Background Guide GA GerMUN 2021

Please be aware that the following BGG consists of BGGs for NMUN 2020. As NMUN differentiates between GA1, GA2, GA3, we hereby recommend you not to focus on this differentiation, as GerMUN will only have one General Assembly which may discuss any of the illustrated topics.

Table of Content

Committee Overview

Introduction

In 1945, following the conclusion of the Second World War, the United Nations (UN) was founded to maintain international peace and security, foster diplomatic relations between states, achieve international cooperation in addressing global problems and promoting human rights, and harmonize state actions towards these

> The **General Assembly Plenary** has six Main Committees. A report is issued to the General Assembly Plenary for each item allocated to a Main Committee.

ends.[1] Article 7 of the Charter of the United Nations (1945) establishes six principal organs: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat.[2] Of these, only the General Assembly has universal membership, rendering it a unique forum for discussion within the UN system.[3] As the normative center of the UN, the General Assembly is a generator of ideas, a place of international debate, and a hub for new concepts and practices in the political, economic, humanitarian, social, and legal spheres.[4]

Governance, Structure, and Membership

All 193 UN Member States are represented in the General Assembly, with each Member State having one vote.[5] The General Assembly may grant Observer status to intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and non-Member States or entities, which allows them to participate in sessions but does not grant them voting rights.[6] The General Assembly makes the majority of its decisions via consensus.[7] When a vote is held, regular decisions require a simple majority of members present and voting, while important decisions require a two-thirds majority of members present and voting.[8]

The General Assembly has six Main Committees that are topically organized around the General Assembly's main fields of responsibility: the Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee); the Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee); the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (Third Committee); the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee); the Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee); and the Legal Committee (Sixth Committee).[9] The Main Committees discuss agenda items assigned to them, adopt draft resolutions, and submit a report on their work to the Plenary.[10] The Plenary then considers these reports and "proceeds without debate to the adoption of the recommended resolutions and decisions. If adopted by consensus in the committee, the Plenary decides by consensus as well; likewise, if adopted by a vote in the committee, the Plenary votes on the resolution or decision in question."[11] The Plenary may also decide to address an issue without prior reference to a committee.[12]

Each year, the General Assembly's regular session begins on the Tuesday of the third week in September.[13] Since its 44th session in 1989, the General Assembly has been considered in session

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[1] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 1.

[2] Ibid., Art. 7.

[3] UN General Assembly, *General Assembly of the United Nations*.

[4] Thakur, *The United Nations, Peace and Security, 2006, pp. 91, 162; UN General Assembly, Functions and powers of the General Assembly*.

[5] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 18.

[6] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 30.

[7] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2017-2018*, 2017, p. 12.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 18.

[10] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2017-2018*, 2017, p. 23.

[11] Smith, *Politics and Process at the United Nations: The Global Dance*, 2006, p. 161; Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 62.

[12] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2016-2017*, 2015, p. 23.

[13] Ibid., p. 17.

throughout the year.[14] The busiest period, otherwise known as the "main part of the General Assembly," lasts from the start of the session in September until the end of December; it includes the general debate and most of the Main Committees' work.[15] The remainder of the year, or the "resumed part of the General Assembly," involves thematic debates, consultation processes, and working group meetings.[16] In addition to the regular session, the General Assembly may also hold special sessions on individual issues at the request of either the Security Council or a majority of Member States.[17]

The President of the General Assembly (PGA) is the largely ceremonial head of the General Assembly, elected each year by a simple majority of Member States to a nonrenewable one-year term.[18] The PGA's duties are to facilitate Plenary sessions by directing discussion, managing the administration of meetings, and enforcing the General Assembly Rules of Procedure.[19] The PGA does not preside over all six General Assembly committees separately; rather, Chairs and Vice Chairs are the facilitators of individual committees.[20] The PGA also performs executive duties, such as meeting regularly with the Secretary-General, the President of the Security Council, and the President of the Economic and Social Council; communicating with the press and the public; and organizing high-level meetings on certain thematic issues.[21]

As a main organ of the UN, the General Assembly does not report to any other organ.[22] It receives substantive and organizational support from two important entities: the General Committee and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM).[23] The General Committee is comprised of the PGA and the 21 Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly, as well as the Chairpersons of the Main Committees; all position-holders are elected each session on a nonrenewable basis.[24] The General Committee's main duty, aside from making recommendations on organizational issues, is to allocate agenda items to the Plenary and the Main Committees from a preliminary list received from the UN Secretariat.[25] The DGACM acts as the intersection between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and provides valuable technical secretariat support, mainly through its General Assembly and ECOSOC Affairs Division.[26] Within the UN Secretariat, other departments and offices offer both substantive and technical support to each of the six Main Committees.[27]

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The mandate of the General Assembly is defined in Chapter IV (Articles 10-22) of the Charter of the United Nations.[28] As stipulated by Article 10, the General Assembly is broadly tasked with discussing "any questions or any matters within the scope of the [Charter] or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the [Charter]," and it may make relevant recommendations to Member States or to the Security Council.[29]

Functions and powers of the General Assembly include the following:

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[14] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 14.
[15] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 14.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid., p. 16.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid., pp. 15 & 18.
[21] Ibid., pp. 16-17.
[22] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 98.
[23] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 17.
[24] Ibid., p. 18.
[25] Ibid., p. 17.
[26] Ibid., p. 24; UN DGACM, *Functions of the Department*.
[27] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, pp. 63-68.
[28] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. IV.
[29] Ibid., Art. 10.

- While the General Assembly may address matters of international peace and security, any such matters requiring action must also be referred to the Security Council. Further, the General Assembly may not make recommendations related to any dispute or situation in respect of which the Security Council is exercising its functions.[30] The only exception is if the Security Council fails to reach a decision on an issue due to lack of consensus among its permanent members, at which point the General Assembly may convene an emergency special session within 24 hours to address the issue in question.[31]
- The General Assembly may initiate studies and make recommendations to promote international cooperation in the political, economic, social, cultural, educational, or health fields; the development and codification of international law; or the realization of fundamental human rights and freedoms.[32]
- The General Assembly may make recommendations "for the peaceful adjustment of any situation, regardless of origin, which it deems likely to impair the general welfare or friendly relations among nations."[33]
- The General Assembly may create subsidiary organs "as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions."[34] Main Committees are therefore capable of introducing resolutions that can lead to the creation and funding of agencies or meetings, as well as ad hoc committees or working groups, that consider a particular question with the purpose of reporting to the General Assembly.[35]
- The General Assembly receives and considers regular reports from the Security Council and from other UN organs.[36]
- The General Assembly considers and approves the UN's budget and apportions expenses to be borne by individual Member States.[37]
- The General Assembly "elects the 10 non-permanent members of the Security Council and the 54 members of the Economic and Social Council. Together with the Security Council, but voting independently, it elects the members of the International Court of Justice."[38]
- The General Assembly also elects the members of its subsidiary bodies, such as the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission.[39]
- Based on the recommendation of the Security Council, the General Assembly appoints the Secretary-General.[40]

Only resolutions adopted by the Plenary are put into effect as official resolutions of the General Assembly.[41] However, unlike Security Council resolutions enacted under Chapter VII of the Charter, General Assembly resolutions are not legally binding on Member States even after adoption by the Plenary.[42] Nonetheless, General Assembly resolutions represent policy norms reached by consensus among Member States, and they often lead to concrete action by the international community.[43]

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[30] Ibid., Arts. 11-12.
[31] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 15.
[32] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 13; UN General Assembly, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly*.
[33] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 14.
[34] Ibid., Art. 22.
[35] Weis, *The United Nations and Changing World Politics*, 2004, p. 161.
[36] *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 15.
[37] Ibid., Art. 17.
[38] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2017-2018*, 2017, p. 12.
[39] Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, pp. 72-73.
[40] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2017-2018*, 2017, p. 12.
[41] UN General Assembly, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly*.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

The following priorities for the UN were adopted for the period 2018-2019 in the General Assembly resolution 71/6 of 27 October 2016:

1. Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and recent UN conferences;

2. Maintenance of international peace and security;

3. Development of Africa;

4. Promotion of human rights;

5. Effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts;

6. Promotion of justice and international law;

7. Disarmament;

8. Drug control, crime prevention, and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.[44]

For the biennium 2020-2021 the priorities have not yet been adopted by the General Assembly. The Committee for Programme and Coordination, which set the priorities for the current biennium 2018-2019, recommended that the General Assembly review all 28 program plans of the proposed programme budget for 2020, ranging from security- and human rights-related to social and economic topics, at its 74th session.[45] The latest 73rd General Assembly session (UNGA73) opened on 18 September 2018 and was followed by high-level meetings and the annual general debate from 24 September – 1 October 2018.[46] During the high-level meetings of UNGA73, the UN General Assembly came together for the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, a high-level plenary meeting on global peace, as well as a high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis; a review of progress towards preventing and controlling non-communicable diseases, and a high-level meeting on the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative.[47] The latest General Assembly Plenary sessions took place in June and July 2019. During the 95th and 96th meeting the body concluded a two-day debate on responsibility to protect, prevention of genocide, and crimes against humanity.[48] In addition to that it adopted three draft resolutions: on assisting victims of terrorism, commemorating the anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development and on torture-free trade.[49] In its 101st meeting on 25 July 2019 the General Assembly Plenary adopted five resolutions including to establish the 2021 International Year for Ending Child Labour, to promote cooperation with regional partner organizations, and to foster a culture of peace and "respect and acceptance of differences, tolerance, peaceful coexistence and cohabitation and respect for human rights, to reject the spread of hate speech, that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence."[50]

The 74th session of the General Assembly (UNGA74) is scheduled to begin on 17 September 2019.[51] The President of UNGA74 will be Nigeria's Permanent Representative to the UN, Tijjani Muhammad-Bande who stated that "Peace and security, poverty eradication, zero hunger, quality education, climate action

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[44] UN General Assembly, *Programme planning (A/RES/71/6)*, 2016, para. 4.
[45] UN General Assembly, *Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (A/74/16)*, 2019.
[46] UN General Assembly, *High-level meetings of the 73rd session*, 2019.
[47] Ibid.
[48] UN DPI, *General Assembly Adopts Texts on Torture-Free Trade, Assisting Terrorism Victims, Anniversary of Cairo Population Conference (GA/12160)*, 2019.
[49] Ibid.
[50] UN DPI, *General Assembly, Adopting 5 Texts, Establishes 2021 International Year for Ending Child Labour, Promotes Cooperation between United Nations, Regional Organizations (GA/12167)*, 2019; UN General Assembly, *Resolutions of the 73rd session*, 2019.
[51] IISD, *74th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 74)*, 2019.

and inclusion will constitute a major priority of [his] presidency."[52] He also put the promotion of human rights, women's and youth empowerment, and gender parity within the UN system at the top of his agenda.[53] UNGA74 will also commemorate the founding of the UN 75 years ago being "a unique opportunity for us to reduce the trust deficit between nations."[54] The general debate and high-level gatherings will commence on 24 September 2019 and include the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development which will take place at the level of heads of states and governments this year.[55] It is the first SDG Summit since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015.[56] The same week will also see the Climate Summit focusing on "energy transition, climate finance and carbon pricing, industry transition, nature-based solutions, cities and local action, and resilience."[57] Other high-level meetings include the High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development, the High-level meeting on Universal Health Coverage, as well as the high-level meeting to review progress made in addressing the priorities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) through the implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.[58]

