Southern Regional Model United Nations XVIII
Fostering a Culture of Peace for International Development
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Atlanta, GA
Email: gathird@srmun.org

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Southern Regional Model United Nations Conference and to the General Assembly Third Committee! My name is Kate Moore and I am excited to be serving as your Director in what will be a phenomenal committee at this year's conference. 2007 marks my seventh year with SRMUN, and my third year on staff. I started attending SRMUN as an undergraduate at Clemson University, where I am received my degree in Political Science. Currently, I am pursuing my JD degree from the George Washington University Law School in Washington, DC. I have a passion for international and public interest law, which I credit in large part to the amazing experiences I have had at SRMUN - both in learning about global issues and in meeting people determined to change them. Consequentially, I hope to spread my enthusiasm for SRMUN onto you all, whether you are new to the world of Model UN or seasoned delegates returning for another great year.

Joining me this year is Kathryn Lentz, a current student at Greenville Community College and a SRMUN veteran. We have both been working hard to put together an amazing and challenging committee for you.

The theme for this year's conference is "Fostering a Culture of Peace for International Development," and the work of the General Assembly Third Committee, formally known as the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee, is essential to this goal. It is through the recognition and understanding of all peoples and cultures that we can make great strides in developing our global society both peacefully and fairly.

The topics for the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee are:

I.   The UN Literacy Decade: Addressing Millennium Development Goal Two
II.   Inequalities in Indigenous Communities
III.   Conflict Diamonds: A Human Rights Issue

To help you prepare for committee debate, background guides will be provided to give a general understanding of the history, recent developments, and current issues on each topic. However, the background guides are only meant to serve as an introduction to our committee topics, and delegates should conduct additional research beyond the information in the guides to prepare accordingly for committee.

In addition, each delegation is required to submit a position paper, no longer than two pages, outlining the history and political positions of their nation concerning all three topics. For more information regarding the position papers please visit the SRMUN website at http://www.srmun.org. Position papers must be submitted to gathird@srmun.org no later than midnight EST on Friday, October 26, 2007. Late or improperly formatted position papers will not be considered for awards.

Good luck delegates, and we look forward to seeing you in November!

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History of the General Assembly Third Committee: Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee

The General Assembly Third Committee is known formally as the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee and is one of the six main committees of the United Nations General Assembly ("GA"). The General Assembly in turn is one of the five main organs that comprise the United Nations system and serves as the principal deliberative body in the organization.[1] The General Assembly was designed to be one of the strongest bodies in the United Nations: much of this power stems from an inclusive membership of representatives from all 192 member nations to the United Nations, each of which is possessed with equal power in the body.[2] Therefore, resolutions passed by the General Assembly necessarily connote the opinion of a majority of member nations to the UN and are thus significant documents in international law and relations.

The General Assembly Third ("GA Third") meets in conjunction with the General Assembly Plenary. Sessions commence and conclude annually in September, with a recess in December, and reconvene the following year "as required."[3] As in the GA Plenary, each member nation in the GA Third has one vote and a simple majority is required to pass resolutions.[4] The GA Third 61st Session, however, has seen a remarkable number of draft resolutions passed by consensus - this is due to the initiative of current President Hamid al Bayati to ensure both compromise and transparency.[5] In addition to the annual regular session, the GA Third may also hold special and emergency sessions, at the request of either the Security Council or a majority of member states.[6] Draft Resolutions passed by the GA Third are then sent to the Plenary Body for consideration. Once passed by the General Assembly, resolutions come into force, and though they are non-binding in nature, are nonetheless powerful in carrying the opinion of a majority of member nations.[7]

The GA Third is probably the most expansive of the main committees.[8] The Committee covers three large topic areas but largely focuses on Human Rights issues - the 60th Session saw the consideration of 62 draft resolutions, 31 of which related to Human Rights.[9] In the social and cultural context, the Committee deliberates on topics relating to youth and ageing, disabled persons, families, crime prevention and drug control.[10]

The General Assembly Third is the starting place for many of the most important conventions, treaties and declarations concerning human rights - the most recent addition is the "International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance," which opened for signing in Paris on February 7, 2007.[11] The GA Third also recently completed and saw the GA Plenary adoption of "*Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law,*" a resolution that represents fifteen years' worth of work.[12] Other recent examples of the GA Third human rights work are the "*Protection of Migrants,*" the "*Elimination of all Forms of Religious Intolerance,*" and "*Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions.*"[13]

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[1] "Background Information: Functions and Powers of the General Assembly." United Nations General Assembly.
http://www.un.org/ga/61/background/background.shtml

[2] Ibid.

[3] "General Assembly: Frequently Asked Questions." United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library.
http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/gafaq.htm.

[4] "The General Assembly: What it is, what it does?" United Nations General Assembly. July 2006.
http://www.un.org/geninfo/faq/briefingpapers/briefing2a.htm

[5] "A 'Delicate Equation': Constructive Solutions on Human Rights." The UN Chronicle Online. November 8, 2006.
http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2006/webArticles/ga/3qa.htm

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] "Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its 61st session." United Nations Documentation: Research Guide.
http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/r61.htm.

[12] Sally Bolton. "The 60th General Assembly Third Committee: Human Rights Dominate the Development Agenda." The UN Chronicle Online. http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2005/issue4/0405p14.html.

[13] Ibid.

The General Assembly Third Committee also oversees either directly or indirectly several of the subsidiary bodies of the UN, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, The United Nations Development Program, the United Nations Environment Programme, and most recently, the Human Rights Council. [14] The GA Third also works with several autonomous specialized agencies of the United Nations, such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the United Nations Social Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization.[15] These subsidiary bodies often work to carry out the recommendations and proposals passed by the GA Third. [16]

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[14] Please reference individual organization websites for further information: "ExCom's Mandate," Executive Committee, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, http://www.unhcr.org/excom/400e3c86a.html; "UNICEF Executive Board, " United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, http://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/index_13211.html; "Executive Board of UNDP and UNFPA Introduction," United Nations Development Programme, http://www.undp.org/execbrd/pdf/eb-overview.PDF; United Nations Environment Programme Organization Profile, http://www.unep.org/PDF/UNEPOrganizationProfile.pdf, http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2006/webArticles/ga/3qa.htm

[15] "Organizational Chart for the United Nations." United Nations. http://www.un.org/aboutun/chartlg.html.

[16] Ibid.

I: The UN Literacy Decade: Addressing Millennium Development Goal Two

"[E]ducation that is universal, attained by all, regardless of class or caste or gender, has a powerful impact in addressing social and economic barriers within a society and is central to realizing human freedoms."[17]

Introduction

The term literate is commonly defined as the ability to read and write.[18] Academics have noted, however, that the concept of literacy encompasses more than just those skills. The term 'literate' is often interpreted to mean "competence, knowledge or skill" - thus the term 'computer literate' is often used to describe a person possessing basic knowledge in using a computer.[19] Indeed, as the 2002 Global Monitoring Report on Literacy noted, "Conceived now in the plural as 'literacies,' and embedded in a range of life and livelihood situations, literacy differs according to purpose, context, use, script and institutional framework."[20] Literacy in the international context particularly leads academics to ask what it means to be 'literate' as a member of a particular culture. Because literacy itself is broad, the ultimate goal of achieving universal literacy is both broad and thus more essential to human rights than most people realize. Being literate is being empowered, to protect oneself and one's family, to earn a living, to be competent of one's rights and the encroachment upon those rights by others. These things are all core pieces of human rights, and moreover, they are dependant on literacy.

Why is literacy so central to human rights? This link can be best understood in terms of three important benefits that result from basic education. First, and most notably, the basic skills of reading and writing are invaluable to development.   On International Literacy Day in 2006, then Secretary General Kofi Annan declared that "higher literacy rates are essential to economic growth," that literacy is "a tool that enables people to take advantage of new learning opportunities, respond to changing occupational demands, undertake greater responsibilities, build their way out of poverty," and most importantly, a "platform for developing a society's human resources."[21] It is these concepts that incorporate literacy as one of the fundamental building blocks of human rights.

Secondly, education helps to reduce other social concerns, such as child labor, disease, and environmental pollution. For example, mandatory primary education for children automatically prevents their use as a source of labor.[22] Education allows people to learn what can cause and transmit epidemic diseases such as HIV/AIDS, thereby preventing further infection.[23] Finally, education helps those groups of people who are doubly disadvantaged, such as women and young girls, to learn their rights and to participate in the democratic process.[24]

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[17] "Summary." Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2002. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2002. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11284&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[18] "Literate." Merriam-Webster Online. http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/literate

[19] Fraida Dubin and Natalie Kuhlman. "The Dimensions of Cross-Cultural Literacy." Cross-cultural Literacy: Global Perspectives on Reading and Writing. Ed. Fraida Dubin and Natalie Kuhlman. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Regents/Prentice Hall. 1992.

