



Distinguished Delegates,

Welcome to the Southern Regional Model United Nations (SRMUN) XXIII, and the General Assembly Plenary (GA Plenary). It is a pleasure to have you with us and we look forward to a rewarding educational experience that you will hopefully remember for a long time. This committee is going to be challenging and sometimes frustrating, but we ask that you approach the topics with proper preparation and an open mind. We have a lot of work to do, so come prepared to work hard and solve some of the worlds' most pressing problems.

GA Plenary is a unique committee; it represents the first organ of the United Nations (UN), the central representative body of the organization, and the first body that has universal membership. As representatives of the GA Plenary, a variety of topics across a broad spectrum can be discussed, with the committee as a whole having more influence than some others within the UN. A wide range of major international legislation has come out of the body and many important benchmarks are set for the coming years. Since its inception, the GA Plenary has made great strides to ensure that most decisions are made by consensus and we are going to stress the same for the committee. This year we have a variety of topics that highlight major issues facing the international population today.

The topics that the General Assembly Plenary will discuss are:

- I. Assessing the Impact of Long-Term Refugee Camps, Squatter Villages and Slums in Developing Member States;
- II. Resource Security: Combatting the Depletion of Natural Resources and Addressing the Need for Renewable Energy; and
- III. Developing Strategies for Disaster Risk Reduction and Economic Mobility in a Turbulent Economy.

Preparations for the conference should focus on a complete reading of the guide that has been provided in the following pages, a review of UN work on the topics at hand, and then specific information on each of the topics that are specific to your assigned Member State. Spend some time really digging into the topics and developing your unique perspective that you are going to bring to the committee. Delegates are going to submit one position paper that covers each of the three topics. This position paper should be no longer than two single-spaced pages, and should present an argument meant to convince or persuade the committee to a course of action yet keeping with the point of view of your respective Member State. Position papers should provide insight into the policy and position of each Member State and outline the steps that your delegation intends to take to address the issues at the conference. A strong and well-developed position paper provides an excellent demonstration of preparedness for the conference staff. It is important that you present a clear and concise statement that takes all sides of the issue into account and provides viable and unique solutions to the worlds' problems. There is more detailed information for writing position papers on the SRMUN website ([www.srmun.org](http://www.srmun.org)).

**All position papers MUST be submitted by Friday October 26, 2012, by 11:59 PM EST using the submission system on the SRMUN website.**

Once again, welcome to the GA Plenary and we look forward to working with all of you at the conference this year. Please do not hesitate to ask if you have any questions or concerns.

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## Committee History of the United Nations General Assembly Plenary

Of the after effects of World War II, destruction and disorder led 51 world leaders to reevaluate the needs of the international community and thus founded the United Nations (UN) with the goals of maintaining peace and promoting international cooperation. Coming fully into force on 24 October 1945, the UN has served as an international discussion forum for critical global issues. The General Assembly (GA) is one of the six principle organs of the UN as stated by Article 7 of the Charter of the UN and is the only universally representative committee, seating all 193 Members of the UN as well as Permanent Observer Member States.<sup>1</sup> According to Chapter IV of the Charter of the United Nations "the function of the General Assembly is to discuss, debate, and make recommendations on a range of subjects pertaining to international peace and security--including disarmament, human rights, international law, and peaceful arbitration between disputing nations."<sup>2</sup>

The General Assembly (GA), under the President or the Secretary General, is considered the main deliberative body of the United Nations. Of the vast spectrum of duties the GA has, some are considered to be more direct action and others more indirect action. It is tasked with the election of all ten non-permanent members of the Security Council (SC) as well as the members of other councils/organs. Also, using recommendations made by the SC, the GA is responsible for election of the United Nations Secretary General-potentially the most important position a single individual can hold in the UN. Since the creation of the UN, the GA Plen has elected eight Secretary-Generals : (1) Trygve Lie of Norway, (2) Dag Hammarskjöld of Sweden, (3) Myanmar diplomat, U Thant, (4) Kurt Waldheim of Austria, (5) Peruvian diplomat Javier Perez de Cuellar, (6) Boutros Boutros-Ghali of Egypt, (7) Ghanaian diplomat Kofi Annan, and (8) current Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the Republic of Korea.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the UN GA also has to consider and approve the budget of the UN.<sup>4</sup>

Some of the additional tasks of the GA are consideration and recommendation of any issues concerning the status of international peace and security, creation and commencement of international studies fomenting political cooperation, and finally, make recommendations with regards to the settlement of international disputes affecting diplomatic and friendly relations between member nations.<sup>5</sup> The General Assembly's resolutions are not legally binding upon Member States. However, through its recommendations it can focus world attention on important issues, generate international cooperation and, in some cases, its decisions can lead to legally binding treaties and conventions.<sup>6</sup>

Given the numerous responsibilities that the GA has, it is divided into subsidiary organs that deal with issues at a more specific level. The meeting of all UN member states as well as Permanent Observers is called the General Assembly Plenary (GA Plen) and then following are its six main committees: First Committee, Disarmament and International Security (DISEC); Second Committee, Economic and Financial (ECOFIN); Third Committee, Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian (SOCHUM); Fourth Committee, Special Political and Decolonization (SPECPOL); the Fifth Committee: Administrative and Budgetary; and, Sixth Committee: Legal. Besides these main committees, the GA has other subsidiary bodies and agencies that can be classified as commissions, boards, councils and panels, working groups, and "other".<sup>7</sup>

The first ever session of GA Plen was held on 10 January 1946 in Westminster Central Hall in London and following on 24 January 1946 the GA Plen adopted its first resolution which maintained its focus to peaceful uses of atomic energy and the elimination of atomic and other weapons of mass destruction.<sup>8</sup> Since then, the General Assembly has pioneered some of the most significant diplomatic documents

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<sup>1</sup> "Council on Foreign Relations." *Council on Foreign Relations*. Web. 22 Feb. 2012.  
<http://www.cfr.org/un/role-un-general-assembly/p13490>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Former Secretaries General  
<http://www.un.org/sg/formersgs.shtml>

<sup>4</sup> "United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly." *UN News Center*. UN. Web. 22 Feb. 2012.  
<http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>

<sup>5</sup> "Charter, United Nations, Chapter IV: The General Assembly." *UN News Center*. UN. Web. 22 Feb. 2012.  
<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter4.shtml>

<sup>6</sup> "United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly." *UN News Center*. UN. Web. 22 Feb. 2012.  
<http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> McCormick, John H. "The General Assembly." *The United Nations Today*. New York: United Nations Dept. of

ever. Just two years after its initial sessions, the GA Plen created the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), containing thirty articles discussing and explaining the UN's view on human rights. Said document proclaimed the "inherent dignity" and "equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family."<sup>9</sup> The issue of human rights remains a critical one, but the efforts made by the UN GA in the form of the UDHR have significantly aided the international desire for true universal human rights.

In 2000, the General Assembly named its 55<sup>th</sup> session as the Millennium Assembly. At the millennium summit held the same year the then Secretary-General Kofi Annan, revealed the United Nation's Millennium Declaration, which set forth the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).<sup>10</sup> On 18 September 2000, the GA voted and passed A/RES/55/2. The MDGs consist of eight global goals that the UN aspires to complete at an international level by 2015. These goals range from eradicating poverty and hunger, implementing better environmental and sustainable practices, and creating a global partnership.<sup>11</sup> While there has been significant progress over the last twelve years, efforts remain in order to successfully reach all eight of the MDGs by the deadline of 2015; nevertheless, these have served as a clear vision for what needs to be done as well as an international source of motivation.

The 66<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly was held in 2011 and was presided by Nassir Al-Nasser of Qatar who served as the Committee President.<sup>12</sup> This session focused on issues such as prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, "desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication"<sup>13</sup>, and a Commemoration ceremony marking the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, amongst many other things. The 67<sup>th</sup> session of the GA will take place in between the months of September and December 2012.

The General Assembly is the only of the six principle organs of the United Nations in which every one of its total 193 Member States is represented and has one vote.

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Public Information, 2008. 17-22. Print.

<sup>9</sup> "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UDHR, Declaration of Human Rights, Human Rights Declaration, Human Rights Charter, The Un and Human Rights." *UN News Center*. UN. Web. 22 Feb. 2012.

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr>

<sup>10</sup> "Council on Foreign Relations." *Council on Foreign Relations*. Web. 22 Feb. 2012.

<http://www.cfr.org/un/role-un-general-assembly/p13490>

<sup>11</sup> "United Nations Millennium Development Goals." *UN News Center*. UN. Web. 22 Feb. 2012.

<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>

<sup>12</sup> "United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly." *UN News Center*. UN. Web. 22 Feb. 2012.

<http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/secretariat.shtml>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

# I: Assessing the Impact of Long-Term Refugee Camps, Squatter Villages and Slums in Developing Member States

## *Introduction*

According to the United Nations-Habitat program, there are 924 million people currently living in urban slums and squatter villages.<sup>14</sup> They are found on six continents and in many of the world's largest cities including Los Angeles, Mexico City and Shanghai. However, the developing world is where the vast majority of these settlements are located. The same survey by the UN-Habitat found that 870 million slum-dwellers and squatters live in the developing world alone. The largest concentration is found in South-central Asia where 262 million people live in these types of settlements. The other side to this problem is found in official responses to humanitarian issues, namely that of refugee camps. The United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) counts twelve million people in camps around the world out of a total of thirty-five million refugees.<sup>15</sup> Of these, estimates show that ninety percent of these are in long-term camp situations.<sup>16</sup> The oldest camps have been in existence since the 1940s stemming from the civil war in Bangladesh and the Israel-Palestine conflict. The causes for these settlements and camps include rapid urbanization, conflict, high fertility rates, natural disasters and a lack of government control. The problem is only expected to become worse as conflicts such as the civil war in Syria and continued effects of the worldwide economic downturn afflict more individuals. Additionally, UN-Habitat notes a new trend as poverty is beginning to urbanize and poverty growth is highest in the cities. The body states that, "The rapidity and enormous volume of this rural-to-urban migration intensifies slum formation. City planning and management systems are unable to adequately cope with the massive population influx."<sup>17</sup>

No matter what the cause, the presence of these settlements is large task for the international community and an important aspect of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This is detailed in Target 11 of Goal 7 "Ensuring Environmental Sustainability" of the MDGs which states, "By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers."<sup>18</sup> This is the task that the UN General Assembly Plenary is asked to address. There are many aspects to this crisis and they will be discussed below. First, a discussion on definitions of each particular type of settlement is necessary.

