Economic and Social Cooperation* [Website]. Retrieved 20 May 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter9.shtml>

This website displays portions of the United Nations Charter in a way that different chapters can be easily accessed. It is important for delegates to utilize this site as a means of understanding the exact mandate of the General Assembly, as well as the General Assembly Second Committee. By understanding the groundwork for the Charter, delegates will be able to better determine the goals and outcomes of the Committee as a whole.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (n.d.). *About Us* [Website]. Retrieved 13 May 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/what-we-do.html>

This site is extremely relevant to delegates of the General Assembly Second Committee because it explores the support connection between GA2, ECOSOC, and DESA. Economic and social affairs can get extremely complex, and this document outlines some of the terminology that can be confusing. Further, this site lays out certain economic duties as well as the social aspects that the committees deal with.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-eighth session. (2013). *Allocation of Agenda Items to the Second Committee: Letter dated 20 September 2013 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chair of the Second Committee*. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/C.2/68/1

This is an official document from the General Assembly Second committee documenting the work done in the Sixty-eighth session, which was completed in 2013. Within this document, the allocation of agenda items is discussed and decided upon by the Second Committee. It serves a first-hand source for the agenda stated by the Second Committee—describing the GA2nd's stance of the post-2015 agenda as well as its priorities. It also serves as a guideline for the topics to be discussed in the 69th session of the General Assembly.

United Nations, General Assembly. (2014). *About the General Assembly* [Website]. Retrieved 20 May 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/index.shtml>

This webpage provides a comprehensive overview of the General Assembly where delegates can review all committees and their general mandates. This resource does a good job of laying out the duties of the General Assembly, its structure, as well its functions, and the different committees it contains. Seeing as the General Assembly represents every Member State, all delegates should find this page helpful for understanding the GA2.

United Nations, General Assembly. (2014). *Economic and Financial – Second Committee* [Website]. Retrieved 18 May 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/second/>

Here, delegates may find a good, detailed explanation as to the function of the General Assembly Second Committee specifically, while outlining the duties and the needs of the General Assembly. Many of the functions have changed over the course of the existence of the GA2 and this can be noted here. Delegates can use the information provided to help formulate decisions that would present their country's foreign policy as well as discern how the General Assembly works alongside ECOSOC.

³² UNGA, *The Post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage*, 2013.

³³ UNDP, *Human Development Index (HDI)*.



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- United Nations, General Assembly. (n.d.). *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly* [Website]. Retrieved 16 May 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>
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I. Strengthening International Strategies for Disaster Reduction

*"It is time for the world to embed disaster-resilience into the economic system, and into the development of towns and cities, taking into account factors such as seismic threats, flood plains, coastal erosion and environmental degradation. If we get it right in Sendai, resilience can become the hallmark of 2015, setting the tone for agreements later on sustainable development and climate change – which have important implications for disaster risk."*³⁴

- How can the GA2 and the UN work to strengthen international strategies for disaster reduction in order to better prepare for future adverse situations?
- In what ways can the GA work with non-governmental organization to provide a unique perspective in disaster areas and responses?
- When situations such as the Nepal earthquake arise, how can priorities be balanced to develop a disaster reduction strategy post-event?

Introduction

The past half century has seen an increasing number of natural and technological events leading to humanitarian emergencies; in fact, there was a nearly two and a half to three-fold increase in events from the 1980-1985 time period compared to 2009-2015.³⁵ These events have significant financial, social, and health impacts on the affected populations, resulting in an increased level of strain on the economy, social service, and health systems.³⁶ The increase in events has prompted UN agencies and other international agencies to further develop their preparedness measures and coordination mechanisms. High-level discussion began prior to the 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami, but this event, and resulting coordination failures, led to the evaluation of existing coordination systems.³⁷ The 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami, also known as the Boxing Day Tsunami, occurred on 26 December 2004.³⁸ This event, initially triggered by a magnitude 9.1 undersea earthquakes off the coast of Indonesia, caused a tsunami that affected more than 14 countries and killed an estimated 228,000 people.³⁹

Disasters are defined by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) as “a sudden, calamitous event that seriously disrupts the functioning of a community or society and causes human, material, and economic or environmental losses that exceed the community’s or society’s ability to cope using its own resources.”⁴⁰ Events can be classified as technological/man made or natural; technological/man made events include famine, conflict, industrial accidents, and displaced populations.⁴¹ Natural events include those that are climatological, geophysical, hydrological, or biological.⁴² Due to the increasing number of events, and the wide variety of effects, many organizations now utilize the “all hazards approach,” which plans for a variety of general events with the ability to adapt to individual circumstances as they occur.⁴³

³⁴ UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, *Comments by ASG for DRR Margareta Wahlström*, 2015.

³⁵ Munich RE, *Loss Events Worldwide 1980-2014*, 2015, p. 3.

³⁶ Munich RE, *Loss Events Worldwide 1980-2014*, 2015, p. 3; Watson, *Epidemics after Natural Disasters*, 2007.

³⁷ UNGA, *Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and the prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster*, 2007.

³⁸ Tsunami Lessons Learned Project, *The Tsunami Legacy*, 2009, p. 7.

³⁹ Tsunami Lessons Learned Project, *The Tsunami Legacy*, 2009, pp. 7-9.

⁴⁰ IFRC, *What is a disaster?*

⁴¹ IFRC, *Types of disasters*.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Australia Emergency Management, *Emergency Management Approaches*.

