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GENERAL ASSEMBLY THIRD COMMITTEE BACKGROUND GUIDE 2016

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NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS



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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2016 National Model United Nations Conference in Washington, DC (NMUN•DC)! We are thrilled to introduce you to our committee, the General Assembly Third Committee (GA3). This year's staff is: Director Dieyun Song and Assistant Director Carolyn Elise Cowgill. Dieyun completed her B.As in Business Management and Economic Crime Prevention and Investigations in 2015 and is currently pursuing an M.A. in History with a focus on global drug control in the context of international peace and security. This will be her third year on staff, and she is excited to return to NMUN•DC. Elise completed her B.A. in Multidisciplinary Studies with minors in Political Science, Sociology, and Leadership Studies and is currently working for a nonprofit organization specializing in youth development. This will be Elise's first time on staff with NMUN•DC and she is looking forward to the experience.

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

- I. The Promotion of Fundamental Freedoms through the Elimination of Racism and Racial Discrimination
- II. Addressing International Drug Control

The General Assembly Third Committee, also referred to as the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Affairs Committee, is one of the six main committees of the UN General Assembly. The General Assembly Third Committee offers a forum for all 193 Member States to discuss a wide range of topics and to enhance international collaboration. Due to the broad scope and variety topics of the committee, the topics can often be complex and challenging, which would provide an unique and, yet, a rewarding experience for delegates. In order to accurately simulate the committee, it will be critical for delegates to understand its role and mandate of the committee, as well as its current priorities.

We hope you will find this Background Guide useful as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We highly encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in-depth, as well as relevant regional and international stakeholders' positions regarding the topics. In the meantime, please utilize the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to glean expansive knowledge and strengthen your research. In preparation for the conference, each delegation will submit a [position paper](#). 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, and the awards philosophy and evaluation method. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory.

The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) are available to 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 the committee or the conference itself, feel free to contact the Under-Secretary-General for the committee, Angela Shively, or the Secretary-General for the conference, Lauren Shaw. You can reach either staff member by contacting them at: usgangelad@nmun.org or secgen@nmun.org.

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

Sincerely,

Dieyun Song, Director
Carolyn Elise Cowgill, Assistant Director



Committee Overview

Introduction

When the United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945, six main bodies were created.¹ These bodies are the General Assembly (GA), the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat.² The GA Third Committee is the main plenary body responsible for overseeing social, humanitarian, and human rights issues.³ Since its inception through the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945), topics such as human rights, the advancement of women's rights, and the codification of fundamental freedoms have been a priority of the GA Third Committee.⁴ The Third Committee reports to the GA Plenary, which convenes on a regular basis to discuss the draft resolutions written in the GA Main Committees.⁵ Through a number of documents, the Third Committee has acquired an increasingly more specific framework through which it can produce more specifically targeted and effective resolutions.⁶

Governance, Structure, and Membership

The GA Third Committee is presently chaired by Omar Hilale of Morocco, who makes up the Third Committee Bureau along with three vice-chairs and one rapporteur.⁷ The committee is governed by the Secretariat, which is made up of the Secretary and his assistants.⁸ The Third Committee's Bureau and Secretariat are elected by the GA at least three months prior to the beginning of the next session.⁹ This governing system was introduced in the fifty-eighth session in order to improve the efficiency of the GA bodies and to streamline its leadership.¹⁰ The GA Third Committee is tasked with the oversight of subsidiary organs; the most prominent one being the Human Rights Council (HRC) which reports to the Third Committee about its current actions and programs.¹¹ The GA is supported by a number of funds and programs, research and training institutes, and other entities and related organizations.¹² Applicable organizations that can provide substantive support to the Third Committee are the UN Development Programme, the UN Population Fund, the UN Human Settlements Programme, the UN Children's Fund, the World Food Programme, the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.¹³

The GA, and by extension the Third Committee, grants universal membership to all UN Member States.¹⁴ Since the UN's inception, membership of the GA has grown from 51 members in 1945.¹⁵ The newest member of the UN, and consequently the GA, is South Sudan, which joined in 2011.¹⁶ Today, the membership consists of 193 Member States, each holding one vote.¹⁷ Aside from voting members, there are two entities that received a standing invitation from the UN to act as observer states and consequently do not hold voting rights.¹⁸ These two members are the Holy See and the State of Palestine.¹⁹

¹ UN DPI, *Main Organs*, 2016.

² Ibid.

³ UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural*, 2016.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

⁶ UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (A/C.3/70/L.17)*, 2015.

⁷ UN General Assembly, *Third Committee – Bureau of the 70th Session*, 2016.

⁸ UN General Assembly, *Third Committee – Secretariat*, 2016.

⁹ UN General Assembly, *Functions and powers of the General Assembly*, 2016.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural*, 2016.

¹² UN DPI, *The United Nations System*, 2015.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

¹⁵ UN, *Growth in the United Nations Membership, 1945-Present*, 2016.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ UN General Assembly, *Rules of Procedure*, 2016.

¹⁸ UN DPI, *Non-Member States*, 2016.

¹⁹ Ibid.

The UN creates biennial budgets, which means every two years a new budget is set.²⁰ The current budget for the years of 2016-2017 is \$5.4 billion and includes all general UN operations.²¹ Within the budget funds are allocated to the GA as a whole; however, there is no separate budget for the Third Committee.²² Every Member State of the UN is expected to pay dues to the UN according to its economic capacity.²³ In order to limit any one country's influence within the UN system, individual country contributions are capped at 22% of the total budget.²⁴

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The Third Committee's mandate is laid out in the *Charter of the United Nations* as "promoting international cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, educational, and health fields, and assisting the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion."²⁵ The Third Committee largely focuses on issues surrounding human rights and discusses topics related to the empowerment, protection, and treatment of women, children, and refugees; indigenous issues; the right to self-determination; and topics surrounding race issues and racial discrimination.²⁶ The committee also considers topics such as criminal justice and crime prevention; drug control; and treatment of specific groups such as youth, persons with disabilities, and families.²⁷ The GA Third Committee is able to write resolutions that will be discussed by the GA Plenary.²⁸