## *Definitions*

The terms "slum" and "squatter village" are often used interchangeably in the academic literature. However, each highlights a key aspect of the general problem. Slums are identified by the UN-Habitat as, "a contiguous settlement where the inhabitants are characterized as having inadequate housing and basic services. A slum is often not recognized and addressed by the public authorities as an integral or equal part of the city."<sup>19</sup> Slums are often the result of previously respectable areas being neglected and divided for low-income housing. This often occurs in the old city centers such as in Cairo or on the fringes of town. In these cases, the settlements are legal even if the people have no legal right to that property.

Squatter villages in contrast are completely illegal sites. The World Health Organization categorizes these as informal settlements along with slums. They are generally considered to be, "residential areas where a group of housing units has been constructed on land to which the occupants have no legal

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<sup>14</sup> UN-Habitat, "Improving the Lives of 100 Million Slum Dwellers."

<http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=1157>

<sup>15</sup> Hilalry Mayell, "World Refugee Total 35 Million. National Geographic.

[http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/06/0616\\_030616\\_refugee1.html](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/06/0616_030616_refugee1.html)

<sup>16</sup> Rebecca Napier-Moore, "Entrenched Relations and the Permanence of Long-Term Refugee Camps." University of Sussex Center for Migration Research. [www.sussex.ac.uk/migration/documents/mwp28.pdf](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/migration/documents/mwp28.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> UN-Habitat, "What are Slums and Why do They Exist?"

[http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/4625\\_51419\\_GC%2021%20What%20are%20slums.pdf](http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/4625_51419_GC%2021%20What%20are%20slums.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> UN-Habitat, "Improving the Lives of 100 Million Slum Dwellers."

<http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=1157>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

claim, or which they occupy illegally.”<sup>20</sup> Often created by refugees or citizens moving into the cities, this type of settlement lacks the previously standing structures found in slums. Nevertheless, they suffer from the same problems that slum dwellers do, most notably overcrowding and access to clean water. Squatters often create houses out of whatever materials can be found and they rarely meet most if not all basic requirements of housing.<sup>21</sup> Some squatter villages can become more permanent over time such as the barrio of La Carpio in Costa Rica. Here some brick and mortar buildings replace those of cardboard and sheet metal. Most of these settlements are found on public land, but the area is often considered unsatisfactory for living by the general populace. This most often includes areas prone to flooding and landfills.<sup>22</sup>

For definition purposes, a refugee is, “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.”<sup>23</sup> Refugee camps are temporary locations designed to provide basic necessities to these people until they can return home. However, the current situation leads to long-term camps where refugees can spend decades. In the Amman New Camp in Jordan, the population has stabilized to the point where they are the home to one of Jordan’s leading soccer teams.<sup>24</sup> Many camps are also now home to multiple generations who know nothing beyond life in the camp.<sup>25</sup> Refugee camps suffer several problems shared with slums and squatter villages, namely access to basic sanitation and water. This is especially true for ones beyond capacity and hastily set up camps. Another major issue is the violence and human trafficking that can accompany many of the camps.<sup>26</sup>

### ***Cause I: The Urban Explosion and Developing States***

There are two main causes for the recent rise in the number and size of slums, squatter villages and refugee camps. The first of these is a phenomenon known as the “urban explosion.” In 1950, barely thirty percent of the world lived in cities. Currently half of the world’s population is now urbanized with projections showing it rising to sixty percent by 2030.<sup>27</sup> The reasons behind this migration are numerous but fall into two main categories. The first are known as push factors as they tend to drive people away from rural areas. This includes natural disasters such as floods and famines. It also includes a lack of access to education, healthcare and other necessities. Conflict is also a major push factor and will be discussed further below. The other category is known as pull factors. This includes better opportunity, access to necessities and higher income.<sup>28</sup> All of these can be clearly seen on the African continent, where conflict, desertification and urban opportunity have transformed many towns into sprawling metropolises.

Despite all of these factors being found worldwide, the developing world suffers from a magnified effect of these problems. Most importantly, their populations are already considerably closer to the poverty line than many states and more susceptible to economic problems. The greatest urban growth will also occur in the developing world where there is already four times the number of cities of over

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<sup>20</sup> World Health Organization, “People Living in Informal Settlements.”

<http://www.who.int/ceh/indicators/informalsettlements.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Mariana Fix, Pedro Arantes, & Giselle M. Tanaka, “Understanding Slums: Case Studies for the Global Report 2003: Sao-Paulo, Brazil.” UN-Habitat.

[http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu-projects/Global\\_Report/cities/saopaulo.htm](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu-projects/Global_Report/cities/saopaulo.htm)

<sup>22</sup> “La Carpio: Village of Hope.” Costa Rican Humanitarian Foundation. <http://www.crhf.org/lacarpio.html>

<sup>23</sup> UNHCR, “Refugee: Flowing Across Borders.” <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c125.html>

<sup>24</sup> Dag Tuastad, “Al-Wihdat: The Pride of the Palestinians in Jordan.” Middle East Institute.

<kms1.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/...f83e.../chapter+5.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> William J. Garvelink & Farha Tahri, “The Dadaab Refugee Complex: A Powder Keg and It’s Giving off Sparks.” Center for Strategic & International Studies

<http://csis.org/publication/dadaab-refugee-complex-powder-keg-and-its-giving-sparks>

<sup>26</sup> UN News Centre, “UN Agency Seeks Solution for Long-term Refugees in Eastern Sudan.”

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40936&Cr=Sudan&Cr1>

<sup>27</sup> Mark Montgomery, “Analyzing Urban Poverty in the Developing World.” SUNY-Stony Brook and the Population Council. [www.prb.org/Publications/PopulationBulletins/.../urbanization.aspx](http://www.prb.org/Publications/PopulationBulletins/.../urbanization.aspx)

<sup>28</sup> “Migration” iGCSE Geography Page, Lancaster.

<http://igcse-geography-lancaster.wikispaces.com/1.2+MIGRATION>

one million people.<sup>29</sup> As a result, the developing world is especially linked to the factors that lead to urban poverty, the incentives to move to the cities and rapid population growth that together cannot be handled adequately.

### ***Cause II: Conflict and Long-term Displacement of Individuals***

The second major cause for the current situation is conflict. This includes warfare both between Member States and internally through civil strife. These conflicts often last for a considerable amount of time with recent statistics stating that the average duration of modern wars being fifteen years.<sup>30</sup> Refugee agencies are unlikely to repatriate refugees until the situation calms down which creates long-term refugee camps. Today, 90% of camps are currently “Protracted refugee situations” which are camps that have been in existence for at least five years.<sup>31</sup> This count does not include the Palestinians whose camps are among the oldest and are run by their own agency. Those who manage to settle outside of camps are not recognized as citizens and thus become “stateless.” These people are the ones most likely to find themselves in squatter villages. As a result, conflict plays a major role in the development and continuation of inadequate housing.

The problems associated with conflict driven camps and slums are numerous but include the overarching concerns of statelessness and security. For many refugees and squatters, there is simply no other option afforded to them. Developing states rarely have the resources to successfully handle the number of people in these settlements and will not offer them many basic rights. Refugees are often unable to leave camps creating economic dependence on aid organizations.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, destination states will only classify themselves as “transient states” meaning they have no stake in what ultimately happens to squatters and refugees. As a result, these groups cannot be a part of their current state of residence but cannot return home.<sup>33</sup> When this situation is repeated for generations, the effects are magnified. These create a series of security problems that often give these types of settlements a poor reputation. This leads to even fewer opportunities to integration.

Security is probably one of the most important issues for this committee to address. Conflict tends to spill across borders and thus violence often follows the refugees and other landless groups. The ease of acquisition of small arms in most developing countries exacerbates this issue. The other side of this problem is that many people cannot find work and their idleness leads to intercommunity violence, Relations between nearby citizens or groups which are economically ahead are rarely positive and tend to deteriorate over time. As one security personal told a refugee who had been raped, “You are raping our trees, so you got what you deserved.”<sup>34</sup> The longer the refugee situation lasts, the more entrenched these feelings become. The situation in many ways mirrors post-colonial states where artificial boundaries and colonial prejudices continue in the new governments and societies.<sup>35</sup>

### ***UN-Habitat: Addressing the Issue of Worldwide Slums***

To address the issues above, the United Nations (UN) created the UN Human Settlements Programme, known as UN-HABITAT in 1978. Originally created during a conference known as Habitat I, the agency had poor funding or success until the Millennium Declaration. The addition of new commitments and ideas from Habitat II held in Istanbul in 1996 also helped. UN-HABITAT is

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<sup>29</sup> Mark Montgomery, “Analyzing Urban Poverty in the Developing World.” SUNY-Stony Brook and the Population Council. [www.prb.org/Publications/PopulationBulletins/.../urbanization.aspx](http://www.prb.org/Publications/PopulationBulletins/.../urbanization.aspx)

<sup>30</sup> John O’Loughlin, “The Political Geography of Conflict: Civil Wars in the Hegemonic Shadow.” University of Colorado at Boulder. [http://www.colorado.edu/ibs/pec/johno/pub/War\\_Book\\_web.htm](http://www.colorado.edu/ibs/pec/johno/pub/War_Book_web.htm)

<sup>31</sup> Rebecca Napier-Moore, “Entrenched Relations and the Permanence of Long-Term Refugee Camps.” University of Sussex Center for Migration Research. [www.sussex.ac.uk/migration/documents/mwp28.pdf](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/migration/documents/mwp28.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> William J. Garvelink & Farha Tahri, “The Dadaab Refugee Complex: A Powder Keg and It’s Giving off Sparks.” Center for Strategic & International Studies <http://csis.org/publication/dadaab-refugee-complex-powder-keg-and-its-giving-sparks>

<sup>33</sup> Rebecca Napier-Moore, “Entrenched Relations and the Permanence of Long-Term Refugee Camps.”

