

General Assembly Background Guide



GerMUN 2016

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Welcome Letter

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the German Model United Nations 2016! On behalf of the Secretariat, we are pleased to introduce you to your committee, the General Assembly. The topics under discussion for the General Assembly are:

1. Advancing Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation
2. Protection of the Human Rights of Migrants
3. Renewable and Alternative Energy Sources and Sustainable Development

The General Assembly is a principle organ of the United Nations and comprises of all Members of the United Nations. As the main deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the UN, it provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter.

We hope you will find this Background useful as an introduction to the topics for the committee. However, it is intended not to replace individual research, but to serve as a point of departure for further exploration. General resources for your research are varied and can be found readily available online. Documents with valuable information do not only include resolutions and decisions of your committee, but also annual reports of the committee, reports from the Secretariat, outcome documents of related international instruments, agenda and other documentation from recent sessions, and others.

Following links are useful for starting your research:

- The committee website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/>
- General UN Documents Databases: <http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl>
- UN-Documents for easy access to UN documents: <http://undocs.org/>
- UN Bibliographic Information System: <http://unbisnet.un.org>

At GerMUN 2016, we have adopted our own Rules of Procedure, which follows the example of the NMUN rules of procedure. The document is available on our website and serves as an important instrument of reference during the conference.

We are looking forward to seeing you at the conference!

Tobias Holl, Secretary General
Markus Peterman, Deputy Secretary-General



I. Advancing Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

Introduction

Despite the fact that only two nuclear weapons were ever used in combat, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is one of the highest priorities on the international disarmament agenda. However, while trying to prevent terrorists from attaining nuclear weapons, persuading nuclear weapon states to give them up and discouraging non-nuclear weapon states from acquiring them, one also has to allow for the peaceful use of nuclear energy, while equally accounting for the risk it poses as well.¹ When dealing with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, there are three different approaches that work together: nuclear disarmament, which is the elimination of existing nuclear warheads; arms control, which is the regulation of weapon commerce and the reduction of existing stockpiles; and nuclear non-proliferation, which aims to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons to new nuclear powers or non-state actors.²

Although proliferation has greatly decreased since the end of the Cold War, there remain over 15,000 warheads, mostly in the possession of the United States and Russia, but also France, the United Kingdom, China, India, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Israel, and Pakistan. Furthermore, the US and Russia keep about 2,000 warheads each on high alert, ready to be deployed immediately.³

International and Regional Framework

International attempts at regulation date back to the first use of nuclear weapons technology, and have evolved in several steps until today. As a follow-up to the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) has yet to be ratified by eight specific states to enter into force. The Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT), which was proposed at the 1995 Conference on Disarmament, has yet to be formulated. These treaties focus on measures to prevent potential terrorists from acquiring nuclear technology and material as well as to reduce overall proliferation.⁴

The Nuclear Suppliers Group is made up of 46 nuclear supplier states with the aim of preventing proliferation to states other than the NPT-recognized nuclear weapon states, mainly through the coordination of national export controls. Founded in 1970 as a reaction to Indian nuclear tests, the NSG is allowed to negotiate with India under safeguards by Security Council Resolution 1172.⁵ Also relevant in this context are the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material of 1987 and its 2005 amendment with the goal of keeping nuclear material off illicit markets and the Missile Technology Control Regime, which seeks to control unmanned delivery systems.⁶

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its 2015 Review Conference

The key document concerning nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which entered into force in 1970. With 190 states parties, the NPT has near universal membership and is the most-ratified arms control treaty. Its central objective is prohibiting non-nuclear weapons states from acquiring nuclear weapons technology while at the same time honouring their right to peaceful use of atomic energy. These objectives are often referred to as the three pillars of the NPT: non-proliferation, disarmament, and the right to the peaceful use of nuclear technology. States recognised by the treaty as nuclear weapons states are the United Kingdom, France, Russia, the United States, and the People's Republic of China.⁷ The NPT is also applied to states who are not nuclear weapons states but have nuclear potential presenting a threat to disarmament and non-proliferation. These states include Argentina, Brazil, Sweden, South Africa, Iran, Libya, Taiwan, Japan, Australia, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, and

¹ Evans and Kawaguchi, *Eliminating Nuclear Threats*, 2009, p. ix.