[20] "Summary." Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2002. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2002. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11284&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[21] Kofi Annan, Secretary-General. "Message on International Literacy Day." United Nations. September 8, 2006. http://www.unesco.org/education/literacyday_2006/KofiAnnanmessage_eng.pdf

[22] "Summary." Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2007. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=49591&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[23] HIV/AIDS & Education: A Strategic Approach. International Institute for Educational Planning/United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization. May 2003. p. 5. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001286/128657e.pdf

[24] "Summary." Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2002. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2002. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11284&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

History of the Right to Literacy

A universal, inalienable right to education was first recognized in the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in Article 26.[25] The *Declaration* is considered important not only for the formal acknowledgement that every human is entitled to read and write, but also is also significant for establishing both legal and theoretical "rights-based" approaches to combating illiteracy.[26] Proponents of literacy today can appeal to governments to act both on the legal and on the moral obligation set forth in the *Declaration* as it is the underlying premise of democratic governments to protect those rights of their people.[27] The 2002 *Education for All Global Monitoring Report* noted the increased use of the rights-based approach to improve literacy rates: "Without legislation, it is difficult to monitor and enforce obligations," thus the notion of a "right to literacy" allows NGOs and other civil society groups to act.[28]

Later conventions and treaties have reinforced and expanded upon the *Declaration*. In 1958, the *Convention Concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation* of the International Labor Organization (ILO) called for states to improve education as a part of promoting the convention's policy of "equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation, with a view to eliminating any discrimination in respect thereof."[29] The *Convention Against Discrimination in Education* of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was passed in 1960, and in 1966, the *International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* specifically defined the importance of education in promoting human rights and equality.[30] As part of the latter convention, UNESCO established September 8th as "International Literacy Day," thus making literacy a recurring theme in international development.[31]

In 1990, literacy achieved new prominence on the global agenda when the World Conference on Education for All was held in Jomtien, Thailand to reiterate education as a universal right and to reaffirm the need to decrease illiteracy drastically over the next ten years.[32] Bringing together 155 Nation States and over 150 NGOs, the World Conference adopted the *World Declaration on Education for All*, which established the ongoing "Education for All" movement (EFA) to be spearheaded by UNESCO, setting out several targets to attain by the year 2000.[33]

When the EFA member states reconvened in 2000 for the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, it was evident that very few of the 1990 goals had been met or even significantly fulfilled.[34] The conference, which had grown to include 164 Member States and over 1,000 participant NGOs and other groups, decided to set firmer groundwork for combating illiteracy.[35] The result of this conference was the *Dakar Framework for Action*, which committed the EFA to achieve its ultimate aim of universal education by 2015 through six related goals:

1. "expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality;
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs;

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[25] Universal Declaration of Human Rights. United Nations General Assembly. 10 December 1948.

[26] "Summary." Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2002. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2002. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11284&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] "Study Guides: The Right to Education." Human Rights Education Associates. http://www.hrea.org/learn/guides/right-to-education.html

[30] Ibid.

[31] "Sidelights on the History of International Literacy Day." United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization. 2000. http://www.unesco.org/education/literacy_2000/history.html

[32] "World Conference on EFA, Jomtien, 1990." United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=47097&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

4. Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;

5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality;

6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills."[36]

Several of the *Dakar* goals set forth above were later integrated into the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).[37] Millennium Development Goal Two is dedicated to universal primary education (UPE), and specifically aims to "ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling."[38] Goal Three of the MDGs relates to gender equality, and specifically includes an aim to "eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015."[39]

To help implement both the educational initiatives of the EFA and the MDGs, in 2003 the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a declaration of a "Literacy Decade" to commence that year.[40] Under the banner "Literacy for all: voice for all, learning for all," the Decade is meant to encourage local participation, multilingual approaches and a focus on program flexibility that assesses a specific region's relevant educational needs that are both "culturally relevant and gender-sensitive."[41] The goals of the Literacy Decade further include raising the awareness of national governments to link illiteracy reduction with other social goals such as poverty reduction, HIV/AIDS awareness, agriculture, health, and even conflict resolution.[42] Proponents also hope to extend the basic goal of Universal Primary Education by ensuring the availability of continued formal education to those individuals who want it. Finally, the Decade has highlighted a need for better monitoring and research to determine how literacy affects societies long-term, as well as how national governments and civil society can better participate in the literacy process.[43]

Current Situation

While the international community has made significant efforts to counteract literacy, the statistics on literacy alone are staggering. For the year 2000, researchers estimated that there were approximately 860 million illiterate adults, aged 15 or older, in the world.[44] There were an additional 100 million illiterate children - these statistics amount to almost 1 out of every 5 people being illiterate.[45] Thanks to world-wide efforts, these numbers do appear to be in a slight decline. UNESCO reported in 2004 that the number of illiterate adults was about 862 million - given the global population growth in general, represented a reduction rate of 2% over the last decade. In fact, the most recent calculations of 2006 have determined that there are now 771 million illiterate adults.[46]

[36] Dakar Framework for Action Education for All: Meeting our collective commitments. World Education Forum. April 26-28, 2000.

[37] Koïchiro Matsuura. Foreword. Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2003. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2003. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=23023&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[38] United Nations Millennium Declaration. The Millennium Summit. September 2000.

[39] Ibid.

[40] "About the Decade: What is the United Nations Literacy Decade?" United Nations Literacy Decade. 18 November 2005. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=27158&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Education for All Global Monitoring Report. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2002. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11284&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[45] Ibid.

[46] "Summary." Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2006. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2006. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=43140&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

Almost half of illiterate people are found in southern and western Asia in four of the most densely populated countries in the world: approximately one third of illiterate adults live in India, and another third are found within China, Pakistan and Bangladesh.[47] Though this currently accounts for almost half of illiterate adults in the world, researchers expect that shifting demographics will soon find that sub-Saharan Africa as the region with the highest percentage of illiterates by 2015.[48]

Though regional fluctuations in literacy rates can occur for many reasons, the correlation between literacy and development is clear. Of the 862 million of illiterate adults reported in 2000, only 15 million are reported to be from developed and transitioning countries, whereas developing countries provide the rest with 847 million illiterate.[49] Developed countries, with funds and cohesive social programs, are making steadier progress towards decreasing illiteracy rates. While scientists predict a further rate reduction in illiteracy by 7% in developing countries between 2000 and 2015, developed and transitioning countries are predicted to make almost a 49.5% drop.[50]

These numbers reinforce within the global community the importance of education in creating a culture of peace for international development: "[through literacy] the acquisition of learning and life skills that, when strengthened by usage and application throughout people's lives, lead to forms of individual, community and societal development that are sustainable."[51] More importantly, literacy can help achieve equality by giving regions of the world a better opportunity to compete with more developed countries. However it is not just entire Nation States who are left behind due to illiteracy. More specifically, it is specific groups of people who already suffer from discrimination or other limitations of their rights that are placed at a double disadvantage by being illiterate. In several of the goals the World Education Forum refer to there is a clear focus on these marginalized groups, including women, displaced persons, and people with disabilities - all of whom are in need of educational aid to improve their status in society.

Women and girls
The world has widely acknowledged the discrimination against women. Gender was recognized in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*,[52] and the specific right of women to education was addressed in the 1979 *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women*.[53] Unfortunately, women and girls still suffer from discrimination in many parts of the world, and illiteracy presents a clear example of this. As of 2000, the number of illiterate women outweighed the number of illiterate men by 360 million.[54] That equates to women as accounting for 64% of illiterates in that year, which was an increase by only 1% (from 63% in 1990).[55] More alarming is the data showing that while overall illiteracy is largely found in the developing nations, the number of illiterate females is consistent throughout: 67% in developed/transition nations and 64% in developing nations as of 2000.[56] In the year 2000, a survey of countries in which the overall literacy rate was below 75%, Latin America was the only region in which female literacy rates were equal to or even surpassed male literacy rates.[57]

When the World Education Forum met in 2000, the convention placed significant importance of creating equal opportunities in education for women. Goal 5 of the *Dakar Framework* set a particularly stringent target of

[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] "Estimated Number of Adult Illiterates—Population Aged 15 or Older (1990, 2000 and 2015)." United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/file_download.php/a7a4f8f2cb949cdcd8d9f09e4cd36b79table2.21.pdf
[50] Ibid.
[51] Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General, UNESCO. "Message from Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO on the occasion of International Literacy Day" September 8, 2006. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=41141&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
[52] Universal Declaration of Human Rights. United Nations General Assembly. 10 December 1948.
[53] "Study Guides: The Right to Education." Human Rights Education Associates. http://www.hrea.org/learn/guides/right-to-education.html
[54] "World Literacy In Brief." United Nations Literacy Decade. 2003. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=12874&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
[55] "Estimated Number of Adult Illiterates—Population Aged 15 or Older (1990, 2000 and 2015)." United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/file_download.php/a7a4f8f2cb949cdcd8d9f09e4cd36b79table2.21.pdf
[56] Ibid.
[57] "Adult Literacy Rate by Gender (2000)." Unites Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/file_download.php/c3330e8d12be6b702dcab46777ef4068chap2_figure2.30.pdf

completely eliminating gender disparity in education by 2005.[58] However, data from the 2002 EFA Global Monitoring Report showed that, out of 153 surveyed countries, gender disparity had largely been achieved in only 86 participant countries while another 18 would have a good chance of attaining it by 2015. However, another 49 countries were not even close to meeting this goal.[59] These numbers only correspond to primary education; gender disparity is even more exaggerated in secondary education, with the worst disparities in Central and West Africa.[60]

Literacy, however, is essential for helping women to achieve equal rights and recognition as men. Moreover, research has shown that the education of women can have significant other social benefits: improving literacy amongst women has been shown to greatly improve the general quality of life within a community. Educated women are more enabled to take care of their families, treat their children's illnesses, and encourage their children to also learn. For example, statistics show that children with uneducated mothers are twice as likely to not be in school as children with educated mothers.[61] Furthermore, multiple studies have shown a correlation between education of women and lower fertility rates.[62] Finally, research in Nepal has shown that educated mothers are more likely to employ preventative health measures for their families, such as immunizations and medical help at the earliest stages of illness.[63]

Persons Displaced by Internal Crises
Though within many national governments there is general acknowledgement and intent to change the status of women in education, there is rarely as dedicated an effort to giving the same opportunities to migrants and displaced persons. Migrants and displaced persons have the multiple disadvantages of poverty and social displacement while remaining largely unprotected by law. Often times they are not represented by the governments under which they are temporarily living, leaving many migrants and displaced persons at an infinite disadvantage.