There are three main documents aside from the *Charter of the United Nations* that led to the creation of the Third Committee's operational framework.²⁹ These documents are the *United Nations Millennium Declaration* (2000), the *2005 World Summit Outcome Document*, and the Sustainable Development Goals (2015).³⁰ In 2000, the GA adopted the *Millennium Declaration* in order to emphasize belief and support in the United Nations.³¹ This document outlines fundamental values that should shape international relations.³² These values are freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, and shared responsibility.³³ These values are applicable to all UN bodies and especially for the GA committees, as sustainable development and the eradication of injustices continue to be the Third Committee's ultimate goals.³⁴ The *2005 World Summit Outcome Document* highlights the three pillars upon which a successful multilateral system can stand: peace and security, development, and human rights.³⁵ The four areas through which the UN aims to create a more peaceful and cooperative world are development, peace and collective security, human rights, and the strengthening of the UN.³⁶ Since these four areas largely overlap with the Third Committee's mandate, they help create a specific operational framework for the committee.³⁷ The third document is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015.³⁸ All 17 goals that are included in the SDGs apply to the Third Committee and enhance its operational framework, as most of them highlight humanitarian and social needs.³⁹

²⁰ UN Dag Hammarskjöld Library, *UN Documentation: Regular Budget*, 2016.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Global Policy Forum, *Tables and Charts on UN Regular Budget*, 2016.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

²⁶ UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural*, 2016

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

²⁹ UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (A/C.3/70/L.17)*, 2015.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ UN General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*, 2000.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ UN General Assembly, *2005 World Summit Outcome (A/RES/60/1)*, 2005.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012; UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

³⁹ UNDP, *Delivering the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2014.

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

The SDGs consist of 17 goals that encompass the equitable and continuous development of populations, while ensuring the maintenance of human rights and social progress.⁴⁰ The goals can be found in many of the topics of the Third Committee's 70th session.⁴¹ The topics on the agenda included the promotion of sustainable development and sustained economic growth, the maintenance of international peace and security, the promotion of human rights, drug control, combating international terrorism, and crime prevention.⁴² During this session, more than half of the sixty draft resolutions that were passed on to the GA Plenary addressed human rights promotion and regional human rights concerns.⁴³ Many of these resolutions considered topics such as human rights and development in specific countries such as Myanmar, the Syrian Arab Republic, and Angola.⁴⁴ The two most recurring topics that were discussed during the Third Committee's Seventieth session were children's rights and the consequences of armed conflict.⁴⁵ During the session the Third Committee put forward a draft resolution titled "Promotion and protection of the rights of children" underlining the importance of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and reaffirming the UN's commitment to the protection of children and the need to implement the convention.⁴⁶

Aside from these topics, the Third Committee has recently considered various draft resolutions regarding social development with a specific focus on social integration, which is summarized in "Social Development: Report of the Third Committee."⁴⁷ The elimination of discrimination against women is a topic that has broadly been discussed in the most recent session, which is outlined in "Advancement of Women: Report of the Third Committee."⁴⁸ Through the report of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the Third Committee also discussed the rights of refugees, internally displaced persons, and returnees.⁴⁹ Finally, the annual report of the HRC is presented in each Third Committee session in order to discuss the HRC's current projects and topics.⁵⁰ The presentation of HRC's report rounds out the strong emphasis on the promotion of human rights within the Third Committee.⁵¹ Recent events pertaining to the Third Committee's mandate include the World Humanitarian Summit, which took place in May 2016, and the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in 2014.⁵² The final document of the World Humanitarian Summit, "Standing up for Humanity: Committing to Action," summarized approaches to creating a more humane world.⁵³ These approaches include the need for strong political leadership, upholding the norms that safeguard humanity, fostering inclusivity, and investing in humanity.⁵⁴

Conclusion

The GA Third Committee is the main UN body overseeing social, humanitarian, and human rights issues. Through its universal membership, the GA Third Committee is able to create reports and resolutions as holistically as possible. Through the GA's budget, the Third Committee is able to focus on substantive matters that aim to take every Member State's opinion and values into consideration. Over the course of the past two sessions, the GA Third Committee primarily discussed the SDGs and human rights issues with a special focus on the rights of the child and human rights in conflict regions. These topics were underlined by the World Humanitarian Summit, which called for the cooperation and inclusion of all actors in order to foster human rights.

⁴⁰ UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Goals*, 2016.

⁴¹ UN General Assembly, *Allocation of agenda items to the Third Committee (A/C.3/70/1)*, 2015.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ UN General Assembly, *Resolutions – 70th Session*, 2016.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ UN General Assembly, *Third Committee – Press Releases*, 2016.

⁴⁶ UN General Assembly, *Promotion and protection of the rights of children (A/C.3/L.28/Rev.1)*, 2015.

⁴⁷ UN General Assembly, *Social Development: Report of the Third Committee (A/70/481)*, 2015.

⁴⁸ UN General Assembly, *Advancement of Women: Report of the Third Committee (A/70/482)*, 2015.

⁴⁹ UN General Assembly, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions (A/70/483)*, 2015.

⁵⁰ UN General Assembly, *Report of the Human Rights Council (A/70/484)*, 2015.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² World Humanitarian Summit, *Home*, 2016; UN DPI, *The World Conference on Indigenous Peoples*, 2016.

⁵³ World Humanitarian Summit, *Standing up for Humanity: Committing to Action*, 2016.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

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The GA provides an agenda for every session. This agenda provides an overview and additional insight into the upcoming topics that will be discussed in the GA Third Committee. The topics discussed in the agenda emphasize the focal points of the Third Committee and allow delegates to gain a better understanding of the Third Committee's priorities for that session. It serves as a good resource to provide an overview of the GA's Seventieth session and to aid in further research into the two committee topics.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Social Development Report of the Third Committee (A/70/481)*. Retrieved 16 April 2016 from: <http://www.undocs.org/A/70/481>

This report was written by the GA Third Committee to provide a summary of the advancements and the Third Committee's involvement in social development. The report provides a summary of proposals and draft resolutions that were discussed and written in the Third Committee, focusing on one of the Third Committee's main areas. It provides a great starting point for further research as it summarizes all discussions regarding social development in the GA's seventieth session.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (A/C.3/70/L.17)* [Draft Resolution]. Retrieved 16 April 2016 from: <http://www.undocs.org/A/C.3/70/L.17>

This draft resolution was written by the Third Committee to outline how the goals set at the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the GA will be implemented. The draft resolution provides valuable insight into the Third Committee's intentions and goals for the upcoming sessions. Through the support of the SDGs, the GA aims to support and enforce the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development. This document reaffirms the importance of the above mentioned declarations and the SDGs when discussing issues around social development and human rights.