Conclusion

As the "chief deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the UN," the General Assembly plays a key role in the UN system as "a unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter."[59] Outcomes reached by the General Assembly may define new norms that can promote peace, human rights, and development.[60] Going forward, the General Assembly will continue to be a cornerstone of international efforts towards a better world.[61]

Annotated Bibliography

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> *This handbook, published annually by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand, is an effort to improve the information available to the international community on the UN system. It provides extensive information on the structure and membership as well the purpose of UN organs. As such, it represents the perfect introduction to the UN system as a whole for individuals less familiar with its complexity. Therefore, delegates should consider this a must-read during preparation for the conference.*

Sciora, R., & A. Stevenson. (2009). Planet UN: The United Nations Confronting the Challenges of the 21st Century. Geneva: Editions du Tricorne.
> *Inspired by the documentary Planet UN, this book offers an in-depth analysis of the role of the United Nations and its challenges for the 21st century. It gives special attention to three pillars: peace, development, and human rights. It also stresses the importance of the UN's ability to adapt itself to our changing world and to react to new threats such as terrorism or nuclear risks. An account of the genesis of the UN also allows delegates to understand how the UN was started with the intent of creating a system to maintain peace and security and to become the organization it is today. Furthermore, this book*

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[52] UN News, *Newly-elected Nigerian UN General Assembly President pledges focus on 'peace and prosperity' for most vulnerable*, 2019.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] IISD, *SDG Summit*, 2019.
[56] Ibid.
[57] IISD, *Climate Action Summit 2019*, 2019.
[58] IISD, *74th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 74)*, 2019.
[59] UN General Assembly, *Functions and powers of the General Assembly*.
[60] Thakur, *The United Nations, Peace and Security*, 2006, p. 162.
[61] Sciora & Stevenson, *Planet UN: The United Nations Confronting the Challenges of the 21st Century*, 2009.

contains a series of testimonies of important personalities such as the last five Secretaries-General of the UN.

Switzerland, Permanent Mission to the United Nations. (2011). The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly. Retrieved 13 July 2016 from: https://www.eda.admin.ch/content/dam/eda/en/documents/publications/InternationaleOrganisationen/Uno/UN-pgahandbook_en.pdf

> *This publication by the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN is another contribution by a Member State of introductory information about the UN system. The General Assembly is a central focus of this handbook. A detailed description of its organization, structure, rules, and working methods can be found. Further providing information specific to all six Main Committees, this handbook offers a unique source of information to delegates to understand the work of the General Assembly and its place within the UN system.*

Thakur, R. (2006). The United Nations, Peace and Security. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

> *Ramesh Thakur, a renowned commentator on the UN, examines the UN from a contemporary perspective in the context of factors such as human security. The author focuses on questions related to international peace and security. By doing so, he critically analyzes the use of force by the UN with the intention of making it more effective in the light of today's threats and with a particular focus on security and how it has evolved over the years and the role of the UN system including the General Assembly. His book is a valuable guide to the UN and offers an interesting perspective on international peace.*

Weis, T., et al. (2004). The United Nations and Changing World Politics. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

> *This book aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of international governance and the UN, human rights and humanitarian affairs, and building peace through sustainable development. While the authors outline the failures of collective security and the problems that the UN is facing when maintaining peace by military means, they address the role played by other UN entities such as the General Assembly in international security. As such, this book questions and analyzes how the international community governs itself by outlining its successes and failures.*

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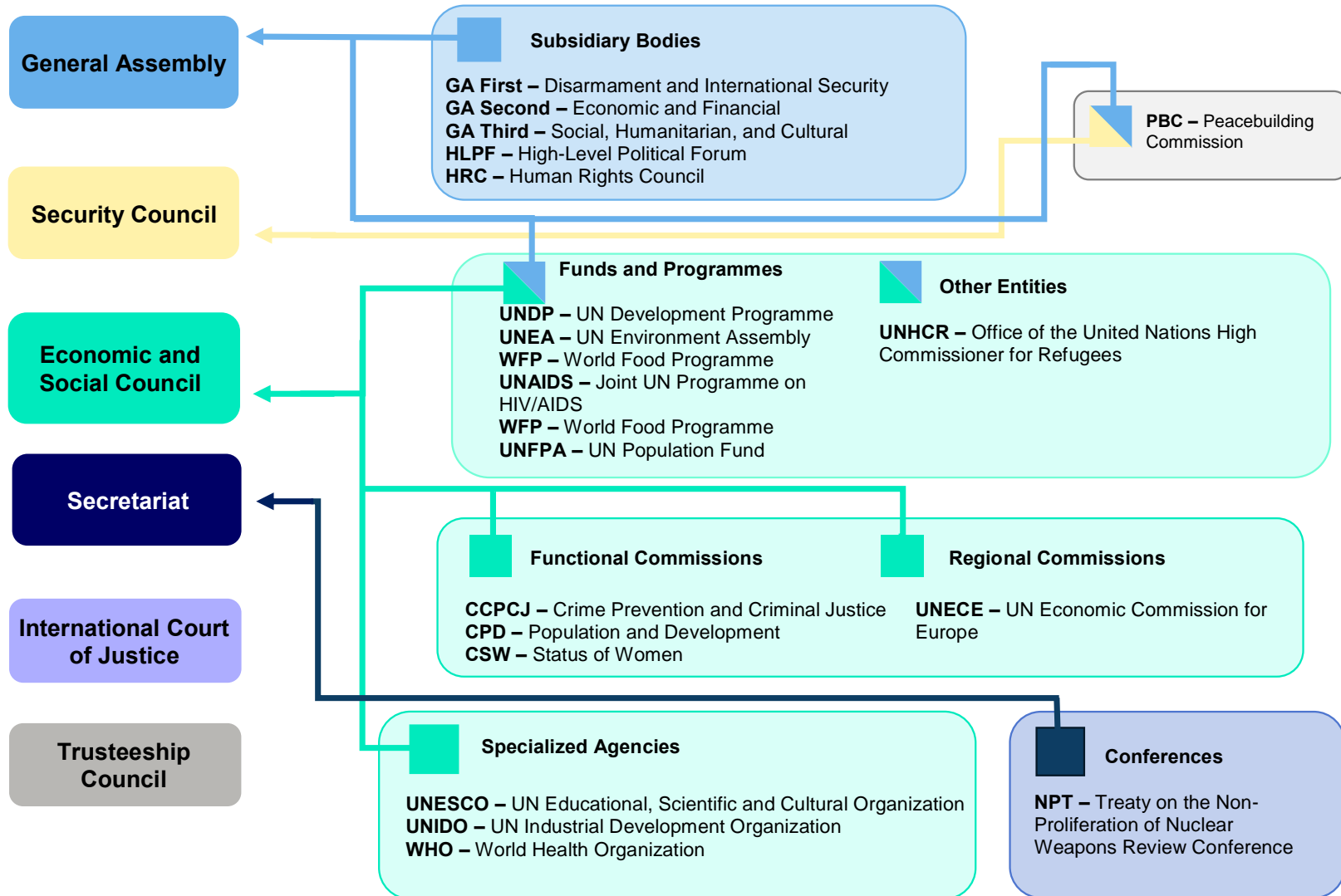
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United Nations System at NMUN•NY

This diagram illustrates the UN system simulated at NMUN•NY and demonstrates the reportage and relationships between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position, purpose, and powers within the UN system.

General Assembly

Security Council

Economic and Social Council

Secretariat

International Court of Justice

Trusteeship Council

Subsidiary Bodies

GA First – Disarmament and International Security
GA Second – Economic and Financial
GA Third – Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural
HLPF – High-Level Political Forum
HRC – Human Rights Council

PBC – Peacebuilding Commission

Funds and Programmes

UNDP – UN Development Programme
UNEA – UN Environment Assembly
WFP – World Food Programme
UNAIDS – Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS
WFP – World Food Programme
UNFPA – UN Population Fund

Other Entities

UNHCR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Functional Commissions

CCPCJ – Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
CPD – Population and Development
CSW – Status of Women

Regional Commissions

UNECE – UN Economic Commission for Europe

Specialized Agencies

UNESCO – UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO – UN Industrial Development Organization
WHO – World Health Organization

Conferences

NPT – Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Review Conference

I. Advancing Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace in the Context of International Security

II. Advancing Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace in the Context of International Security

"We remain committed to an accessible, open, interoperable, reliable and secure cyberspace. We recognize the enormous benefits for economic growth and prosperity that we and all others derive from cyberspace as an extraordinary tool for economic, social and political development."[154]

Introduction

According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), 3.9 billion people, over half of the world population, were using the Internet at the end of 2018.[155] In the digital era, a free, open, and secure cyberspace is a necessary precondition for the exercise of human rights, both online and offline.[156] In recent years, the international community has made numerous efforts to agree on a set of norms regulating the behavior of Member States in cyberspace.[157] The General Assembly First Committee is a key forum for the discussion of the norms and customs of what responsible behavior in cyberspace is; it has largely contributed to the development of a set of standards for how Member States are to behave in cyberspace, especially by periodically establishing a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE).[158] The 2015 GGE consensus report elaborates on what norms and principles for responsible state behavior in cyberspace is in saying that "norms reflect the international community's expectations, set standards for responsible State behavior and allow the international community to assess the activities and intentions of States."[159] In particular, this report represents the basis for a globally accepted cyber code of conduct because it provides important recommendations regarding the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) by Member States.[160] For example, it describes the necessary commitment of Member States to prevent an increase in malicious technologies while working to avoid that their territories may be used for criminal cyber-attacks.[161]

The development of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), have brought both new opportunities and challenges for the responsible state behavior in cyberspace due to the uncertainties of how such technologies can be applied.[162] Furthermore, it is difficult to understand potential unintended and destructive consequences of such technologies.[163] For example, the ungoverned nature of AI in cyberspace poses a distinction between offensive and defensive use of AI technologies where states may use AI to conduct cyber-attacks that may pose a threat to international peace and security.[164] Last year, the Secretary-General warned that, "malicious acts in cyberspace are contributing to diminishing trust among Member States," but the international community is committed to making cyberspace safer.[165] At its Seventy-third session, the General Assembly established two processes that focus on ICT-related issues in the context of international peace and security: a sixth GGE, and, for the first time, an Open-

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[154] G7, *G7 Declaration on Responsible States Behavior in Cyberspace*, 2017.

[155] ITU, *Statistics*, 2019.

[156] Kumar & Brown, UN First Committee Processes on Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace: An Explainer, 2019.

[157] Kumar & Brown, *UN First Committee Processes on Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace: An Explainer*, 2019.

[158] Ibid.; CCDCOE, *2015 UN GGE Report: Major Players Recommending Norms of Behaviour, Highlighting Aspects of International Law*, 2015.

[159] CCDCOE, *2015 UN GGE Report: Major Players Recommending Norms of Behaviour, Highlighting Aspects of International Law*, 2015.

[160] Chernenko, *Increasing International Cooperation in Cybersecurity and Adapting Cyber Norms*, 2018; CCDCOE, *2015 UN GGE Report: Major Players Recommending Norms of Behaviour, Highlighting Aspects of International Law*, 2015.

[161] Ibid.

[162] OECD, *Artificial Intelligence in Society*, 2019.

[163] Ibid.

[164] INFOSEC, *Introduction to AI and Cybersecurity*, 2019; OECD, Artificial Intelligence in Society, 2019.

[165] UNODA, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, 2018, p. 56; INFOSEC, *Introduction to AI and Cybersecurity*, 2019.