² Damrosch, *Banning the Bomb: Law and its Limits*, 1986, p. 654f.

³ International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, *Nuclear Arsenal*, 2015.

⁴ Kwang Teo and Atsushi, *Incentives and Disincentives of Accessions of Non-Proliferation Treaty: Why Is Nuclear Non-Proliferation Globally Supported*, 2005, p. 2.

⁵ Lodgaard, *The Future of the Non-Proliferation Treaty*, 2008, p. 5; UN Security Council, *Peace and Security – nuclear tests by India and Pakistan (S/RES/1172 (1998))*, 1998.

⁶ Lodgaard, *The Future of the Non-Proliferation Treaty*, 2008, p. 5.

⁷ Kwang Teo and Atsushi, *Incentives and Disincentives of Accessions of Non-Proliferation Treaty: Why Is Nuclear Non-Proliferation Globally Supported*, 2005, p. 1ff.



the Netherlands.⁸ The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has withdrawn from the NPT in 2003, while India, Israel, Pakistan and South Sudan have never signed the treaty.

The NPT prohibits all but the five recognised nuclear weapon states (NWS) from acquiring nuclear weapons technology and asks all signatories to work towards universal disarmament, while assuring the right to peaceful use, research and development of nuclear technology. Therefore, it also promotes the establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones (NWFZs). All non-nuclear weapons states (NNWS) have agreed to apply IAEA safeguards to their nuclear facilities which are subject to regular inspections by the IAEA.⁹

The implementation and the work under the treaty is reviewed every five years during the NPT Review Conferences, which also serve as a stage for bi- and multilateral negotiations and general discussions related to nuclear weapons and technology. The conference requires consensus to take action.¹⁰ Seven Review Conferences have been held so far, the last taking place last year. Most review conferences have concentrated on halting the arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union. More recently, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its withdrawal from the treaty have come into focus while Pakistan, India, and Israel as non-recognised NWS remain an important focus of debates.¹¹ Last year's review conference has not reached consensus on an outcome document. The NWFZ in the Middle East prescribed by the 2010 conference until 2012 has not been implemented, also due to the absence of Israel from the treaty. However, in light of the recent breakthrough in negotiations with Iran to comply with the IAEA inspections and the scale back of its nuclear programme¹², the future of the NPT is difficult to assess.¹³

Role of the International System

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was founded in 1956 and follows its own statute.¹⁴ It is a body independent from the United Nations, but both entered into a formal agreement in 1959. They cooperate under the three pillars of Safeguards and Verification, Safety and Security, and Science and Technology, which includes ensuring that nuclear material is not used for military means, protecting people from exposure to radiation and increasing the peaceful use of nuclear technology.¹⁵

One of the IAEA's key functions is to verify NPT compliance by inspecting and monitoring State Parties to the NPT. For this purpose, State Parties must establish a comprehensive safeguard agreement with the agency, covering all their nuclear activities. The IAEA has also concluded item-specific safeguard agreements with India, Pakistan, and Israel, who are not parties to the NPT and therefore are not obliged to enter into a comprehensive safeguard agreement. The NWS as recognised under the NPT are exempt from comprehensive safeguard agreements, however, some have entered voluntary agreements.¹⁶ With the recently negotiated deal with the Iran, the IAEA's main concern remains the nuclear programme of the DPRK after its withdrawal from the NPT in 2003 and inspectors permanently leaving the country in 2007. The status of the DPRK's comprehensive safeguard agreement after leaving the NPT remains disputed.¹⁷

The Role of the General Assembly in Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is not only important to the United Nations Security Council, but also to the General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, especially in regards to Art. 11 of the United Nations Charter. This article allows it to discuss all topics within the limitations of the Charter that are also

⁸ Evans and Kawaguchi, *Eliminating Nuclear Threats*, 2009, p. 50f.

⁹ United Nations, *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty*, 1968, Articles IV, VI, VII.

^{10 10} Kwang Teo and Atsushi, *Incentives and Disincentives of Accessions of Non-Proliferation Treaty: Why Is Nuclear Non-Proliferation Globally Supported*, 2005, p. 2, 4.

¹¹ Johnson, *Assessing the 2010 NPT Review Conference*, 2011, p. 7-9.

¹² IAEA Board of Governors, *Verification and Monitoring in the Islamic Republic of Iran in light of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015)*, 2016.