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Elavie Ndura, “Transcending the Majority Rights and Minority Protection Dichotomy Through Multicultural Reflective Citizenship in the African Great Lakes Region.” <http://www.google.com/search?q=rwanda+post+colonial+racism&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a>

mandated to, “promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.”<sup>36</sup> UN-HABITAT has been extremely involved in the issue of slums, refugee camps and other unstable housing. The organization published two major reports in 2003, namely *The Challenge of Slums* and *Slums of the World: The Face of Urban Poverty in the New Millennium*.<sup>37</sup>

The most important goal of UN-HABITAT is their implementation of Target 11 of Goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals. Their focus can be broken down into five dimensions. The first is access to safe water. Among the indicators the UN-HABITAT looks for include how expensive is clean water, how long it takes to gather water and if sufficient quantities can be allotted to each household. The second dimension is access to sanitation. This includes limiting sharing among households and sufficient capacity. The third dimension is secure tenure or whether or not deeds exist or the tenets are protected from eviction. The fourth dimension is the durability of this housing. Indicators include not only how long structures can last but also if they are built in a hazardous areas such as near railroad tracks or landfills. The fifth and final dimension is that of sufficient living space. According to standards set by UN-HABITAT, anything above three people per room is inadequate.<sup>38</sup> Since the development of these goals, UN-HABITAT has made progress in alleviating living conditions for the low income people worldwide. According to their recent report *Status of the World's Cities 2010/2011*, 227 million people have escaped slum conditions since 2000, essentially meeting Target 11. In developing countries, nearly 22 million leave slums every year.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, UN-HABITAT stated that, “The progress made on the slum target has not been nearly enough to counter the growth of informal settlements in the developing world.”<sup>40</sup> In fact, the number of slum dwellers grew by 55 million from 2000 to 2010. Thus, the organization will continue its fight against the rapidly increasing number and size of slums and squatter villages worldwide. One of the more recent projects is known as the Slum Upgrading Facility Programme. Originally started in four countries, the programme utilizes, “one-time grant funding to set up operations and capitalise a revolving credit enhancement fund to support slum upgrading projects desired by the community.”<sup>41</sup>

### ***UNHCR and Long-term Refugee Camps***

The other major agency that is related to this topic is The UN High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), which is the chief refugee agency of the UN. It was founded in 1950 to help with displaced peoples from the Second World War. Currently, the UNHCR works with more than 30 million people in the following areas: “14.7 million internally displaced people, 10.5 million refugees, 3.1 million returnees, 3.5 million stateless people, more than 837,000 asylum seekers and more than 1.3 other persons of concern”<sup>42</sup> The UNHCR considers long-term camps to be “protracted refugee situations,” which were largely undocumented for decades. When a number of protracted conflicts erupted, the UNHCR launched a Protracted Refugee Situations Project as a source of research on the issue. After 200, at least five projects were created to address aspects of protracted refugee situations including steps towards self-reliance and local integration.<sup>43</sup>

The UNHCR has had some success in ending protracted refugee situations but they have been limited in size and scope. Successful local integration programs in Tanzania resolved a decades-long problem

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<sup>36</sup> “History.” UN-HABITAT. <http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?typeid=19&catid=10&cid=927>

<sup>37</sup> “Publications: Search.” UN-HABITAT.

<http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/searchResults.aspx?sort=relevance&page=search&searchField=all&searchstring=slums&x=0&y=0>

<sup>38</sup> “Guide to Monitoring Target 11: Improving the Lives of 100 Million Slum Dwellers.” UN-HABITAT and the Global Urban Conservatory. <http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=1157>

<sup>39</sup> “Urban Trends: 227 Million Escape Slums.” UN-HABITAT.

<http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?cid=8051&catid=7&typeid=46>

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> “Slum Upgrading Facility.” UN-HABITAT. <http://www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=542>

<sup>42</sup> “History.” UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cbc.html>

<sup>43</sup> Jeff Crisp, “No Solutions in Sight: The Problem of Protracted Refugee Situations in Africa.” UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opedocPDFViewer.html?docid=3e2d66c34&query=protracted%20refugee%20situations>

with Burundian refugees.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, the Self-Reliance Strategy has showed signs of hope in Uganda.<sup>45</sup> Of the refugees under their mandate, scarcely 180,000 were repatriated in 2009, a new low from an average of half a million.<sup>46</sup> The problem resembles that of slums, the number of refugees is outpacing repatriation. A report by the UNHCR notes that 43 million people were forcibly displaced in 2009 and many of those that did not end up as refugees became stateless people, others living in slums. Many protracted situations are only getting worse, as continued conflict in Somalia and South Sudan makes two of the largest sources of refugees continue to grow.

### ***Case Study I: La Carpio, Costa Rica***

The first case to be noted is that of the barrio of La Carpio, located outside the capital of Costa Rica, San Jose. La Carpio was originally established when illegal Nicaraguan refugees poured into Costa Rica, feeling war and natural disasters.<sup>47</sup> With no place to go, they began settling on unoccupied land near the city's landfill. By the late 1990s, nearly 34,000 people lived in La Carpio. With an area of less than three hundred square kilometers, the barrio soon struggled to house its burgeoning population even by the worst standards. As a result, many people began constructing housing on dangerous slopes or closer to the landfill. Through some activism, the illegal settlement now has some very limited schooling, health clinics and a paved road. Nevertheless, statistics show that half of the population is below the poverty line. Relations with ethnic Costa Ricans are also very poor with natives generally looking down upon them and blaming Nicaraguans and other immigrants for the ills in the state's society.<sup>48</sup>

The example of La Carpio is important for two reasons. Foremost, it shows that it takes only a short amount of time for such entrenched issues to develop. If the global community does not act in a proactive manner, illegal settlements such as La Carpio become extremely difficult situations to resolve. Immigrants have taken what little they have and placed it into the settlement and xenophobic issues with native Costa Ricans make it nearly impossible for them to blend with the rest of society.<sup>49</sup> However, the location and size of La Carpio makes it a very poor choice for long-term settlement. As a result, the problems of La Carpio are going to largely continue without massive investment and public works.

Second, the example of La Carpio hints at the problem of size. With nearly a billion people in illegal settlements, slums, and refugee camps, the issue of dealing with such massive numbers often overwhelms most efforts. Smaller settlements are often ignored, not out of choice or ignorance, but simply because there is more pressing needs elsewhere. The issue before this committee is to design and implement solutions that address all aspects of the problem, including new and smaller settlements like La Carpio.

### ***Case Study II: Dadaab Refugee Camp***

The second case study involves the Dadaab refugee camp in northeastern Kenya. Set up following the civil war in Somalia in the early 1990s, Dadaab was originally designed to hold 90,000 refugees.<sup>50</sup> As of 2012, the number of registered refugees stands at 463,000 people in five distinct camps that make up the greater Dadaab compound. Of these five sub-units, one is was recently approved but experienced flooding that forced refugees to flee their own camp. Another is not actually completed but has 12,000

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<sup>44</sup> "UNHCR Meeting Seeks Solutions to End Long-Term Exile of Millions of Refugees." UNHCR.

<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=493fa95c4&query=long%20term%20camps#hit2>

<sup>45</sup> Jeff Crisp, "No Solutions in Sight: The Problem of Protracted Refugee Situations in Africa."

<sup>46</sup> Number of Refugees Returning Home drops to Lowest in 20 Years-UN Report." UN News Centre.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=35026>

<sup>47</sup> "La Carpio: Village of Hope." Costa Rican Humanitarian Foundation. <http://www.crhf.org/lacarpio.html>

<sup>48</sup> Lynn Schneider, "La Carpio: Exposing the Hidden Violence and Marginalization of Poverty in Costa Rica."

*InsideCostaRica*. <http://insidecostarica.com/dailynews/2008/october/04/nac04.htm>

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> "Dadaab: World's Biggest Refugee Camp 20 years old." UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/4f439dbb9.html>



people living there.<sup>51</sup> Add in the unregistered people on the outside areas, the number is over a half million people. Dadaab represents one of the worst situations as the long-term status has created poor relations with native Kenyans as has been described above. Within Dadaab, you can now find thousands of third-generation refugees whose parents never knew Somalia or any of the countries that these people fled from.<sup>52</sup>

Many of the problems at Dadaab: lack of facilities, camp safety and security and lack of cooperation have been detailed in earlier sections. One of the unmentioned problems that is pertinent for this committee is the understanding that Dadaab represents just about half of all refugees and other forced migrants within the borders of Kenya.<sup>53</sup> According to UNHCR statistics, there will be over 1.1 million persons of concern in Kenya by Dec. 2013. 80,000 lived in the nearby Kakuma camp and there were 52,000 refugees in the capital of Nairobi.<sup>54</sup> For most refugees, relations with native Kenyans are very poor, meaning that they have no hope of assimilating into greater Kenyan society. Successful attempts at resettlement into the host country have been noted (Tanzania) however, this solution is not feasible when one examines the situation on the ground. Like most large cities, Kenya's capital of Nairobi has a very large slum population numbering at least 300,000.<sup>55</sup> Many of these people moved to find employment or a better life. If attempts are made to settle the half million people of Dadaab within Kenya, where will they go? How can the international community prevent them from joining the hundreds of thousands already in improper housing with low access to jobs, education, and healthcare? As a result, this committee needs to look beyond simple resettlement plans and design and implement long-term plans that address each step of the problem. Additionally, delegates are encouraged to look at what can be done to alleviate immediate problems such as overcrowding in camps.

### *Case Study III: Slums of Mumbai*

The final case study will be that of the Indian city of Mumbai. Like many megalopolis, Mumbai has a large slum population that accounts for half of its almost twenty million people.<sup>56</sup> Unlike most fast-growing cities, Mumbai has been working for nearly twenty years to alleviate some of the abject poverty found in its slums. This case study is designed to show some of the measures that have found real-world success as well as programs that have not been able to accomplish their desired goals. Slums in Mumbai can be dated to the rise of factories and the opportunity that they provided the mostly rural population.<sup>57</sup> Until 1970, the Indian government destroyed many illegal settlements. However, beginning in the 1970s, government officials began registering slum dwellers and multiple projects to improve conditions were made. The first was Slum Upgrading Program (SUP) which began in 1971 but reached its main focus from 1985 until 1991 under the Prime Minister's Grant Project (PMGP). The main focus of this plan was to give legalize the illegal settlements and give the slum dwellers a sense of protection. Under the PMGP, government officials planned to resettle many of the inhabitants and redevelop the largest slum known as Dharavi, but this was widely criticized.<sup>58</sup> Instead, the plan largely helped with individual redevelopment projects. This produced only localized success and the project made no far reaching effects due to increased costs as well as the ability for tenants to pay their portion of the redevelopment loans.

The SUP was followed by the Slum Redevelopment Scheme (SRD) (1991-1995).<sup>59</sup> The SRS was mainly a private sector initiative where construction companies were able to exceed maximum building standards and sell the properties thus turning a profit. Those people already on the land had to pay just

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<sup>51</sup> William J. Garvelink & Farha Tahri, "The Dadaab Refugee Complex: A Powder Keg and It's Giving off Sparks." Center for Strategic & International Studies. <http://csis.org/publication/dadaab-refugee-complex-powder-keg-and-its-giving-sparks>

<sup>52</sup> "Dadaab: World's Biggest Refugee Camp 20 years old." UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/4f439dbb9>.