In a 2002 study of the 153 "Education for All" countries, for which data was available at that time, at least 73 countries were currently undergoing some type of internal crisis such as civil war or natural disaster or attempting a reconstruction effort following an internal crisis in that year.[64] Analysts subsequently predicted that at least 4 or 5 more countries would be likely to face large scale "humanitarian emergencies caused by natural disaster or conflict over the next several years."[65] Five out of six of these types of crises occur in Africa and Asia, with the resulting number of displaced persons estimated to be 24 million.[66] Many remain within the borders of their home country, and are known as internally displaced persons.[67]

These crises result in massive disruptions of social welfare programs such as education, as well as reduced funding as money shifts towards disaster relief and reconstruction.[68] Though some refugee camps have been able to establish basic schools, there still remains the additional problem of the trauma that many displaced person suffer from, as well as ongoing violence, both of which lead to increased school drop-outs.[69]

Migrants, who have steadily increased in number over the last several decades, are also more likely to suffer from marginalization, both because they are less likely to meet literacy standards in their new environment, and because

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[58] Dakar Framework for Action Education for All: Meeting our collective commitments. World Education Forum. April 26-28, 2000.

[59] "Summary." Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2002. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2002. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11284&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

[67] "Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement." Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. February 11, 1998. http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/7/b/principles.htm

[68] "Summary." Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2002. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2002. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11284&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[69] Ibid.

many leave behind family members that are likely to be literate.[70] In 2005, UNESCO estimated that there was between 185 and 192 million migrants across the globe, representing 3% of the world's population.[71] Though the *Convention on Migrants' Rights* was opened for signing in 2003, it has not received significant support, and there are virtually no other protections in place for migrants.[72] With little protection in place, many illiterate migrants are readily taken advantage of financially, physically, and sexually.

People with Disabilities
Though 2007 saw the adoption of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*,[73] most international treaties fail to observe the role disabilities play in compounding social problems such as gender inequality and literacy.[74] Almost 1 out of every 10 people, nearly 600 million worldwide, has a substantial disability that affects daily life: physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental health impairment.[75] And of those 600 million disabled, 80% of people live in developing countries.[76] Those adults with disabilities have a global literacy rate of 3%, which drops to only 1% for women with disabilities.[77] In 2003, the Director-General of UNESCO observed that "98% of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school."[78] Several United Nations conferences have highlighted the need to implement the newly developed concept of "inclusive education," which seeks ways to include all persons who are more likely to be marginalized and excluded from society, but which focuses especially on persons with disabilities. [79]

Although the universal acknowledgement of education as an intrinsic human right is more than sufficient reason to improve these percentage rates, there are also additional benefits that make the education of people with disabilities not only essential, but also practical. With learning specialized to their individual needs, many people with disabilities can still become active participants in their families and communities, which in turn can help families struggling against poverty. Furthermore, educating people with disabilities gives them the power to protect themselves from discriminatory treatment, represent themselves in government and educate others who have misconceptions about disabilities.[80]

It should also be noted that, at least in developing countries, almost "80% of the causes of disabilities are either preventable or avoidable" through education.[81] For example, child laborers are at a higher risk for developing a workplace disability of physical, mental or psychological nature, which reinforces the need for mandatory education to prevent child labor.[82] Uneducated parents often fail to recognize the dangers of unclean water or malnutrition for young children, which can often cause disability.[83] 41 million babies are at risk for mental impairment each year,

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[70] Ibid.
[71] "United Nations Convention on Migrants' Rights, Information Kit." United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. 2005. p. 7.
http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/file_download.php/cacc471f0f7f7542cac63b080e549b49English+Kit.pdf
[72] Ibid.
[73] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. United Nations. March 30, 2007.
[74] "Statement by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Disability on the Occasion of International Women's Day." March 8, 2005. http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/womenday05.htm
[75] "Disability & HIV/AIDS." The World Bank. November 2004.
http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTHEALTHNUTRITIONANDPOPULATION/EXTPHA
AG/0,,contentMDK:20655822~menuPK:1314766~pagePK:64229817~piPK:64229743~theSitePK:672263,00.html
[76] Ibid
[77] Ibid.
[78] Willaim Brohier. "People with Disabilities." The United Nations Literacy Decade in Asia and the Pacific: Progress to Date. UNESCO. 2005. p. 17 http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/unld_asiapacific/UNLD_AsiaPacific.pdf
[79] "Inclusive Education: Our challenge." United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11891&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
[80] Volker Rutte. "Austria." Making it Happen: Examples of Good Practice in Special Needs Education & Community-Based Programmes. UNESCO, p.5. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0009/000968/096884ev.pdf
[81] Willaim Brohier. "People with Disabilities." The United Nations Literacy Decade in Asia and the Pacific: Progress to Date. UNESCO. 2005. p. 17. http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/unld_asiapacific/UNLD_AsiaPacific.pdf
[82] "Inclusive Education: Our challenge." United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11891&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
[83] Willaim Brohier. "People with Disabilities." The United Nations Literacy Decade in Asia and the Pacific: Progress to Date. UNESCO. 2005. p. 17. http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/unld_asiapacific/UNLD_AsiaPacific.pdf

because breastfeeding mothers are unwittingly failing to get enough iodine in their diets.[84] Thus, since women are often the primary caregiver in developing countries, the prevention of many disabilities reiterates the need to focus on improving literacy for women.[85]

Groups with Multiple Disadvantages
Perhaps the worst kind of disadvantage that needs to be alleviated through literacy is that of women in developing countries who also have a disability.[86] This common scenario is what the Special Rapporteur on Disability has referred to as a "triple discrimination" as "girls and women with disabilities suffer the discrimination of being women and of being disabled, [and in] many developing counties, of being poor and thus marginalized."[87] Since more than 80% of women with disabilities are completely dependent on others for support and care, these women have the greatest need for assistance through education.[88] This is only one example of the multiple disadvantages that can face illiterate persons.

Conclusion
Seven years after the establishment of both the Dakar Framework and the Millennium Goals, the outlook is bleak for reaching either of these goals by 2015. According to the 2002 EFA Global Monitoring Report, when interpreting the 6 EFA goals in terms of adult literacy levels and equal gender treatment in primary educational settings, only 83 countries have achieved these goals or will do so by 2015. Another 43 countries have made progress, but will still fall short, while another 28 will likely not come close to achieving any of the 2000 goals.[89] Though the aims set forth in 2000 have helped to shine light on the serious inadequacies in literacy and in-education overall, it is clear that new initiatives must be implemented if the world community wants to make at least significant progress in achieving universal literacy by 2015.

UNESCO Director General Koïchiro Matsuura noted that to achieve these goals, Nation States and NGOs must be strongly encouraged to keep literacy as a top national priority, and the quality of existing programs must be constantly reassessed. Furthermore, the Director-General has reiterated the need for gender disparity to help reduce illiteracy overall.[90] In order to accomplish both of these tasks, better information is needed on global illiteracy and education. The EFA Global Monitoring Report has repeatedly acknowledged "major gaps" in information on world-wide education.[91]

Additionally, much work needs to be done to extend literacy efforts to marginalized groups, including those groups specifically noted in this guide. The Education for All Report has placed this problem in the context of "a cycle of exclusion" that is perpetuated by "low demand, inflexible provision [*sic*] and poor quality."[92] Though many national programs are targeting girls, ethnic and linguistic minorities, children who are HIV-positive are largely ignored.[93] Finally, much of the current failure to make substantial progress lies in structural details. The EFA has noted that

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[84] "Inclusive Education: Our Challenge." United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. http://portal.unesco.org/education/es/ev.php-URL_ID=18542&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[85] Willaim Brohier. "People with Disabilities." The United Nations Literacy Decade in Asia and the Pacific: Progress to Date. UNESCO. 2005. p. 17.

[86] Summary. Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2005. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2005. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=35939&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[87] "Statement by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Disability on the Occasion of International Women's Day." March 8, 2005. http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/womenday05.htm

[88] Ibid.

[89] Summary. Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2002. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2002. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11284&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[90] Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General, UNESCO. "Director General Message on the Occasion of International Literacy Day. September 8, 2004. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=32627&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[91] "Summary." Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2002. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2002. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11284&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[92] Ibid.

[93] Ibid.

there is international discord in what action plan to pursue. For example, UNICEF goes with the EFA Dakar goals, while the World Bank follows the singular ideal of universal primary education, and still other groups chose to work towards the MDG.[94] The failure for international organizations and national governments to work towards one common goal could be hurting the overarching aim of the universal literacy campaign, and thus preventing a multitude of sustainable development goals to be achieved. By having the General Assembly Third Committee address and discuss MDG Goal Two the global community is taking one step closer to realizing a fundamental platform of human rights.