International and Regional Framework

The *Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)* is an outcome document from the World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in Kobe, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005.⁴⁴ The *Hyogo Framework for Action* is the successor to the *Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World* (1994) and was produced at the mid-point of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.⁴⁵ The *HFA* outlines the involvement of the United Nations, and related organizations in preparedness and response activities.⁴⁶ It stresses the importance of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) strategies to be undertaken by Member States.⁴⁷ The *HFA* followed the *Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World* in the encouragement of local communities taking responsibility for risk reduction activities.⁴⁸

The Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Sendai, Japan from 14-18 March 2015.⁴⁹ Since approaches and the activities outlined by the *HFA* will come to a close at the end of 2015, this conference built upon previous conferences on DRR and served as a venue to critically evaluate actions taken under the *HFA*.⁵⁰ The overall goal of the conference was to adopt “a concise, forward-looking and action-oriented post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction,” particularly through the examination of successful national and regional programs and policies.⁵¹

Role of the International System

The primary UN agency responsible coordinating the UN response to an event is the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).⁵² OCHA interacts with Member States through appointed Humanitarian or Resident Coordinators (HC/RC).⁵³ While the HC/RC is present in a Member State, it is the primary responsibility of the Member State to respond to any event. The HC/RC will only provide leadership and coordination if international assistance is requested by the Member State. One of the primary responsibilities of the HC/RC is to ensure that international assistance being provided not only addresses needs post-event, but is contributing to the longer-term recovery of affected areas.⁵⁴

OCHA is the primary agency responsible for coordinating the international humanitarian response to events, but due to the significant amount of thematic areas that are required, “clusters” have been established to address and coordinate specific thematic areas under the overall guidance of the HCT and RC/HC.⁵⁵ Global Clusters are chaired by identified UN organizations and agencies that are subordinate to the overall Emergency Response Coordinator.⁵⁶ Clusters can be activated in a variety of configurations depending on the ability of the Member State to provide leadership.⁵⁷ In situations where the Member State only has limited ability to provide coordination, the UN organization or agency will co-lead the identified cluster and provide support as needed.⁵⁸ If an event results in the inability of the Member State to provide any coordination, the cluster lead will provide appropriate leadership.⁵⁹ Another major coordination mechanism utilized by OCHA during events is the On-site Operations Coordination Center (OSOCC).⁶⁰ While this was initially a mechanism implemented to aid with the coordination of Search and

⁴⁴ UNISDR, *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters*, 2007.

⁴⁵ UNDHA, *Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World*, 1994.

⁴⁶ UNISDR, *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters*, 2007.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ UNDHA, *Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World*, 1994; UNISDR, *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters*, 2007.

⁴⁹ UNISDR, *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, 2015.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² OCHA, *Leadership - OCHA*.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ WHO, *WHO - The Cluster Approach*.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ IASC, *Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level*, 2013, pp. 4-6.

⁵⁸ IASC, *Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level*, 2013, pp. 4-6; WHO, *WPRO Health Sector Rehabilitation and Recovery Construction (HeRRC) Group*.

⁵⁹ IASC, *Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level*, 2013, p.4-6.

⁶⁰ OCHA, *OSOCC and RDC*.

Rescue teams in collaboration with the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group network, it has been expanded to include all incoming humanitarian aid.⁶¹ The OSOCC is a valuable mechanism that can be scaled to the individual event or events to ensure the proper aid and services are being delivered.⁶² As technology has developed, virtual OSOCCs have been established and provide points of contact for responding agencies prior to arriving in the affected areas.⁶³

Collaborations between the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and the United Nations Environment Programme have produced the PREVIEW Global Risk Data Program, which is an interactive tool that provides extensive data regarding areas at risk for natural disasters.⁶⁴ This tool can be utilized by agencies that are interested in implementing a DRR program in a specific geographic area.⁶⁵ Additionally, following a major event, data can be downloaded to provide initial assessments of the affected areas.⁶⁶ This program also has support from major academic centers and has proven invaluable in times of crisis.⁶⁷

The Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) was established in 1992 by GA resolution 46/128, *International Year for the World's Indigenous People*, to facilitate the exchange of information and provide a venue for coordination between UN Agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).⁶⁸ The IASC consists of all operational organizations and a standing invitation to the International Committee of the Red Cross, the IFRC, and the International Organization for Migration.⁶⁹ Relevant NGOs can be invited to participate in the standing committee on an ad hoc basis.⁷⁰ A major achievement of the IASC was the initiation of Humanitarian Reform Process in 2005, which ultimately resulted in the 2011 Transformative Agenda.⁷¹ Key guidance documents were issued prior to the 2011 Transformative Agenda, including the *IASC Guidance for Humanitarian Country Teams*, which provided the procedure for establishing a Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and the roles of the HCT.⁷²

While the above agencies are focused primarily on coordination during and post-event, the UNISDR is responsible for DRR activities in Member States.⁷³ The UNISDR Mandate is as follows: “to serve as the focal point in the United Nations system for the coordination of disaster reduction and to ensure synergies among the disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system and regional organizations and activities in socio-economic and humanitarian fields.”⁷⁴ Through this mandate, broad activities are undertaken on an international, regional, and national level, ensuring the appropriate implementation of DRR activities.⁷⁵ Many current activities are focused around the development of the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the most prominent of which is the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.⁷⁶

Case Study: 2015 Nepal Earthquake Response

At 11:56 a.m. on 25 April 2015, a magnitude 7.1 earthquake struck Nepal.⁷⁷ The epicenter of this earthquake was northwest of Kathmandu in the Lamjung District.⁷⁸ At this time, it is estimated that over 8,700 people have lost their lives, with a further 2.8 million in need of assistance.⁷⁹ Immediately following the earthquake, resources began to mobilize within Nepal and internationally, with further mobilization occurring as situation reports were received.

⁶¹ OCHA, *OSOCC and RDC*.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ OCHA, *Global Disaster Alerts and Coordination Systems Guidelines*, 2014.

⁶⁴ UNEP, *Global Risk Data Platform*.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Inter-Agency Standing Committee, *IASC – Inter-Agency Standing Committee*.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ UNGA, *Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations*, 1991.

⁷¹ Inter-Agency Standing Committee, *Key Messages: The IASC Transformative Agenda* (IA/1206/4147), 2012.

⁷² Inter-Agency Standing Committee, *Guidance for Humanitarian Country Teams*, 2010.

⁷³ UNISDR, *What we do*.

⁷⁴ UNISDR, *Our mandate*.

⁷⁵ UNISDR, *What we do*.

⁷⁶ UNISDR, *Towards a Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*.

⁷⁷ UN Office of the Resident Coordinator, *Nepal Earthquake Situation Report No1*, 2015.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ OCHA, *Humanitarian Data Exchange - Nepal*, 2015.