<sup>53</sup> "2012 UNHCR Country Operations Profile-Kenya." UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e483a16.html>

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> "Nairobi Slum Inventory." IRIN News. [www.irinnews.org/pdf/nairobi\\_inventory.pdf](http://www.irinnews.org/pdf/nairobi_inventory.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> "Mumbai's Quest for 'World City' Status." UN-Habitat: Asia-Pacific Conference on Housing and Human Settlements. <http://www.google.com/search?q=mumbai%27s+quest+for+world+city&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a>

<sup>57</sup> "History." Slum Rehabilitation Authority. <http://www.sra.gov.in/>

<sup>58</sup> Prof. Vinit Mukhija, "Enabling Slum Redevelopment in Mumbai: Policy Paradox in Practice." *Housing Studies* (2001) 18(4) [www.spsr.ucla.edu/UP/.../EnablingRedevelopment\\_HStudies\\_.pdf](http://www.spsr.ucla.edu/UP/.../EnablingRedevelopment_HStudies_.pdf) 213-222.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

twenty-three percent of the construction cost and received medium-sized housing.<sup>60</sup> This program also failed to due to concerns by the private sector as well as bureaucratic red tape.<sup>61</sup> In 1995, the SRD was replaced by the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme (SRS). This program relaxed some of the requirements placed on the private sector as well as increasing the number of slums dwellers who could be helped by the program. In addition, unusually high property prices in Mumbai helped make the SRS considerably more feasible than previous attempts. Nevertheless, the SRS hit many of the same problems that its predecessors had; namely delays and private sector skepticism. However, all three plans revealed an important concept that is important for this committee to understand. Under each plan, the people living in slums expressed a desire to improve their housing even helping pay some fo the costs as long as they would receive rights to the land.

Other more specialized programs have also seen some successes. The World Bank supported Slum Sanitation Program which was launched in 1995, helped provide 5,100 public toilets in over three hundred community toilet blocks (CTBs).<sup>62</sup> Slum dwellers also worked with local police to set up community police stations run by the local inhabitants.<sup>63</sup>

The importance of this case study is the fact that the local governments and the international community has made attempts to alleviate the problems facing slums. However, the best practices still elude them. Private sector action has been found to help provide the capital, but it is difficult to obtain. Developing states simply do not have the resources and most lack a mature private sector to help out. International donations and expertise are needed as well as clear plan to address each aspect outlined in Target 11 of Goal 7 of the MDGs.

### ***Conclusion***

The problems that slums, squatter villages, and refugee camps are faced with have been common threads. Population control, security, sustainable development, human rights, and globalization are all factors in the cause, spread and degradation of these types of settlements. The United Nations has been hard at work to make sure that the solutions to these problems will also improve these settlements. This is truly a global problem and thus requires a global response. This is not simply a question of alleviating poverty but of creating sustainable settlements that improve both the people who live there but also the countries they live in.

### ***Committee Directive***

The current state of slums, squatter villages and refugee camps demands immediate action from the international community. The UN General Assembly is ideal body to address such problems. At the same time, delegates must realize that many different strategies have already been used to address this situation with limited but notable success. Thus, it is imperative that all delegates do additional research to see what has been done to address slums, squatter settlements and refugee camps, both from their own country or internationally. The Technical Appendix to this document is an excellent place to start.

Delegates are also encouraged to avoid avoid creating committee, commissions, or other bodies to deal with the problems facing these settlements. Many of organizations such as the World Bank, UN-Habitat, as well as state organizations like India's Slum Rehabilitation Authority provide the framework for implementing solutions. Instead, delegates are encouraged to seek out new programs, mandates, and ideas that will be make the General Assembly and potentially these other bodies work better. Most importantly, delegates should seek consensus on their solutions. If these settlements are a global problem, then it will take the full UN body to truly solve the issues.

Lastly, delegates should make note three things that can help create solutions to these problems. First, their solutions do not have to wide-reaching. There are many facets to each issue that these settlements

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> "The Mumbai Slum Sanitation Program: Partnering with Slum Communities for Sustainable Sanitation in a Megalopolis." World Bank. [esa.un.org/iys/docs/san\\_lib\\_docs/WSP-Mumbai.pdf](http://esa.un.org/iys/docs/san_lib_docs/WSP-Mumbai.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> AN Roy, "Community Police Stations in Mumbai's Slums." *Environment & Urbanization Journal*. <http://eau.sagepub.com/content/16/2/135>

face including security, basic needs, population control, microfinance, and camp management. These cannot be resolved in one resolution. Thus, it is important to work on each issue. Second, it is important that delegates find sources of funding for their ideas. In most cases, there are reliable sources of funding that can be used (and has been used in the past) to deal with these problems. Third and finally, delegates are encouraged to work together within the committee to find the best solutions. The UN General Assembly is one of the largest committees at SRMUN, which provides the opportunity to examine ideas and gain feedback. Make sure to use the ideas of your fellow delegates and if necessary combine ideas. If these ideas are considered, the committee will be able to better address these issues presented before it.

## **II: Resource Security: Combating the Depletion of Natural Resources and Addressing the Need for Renewable Energy**

*"If we fail today to make water an instrument of peace, it might become tomorrow a major source of conflict," –UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova<sup>64</sup>*

### ***Introduction***

The year 2012 is declared by the United Nations General Assembly as the International year of Sustainable Energy for all.<sup>65</sup> Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon is embracing this declaration by leading a Sustainable Energy for all Initiative to provide access to essential energy sources for all through a focus on efficiency and renewable resources.<sup>66</sup> In unity and dedication to sustainable development Member States gathered in Rio de Janeiro in June, 2012 to attend the Rio +20 Conference on Sustainable development. In preparation for this conference seven critical issues were established to outline and categorize discussion surrounding sustainable development. The importance of renewable natural resources is highlighted within each of the seven critical issues: jobs, energy, cities, food, water, oceans, and disasters.<sup>67</sup> Currently, over five million people work within the renewable energy vertical and global investment in renewable energy increased seventeen percent in 2011.<sup>68</sup> As the importance and investment into renewable resources grows, still only 16.7% of the world's energy comes from renewable sources.<sup>69</sup> With only a small amount devoted to nuclear energy, which at the current time remains unsustainable; the majority of the world's energy is reliant on non-renewable sources such as petroleum and natural gas. Prices for non-renewable energy sources are high due to an increase in demand and constant reduction in supply, leading to an understanding that the continued emphasis on non-renewable natural resources for sustainable development is a large factor fueling the worldwide economic downturn.<sup>70</sup>

For the purpose of this paper we will focus on the scarcity of natural resources. That is, resources that occur naturally within the earth and atmosphere and their byproducts. For example, fossil fuels such as oil, coal, and natural gas are byproducts of the fossilization of plants and animals which lived millions of years ago.<sup>71</sup> It is important to understand that simply because a resource is naturally occurring within the environment that it is not necessarily renewable. Many natural resources are, and at an exponentially increasing rate, exhaustible. Non-renewable natural resources include fossil fuels, minerals, ore, and any naturally occurring resources that cannot be replenished at least within the

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<sup>64</sup> "UN World Water Development Report, 4<sup>th</sup> ed." UNESCO.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002156/215644e.pdf>

<sup>65</sup> "Renewables 2012: Global Status Report." REN21. <http://www.map.ren21.net/GSR/GSR2012.pdf>

<sup>66</sup> "7 Critical Issues at Rio+20". United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

<http://www.uncsd2012.org/index.php?menu=123>

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> "Renewables 2012: Global Status Report." REN21. <http://www.map.ren21.net/GSR/GSR2012.pdf>

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Tom Young, "UN: Global Renewables Investment Up Despite Financial Crisis." *Business Green*. <http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/1807562/un-global-renewables-investment-despite-financial-crisis>

<sup>71</sup> "How Fossil Fuels were Formed." U.S. Department of Energy. [http://www.fossil.energy.gov/education/energylessons/coal/gen\\_howformed.html](http://www.fossil.energy.gov/education/energylessons/coal/gen_howformed.html).

existence of a generation.<sup>72</sup> Resources such as fauna, plants, water, air and solar energy are considered to be renewable due to their ability to be replenished within a reasonable amount of time or at least depletion can be avoided through concerted efforts towards sustainable resource management.<sup>73</sup>

The importance of the discussion surrounding natural resources as a part of a Member States' national sustainable development strategy (NSDS) has been realized and acknowledged heartily for the past two decades. Beginning with the adoption of the Agenda 21 programme of action and the Rio Declaration of Environment and Development, both adopted at the United Nation's Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, Member States have worked with the UN to put strategic emphasis for the conservation of natural resources within their national policy framework.<sup>74</sup> These initiatives were furthered through the Millennium Declaration established in 2000 during the Millennium Summit in New York City, NY.<sup>75</sup> The Millennium Declaration created eight goals to improve key areas of life for all global citizens. The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were established to improve quality of life including eradicating communicable diseases and extreme poverty worldwide.<sup>76</sup> Specifically, MDG 7 deals with Environmental Sustainability with targets directly stating goals to reverse the loss of environmental degradation, reduction of biodiversity loss, and halving the number of individuals without access to clean drinking water.<sup>77</sup>

With the knowledge and understanding that the world population grew by billions over the last century and is expected to grow by another three billion in the next fifty years,<sup>78</sup> Member States agree the situation requires immediate action. Member States such as Barbados have placed the topic of natural resource management within their second tier topics of the NSDS with the stated objective to "Promote and facilitate the Sustainable Use of our Renewable Resources and the Wise Management of our Non-renewable Natural resources"<sup>79</sup> Similarly, Brazil has three tiers dedicated to the topic of natural resource management within their NSDS with a second tier objective of "Renewable Energy and Biomass: Further reduce importance of fossil fuels..." coupled with several third tier action items incorporating incentives for innovation of lessened energy usage and the development of new strategies and technologies focusing on renewable resources.<sup>80</sup>

This topic can easily cover a wide range of issues facing the international community. For the purposes of this committee, the topic will focus on the innovation and sustainable management of renewable energy resources and the effects on the global population as well as political conflict. Addressing resource scarcity and renewable energy resources effects each of the MDG's as without clean water to support growing agricultural needs extreme poverty and hunger cannot be satisfied (MDG 1).<sup>81</sup> Without clear efforts to provide renewable energy to a growing population, Member States cannot expect to provide proper healthcare and education to their citizens (MDGs 2, 4, 5, and 6).<sup>82</sup> Finally, it is imperative for the committee to understand that sustainable renewable resource management is not only important to achieving the MDGs but also to achieve and maintain world peace as resource scarcity is consistently linked to increasing acts of political controversy especially within developing nations.

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<sup>72</sup> "Renewable Natural Resources." Cooperative Extension University of Delaware College of Agriculture & Natural resources. <http://ag.udel.edu/extension/renewresources/index.htm>.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> "Addressing climate change in national sustainable development strategies – common practices" United Nations Division for Sustainable Development. New York. 12-13 November 2007.

<sup>75</sup> "United Nations Millennium Development Goals: Background." The United Nations. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/bkgd.shtml>.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> "World Population to 2300." UN Economic & Social Affairs.

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/longrange2/WorldPop2300final.pdf>

<sup>79</sup> "Addressing climate change in national sustainable development strategies – common practices" United Nations Division for Sustainable Development. New York. 12-13 November 2007.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> "Water Scarcity." International Decade of Action. <http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/scarcity.shtml>

<sup>82</sup> "United Nations Millennium Development Goals: Background." The United Nations. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/bkgd.shtml>.