Committee Directive
In addition to improving our understanding of the effects of literacy, delegates should consider different approaches not only in making education more readily available but also efficient to the needs of any particular culture. In doing so, delegates should consider how to open social and cultural barriers to literacy, how to improve the level of literacy to people who already have some limited knowledge, and how to improve the quality of existing educational programs. For example, many researchers have observed that while 1 out of every 10 African children will be required repeat a level of schooling, there is no beneficial value to this repetition. Rather, students who repeat a level are more likely to keep failing or even drop out of school altogether. Especially, given that the inability of some students to pass a level of education might be caused by a disability, delegates might want to consider alternative methods to this very particular aspect of the quality of education. Related to this concern is the need of teachers. The world is estimated to need approximately 15-35 million more well-trained teachers to reach the 2015 goal of universal primary education, but how can developing countries afford to pay this number of additional teachers? And how will such teachers be trained?[95]

Delegates should also consider the needs to education for migrants and displaced persons - immediate and short term education programming need to be in place for when emergencies arise, and long term programs must be developed as a necessary part of reconstruction efforts.[96] Delegates should also consider how to unify the work of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), UNICEF and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to better protect these groups of people.

Delegates should examine a variety of resources in addressing these problems. National governments must work to improve infrastructure regarding education, and to target marginalized social groups. Non-governmental organizations, especially locally and regionally based ones, are proving to be an untapped resource that could provide creative solutions.[97] Delegates should also keep in mind that while financial solutions (more funding, for example) are important, money is meaningless unless the quality of literacy programs is also addressed. For example, most primary education classrooms have student to teacher ratios much higher than the recommended 40:1 ratio needed for effective teaching.[98] Moreover, many teachers are not certified or qualified to teach.[99]

This topic presents many different avenues to explore. Delegates' research should be varied to reflect the numerous approaches, resources, and challenges that face this body in achieving Millennium Development Goal Three.

II.   Inequalities in Indigenous Communities

Even though you are in your boat and I in my canoe, we share the same river of life.
-Anonymous

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[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] "Summary." Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris and Montreal: United Nations. 2007. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=49591&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid.

Introduction

In 1923, an American Indian Chief traveled to Geneva, Switzerland to approach the League of Nations about the rights of Native Americans. He was not allowed to speak, and made the return voyage home without being able to address any of the issues he had wished.[100] In the decades since, indigenous people have continually struggled to gain recognition in political processes on both national and international scales.

The United Nations has no set definition of what defines a people as indigenous. For working purposes, indigenous peoples can be defined as those peoples who have "retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live."[101] Furthermore, indigenous peoples maintain a "historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories" and are "determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system."[102] Ultimately, indigenous peoples have the right to identify themselves as indigenous, as opposed to using any standardized definition.[103] Thus, indigenous peoples have been prevalent throughout the world for as long as culture and societies have existed.

History

The General Assembly Third is responsible for reviewing issues that pertain to the promotion and protection of human rights. Human rights are most easily violated in situations where a majority is against a minority.[104] The difference in number often results in the minority rights becoming secondary or marginalized by the will of the majority, whether purposefully or accidentally.[105] This is especially true in the case of indigenous communities. A continued history of discrimination, exploitation, and mistreatment can be seen with indigenous communities throughout the world.[106] For example, in 1924 a Maori religious leader from New Zealand traveled to London to address King George regarding the loss of Maori tribal lands. These lands were protected by a treaty with the government of New Zealand that was subsequently broken.[107] When the religious leader was not allowed to speak with King George, he traveled to Switzerland to approach the League of Nations.[108] Like the American Indian Chief who traveled before him, he also failed to have his issues addressed by the League.[109]

Another, more recent example is that of the Gypsies, or Roma, in the former Yugoslavia and the Czech Republic. During the war between Serbians and Albanians in Kosovo, nearly all of the region's 100,000 Gypsies were forced to leave their homes and "hundreds [were] killed – by Serbs during the war and by ethnic Albanians afterward."[110] Furthermore, during the same time period, Gypsies in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary were "disproportionately shunted into special schools for the 'mentally retarded'."[111] Some reports say that as many as seventy percent of Gypsy children have attended these schools, which has them from attaining high school education or good employment.[112] This in turn has contributed to the high crime rates cited in Gypsy societies.[113] The normal rules, regulations, and tests that result in a child being placed in these schools are not applied to Gypsy children, in part due to prejudice and in part due to lesser language skills, as many Gypsy children do not speak Czech at

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[100] "History of Indigenous Peoples." United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2005.
http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/history.html
[101] Ibid.
[102] PFII/2004/WS.1/3. The Concept of Indigenous Peoples. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 2004.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Emily A. Schultz and Robert H. Lavenda. Cultural Anthropology: A Perspective on the Human Condition, 5th Edition. Mountainview, California: Mayfield Publishing Company. 2001.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.
[107] DPI/2309. Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous Voices: United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Brochure. United Nations Department of Public Information. May 2003.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Emily A. Schultz and Robert H. Lavenda. Cultural Anthropology: A Perspective on the Human Condition, 5th Edition. Mountainview, California: Mayfield Publishing Company. 2001.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid.

home.[114] Recently, programs have been started to assist Gypsy children in succeeding within the regular school environment, and hopefully positive changes will result.[115] However, these instances only emphasize the fact that when there is a violation of the rights of an indigenous population, it is difficult for that population to find ways to protest in the conventional system.[116]

Actions Taken by the United Nations

Much of the progress for indigenous peoples within the United Nations has occurred in the last thirty years[117]. In 1970, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, a working group under the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Commission on Human Rights, recognized the need for a special study into the discrimination against and protection of rights of indigenous peoples.[118] In 1971, a Special Rapporteur, Jose R. Martinez Cobo, was appointed to head this study designed to "suggest national and international measures for eliminating…discrimination" against indigenous populations.[119] It was during this study that he developed his working definition for indigenous peoples.[120] Partially as a result of Cobo's final report, UNESCO appointed the Working Group on Indigenous Populations (WGIP) in 1982, designed to "review national developments pertaining to the promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples" and to "develop international standards concerning the rights of indigenous peoples, taking account of both the similarities and differences in their situations and aspirations throughout the world."[121]

As part of the latter of their two tasks, the WGIP began developing a declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples in 1985.[122] The draft Declaration "emphasizes the rights of indigenous peoples to maintain and strengthen their own institutions, cultures and traditions and to pursue their development in keeping with their own needs and aspirations."[123] The draft Declaration was completed and approved by the WGIP in 1993, adopted by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in 1994, then submitted to the Commission on Human Rights. [124] In 1995, the Commission on Human Rights created a working group to consider the draft, and subsequently established an application process to allow indigenous groups to participate in the review of the draft Declaration, thus promoting active involvement of indigenous peoples in the decision-making process.[125] As of 1997, ninety-nine groups of indigenous peoples had been accepted for participation.[126] In 2006, the Commission on Human Rights approved the draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the draft Declaration is now being heavily debated in the General Assembly Third Committee.[127] Furthermore, a permanent working forum for the promotion of indigenous peoples' rights has been formed, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.[128] The Permanent Forum is now one of the main advocates for the rights of indigenous peoples, as it is responsible for submitting reports regarding the status of the rights of indigenous peoples directly to

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[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid.

[116] DPI/2309. Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous Voices: United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
      Brochure. United Nations Department of Public Information. May 2003.

[117] Fact Sheet No. 9 (Rev. 1), The Rights of Indigenous Peoples. United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for
      Human Rights. 1996.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Ibid.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Frequently Asked Questions: Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. United Nations Permanent Forum on
      Indigenous Issues. 2006.

[124] Fact Sheet No. 9 (Rev. 1), The Rights of Indigenous Peoples. United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for
      Human Rights. 1996.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

[127] "UN's Indigenous Forum issues recommendations regarding lands, territories and natural resources as two week
      meeting concludes." United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2007.

[128] "History of Indigenous Peoples." United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2005.
      http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/history.html

ECOSOC, and ultimately to the General Assembly Third.[129] This not only assists in raising awareness of the issues of indigenous peoples, but also helps shape the path that new policies take.[130]

Another milestone for indigenous people came in 1994, when the UN declared 1995 to be the beginning of an International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples.[131] The goals of the Decade were "the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous people and their empowerment to make choices which enable them to retain their cultural identity while participating in political, economic and social life, with full respect for their cultural values, languages, traditions and forms of social organization."[132] In 2004, the UN declared 2005 to be the beginning of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, in order to build on the progress of the first decade and specifically focus on promoting the human rights of indigenous peoples.[133] The goals of the second decade are "strengthening international cooperation to solve problems faced by indigenous people in areas such as culture, education, health, human rights, the environment and social and economic development, through the implementation of programmes, projects, technical assistance and standard-setting activities".[134] One of the main goals of the Second Decade is the passage of the draft Declaration by the General Assembly.[135]

Current Situation

There are an estimated 300 million indigenous people in more than 70 countries worldwide.[136] With the deadline for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals fast approaching, there is a growing need to focus on the ability of the goals to be reached within indigenous communities. The Millennium Development Goals are particularly important to indigenous communities because achievement of the goals would help promote many of the rights that are most frequently denied to indigenous communities. Difficulties arise when attempting to measure progress towards reaching the goals within indigenous populations, as general data for country reports may neglect or mask worsening situations within indigenous populations.[137] For example, one indicator that is particularly difficult to apply to indigenous peoples is that of poverty.[138] For most definitions, poverty is determined by purchasing power, a factor that does not apply to indigenous peoples that rely on 'subsistence production,'[139] or when a community produces only those items that are needed for basic survival and without focus on trade or purchasing.[140] A much more relevant definition of poverty for indigenous peoples would be one that included other indicators, "such as whether or not they have political power or representation, control of their resources and secure land tenure, and access to infrastructure, education and health services."[141] In addition to being good indicators of the quality of life of indigenous peoples, these factors also are frequently those for which indigenous peoples struggle most as their rights to said factors are not adequately protected. Of these, a focus should be made on three general areas of utmost importance: language, education, and healthcare.