¹³ Wan, *Why the 2015 NPT Review Conference Fell Apart*, 2015.

¹⁴ IAEA, *Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency*, 1956.

¹⁵ IAEA, *Our Work*, 2016.

¹⁶ IAEA, *Safeguards Agreements*, 2016.

¹⁷ IAEA, *Fact Sheet on DPRK Nuclear Safeguards*, N.N.



discussed in other UN bodies and to make recommendations to the Security Council.¹⁸ It also works closely together with the United Nations Disarmament commission under the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs, and the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament. In fact, the very first General Assembly resolution, entitled “Establishment of a Commission to Deal with the Problems Raised by the Discovery of Atomic Energy”, dealt with the problem at hand.¹⁹ However, seeing the non-binding character of GA resolutions, its recent work on the topic has focused on emphasising and evaluating existing agreements such as the 2010 NPT Review Conference Outcome Document with regards to the NWFZ in the Middle East²⁰, the CTBT²¹, and the NPT itself²². Central to its mission also is achieving a Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons, drafted with the help of the Conference on Disarmament.²³

Conclusion

Especially after the end of the Cold War and with the increasing threat of terrorist attacks, the challenges the international community faces in regard to nuclear weapons have changed. The NPT and the IAEA remain key instances for ensuring nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, aided by the United Nations system, as the recent success in negotiating with the Iran has shown. The General Assembly can provide key incentives and establish norms to deal with the topic at hand, however, it has also been criticised for being stuck in repetitive arguments and reiterating the same resolutions year after year.²⁴

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¹⁸ United Nations, *United Nations Charter*, 1945, Art. 11.

¹⁹ General Assembly of the United Nations, *Disarmament and International Security*, N.N.

²⁰ United Nations, *A/RES/70/70*, 2015.

²¹ United Nations, *A/RES/70/73*, 2015.

²² United Nations, *A/RES/70/40*, 2015.

²³ United Nations, *A/RES/70/62*, 2015.

²⁴ Reaching Critical Will, *UN General Assembly First Committee*, 2016.



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II. Protection of the Human Rights of Migrants

"The protection of migrants is an urgent and growing human rights challenge. Governments have obligations to ensure that xenophobic violence, racism and related intolerance against migrants and their communities have no place in their societies".²⁵

Introduction

Migration and human rights have been one of the main themes of the UN since its foundation. Today, migration affects every part of the world, with an estimated 232 million people living outside their country of origin.²⁶ The reasons for migration are varied and include the search for protection and opportunity, both of which are intertwined. Migration can be empowering and bring positive experiences, while contributing to the country of destination both culturally as well as economically. However, many migrants suffer under human rights violations and discrimination.²⁷ For example, migrants may be subjected to arbitrary detention and punishment without the due process guarantees afforded to citizens of a country, or they may be forced to work in conditions that are dirty, degrading, and unduly dangerous. "Migrants, have - among other things - the right to health, education, housing and decent work, as well as labour rights, regardless of their migratory status in relation to the territory they find themselves in."²⁸ Issues related to human rights and migration are complex, not least because they constitute an inherent conflict between two internationally recognized legal principles, the principle of state sovereignty and the human right to migrate across state borders.

There is no trend for a sustained increase of migration from third countries.²⁹ Asylum claims and irregular migration are the main challenge since 2013, not the regular migration to Europe.³⁰ UNHCR reported the highest amount of migration since the end of World War II in the beginning of 2015.

International and Regional Framework

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted in 1948, is the foundation of all modern human rights law.³¹ Later, the UDHR was codified in two further treaties, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1966), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (1966). Today, all core international human rights instruments are generally and specifically relevant to the situation of migrants, particularly the following instruments: the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CMW).³² The latter represents one of the main documents specifically addressing the human rights of migrants and provides the framework for the human rights that are codified in the ICCPR and the ICESCR as they relate to migration. In addition to that, the CMW also specifies rights that are specific to migrants, such as the prohibition of the destruction of identity documents or the prohibition of collective expulsion. Additionally, the International Labor Organization Convention 97 on Migration for Employment (ILO Convention 97), and the International Labor Organization Convention 143 Concerning Migrant Workers (ILO Convention 143) establish and expound provisions on the equal treatment of migrants in the workplace. However, due to the lack of ratification of the CMW and the non-binding nature of ILO conventions, those instruments that specifically address the human rights of migrants do not have the status of international of international human rights law.