## *Effects of Water Scarcity*

UN-Water states in its 2006 report, *Coping with Water Scarcity*, “Water is essential for all socio-economic development and for maintaining healthy ecosystems. As population increases and development calls for increased allocations of groundwater and surface water for the domestic, agriculture and industrial sectors, the pressure on water resources intensifies, leading to tensions, conflicts among users, and excessive pressure on the environment.”<sup>83</sup> According to the UN Environmental Programme,<sup>84</sup> around 30 percent of the world’s freshwater is stored underground in the form of groundwater (shallow and deep groundwater basins up to 2 000 metres, soil moisture, swamp water and permafrost). This constitutes about 97 percent of all the freshwater that is potentially available for human use.<sup>85</sup> Most of the remainder is groundwater, with only 0.3 percent of all freshwater found in lakes and streams. The end result of these statistics finds that less than one percent of freshwater resources is found by the UNEP to make up the, “total usable freshwater supply for ecosystems and humans.”<sup>86</sup> Over the next two decades, demand for clean freshwater is expected to increase by 40 percent.<sup>87</sup> Estimates show that if we do not work harder to increase population’s access to water, two-thirds of the world’s population will live in countries with drastic shortages in freshwater for drinking and agriculture.<sup>88</sup> Freshwater is thus the main source of concern in terms of addressing water scarcity. Over half of all accessible water is currently being utilized with seven of every ten liters being used for irrigation. A little more than twenty percent is used in industrial capacities and the remainder for domestic use. Additionally, the Food and Agricultural Organization stated that water use is currently growing at double the rate of population growth.<sup>89</sup> The developing world in particular will need to increase their water allotment as they continue to improve economically and socially. The World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) has set 20-50 liters as the minimum requirements for people in regards to cooking, drinking, and cleaning.<sup>90</sup> At the same time, the developed world uses ten times that amount daily.<sup>90</sup>

One of the most pressing threats associated with water scarcity is disease. In developing states, lack of clean water access forces many people to seek unclean supplies that spread diseases like dysentery and cholera. These diseases are lethal when left untreated. According to the Joint Monitoring Programme on Water Supply and Sanitation, “diarrhea is the leading cause of illness and death, and 88 per cent of diarrheal deaths are due to a lack of access to sanitation facilities, together with inadequate availability of water for hygiene and unsafe drinking water.”<sup>91</sup> With the rapidly dwindling supplies, these diseases can claim even more lives. Each year one and a half million children die from completely preventable diseases. At the same time, those who make it to medical care drain government’s resources that could be used to prevent rather than treat them.<sup>92</sup> Another threat to water resources is desertification. Desertification happens for a variety of reasons; however, poor farming techniques are one of the ways where people can worsen the problem. As more water has to be used for irrigation to feed a growing population, strain is placed on the local water supply. Less water decreases soil fertility, forcing more irrigation creating a cyclical situation where land becomes totally unusable for agriculture.<sup>93</sup> When it does rain, the increased sand in the soil can create flood conditions. Additionally, farmers are displaced as their livelihoods are no longer sustainable and population controls cannot provide for difference. As a result, desertification and water scarcity creates a significant problem for the international community.

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<sup>83</sup> “Coping with Water Scarcity: A Strategic Issue and Priority of System-wide Action.” UN-Water Thematic Initiatives. <ftp://ftp.fao.org/agl/aglw/docs/waterscarcity.pdf>

<sup>84</sup> “Water Resources.” UN-Water. [http://www.unwater.org/statistics\\_res.html](http://www.unwater.org/statistics_res.html)

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> “Water Use.” UN-Water. [http://www.unwater.org/statistics\\_use.html](http://www.unwater.org/statistics_use.html)

<sup>89</sup> “Water Resources.” UN-Water. [http://www.unwater.org/statistics\\_res.html](http://www.unwater.org/statistics_res.html)

<sup>90</sup> Natural Resources and Environment Department. “Hot Issue: Water Scarcity.” FAO. <http://www.fao.org/nr/water/issues/scarcity.html>

<sup>91</sup> “Water Resources.” UN-Water. [http://www.unwater.org/statistics\\_res.html](http://www.unwater.org/statistics_res.html)

<sup>92</sup> “Drinking Water and Sanitation.” UN-Water. [http://www.unwater.org/statistics\\_san.html](http://www.unwater.org/statistics_san.html)

<sup>93</sup> “Water Scarcity and Desertification.” UN Convention to Combat Desertification. [http://www.undp.mn/publications/slm/Desertification\\_&\\_water\\_scarcity\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.undp.mn/publications/slm/Desertification_&_water_scarcity_ENG.pdf)

With a population which grew by billions over the last century and is expected to grow by another three billion in the next fifty years,<sup>94</sup> the situation requires immediate action as scarcity will only increase as supplies of these resources are extended well beyond sustainable amounts. UN-Water does work with some desalination efforts, however these are mainly for small-scale projects and can only compliment larger projects like urban or municipal supplies.<sup>95</sup>

The struggle to provide clean drinking water to an already struggling population has lead scientists to address the shortage in a unique way. Over one-third of the world's population cannot keep up with the need for fresh water and by 2025, that number is expected to double.<sup>96</sup> Desalination is a controversial process that scientists have been working on that converts salty sea water into drinkable fresh water. A Yale University study argues that this process of desalination could and should play an integral part in combating the shortage of fresh water, but it must first make the technology more affordable and energy efficient.<sup>97</sup>

On a grand scale, there are large industrial plans that deliver 50 million cubic meters of water that is fresh and ready for drinking every day, but the technology is very complex, it consumes a huge amount of energy and it is not suitable for all climates, particularly arid and semiarid, which describe the climate of many of the areas that needs the water to begin with.<sup>98</sup> With poor infrastructure and little to no access to electricity, this new technology that could help so many becomes essentially useless in many regions.<sup>99</sup> In several EU-funded projects, Joachim Koschikowski of the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems, have developed small plants that have their own independent solar power supply to turn the salt water into fresh drinking water, but these are lacking in number and costs too much for the majority of those in need.<sup>100</sup> With a unique technology on the brink, scientists are at work trying to perfect the process and make it widespread for the masses in need of fresh drinking water.

### ***Natural Resource Depletion for Energy and the Effect of Biofuels***

The use of fossil fuels for energy is not a new phenomenon, in fact, it continues to present a problem today because our natural resources are running out and we have no way of replacing them. The soot generated from burning fossil fuels are found to significantly affect climate change by causing a decrease in cloud depth over a significant period of time. A study published in the Journal Geophysical Research noted that soot generated by the burning of fossil fuels is easily the second highest contributor to ozone depletion and ultimately increasing global warming.<sup>101</sup> The study also notes that the elimination of fossil fuel soot could reduce the global temperature by 0.3-0.5 K. Biofuel soot is also noted to contribute to global warming however can be controlled much easier through more efficient biofuel technology and improving particle traps in biofuel facilities.<sup>102</sup>

The world relies heavily upon fossil fuels as a source of energy, “with coal, oil, and gas currently accounting for 81 percent of the total.”<sup>103</sup> As the world population grows at an exponential rate, the demand for energy sources will continue to grow. This demand coupled with the threat of depletion, new sources of energy are being explored. One such energy source is biofuels. Biofuels are considered to be any solid, gaseous, or liquid obtained from biomass origin that can be used as fuel. The term biomass includes plants and animals or their metabolic byproducts-such as feces from cows.”<sup>104</sup> There are three main types of biofuels that are used as sources of energy: bioethanol is derived from

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<sup>94</sup> “World Population to 2300.” UN Economic & Social Affairs.

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/longrange2/WorldPop2300final.pdf>

<sup>95</sup> “United Nations.” World View Water. <http://www.worldviewwater.com/?q=node/4>

<sup>96</sup> “Better Desalination Technology Key to Solving World’s Water Shortage.” Science News. Science Daily. 5 Aug. 11. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/08/110804141752.htm>

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> “Fresh Water For the World’s Poorest.” Science Daily. 9 Jan. 2008.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/01/080104140733.htm>

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Mark Z. Jacobson. “Short-term effects of controlling fossil-fuel soot, biofuel soot and gases, and methane on climate, Artic Ice, and air pollution health”. The Journal of Geophysical Research. Vol. 115 D14209. 2010.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> “The State of Food and Agriculture 2008,” Food and Agriculture Organization, 2008.

<sup>104</sup> “Implication for the Use of Biofuels with Special Reference to the Caribbean,” Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2007.

fermented crops like corn and sugarcane, biodiesel is derived from oilseed crops like rapeseed and sunflower, and biogas, which is derived from organic wastes from animals.<sup>105</sup>

In accordance with the tiered objectives and action items outlined within its NSDS, Brazil directly encourages the growth of its pro-alcohol program for fuel substitution.<sup>106</sup> This program dubbed The National Alcohol Program (Pro-Alcohol) was established in 1975 and utilized sugarcane, abundantly grown in Latin America and the Caribbean, as a fuel in the form of ethanol as a substitute for gas generated by fossil fuels. The program suffered in the 1980's as low oil costs lessened the focus for alternative (non-fossil fuels) energy sources until the 21<sup>st</sup> century when rising costs and speculation of looming depletion of such non-renewable natural resources inspired demand for renewable resources as a fuel source.<sup>107</sup> Pro-Alcohol is arguably one of the most successful campaigns utilizing a renewable resource as a replacement for petroleum-based fuels. In 2010 ethanol production levels reached a record 27.9 billion liters which is an astounding increase based on the 2003/2004 production levels of only 12.5 billion liters of ethanol.<sup>108</sup>

### ***Resource Scarcity and Effects on Direct and Indirect Political Conflict***

The United Nations Environment Programme published a report in 1999 demonstrating data for the correlation between natural resource scarcity and political conflict. This report identified to main categories and two sub categories within each main category to describe political conflict. The main categories of direct and indirect conflict differ based on the immediate causation for conflict. Direct conflict occurs when resource scarcity creates direct competition between two opposing groups who are trying to control the resource or are directly negatively affected by the opposing group's usage of a resource (i.e. pollution).<sup>109</sup> Indirect conflict occurs when resource scarcity exacerbates existing tension between two groups. The friction over a resource's depletion is not directly correlated to the conflict but is only adding to existing tension caused by other socio-economic factors between the two groups.<sup>110</sup> Within each of the categories of direct and indirect conflict are two sub categories of international and intranational conflict. Simply, international conflict deals with two separate Member States while intranational conflict is between two groups within the borders of a Member State.<sup>111</sup> The most common type of conflict is indirect resource conflict where the depletion of natural resources becomes a reason to militarize in the name of national preservation however existing socio-economic tensions between two groups are already present.<sup>112</sup> 160,000 Somalis are currently displaced into Kenya due to lack of water, relations between native Kenyans and refugees tend to be poor and the threat of violence is ever present.<sup>113</sup> UNEP analysts have identified a recent trend similar to the Somali refugee/Kenyan native issue where environmental degradation is leading to mass migrations across borders and the increased depletion of resources in the destination state are enhancing conflicts.<sup>114</sup>

As an increasing number of Member States are threatened with a lack of natural resources, the opportunity for conflict rises exponentially. Within the past 20 years, Pakistan has faced much conflict linked to population growth increasing rates of desertification, soil erosion, and water pollution. Scarcity of land of agricultural quality has led many poor share croppers to be forced off their land by land owners and generating a massive migration to urban slums.<sup>115</sup> Water pollution is a major problem for Pakistan as a growing population places increased demands on present sources and poor investment in the infrastructure of the sanitation system is leading to pollution of water sources by sewage and industrial waste from urban centers.<sup>116</sup> An increasing number of violent incidents are

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> "Addressing climate change in national sustainable development strategies – common practices" United Nations Division for Sustainable Development. New York. 12-13 November 2007.

