

**Delegation from The Arab Republic of Egypt**  
***Position Paper for the Economic and Social Council***

The issues before the Economic and Social Council are: Education in Post-Conflict Situations, Implementing SDG7: Ensure Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable and Modern Energy for All and Promoting the Political, Socioeconomic, and Cultural Rights of Indigenous People. The Egyptian writer Nagib Mahfuz once said that “You can tell whether a man is clever by his answers. You can tell a man is wise by his questions.” Let’s ask ourselves the right questions in order to find the best answers.

**I. Education in Post-Conflict Situations**

The Arab Republic of Egypt is altered by the negative effects of post-conflict situations on education and calls for measures, which secure education in such times. Conflicts cause the destruction of infrastructure, including schools, resulting in children not being able to receive education. However, the end of a conflict does not necessarily mean that children instantly receive education again as it can take decades to rebuild necessary infrastructure and to hire skilled teachers. Therefore, it is crucial to reinstall quality education after the end of a conflict as soon as possible. Egypt already works together with United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and NGO’s in order to ensure refugee and migrant children access to quality education through provision of education cash grants and teacher training, and through distribution of educational material. This effort is a great example for securing education in complicated times. However, a systematic approach to education in post-conflict situations is still missing.

Egypt not only signed but also ratified both the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC) in 1990 and the *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* (Refugee Convention) in 1981. Both conventions state education as a basic human right and this clearly shows Egypt’s position. UNICEF and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) are the two main agencies responsible for education within the UN. Egypt works closely together with UNICEF and UNESCO in order to give quality education to Egyptian children but also to refugee and migrant children. Furthermore, UNESCO is also a member of the Sub-Working Group on the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP). CAP is a program cycle for aid organizations to plan, coordinate, fund, implement, and monitor their response to disasters and emergencies, in consultation with governments. CAP belongs to the UN Post-Crisis coordination mechanisms.

Egypt suggests to establish temporary education camps in every city or region, in which schools were destroyed, so that every child has access to education. Therefore, the camps need to be built immediately after an armed conflict has ended. Egypt understands that the task of identifying destroyed schools is crucial. This is why, Egypt suggests a working group, which operates in consultation with CAP, UNESCO and UNICEF. The new working group must identify destroyed schools and the appropriate point of time to build temporary education camps. CAP is a major actor in this process because it helps to integrate all stakeholders. Teachers for the temporary education camps need to be provided by UNESCO. The funding of the camps is crucial and shall be provided by UNICEF. The temporary education camps are the best solution to bridge the time until the schools are rebuilt.

**II. Implementing SDG 7: Ensure Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable and Modern Energy for All**

The Arab Republic of Egypt is determined to implement SDG 7. However, about 40 % of the population still relies on non-renewable energy, which have a negative effect on the environment. One struggle of achieving SDG7 until 2030 is the growing population, which is expected to increase from 7 billion people to 9 billion people by 2050. Therefore, SDG 7 has to be priority as it is not only better for the environment but it also helps to increase standards of living. Egypt has already been making some efforts. The New & Renewable Energy Authority (NREA) is government-owned and plays a strategic role in the renewable energy plans. Egypt, for example, wants to supply 20 percent of generated electricity from renewable sources by 2022. However, there need to be opportunities for all private people to install clean energy technologies. Only if all people have this opportunity, it is possible to ensure access to reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

Egypt welcomes the work the UN has done so far towards a more sustainable future. The General Assembly resolution 70/1 (2015) adopted the SDGs and was affirmed by all members of the UN. The SDGs signalize the importance and right to development for everyone. Additively, energy was recognized as main priority. In 2015, the Egypt supports the Paris Agreement (2015) which recognizes the importance of clean energy technologies as the key to fight climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, Egypt and the UN have signed a strategic framework agreement to support national development plans in March 2018. One pillar of the agreement is the sustainable management of natural resources and the employment of more renewable energy. This clearly shows Egypt's dedication to SDG 7. Egypt has made great efforts nationwide, but Egypt also recognizes that there need to be more opportunities for individuals. A great example for a capacity-building measure is the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Indian Solar Loan Programme. The program demonstrates how financing clean energy for private households can work.

Egypt therefore suggests adopting a program similar to the UNEP Indian Solar Loan Programme on a global level with a special focus on developing countries. The program should encourage partnerships between UNEP and large banking groups in the respective countries. In the new program, which is named the UNEP Worldwide Photovoltaic Loan Program, the partnerships arrange the financing of photovoltaic panels (e.g. interest rate reduction). Once a photovoltaic panel is financed, private households can use the produced energy for themselves and the remaining energy can be sold to the government or other private energy companies. The price for a kilowatt-hour should be fixed in advance. The fixed price guarantees the household a steady income and the revenues can be used to pay back the loan. Egypt believes that this system helps to make reliable, sustainable and modern energy accessible for everyone since it is a capacity-building measure.

### **III. Promoting the Political, Socioeconomic, and Cultural Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

The Arab Republic of Egypt is inhabited by a small group of indigenous peoples – the Nubians. The indigenous group is located in South Egypt and Sudan and is composed of about 3 million Nubians living in South Egypt. Nubians were represented in the drafting process of our constitution in 2014 and Article 236 gives Nubians the right to return to the land, from which they were displaced. Clearly, the Nubians are treated very well. However, this is not the case in all countries of the world. Over 5000 distinct indigenous communities exist in 90 countries. A vast majority of these indigenous peoples are living in extreme poverty and are often marginalized in society. Therefore, it important to strengthen their political, socioeconomic and cultural rights. Only if these rights are implemented, indigenous people are equal and not disadvantaged. This is why measures need to be taken.

Egypt was one of the 48 countries, which voted in favour of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) and also signed and adopted it in 1948. The declaration marks a first milestone in the rights of indigenous peoples since it declares all people as equal regardless of ethnicity, race, or nationality. In 2007, the General Assembly finally adopted a *UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP). Egypt also voted in favour of this declaration and proofs its engagement in the fight on rights of Indigenous Peoples. The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) was adopted with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution 2000/22 and is an advisory body to ECOSOC. The Forum deals with economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights of indigenous peoples.

Egypt believes that a program within the UNPFII must be established. The program should be a monitoring mechanism, which determines if the political, socioeconomic, cultural rights of indigenous people are fulfilled or violated. In addition, the monitoring mechanism should identify to which extend the rights of indigenous peoples are violated. Therefore, the new program "UN Monitor of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" must develop a scale. Only after the correct determination, the right measures and actions can be taken against the discrimination of indigenous peoples. It is important that every five years a report is published, which clearly states all violations against indigenous groups. In addition, the new program offers the opportunity to determine the success of already taken measures by the UN and leaves room to improve the respective measures. The financing should come from UNPFII and also the staff must be employed by the forum.