With the cluster system activated, and both the UN and WHO designating this emergency at a Level 3 and Grade 3 respectively, significant resources became available.⁸⁰ Due to the scope of the event, the large area affected, and the ongoing aftershocks, initial coordination on the ground was difficult. This was further complicated by the presence of only one international airport in the area.⁸¹ With only a single, damaged runway, a bottleneck occurred at the only point of entry.⁸² Amongst these challenges, significant coordination was occurring due to the increasing presence of technology in humanitarian events. Previously utilized resources such as PREVIEW, the OSOCC, and reliefweb.int were activated.⁸³ This event also utilized a tool developed to coordinate and consolidate information from the 2014 West Africa Ebola Outbreak, the Humanitarian Data Exchange.⁸⁴ This new resource provided a single point of contact for significant quantities of data, including situation reports, 3W's, information being released by the government, and funding information.⁸⁵ Further coordination occurred through the provision of interactive maps highlighting the location of damaged health facilities, refugee camps, and hazards.⁸⁶ The ability to gather all of this information quickly and in one location provides a massive advantage over significant events in the recent past.

Conclusion

Due to the trends in disaster occurrences, more significant events are likely to occur with greater frequency. This leads to a dire need for strengthened coordination post-event, but it also highlights the need for increased coordination leading up to events. Improved coordination with the utilization of the digital resources now available has the potential to provide a broad base of technical resources that Member States can draw upon when considering DRR activities. Member States should pay close attention to any major events that occur in order to compare the resources utilized and if any DRR activities were implemented prior to the event.

Annotated Bibliography

Munich RE. (2015). *Loss Events Worldwide 1980-2014*. Retrieved 27 May 2015 from: http://www.preventionweb.net/files/44281_19802014paketworldusde4zu3.pdf

This document provides a significant amount of data related to the frequency and impact of disasters over a thirty-five year period. The information provided is a great resource for delegates as a method to quantify the impact of these events. Delegates should pay particular attention to the geographic distribution of events and the potential impact this has on Member States, especially SIDS and LIC.

Reliefweb (2015). *Nepal Earthquakes 2015*. Retrieved 12 June 2015 from: <http://reliefweb.int/disaster/eq-2015-000048-npl>

This website provides resources related to the 2015 Nepal Earthquake, including, but not limited to: situation reports, financial flash appeals, and other coordination materials. Delegates should pay close attention to the variety of resources available through this site to highlight the role of online resources for coordination in large-scale events. This may be useful for implementing future event coordination among Member States and the United Nations.

United Nations, Department for Humanitarian Affairs. (1994). *Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World*. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: http://www.unisdr.org/files/8241_doc6841contenido1.pdf

The Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World was the initial strategy adopted by the United Nations during International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, and it outlines the importance of disaster risk reduction activities as well as the importance of sovereignty. Delegates should pay particular attention to the recommendations for action, and the role of the Member State in identifying risk areas and developing appropriate awareness activities.

⁸⁰ WHO, *Nepal Earthquake 2015- Grade 3 Emergency*, 2015.

⁸¹ NPR, *With Only One Runway, Kathmandu's Airport Hinders Earthquake Relief*, 2015.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Reliefweb, *Nepal Earthquakes 2015*, 2015.

⁸⁴ OCHA, *Humanitarian Data Exchange*, 2015.

⁸⁵ OCHA, *Humanitarian Data Exchange - Nepal*, 2015.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

United Nations, Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2007). *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters*. Retrieved 6 May 2015 from: <http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/1037>

The Hyogo Framework for Action outlines the actions to be taken from 2005-2015 in relation to disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction. The HFA emphasizes the role of communities in preparedness and response to ensure programs are sustainable and appropriate for the environment. Delegates should be familiar with the general ideas presented within the document and pay particular attention to community based approaches. This resource should be utilized as broad introduction to disaster risk reduction and preparedness activities, as it is the precursor to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

United Nations, Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2015). *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*. Retrieved 6 May 2015 from:

http://www.wcdrr.org/uploads/Sendai_Framework_for_Disaster_Risk_Reduction_2015-2030.pdf

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is the primary document that outlines actions that will be taken over the next 15 years in disaster risk reduction. It strongly promotes the idea of “Build Back Better” for actions taken post-disaster, and the role of the each stakeholder in this process. Delegates should be familiar with all parts of this document and utilize it as a starting point for further research.

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II. Addressing External Debt Sustainability

“The new millennium began with a great global dream. World leaders gathered at the United Nations in 2000 and adopted, among others, a historic goal to reduce poverty by half by 2015. Never in human history had such a bold goal been adopted by the entire world in one voice, one that specified time and size”⁸⁷

- How can external debt be addressed in a sustainable way that will be best for each Member State?
- What different challenges do various Member States face regarding their income status?
- In what ways can the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group work with the General Assembly to achieve fiscal sustainability for different regions?

Introduction

Many of the paradigms that explain global economic trends evolve as economies develop. With the trends constantly changing, the need to address external debt sustainability also rises. The World Bank Group defines external debt as “the portion of a country's debt that was borrowed from foreign lenders including commercial banks, governments or international financial institutions.”⁸⁸ Many development metrics are based off human development and poverty alleviation.⁸⁹ Low-income Countries (LICs) tend to struggle the most with external debt, much of which has been reduced by international debt relief initiatives that are led by more developed Member States.⁹⁰ Further, the MDGs and debt relief programs from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) help to create policies and frameworks that help countries move toward external debt sustainability.⁹¹ Many of the fundamental changes of economic development and sustainability have occurred within the boundaries of international economic relations, such as the creation of international bodies like the IMF and World Bank Group, which now oversee international economic actions.⁹²

International and Regional Framework

Many of the efforts to address external debt sustainability originate through the World Bank Group, as well as the IMF's Debt Sustainability Framework.⁹³ Debt sustainability analyses (DSAs) are another effort the international community has taken to help relieve and stabilize the external debt of Member States that are suffering from the largest amounts of debt.⁹⁴ DSAs project a state's debts over the following 20-year period to help Member States better understand how their fiscal needs will change and how their debt burden will fluctuate.⁹⁵ Many recommendations on borrowing and lending come from these frameworks and are presented to Member States to better assist in the management of external debt.⁹⁶

⁸⁷ Nobel Prize Committee, *Comments by Muhammad Yunas*, 2006.