²⁵ Pillay, **Migration and Human Rights**

²⁶ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, **Migration and Human Rights**

²⁷ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, **Migration and Human Rights**

²⁸ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, **International Migrant's Day 2015**

²⁹ Human Rights Council, A/HRC/29/36 p.4

³⁰ Human Rights Council, A/HRC/29/36 p.5

³¹ United Nations, **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

³² Global Migration Group, **Human Rights: Legal Framework**



Role of the International System

The Third Committee of the General Assembly regularly address the issue of migration and human rights. Also, the GA was responsible for adoption of the CMW. Generally speaking, in its resolutions on the topic at hand, the GA has largely focused on the protection of migrants from violence caused by human trafficking, discrimination, criminal organizations, and other sources.³³

In its most recent resolution 70/147 (2015) on the protection of migrants, the General Assembly called upon Member States to:

“promote and protect effectively the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants, regardless of their migration status, especially those of women and children, and to address international migration through international, regional or bilateral cooperation and dialogue and a comprehensive and balanced approach, recognizing the roles and responsibilities of countries of origin, transit and destination in promoting and protecting the human rights of all migrants and avoiding approaches that might aggravate their vulnerability”³⁴

In 1999 the Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants was created pursuant to resolution 1999/44 of the former Commission on Human Rights. This mandate was continued after the Commission on Human Rights was replaced by the Human Rights Council.³⁵ Migration governance exists at various levels. At the national level governments deal with regulating the incoming migration, providing resources, setting economic basics. They also discuss protection of migrants and providing working possibilities.³⁶ “The first High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, held in September 2006, provided an opportunity for countries to address these multi-dimensional aspects of international migration. Following the first High-level Dialogue, the GA created the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), which serves as an annual States-led, voluntary, informal and non-binding forum for debate on the interconnection of migration and development.”³⁷ Other international mechanisms include the Second UN High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development, the United Nations Development Programme Development Report on human mobility and development and the International Dialogue on Human Migration.³⁸

In 2006, the UN Secretary-General created the Global Migration Group (GMG), an inter-agency group consisting of sixteen UN and other international agencies, which addresses all issues relating to migration. Part of the GMG are the ILO, the International Organization of Migrants (IOM), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the UN Development Programme, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, among others.

Conclusion

There is a significant knowledge gap in relation to migration and human rights. For example, most official data systems fail to capture either the number or the circumstances of migrants, and much international data on migration does not accurately account for migrants in an irregular situation.³⁹ International cooperation is certainly needed in confronting migrant smugglers and human traffickers in full compliance with international human rights law and combat these challenges. An implementation of save transition possibilities is an aspect of the challenge.⁴⁰ National authorities have to acknowledge and adequately respond to the need of low-wage labour markets and more regular migration avenues for migrants at all skill levels, and strengthening labour inspections.⁴¹ A possible proposal is a commitment to resettlement

³³ UN General Assembly, Protection of Migrants (A/66/253) [Report], 2011.

³⁴ General Assembly, A/RES/69/167 p.4

³⁵ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants

³⁶ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, Migration and human rights, 2013, p. 22

³⁷ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, Migration and human rights, 2013, p. 24

³⁸ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, Migration and human rights, 2013, p. 27

³⁹ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, Migration and human rights, 2013, p. 36

⁴⁰ Crépeau; Mena, Statement on Situation of Migrants

⁴¹ Crépeau; Mena, Statement on Situation of Migrants



of millions of migrants.⁴² Therefore, physical and legal protection is needed as a basis. Governments should discuss services and programs to increase the amount of successful resettled people.⁴³ The challenge addressed in this paper is the search for systematic, coherent and coordinated international cooperation in protecting the human rights of all migrants. International Cooperation can improve the situation of the protection of migrants.⁴⁴

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⁴² Crépeau; Mena, Statement on Situation of Migrants

⁴³ UN Refugee Agency, Resettlement

⁴⁴ Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, Migration and human rights, 2013, p. 47



III. Renewable and Alternative Energy Sources and Sustainable Development

“The end is in sight. Let us now finish the job. The whole world is watching. Billions of people are relying on your wisdom.”⁴⁵

Introduction

Renewable and alternative energy sources are a key factor for engaging in a Sustainable Development Policy. The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) focused on environmental sustainability in goal 7.⁴⁶ Following the expiration of the MDGs in 2015, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), thereby marking the transition to the post-2015 development agenda.⁴⁷ The 17 Goals focus on different issues of sustainable development. Goal 7 of the SDGs stresses the “access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all”.⁴⁸ The role of, and access to, renewable and sustainable energy has thereby received recognition as a pivotal dimension for the achievement of sustainable development.