<sup>107</sup> "Energy". The United States Diplomatic Mission to Brazil. <http://brazil.usembassy.gov/energy/energy.html>

<sup>108</sup> "Energy: Biofuels". Brazil.gov.br. <http://www.brasil.gov.br/energia-en/energia-matrix/biofuels>.

<sup>109</sup> Danel Schwartz and Ashbindu Singh. *Environmental Conditions, Resources, and Conflicts*. United Nations Environment Programme. <http://na.unep.net/siouxfalls/publications/Conflicts.pdf>.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> "Water Resources." UN-Water. [http://www.unwater.org/statistics\\_res.html](http://www.unwater.org/statistics_res.html)

<sup>114</sup> Danel Schwartz and Ashbindu Singh. *Environmental Conditions, Resources, and Conflicts*. United Nations Environment Programme. <http://na.unep.net/siouxfalls/publications/Conflicts.pdf>.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

present every day within Pakistan not only when the poor farmers forced off the land they have occupied for generations but also within slums as food, water, and shelter are scarce among the growing population of urban poor.<sup>117</sup> Water scarcity has been an indirect aggravating factor within the Israeli and Arab war since 1967 when the Arabs tried to divert the headwaters of the Jordan River which is Israel's main source of water.<sup>118</sup> Almost 40 percent of Israel's water comes from the West Bank Aquifer and with the Israeli population expected to increase to 6.7 million by 2020 water scarcity is becoming a growing concern for the Israeli government. In response to Arab actions in 1967 and other ethnic, religious, and socio-economic factors Israel has begun to retaliate to the Palestine population within the West Bank. The Israeli government limited the ability of Palestinian inhabitants to drill wells while drilling for Jewish settlers within the West Bank are subsidized and placed within close proximity to the Palestinian wells.<sup>119</sup> Palestinian wells within the West Bank tend to be of poorer structure and shallow compared to the Jewish well counterparts and are therefore susceptible to pollution from industrial runoff as well as salinization from over-use. Irrigated agriculture in the West Bank has dropped from 27 percent in 1967 to around four percent in 2000. Many Palestinians have abandoned agriculture as a form of income due to the lack of available water. This fact, of course, has only increased already high tensions between the Palestinian and Israeli people.<sup>120</sup>

More than two-thirds of the world shares a common water border making this threat truly international.<sup>121</sup> Conflict over water resources are trending high as water source vs water flow, salinization, and pollution easily lead to direct international and intranational conflict.<sup>122</sup> Deforestation, desertification, soil erosion and flooding are the most common resource-based factors of conflict as the vast depletion of natural resources causes a ripple effect on the economic sustainability of a region as massive migration occurs.<sup>123</sup> One way to combat the conflict either directly or indirectly generated by natural resource scarcity is through the increased investment and innovation of renewable resource technologies at an international level. The nature of these conflicts are often transboundary and require cooperation fostered by the international community coupled with technology and knowledge sharing between Member States. The Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century noted an increase in global renewable energy sources by 16.7 percent in 2010. Although this number is encouraging it is important to understand that seven Member States: China, the United States, Germany, Spain, Italy, India, and Japan accounted for 70 percent of growth.<sup>124</sup> Each of these countries are developed nations with the economic capacity and ability to invest in such ventures. Renewable technology is beginning to expand into new markets with geothermal power beginning to become of interest to East African Member States however more must be done to supplement the growing scarcity of natural resources for these developing nations.<sup>125</sup> As a united body we must continue the assertions of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and cooperate to conserve and protect natural resources (principle 7) while giving special attention to developing nations (principle 6) who do not have access to the infrastructure and technology required to ward resource-charged political conflict.<sup>126</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The global community is faced with the daunting task of preserving the few natural resources that we have left on the planet. There are a tremendous amount of studies occurring that are investigating the use of alternative means to ensure the global population has the basic necessities for life, including the access to clean water and healthy food, but if we are going to survive into the next century, the use of technology and alternative resources are going to be the key to a sustainable future.

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> "Water Resources." UN-Water. [http://www.unwater.org/statistics\\_res.html](http://www.unwater.org/statistics_res.html)

<sup>122</sup> Danel Schwartz and Ashbindu Singh. *Environmental Conditions, Resources, and Conflicts*. United Nations Environment Programme. <http://na.unep.net/siouxfalls/publications/Conflicts.pdf>.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> "Renewables 2012: Global Status Report." REN21. <http://www.map.ren21.net/GSR/GSR2012.pdf>

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> *The Rio Declaration of Environment and Development*. A/CONF.151/26(Vol. 1). United Nations General Assembly.



### *Committee Directives*

Delegates of the General Assembly are faced with a difficult topic here, to address the issue of depleting natural resources and the need for alternative energy. What are some of the needs of your Member State when it comes to the basic necessities? What about your Member States' National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS)? Do you have one? Are you making progress? What is working? What are some challenges that you face on a daily basis? Do you have a water shortage? Food? What kind of technology would best work in your region to bring enough energy to sustain all life? Which Member States are you prepared to work with? Does your Member State or one in your region have a particular technological advance that would work on a grander scale? How can we get this technology to the masses? What are the challenges that we are going to face along the way?

Delegates need to come prepared to discuss the need for alternative energy in our growing global population. Instead of pointing fingers at those Member States that use the most energy and deplete the most resources, think of unique and innovative ways to address the issue that doesn't involve creating commissions or new bodies. Please think of ways to use existing organizations and groups to expand their work instead of starting from scratch.

### **III: Developing Strategies for Disaster Risk Reduction and Economic Mobility in a Turbulent Economy**

*“Disasters exacerbate poverty and undermine development planning, particularly poverty reduction strategies. When we reduce disaster risk, we increase our chances of achieving the Millennium Development Goals and building a truly sustainable world for all.”*  
*-Ban-Ki Moon, United Nations Secretary- General<sup>127</sup>*

#### **Introduction**

The primary drivers of humanitarian crises are typically natural disasters and/ or conflict, intersecting with people's vulnerability to, and ability to cope with, the impact of such events.<sup>128</sup> In 2011, the number of people affected by natural disasters fell to 91 million, substantially lower than the 224 million in 2010 and the lowest figure in 10 years.<sup>129</sup> The estimated cost of damages associated with these natural disasters, however, rose substantially to 290 billion USD in 2011, up from 127 billion USD in 2010.<sup>130</sup> According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)'s Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Programme, every year, disasters related to meteorological, hydrological and climate hazards cause significant loss of life, and set back economic and social development by years, if not decades. Between 1980 and 2005, nearly 7,500 natural disasters worldwide took the lives of over 2 million people and produced economic losses estimated at over 1.2 trillion USD.<sup>131</sup> Of this, 90 per cent of the natural disasters, 72.5 per cent of casualties and 75 per cent of economic losses were caused by weather-, climate- water-related hazards such as droughts, floods, windstorms, tropical cyclones, storm surges, extreme temperatures, landslides and wild fires, or by health epidemics and insect infestations directly linked to meteorological and hydrological conditions.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>127</sup>United Nations, Secretary-General SG/SM/14226 GA/11226, Department of Public Information, News and Media Division, New York; When Disaster Risk Reduced, Chances of Building Truly Sustainable World For All Increases, Secretary-General Says in Message to Interactive Thematic Debate; 12 April 2012 <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/sgsm14226.doc.htm>

<sup>128</sup> Global Humanitarian Assistance; Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA) Report 2012, Pg. 60 [http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/GHA\\_Report\\_2012-Websingle.pdf](http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/GHA_Report_2012-Websingle.pdf)

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> World Meteorological Organization (WMO); WMO Disaster Risk Reduction Program <http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/drr/>

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

Natural Hazards whether they be a flood, earthquake, landslide, etc. are all serious concerns of nature that not only cause the loss of life but can further destroy a nation and its people's wellbeing, hope, faith, destiny, etc. Therefore, it is important for the international community to not only realize the disastrous effects natural hazards pose but as well the international community should continue to find the best practices for its current global citizens and those in the future.

### ***Definitions***

The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) published the UNISDR Terminology Report on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2009 defining all terms associated with disasters and natural hazard. Some of the key terms of the report are defined as follows:

- ***Natural Hazard***: Natural process or phenomenon that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, loss of livelihoods and services, social and economic disruption, or environmental damage.<sup>133</sup>
- ***Disaster Risk Reduction***: The concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyze and manage the causal factors of disasters including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events.<sup>134</sup>
- ***Emergency Management***: The organization and management of resources and responsibilities for addressing all aspects of emergencies, in particular preparedness, response and initial recovery steps.<sup>135</sup>
- ***Mitigation***: The lessening or limitation of the adverse impacts of hazards and related disasters. The adverse impacts or hazards often cannot be prevented fully, but their scale or severity can be substantially lessened by various strategies and actions. Mitigation measures encompass engineering techniques and hazard-resistant construction as well as improved environmental policies and public awareness.<sup>136</sup>
- ***Preparedness***: The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, professional response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from, the impacts of likely, imminent or current hazard events or conditions.<sup>137</sup>
- ***Response***: The provision of emergency services and public assistance during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of the people affected.<sup>138</sup>
- ***Recovery***: The restoration, and improvement where appropriate, of facilities, livelihoods and living conditions of disaster-affected communities, including efforts to reduce disaster risk factors. The recovery task of rehabilitation and reconstruction begins soon after the emergency phase has ended, and should be based on pre-existing strategies and policies that facilitate clear institutional responsibilities for recovery action and enable public participation.<sup>139</sup>

### ***History***

The International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR; 1990-2000) was launched by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 22 December 1989 through A/RES/44/236 to reduce through concerted international action, especially in developing countries, the loss of life, property damage and economic and social disruption caused by natural disasters.<sup>140</sup> As well resolution 44/236 designated the second Wednesday of October as the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction

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<sup>133</sup> United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), 2009 UNISDR Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction; Pages 20-21,  
[http://www.unisdr.org/files/7817\\_UNISDRTerminologyEnglish.pdf](http://www.unisdr.org/files/7817_UNISDRTerminologyEnglish.pdf)

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, Pages 10-11.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid, Pages 13-14.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, 19-20.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, Page 21.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, Page 24.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid, Page 23.