Ended Working Group (OEWG).[166] The creation of these new bodies represents a further step for the General Assembly to deal with new cybersecurity-related issues and broaden the scope of discussions, with the aim of reducing potential disagreements among states.[167] Many regional organizations, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), have made numerous efforts to preserve the stability of cyberspace, especially by defining common codes of conduct for Member States to avoid cybersecurity abuses, which could escalate into cyber-conflict.[168]

International and Regional Framework

Conflicts related to ICTs have been on the agenda of the United Nations (UN) since 1998, when the General Assembly First Committee resolution 53/70 on the "Development in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security" was adopted.[169] This resolution recognized for the first time both the benefits of ICTs for development and the threats to international peace and security that may result from the malicious use of them.[170]

The *Convention on Cybercrime of the Council of Europe* (2001), known as the Budapest Convention, is the only binding international mechanism on cybercrime and offers a comprehensive model for further steps in the context of responsible state behavior in cyberspace.[171] This Convention brings together those states, both members and non-members of the Council of Europe, who strongly believe that a common criminal policy is required in order to protect society against cybercrime, and therefore are committed to strengthening international cooperation and setting appropriate common norms in cyberspace.[172] Consequently, at the UN level, the Budapest Convention is considered as an important consulting tool and a benchmark for the establishment of mutual global customs guiding the responsible state behavior in cyberspace.[173] The Budapest Convention is supplemented by a *Protocol Concerning the Criminalization of Acts of a Racist or Xenophobic Nature Committed Through Computer Systems* (2003), which considers how the misuse of ICTs can spread forms of racism and xenophobia, and affirms the necessity for the States parties to adopt legislative and other measures to address such issues.[174] Similarly, in 2014, the African Union adopted the *Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection*, also known as the Malabo Convention.[175] This Convention aims to set the essential rules for establishing a safe cyberspace and addresses the gaps in regulation on this topic, including issues related to e-commerce, digital privacy, and cybercrime.[176]

The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015) recognizes that ICTs are an important pillar for the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[177] SDG 17 (peaceful and inclusive societies) reflects the importance of ICTs in achieving the SDGs, in particular targets 17.7, 17.8, and

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[166] Kavanagh, *The United Nations, Cyberspace and International Peace and Security: Responding to Complexity in the 21st Century*, 2017, p. 1.

[167] Kumar & Brown, *UN First Committee Processes on Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace: An Explainer*, 2019.

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[170] UN General Assembly, *Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (A/RES/53/70)*, 1999; Tikk-Ringas, *Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security: Work of the UN First Committee 1998-2012*, 2012.

[171] Council of Europe, *Convention on Cybercrime*, 2011.

[172] Ibid.

[173] Pawlak, A Wild Wild Web? Law, Norms, Crime and Politics in Cyberspace, *European Union Institute for Security Studies*, 2017.

[174] Council of Europe, *Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, Concerning the Criminalization of Acts of a Racist and Xenophobic Nature Committed Through Computer Systems*, 2003.

[175] African Union, *African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection*, 2018.

[176] Ibid.

[177] ITU, *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

17.9.[178] Target 17.7 promotes the responsible use of cyberspace between Member States by supporting the advance of new technologies and support capacity-building programs to promote environmentally sound technologies in developing countries.[179]

Role of the International System

General Assembly resolution 73/27 on the "Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security" was adopted by the First Committee in 2018 and it underlines how the misuse of ICTs could represent a threat to international peace and security.[180] Resolution 73/27 further decided to establish an OEWG, which started its work in June 2019, and is expected to present its report at the 75th General Assembly session.[181] The OEWG provides a forum for the discussion on the norms, rules, and principles of responsible state behavior, including the ways to implement such norms.[182] In addition, the OEWG is called to analyze the threats related to information security, and to give suggestions on how to advance confidence-building measures and capacity-building measures.[183] Also in 2018, the General Assembly adopted the resolution 73/266 on "Advancing responsible State behavior in cyberspace in the context of international security", which accentuates the necessity for Member States to implement cooperative measures to address the threats emerging in cyberspace.[184] The current GGE has a mandate for the period of 2019-2021 and is in charge of studying more possible joint measures to address threats in the field of international information security, including rules and norms of responsible state behavior, and the application of international law to the use of ICT by Member States.[185]

Many other UN bodies work on cyberspace-related issues, such as the ITU and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).[186] As the leading UN agency on ICTs, the ITU has a predominant role in implementing UN resolutions regarding technologies and cyberspace.[187] Among several initiatives, the ITU has launched the *Global Cybersecurity Agenda* (GCA), which serves as a framework for international cooperation to promote a safer information society.[188] Since 2007, the GCA has accomplished many results, such as facilitating the creation of multi-stakeholder partnerships to promote cybersecurity and shaping a common understanding of cybersecurity risks among Member States.[189] UNIDIR works to implement ways to reinforce cyber stability and therefore ensure the advance of a more secure cyberspace.[190] Among the ongoing projects, UNIDIR has organized series of International Security Cyber Issues Workshops, as well as Cyber Stability Conference Series.[191] One of the most recent conferences was held in New York in June 2019 and focused on how to strengthen

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[178] SDG Compass, *SDG 17: Strengthen the Means of Implementation and Revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.*
[179] Ibid.; GRI & UN Global Compact, *Business Reporting on the SDGs*.
[180] UN General Assembly, *Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (A/RES/73/27)*, 2018.
[181] GIP Digital Watch, *UN GGE and OEWG,* 2019; Kumar & Brown, *UN First Committee Processes on Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace: An Explainer*, 2019.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Stadnik, *Discussing State Behavior in Cyberspace: What Should we Expect?*, 2019.
[184] UN General Assembly, *Advancing Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace in the Context of International Security (A/RES/73/266)*, 2019.
[185] Stadnik, *Discussing State Behavior in Cyberspace: What Should we Expect?*, 2019; Kumar & Brown, *UN First Committee Processes on Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace: An Explainer*, 2019.
[186] ITU, *Cybersecurity Programme*; UNIDIR, *Cyber Stability Conference: Strengthening Global Engagement 2019*, 2019.
[187] Wamala, *The ITU National Cybersecurity Strategy Guide*, 2011, pp. 18-19.
[188] ITU, *Global Cybersecurity Agenda*, 2019.
[189] Ibid.
[190] UNIDIR, *Cyber Stability*.
[191] Ibid.

international commitment in the field of cyberspace.[192] Discussions included the mandates of the GGE and OEWG, and the need to harmonize international practices in the context of cyberspace.[193]

The European Union (EU) has made significant progress around EU cyber-safety and transparency.[194] For example, the *EU Cybersecurity Act* created a set of common rules for EU Member States in cyberspace.[195] With regards to AI, the EU has introduced a set of guidelines and standards to be considered in developing AI systems starting from 2020, which include privacy and data governance, transparency, and diversity, nondiscrimination, and fairness.[196]

Among many independent bodies, the Global Commission on the Stability of Cyberspace has undertaken several initiatives to strengthen awareness between cyberspace communities and support policy norms in the context of cyberspace's security.[197] These norms represent a clear step to advance a responsible state behavior in cyberspace by referring to what Member States should do to avoid foreign tampering in domestic cyber-products, and to respond to potential offensive cyber operations by non-state actors.[198]

The SCO, which has had Observer Status in the General Assembly since 2005, has broadened its agenda to include topics related to cyberspace.[199] The SCO has made efforts to develop a set of norms regulating state behavior in cyberspace by submitting the proposal of the *International Code of Conduct for Information Security* to the General Assembly in 2011, followed by an updated version in 2015.[200] The objective of this Code of Conduct is to recognize the rights and responsibilities of Member States, foster responsible state behavior and cooperation in cyberspace in order to cooperatively address the potential threats and challenges and create a peaceful, secure, and open cyberspace.[201]

Artificial Intelligence: Threats and Opportunities

The nature of AI is continuously evolving and therefore, the potential future uses and threats posed by AI are uncertain.[202] However, the link between AI and cybersecurity is well established as there are many AI-based systems being used by Member States, civil society, and the private sector to defend against cyber-threats and potentially be used for offensive capabilities.[203] The appeal to use AI in the cyber-domain is that it involves little human interaction.[204]AI systems are able to detect and deter threats automatically, including threats that may have been missed by a human analyst.[205] While AI can be used to defend against cyber-threats, AI systems themselves also pose a threat to Member States as cyber-criminals can use these technologies to launch advanced cyber-attacks.[206] Furthermore, due to the ungoverned nature of AI technologies, states may be able to use AI technology for offensive, instead of defensive, purposes to launch cyber-attacks against other states.[207] Therefore, due to the unknown possibilities, potential challenges, and unintended consequences of AI, creating a mechanism to govern and regulate the use of AI technologies is an ongoing challenge in the international community.[208]

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[192] UNIDIR, *Cyber Stability Conference: Strengthening Global Engagement 2019*, 2019.
[193] Ibid.
[194] European Commission, *The EU Cybersecurity Act*, 2019.
[195] Ibid.
[196] Segal, Cyber Week in Review: April 12, 2019, *Council on Foreign Relations*, 2019.
[197] GCSC, *The Commission*.
[198] GCSC, *Norm Package Singapore*, 2018.
[199] Albert, The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, *Council on Foreign Relations*, 2015.
[200] McKune, *An Analysis of the International Code of Conduct for Information Security*, 2015; Albert, The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, *Council on Foreign Relations*, 2015.
[201] McKune, *An Analysis of the International Code of Conduct for Information Security*, 2015.
[202] INFOSEC, *Introduction to AI and Cybersecurity*, 2019.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Etzioni & Etzioni, *Should Artificial Intelligence Be Regulated?*, 2017.
[207] Ibid.
[208] Etzioni & Etzioni, *Should Artificial Intelligence Be Regulated?*, 2017.

The First Committee has been debating about how new technologies may pose risks to international security.[209] Among many initiatives, the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) has recently launched the 'Youth4Disarmament' Initiative to discuss on the implications of AI for international peace and security.[210] Such implications include the role of AI in modern warfare, its strategic implications, and moral and ethical questions linked to the weaponization of AI technology.[211] During the first Youth4Disarmament dialogue, which took place in August 2019, the panelists highlighted the potential impact of AI on strategic stability and nuclear command-and-control systems, the proliferation risks associated with AI technologies, and the ethical and moral concerns of delegating life-or-death decisions to machines.[212]

With regards to new technologies, the Secretary-General has launched the "Strategy on New Technologies" in October 2018.[213] This Strategy defines the way in which the UN system will support the use of new technologies, such as AI, to achieve the SDGs.[214] The Strategy introduces some main guiding principles for UN activities by promoting global standards, supporting the development of partnerships in the use of new technologies, and fostering inclusion and new forms of cooperation in the field of technologies.[215] These principles can further be applied as guidelines for responsible state behavior in cyberspace.[216]

Another important initiative aimed to promote the responsible use of AI in cyberspace was the launching of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) *Recommendation of the Council on AI* by the OECD Member States in May 2019, which was the first intergovernmental standard document on AI to be ever approved.[217] These principles set standards in areas such as privacy, digital security risk management, and responsible business conduct, which were used as a benchmark by the G20 Leaders who welcomed G20 AI Principles in June 2019.[218] While all of these initiatives and strategies are attempting to bring light to the potential uses and challenges of AI and cybersecurity, there has been no dialogue to create an international mechanism to govern the use of AI technologies in cyberspace.[219] Therefore, responsible state use of AI in in cyberspace, combined with the continuously evolving nature of AI technology, may pose a threat to international peace and security if used inappropriately.[220]

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Challenges in Cyberspace

The SCO is an example of a regional organization taking an active role in addressing issues related to responsible state behavior in cyberspace.[221] In 2009, with the signing of the *Agreement among the Governments of the SCO Member States on Cooperation in the Field of Ensuring International Information Security,* the SCO underlined t "digital gap".[222] This gap is put in place where more developed Member States produce greater amounts of ICT technologies, which in turn forces less-developed

[209] UN, *First Committee Weighs Potential Risks of New Technologies as Members Exchange Views on How to Control Lethal Autonomous Weapons, Cyberattacks*, 2018.
[210] Bianco, *UNODA Launches 'Youth4Disarmament' Initiative with Dialogue on Artificial Intelligence and International Security*, 2019.
[211] Ibid.
[212] Ibid.
[213] UN EOSG, *Secretary-General's Strategy on New Technologies*, 2018.
[214] Ibid.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Ibid.
[217] OECD, *What are the OECD Principles on AI?*, 2019.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Etzioni & Etzioni, *Should Artificial Intelligence Be Regulated?*, 2017; INFOSEC, *Introduction to AI and Cybersecurity*, 2019.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Kizekova, *The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Challenges in Cyberspace – Analysis*, 2012.
[222] Ibid.