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[129] Ibid.

[130] Ibid.

[131] Fact Sheet No. 9 (Rev. 1), The Rights of Indigenous Peoples. United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. 1996.

[132] Ibid.

[133] "UN Forum to consider impact on indigenous peoples of Millennium Development Goal implementation." United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2005.

[134] Ibid.

[135] "UN's Indigenous Forum issues recommendations regarding lands, territories and natural resources as two week meeting concludes." United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2007.

[136] Fact Sheet No. 9 (Rev. 1), The Rights of Indigenous Peoples. United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. 1996.

[137] "How can the Millennium Development Goals help indigenous peoples?" United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2005.

[138] Ibid.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Emily A. Schultz and Robert H. Lavenda. Cultural Anthropology: A Perspective on the Human Condition, 5th Edition. Mountainview, California: Mayfield Publishing Company. 2001.

[141] How can the Millennium Development Goals help indigenous peoples?. United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2005.

Language, Education, Healthcare: Addressing Challenges and Barriers
Language is one of the key tenets of any culture since it is a mechanism for the promotion of both cultural values as well as tradition in history and societal structure.[142] Loss of that language will therefore often result in the slow but eventual loss of the culture itself.[143] Language is part of a culture's identity, and therefore is integral to defining that culture.[144] It is for this reason that preservation and maintenance of indigenous languages is so imperative, as many indigenous communities employ a different language than the dominant culture and controlling national governments where they live, making it more difficult to maintain traditional languages and endangering the culture itself.[145]

The use of a language that differs from the language of the dominant surrounding culture results in many problems for indigenous peoples. One is effective communication in issues relating to people outside of the indigenous community. Beyond access to healthcare, language barriers can create difficulties for indigenous peoples in participating in government, which causes a cascade of effects into the protection of their rights as this makes it more difficult to communicate inequalities and can encourage exploitation.[146] They are less likely to have access to current events, media or government documents in their native language. This can also decrease the likelihood of involvement in the political scheme due to the inability to achieve voting rights that require literacy in the dominant tongue[147].

Furthermore, an important part of development aid throughout the world is the promotion of the principle of "free, prior, informed consent (FPIC)."[148] This is the idea that all people affected by development should have a full understanding of how the development will affect their well-being.[149] Imperative to this is the availability of communication in the native language, to guarantee adequate understanding.[150] All of these issues place an emphasis on promoting the preservation of the native languages and increasing the accessibility of information for indigenous peoples.

In addition, language plays a huge issue in education as well. The majority of educational programs available for indigenous peoples are taught in the dominant language, rather than in the native tongue.[151] It is proven that "submersion teaching" in the dominant language with little or no contact to the native tongue results in higher failure rates for students in indigenous communities.[152] Education that limits contact to the native tongue results in a child having verbal removal from their culture, as they are unable to communicate on a higher level in the native tongue with other members of the indigenous community.[153] Thus, an approach that combines teaching in the native tongue with secondary language teaching in the dominant language is the best approach to promote passage rate.[154] This fact also underscores one of the main reasons why it is important to preserve native languages.

Unfortunately, indigenous communities are often forgotten in funding for educational programs. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that these groups are left outside of the cultural and governmental majority, and so they are thus less able to argue for funding.[155] This is a multi-layered issue, as many indigenous communities are also geographically removed from the rest of society, making developing and staffing educational programs more

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[142] Emily A. Schultz and Robert H. Lavenda. Cultural Anthropology: A Perspective on the Human Condition, 5th Edition. Mountainview, California: Mayfield Publishing Company. 2001.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid.
[145] PFII/2004/WS.1/3. The Concept of Indigenous Peoples. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 2004.
[146] Ibid.
[147] E/CN.4/Sub.2/1983/21/Add.3. Study of the Problem of Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations. Jose R. Martinez Cobo. United Nations Economic and Social Council. 17 June 1983.
[148] E/C.19/2006/CRP.3. Report on the Meeting on Indigenous Peoples and Indicators of Well-being. United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2006.
[149] Engaging Indigenous Peoples in governance process: International legal and policy frameworks for engagement. United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 15 August 2005.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Language in education: a factor in poverty among indigenous peoples. United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2005.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid.

difficult and more costly than urban programs.[156] The cost of developing educational programs in the native tongue is one of the main reasons cited against developing programs for indigenous populations in their native languages.[157] In fact, it is important to note that many educational loans from international financial institutions are used for "the modernization agenda." This concept stresses the education of indigenous peoples in the dominant language in order to bring that population towards "modernization" - an idea that many indigenous communities find offensive and contradictory to their goals.[158] However, it can be argued that an increased success rate in school when programs are taught in a combination of the native and dominant languages decreases the cost spent in repeated school years.[159] Education is an extreme priority for increasing the involvement of indigenous peoples in the political scheme and subsequently the promotion and protection of their rights. Therefore it is important to address the best ways for their success in an educational system. This includes access to education, as well as funding for adequate materials, supplies, and instruction.

A good example of successful education programs native languages can be seen in the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF) programs in Brazil and Namibia.[160] In Brazil, UNICEF supported a program "to teach Yanomami children in northern Roraima to read and write in their mother tongue."[161] In Sao Gabriel de Cachoeira, for the Amazonas of Brazil, "the primary education curriculum has been adapted for use with indigenous groups and reaches 3,000 children."[162] Additionally, in Namibia a project has begun that is designed "to address the educational exclusion of San children in the Omaheke administrative region."[163] By training San community members to act as mediators and resources for San families, the program hopes to increase mainstream school enrollment of San children and school retention rate.[164] In both countries, efforts are being made to include indigenous communities in mainstream systems while maintaining their traditions and ways of life.

Beyond the difficulties that arise with educational systems, indigenous peoples are less served by conventional health care systems, due to an inability to access them. Oftentimes, indigenous peoples live in remote areas removed from the rest of society.[165] This results in considerable geographical barriers to healthcare, as treatment facilities are fewer and oftentimes require travel of long distances to be reached.[166] For indigenous communities that survive on subsistence production, costs of healthcare are another barrier to treatment, as they may be unable to afford both travel to and costs of treatment.[167]

Secondary costs of seeking healthcare, such as potential marginalization within the community due to stigma from seeking treatment or confirming a diagnosis, prevent members of indigenous communities from accessing healthcare.[168] Western medicine and other modernized treatments, at face value, may not fit into an indigenous community's cultural framework. Cultural norms may support more traditional treatments, thus making it more difficult to reach out to these communities.

Indigenous peoples will often "seek traditional, ancestral or spiritual healing first and… modern medicine only when these traditional interventions fail."[169] This is of great concern in terms of the delay it causes in seeking treatment

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[156] E/CN.4/Sub.2/1983/21/Add.4. Study of the Problem of Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations. Jose R. Martinez Cobo. United Nations Economic and Social Council. 17 June 1983.

[157] Language in education: a factor in poverty among indigenous peoples. United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2005.

[158] "How can the Millennium Development Goals help indigenous peoples?" United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2005.

[159] Language in education: a factor in poverty among indigenous peoples. United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. 2005.

[160] E/CN.19/2002/2/Add.3. United Nations Children's Fund and Indigenous Issues. United Nations Children's Fund. April 8, 2002.

[161] Ibid.

[162] Ibid.

[163] Ibid.

[164] Ibid.

[165] WHO/HTM/TB/2005.352. Addressing Poverty in TB Control: Options for National Control Programmes. World Health Organization. 2005.

[166] Ibid.

[167] Ibid.

[168] Ibid.

[169] WHO/HTM/TB/2005.352. Addressing Poverty in TB Control: Options for National Control Programmes. World Health

for highly communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, the treatment of which drastically increases in success rate the sooner treatment begins.[170] However, if other barriers to healthcare such as economic, geographic and language issues are alleviated, the likelihood of seeking modern medical treatment *in conjunction with* instead of *following* the use of traditional medicinal practices increases.[171] To further the promotion of the use of traditional medicine in conjunction with modern medical treatment, the World Health Organization has developed a Traditional Medicine program, which aims to develop and integrate traditional medicine into national healthcare systems and to "ensure the appropriate, safe and effective use of traditional medicine."[172]

Even when healthcare is geographically accessible to indigenous peoples, lower funding causes these facilities to be staffed by a lower number of health professionals who have limited access to the latest technologies and medication.[173] Compounding these difficulties are language barriers when seeking treatment and in basic health education. Publicly available information about disease is usually not available in indigenous languages, and when seeking treatment, indigenous peoples must be able to communicate symptoms and understand treatment guidelines in the dominant language rather than their native tongue.[174]

A positive step was taken in Peru in 2001, when UNICEF helped to sponsor the production of educational videos on pregnancy health and safety using indigenous actors for use in the indigenous populations of the Andean and Amazonian regions.[175] However, this practice is not yet widespread. Therefore, language barriers result in great difficulty in achieving successful diagnosis and treatment for illness in indigenous peoples, as well as providing a reason for hesitancy to seek out treatment in the first place.[176]

The Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
The General Assembly Third is currently in debate over the final drafts of a Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. At present, the draft Declaration is stalling in committee for several reasons. Part of the difficulty in creating such a declaration is that human rights are most often seen as guaranteed to individuals, not groups of people.[177] In writing a declaration of rights for indigenous peoples, the United Nations would inherently be declaring the rights of both *individual* indigenous persons as well as *groups* of indigenous peoples.[178] This has caused much stalling in the passage of the declaration, for there are still parts of the draft Declaration relating to the rights of *groups* of peoples that many countries find conflicting with their sovereignty.[179] Others believe that indigenous communities have been left out of the process of creating the draft Declaration. This has resulted in much conflict and debate over the draft Declaration, with great difficulty in appeasing all parties involved. Even once the draft Declaration is passed there will be much work to be done in order to implement it, especially in terms of the involvement of indigenous people in individual national government systems.[180]