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I. The Promotion of Fundamental Freedoms through the Elimination of Racism and Racial Discrimination

“Lasting peace can only be built on the premise that all people have equal rights and dignity—regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, social or other status.”⁵⁵

Introduction

When the United Nations (UN) was conceived in 1945, at its core was the principle of nondiscrimination on the grounds of race.⁵⁶ The *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (ICERD) (1969) defines racial discrimination as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.”⁵⁷ In the era of globalization, the world is more aware than ever before of a steady increase in extremist movements and ideologies, both within and transcending domestic borders.⁵⁸ The eradication of racism and racial discrimination has been and remains a significant topic within the UN system, and particularly before the General Assembly (GA) Third Committee.⁵⁹ The UN system’s goals encompass several cross-cutting issues, many of which strive for the promotion of fundamental freedoms and derive from discussions of eradicating racism and racial discrimination.⁶⁰ To more efficiently address these concerns and make the world free of racism and racial discrimination, the GA Third Committee plays a proactive role in initiating dialogues, implementing existing frameworks, and engaging different actors in the movement.⁶¹

International and Regional Framework

Article I of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945) states that fundamental freedoms and human rights must be respected for all people without regard to race, sex, language, or religion.⁶² The *Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (1948) was adopted as GA resolution 3/260 on 9 December 1948 as the GA’s first human rights treaty.⁶³ It provided the first formal definition for genocide and made it a crime under international law.⁶⁴ Just one day later, the GA adopted the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948), which itemizes fundamental freedoms and human rights to be protected.⁶⁵ In 1963 the GA adopted the *United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, which identifies issues associated with racism and racial discrimination but leaves ambiguities in its definitions of racism and racial discrimination.⁶⁶ In comparison, ICERD makes clear that any document proclaiming one race to be better than another is unjustifiable, and that any discriminatory practices based on race or ethnicity are an obstacle to peace.⁶⁷ The 177 States Parties to ICERD have agreed to end racial discrimination and promote a collaborative world in which peoples of all races can live peacefully.⁶⁸

⁵⁵ UN DPI, *Message of the Secretary-General for 2015*, 2015.

⁵⁶ UN DPI, *E-Press kit: The UN Works to Fight Racism*, 2001.

⁵⁷ UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/21/2200(XXI))*, 1966.

⁵⁸ WCAR, *Impact of Past on Globalization, Middle East are Major Concerns as Racism Conference Debate Continues*, 2001.

⁵⁹ Psychology Coalition at the United Nations, *Integrating the Elimination of Inequalities due to Racism into the Framework of the UN Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda: Recommendations from Civil Society*, 2015, p. 2.

⁶⁰ UN General Assembly, *A Global Call for Concrete Action for the Total Elimination of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the Comprehensive Implementation of and Follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (A/RES/70/140)*, 2016, p. 2.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.

⁶³ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (A/RES/3/260)*, 2006.

⁶⁴ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (A/RES/3/260)*, 2006.

⁶⁵ UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.

⁶⁶ UN General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (A/RES/18/1904)*, 1963.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

In 2001 the GA held the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) produced the *Durban Declaration and Programme of Action* (Durban III) (2001).⁶⁹ Durban III assigns the primary responsibility of combating racial discrimination to states, a crucial component to today's discussions on racism.⁷⁰ The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the leaders present at the UN Sustainable Development Summit, a high-level plenary meeting of the GA, on 25 September 2015 in GA resolution 70/1.⁷¹ Numerous SDGs are directly related to the eradication of racism and racial discrimination, including: Goal 1, to end poverty; Goal 4, to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education; Goal 8 decent work and economic growth for all; and Goal 10, reduced inequalities.⁷² In 2013 the UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance stated emphatically that racist attitudes and poverty are linked due to the impact of structural racism on access to education, healthcare, and decent work.⁷³

There are also regional treaties that aim to prohibit racism and racial discrimination.⁷⁴ Article eight of the *Inter-American Convention Against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance* (2013), created by the Organization of American States, states that any action, regardless of intent, creating discrimination against either individuals or organization based on race, skin color, or origin will not be tolerated.⁷⁵ The document also created the Inter-American Committee for the Prevention and Elimination of Racism, Racial Discrimination, and All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance as a platform for the sharing of ideas, experiences, programs, knowledge, and progress, and with the expectation of annual reports from the States Parties to the Convention.⁷⁶

Role of the International System

On 17 December 2015, GA resolution 70/140 was adopted to further the comprehensive implementation and follow-up to Durban III and to iterate its significance to the agenda of the GA Third Committee.⁷⁷ Also during the 70th session, the GA adopted “Combating Glorification of Nazism and Other Practices that Contribute to Fuelling Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance,” which discusses the drastic increase in “racist extremist movements and ideologies,” and takes a definitive stance against it while calling upon Member States to educate citizens on the dangers of racism.⁷⁸

The entire UN system collaborates to combat racism and racial discrimination.⁷⁹ The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), established as an expert committee of the Economic and Social Council, is responsible for supervising the implementation of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (1966).⁸⁰ In grievous cases, CESCR may undertake inquiries, investigations, and consider inter-state complaints.⁸¹ Expert committees such as CESCR play in unique role in comprehensive evaluation and knowledge sharing.⁸² The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is a UN body dedicated to the eradication of poverty as well as the elimination of inequality and exclusion, while simultaneously helping countries to develop

⁶⁹ UN DPI, *E-Press kit: The UN Works to Fight Racism*, 2001; WCAR, *Report of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance*, 2001.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform*, 2016.

⁷² UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform*, 2016; Social Watch, *Poverty and Racism Inextricably Linked*, Says UN Expert, 2013.

⁷³ Social Watch, *Poverty and Racism Inextricably Linked*, Says UN Expert, 2013.

⁷⁴ Organization of American States, *Inter-American Convention Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Related Forms of Intolerance* (A-68), 2013.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ UN General Assembly, *A Global Call for Concrete Action for the Total Elimination of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the Comprehensive Implementation of and Follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action* (A/RES/70/140), 2016.