Member States to become dependent on these products and not have an opportunity to develop such technologies themselves.[223] This Agreement also affirmed the necessity for SCO Member States to establish mutual codes of conduct in cyberspace to prevent the escalation of cyber threats.[224]

In recent years, an international consensus has emerged on the need to define general norms of conduct for Member States in order to address common challenges in the field of information security.[225] Some SCO Member States submitted a draft code of the *International Code of Conduct for Information Security* before the 66th session of the General Assembly in September 2011 and further gave suggestions on how to develop a code of responsible conduct for Member States.[226] The SCO replaced this document in 2015, when its Member States submitted a revised draft to the General Assembly, stressing the necessity to identify the rights and responsibilities of states in the information space and explicitly acknowledge that states must play the same role in governing cyberspace.[227] However, the diverging views regarding the concept of "international information security" have made it impossible to reach a consensus.[228] Whereas the SCO Member States underline the necessity of regulation in cyberspace, many other UN Member States consider this level of content regulation to be a threat to fundamental human rights.[229] The 2015 GGE took note of this proposal, but the code has not been further negotiated and has not gained a full support from the international community.[230]However, during the meeting of the Council of Heads of the SCO held in October 2018, leaders reaffirmed their commitment to cooperate in the field of ICTs by developing international principles and norms for the responsible state behavior in cyberspace.[231] Among these norms, SCO Member States are called not to use ICTs to interfere in the internal affairs of other states; to develop confidence-building measures, such as voluntary exchange of information about national strategies and organizational structures; and to assist developing countries in their efforts to close the "digital gap."[232]

Conclusion

Concerns about cybersecurity have increased as Member States increasingly depend on the Internet while the number of cyber-attacks expands.[233] While ICTs can drive economic and social development, malicious use of these new tools could be a risk for global security.[234]The international community is therefore committed to continue to explore ways that commit countries to respect laws, rules, or norms in cyberspace.[235] Past GGE reports have established a strategic framework for responsible state behavior, which is based on the development of new norms of responsible state behavior, as well as the

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[223] Ibid.
[224] Ibid.
[225] UN General Assembly, *Letter dated 9 January 2015 from the Permanent Representatives of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/69/723)*, 2015.
[226] The Embassy of the Russian Federation to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, *International code of conduct for information security*, 2011.
[227] UN General Assembly, *Letter dated 9 January 2015 from the Permanent Representatives of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/69/723)*, 2015.
[228] CCDCOE, *Shanghai Cooperation Organisation*.
[229] Ibid.
[230] CCDCOE, *2015 UN GGE Report: Major Players Recommending Norms of Behaviour, Highlighting Aspects of International Law*, 2015.
[231] SCO, *Information Report Following the Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States*, 2018.
[232] UN General Assembly, *Letter dated 9 January 2015 from the Permanent Representatives of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/69/723)*, 2015.
[233] Lété & Chase, *Shaping Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace*, 2018.
[234] Ibid.
[235] Ibid.

implementation of already existing ones.[236] Throughout the Seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, the First Committee, in particular through the GGE and the OEWG, continued to work on supporting and advancing effective implementation of the norms, principles and rules of responsible state behavior in cyberspace, and promote possible cooperative measures to address cyber-threats.[237]

Further Research

Moving forward, delegates should consider the following questions: What can the First Committee do, within its mandate, to reconcile the diverging views of Member States on cyberspace-related issues, such as the digital gap and the ungoverned space of AI? How can regional frameworks regarding policy and normative expectations for Member States in cyberspace can be adapted at the UN level? How does the private sector respond to UN resolutions on cyberspace? How can the First Committee set policy norms to govern the responsible use of AI in cyberspace?

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> *This report offers a great starting point for research about how the United Nations has adapted and responded to developments in information and communication technologies. It focuses primarily on the norm-setting work of the General Assembly, its underlying processes, and challenges related to the use of ICTs by Member States. Delegates will also find information about linkages and complementarities with other non-UN processes and comparisons with other items on the UN agenda, which are linked to international peace and security. The report also includes figures that are very helpful to better understand the topic, such as an illustrative explanation of the principal organs of the UN dealing with ICTs-related issues and a representation of GGE members since 2004.*

Kumar, S. & Brown, D. (2019, May 1). UN First Committee Processes on Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace: an explainer. *Global Partners Digital*. Retrieved 14 July 2019 from: https://www.gp-digital.org/un-first-committee-processes-on-responsible-state-behaviour-in-cyberspace-a-briefing/
> *This article provides a good summary for the research about cybersecurity in the context of the First Committee. It explains the role of the First Committee in cybersecurity-related issues and the key issues on the agenda of the Groups of Experts. Such issues include the development of rules, principles, and norms about the responsible state behavior in cyberspace, the potential cooperative measures to face threats in cyberspace, and the applicability of international law in the use of ICTs. The article also relates the work of the First Committee to other multilateral forums, like the OSCE, NATO, APEC, and the BRICS Summit, which have also contributed to the norm-development process with regards to the behavior of Member States in cyberspace.*

Tikk-Ringas E. (2012). Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security: Work of the UN First Committee 1998-2012. *ICT4Peace Publishing*. Retrieved 15 July 2019 from: https://ict4peace.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Eneken-GGE-2012-Brief.pdf
> *This report offers well-explained information regarding the work of the First Committee with regards to international peace and security between 1998 and 2012. Delegates will find guiding sources for their research, including important explanations about the work of the Groups of Governmental Experts, Annual Reports of the Secretary-General, and the*

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[236] Kumar & Brown, *UN First Committee Processes on Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace: An Explainer*, 2019.
[237] Kumar & Brown, *UN First Committee Processes on Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace: An Explainer*, 2019.

Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament. This source can be used to better understand the historical background of the topic under discussion, and therefore provide delegates with a better contextual understanding of the most recent developments in the field.

United Nations, Executive Office of the Secretary-General. (2018). *UN Secretary-General's Strategy on New Technologies.* Retrieved 23 August 2019 from:
https://www.un.org/en/newtechnologies/images/pdf/SGs-Strategy-on-New-Technologies.pdf
The objective of this strategy is to define how the UN system should aim to support new technologies to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Therefore, it is a good source to understand how the Secretariat envisions a UN approach in the use of new technologies in the context of the SDGs. Delegates will find a list of recent initiatives undertaken by many parts of the UN, especially at the national level. Additionally, this strategy identifies four major commitments for the UN: deepening the UN's internal capacities and exposure to new technologies; increasing understanding, advocacy and dialogue; supporting dialogue on normative and cooperation frameworks; and enhancing UN system support to government capacity development.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-third session. (2018). *Advancing responsible State behavior in cyberspace in the context of international security (A/RES/73/266)*. Adopted on report of the First Committee (A/73/505). Retrieved 25 July 2019 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/73/266
Adopted by the General Assembly during the Seventy-third session, this resolution is one of the most recent documents about the issue of cyberspace in the context of international security. The resolution requests the establishment of a new group of governmental experts to continue to study the possible cooperative measures to address information security threats. The GGE will operate for three years and will potentially discuss norms and principles for a responsible state behavior in cyberspace. Additionally, this resolution requests the establishment of future consultative meetings for Member States to further discuss possible joint measures to address threats in the field of international information security, including norms and rules of responsible state behavior and the application of international law to the use of ICT by Member States.

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II. Empowering Conflict-Affected Children and Youth

II. Empowering Conflict-Affected Children and Youth

Introduction

With more than 50 ongoing armed conflicts worldwide, 420 million children currently live in conflict-affected areas, representing over 20% of the global youth population.[147] The United Nations (UN) *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC) (1990) defines a child as "a human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier."[148] Children and adolescents are vulnerable by nature, and in the case of conflict, young people are even more critically vulnerable than others.[149] Children and youth tend to be the main civilian casualties of armed conflict, and are further vulnerable because they are under the age of legal independence.[150] The UN General Assembly acknowledged a significant increase in the globally reported violations of children's rights from 15,500 in 2016, to 21,000 in 2017.[151] These grave violations can include recruitment and use of children in conflict; killing and maiming of children; rape and sexual violence, particularly of girl children; attacks on schools and hospitals; abduction of children; and denial of humanitarian access.[152]

While there is no single definition of "conflict," the UN Global Compact broadly determines that conflict areas are those experiencing high levels of armed violence, and political or social instability; where there are serious concerns about abuses of human rights and political and civil liberties; and where there is violent conflict, including interstate and civil war.[153] Two billion people are affected by the humanitarian consequences of armed conflict, including extreme poverty, displacement, and lack of education and employment opportunities.[154] As estimated by the World Bank Group, due to fragility, conflict or violence 46% of these people are estimated to be subjected to extreme poverty by 2030.[155]

The UN, supported by the international community, has put in substantial effort to develop the global standards on protecting children in armed conflict, supporting reintegration programs, and conducting activities to mainstream children's rights.[156] However, with the increasing number of violations of human rights in areas of conflict, there is clearly still a need to further empower and support conflict-affected children and youth.[157] Supporting these high-risk youth will require the UN, governments, adults, children, civil society, businesses, and all other stakeholders to conduct comprehensive and nuanced support projects with the ultimate goal of youth empowerment.[158]

International and Regional Framework

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948), the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural* Rights (ICESCR) (1966), and the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*

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[147] UN General Assembly & UN Security Council, *Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/865-S/2018/465)*, 2018, p. 2; Save the Children, *Stop the War on Children*, 2019, p. 9.

[148] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of the Child (A/RES/44/25)*, 1989.

[149] Peacebuilding Initiative, *Empowerment: Children & Youth: Children, Youth & Peacebuilding Processes*, 2008.

[150] ICRC, *Children Affected by Armed Conflict and Other Situations of Violence*, 2011, p. 9.

[151] UN General Assembly & UN Security Council, *Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/865-S/2018/465)*, 2018, p. 2.

[152] UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, *20 Years to Better Protect Children Affected by Conflict*, 2017.

[153] UN Global Compact, *Doing Business While Advancing Development and Peace*, 2010.

[154] ICRC, *Global Trends of War and their Humanitarian Impacts*, 2018.

