

Delegation from The United Kingdom of Great Britain  
*Position Paper for the Economic and Social Council*

The topics before the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) are: Education in Post-Conflict Situations; Implementing SDG 7: Ensure Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable and Modern Energy for All; Promoting the Political, Socioeconomic, and Cultural Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The United Kingdom of Great Britain is deeply committed to the primary goals of the ECOSOC, including the development of educational, economic and social rights. We believe in the importance of international collaboration in order to address the issues on the agenda effectively.

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

Education is the key for development: Research shows, that education has a significant effect on human capital, which leads to a substantial growth of economy in a country. Nevertheless, of all states, mainly the one that face economic problems due to recent conflicts, are the ones that lack in educational provisions because of their unstable situation. Subsequently it is of undeniable importance for the international community that post conflict countries reach stable economy again, in order to connect them to the global market. Though the *fourth Geneva Convention* relative to the *Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (1949)* and the *Additional Protocol relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II, 1977)* already constitute the appeal towards all nations, we face critical situations in many countries, particularly in the middle east, demonstrating the need for actual implementation of the measures.

58 million children do not have access to basic education, because of challenges concerning infrastructure, finances or lacking personal. Out of these number estimated 50 per cent, tendency rising, live in conflict-affected countries. The United Kingdom of Great Britain recognized the need to react towards the incline of that number by signing the *Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (2002)*, stressing the need to protect vulnerable populations while enabling them access to education. Furthermore we have shown our commitment in the World Conference on Education for all in Dakar, Senegal (2000) by agreeing to the “*Education for All*” (EFA) goals, which strive to enhance quality education for youth, adults and vulnerable populations and ensure measurable learning outcomes among other aims. Additionally, we support ECOSOC’s close funding partner the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), responsible for conflict and natural disasters, by being one of its top three donor countries. Our dedication to proper education reveals itself also within the country through 38% of the population with a university or college degree, which is the highest number in Europe.

In order to foster the implementation of education in post-conflict situations, the United Kingdom of Great Britain sees the need to strengthen national and international cooperation: mobilization of education, that enables communication between teachers and children and youth in post-conflict areas, is a measure that today’s technology allows us. For this we should not underestimate the use of local experts and teachers, who can contribute effectively and with specialized knowledge to the curricula. Still it is urgent to include international capabilities such as language skills, since post-conflict areas are still unstable and bear a high risk of regressing to violence, making the escape to other countries inevitable.

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

Ensuring Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable and Modern Energy for All has been an extensive addressed topic on international conferences such as the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, the Twenty-First Conference on the Parties held in Paris and the Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development in Quito. However, the agreements that have been brought out during these conferences, have still not or insufficiently been implemented in many parts of this world, bearing in mind that 13 per cent of the global population still lack access to modern electricity. We notice that not all states have the financial capabilities to ensure energy for everyone, and therefore acknowledge the important role of international cooperation.

As Access to Energy for All is one of the main priorities in British policy, we welcomed General Assembly resolution 60/199 "Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, including the implementation of the World Solar Programme 1996-2005", urging Member States to invest in, support, and adopt clean energy technologies. The United Kingdom of Great Britain especially supported the recent resolution 71/233 of 2017 on „Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all“, which underlined the effectiveness of international collaboration for sharing clean energy technologies, diversify the energy market and adopt sustainable energy policies. Moreover, we recognize the importance of the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), which perceived energy as a priority for sustainable development. The resulting document, named *Future We Want*, constitutes the commitment of all to improving the implementation of renewable sources of energy policies. With this we try to promote the use and affordability of energy technologies and services in order to combat climate change and eradicate poverty. Our devotion towards renewable and sustainable energy can be illustrated in our will to extent the use of ocean power, which shows the construction of our first wave farm, being the largest worldwide. Besides ocean power, also solar energy has experienced rapid incline in the recent years with 4 million households in 2012.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain urges all member states to communicate with businesses within the country, since they can increase affordable, reliable and sustainable energy systems by investing in renewable energy resources, prioritizing energy efficient practices, and adopting clean energy technologies and infrastructure. Moreover, new innovations in technology can change the status quo of the global energy system, becoming the centre of climate change solutions. Additionally, we advocate the investment in local infrastructure in order to establish accessible energy services. Prioritizing telecommunications and increasing the use of less energy intensive modes is another effective measure, that we stress to keep in mind. We call all member states to commit to sourcing 100% of operational electricity needs from renewable sources. Lastly, we underline the importance of women, as they are often responsible for the household and therefore drive much of the energy consumption. Companies should invest and train women to efficient cooking solutions that do not harm their health for instance through hazardous smoke and air pollution from burning traditional fuels.

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

"I feel proud that aboriginal Australians are now studying in Oxford and Cambridge...let me acknowledge the original owners of this land." Our former prime minister David Cameron already stated our appreciation for indigenous people by addressing the Australian Parliament at the G20 summit in Brisbane. Although the United Kingdom does not have an indigenous community, we value the enrichment that indigenous peoples all over the world constitute and therefore recognize the need for promoting their rights. Emphasizing the fact that the rights of indigenous peoples are a matter not only in less developed countries but equally in developed countries, we believe in the importance of this topic. The United Kingdom of Great Britain underlines the urgency of actions, not lastly because of the threatening loss of their cultures, which would be a loss for all nations.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain is strongly committed to resolution 69/2, adopted by the General Assembly on the World Conference on Indigenous People, expressing the need of cooperation with indigenous communities in the realization of all political, socioeconomic, and cultural rights. Furthermore, we fully supported the creation of a permanent body, initiated by the ECOSOC to work on resolutions and recommendations with respect to the rights of indigenous peoples, and to intensify debate between Member States and civil society. Since financial aid remains the foundation for realizing the ideas and action plans developed by international organizations, the United Kingdom of Great Britain donates to the voluntary fund for indigenous peoples, established by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). In addition, we show our dedication towards the topic, by mobilizing funds of the department of international development (DFID) for researchers that help to protect the water rights of indigenous Mexicans and enhanced medical access for indigenous peoples in Brazil.

With respect to the political rights, we believe in the necessity of shaping the legal international framework that guarantees indigenous peoples autonomy and self-governance. Socioeconomic rights, including equal access to the labour market, as well as to education and health care, can be achieved with focus on empowerment of indigenous communities through entrepreneurship programs as well as the inclusion of the private sector, as the key actor in the job market. Bearing in mind the lack of cultural rights, we strongly advocate the building of public awareness, since dialogue can eventually influence

society. Practically this can be achieved by educational informing or network-based meetings of all affected parties.