The draft Declaration is incredibly comprehensive in the rights it promotes for indigenous peoples. Of the forty-five articles in the draft Declaration, seventeen pertain to "indigenous culture and how to protect and promote it, by

   Organization. 2005.
[170] Paul Farmer. Infections and Inequalities. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1999.
[171] Ibid.
[172] E/CN.19/2002/2/Add.8. World Health Organization (WHO) Activities on the Health of Indigenous and Tribal
   Peoples. World Health Organization. 9 April 2002.
[173] E/CN.4/Sub.2/1983/21/Add.5. Study of the Problem of Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations. Jose R.
   Martinez Cobo. United Nations Economic and Social Council. 21 June 1983.
[174] WHO/HTM/TB/2005.352. Addressing Poverty in TB Control: Options for National Control Programmes. World Health
   Organization. 2005.
[175] E/CN.19/2002/2/Add.3. United Nations Children's Fund and Indigenous Issues. United Nations Children's
   Fund. April 8, 2002.
[176] E/CN.4/Sub.2/1983/21/Add.5. Study of the Problem of Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations. Jose R.
   Martinez Cobo. United Nations Economic and Social Council. June 21, 1983.
[177] Briefing Note 6: Gender and Indigenous Peoples' Human Rights. United Nations Department of Economic and
   Social Affairs. 2007
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid.
[180] "Frequently Asked Questions: Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples." United Nations Permanent Forum on
   Indigenous Issues. 2006.

respecting the direct input of indigenous peoples in decision-making, and allowing for resources."[181] Most importantly, and most contentious in terms of national sovereignty, the draft Declaration "confirms the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination and recognizes subsistence rights and rights to lands, territories and resources."[182] In addition, the draft Declaration aims to eliminate discrimination against indigenous peoples and "promotes their full and effective participation in all matters that concern them, as well as their right to remain distinct and to pursue their own visions of economic and social development."[183]

Conclusion

The issue of promotion and protection of the rights of peoples in indigenous communities is obviously a multi-layered and complicated one. Economic, social, and cultural barriers all play a part in the difficulties faced by indigenous communities worldwide. The answers to these difficulties must also be multi-layered in their approach. The struggle for participation and recognition within national and global political spheres has culminated in the draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the passage of which would result in the establishment of a "significant tool towards eliminating human rights violations against over 370 million indigenous people worldwide and assist them in combating discrimination and marginalization."[184] The difficulty now for the General Assembly Third is finding ways to best protect and promote the rights of indigenous peoples without infringing on national sovereignty while acting as a champion for these peoples and all peoples worldwide.

Committee Directive

Delegates should consider how to improve human rights of indigenous peoples living within recognized borders of other societies. As development continues in countries throughout the world, more action needs to be taken to ensure that traditional values and beliefs are maintained while blending these with better technology and educational access. Traditional languages of indigenous communities must also be preserved. This includes allowing for education within these languages, but also for production of government documents, road signs, tests for driving and voting, and public health materials.

When preparing for committee session, delegates should be sure to become familiar with the present situation of indigenous peoples living within their respective national borders, as well as how the issues discussed above are affecting these groups. Review of the draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is important, but be sure to shift focus towards methods of *implementing* or *supporting* the draft Declaration and its passage, rather than just re-writing the draft Declaration itself. Delegates should prepare by answering the following questions: How would giving more rights to a minority group affect the majority groups within the country which the delegate represents? How can the General Assembly Third best further the steps taken in writing the draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples? How can the rights of indigenous people best be protected without infringing upon national sovereignty?

III.   Conflict Diamonds: A Human Rights Issue

"'This civil war wasn't caused by a political vision or for religious reasons or for ethnic reasons . . . This was done for pure greed. This was done to control a commodity, and that commodity was diamonds.'"[185]

Introduction

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[181] Ibid.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid.
[185] "Sierra Leone: Truth and Reconciliation." PBS Religion & Ethics Newsweekly. Episode no. 619. 10 January 2003.
    http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week619/cover.html

For many of the world's cultures diamonds have come to symbolize positive ideals such as love, purity, wealth, status and durability.[186] Yet, while diamonds conjure such positive images in consumer markets, they are often produced in less than ideal settings. Indeed, almost 25% of the world's diamond supply derives from African nations that either currently suffer or have in the past from internal conflicts. The conflicts have in turn stagnated the growth and development of democratic governments, economic stability, and most importantly, human rights. Researchers are now increasingly linking much of this internal discord to the exploitation of Africa's natural resources:[187] For example, during a recent Security Council inquiry into the relation between natural resources and internal discord, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs noted that in "too many cases, the illegal exploitation of natural resources has triggered, exacerbated and prolonged armed conflict."[188] No natural resource is more widely recognized as a negative impact on African growth and development than the conflict diamond.[189]

Within the last decade, 'conflict diamonds' have become a globally recognized social issue, spawning protests, fair-trade movements, and attention in pop culture songs and movies. However, though the term "conflict diamond" has achieved household recognition, it is largely misunderstood as conflict diamonds are defined by more than simply the violent intrastate conflicts that they fund. Rather, conflict diamonds are considered by many advocate groups to be "diamonds that fuel conflict, civil wars, and human rights abuses."[190] More specifically, a diamond can be considered "a conflict diamond if its profit is used to fund war, or it is mined or produced under unethical conditions."[191] Therefore, conflict diamonds are recognized not just by the conflict for which they are produced, but also by the manner in which they are mined.

Background
The first diamond mines in Africa were opened in the late 1860's by explorers and representatives of western democracies that controlled much of the continent at the time.[192] In these early days of diamond mining, mine workers had considerable power to contract with mine owners, and mining wages were actually among the highest in the world.[193] However, as economic depression and European military conquests forced many Africans off of their homelands and into the colonial economy, African workers gradually began to lose bargaining power.[194] Labor practices deteriorated into a virtual enslavement with enclosed "compounds" that restricted movement and lessened wages, thereby enabling diamond mine owners to profit more at the expense of African workers.[195] These practices continued on from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and are debated to be the influence for current diamond mine labor practices.[196] Diamonds would again achieve significant value in international markets, but these inhumane and cruel labor practices have continued to flourish in many countries.

Today, diamonds are an integral source of trade and revenue for the producing countries of Africa: 41% of diamonds originate from Botswana, South Africa and Namibia, and another 25% originates from ten other nations in south and central Africa.[197] For those first three countries, Botswana, South Africa and Namibia, diamonds have played a

[186] "The Nature of Diamonds: What is in a name?" American Museum of Natural History.
          http://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/diamonds/name.html
[187] Ernest Harsch. "Conflict Resources: From 'Curse' to Blessing: Transforming an African War Risk into a Peace Asset." Africa Renewal. United Nations: January 2007, Vol. 20 No. 4. p. 17.
          http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol20no4/204-conflict-resources.html
[188] "Security Council Examines Role of Natural Resources in Fueling Conflicts which Angers Some Countries." The International Herald Tribune. June 25, 2007. http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/06/26/news/UN-GEN-UN-Resource-Conflicts.php.
[189] Ernest Harsch. "Conflict Resources: From 'Curse' to Blessing: Transforming an African War Risk into a Peace Asset." Africa Renewal. United Nations: January 2007, Vol. 20 No. 4. p. 17.
          http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol20no4/204-conflict-resources.html
[190] "Combating Conflict Diamonds." Global Witness. http://www.globalwitness.org/pages/en/conflict_diamonds.html
[191] "What is a Conflict Diamond?" The Conflict-Free Diamond Council.
          http://www.conflictfreediamonds.org/awareness/conflict_diamonds.html.
[192] Rob Turrell. "Diamonds and Migrant Labour in South Africa, 1869-1910." History Today. May 1986, Vol. 36, p. 45.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid.
[195] Ibid.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Ibid.

positive and important role in economic development.[198] This is most likely explained by the manner in which the diamonds are naturally formed and extracted.[199] The diamonds produced by these countries are known as Kimberlite diamonds, and are found embedded in carrot-shaped "pipes" of volcanic rock, first discovered near Kimberley, South Africa in the late 19th century.[200] These diamonds are considered to be more valuable, and the geological formation of these pipes allows for mines to be more enclosed and thus well-guarded.[201]

In contrast, the other 25% of the world's diamonds found within Africa nations have not contributed to national economic growth.[202] This can be attributed to the type of diamonds produced – alluvial diamonds. Alluvial diamonds are found in river beds that can extend over a broad area. These mining sites are not lucrative enough to interest wealthy diamond producers, leaving them open to control by anyone powerful enough to exert it.[203] As a result of the geographical characteristics, and the lack of well-financed protective ownership, these sites are often the source for both diamond smuggling and violent conflict between rebel forces for control of the land.[204] Rebel factions that gain control of diamond mines often force individuals to mine through cruel labor tactics visible in amputated arms and legs as punishment for suspected dereliction.