[155] The World Bank, *Fragility, Conflict & Violence*, 2019.

[156] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (A/HRC/40/49)*, 2018, pp. 1-5.

[157] Ibid.

[158] Ibid.

in hostilities.[173] Article 77 of this Protocol proclaims that in conflict areas children should be respected and protected from violence, and should not be recruited into armed forces.[174] Article 78 further prevents international displacement of children by prohibiting the evacuation of children to foreign countries by people that do not share the same nationality as them.[175]

To establish the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda) (2015), the General Assembly adopted resolution 70/127 (2015), which created the current global framework for development, peace and security, and human rights.[176] The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established in the 2030 Agenda, are 17 goals to ensure global economic prosperity and equality.[177] The 2030 Agenda reiterated several key issues of importance to children and youth, including emphasizing access to services and opportunities to improve capacity building skills, employability and entrepreneurial development of the young population.[178] In particular, SDG 3 (good health and well-being), SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) aim to address issues related to the lack of education and employment of disadvantaged societies, ensure availability of social infrastructure in the conflict areas, and increase the voice of children and youth within their communities.[179]

More recent key framework documents establishing children's rights include the *Buenos Aires Declaration on Child Labor, Forced Labor and Youth Employment*, which was adopted at the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labor in 2017, and first called upon the international community to conduct research on child labor and forced labor in the context of armed conflict, emphasizing high-risk sectors and support capacity building measures.[180] The Declaration also encourages Member States to strengthen activities to eradicate child labor in crisis situations arising from conflicts.[181]

Role of the International System

Within the UN system, the General Assembly Third Committee shapes global policies on human rights, social issues, and humanitarian affairs, and specifically supports the efforts of Member States in protecting and empowering conflict-affected children and youth.[182] Since 2015, each UN General Assembly Third Committee session included items devoted to the rights of the child, empowerment of youth, protection of victims of armed conflicts, and rights of the girl child.[183] In its most recent resolution 73/155 (2018) on the "Rights of the Child," the General Assembly expressed deep concern that as a result of armed conflicts in many parts of the world, the status of the rights of children and youth remains critical.[184] It also calls upon Member States to respect and promote the right of girls and boys; to involve children, including children with disabilities, in decision-making processes; and to support children's organizations and child-led initiatives.[185]

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[173] ICRC, *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I)*, 1977.

[174] Ibid.

[175] Ibid.

[176] UN General Assembly, *Policies and Programmes Involving Youth (A/RES/70/127)*, 2015, pp. 3-5.

[177] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 13.

[178] UN General Assembly, *Policies and Programmes Involving Youth (A/RES/70/127)*, 2015, pp. 3-5.

[179] Zerrougui, Harnessing the Potential of Boys and Girls to Fulfil the Promise of the Sustainable Development Goals, *UN Chronicle*, 2015.

[180] IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour, *Buenos Aires Declaration on Child Labour, Forced Labour and Youth Employment*, 2017.

[181] Ibid.

[182] UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues (Third Committee)*, 2019.

[183] Ibid.

[184] UN General Assembly, *Rights of the Child (A/RES/73/155)*, 2019, pp. 1-3.

[185] Ibid.

The first practical guidelines for Member States to ensure the rights of young people and enhance their role in society was introduced by the UN General Assembly in 1995, when its resolution 50/81 adopted the "World Programme of Action for Youth" (WPAY).[186] WPAY recommended Member States to work within the framework of fifteen youth priority areas, such as education, employment, women empowerment, participation, and intergenerational issues in armed conflict.[187] Priorities set in the WPAY impacted national plans, priorities and laws, as well as contributed to the development of the multi-level mechanisms for consultation, mainstreaming, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the national initiatives.[188] The Programme contributed to the system of communication and cooperation between national, regional and international actors on the empowerment of youth.[189]

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, whose current mandate holder is Virginia Gamba, plays a key role in promoting the protection of children affected by armed conflict and ensuring accountability of Member States.[190] In the *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict on Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children* (2018), the Special Representative outlined key aspects of ensuring the rights of children in armed conflict, highlighting the importance of having children considered in transitional justice, the creation of country task forces, and conflict resolution and peacebuilding.[191] The Special Representative also discussed the need to continue protecting children under the auspices of international humanitarian law, preventing the unnecessary detainment of children who have been co-opted into working for non-state actors or militias, and ensuring that the rights of children support progress towards the SDGs.[192]

The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) sets out best practices to support Member States in developing their reintegration programs for children and youth following armed conflict.[193] These programs involve psychosocial support, and education and training for the conflict-affected young people.[194] Reintegration programs contribute to breaking the cycle of violence, reducing risk of recruitment of children and youth to the armed forces, and increasing resilience of communities.[195] For instance, UNICEF implements the "Armed Violence Prevention and Reduction Programme in nine countries of Latin America and the Caribbean."[196] This program aims to enhance community participation, public awareness and school-based initiatives for conflict-affected children and youth.[197] Activities of UNICEF in conflict-affected areas encompass, among others, carrying out development of life skills programs for adolescents and establishing mediation centers for positive parenting and peaceful conflict resolution.[198]

Relatedly, in 2016 the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched the "Youth Global Programme for Sustainable Development and Peace," which focuses on addressing challenges faced by

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[186] UN General Assembly, *World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (A/RES/50/81)*, 1996, pp. 4-6.

[187] Ibid.

[188] UN DESA, *World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond*, 2010.

[189] Ibid.

[190] UN General Assembly, *Rights of the Child (A/RES/51/77)*, 1997, p. 7.

[191] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (A/HRC/40/49)*, 2018, pp. 11-13.

[192] Ibid.

[193] UN General Assembly & UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (A/73/907–S/2019/509)*, 2019, p. 4.

[194] UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, *Global Coalition for the Reintegration of Former Child Soldiers*, 2019; United Nations Children's Fund, *Annual Report*, 2018.

[195] UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, *Global Coalition for the Reintegration of Former Child Soldiers*, 2019.

[196] UNICEF, *A Familiar Face, Violence in the Lives of Children and Adolescents*, 2017, p. 70; United Nations Children's Fund, *Annual Report*, 2018.

[197] UNICEF, *A Familiar Face, Violence in the Lives of Children and Adolescents*, 2017, p. 70.

[198] UNICEF, *Annual Results Report on Child Protection*, 2017, p. 39.

young people worldwide by improving capacities to enhance youth empowerment at different levels.[199] The Programme contributed to the implementation of the "UNDP Youth Strategy 2014-2017 'Empowered Youth, Sustainable Future'" (2013) by providing recommendations for the strategic engagement of young people and relevant actors in promoting youth empowerment globally.[200] The Strategy encourages supporting capacity development of youth organizations, engaging youth-related questions in all spheres of development planning, and supporting national youth policy development and implementation activities.[201]

The work of the UN is also supported at the regional level, where regional organizations such as the European Union and the African Union (AU), among others, can help set norms and standards for protecting the rights of children and youth.[202] For example, in the 1990 *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child* adopted by the AU, Articles 7-11 established a regional framework on ensuring their freedom of expression and association, freedom of thought, protection of privacy and the right to education, while the Article 22 contains provisions on protecting children in armed conflicts.[203]

Supporting the work of the UN and regional bodies, there are many civil society organizations advocating for the empowerment of children and youth, including Search for Common Ground (SFCG).[204] The work of SFCG is funded by a number of foundations, business corporations, governments, and UN bodies, such as UNICEF, the World Bank, the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), and the International Organization for Migration.[205] SFCG then implements programs by using the media, policy, education, and action-focused programming to enable children and youth to transform their communities and be recognized as peacemakers.[206]

Empowering Children and Youth in Post-Conflict Decision-Making

One of the main challenges impacting conflict-affected children and youth is the lack of political autonomy and civil empowerment.[207] As stated in the 2018 *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict on Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children*, in addition to social and gender disparity between youth, many children and youth feel disempowered over their post-conflict future.[208] The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child also specifies that many adults do not consider children as human rights defenders and do not believe in their capacities, which creates one of the fundamental obstacles to the empowerment of children and youth.[209] Additionally, in many societies, children and youth are not allowed to speak politically or vote, as they are still viewed as legal

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[199] UNDP, *Youth Global Programme for Sustainable Development & Peace*, 2016, p. 1.

[200] UNDP, *UNDP Youth Strategy 2014-2017*, 2014, p. 32.

[201] Ibid.

[202] UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, *Working with Member States*, 2019.

[203] African Union, *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*, 1990.

[204] SFCG, *About Us*, 2019.

[205] SFCG, *International Partners*, 2019.

[206] SFCG, *About Us*, 2019.

[207] Global Partnership for Children and Youth in Peacebuilding, *Evaluation of Child and Youth Participation in Peacebuilding*, 2015; World Vision International, *Leading the Way: Guidance on the Participation of Children & Young People in Global Engagements*, 2017.

[208] UN General Assembly, *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict on Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children (A/73/278)*, 2018, p. 2.

[209] UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Report on Protecting and Empowering Children as Human Rights Defenders*, 2018; UN HRC, *Annual Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict*, 2017.

minors, which can lead to less investment in political processes and post-conflict rebuilding.[210] For this reason, states will often prioritize child protection frameworks, over child empowerment programs.[211]

However, civil society studies from organizations such as the Global Partnership for Children and Youth in Peacebuilding, have noted that empowering children and youth provides an opportunity to express their influence on political and social decisions that impact them, learn new skills, and develop a closer connection to their community, and it gives them increased autonomy by being involved in decision-making.[212] Empowered children are also more likely to have the ability to respond appropriately to risks by becoming active citizens, and support positive change towards a violence-free environment through stopping cycles of violence.[213] Additionally, when children belong to peer-led local organizations such as those at school, religious and cultural organizations, or community groups, they are more likely to build awareness of the risks of violence, and increase their ability to provide peer-support to others at risk.[214] Such organizations have the ability to conduct training on child rights, sexuality and reproductive health education, communication and negotiation skills, and gender equity.[215] However, the application of programming and policy for children's empowerment can also be expanded to include training and opportunities for political and civic life at all levels, including electoral activities, participation in government and non-governmental decision-making, building skills and capacities for governing and carrying out civil service functions, participation in village child protection committees to prevent and respond to violence; government accountability and information.[216]

Some national laws and policies have been adapted to align with the CRC and UN recommendations on children's empowerment. [217] For instance, Nepal, who is recovering from armed conflict, adopted legal and policy frameworks in 2011 that support the participation of disadvantaged children and youth, and their representation in decision-making processes concerning them.[218] Nepal's *Child Friendly Local Governance National Strategy* (2010) contains indicators ensuring children aged 12 to 18 years participate in the decision-making processes of local bodies through the development of institutional participation mechanisms, such as child club networks.[219] In addition, the *National Youth Policy* (2010) in Nepal covers women, men, and third gender persons aged between 16 and 40 years, and establishes a full range of rights, including the right to livelihood, education, health, family welfare, employment, and social security, and to participation, empowerment, and leadership opportunities.[220] While policies such as these, and the work of bodies such as the Tunisian Youth Leadership Council, represent excellent progress towards empowering youth, some parents, community members, or local government officials remain unaware of relevant laws and policies, while there can also be insufficient implementation and

[210] Global Partnership for Children and Youth in Peacebuilding, *Evaluation of Child and Youth Participation in Peacebuilding*, 2015; World Vision International, *Leading the Way: Guidance on the Participation of Children & Young People in Global Engagements*, 2017.