⁷⁸ UN General Assembly, *Combating Glorification of Nazism and Other Practices that Contribute to Fuelling Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance* (A/RES/70/139), 2016.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ UN OHCHR, *Overview: Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights*, 2016.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² UN OHCHR, *Overview: Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights*, 2016.

policies, partnering abilities, and institutional capabilities.⁸³ UNDP, which is active in more than 170 countries, provides substantive support to the GA Third committee.⁸⁴ In its 2014 Human Development Report, UNDP calls for universal access to social protection, health, and education, recognizing that lack of access to these fundamental freedoms has a negative impact on both individual and societal development.⁸⁵

Many civil society organizations (CSOs) are also involved in combating racism, including the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR), an international non-governmental organization (NGO) that focuses on the elimination of discrimination and racism and the expansion of international human rights.⁸⁶ IMADR promotes empowerment, solidarity, and advocacy, specifically through combating discrimination stemming from race and gender.⁸⁷ IMADR works to help groups against whom discrimination has occurred to find the strength and resources to actively represent themselves.⁸⁸ IMADR also works to encourage networking, collaboration, and communication between victims of discrimination while transcending differences lying between victims from different economic, social, and cultural backgrounds.⁸⁹ Through the education of discrimination victims on existing international human rights law, IMADR raises the legal standard domestically and helps domestic citizens become their own advocates while holding governments accountable.⁹⁰ Since its inception, IMADR has been granted consultative status with ECOSOC and works to enforce the implementation of ICERD.⁹¹

Another active CSO is the American Psychological Association (APA). This professional association, based in the United States, incorporates several international psychological associations and is “committed to the eradication of psychological torture and wasted human potential resulting from the barbaric, inhumane and illegitimate, racist system of human relationships.”⁹² The APA made several recommendations during remarks to WCAR in 2001, including the establishment of “programmatic support for mental health...giving priority to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerances.”⁹³ With experts lending scientific knowledge to the damage done by racism and racial discrimination, civil society can better promote the eradication of these atrocities.⁹⁴

Current Obstacles

Racism and racial discrimination are issues that ultimately lie within the individual citizens of a state.⁹⁵ Differences in social, cultural, and religious norms can make solutions difficult.⁹⁶ Civil society organizations such as IMADR that teach private citizens how to defend themselves under the law can mitigate this, particularly because regulations of international humanitarian law take time to be enacted by each Member State.⁹⁷ To actively engage civil society’s participation in the movement to end racial discrimination, the “Let’s Fight Racism” campaign was launched with a joint effort of the UN Department of Public Information and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

⁸³ UNDP, *A World of Development Experience*, 2016.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ UNDP, *2014 Human Development Report “Sustaining Human Progress: Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience,”* 2014, p. iv.

⁸⁶ The International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism, *About IMADR*, 2016.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² American Psychological Association, *Psychological Causes and Consequences of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance: Intervention of the American Psychology Association Delegation to the World Conference Against Racism*, 2004.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ American Psychological Association, *Psychological Causes and Consequences of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance: Intervention of the American Psychology Association Delegation to the World Conference Against Racism*, 2004.

⁹⁶ Social Watch, *Poverty and Racism Inextricably Linked, Says UN Expert*, 2013.

⁹⁷ The International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism, *About IMADR*, 2016.

(OHCHR), using social media to educate the general public on anti-racism related items with real life stories and providing suggestions for educators to streamline the information in classroom settings.⁹⁸

Addressing racism is particularly challenging in conflict zones.⁹⁹ Discriminatory policies, indiscriminate attacks, and unstable governance during and after armed conflicts put lives and freedoms in jeopardy.¹⁰⁰ It also increases the possibility of violations of the rights of minority groups due to lack of rule of law.¹⁰¹ Another major challenge is that the existing action plans and treaties require cohesive, up-to-date, and effectively monitored international and regional follow-up plans.¹⁰² To address these issues, international agencies, expert working groups, CSOs, and state governments can continuously renew and strengthen public support and contribution through new and existing partnerships.¹⁰³ Additionally, international institutions can financially empower regional agencies and CSOs and promote technical cooperation between international agencies and Member States.¹⁰⁴

Conclusion

Racism and racial discrimination have evolved over time and more work is required for UN policies to do the same.¹⁰⁵ The ideas promoted by the SDGs involve every person's ability to exercise their fundamental freedoms; therefore, implementing the SDGs directly invites action toward the eradication of racism and racial discrimination.¹⁰⁶ While Durban III led to further commitment toward the eradication of racism and racial discrimination, a rise in extremist movements and ideologies is clearly visible.¹⁰⁷ The role of civil society in this endeavor has become continually more apparent.¹⁰⁸ The cooperation of individual persons is paramount to the eradication of racism and racial discrimination and can be encouraged through education and information sharing.¹⁰⁹ With the guidance outlined by the existing international documents and the SDGs, an equal, free, and joyful life for all will be more prominent in the near future from the cohesive collaboration within the international community.¹¹⁰

Further Research

Moving forward, delegates can consider the following questions: In what ways have the issues of racial discrimination grown more complex? What can be done to enhance the existing human rights documents? How could the body utilize the blueprint provided in the SDGs to further advance its agenda? How can the UN effectively work with Member States to protect citizens whose fundamental freedoms are compromised while respecting state sovereignty? What can be done to strengthen the existing partnerships among civil society organizations, the UN system, and Member States? How can new partnerships be established and encouraged? In what way can the international community assist and hold Member States accountable to ensure transparency and adherence to international human rights documents?

⁹⁸ UN DPI, *More than Meets the Eye: Let's Fight Racism!* 2016

⁹⁹ Minority Voices Newsroom, *Sri Lanka: Discrimination against Tamils Continues after the War*, 2011.

¹⁰⁰ Minority Voices Newsroom, *Sri Lanka: Discrimination against Tamils Continues after the War*, 2011; UN Chronicle, *Eliminating Racial Discrimination: The Challenges of Prevention and Enforcement of Prohibition*, 2007.

¹⁰¹ UN Chronicle, *Eliminating Racial Discrimination: The Challenges of Prevention and Enforcement of Prohibition*, 2007.

¹⁰² UN General Assembly, *A Global Call for Concrete Action for the Total Elimination of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the Comprehensive Implementation of and Follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (A/RES/70/140)*, 2016, p. 5.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6.

¹⁰⁴ Council on Foreign Relations, *The Global Human Rights Regime*, 2013.