<sup>140</sup> CBS Interactive Business Network Resource Library; The Yokohama Conference, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Courier, Find Articles  
[http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1310/is\\_1994\\_May/ai\\_15630137/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1310/is_1994_May/ai_15630137/)

to be observed annually during the IDNDR and through A/RES/64/200 of 21 December 2009 the General Assembly decided to designate the 13<sup>th</sup> of October as the date to commemorate the International Day for Disaster Reduction.<sup>141</sup> The objective of the observance is to raise awareness how people are taking action to reduce their risk to disasters. In 2011, the observance took place within the framework of the "**Step Up for Disaster Risk Reduction!**" campaign, and its theme was "**Making Children and Young People Partners for Disaster Risk Reduction**".

The UN World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction which was part of a mid-term review of the IDNDR activities, was held in Yokohama (Japan), 23-27 May 1994 to review the accomplishments of the Decade to date, chart a programme of action for the future, facilitate the exchange of information on the implementation of programmes and policies, and increase awareness of the importance of disaster reduction policies.<sup>142</sup> At the Yokohama conference, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) organized a technical committee on warning systems.<sup>143</sup> UNESCO also organized a series of Poster Sessions which provides a forum for scientific and technical presentations in the form of display materials on such themes as warning systems, education, health, earth science, engineering and architecture, legislation, regulation and land use.<sup>144</sup>

As its name implied, the IDNDR officially came to an end in 1999. However, during its ten-year span of activities, it achieved such important successes - especially in terms of forging vital links among the political, scientific and technological communities - that the United Nations created a successor body to carry on its work. Created in December 1999, the UNISDR is the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). The successor to secretariat of the IDNDR, the UNISDR was established with the purpose of ensuring the implementation of the ISDR (A/RES/54/219). In 2011, the mandate of the UNISDR expanded to include serving as the focal point within the United Nations system for the coordination of disaster reduction and to ensure synergies among disaster reduction activities.<sup>145</sup>

Established in 2006 under General Assembly resolution 61/198, the UNISDR is responsible for the preparation and follow-up of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction which has become the main global forum for disaster risk reduction and for the provision of strategic and coherent guidance for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework and to share experience among stakeholders.<sup>146</sup> Other areas of work for the UNISDR includes issuing the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction every two years, supporting countries in monitoring risk trends and the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, and leading global campaigns on disaster risk reduction for safer schools, safer hospitals and safer cities.<sup>147</sup> The sessions of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction are held every two year in Geneva Switzerland and thus far the UNISDR has met for these meetings three times, 2007, 2009, and 2011, respectively and is scheduled to meet again in 2013.<sup>148</sup>

The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015 is the key instrument for implementing disaster risk reduction, adopted by the Member States of the United Nations.<sup>149</sup> It is a global blueprint for disaster risk reduction efforts with a ten-year plan, adopted in 18- 22 January 2005 by 168 governments at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (A/RES/58/214) held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan.<sup>150</sup> The conference was organized to take stock of progress made on disaster risk reduction since the Yokohama Conference of 1994 and to plan for the next ten years. The main outcome of the conference, the Hyogo Declaration and Hyogo Framework for Action, represent a strong commitment from the

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<sup>141</sup> United Nations; International Day for Disaster Reduction –13 October

<http://www.un.org/en/events/disasterreductionday/>

<sup>142</sup> International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR); United Nations International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR)<http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/programmes/un/idndr/idndr.html>

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, Who We Are, Our Mandate

<http://www.unisdr.org/who-we-are/mandate>

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters – brochure [http://www.preventionweb.net/files/1217\\_HFAbrochureEnglish.pdf](http://www.preventionweb.net/files/1217_HFAbrochureEnglish.pdf)

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

international community to address disaster reduction and to engage in a determined, results-based plan of action for the next decade: 2005-2015.<sup>151</sup> Its main goal seeks to build resilience of nations and communities to disasters by achieving substantive reduction of disaster losses by its target of 2015. The HFA offers five areas of priorities of action: (1) Make Disaster Risk Reduction a Priority, (2) Know the Risks and Take Action, (3) Build Understanding and Awareness, (4) Reduce Risk, (5) and, Be Prepared and Ready to Act.<sup>152</sup>

Lastly, another key component of the UNISDR is the Preventionweb.net website launched in 2007 that provides a common platform for the DRR community to find and share DRR information, exchange experience, and connect and collaborate.<sup>153</sup> Preventionweb.net is open to everyone everywhere and promotes the work in DRR and the implementation of the HFA.<sup>154</sup> Preventionweb.net is the first website of its kind that provides a common tool for both specialists and non-specialists interested or working in DRR to connect, exchange experiences and share information at all levels of the ISDR: local to global, UN, international and nongovernmental organizations to citizens and companies. Preventionweb.net relies on contributions from the DRR community and includes: DRR news, country reports, publications, good practices, fact sheets, networks and communities, and more.<sup>155</sup>

#### *Four Stages of Natural Hazards*

As defined above a natural hazard is the natural process or phenomenon that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, loss of livelihoods and services, social and economic disruption, or environmental damage.<sup>156</sup> Further, natural hazards are events in nature that can not only cause the loss of one life but often time thousands however there are four stages of natural hazards that are identified as mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

1. ***Mitigation*** is the initial step as it attempts to lessen or limit the adverse impacts of hazards and related disasters. Regardless of mitigation though, natural hazards will occur and cannot be prevented but if mitigation is put in place then the scale or severity can be substantially lessened by various strategies and actions. Mitigation is composed of engineering techniques and hazard-resistant construction as well as improved environmental policies and public awareness. A recent use of mitigation was used in late August 2011 when Hurricane Irene headed for the eastern seaboard including key cities such as Washington, D.C. and New York.<sup>157</sup> In this state of mitigation residents were urged to prepare for the coming storm as well as because of its anticipated trajectory, 2.3 million people were ordered to evacuate—including an unprecedented number in New York.<sup>158</sup> Public service announcements and media reports included urgent pleas, though many chose to stay put instead.<sup>159</sup> Hurricane Irene was projected to cause 7 billion USD in damage with winds of up to 120 miles per hour and 20 inches of rain. Flooding broke records in 26 rivers, and an estimated 40 people died.<sup>160</sup> Beyond the 40 deaths, the storm brought damage to crops, boatyards, businesses, and homes, and long-term recovery efforts still are needed.<sup>161</sup> Although Hurricane Irene slowed down and turned to Tropical Storm Irene it still had a significant impact on many communities and could have created much more damage than she did.<sup>162</sup>

A new approach to mitigation is the use of technological advancements such as OpenStreetMap, Sahana, Virtual Disaster Viewer, and GoogleMapMaker just to name a few

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Preventionweb.net; About Us, UNISDR press release- Nov 07

<http://www.preventionweb.net/english/documents/about/pressrelease.pdf>

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), 2009 UNISDR Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction; Pages 20-21,

[http://www.unisdr.org/files/7817\\_UNISDRTerminologyEnglish.pdf](http://www.unisdr.org/files/7817_UNISDRTerminologyEnglish.pdf)

<sup>157</sup> Center for Disaster Philanthropy—The when, where, and how of informed disaster giving; Hurricane Irene

<http://disasterphilanthropy.org/where/current-disasters/hurricane-irene/>

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

and the United Nations recognizes the importance of such new methodologies for disaster risk management and emergency response. Thus, in its General Assembly resolution 61/110 of 14 December 2006 the United Nations to establish the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response – (UN-SPIDER) as a new United Nations programme, with the mission to "ensure that all countries and international and regional organizations have access to and develop the capacity to use all types of space-based information to support the full disaster management cycle".<sup>163</sup> UN-SPIDER is the first to focus on the need to ensure access to and use of such solutions during all phases of the disaster, including the mitigation phase which will significantly contribute to a reduction in loss of lives and property.<sup>164</sup> The UN-SPIDER programme is achieving this by focusing on being a gateway to space information for disaster management support, by serving as a bridge to connect the disaster management and space communities and by being a facilitator of capacity-building and institutional strengthening, in particular for developing countries.<sup>165</sup> UN-SPIDER is being implemented as an open network of providers of space-based solutions to support disaster management activities. Besides Vienna (where the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs is located), the programme also has an office in Bonn, Germany as well as an office in Beijing, China.<sup>166</sup>

Lastly, another crucial tool for mitigation is education. According to UNESCO, a significant proportion of the 69 million children out-of-school worldwide, live in countries affected by war and natural disasters.<sup>167</sup> As such, achieving education for all requires that we ensure learning opportunities for these children and youth affected by emergencies regardless of their home country.<sup>168</sup> It is increasingly recognized that education must be a principal part of any humanitarian response and conflict and disaster-affected communities prioritize the provision of education for their children.<sup>169</sup> Through education communities and nations alike can save and sustain lives, and offer physical, cognitive and psychosocial protection.<sup>170</sup> As well, education is not only used as a mitigation technique but as well is used in the recovery stages and restores routine and gives people hope for the future; it can also serve as a channel both for meeting other basic humanitarian needs and communicating vital messages that promote safety and well-being.<sup>171</sup>

2. ***Preparedness***, the second step to a natural hazard, is the knowledge and capacities developed by governments, organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from, the impacts of current hazard events. Preparedness comes in many different forms but the most known are the use of stockpiles, communication systems, and trained and ready to go response teams.

An instrumental agency in the preparedness phase is the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) whom has assembled teams of people with a wide range of key skills ready for deployment anywhere in the world at a moment's notice.<sup>172</sup> The agency has also created emergency stockpiles of non-food aid items in Copenhagen, Denmark and Dubai, United Arab Emirates to supplement local aid supplies in areas of need. The UNHCR has established long-standing agreements with freight forwarders and logistics companies, and developed a global network of suppliers, specialist agencies and partners.<sup>173</sup> The agency can also mobilize more than 300 trained personnel within 72 hours that come

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<sup>163</sup> United Nations, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response; About Us, About UN-SPIDER <http://www.un-spider.org/about>

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Themes, Post-Conflict and Post-Disaster Responses; Education in Emergencies: Preparedness, Response, Recovery <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/themes/pcpd/education-in-emergencies/>

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), What We Do, Emergency Response; Emergency Preparedness and Response <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cc2.html>

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

from the UNHCR's Emergency Response Team (ERT).<sup>174</sup> UNHCR has also developed mechanisms for the immediate mobilization of financial resources to help meet the response to an emergency without delay.<sup>175</sup> Lastly, the UNHCR's eCentre is situated in Tokyo, Japan which helps improve emergency preparedness and response capabilities in the Asia-Pacific region through targeted training and other capacity-building measures.<sup>176</sup>

3. ***Response*** is the step at the heart of any natural hazard as it deals directly with the hazard as it occurs. The most critical response areas include but do not limit money, food, water, health, and shelter.