[211] UN General Assembly, *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict on Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children (A/73/278)*, 2018, p. 2; UN HRC, *Annual Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict*, 2017; World Vision International, *Leading the Way: Guidance on the Participation of Children & Young People in Global Engagements*, 2017.

[212] Global Partnership for Children and Youth in Peacebuilding, *Evaluation of Child and Youth Participation in Peacebuilding*, 2015; Commissioner for Children Tasmania, *Involving Children in Decision Making*, 2015, p. 5.

[213] Global Partnership for Children and Youth in Peacebuilding, *Evaluation of Child and Youth Participation in Peacebuilding*, 2015, p. 122.

[214] Global Partnership for Children and Youth in Peacebuilding, *Evaluation of Child and Youth Participation in Peacebuilding*, 2015.

[215] Ibid.

[216] Ibid., p. 122.

[217] Dharel & Srestha, Child Friendly Local Governance in Nepal: Practices, Learning and Opportunities, *World Vision International*, 2018, p. 5.

[218] Ibid.

[219] Ibid.

[220] Nepal Law Commission, *National Youth Policy*, 2010.

monitoring of laws and policies due to the weak political process, especially at the local levels and where conflict has further weakened existing infrastructure.[221]

Improving Employment Opportunities for Conflict-Affected Children and Youth

Since the impact of armed conflict and violence on children and youth can include a wide range of psychological consequences, the reintegration of conflict-affected children and youth into society is an important stage of supporting these vulnerable groups.[222] Often in armed conflict, children's educational pathways are also interrupted, preventing them from participation in social interactions and opportunities for personal development.[223] Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have noted that in conflict-affected societies, less than 1% of displaced youth have access to tertiary education, while young populations living in conflict-affected areas face increased difficulty with acquiring necessary personal and professional skills.[224] Additionally, in conflict-affected areas the lack of employment opportunities for youth may become a reason or catalyst for a new round of violence.[225] For instance, thousands of unemployed urban youth contributed to the continued upheaval in the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, which has been in the process of recovering from conflict since 2006.[226]

Programs such as UNDP's and the Department of Political Affairs' "Joint Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention (2013 – 2015)" have been highly effective in mitigating some of the long-term impacts of reskilling a reintegrating youth population.[227] Having determined youth employment as a means of conflict prevention, the program focused on enhancing government capacities in generating youth employment, improving livelihoods, supporting contribution of youth in creating social enterprises, and expanding financial services to youth.[228] Within the program, Youth Results Group provided critical input to governments, contributed to the National Youth Strategy, and facilitated the process of raising awareness on youth issues in Timor-Leste.[229]

As another example of work being done to support reintegrating children and youth to employment post-conflict, in partnership with the ING Group, a Europe-based global bank, UNICEF launched the "Power for Youth" project.[230] This project aims to empower young people by providing them with the skills and tools they need to support them becoming future leaders, entrepreneurs, and participants in society.[231] Participating children and youth worked to improve their critical thinking, collaboration, and leadership skills to create a social change.[232] The main focus of this project was to help adolescents develop into problem-solvers, peacebuilders, and decision-makers in a variety of fields.[233] Additionally, UNICEF and the Antonio Restrepo Barco Foundation supported the Government of Colombia in creating a multi-purpose fund providing child and youth groups and organizations with crucial support to develop sustainable and income generating projects in the post-conflict period.[234]

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[221] Ibid.
[222] Dudenhoefer, Understanding the Recruitment of Child Soldiers in Africa, *African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes*, 2016.
[223] Educate a Child, *Conflict-affected Situations, Insecurity and Instability*, 2012.
[224] Ibid.
[225] UNDP, *Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Work in Asia Pacific,* 2016, pp. 58-59.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid.
[228] Ibid.
[229] Ibid.
[230] ING, *ING and UNICEF*, 2019.
[231] UNICEF, *Annual Report on Private Fundraising and Partnerships*, 2016.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Ibid.
[234] Global Partnership for Children and Youth in Peacebuilding, *Evaluation of Child and Youth Participation in Peacebuilding*, 2015, p. 122.

Conclusion

As armed conflict continues to negatively impact already vulnerable children and youth, the UN has established a comprehensive framework to protect these populations and to support Member States in adhering to international human rights standards.[235] The lack of empowered children and youth has continued to be one of the major obstacles to building sustainable peace and helping societies holistically recover from armed conflict.[236] Ways to increase the participation of conflict-affected children and youth have been widely discussed within the UN system, and the General Assembly Third Committee leads the international discourse on various approaches achieving rights of children and youth.[237] However, given the progress that still needs to be achieved, the international community continues to look to the General Assembly Third Committee to lead the conversation on, among other issues, opportunities of increasing employment opportunities, and expanding the participation of children and youth in the decision-making process.[238]

Further Research

In their research, delegates should look at how the General Assembly Third Committee can increase the participation of children and youth in activities related to peace processes, social and political aspects of their communities, and contributing to the sustainable peace and development. Delegates may consider ways of improving international legal instruments and measures to raise awareness on the rights of the conflict-affected children and youth, including: What is the role of adults in involving children in youth into the decision-making processes in the conflict-affected countries? How can the General Assembly Third Committee foster collaboration among Member States, international and regional organizations, the private sector, and civil society to increase the participation of children and youth in decision-making processes? What best practices of empowering conflict-affected children and youth can be shared among the various actors? How can children and youth be politically empowered and actively involved in post-conflict processes? How do other disparities, such as gender, ability, or cultural background, impact children's access to existing post-conflict resources, and how can these disparities be mitigated through best practices?

Annotated Bibliography

United Nations Children's Fund. (2018). *Annual Report.* Retrieved 22 July 2019 from: https://www.unicef.org/media/55486/file/UNICEF-annual-report-2018%20revised%201.pdf
> *This report provides an analysis of the activities of UNICEF and establishes three goal areas: ensuring protection of children from violence and exploitation; gender equality; and global humanitarian action. Delegates are particularly invited to examine SDG 3, which describes some important aspects of empowering children, such as strengthening justice systems and global commitments on the topic. The report also illustrates examples of ongoing partnerships between UNICEF, governments, and the private sector on protecting the rights of the child, which might be useful in understanding how to move forward on the issue.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-third session. (2018). *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict on Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children (A/73/278)*. Retrieved 22 July 2019 from: https://undocs.org/A/73/278
> *The report gives an overview of the activities conducted by the Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the progress achieved in advancing the UN's children and armed conflict agenda. It discusses recent trends, major*

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[235] UN General Assembly & UN Security Council, Children and armed conflict: Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/865-S/2018/465), 2018, p. 2.

[236] ICRC, *Global Trends of war and their Humanitarian Impacts*, 2018.

[237] UN General Assembly, *Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues (Third Committee)*, 2019.

[238] UN General Assembly, *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict on Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children (A/73/278)*, 2018.

challenges, and achievements in protecting the rights of the child. The report also covers numerous aspects of the representative's mandate, including dialogue with regional organizations, civil society actors, and parties to conflict. In their research, it would be helpful for delegates to take into account the relevant conclusions, priorities, and recommendations outlined by this report.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-second session & Security Council, Seventy-third year. (2018). *Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/865-S/2018/465)*. Retrieved 1 October 2019 from: https://undocs.org/s/2018/465

This report describes the current situation of children and armed conflict, emphasizing efforts made by the international community since 2017. The document will be useful for analyzing effectiveness of the UN's response in preventing violations against children in the regional context. Delegates are advised to explore recommendations of the Secretary-General on strengthening global partnerships in promoting rights of children in armed conflict. It would also be helpful for delegates to understand which regions are marked with the highest risk of violence against children, as well as those states with significant progress left to achieve in protecting children.

United Nations, Human Rights Council, Thirty-fourth session. (2016). *Annual Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict*. Retrieved 22 July 2019 from: https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/34/44&Lang=E&Area=UNDOC

This report outlines key aspects of ensuring the rights of children in armed conflict, including addressing violations against children, the impact of conflict on girls, and reoccurring challenges related to the grave violations against children. Delegates are recommended to use this resource to understand the existing cooperation mechanisms between global and regional actors on protecting the rights of children, as well as to consider the Special Representative's key recommendations on working with UN human rights mechanisms and regional organizations. Additionally, this resource will be helpful for delegates to learn about the current status of girls in armed conflict to find case studies on Afghanistan, Sudan, Colombia and Cuba, and Somalia.

United Nations, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. (2016). *20 Years to Better Protect Children Affected by Conflict*. Retrieved 22 July 2019 from: https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Twenty-Years-of-Work-Updated-Booklet_web.pdf

This report gives a comprehensive overview of the most significant international projects and legal instruments launched by the UN on protecting children affected by conflict since 1996. This document will help delegates in understanding the complex approaches to protecting the rights of the child in armed conflict, as well as the relationship between various actors on this topic. This publication also lists major achievements on improving the status of children in the world and provides insights of the key actors involved in this process globally. Importantly, the report also sets priorities for the international community for the third decade of the Children and Armed Conflict mandate.

World Vision International. (2017). *Leading the Way: Guidance on the Participation of Children & Young People in Global Engagements*. Retrieved 22 July 2019 from: https://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/WV-Leading-the-Way-2017-04-11.pdf

This document is designed to recommend a basic system for child participation in global initiatives. It outlines formats for engaging children and young people in national or global events as well as actions and procedures for the participation of children and young people in global engagements. The guidelines also draw attention to the most important steps of preparing potential participants and supporting children's involvement in the planning process. Delegates may utilize this publication as a useful example of guidelines and national action plans for empowering children post-conflict.

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%20Prevention%20and%20PEacebuilding%20in%20AP_2016FINAL.pdf

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ngYouthoftheIdealsofPeace,MutualRespectandUnderstandingbetweenPeoples(1965).aspx

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III. Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development

II. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for Sustainable Development

Introduction

During its 73rd session, the Second Committee highlighted that information and communication technologies (ICTs) facilitate financing and economic opportunities for sustainable development, and enable global connectedness and accelerate progress towards the achievement of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.[166] ICTs exist in two categories of usage; the instrumental usage that sustains capacity-building, education and governmental policy reforms, and the industrial usage that creates economic opportunities through software, hardware and communication services.[167] ICTs include, but are not limited to broadband and internet services, mobile and computer devices, and software for communication.[168] Access and use of ICTs grants the opportunity to participate in the digital world and contribute to the digital economy.[169] ICTs can be harnessed to promote inclusive economies through expanding participation in the digital economy and e-commerce.[170] This strengthens international trade, promotes capacity-building for economic opportunity and development, and increases employment opportunity and the employability of individuals.[171] The Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) acknowledges General Assembly resolution 70/125 (2015) that highlights the cross-cutting contributions of ICTs to development.[172] Additionally, ICTs impact development challenges such as financing for development by encouraging investments and partnerships from all levels of government, private partnerships, and civil societies.[173]

Digitalization allows for increased participation in business platforms, online financial services, competitive markets, and education training.[174] Additionally, it holds an essential role in fostering Information Societies, which are outlined as societies geared towards the sharing of knowledge and information, which improves global connectedness.[175] Further, digitalization allows access to internet services, information and data on a global scale.[176] Information Societies accelerate progress towards sustainable development by addressing social and economic structural imbalances within the international community.[177] These Information Societies integrate e-strategies, specifically e-government and e-economies that target opportunities in strengthening financial systems.[178] E-strategies promote international cooperation through the strengthening of partnerships between governments, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and the private sector to address the distribution of ICT resources.[179]

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[166] UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/73/218)*, 2018.