¹⁰⁵ UN General Assembly, *of Nazism and Other Practices that Contribute to Fuelling Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (A/RES/70/139)*, 2016.

¹⁰⁶ Psychology Coalition at the United Nations, *Integrating the Elimination of Inequalities due to Racism into the Framework of the UN Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda: Recommendations from Civil Society*, 2015, p. 2.

¹⁰⁷ UN DPI, *10th Anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action*, 2011.

¹⁰⁸ Psychology Coalition at the United Nations, *Integrating the Elimination of Inequalities due to Racism into the Framework of the UN Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda: Recommendations from Civil Society*, 2015, p. 2.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Annotated Bibliography

The International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism. (2016). About IMADR [Website]. Retrieved 25 April 2016 from: <http://www.imadr.org/about/>

IMADR is an NGO that has had considerable success in forging international solidarity between minorities and others with a history of being discriminated against. It is a prime example of the involvement of civil society in the fight to eradicate racism and racial discrimination. This website provides recent news updates as well as UN action relevant to the issues of discrimination and racism. Delegates will find this example helpful when examining how governments can work with their citizens on these issues for the betterment of the international community as it provides several examples of different domestic programs and consistent updates on the current work of the international community.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2016). *A Global Call for Concrete Action for the Total Elimination of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance and the Comprehensive Implementation of and Follow-Up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (A/RES/70/140)* [Resolution]. Adopted on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/487). Retrieved 17 April 2016 from: <http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/70/140>

This document is a global call for concrete action for the further implementation of Durban III. In the comprehensive resolution, delegates will find the full ICERD, the detailed responsibilities of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, independent experts, the HRC, and financial sponsors, as well as the follow-up plan. In order to best understand current actions and practices, delegates should be very familiar with this document. Delegates will find this document particularly helpful when looking for areas in which further action is needed.

United Nations, General Assembly, Twenty-first session. (1966). *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*. Retrieved 3 April 2016 from: [http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/2200 \(XXI\)](http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/2200 (XXI))

This covenant, adopted by the GA, outlines the rights of individuals regardless of several characteristics, race included. As race is often deeply intertwined with cultural rights and activities, it is important to be familiar with this document. Delegates will find this treaty useful in understanding the shortcomings of this and other existing UN documents that address the issues of racism and racial discrimination. The document is also particularly helpful in looking at the way international views on these issues have changed since the resolution was adopted in 1966.

United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2016). *Overview: Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights* [Website]. Retrieved 28 May 2016 from: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CESCR/Pages/CESCRIndex.aspx>

CESCR is an expert commission under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council. CESCR deals directly with social and cultural rights and the effectiveness of thematic action within the context of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights. The Committee can issue general opinions on issues related to these rights, and also conducts reviews of States Parties' implementation of the treaty. Delegates will find this website relevant when beginning to understand other bodies that work alongside the GA3 in the goal of eliminating racism and racial discrimination.

United Nations, World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance. (2001). *Report of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance (A/CONF.189/12)*. Retrieved 4 May 2016 from: <http://undocs.org/A/CONF.189/12>

This summary report includes documents adopted by the conference, opening and closing statements from various experts and heads of state, and much of the General Debate surrounding this topic. Reading the report in full will provide delegates information regarding the issues on which states disagree. In addition, a firm knowledge base of the 2001 WCAR is crucial to the success of further international discussion and concrete action.

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II. Addressing Global Drug Control

*“Humankind cannot afford a 21st century drug policy as ineffective and counter-productive as the last century’s. A new global response to drugs is needed, grounded in science, compassion, health and human rights.”*¹¹¹

Introduction

Few countries and regions are exempt from the harms of drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking as these issues cause great harm to international development and human rights.¹¹² Addressing global drug control contributes to protecting national and international peace and security, while a lack of drug control causes numerous political and transnational crimes, including corruption, weapon trafficking, human trafficking, terrorism, and money-laundering.¹¹³ “Illicit drugs” typically refers to opiates, cocaine, and Cannabis, and there were approximately 231 million illicit drug users across the world in 2014.¹¹⁴ According to the United Nations (UN) Office on Drugs and Crime’s (UNODC) most recent *World Drug Report*, about 187,000 deaths resulted from illicit drug use in the year of 2010.¹¹⁵ The major drug producers include Afghanistan, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Laos, Morocco, Myanmar, and Peru, and the biggest consumers are in Asia and Oceania.¹¹⁶ West Africa, especially Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, and Guinea, is considered a major global hub for drug trafficking.¹¹⁷ According to UNODC research released in 2016, about 450 tons of heroin is in the global market annually, an increase of 510% from 2008.¹¹⁸ Drug control is an issue that is pressing for the future development of all Member States.¹¹⁹

Drug issues are not simply about supply and demand or criminal justice, but also about eradicating poverty, empowering women, government transparency, and international development.¹²⁰ The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were officially adopted in GA resolution 70/1 in September 2015 and establish goals to be achieved by 2030.¹²¹ The goals that correlate to drug control include Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 15, 16, and 17.¹²² The SDGs recognize the threat the illicit market poses to international sustainable development.¹²³ The Open Working Group of the GA on SDGs and the Secretary-General (SG) both emphasized the importance of strengthening the licit sector and “providing an enabling environment to build inclusive and peaceful societies...and respect for the rule of law will require rebuilding institutions at the country level to ensure that the gains from peace are not reversed.”¹²⁴ The SDGs propose an alternative development blueprint, including land governance reform, environmental protection, and international trade revision.¹²⁵ Addressing the global drug issue requires a multilayered approach that is sustainable, fair, and respectful to human rights.¹²⁶ As one of the most vital and active international agencies in addressing global drug control, the General Assembly (GA) Third Committee, along with the entire UN system, is committed to advocating and enhancing international collaboration and supporting Member States in development processes to address international drug control.¹²⁷

¹¹¹ Drug Policy Alliance, *A Public Letter to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon*, 2016.

¹¹² UN General Assembly, *Thematic Debate of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Drugs and Crime as a Threat to Development on the Occasion of the UN International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking*, 2012.

¹¹³ UNODC, *Drug Trafficking*, 2016.

¹¹⁴ UNODC, *World Drug Report 2015*, 2015, pp. 41-57.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. ix.

¹¹⁶ UNODC, *Drug Trafficking*, 2016; UNODC, *World Drug Report 2015*, 2015, p. xvi.