⁸⁸ World Bank Group, *External Debt*.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ World Bank Group, *External Debt*.

⁹¹ IMF, *The IMF and the Millennium Development Goals*, 2015.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Development Finance International, *Debt Sustainability Framework for Low and Middle Income Countries*, 2015.

⁹⁴ IMF, *Debt Sustainability Analysis for Market-Access Countries*, 2015.

⁹⁵ World Bank Group, *Debt Sustainability Analysis (DSA)*, 2014.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

ECOSOC held a special meeting on external debt sustainability and development called Lessons Learned from Debt Crises and Ongoing Work on Sovereign Debt Restructuring and Debt Resolution Mechanisms in April 2013.⁹⁷ GA resolution 67/198, *The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction*, is a product of this meeting and discusses external debt sustainability and development in detail.⁹⁸ It is important to look at how states have managed to take control of their external debt, whether it be via austerity cuts, increase in taxes, or frameworks created by the IMF or the World Bank Group. In cases where a state's domestic policies have not been successful in controlling unsustainable debt levels, many Member States are turn to the IMF for further advise and must go through a series of development programs to manage their economy.⁹⁹ To citizens, this can, however, be a very unpopular solution to managing external debt. If a state is in serious financial hardship, this poses a threat to the stability of the international financial system as well, and therefore, it is imperative that the system remains stable. Through the IMF's Article of Lending, IMF loans are "are meant to help member countries tackle balance of payments problems, stabilize their economies, and restore sustainable economic growth."¹⁰⁰ While IMF loans often come with conditions that states must implement domestically, those loans are often the only resource available to states when their unsustainable debt burdens reduce creditworthiness and the availability of other loan sources.

Role of the International System

The World Bank-IMF Debt Sustainability Fund (DSF) is composed of multiple programs such as the LIC-DSF, which is specifically tailored to Low-Income Countries.¹⁰¹ This allows for the adaptation of financing terms to anticipate future risks of the constantly fluctuating economy of the international community.¹⁰² The balancing of funds to help repay debt is also another way in which the DSF suggests to ease external debt; this has begun to work with austerity cuts that many states have employed to help ease their in surmounting debt.¹⁰³ Many of European states have used this method of balancing funds to help service their large amount of external debt.¹⁰⁴ While these states are not low-income, they have used many of the methods that are utilized by LIC states to help ease their burden of debt.¹⁰⁵ The Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) framework is another method for reducing debt under the DSF.¹⁰⁶

Middle Income Countries

The method for addressing the debt of Middle Income Countries (MICs) is different than that of LICs. Taking into account the higher level of development in MICs, there is a more robust and established economy and other tools of assessment can be necessary when addressing external debt.¹⁰⁷ While the ideals and frameworks from the LIC-DSF can be applied to MIC-DSF, the manner in which external debt is addressed depends on the situation that the Member State is in. Fiscal policies are one of the ways in which MIC-DSF addresses external debt for MICs.¹⁰⁸ This can include austerity cuts to government spending, changing taxes, and recommendations to receive assistance from the IMF like low interest loans to help sustain and decrease their debt.¹⁰⁹ Many of the fiscal policies that come out of these frameworks can be very unpopular, some of which include raising of taxes or the reallocation of funds from other governmental organizations that the citizens of a state may deem unfavorable or even unnecessary.¹¹⁰ As such,

⁹⁷ ECOSOC, *Special meeting of ECOSOC on "External debt sustainability and development: Lessons learned from debt crises and ongoing work on sovereign debt restructuring and debt resolution mechanisms,"* 2013.

⁹⁸ UNGA, *External debt sustainability and development (A/RES/67/198)*, 2013.

⁹⁹ IMF, *IMF Lending*, 2015; International Monetary Fund, *Policy Papers on Debt-Sustainability in Low-Income Countries*.

¹⁰⁰ IMF, *IMF Lending*, 2015.

¹⁰¹ IMF, *Preserving Debt Sustainability in Low-Income Countries in the Wake of Global Crisis*, 2010; World Bank Group, *Factsheet: The Joint World Bank-IMF Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries*.

¹⁰² World Bank Group, *Debt Sustainability Analysis (DSA)*, 2014.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ World Bank Group, *External Debt*; World Bank Group, *Debt Sustainability Analysis (DSA)*, 2014.

¹⁰⁵ World Bank Group, *External Debt*.

¹⁰⁶ IMF, *A Review of Some Aspects of the Low-Income Country Debt Sustainability Framework*, 2009.

¹⁰⁷ Development Finance International, *Debt Sustainability Framework for Low and Middle Income Countries*, 2015.

¹⁰⁸ Development Finance International, *Debt Sustainability Framework for Low and Middle Income Countries*, 2015; IMF, *Fiscal Sustainability: A 21st Century Guide for the Perplexed*, 2013.

¹⁰⁹ Development Finance International, *Debt Sustainability Framework for Low and Middle Income Countries*, 2015.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

it can be difficult to discern just what fiscal policies are necessary and what fiscal policies will not necessarily aggravate the people or even the governments and policymakers of a state.