In this context, the promotion of renewable and alternative energy sources can prove to play a pivotal role for the implementation of the SDGs. To incorporate more renewable and sustainable energy, global efforts are essential. The International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that renewable energy – meaning inexhaustible and clean energy gained by wind, water, the sun, biomass and geothermal energy – currently constitutes 15% of the global energy mix.⁴⁹ The International Energy Agency (IEA) speaks of renewable energy as “derived from natural processes (e.g. sunlight and wind) that are replenished at a faster rate than they are consumed.”⁵⁰ However, there is no universally accepted definition of renewable energy.⁵¹

Assessments and studies demonstrate that global energy demand will increase rapidly.⁵² This is partly caused by the higher growth rates of developing states. Developed states, however, are responsible for high energy usage of the both the past and the present. Further research and development of alternative energy sources are a change to address both issues, clean energy on the one side and sustainable development on the other side. In 2008, investments in already developed renewable energy sources exceeded those allocated for fossil fuels.⁵³ At the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris in 2015, a process was started which has the potential to further facilitate and encourage the use of renewable and alternative energy sources.⁵⁴ These developments show that a turning point towards the full realization of renewable and sustainable energy is possible.

International and Regional Framework

The topic of renewable and alternative sources of energy and sustainable development was first addressed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992.⁵⁵ The conference and one of its main outcome documents, the so-called *Agenda 21* (1992), called for an environmentally sound use of new and renewable sources of energy.⁵⁶ Another outcome of UNCED was the establishment of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which recognized the promotion of energy efficiency. As the most important outcome of the third Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in 1997, the Kyoto Protocol set a milestone for international climate change negotiations and established programs like the Clean

⁴⁵ Ban Ki Moon during the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Paris 2015

⁴⁶ UN General Assembly, United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2), 2000.

⁴⁷ UN General Assembly, Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1), 2015.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ IEA, World Outlook 2011, Global Energy Assessment.

⁵⁰ IEA, FAQs: Renewable Energy.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² REN21, Renewables 2015: Global Status Report, 2015, pp. 27-28.

⁵³ UNEP et al, Global Trends in Sustainable Energy Investment, 2009, p. 11.

⁵⁴ UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Adoption of the Paris Agreement (FCCC/CP/2015/L.9/Rev.1), 2015.

⁵⁵ UNCED, Agenda 21, 1992.

⁵⁶ UNCED, Agenda 21, 1992.



Development Mechanism (CDM), a method of sustainably reducing greenhouse gases that has resulted in private investments in renewable energy.⁵⁷

The contents of the Agenda 21 document were further discussed during the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012.⁵⁸ At the conference, over 200 attending government officials worked together to deliberate collectively about energy production, distribution and consumption to ensure sustainable development through renewable and alternative energy sources. The follow-up GA resolution 66/288 (2012), *The Future We Want*, was generally considered an important step towards recognizing the interconnection of energy issues and development.⁵⁹

The Millennium Summit in 2000 resulted in the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which were set to be achieved by the end of 2015.⁶⁰ While the MDGs did not specifically address energy, the issue was still integrated in a general way across a number of goals. For instance, Target 7 of the MDGs focused on environmental sustainability.⁶¹ With the adoption of the SDGs in September 2015, the issue of renewable energy and sustainable development was explicitly addressed within the context of the international development agenda. SDG 7 focused on the sustainable development in terms of energy usage by calling to “ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all”.⁶² This articulation explicitly draws the link between access to renewable energy and development efforts, while also calling on Member States to “increase substantially, the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.”⁶³ The development of renewable and alternative energy sources was facilitated through the adoption of the *Paris Agreement* during the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in late 2015.⁶⁴ The agreement incorporates a global peer-review measure: Every state elaborates a five year plan on how to reduce green house emissions and to further bolster alternative energy sources.