[167] ITU, *Visions of the Information Societies, The Nature of Information Society: A Developing World Perspective*, 2003.

[168] ITU, *The ICT Development Index: Methodology, Indicators, and Definitions*, 2019.

[169] UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/73/218)*, 2018.

[170] IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, p. 6.

[171] UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/69/204)*, 2014.

[172] UN General Assembly, *Outcome Document of the High-Level meeting of the General Assembly on the Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (A/RES/70/125)*, 2015.

[173] Ibid.

[174] UNCTAD, *Information Economy Report 2017: Digitalization, Trade, and Development*, 2017.

[175] WSIS, *Declaration of Principles*, 2003.

[176] UN General Assembly, *Outcome Document of the High-Level meeting of the General Assembly on the Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (A/RES/70/125)*, 2015.

[177] WSIS, *Declaration of Principles*, 2003.

[178] Ibid.

[179] Ibid.

However, there are a number of considerations that impact the implementation of ICTs; including, the creation of transnational policy agendas, cybersecurity and exploitation, and the digital divide.[180] The digital divide is a significant barrier to the integration and implementation of ICTs, particularly in least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing states (SIDS).[181] Within the UN system, this digital divide denotes those who have access to ICTs identified as broadband services, hardware devices, access to information, and proficient skill for usage and those who do not.[182] Many developed countries continue to advance their use of ICTs with newly patented equipment and improved services, such as 5G networks.[183] In comparison to developing regions, LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS have limited access to these new technologies and remain limited to ICT tools such as basic mobile and internet connections, and may lack proficient training on how to use these products and services.[184] Developing regions often face, additional barriers such as challenging geographical terrain, social and economic inequalities, and particularly isolated communities; this disproportionly impacts women, and youth, who remain the lowest subscribed users of the population in developing regions.[185]

International and Regional Framework

The *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (AAAA) (2015) emphasizes that investing in economic resources that promote capacity-building and economic growth creates an enabling environment that promotes empowerment, equitable economic growth, and sustainable development.[186] Additionally, the AAAA encourages the creation of policies and frameworks that promote investments in ICTs, and bridges to strengthen public-private partnerships (PPPs) and partnerships between governmental bodies.[187] Second, the 2003 WSIS and 2005 WSIS reaffirm the fundamental rights and freedoms of all peoples to sustainable livelihoods and well-being.[188] This collaboration of the international community provided a global alignment for generating access, use, and sharing of knowledge, with the common desire to regulate ICTs for universal benefit.[189] The WSIS resulted in two outcome documents: the *Declaration of Principles* (2003), the *Tunis Commitment* (2005) and the *Tunis Agenda* (2005).[190] The *Declaration of Principles* underlines the relationship between the development of ICTs and societies, and improved quality of life for all.[191] Through addressing international cooperation and partnerships, access to knowledge, and fostering enabling environments, ICTs enhance sustainable development and increase human productivity, economic growth and employability.[192] The *Tunis Commitment* and the *Tunis Agenda* address internet governance, policy recommendations, and mechanisms for financing to encourage the implementation of ICT resources for sustainable development.[193] These documents note that the cost of ICTs and attaining sustainable funding for ICTs would help in the implementation process and bridge the digital divide.[194] The digital divide presents the challenge in integrating ICTs into regions that lack basic

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[180] UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Development (A/RES/69/204)*, 2015.
[181] UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/73/218)*, 2018.
[182] UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/69/204)*, 2014.
[183] UN General Assembly, *Impact of rapid technology change on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (A/RES/72/242)*, 2018.
[184] Ibid.
[185] UN General Assembly, *Outcome Document of the High-Level meeting of the General Assembly on the Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (A/RES/70/125)*, 2015.
[186] UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015.
[187] Ibid.
[188] WSIS, *Declaration of Principles*, 2003.
[189] Ibid.
[190] Ibid.; WSIS, *Tunis Commitment*, 2005.
[191] WSIS, *Declaration of Principles*, 2003.
[192] Ibid.
[193] WSIS, *Tunis Commitment*, 2005.
[194] Ibid.

access, infrastructure, and skill sets for utilization.[195] As ICTs evolve, this creates a larger divide between developed countries, with resources to attain these tools, and developing countries who lack the financial structure.[196]

In addition to the outcome documents of the WSIS, an annual forum was formed to discuss the implementation of the commitments, and in recent years, the role of ICTs in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[197] An outcome of the 2016 WSIS Forum was the creation of the WSIS Action Lines and a supporting SDGs Matrix which outlines the role of ICTs in each SDG, and the influence in advancing sustainable development.[198] Examples include the utilization of ICTs for weather forecasting to send early warning signs that increase preparedness against natural hydro metrological related disasters.[199] This was successfully implemented by Member States which assisted in reducing vulnerability to climate-related hazards, and targeted SDG 13.3 by improving education and institutional capacities on climate mitigation and early warning.[200]

Role of the International System

As a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) studies the relationship between ICTs and the 2030 Agenda.[201] The priority theme of the 22nd session of CSTD examined "the impact of rapid technological change on sustainable development."[202] Although emerging ICTs accelerate the pace towards achieving the SDGs, ITCs may disrupt markets and widen existing economic and social gaps. Monitoring this negative impact of ICTs aligns with the objective outlined in the 74th session of the Second Committee, to coordinate the role of new technologies in sustainable development.[203] This includes the development of governmental strategies and policy recommendations that address investments needed in infrastructure, capacity-building, and financial systems.[204]

The annual WSIS Forum is a collaboration of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Committee on Trade (UNCTAD).[205] The WSIS Forum highlights key themes including; economic growth opportunities, strengthening governance of the digital world, and ICTs for sustainable development.[206] The WSIS is further supported through reports presented by these agencies, for example, UNCTAD's Information Economy Report from 2017 that draws the relationship between inclusion in the digital economy and the empowerment of emerging economies.[207] The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) facilitates this collaboration by engaging various stakeholders to discuss public policy regarding issues and opportunities related to the internet.[208] A 2018 IGF report highlights the increasing number of publicly available free internet access points to encourage the use of

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[195] UN General Assembly & UN ECOSOC, *Progress made in the Implementation of and Follow-Up to the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society at the Regional and International Levels (A/74/62-E/2019/6)*, 2019.

[196] IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.

[197] UN DESA, *WSIS Action Lines: Supporting the Implementation of SDGs*, 2019.

[198] ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016, p.

[199] UN DESA, *WSIS Action Lines: Supporting the Implementation of SDGs*, 2019.

[200] Ibid.

[201] UN ECOSOC, *Science, Technology, and Innovation for Development*, 2019.

[202] Ibid.

[203] UN General Assembly & UN ECOSOC, *Progress made in the Implementation of and Follow-Up to the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society at the Regional and International Levels (A/74/62-E/2019/6)*, 2019.

[204] Ibid.

[205] ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016, p.

[206] WSIS, *Tunis Commitment*, 2005.

[207] UNCTAD, *Information Economy Report 2017: Digitalization, Trade, and Development*, 2017.

[208] WSIS, *Tunis Agenda*, 2005.

ICTs for social and economic development and global connectedness.[209] To that effect, Open Educational Resources (OER), which are freely accessible digital resources for learning, sharing, and teaching, allow for public access to information, and inclusion through digitalization.[210] The utilization of public domain content, existing under open-licenses, OER permits for no-cost access to learning, research, and information.[211] This initiative enables capacity-building efforts and enhances ICT skills.[212] The United Nations Committee on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reports that the relationship between inclusion in the digital economy and the empowerment of emerging economies is an example of how ICT innovations bring a positive impact on the social and economic development of countries.[213]

Similarly, ITU works to accelerate the progress towards achieving the SDGs; notably by coordinating and developing international standards alongside the private sector, governments, and CSOs.[214] ITU also assists efforts to establish affordable and accessible ICTs by promoting opportunities on economic and sustainable development.[215] For example, ITU launched the ITU-McCaw Foundation Broadband Wireless Network Project for Africa that implements broadband wireless networks with ICT applications at affordable rates within hospitals and remote areas.[216] This improved the efficiency of the health care systems and enhanced national e-strategies, specifically e-health.[217] Such projects reduce the financing barrier faced by LDCs to implement ICTs in remote areas by partnering with organizations that can bring in resources, ensuring improved accessibility and capacity for individuals in the community.[218] Additionally, ITU leads studies that examine International Internet Connectivity (IIC) by conducting research on Internet Service Providers (ISP), the connectedness between countries, and the barriers faced by LDCs.[219] Internet cost inflation due to high traffic in areas with lower proportions of ISPs, prompted the IIC to establish an international standard to connect local Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) with local communities to reduce traffic and internet costs.[220] These hubs improve global connectedness all while reducing the digital divide and increasing affordability in isolated regions.[221]

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) commits to the creation and advancement of Inclusive and Sustainable Development through forming knowledge and capacity-building frameworks centered around the development of ICT skills and development.[222] The outcomes of these initiatives enhance employment, food security, well-being, and create a sustainable livelihood.[223] An example of this is recognized within the agricultural communities of LDCs where women account for 70% of the agriculture labor force and contribute significantly towards the socio-economic development of the regions that surround them.[224] UNIDO's Agribusiness Development Branch assists in the development of agriculture to generate employment, address food security, and promote entrepreneurship.[225]

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[209] IGF, *IGF 2018 Messages – Development, Innovation, and Economic Issues*, 2018.

[210] Ibid.

[211] UNESCO, *Building Knowledge Societies, Open Educational Resources (OER)*, 2019.

[212] UNESCO, *Intergovernmental Expert Meeting adopts revised Draft Recommendation on Open Education Resources*, 2019.

[213] UNCTAD, *Information Economy Report 2017: Digitalization, Trade, and Development*, 2017.

[214] ITU, *ITU's approach to using ICTs to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*, 2018.

[215] Ibid.

[216] ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016, p. 9.

[217] Ibid.

[218] Ibid.

[219] ITU, *International Internet Connectivity*, 2016.

[220] Ibid.

[221] Ibid.

[222] UNIDO, *Introduction to Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development*, 2015.

[223] Ibid.

[224] UNIDO, *Agribusiness Development: Transforming rural life to create wealth*, 2013, p. 25.

[225] Ibid.