¹¹⁷ UNODC, *West and Central Africa*, 2016.

¹¹⁸ UNODC, *Drug Trafficking*, 2016.

¹¹⁹ UNODC, *World Drug Report 2015*, 2015, p. 118.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

¹²² Health Poverty Action, *Drug Policy and the Sustainable Development Goals: Why Drug Policy Reform is Essential to Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2015, pp. 2-10.

¹²³ UNODC, *World Drug Report 2015*, 2015, p. 116.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 116-117.

¹²⁶ UN General Assembly, *International Cooperation against the World Drug Problem: Report of the Secretary-General (A/70/98)*, 2015, p. 19.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

International and Regional Framework

There are three major international legal frameworks for drug control that provide crucial guidance for international cooperation and the priorities of the UN system.¹²⁸ The first international treaty in regards to drug control is the *Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs* (1961) which aims to restrict the manufacturing, production, and use of drugs for scientific and medical purposes.¹²⁹ In 1972 the *Convention on Psychotropic Substances* was adopted by the GA to address the emerging class of psychotropic drugs, such as barbiturates and amphetamine.¹³⁰ It also created an international control system in response to the expansion and diversification of illicit drug abuse.¹³¹ These two conventions are milestones in the development of the UN's drug policy, and establish the basis of international control measures to prevent scientific and medical purposed drugs from converting into illicit uses.¹³² The most recently established framework is the *Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances* (1988) which focuses on providing eradication measures against illicit drug trafficking and its related crimes, such as money laundering and weapon trafficking.¹³³ On 21 October 1998 a comprehensive action plan for the betterment of international collaboration in mitigating global drug issues was adopted in GA resolution S-20/4, compiling the previous discussions and standardizing measures for all Member States.¹³⁴

The GA plays a vital role in drug policy by connecting different international actors and providing a channel for dialogue.¹³⁵ During its 70th session the GA adopted "International Cooperation against the World Drug Problem," reiterating all Member States' shared responsibility and obligation to accelerate the implementation of the existing international legal frameworks, and addressing the fundamental principles of respecting human rights and state sovereignty.¹³⁶ Recognizing the complex nature of drug control, the resolution calls for a comprehensive and multilayered approach that improves the situation using public health education, violence prevention, and rehabilitation methods.¹³⁷ To fully achieve target five of SDG three, "strengthen prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol," the GA encourages scientifically-based, comprehensive reduction programs empowered through international cooperation and information sharing.¹³⁸ The 2016 GA Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS) was a checkpoint for the implementation of the *Political declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem* (2009).¹³⁹ This document provided guidance for policy and programs to take place within Member States in order to significantly decrease or eliminate the cultivation, demand, distribution, trafficking, and money-laundering related to illicit drugs by 2019.¹⁴⁰ UNGASS resolution S-30/1 contains operational recommendations for supply and demand reduction, international cooperation, strengthening rule of law, and forming a development-centered drug policy.¹⁴¹ Recognizing the urgency of addressing global drug control to achieve the 2019 targets and the SDGs, the resolution has a stronger focus on preventive measures and the respect of human rights, including sensitivities towards gender equality, youth empowerment, and public health education.¹⁴²

¹²⁸ UNODC, *Legal Framework for Drug Trafficking*, 2016.

¹²⁹ UNODC, *Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961*, 2016.

¹³⁰ UNODC, *Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971*, 2016.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² UNODC, *Legal Framework for Drug Trafficking*, 2016.

¹³³ UNODC, *The International Drug Control Conventions*, 2013, p. 107.

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¹³⁵ UN General Assembly, *Thematic Debate of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Drugs and Crime as a Threat to Development on the Occasion of the UN International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking*, 2012.

¹³⁶ UN General Assembly, *International Cooperation against the World Drug Problem (A/C.3/70/L.10)*, 2015, p. 5.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹³⁹ UNODC, *UNGASS 2016: About*, 2016.

¹⁴⁰ UNODC, *Political declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem*, 2009, p. 14.

¹⁴¹ UN General Assembly, *Our Joint Commitment to Effectively Addressing and Countering the World Drug Problem (A/RES/S-30/1)*, 2016.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 4-12.

On a regional level, the *South American Agreement on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances* (ASEP) was adopted and put into force in 1976, placing a unique emphasis on preventive measures, information sharing, and technical collaboration with international agencies, while other existing treaties primarily focus on eradication.¹⁴³ ASEP organizes regional and international educational programs among States Parties and advocates for the creation of national drug control coordinating agencies.¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, the *Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances* (1990) was adopted by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and emphasizes the link between drug trafficking and transnational organized crimes.¹⁴⁵ It also expresses desire to enhance regional collaboration through legislation reform and standardization of judicial process.¹⁴⁶ In 2008, the *Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Crimes in Africa* was adopted by the Economic Community of West African States.¹⁴⁷ In addition to endorsing the further ratification and implementation of the three existing international legal frameworks, the Declaration urges States Parties to intensify eradication and control mechanisms in joint efforts with the UNODC and civil society organizations (CSOs).¹⁴⁸

Role of the International System

Many UN agencies contribute expertise and resources in addressing the world drug problem.¹⁴⁹ UNODC provides technical, research, and field assistance, including preventive educational campaigns, legislation reform, and capacity building to counter illicit drug control.¹⁵⁰ As the joint governing bodies of UNODC, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) monitor the implementation and application of international drug control treaties and frameworks and also adopt decisions and resolutions to guide Member States in drug policy.¹⁵¹ Further, the International Narcotics Control Board, an independent expert committee overseen by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), organizes and assesses information from Member States and submits its analysis on the global drug situation to CND and ECOSOC.¹⁵² From a public health perspective, the World Health Organization (WHO) operates through initiatives such as the Access to Controlled Medicines Programme (ACMP) to improve the access to controlled medicines for medical purposes while respecting the existing international legal frameworks.¹⁵³ The joint program led by the UNODC and WHO on drug Dependence Treatment and Care is another example of a long-term health-based initiative that supports the development of a demand reduction policy and care for mental disorders due to illicit drug usage.¹⁵⁴

CSOs, academia, and the scientific community contribute expertise and implementation methods for addressing drug control and play important roles in the development, implementation, and research of drug control policies and programs.¹⁵⁵ Drug Policy Alliance (DPA), which promotes individual sovereignty and drug policies based on compassion, health, science, and human rights, is active in legislation reform and research and advocates for a realistic educational platform which accurately educates youth on the use of drugs and a health-centered approach in public health education.¹⁵⁶ Health Poverty Action (HPA) is a CSO based in London that advocates for strengthened

¹⁴³ National Center for Biotechnology Information, *The Role of the South American Agreement on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in the Fight against Illicit Drug Trafficking*, 1983

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, *SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances*, 2009.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5.