Fiscal Sustainability

Fiscal sustainability has an important role in the current global economy. After the financial crash of 2008, fiscal sustainability took on a more pertinent role for economists. Financial sustainability is defined as “the relation to the affordability of government taxation and spending programmes.”¹¹¹ Simply put, it is government’s spending activities and how they sustain a manageable amount of debt. Governments are advised to keep a “prudent level of debt,” though each government decides what is prudent and generally base that decision off of the GDP growth.¹¹² The European Union publishes an annual report on the fiscal sustainability of the European Union that provides updated definitions, reports, and country assessments of each Member State of the European Union.¹¹³ Through actions such as this report, Member States remain vigilant on their spending and governments can then adjust how they are managing the debt of their state. The World Bank Group publishes a similar report, the Debt Management Performance Assessment (DeMPA).¹¹⁴ It is published every year and is a “methodology for assessing public debt management performance through a comprehensive set of indicators spanning the full range of government debt management functions.”¹¹⁵ It revises and reevaluates criteria for financial assistance to LICs to match the ever-changing international financial market.¹¹⁶ Many methodologies such as this one are arising as a way for states to manage their insurmountable debt and have been proven effective in some African Member States.¹¹⁷

Conclusion

In an ever-changing global economy, the international system must continually review the financial safety nets that have been established to ease financial shocks that Member States undergo in adverse situation within the global economy. The Second Committee focuses heavily on increasing the ability of Member States to alleviate their debt burden without extensive external involvement. In cases where a Member State does require external assistance, though, the Second Committee continues to work with other international entities to ensure that frameworks and programs can better ensure long-term debt sustainability is achieved.

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This report by the European Union provides detailed information on Member State’s financial sustainability as well as provides factsheets and tables that provide a plethora of statistics that delegates will find useful. Reports like this will also help delegates discern just how their Member State may react in regard to policies that the committee may bring up in session. This document will provide a basic starting point for basic fiscal policy research.

International Monetary Fund. (n.d.). *Policy Papers on Debt-Sustainability in Low-Income Countries* [Website].

Retrieved 19 June 2015 from: <https://www.imf.org/external/ns/cs.aspx?id=174>

The IMF not only provides a number of sources that describe external debt and the initiatives that the current international system is utilizing to help ease less developed Member States’ debt, but it also gives in-depth statistics that will aid in the creation and help facilitate the flow of ideas that will help delegates create their own frameworks and ideas as to how to solve these problems. The information within this excerpt from the IMF helps to showcase how certain Member States are handling their debt crisis. In turn, the information is a good basis for the flow of ideas on how delegates will address the debt issues brought before their committee.

¹¹¹ European Union, *Fiscal Sustainability Report*, 2012.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ World Bank Group, *DeMPA*, 2015.

¹¹⁵ Economic and Policy Debt, *Indicators*.

¹¹⁶ World Bank Group, *DeMPA*, 2015.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

International Monetary Fund. (2010). *Preserving Debt Sustainability in Low-Income Countries in the Wake of Global Crisis* [Website]. Retrieved 20 June 2015 from: <https://www.imf.org/external/np/pp/eng/2010/040110.pdf>
These papers contain many ideas as to how LICs can get into certain debt situations that they find themselves in. The document discusses higher debt vulnerability and what makes an LIC susceptible to it, as well as if the LIC state is eligible for HIPC programs. This document is a good source of statistics on programs that help sustain external debt, as well as the long-term effects of lingering debt.

International Monetary Fund. (2013). *Fiscal Sustainability: A 21st Century Guide for the Perplexed* [Website]. Retrieved 25 June 2015 from: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2013/wp1389.pdf>
This working paper from the International Monetary Fund provides an overview of definitions and details about fiscal sustainability. This document captures the complexity of fiscal sustainability and just how difficult it can be to manage. Each analysis has liabilities discussed as well as different approaches that Member States use to achieve fiscal sustainability.

World Bank Group. (n.d.). *Factsheet: The Joint World Bank-IMF Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries*. [Website]. Retrieved 19 May 2015 from: <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/jdsf.htm>
Factsheets are an invaluable series of data that delegates can use to not only provide a basis for their country's fiscal stance, but also provide statistics to corroborate statements within their position papers. This factsheet specifically outlines the debt sustainability frameworks for LICs, and which Member States tend to use these sorts of frameworks the most. The factsheet also explains how the frameworks work and what a state must do to get a framework applied to their state.

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III. International Trade and Development

“Let us use the power of trade to improve the well-being of people everywhere while carefully managing the planet’s natural resources and ecosystems.”¹¹⁸

- How can the Second Committee work with other relevant international organization to promote international trade and development while simultaneously protecting the environment?
- In what ways are Member States challenged by international trade and development according to their market access?
- Should agricultural subsidies be utilized or, alternatively, reduced in order to promote international trade and development?

Introduction

The international trade system is most commonly associated with establishing rules and regulations to ensure fair and free trade around the world for all participating countries. The rules and regulations promoted cover a variety of trade issues and have established basic principles for international trade. The principles of international trade cover areas such as trade dumping, predatory pricing, and trade discrimination.¹¹⁹ Trade dumping occurs when products are “dumped” at lower than market price in competing area to flood the market and drown out competition.¹²⁰ Trade discrimination is characterized by a Member State explicitly favoring one trade partner over another by providing favorable trade conditions such as lower tariff rates or favoring local producers over foreign producers; non-tariff barriers, which are a form of tariff that is non-monetary like quotas, embargos, or sanctions; and subsidies, which

¹¹⁸ Ban Ki-moon, *Opening the 2014 WTO Public Forum*, 2014.

¹¹⁹ WTO, *World Trade Organization*, 2015.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

occurs when a nation protects a local industry by providing producers monetary benefits and placing higher tariffs on similar imported products.¹²¹ The above basic principles have been renegotiated countless times by both international and regional organizations as more states join the international trading system and trade regulations turn towards promoting lower-income country development.