Role of the International System

The topic of renewable and alternative energy sources and sustainable development remains one of the major topics of emphasis for the GA 2nd Committee. In its recent session, more than 20 draft resolutions on sustainable development have been adopted. The Committee also considered the report *Sustainable Development: Promotion of New and Renewable Sources of Energy*, which promotes the usage of sustainable energy resources within Member States.⁶⁵

This highly interconnected topic is also an important issue of other international actors. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) published a study on the impacts of energy subsidies, stressing that “energy subsidies discourage needed investments in energy efficiency, renewables, and energy infrastructure, and increase the vulnerability of countries to volatile international energy prices.”⁶⁶ Changing its policies, the World Bank (WB) supports clean energy production projects and got rid of coal investments.⁶⁷ To underpin its green commitment, the WB issues Green Bonds. As of mid 2015, over 100 Green Bonds supported the “low-carbon and climate resilient growth.”⁶⁸ These Bonds facilitate the work of projects such as the Second Rural Electrification project, which provides electricity to 42,500 rural households and benefits 174,000 people and therefore enhances sustainable development through the distribution of new energy sources.⁶⁹

⁵⁷ Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1997; Clean Development Mechanism, What is the CDM, 2015.

⁵⁸ UN Sustainable Development, Rio+20: United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

⁵⁹ UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want* (A/RES/66/288), 2012.

⁶⁰ UN General Assembly, United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2), 2000.

⁶¹ UN General Assembly, United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2), 2000.

⁶² UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (A/RES/70/1), 2015.

⁶³ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (A/RES/70/1), 2015.

⁶⁴ UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Adoption of the Paris Agreement (FCCC/CP/2015/L.9/Rev.1), 2015.

⁶⁵ UN General Assembly Second Committee, List of Draft Proposals, 2014.

⁶⁶ IMF, *How Large Are Global Energy Subsidies?* 2015, p. 4.

⁶⁷ Goldenberg, *World Bank rejects energy industry notion that coal can cure poverty*, 2015.

⁶⁸ The World Bank, *Green Bond: Impact Report*, 2015, p. 3.

⁶⁹ The World Bank, *Green Bond: Impact Report*, 2015, p. 3.



Other non UN-related organizations such as the IEA and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) are working on the facilitation of green and clean energy policies. Their work include the analysis of global energy trends and the elaboration clean energy strategies in order to pressure other international actors to further implement sound energy policies.⁷⁰

Rising Awareness is also an important factor for the further development of sustainable development through renewable and alternative energy sources. In this context, the GA designated the year 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All through resolution 65/251.⁷¹ Global awareness of this topic is just emerging. Therefore, the declaration of the period of 2014-2024 as the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All through resolution 67/215 underpins these efforts and pose an opportunity to provide wide-spread access to clean and sustainable energy sources.⁷² This declaration was facilitated through the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) initiative in 2011. SE4ALL goals are to provide universal access to sustainable energy by 2030 through a three point plan. This plan seeks to achieve this goal by “ensuring universal access to modern energy services, doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency,” and by “doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.”⁷³

Conclusion

Sustainability development and the use of renewable and alternative energy sources are inextricably intertwined. A more efficient use of energy resources and the promotion of and access to renewable energy pose a great potential of enhancing the living conditions for a great number of people. The importance of energy for sustainable development has been underscored by the SDGs in Goal 7, however, this development took a long path. What is now required are follow-up actions to facilitate the implementation of the goals as set forth in the SDGs. Further awareness is key to facilitate the implementation of the high-set goals of e.g. the *Paris Agreement*. The collaboration of developed and developing states, of private as well as of international organizations is imperative to achieve sustainable development through renewable and alternative energy sources. Existing programs need to be implemented globally and further ones must be set up. For this, the GA 2nd Committee is the ideal setting to find common ground for future actions.

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⁷⁰ IEA, Our Mission; IRENA, About IRENA; IRENA, Introduction to the International Renewable Energy Agency, 2013.

⁷¹ UN General Assembly, 2012 the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All (A/RES/65/151), 2011.

⁷² UN General Assembly, Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (A/RES/67/215), 2013.

⁷³ UN, The Secretary-General's High-Level Group on Sustainable Energy for All, Sustainable Energy for All: A Global Action Agenda, 2012, p. 2.



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