Bridging the Digital and Knowledge Divide

ITU reports that 4.3 billion people still remain offline or have limited access to ICTs.[226] Those who are offline have no access to ICT tools such as broadband services, hardware devices, access to information, and proficient skill for usage.[227] Other obstacles in the divide are the quality of broadband connection, distance between towers in local regions, and the associated costs in attaining these ICTs.[228] Statistics show that the divide is predominantly present between developed countries, and LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDs.[229] Within developing states these barriers are increased by factors such geographical isolation, urbanization, and gender inequalities which constrain the instrumental and industrial use of ICTs.[230] The existence of the digital divide further results in a knowledge divide, a lack of technological literacy, inadequate proficiency in the use of ICTs, and inability to access readily available information online.[231] Closing the digital and knowledge divide stimulates economic growth by enabling inclusive economic participation, which expands global e-commerce markets.[232] The expansion of global e-commerce translates to greater engagement and opportunity at regional levels.[233] UNCTAD reports that emerging economies largely contribute to increasing global e-commerce and international trade by expanding the international flow of goods and services, and sustaining economic growth.[234]

The World Bank suggests that increasing global connectedness and financial growth through ensuring participation in the digital economy, can be achieved by providing telephone and internet services.[235] This will increase opportunities in international trade, economic and social development, and lift developing regions out of poverty.[236] Additionally, it will allow for the development of capacity through technology literacy and proficiency, and provide new employment opportunities.[237] The ability to understand how to use a telephone or navigate the internet also builds on the foundation of Information Societies which encourage the creation of national and international e-strategies.[238] These e-strategies promote dialogue in areas for development that influence trade, health, agriculture, education; but, most importantly logistics in harnessing ICT resources.[239] For developing countries, this provides opportunities for policy recommendations and partnerships with developed states and private investors to lay the groundwork for commerce and innovation.[240]

The development of new ICTs creates a large amount of e-waste as the ICTs once utilized in developed countries are not being reused or disposed of in sustainable and environmentally conscious ways.[241] This leaves a considerable environmental imprint, but also a missed opportunity to share these resources.[242] In 2016 alone, 44.7 million metric tons of e-waste was generated, and only 8.9 million tons were collected and managed.[243] Encouraging the re-use of ICT devices through global partnerships enables digital

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[226] ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016.
[227] UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/69/204)*, 2014.
[228] IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019.
[229] ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016.
[230] Ibid.
[231] UN General Assembly, *International Financing System and Development (A/RES/74/168)*, 2019.
[232] IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019.
[233] IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.
[234] UNCTAD, *Information Economy Report 2017: Digitalization, Trade, and Development*, 2017.
[235] IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.
[236] IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.
[237] UN General Assembly & UN ECOSOC, *Progress made in the Implementation of and Follow-Up to the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society at the Regional and International Levels (A/74/62-E/2019/6)*, 2019.
[238] Ibid.
[239] UN ECOSOC, *Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (E/RES/2018/28)*, 2018.
[240] Ibid.
[241] ITU, *Handbook for the Development of a Policy Framework on ICT/E-waste*, 2018.
[242] Ibid.
[243] Ibid.

inclusion and tackles the barrier of financial access by providing affordable costs for these reused devices.[244] The joint efforts from International Solid Waste Organization (ISWA), United Nations University, and ITU established the Global E-waste Statistics Partnership that collects worldwide e-waste statistics to track e-waste and influence international and regional capacities to work together in utilizing these unused ICT devices.[245] These statistics assist in evaluating the number of unused ICT industrial tools in order to increase their life cycle.[246] This addresses opportunities in closing the digital and knowledge divide by encouraging the recycling and reusing of ICT industrial tools for capacity-building and economic growth in regions who currently do not have access to these resources.[247]

Challenges in Financing ICTs for Development

Attaining sustainable financing and investments, investing in ICTs for development to stimulate trade, and creating economic growth opportunity remain some of the largest challenges in achieving the SDGs.[248] The lack of funding for ICT initiatives increases the strain on already existing financial systems, resulting in a greater challenge to promote sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda.[249] During the 74th session of the Second Committee, the integration of financial mechanisms to fund ICTs, increasing partnerships with private investors, and civil society was deemed critical for accelerating progress towards the 2030 Agenda.[250]

The Secretary-General's Strategy for Financing the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* further emphasizes the importance of transforming financial systems by addressing current financial constraints and focusing on three main objectives.[251] First, by aligning global economic policies and economic systems between developed and developing Member States to support the objectives of the 2030 Agenda.[252] Second, by improving current financial strategies and investments at all levels of government, with emphasis on inclusivity for all Member States, by considering affordability and availability of resources.[253] And last, by investing in financial innovations, technologies, and digitalization in order to ensure an equitable environment for development and economic opportunity.[254] Further attention and development is required on international financing strategies that enable cooperative development and align with regional governments in order to resolve the lack of resources by Member States.[255] Investments must be focused on exploring all means of implementation, most importantly ICTs.[256] The *Tunis Agenda for Information Societies* details the importance of commitment from all levels of government, the international community, PPPs, and stakeholders to achieve access to all people so that all may benefit from ICTs.[257] Considering the review of the implementation of the WSIS, quickly adapting financial mechanisms for ICT infrastructure is necessary to maintain progress towards the 2030 Agenda.[258]

The Task Force on Financial Mechanism reviews existing financial mechanisms that meet the challenges in ICTs for development and identifies affordability as one of the main challenges to financing ICTs for

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[244] Ibid.
[245] Ibid.
[246] Ibid.
[247] Ibid.
[248] IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019, 2019*, pp. 3-7.
[249] UNCTAD, *Information Economy Report 2017: Digitalization, Trade, and Development*, 2017.
[250] UN General Assembly, *International Financing System and Development (A/RES/74/168)*, 2019.
[251] IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.
[252] UN Secretary-General, *Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2019.
[253] Ibid.
[254] Ibid.
[255] UN General Assembly, *International Financing System and Development (A/RES/74/168)*, 2019.
[256] Ibid.
[257] WSIS, *Tunis Commitment*, 2005.
[258] UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015.

sustainable development.[259] Affordability of ICTs remains a challenge particularly for developing countries that lack the resources and depend on the international community to invest in their infrastructure.[260] This dependency holds the potential risk of increasing international debt and an unsustainable foundation for financing.[261] The ICT Development Fund (ICT-DF), a partnership between Members of ITU, the public and private sector, and financial agencies, works to accelerate sustainable development by co-financing multilateral ICT development projects.[262] An example of this success is the partnership of Member States in assisting the establishment of Sector Governance in Telecommunications.[263] This initiative allowed for the introduction of computerized systems for management, capacity-building for skills training, and the creation of interconnection policies which regulate radio communications, broadcasting, carrier and service providers, and costs.[264] The Second Committee advocates for developing broadband for all; however, in order to implement this on a global scale, industrial infrastructure and instruments for ICT must become more affordable.[265] This includes hardware, software, cellular towers, routers, equipment, and power boxes or generators.[266] Without the infrastructure to sustain the usage of ICTs, they will not be viable, and their operations will have no effect on social or economic development.[267]

Conclusion

ICTs are critical enablers of economic and social development, and catalysts in the achieving the 2030 Agenda.[268] Utilizing ICTs sustains inclusive digitalization that stimulates digital economy and a diverse e-commerce market.[269] This promotes economic growth, in addition to expanding trade and global value chains which supplement regional economic opportunities.[270] This can only be accomplished through the instrumental use of ICTs that promote capacity-building efforts that will boost technology literacy and understanding.[271] Additionally, the promotion of ICTs develops Information Societies where the sharing of knowledge and information creates an increasingly connected world, with readily available data online.[272] This translates into stronger cooperation for financial and economic policies that will continue to strengthen the global economy, in addition to development of financial strategies and mechanisms required to ensure realistic implementation of ICT initiatives.[273] However, incorporation of ICTs for all continues to face challenges in bridging the digital divide, securing global financing, and establishing cooperative ICT development policies.[274] The 74th session of the Second Committee, focused on the follow-up of the WSIS, and the implementation of ICTs at regional levels of government.[275] This is most

[259] ITU, *The Report of the Task Force on Financing Mechanisms for ICT for Development*, 2004.
[260] IATF, *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019*, 2019, p. 16.
[261] IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.
[262] ITU, *ICT Development Fund Projects*, 2019.
[263] ITU, *ICT Development Fund Projects: Assistance for the Establishment of Sector Governance in Telecommunications in East Timor*, 2011.
[264] ITU, *ICT Development Fund Projects: Assistance for the Establishment of Sector Governance in Telecommunications in East Timor*, 2011.
[265] IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.
[266] Ibid.
[267] UN General Assembly & UN ECOSOC, *Progress made in the Implementation of and Follow-Up to the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society at the Regional and International Levels (A/74/62-E/2019/6)*, 2019.
[268] UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/73/218)*, 2018.
[269] Ibid.
[270] ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016, p.
[271] UN General Assembly, *Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainable Development (A/RES/73/218)*, 2018.
[272] WSIS, *Declaration of Principles*, 2003.
[273] UN Secretary-General, *Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2019.
[274] ITU, *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*, 2016, p.
[275] UN General Assembly & UN ECOSOC, *Progress made in the Implementation of and Follow-Up to the Outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society at the Regional and International Levels (A/74/62-E/2019/6)*, 2019.

important in ensuring inclusive participation and policy adaptability for Member States.[276] Additionally, urgency is noted in strengthening international financial systems to ensure financial inclusion and management, and progress is continued towards the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.[277]

Further Research

As delegates continue their research, they should consider the following questions: What other challenges may the international community face in financing ICTs for sustainable development? What more can be achieved to integrate ICTs in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDs? Are there other mechanisms that reduce the digital and knowledge divide? How does debt management influence the global financing system, and what can be done to address this? How can e-waste be recycled or reused to assist with providing ICT access and use? What role do regional governments, public and private sector, and civil societies play in financing ICTs for sustainable development?

Annotated Bibliography

Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development. (2019). *Financing for Sustainable Development Report*. Retrieved 20 September 2019 from: https://developmentfinance.un.org/fsdr2019
> *This report highlights the current status of global financing for sustainable development. It breaks down the trends, challenges, and opportunities in the UN financial system, and provides insight to a multitude of key financing insights. This source will be useful for delegates in understanding the current structure of global financing, and key factors challenging the system. Additionally, it outlines the role of ICTs, e-commerce, and international trade in accelerating the economy and the 2030 Agenda.*

International Telecommunication Union. (2016). *WSIS Action Lines Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs*. Retrieved 16 August 2019 from: https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2016/Content/documents/outcomes/WSISForum2016—WSISActionLinesSupportingImplementationSDGs.pdf
> *The WSIS Action Lines provides direct linkages between ICTs development, the WSIS Action Plan, and the 17 SDGs. This source outlines the influence of ICTs on the 2030 Agenda in addition to providing examples about the individual goals. Additionally, it discusses the role regional governments, multi-stakeholders, public and private partnerships, and investments in promoting ICTs for development. Delegates will find this source helpful in understanding the relationship between ICTs and implementing SDGs.*

International Telecommunication Union. (2019). *The ICT Development Index: Methodology, Indicators, and Definitions*. Retrieved 22 July 2019 from: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/statistics/ITU_ICT%20Development%20Index.pdf
> *This source provides an understanding of the measurement tools, analysis, and definitions for the consideration of ICT development. The methodologies used within this source provides a technical understanding of terminology, and measurable tools of usage. It focuses on individualizing the components used towards accessing the integration of ICTs within communities. This source will assist delegates in grasping the timeline, and the current development track of ICTs on a global scale.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Outcome Document of the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (A/RES/70/125)*. Retrieved 22 July 2019 from: https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/125

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[276] Ibid.
[277] IATF, *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018*, 2018.

The source showcases the current initiatives taking place within the UN system surrounding ICTs and their influence in progressing global sustainable development. This resolution lists the collaboration among different bodies within the UN system, private partnerships, and civil societies. In consideration of the topic, delegates may find this provides a detailed overview of the current work the General Assembly is contributing to implementation. This source also provides insight to the progress made in implementing the items from WSIS. Additionally, there is explanation of the linkages between ICTs and sustainable development.

World Summit on the Information Society. (2003). *Declaration of Principles*. Retrieved 14 August 2019 from: https://www.itu.int/net/wsis/docs2/tunis/off/7.html
This declaration represents the foundation of the commitment from the UN body of the common desire in recognizing ICTs as enablers of sustainable development. Within this source you will also find the call for all UN entities, governmental bodies, and civil societies to work towards the creation of policy to support these objectives. For delegates this source aids in providing insight to the root of current implementation initiatives, and the calls to actions that shape current strategies.

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