Negotiation of international trade rules and regulations started in 1947 with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).¹²² Forged by 23 states, the GATT was developed in response to the growing difficulties within negotiating trade management.¹²³ The GATT was one of the first formal institutions for trade negotiations with a secretariat, director general, and non-binding dispute settlement capabilities.¹²⁴ Trade negotiation “rounds” started with the GATT, the first being the Geneva Round.¹²⁵ The principles agreed upon in the Geneva Round are those basic principles outlined above along with the organization’s ability to settle trade disputes between nations.¹²⁶ However, agricultural subsidies was a point of great contention with the round only agreeing that negotiations needed to continue, and the topic continues to stifle negotiations today.¹²⁷

The 1987 Uruguay Round was the beginning of drastic changes within the GATT and the future of the international trade framework.¹²⁸ The Uruguay Round recognized and reaffirmed the triumphs of previous rounds such as codifying greater regulations for non-tariff barriers and non-discrimination tactics.¹²⁹ The negotiations officially recognized that the current trading atmosphere was at a precipice in the new international economic era due to increasing interdependence, economic crises, developing countries seeking market access, and growing regionalism that altered multilateral trade arrangements.¹³⁰ By the end of the Uruguay Round in 1995, the 124 GATT members created the Marrakesh Agreement, which improved on the previous non-tariff barrier and safeguard agreements, addressed protection of intellectual property rights, and most importantly created binding mechanisms for its dispute settlement arm.¹³¹ The final outcome of the round was the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in hopes that a new body, with a mandate consisting of more detailed principles and abilities, would be able to better address the issues within the new international economic era and the growing trade community.¹³²

The WTO has grown to 160 members and is currently working within the Doha Round, which commenced in 2001 and has been termed the Doha Development Agenda as it has placed developing countries’ interests at the forefront of the negotiations.¹³³ However, the Doha Round has been mostly considered a failure for developing countries as nearly all ministerial meetings over the last decade have ended with little semblance of an agreement. In 2013, the Doha Round produced the Bali Package that addressed the broader goals of the Doha Round but did not cover more contentious issues such as agricultural subsidies.¹³⁴ Even though the Bali Package was a landmark event for the Doha Round, many WTO members are dissatisfied with negotiations and have been looking toward collaborating within regional blocs to address trade concerns.¹³⁵ Recently, the GA has expressed its concerns with the lack of Doha’s progress in resolution 69/205, *International Trade and Development*.¹³⁶ The next WTO ministerial meeting will be held at the end of 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya, with hopes that the small successes of the Bali meeting can continue.¹³⁷

¹²¹ WTO, *World Trade Organization*, 2015.

¹²² Spero & Hart, *The Politics of International Economic Relations*, 2010.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² WTO, *World Trade Organization*, 2015.

¹³³ Spero & Hart, *The Politics of International Economic Relations*, 2010.

¹³⁴ WTO, *A Year in Review*, 2014.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ UNGA, *International trade and development A/RES/69/205*, 2015.

¹³⁷ WTO, *A Year in Review*, 2014.

International and Regional Framework

Recent international trade negotiations have shifted focus from multilateral, or working within the UN and WTO frameworks in order to ensure all stakeholders are involved in negotiations. The current preferred mechanisms are regional, plurilateral, or bilateral frameworks like the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation organization, the European Union, North American Free Trade Agreement, and 350 other recognized trade arrangements.¹³⁸ Regional, plurilateral, and bilateral arrangements differ from multilateral in that fewer nations with similar geography or trade interests are involved in negotiations.¹³⁹ The shift to these trade arrangements has occurred due to the ability of such mechanisms to meet specific demands among each nation involved without having to work around the demands of all 160 WTO members.¹⁴⁰ However, the UN and the WTO have embraced these new arrangements in good faith to promote the international trade system.

Bali Package

The 2013 Bali Package is the first WTO trade agreement passed since 1995 and produced key decisions covering various trade issues to encourage further Doha Round negotiations.¹⁴¹ These negotiations included 103 ministers, 175 delegations from regional and multilateral organizations, and 349 NGOs.¹⁴² First, the Trade Facilitation Agreement requires Member States to “cut red tape” (duties, quotas, or sanctions) to foreign direct investment and customs procedures for imported goods.¹⁴³ Regarding agriculture, the package has given temporary protection to states that are practicing food stockholding of staple crops for food security.¹⁴⁴ Lastly, the package addresses issues in development such as ensuring LDCs are given preferential treatment in areas such as duty-free and quota-free market access and mechanisms to monitor treatment of LDCs.¹⁴⁵ Since the package was announced, the WTO has spent the last year implementing the various decisions, but the WTO has faced an uphill battle with over 400 new trade restrictions implemented by Member and non-Member States due to mostly weak economic growth.¹⁴⁶ In general, LDCs were deemed the “winners” of the Bali meeting, but with agricultural issues being the primary issue now, developed and middle-income countries are creating outside agreements excluding LDCs.¹⁴⁷

Agricultural Subsidies

Agricultural subsidies are one of the primary points of contention beleaguering the Doha Round and regional trade negotiations.¹⁴⁸ Though the Bali Package was easily the greatest achievement by the WTO in two decades, it did little to address issues concerning agriculture.¹⁴⁹ In fact, the decisions on agriculture simply reaffirmed the need to continue discussions regarding subsidies on staple crops such as corn, cotton, soybean, wheat, and rice.¹⁵⁰ During the Uruguay Round, the Agreement on Agriculture established that excessive export and domestic subsidies needed to be reduced to help developing countries gain access to agricultural markets, but the text had little to actually implement.¹⁵¹ However, the opposite of the agreement occurred with developed countries and emerging markets in Asia increasing agricultural protections and non-tariff barriers.¹⁵² These protections have resulted in increasing price volatility for staple crops; increased dumping practices in which excess of crops are sent to developing countries and lower market value of local crops; encouragement of unnecessary food stockpiling; and have helped developed countries out-produce and out-compete their developing counterparts.¹⁵³ The uphill battle the WTO faces with new attempts at agriculture negotiations is not unique. In fact, regional trade negotiations often do not discuss agriculture in hopes of avoiding the breakdown of cooperation on other trade topics.¹⁵⁴

¹³⁸ WTO, *Regional Trade Agreements*, 2015.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ Spero & Hart, *The Politics of International Economic Relations*, 2010.

¹⁴¹ WTO, *A Year in Review*, 2014.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ Bellman, *Challenges Facing LDCs in Bali and Beyond*, 2013.

¹⁴⁸ Spero & Hart, *The Politics of International Economic Relations*, 2010.

¹⁴⁹ WTO, *A Year in Review*, 2014.

¹⁵⁰ Shelton, *The Hidden Costs of US and EU Farm Subsidies*, 2013.

¹⁵¹ WTO, *Agriculture*, 2015.

¹⁵² Spero & Hart, *The Politics of International Economic Relations*, 2010.