¹⁴⁷ Economic Community of West African States, *Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Crimes in Africa*, 2008.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ UN General Assembly, *Our Joint Commitment to Effectively Addressing and Countering the World Drug Problem (A/RES/S-30/1)*, 2016.

¹⁵⁰ UNODC, *About UNODC*, 2016.

¹⁵¹ UNODC, *Commissions*, 2016; UNODC, *Commission on Narcotic Drugs Vienna*, 2016.

¹⁵² UNODC, *Legal Framework for Drug Trafficking*, 2016.

¹⁵³ WHO, *WHO's Role, Mandate, and Activities to Counter the World Drug Problem: A Public Health Perspective*, p.10.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁵⁵ UN General Assembly, *Our Joint Commitment to Effectively Addressing and Countering the World Drug Problem (A/RES/S-30/1)*, 2016, p. 3

¹⁵⁶ Drug Policy Alliance, *About the Drug Policy Alliance*, 2016; Skager, *Beyond Zero Tolerance: A Reality-Based Approach to Drug Education and School Discipline*, 2013.

individual rights to health through policy advocacy and field work.¹⁵⁷ HPA supports the exploration of an evidence-based combination of legal and regulatory measures that can “ensure the rights of the poorest and most marginalized individuals.”¹⁵⁸ Further collaborative partnerships between Member States and CSOs could be established for the betterment of the development and execution of human-centered and sustainable drug policies.¹⁵⁹

Alternative Development: A Multilayered Comprehensive Approach

SDG target 3.4 sets a deadline to reduce one third of premature deaths caused by non-communicable diseases through preventive measures and mental health education.¹⁶⁰ Drug control is often perceived a criminal or a political matter, but there are also health concerns related to drug abuse and the burden of HIV among people who inject drugs (PWID).¹⁶¹ According to UNODC, about 30% of the prison population uses illicit drugs, of which injection is the most common method.¹⁶² About 13.5% of HIV positive persons are PWID and 50% of PWID are living with hepatitis C.¹⁶³ Harm reduction services are limited in most countries, and from 2005-2015 the transmission of HIV among PWID was reduced by only 12% despite a global focus on reducing HIV infections.¹⁶⁴

In addition to public health concerns, there are two components to the environmental perspective of addressing global drug control: environmental preservation and land governance.¹⁶⁵ An appropriate land governance policy, under which effective and fair decisions regarding land access and usage can be developed and implemented, is central to illicit cultivation reduction and sustainable development.¹⁶⁶ Involving local communities, planters, and indigenous people in the process of the development of land rights and management legislations is strongly recommended by the UN Guiding Principles on Alternative Development.¹⁶⁷ One strategy is to form partnerships with land owners, practice sustainable agricultural production, and join an international market for carbon credit.¹⁶⁸ Another strategy is sustainable forest management and agroforestry; by implementing proper zoning strategy, the Doi Tung project in Thailand successfully increased its forest area by 55%.¹⁶⁹ Additionally, the Colombian Forest Warden Families Programme in Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta acquired land previously used for illicit coca cultivation and added to the reservation of the indigenous Kogui, where the main agricultural practice was redirected to coffee planting in an environmentally friendly manner.¹⁷⁰ It is important to promote sustainable and legal agricultural practices that encompass both economic and environmental concerns instead of illicit coca cultivation that is unsustainable and harmful to the environment.¹⁷¹

Women are one of the most vulnerable groups in illicit drug issues due to unequal access to education and employment.¹⁷² Engaging women in countering illicit drug problems not only utilizes their abilities, but provides opportunities to protect their rights and promotes women’s involvement in decision making processes.¹⁷³ In Vietnam and Laos, the UNODC notes progress in reducing illicit coca cultivation by engaging women as community leaders to advocate for sustainable agricultural practices.¹⁷⁴ Microcredit is issued to empower women through literacy

¹⁵⁷ Health Poverty Action, *About Us*, 2015.

¹⁵⁸ Health Poverty Action, *Rethink the War on Drugs: Health Poverty Action Supports a Reassessment of the War on Drugs*, 2015.

¹⁵⁹ UN General Assembly, *Our Joint Commitment to Effectively Addressing and Countering the World Drug Problem (A/RES/S-30/1)*, 2016.

¹⁶⁰ UN DPI, *Goal 3: Ensure Health Lives and Promote Well-being for All at All Ages*, 2016.

¹⁶¹ UNODC, *World Drug Report 2015*, 2015, pp. 12-13.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-10.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-107.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

¹⁷² UNODC, *Bangladesh: Empowering Women to Deal with Drug Use, HIV and AIDS in Their Families*, 2016.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

classes, professional skill training, and adult education programs.¹⁷⁵ As repeatedly emphasized by the UN, drug issues are a matter of social development and empowering women is empowering humanity and the entire society.¹⁷⁶

One of the most direct and effective ways to reduce illicit drug cultivation is to provide alternative and sustainable products of investment.¹⁷⁷ One successful example of this is microcredit.¹⁷⁸ Instead of private loans with high interest rates, local microcredit opportunities gradually assist planters to initiate savings plans and build capacity in financial management.¹⁷⁹ For instance, in Laos's Oudomxay Province, UNODC supports the community in creating rice banks, public transportation systems, and introducing alternative products including livestock, fruit, non-timber forest products, and more.¹⁸⁰ Because of this, a 500% annual increase in household income has been seen in 32 villages.¹⁸¹ Such strategies have also resulted in considerable success in Helmand, Afghanistan by distributing wheat seeds and fertilizers to poppy planters, which led to a 37% reduction of raw poppy production in one year.¹⁸²