Alluvial diamond mines are often synonymous with 'artisanal mining', which is characterized by an absence of technology and safety standards, workers who are largely untrained migrants, low wages, and poor productivity.[205] Thus, alluvial diamond mines are equally prevalent in countries not dominated by internal conflict, but which often still lack infrastructural oversight. Thus giving way to deplorable working conditions without government regulation.[206] Such mines are often crowded with poverty stricken individuals desperate to find gems in order to feed and clothe their families.[207] As a result, many workers are former combatants in civil wars from across the western African region.[208] The lack of technology further creates a high rate of injury due to dangerous working conditions. For example, the geography of many alluvial mines forces miners to work while submerged in muddy, unclean waters, and there is a great risk of landslides and collapsing walls that can crush workers and bury them alive.[209] Diamond mining camps are often rife with disease from poor sanitation and overcrowding.[210] Because of remote working conditions, food must often be provided by mine operators, and such food is often hardly enough to survive on.[211] Furthermore, the same inferior status of alluvial diamonds that repels large, wealthy companies also earns little for the individual artisanal miner, and what profit is brought in by an alluvial diamond is quickly seized by the operator of the mine, leaving the worker with only a small share of the revenue.[212]

Children in particular suffer from these practices. In Angola, 46% of diamond miners were under the age of 16. Children are at risk to be tortured, due to their lack of understanding of their situation and the increased likelihood to make mistakes. Furthermore, children are pulled into the overarching conflict as child mercenaries who are themselves trained to fight and torture others in civil wars and other internal conflicts fueled within the diamond producing nations.

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[198] "UN and Africa." United Nations Radio. January 18, 2007. http://www.un.org/av/radio/unandafrica/transcript135.htm
[199] Louis Goreux. "Conflict Diamonds." The World Bank. http://www.worldbank.org/afr/wps/wp13.pdf
[200] "The Nature of Diamonds: How Do Diamonds Move to the Earth's Surface?" American Museum of Natural History. http://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/diamonds/how.html
[201] Louis Goreux. "Conflict Diamonds." The World Bank. http://www.worldbank.org/afr/wps/wp13.pdf
[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Beatice Labonne and Jonathan Gilman. "Towards Building Sustainable Livelihoods in the Artisanal Mining Communities." International Labour Organization. May 1999. http://www.natural-resources.org/minerals/CD/docs/undesa/ssminingbl.pdf
[206] Louis Goreux. "Conflict Diamonds." The World Bank. http://www.worldbank.org/afr/wps/wp13.pdf
[207] Ibid.
[208] "The Current State of Diamond Mining in the Mano River Basin and the Use of Diamonds as a Tool for Peace Building and Development." United Nations Development Programme. http://www.lr.undp.org/D4D_BackGroundPaperIA_presentation_EN.pdf
[209] Ibid.
[210] Louis Goreux. "Conflict Diamonds." The World Bank. The World Bank. http://www.worldbank.org/afr/wps/wp13.pdf
[211] "The Current State of Diamond Mining in the Mano River Basin and the Use of Diamonds as a Tool for Peace Building and Development." United Nations Development Programme. http://www.lr.undp.org/D4D_BackGroundPaperIA_presentation_EN.pdf
[212] Ibid.

Actions Taken by the United Nations
The extent of the human rights violations began to significantly draw the world's attention in the early 1990s, as several African nations underwent serious internal political coups and violent conflicts. The first UN sanctions on diamonds were placed in 1998 on Angola, which had devolved into political in-fighting between several forces, of which the most infamous was known as UNITA, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola.[213] Unfortunately, the diamond sanctions, which were a continuation of previous and broader financial sanctions, accomplished little in stemming the flow of conflict diamonds. Though a peace agreement was reached, UNITA forces continued to seize diamond mines, and neighboring states continued to filter Angolan UNITA diamonds into international markets.[214] In 2001, reports indicated that UNITA earned approximately $90 thousand to $125 thousand in illegal diamond sales.[215] Even more alarming was the likely possibility that conflict diamonds had also been produced through seemingly legitimate sources operating within the Angolan government.[216] Though a peace agreement was achieved in 2002 and UNITA dismantled, the poor enforcement of the UN sanctions remain an important lesson for diplomats.[217]

The United Nations next placed sanctions on Sierra Leone in 1999,[218] as the country struggled with an internal conflict between the government and a rebel group known as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF).[219] Sanctions were also placed on Liberia in March of 2001,[220] which had helped the RUF in Sierra Leone in accessing diamond fields to use for funding.[221] Sanctions were also placed on Cote D'Ivoire and on the Democratic People's Republic of Congo.[222] To increase the effectiveness of the sanctions and to ensure that there are no violations, the UN Security Council also created monitoring committees over the sanctions against Angola and Liberia, which would investigate and report violators in an effort to 'shame' them into adherence.[223]

Some of these sanctions are still in place, but are only having a muted effect. NGO's have alleged that anywhere from $9 to $23 million worth of diamonds are still being produced and leaked into the international market from Cote d'Ivoire alone.[224] Moreover, many critics argue that sanctions can worsen the humanitarian situation if poorly applied, by causing more economic desperation within a targeted country.[225]

In December of 2000, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution A/RES/55/56, which is commonly referred to as the Kimberley Process.[226] The Kimberley Process was created in response to UN reports which showed that despite sanctions, between 350 to 420 million in U.S. dollars' worth in Angolan diamonds were still being smuggled out of Angola, most likely by being transported into third-party countries.[227] There the diamonds would be mixed with legitimate ones so when they were sold the certificate of authenticity, required to

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[213] "Conflict Diamonds: Sanctions and War." United Nations. http://www.un.org/peace/africa/Diamond.html
[214] Ibid.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Michael Fleshman. "'Conflict Diamonds' Evade UN Sanctions." Africa Recovery. United Nations. December 2001. Vol. 15 No. 4. p. 15. http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol15no4/154diam.htm
[217] Horst Rustch. "Diamonds are the Heart of the Matter." UN Chronicle. Vol. 37, No. 2. http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2000/issue2/0200p47.htm
[218] "Conflict Diamonds: Sanctions and War." United Nations. http://www.un.org/peace/africa/Diamond.html
[219] Salil Tripathi. "International Regulation of Multinational Corporations." Oxford Developmental Studies. March 2005. Vol. 33, No. 1. p. 3
[220] Michael Fleshman. "'Conflict Diamonds' Evade UN Sanctions." Africa Recovery. United Nations. December 2001. Vol. 15 No. 4. p. 15. http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol15no4/154diam.htm
[221] Salil Tripathi. "International Regulation of Multinational Corporations." Oxford Developmental Studies. March 2005. Vol. 33, No. 1. p. 3
[222]
[223] Michael Fleshman. "'Conflict Diamonds' Evade UN Sanctions." Africa Recovery. United Nations. December 2001. Vol. 15 No. 4. p. 15. http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol15no4/154diam.htm
[224] "UN and Africa." United Nations Radio. January 18, 2007. http://www.un.org/av/radio/unandafrica/transcript135.htm
[225] Michael Fleshman. "'Conflict Diamonds' Evade UN Sanctions." Africa Recovery. United Nations. December 2001. Vol. 15 No. 4. p. 15. http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol15no4/154diam.htm
[226] Ibid.
[227] Salil Tripathi. "International Regulation of Multinational Corporations." Oxford Developmental Studies. March 2005. Vol. 33, No. 1. p. 3

accompany any rough diamond being exported from a country, would only reveal the legitimate diamond's origin.[228] The number of participants in the Kimberley Process continues to grow, and now includes 47 members collectively representing the interests of 71 countries.[229] Though the Kimberley Process has a very narrow definition of conflict diamonds, it still remains a useful tool for distinguishing legitimate buyers from illegitimate ones.

The United Nations has also made efforts to regulate the activity of transnational corporations that work with, and thus fund, producers of conflict diamonds. Today's diamond industry is unique from other trades, with an exclusive oligopoly and a largely self-regulated system that has proved to be extremely lucrative for participants.[230] De Beers in particular is the largest corporation in the industry, owning approximately 40% of the world's diamond mines and purchasing 70% of all rough, un-cut diamonds.[231] Further exclusivity is demonstrated by the significantly small number of sorting centers around the world. The largest is Antwerp, through which over 80% of diamonds will pass through during production, the process in which diamonds are polished, cut and manufactured into jewelry.[232] With profits over 100%, these few members of the diamond industry are reluctant to sacrifice their influence or their profits. Their self-regulation allows them withstand outside forces, thus frustrating global efforts to effect change from a business end.[233] However, in 2003 a sub-committee to the Committee on Human Rights issued the *Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights*, which applies the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and various laws of war to transnational corporations since such businesses are seen as "organs of society."[234] Therefore, companies that were once able to avoid the confines of international law are being held to stricter scrutiny.

The UN Security Council has also taken steps on the alarming role that children have come to play in these countries. In 2003, the Security Council called upon states to act pursuant to their obligations to the protection of children during in armed conflicts and requested a full report on the status of several countries named in the resolution which must reduce their use and exploitation of children and what efforts those countries have made to end the involvement of children in armed conflicts.[235]

Current Situation

UN efforts are currently focused on improving the effectiveness of the Kimberley Process, which has come under significant criticism for leaving serious holes through which conflict diamonds are still being exported into the global market. Many critics of the Kimberley Process note that its problems largely stem from the notion that it is "voluntary self-regulation."[236] The Kimberley Process was adopted by the countries of Southern Africa with the support of the United Nations and is therefore largely self-regulated.[237] Criticism has also fallen on the integrity of the process. In 2006, Ghana was accused of allowing for the trafficking of conflict diamonds from Cote D'Ivoire, through its channels, to circumvent restrictions.[238] While careful expert scrutiny might be able to distinguish the regional origins of one diamond from another, the process is not reliable enough to compensate for the massive influx of conflict diamonds that smuggling has enabled.[239] The General Assembly has passed recent resolutions calling for more internal controls, but little has been done to act on this demand.[240]

[228] Salil Tripathi. "International Regulation of Multinational Corporations." Oxford Developmental Studies. March 2005. Vol. 33, No. 1. p. 3

[229] "Number of Conflict Diamonds on the Global Market Decreases Says Chair of Kimberley Process." United Nations Radio News Service. December 4, 2006. http://www.un.org/radio/news/RS/nnF/nnFItemDesc.asp?id=6159

[230] Louis Goreux. "Conflict Diamonds." The World Bank. http://www.worldbank.org/afr/wps/wp13.pdf

[231] Ibid.