¹⁵³ FAO, *Price Volatility in Food and Agricultural Markets: Policy Responses*, 2011.

¹⁵⁴ Center for International Development, *Regionalism*, 2004.

Role of the International System

Since the beginning of international trade discussions, the UN has continuously been involved with each round of negotiations. From 1949 to 1960 there were four rounds of negotiations but all consisted of fewer than forty Member States and few developing countries.¹⁵⁵ In the 1960s the Group of 77 (G-77) developing countries approached the GA with calls for greater inclusion in UN forums and GATT negotiations.¹⁵⁶ The G-77 was successful in persuading the GATT to include economic development and the UN to create a division called the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1964.¹⁵⁷ Currently, UNCTAD has 194 Member States represented compared to the WTO's 161 members.¹⁵⁸ UNCTAD's mandate is to provide policy research and technical assistance to developing countries and facilitate further dialogue for trade negotiations.¹⁵⁹ Specifically, UNCTAD works to help developing countries enter the international market, negotiation investment treaties, and work towards sustainable development in international trade.¹⁶⁰ As the arm of the UN that seeks to integrate trade and development, UNCTAD works with a variety of other UN and non-UN organizations such as the UNDP, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the WTO, and the International Trade Center (ITC).¹⁶¹ Further, UNCTAD has worked with regional organizations to help forge development agendas that include trade openness that promotes regional development, especially in the agricultural sector.¹⁶²

UNCTAD reports to the GA and provides critical policy research to Member States and other UN organizations.¹⁶³ Within the Second Committee's mandate, GA2 is able to make recommendations for further work within UNCTAD and can also appeal to the WTO and other regional organizations.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, to work with the WTO in facilitation of the MDGs, the GA created the International Trade Centre (ITC), which works with developing countries and populations to provide access to trade.¹⁶⁵ The proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have room to improve greatly upon the way the MDGs addressed trade and development, which ended up as a general statement about the promotion of developing countries in international trade and creating a friendly trade environment.¹⁶⁶ Building off of that, the proposed SDGs provide a framework and concrete goals for multilateral and regional organizations to address trade concerns, especially in regards to ensuring access for developing countries. As the MDGs come to a close and the conversation about the post-2015 development agenda continues, UNCTAD and the GA2 have expressed their desire that agricultural subsidy negotiations continue to be at the forefront of trade development to end absolute poverty.¹⁶⁷ Beyond agriculture, the UN and its various organs have placed increasing emphasis on helping marginalized peoples gain market access and address the growing environmental crises.

Market Access for Marginalized Peoples

According to the ITC, women currently own ten million of the world's small to medium sized businesses, but most do not have access to international markets due to poor physical and economic infrastructure to move products.¹⁶⁸ In a 2015 report on women in development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations reported that women produce 60 to 90% of agricultural products throughout the world and provide for nearly 80% of the fishing industry in West Africa and East Asia.¹⁶⁹ However, these female business owners and producers are not represented at those levels in the global market place.¹⁷⁰ The ITC is currently working towards its goals of helping women access developed country markets and providing developing country governments with the proper policy recommendations to support women.¹⁷¹ ITC's Women and Trade Programme has helped bridge the gap between buyers and suppliers

¹⁵⁵ Spero & Hart, *The Politics of International Economic Relations*, 2010.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ UNCTAD, *UNCTAD*, 2015.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ ITC, *International Trade Centre*, 2015.

¹⁶⁶ ECOSOC Sustainable Development, *Trade*, 2015.

¹⁶⁷ UNCTAD, *Executive Summary TD/B/61/2*, 2014.

¹⁶⁸ ITC, *International Trade Centre*, 2015.

¹⁶⁹ FAO, *The State of Food and Agriculture*, 2011.

¹⁷⁰ ITC, *Microfinance in East Africa*, 2011.

¹⁷¹ ITC, *International Trade Centre*, 2015.

and bring women to the table.¹⁷² Such efforts have produced long-term partnerships between the United States of America, Latin American, and African women coffee growers.¹⁷³ These types of partnerships capitalize on the need for corporations to be socially responsible in regards to placing the environment or a person's livelihood in front of profit-maximizing ventures.¹⁷⁴ Moreover, ITC works with local NGOs and civil society organizations to support the education of women in entrepreneurial and trade skills, and through empowering women with environmentally sustainable knowledge.¹⁷⁵ For example, some projects are helping Kenyan and Ugandan female tea farmers gain access to microcredit mechanisms for land ownership and production costs, while helping reduce energy costs and adapt their farming techniques to issues with climate change.¹⁷⁶

Organizations like the World Fair Trade Organizations (WFTO) work to support marginalized groups by promoting their products to multinational corporations and other enterprises within the global market place.¹⁷⁷ Specifically, the WFTO supports environmentally sustainable production, promotes fair wages and prices, and can provide access to markets for marginalized groups through lobbying, advertising campaigns, and establishing viable connections to Fair Trade businesses.¹⁷⁸ Though the principles that the WFTO promote are integrated into the social responsibility aspect of developed countries supporting developing countries, the UN and the WTO can work towards greater inclusion of such principles.¹⁷⁹ UNCTAD has recognized that complete liberalized trade has harmed developing countries due to the increasingly low prices multinationals are able to provide and the question of state sovereignty while being encouraged to allow all nations and corporations access to their economies.¹⁸⁰ By supporting trade access for small to medium sized enterprises and marginalized peoples, the UN is supporting one of the main tenets of sustainable development: "leave no one behind and provide a life of dignity for all."¹⁸¹

Environmental Protection and Trade

This year the UNEP and the International Institute for Sustainable Development launched the third edition of *Trade and the Green Economy Handbook*.¹⁸² According to the handbook, "sixty percent of the world's ecosystem services are currently being degraded or used unsustainably," due to the reliance on trade of natural resources throughout the world.¹⁸³ International trade and its links to environmental degradation have commonly been in the forefront of multilateral discussions and have witnessed growing attention since the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) endorsed the green economy paradigm. Since 2012, many UN forums have focused on addressing the green economy by integrating language such as low-carbon, energy-efficient technologies, and environmental protections for sustainable development into each discussion.