Case Study: UNODC in West Africa

West Africa is known as the global hub for illicit drug trafficking with 20 to 40 tons of cocaine en route to Europe and other recipients moving through the region every year.¹⁸³ From 2010 to 2014, UNODC spent \$92.5 million in West Africa on for judicial system capacity building, preventive education programs, and combating transnational organized crime and terrorism on both national and regional levels.¹⁸⁴ Taking into account the unique situations and needs of each country and region, UNODC worked closely with local governments and civil society to customize program initiatives in each country.¹⁸⁵ Considering the central location and the high land traffic in Nigeria, 200 officers from the Nigerian National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons received training in administration and the investigation of transnational crime.¹⁸⁶ In Liberia, where the most urgent needs are building national security and enhancing good governance after two civil wars, UNODC assisted the Liberian government in revising its national legislation on drug trafficking to meet both the government's interests and the international standards.¹⁸⁷ In addition to the differentiated approaches in individual countries, UNODC mainstreamed regional programs that assist the monitoring of drug abuse, capacity building for CSOs in developing and executing preventive educational programs, and social reintegration of vulnerable individuals in the region.¹⁸⁸ UNODC's success in West Africa is an example that there is no one-size-fits-all policy in addressing global drug control.¹⁸⁹

Conclusion

Significant progress in countering global drug control issues has been seen through establishing international legal frameworks, advocating for international partnerships, and forming regional cooperation strategies.¹⁹⁰ These successes are examples of the UN system's crucial role in initiating multilateral dialogues, engaging diverse

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ UN General Assembly, *Thematic Debate of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Drugs and Crime as a Threat to Development on the Occasion of the UN International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking*, 2012.

¹⁷⁷ UNODC, *World Drug Report 2015*, 2015, p. 98.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 99.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p. 99.

¹⁸² Ibid., p. 100.

¹⁸³ UNODC, *Regional Programme for West Africa 2010-2014: Supporting the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa, Adopted at the 35th Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS*, p. ix.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, pp. 126-131.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p. viii.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, pp. 104-108.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 130.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ UN General Assembly, *Our Joint Commitment to Effectively Addressing and Countering the World Drug Problem (A/RES/S-30/1)*, 2016.

stakeholders, and forming human-centered global drug control policies.¹⁹¹ There is still a long and challenging journey ahead to fully achieve the SDGs and provide the next generation a sustainable environment.¹⁹² To bridge the gap, building upon the existing foundation, the exploration of alternative development strategies, and more cohesive international collaboration are needed to build both state capacities and the UN's efficiency.¹⁹³ With the SDGs, a mutual respect for human rights, and international collaboration, it is certain that the future for global drug control will be successful.¹⁹⁴

Further Research

After reading and understanding the background guide, delegates should have a clear picture on the progress made and lessons learned in global drug control thus far. To move forward with research, it is essential to consider the rationale behind a state's position. What are the drivers of a prohibitionist approach, and how successful have they been? What is the progress of your assigned Member State's implementation of the three existing international legal frameworks? What are the obstacles faced by Member States, CSOs, and the UN system in initiating effective and fair dialogue to form cohesive international standards in global drug trafficking? What can the GA do in the future to support Member States and other stakeholders on this issue? What alternative approaches could be proposed to the body that are development-oriented and human-centered?

¹⁹¹ UN General Assembly, *Our Joint Commitment to Effectively Addressing and Countering the World Drug Problem (A/RES/S-30/1)*, 2016.

¹⁹² UN General Assembly, *Thematic Debate of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Drugs and Crime as a Threat to Development on the Occasion of the UN International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking*, 2012.

¹⁹³ Drug Policy Alliance, *A Public Letter to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon*, 2016.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

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<https://www.healthpovertyaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/HPA-SDGs-drugs-policy-briefing-WEB.pdf>

CSOs play a larger and larger role in global drug control as the complexity and potential threats in the international environment continue to rise. Although the policy making of global drug control is a high-level dialogue, the implementation of the policies still highly relies on local government and CSOs. This briefing paper presents the connections among drug control, sustainable development, and individuals' daily life, which offers both expertise on the topic and also a third opinion on the role of the UN system and all stakeholders.

United Nations, General Assembly, Thirtieth special session. (2016). *Our Joint Commitment to Effectively Addressing and Countering the World Drug Problem (A/RES/S-30/1)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 19 May 2016 from:

<http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/S-30/1>

Delegates will find this comprehensive and informative document helpful in understanding the current UN position in global drug problem as it is the most recent adopted resolution by the GA. This resolution covers a variety of topics including: cooperation among Member States, the UN system, and CSOs; recommendations to related UN agencies; alternative and sustainable strategy formation; demand reduction; capacity building; and countering transnational crime. Considering the complexity of the issue and the demand for a delicate and, yet, multilayered approach, this resolution is a worth-while read that provides delegates some insight in to addressing global drug control.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2009). *Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem*. Retrieved 19 May 2016 from:

https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/Political_Declaration/Political_Declaration_2009/Political-Declaration2009_V0984963_E.pdf

While most of the international drug policies share relative ambiguous and broad terminologies, this declaration, while showing the latest political agreement on the issue, provides detailed plans for action. These plans are inclusive of: demand reduction; supply reduction and related measures; as well as countering money-laundering; and enhancing judicial reform and international cooperation. Understanding and evaluating the plans with further research on the current execution of the principles will be important in understanding the representation of Member State's positions.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2013). *The International Drug Control Conventions* [Report]. Retrieved 12 April 2016 from:

https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/Int_Drug_Control_Conventions/Ebook/The_International_Drug_Control_Conventions_E.pdf

The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, and United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 are all compiled in this one document. As drug control is linked to multiple areas of crime, it is crucial to understand the topic from more than one angle. This document is a resource to help delegates understand drug control as a criminal, public health, and legal issue. Comparing these existing international treaties to the current working progress could assist delegates with the understanding of the evolution of global drug control.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2015). *World Drug Report 2015*. Retrieved 18 May 2016 from:

http://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr2015/World_Drug_Report_2015.pdf

As the most comprehensive, informative, and authoritative UN publication on global drug control, delegates may find this document an essential and insightful starting point for further research. Starting with analysis of the current global illicit drug market, including the forms of drug use, drug use prevention, drug supply, and market analysis based on drug types, the document then provides a detailed and thorough proposal of alternative development strategies with case studies.

Moving in to the post-2015 sustainable development era, drug policies need to be strategic, sustainable, and development-oriented. By reading this report, aside from being able to have a more clear ideas of the current policies in different regions, delegates may also gain some inspiration in alternative policies that may be more effective in the future.

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