[232] Ibid.

[233] Ibid.

[234] Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises With Regard To Human Rights. Commission on Human Rights, Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. August 26, 2003.

[235] S/Res/1460. United Nations Security Council. January 30, 2003.

[236] "Diamonds in Conflict: Kimberley Process." Global Policy Forum. http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/diamond/kimberlindex.htm

[237] "UN and Africa." United Nations Radio. January 18, 2007. http://www.un.org/av/radio/unandafrica/transcript135.htm

[238] "The True Cost of Diamonds—Kimberley Process." Amnesty International. June 21, 2006. http://web.amnesty.org/pages/ec-diamonds-eng

[239] "UN and Africa." United Nations Radio. January 18, 2007. http://www.un.org/av/radio/unandafrica/transcript135.htm

[240] "Number of Conflict Diamonds on the Global Market Decreases Says Chair of Kimberley Process." United Nations Radio News Service. December 4, 2006. http://www.un.org/radio/news/RS/nnF/nnFItemDesc.asp?id=6159

These recent allegations against countries like Ghana shed some light on loopholes in the Kimberley Process.[241] Particularly, the allegations highlight how difficult it is to distinguish the origins of a particular diamond, thus enabling smugglers to undermine the purpose of UN sanctions and the market forces driven by fair trade ideals. Moreover, enforcement is lax. While conflict diamonds are still considered to be prevalent in the international market, no company has been formally charged with accepting conflict diamonds.[242] Furthermore, the Kimberley Process can only be applicable to the activity of corporations and militia factions. If a recognized national government is producing conflict diamonds, it is protected by the principle of state sovereignty and need not heed international law.[243]

While UN Sanctions and other measures that work to improve the security status of a country are important to stemming the unethical use of diamonds, separate work must also be done to specifically address the human rights violations themselves. When these human rights violations are addressed, they are often directed at the crimes caused by rebelling groups funded by conflict diamonds. Very little focus is placed on the labor practices that produce the diamonds.

Yet exporters of conflict diamonds do not act alone. Many international companies continue to fund Africans militias, and even some African governments in their exploitation of workers, as well as their military agendas, often violate the principles of human rights. Corporations are clearly not state actors, but are nonetheless are considered to be "organ[s] of society" that must adhere to the principles of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.[244] Furthermore, the UN Sub-Commission for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights drafted in 2003 the *United Nations Norms for Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises Regarding Human Rights*, which applies many aspects of the laws of war to international corporations, "specifically with regard to the use of forced labor and the use of security forces."[245] The Agreement notes that "transnational corporations and other business enterprises shall refrain from any activity which supports, solicits, or encourages States or any other entities to abuse human rights."[246] Though many of the companies that violate these obligations have already been recognized by the UN and have subsequently ceased their business, many critics have noted the need to improve the methods by which the UN investigates such business practices in order to uncover more illicit practices.[247]

The United Nations Security Council has considered interfering with the control and use of conflict diamonds and other natural resources as recent as 2007.[248] However, many nations vehemently oppose this initiative, arguing that such interference would undermine the sovereignty of Member States and, if within the purview of the UN at all, would be better suited to plenary bodies such as the General Assembly.[249]

Conclusion

Academics, politicians, and human rights workers have advocated for a number of different solutions to ending the role that diamonds play in civil conflicts. Many believe that the issue is integrally linked to government control. UN Under-Secretary-General Pascoe informed the Security Council in June 2007 that "with good governance and effective measures to ensure accountability and transparency, natural resources can be a great boon to a country and

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[241] "UN and Africa." United Nations Radio. January 18, 2007. http://www.un.org/av/radio/unandafrica/transcript135.htm

[242] Salil Tripathi. "International Regulation of Multinational Corporations." Oxford Developmental Studies. March 2005. Vol. 33, No. 1. p. 8.

[243] Ibid.

[244] Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises With Regard To Human Rights. Commission on Human Rights, Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. August 26, 2003.

[245] Salil Tripathi. "International Regulation of Multinational Corporations." Oxford Developmental Studies. March 2005. Vol. 33, No. 1. p.3.

[246] Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises With Regard To Human Rights. Commission on Human Rights, Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. August 26, 2003.

[247] Salil Tripathi. "International Regulation of Multinational Corporations." Oxford Developmental Studies. March 2005. Vol. 33, No. 1. p.3.

[248] "Security Council Examines Role of Natural Resources in Fueling Conflicts which Angers Some Countries." The International Herald Tribune. June 25, 2007. http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/06/26/news/UN-GEN-UN-Resource-Conflicts.php.

[249] Ibid.

contribute to peace and development."[250] Some UN representatives have called for embargoes to be placed on conflict diamonds and other natural resources in an effort to curb their effectiveness in raising money, and thus their attractiveness to warring factions.[251] Other advocates call for the establishment of programs and regulations for diamond producing countries to abide by that would in turn help to curb smuggling. As noted above, any UN involvement in a state's control of its natural resources has been labeled an issue best dealt with by the General Assembly. Even within the General Assembly, such a radical approach might be defeated by fears of impeding national sovereignty.

If the United Nations cannot itself work to institute controls and regulations for the African mining trade, then the UN can work to influence nation-states to do so. Governments can ensure that mines are operated by persons with a license or other authorization and that both operators and workers are properly trained.[252] Many important labor tactics should be put into place, including increasing the profit share retained by individual artisan miners and the placement of minimum standards for acceptable working conditions, including food supplies, reasonable and limited working hours and more sanitary conditions.[253] Programs could be developed to provide care for workers who fall ill or who are injured while working. Finally, the development of trade unions could help to bring these changes about, but the establishment of unions must overcome the migrant lifestyle and multiple languages of many mine workers.[254]

To promote the positive use of diamonds by revealing their contribution to a nation's economic growth and stability, local communities must be protected when diamond mines are discovered close by. Suggested government reforms include providing the local community with a part of the revenue from diamond sales, or by forcing mine operators to pay 'rent' for use of the community land.[255] A successful method has been employed in Sierra Leone, in which a fraction of the revenue from each exported diamond is donated to the Diamond Area Community Development Fund (DACD), which in turn gives money to local communities to finance development projects.[256]

Key to the global conflict diamond debate is the review and discussion of the Kimberley Process. As it stands, the Process lacks controls that can definitively determine each rough diamond's origin. One proposed solution is through a geological review. Geological surveys could be conducted to ascertain the volume of diamond production of specific countries, thus allowing monitoring agencies to ascertain whether actual production exceeds that amount.[257] By determining where a diamond has originated from, officials can verify whether or not a diamond has originated from a legal and licensed locale, or whether that diamond was smuggled from a banned or illegal source. Furthermore, another weakness of the Kimberley Process is the lack of enforcement. When it is conclusively determined that a diamond has been smuggled or cannot otherwise be accounted for, repercussions must be available. A recent UN panel has called for sanctions to be again placed on the Democratic People's Republic of Congo for this reason. However, many argue that sanctions do nothing but further stagnate an already troubled economy, while not addressing the real issue.

As long as there is a market for diamonds, and demand is high, then conflict diamonds and the human rights issues they present will continue to be of importance. The economic potential diamonds have in sustainable development is tremendous. Transforming that potential from the current state of the diamond markets will be difficult. However, until policies are reviewed, processes are changed, and enforcement occurs conflict diamonds will be produced with high human costs and little input to development.

Committee Directive

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250 Ibid.
251 Ibid.
252 "The Current State of Diamond Mining in the Mano River Basin and the Use of Diamonds as a Tool for Peace Building and Development." United Nations Development Programme. http://www.lr.undp.org/D4D_BackGroundPaperIA_presentation_EN.pdf
253 Ibid.
254 Ibid.
255 Ibid.
256 Ibid.
257 "UN and Africa." United Nations Radio. January 18, 2007. http://www.un.org/av/radio/unandafrica/transcript135.htm

In discussing methods for curbing the sale and production of conflict diamonds, delegates should remain aware of the nature of the commodity in question. While the diamond market is based on a rare natural resource that gives producers enormous leverage, diamonds are only valuable to the world economy because of cultural perceptions.[258] Diamonds are in no way a necessary good. Thus, unlike oil, the demand for diamonds could easily decrease simply by encouraging individual buyers to make ethical choices.

Delegates should first look to existing UN programs to find ways to improve on them. For example, the Kimberley Process needs to be strengthened to include those producers of conflict diamonds who do implement fair labor and refrain from child labor. While these countries might appear to be following guidelines and restrictions, they may also be providing avenues for illegitimate sources of conflict diamonds to reach international markets. Delegates might also look at ways to provide aid to people debilitated by conflict diamond mining, in terms of healthcare and rehabilitation, as well as helping them to become able to provide for their families again.

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[258] Salil Tripathi. "International Regulation of Multinational Corporations." Oxford Developmental Studies. March 2005. Vol. 33, No. 1. p. 8.