The most recent emphasis within the sustainable development discussions has been the Blue Economy especially in relation to coastal nations and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).¹⁸⁴ The Rio+20 Declaration outlined the main threats to the ocean ecosystem as ocean acidification and pollution, overfishing, unregulated and unreported fishing, and destruction of marine life habitat.¹⁸⁵ Currently, 57% of the global fish resources are fished at the biological limit and thirty percent have been fished beyond the limit.¹⁸⁶ The UNCTAD meeting for SIDS in Samoa in 2014, discussed not only economic issues facing SIDS, but the growing environmental catastrophe due to degradation of fish species by over fishing, chemical waste in the ocean from the lack of eco-friendly technology, and the rising sea levels that have resulted from climate change.¹⁸⁷ In UNCTAD's report on the *Oceans Economy: Opportunities and Challenges for Small Island Developing States*, it emphasized the need for all coastal nations to take part in sustainable fishing techniques such as building the aquaculture industry and establishing trade routes that do not

¹⁷² ITC, *International Trade Centre*, 2015.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ ITC, *Microfinance in East Africa*, 2011.

¹⁷⁶ ITC, *International Trade Centre*, 2015.

¹⁷⁷ WFTO, *World Fair Trade Organization*, 2015.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ UNCTAD, *The Oceans Economy: Opportunities and Challenges for Small Island Developing States*, 2014.

¹⁸¹ IISD, *What is Sustainable Development*, 2015.

¹⁸² UNEP, *Trade and Green Economy Handbook 3rd Edition*, 2014.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ UNCTAD, *The Oceans Economy: Opportunities and Challenges for Small Island Developing States*, 2014.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

directly harm marine ecosystems.¹⁸⁸ Further, UNCTAD emphasized the need to ensure greater maritime trade access for developing coastal states and for all nations to invest in environmentally sustainable maritime transport mechanisms, such as using paint without the chemical DDT on ships and using natural-gas fueled cargo ships similar to those used in Northern Europe.¹⁸⁹

UNCTAD, UNEP, and WTO have all recognized that globalization and increased trade does not have to mean further environmental degradation. All three organizations encourage Member States to regulate standards of products to be environmentally sustainable, but also address the need to improve technologies used for trade such as mass cargo ships and trade routes. Unfortunately, the WTO is the only organization that can create binding trade rules to directly protect the environment and has had little success in forging a binding environmentally minded treaty within the last decade. National regulations have been implemented in many nations around the world, but the cost of eco-friendly production inputs and the cost of implementing the regulations have hindered many developing countries.

Conclusion

In 2014, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon emphasized in his address to the WTO that international trade is inherently linked to the development of states and populations across the globe.¹⁹⁰ However, trade negotiations have been increasingly difficult over the last decade as more countries are invited to the negotiating table and agriculture becomes the priority. The current discussion on the post-2015 development agenda should include more language regarding trade to encourage Member States to address agricultural subsidies and more inclusive trade. Future discussions and negotiations on trade must include environmentally sustainable trade aspects as the world's reliance on natural resources is degrading ecosystems quickly and altering the global landscape. The Second Committee has a unique place in relation to trade and development since it can recommend a breadth of holistic inclusive policies and future actions to address the various issues facing developing countries in regards to trade.

Annotated Bibliography

Global Policy Forum. (2015). *International Trade and Development*. Retrieved 11 June 2015 from: <https://www.globalpolicy.org/social-and-economic-policy/international-trade-and-development-1-57.html>

This website is a great tool to find recent publications and discussions from a third party outside of the WTO and the UN. It provides current issue discussions and policy recommendations. Here, there are many articles that can assist with guiding delegates in their research process for this topic especially in regards to policy analysis. Commonly the jargon used with international trade can be confusing and this provides good explanations of WTO, regional, and domestic trade policies.

International Trade Centre. (2015). *International Trade Centre*. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: <http://www.intracen.org/>

Here, delegates can find all of the projects ITC has been working on, which can assist in identifying current issue areas. Specifically, ITC provides frameworks for projects and partners to implement its projects to fulfill its UN General Assembly mandate. This is a great resource that shows how trade and development are integrated within the sustainable development agenda.

Spero, J., & J. Hart. *The Politics of International Economic Relations*. 7th Ed. (2010). Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

This is a full text on international economic relations with scholarly insights provided and a great start to understanding past and present trade negotiations. It was used to provide the historical context for trade relations and developing countries since 1947. Delegates may want to pay close attention to chapters 3 and 7, and can find a pdf version of this text online: <http://www.economicblogdownload.blogspot.com/2015/02/the-politics-of-international-economic.html>.

¹⁸⁸ UNCTAD, *The Oceans Economy: Opportunities and Challenges for Small Island Developing States*, 2014.

¹⁸⁹ UNDP, *Producing Paint Using Martine-Friendly Alternatives to DDT*, 2010.

¹⁹⁰ Ban Ki-moon, *Opening the 2014 WTO Public Forum*, 2014.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2014). *The Oceans Economy: Opportunities and Challenges for Small Island Developing States*, 2014. [Report]. Retrieved 24 May 2015 from <http://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationWebflyer.aspx?publicationid=970>

This report provides critical information on one of the most pressing issues facing the global ecosystem and the development of Small Island Developing States. It was used for information about the outcomes of the 2014 Samoa SIDS meetings, which outlined areas of concern and potential opportunities for coastal nations. Delegates can use this report to start their research in regards to proposing further solutions to the environmental crisis.

United Nations Environment Program. (2014). *Trade and Green Economy Handbook 3rd Edition*. Retrieved 26 May 2015 from: <http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/portals/88/documents/Trade-GE-Handbook-FINAL-FULL-WEB.pdf>

This report provides information on the links between trade and environmental degradation. The text was used to outline the current WTO legal atmosphere to protect the environment and forge sustainable trade. This handbook gives great insights into the current inadequacies in the WTO legal framework and highlights the research United Nations bodies have completed in regards to environmentally sustainable practices.

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