Between 2001 and 2010, government donors provided 99 billion USD in humanitarian aid financing.<sup>177</sup> 95 percent of this was provided by member governments of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC).<sup>178</sup> The remaining 5 percent of contributions were provided by governments outside the OECD-DAC group. The largest donor throughout this period was the United States of America, which provided over a third of the total funding from governments.<sup>179</sup> The five largest donors between 2001 and 2010 included the United States, the European Union institutions, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Germany and Sweden which collectively contributed 69 percent of the total for that period.<sup>180</sup> Money is seen as the most critical of the response phase as it supplies the affected area with the finances and economies to handle the other areas of response and as well as recovery and could possibly be used to mitigate and prevent another crisis from occurring. Some of the most immediate uses of donations received are used for reconstruction, healthcare, shelter, water, protection and support services, food aid, and relief.

An organization that is actively involved in food security in times of crisis is the World Food Programme (WFP) and it reported that in 2010 more than 50 percent of its projects addressed the risks of natural disasters and their impacts on food security, reaching approximately 80 million people.<sup>181</sup> Further in 2010, WFP supported more than 22.5 million people in almost 10,000 of the most food-insecure communities in the world, improving access to food and reducing risk through food for assets programmes that improve livelihoods by catalyzing community-based processes.<sup>182</sup> Specifically looking at the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013) its Strategic Objective 2 holds to “Prevent acute hunger and invest in disaster preparedness and mitigation measures”, and its sub-goals are to: support and strengthen capacities of governments to prepare for, assess and respond to acute hunger arising from disasters; and, support and strengthen resiliency of communities to shocks, through safety nets or asset creation, including adaptation to climate change.<sup>183</sup>

The World Health Organization (WHO) is the directing and coordinating authority for health within the United Nations system responsible for providing leadership on global health matters, shaping the health research agenda, setting norms and standards, articulating evidence-based policy options, providing technical support to countries and monitoring and assessing health trends.<sup>184</sup> Glancing at the WHO's six-year strategy for the health sector and community capacity development on risk reduction and emergency preparedness the WHO's

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Global Humanitarian Assistance; Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA) Report 2012, Pg. 15

[http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/GHA\\_Report\\_2012-Websingle.pdf](http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/GHA_Report_2012-Websingle.pdf)

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> World Food Programme (WFP); WFP Policy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management: Building Food Security and Resilience (Policy approved November 2011), Pg. 10

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/newsroom/wfp247914.pdf>

<sup>182</sup> Ibid, Pg. 14.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> World Health Organization (WHO); Engaging for Health: Eleventh General Programme of Work 2006-2015, A Global Health Agenda, Pg. 8 [http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2006/GPW\\_eng.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2006/GPW_eng.pdf)

strategy is based on an All-Hazard/Whole Health concept.<sup>185</sup> All-hazard entails developing and implementing emergency management strategies for the full range of likely risks and emergencies and the whole-health approach is based on countries and communities adopting a plan for health for all regardless of the situation or persons. Irrefutable of the hazard that occurs, a multi-sectoral approach is required and the provision of public health services and medical care is utterly dependent on the preparedness of other sectors such as: law and order, transport and communications, lifeline services (water/ electricity) and public works, search and rescue and fire services, social services and housing, and others.<sup>186</sup>

Lastly, another vital organization during the response phase is United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) whom is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.<sup>187</sup> The UN-HABITAT hosts a Disaster management programme which helps governments and local authorities rebuild in countries recovering from war or natural disasters.<sup>188</sup> The Disaster Management Programme works or has worked in different countries worldwide including but not limited to Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Guatemala, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia and Timor Leste, just to name a few.<sup>189</sup>

4. **Recovery**, the final stage of the natural hazard process, is concerned with the restoration and improvement of the affected area's facilities, livelihoods and living conditions of disaster-affected communities, and includes efforts to reduce disaster risk factors. Recovery is primarily concentrated on restoring the area to its previous state and rebuilding infrastructure.

A significant organization in the recovery phase is the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which seeks to help developing countries attract and use aid effectively. As part of UNDP, the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) was established to support innovative approaches to crisis prevention, early warning and conflict resolution, as well as to help bridge the gap between emergency relief and long-term development.<sup>190</sup> The crisis governance programme prioritizes rebuilding of confidence in the state, including building national capacity at the local level to deliver services to crisis-affected populations in the short to medium term via existing or rapidly reconstituted local authorities.<sup>191</sup>

### **Case Study: Haiti**

On 12 January 2010, the Caribbean nation of Haiti experienced a massive earthquake of a 7.0 magnitude with an epicenter near the town of Léogâne, approximately 56 km southwest of its capital, Port-au-Prince.<sup>192</sup> It was the worst tremor in Haiti in more than 200 years and among the strongest ever to strike the Caribbean.<sup>193</sup> Continuing the earthquake, there were a total of at least 52 aftershocks by 24 January 2010, with a staggering 16 aftershocks registered at a 5.0 or higher on the Richter Scale.<sup>194</sup> The earthquake devastated Port-au-Prince, Léogâne and other cities mainly in the south, including Miragoane and Jacmel.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> World Health Organization (WHO); WHO six-year strategy for the health sector and community capacity development, Pg. 8

[http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/preparedness/emergency\\_preparedness\\_eng.pdf](http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/preparedness/emergency_preparedness_eng.pdf)

<sup>186</sup> Ibid, Pg. 16.

<sup>187</sup> United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), About Us, Mandate

<http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?cid=2467&catid=1&typeid=24&subMenuId=0>

<sup>188</sup> United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), Our Work, Risk and Disaster Management, Overview <http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?cid=2711&catid=286&typeid=24&subMenuId=0>

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); Preventing Crisis Enabling Recovery, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Annual Report 2011

[http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/crisis%20prevention/BCPRAR2011\\_final.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/crisis%20prevention/BCPRAR2011_final.pdf)

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); UNEP in Haiti: 2010 Year in Review, Pg. 12

[http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/UNEP\\_Haiti\\_2010.pdf](http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/UNEP_Haiti_2010.pdf)

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

The most places affected in terms of infrastructure were homes, offices and commercial centres, most of which were decimated.<sup>196</sup> An estimated 105,000 houses were reduced to rubble and more than 188,300 others were damaged in the Port-au-Prince area and in much of southern Haiti.<sup>197</sup> The Presidential Palace, Parliament, the Supreme Court and most public administration buildings sustained serious damage while other offices such as the headquarters of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the offices of the World Bank were destroyed.<sup>198</sup> Other affected areas included many hospitals, schools, courthouses, police stations and prisons as well rural areas suffered extensive crop losses.<sup>199</sup> Sediment and rubble flowing into coastal areas closed ports and had a catastrophic impact on fisheries.<sup>200</sup> More than 222,000 people perished and over 300,000 were injured.<sup>201</sup> In total, 2.3 million Haitians were displaced and almost 1.5 million people were housed in temporary shelters.<sup>202</sup> Haiti's capacity to cope was seriously affected by the death of many key officials, such as the MINUSTAH's Chief, Hédi Annabi, and the crippling of government infrastructure.<sup>203</sup> Also among the deceased were 102 United Nations workers, the single greatest loss of life in the history of the United Nations.<sup>204</sup>

Communication systems, air, land, and sea transport facilities, hospitals, and electrical networks had been damaged by the earthquake, which hampered rescue and aid efforts; confusion over who was in charge, air traffic congestion, and problems with prioritisation of flights further complicated early relief work. In the wake of the earthquake, Port-au-Prince's morgues were overwhelmed with tens of thousands of bodies that had to be buried in mass graves. In the nights following the earthquake, many people in Haiti slept in the streets, on pavements, in their cars, or in makeshift shanty towns either because their houses had been destroyed, or they feared standing structures would not withstand aftershocks.

The earthquake struck in the most populated area of the country and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies estimated that as many as 3 million people had been affected by the quake. In regards to relief efforts, over the first weekend 130,000 food packets and 70,000 water containers were distributed to Haitians, as safe landing areas and distribution centers such as golf courses were secured.

However, regardless of the efforts drawn for Haiti within the initial days of the earthquake it was stated in a CBS article that six months after the quake as much as 98 percent of the rubble remained uncleared.<sup>205</sup> In the 10 January 2012 report, *Haiti: The Slow Road to Reconstruction—Two Years after the Earthquake* released by Oxfam, an international confederation of 17 organizations networked together in 92 countries, stated that two years after the earthquake, reconstruction of the country has proceeded "at a snail's pace" leaving more than half a million Haitians still homeless.<sup>206</sup> It called upon the Haitian government and countries that have pledged money for rebuilding to accelerate reconstruction of the country.<sup>207</sup> Further, it asked that the Haitian government implement a comprehensive reconstruction plan to rebuild the country and re-house the approximately 520,000 people still living under tarpaulins or in tents.<sup>208</sup> It urges donors to disburse the funds they have pledged to the reconstruction effort and calls on the international community to strengthen the government's capacity to effectively coordinate reconstruction.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

<sup>205</sup> CBS News; Fights Over Land Stall Haiti Quake Recovery

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2010/07/11/world/main6668155.shtml>

<sup>206</sup> Oxfam; Two years on and Haiti's reconstruction proceeds at a 'snail's pace,' leaving half a million Haitians homeless <http://www.oxfamamerica.org/press/pressreleases/two-years-on-and-haitis-reconstruction-proceeds-at-a-snails-pace-leaving-half-a-million-haitians-homeless>

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.



Oxfam said that while the emergency relief effort following the earthquake was successful in saving countless lives and providing basic services to over a million people, much more needs to be done to meet Haitians' long-term needs for housing, jobs, and basic services, such as education, water, and health care.<sup>210</sup>

Two years on, there has been some positive progress made on reconstruction. Nearly half of all the rubble has been removed, accounting for 5 million cubic meters of debris.<sup>211</sup> As well, in a country where only an estimated five percent of roads were covered in hard-top before the earthquake, some 430 kilometers (26 miles) of roads have been constructed or rehabilitated since the earthquake, providing vital infrastructure for economic recovery.<sup>212</sup>

Major problems remain however. More than half a million people are still living under tents and tarpaulins; most Haitians do not have running water, a toilet, or a access to a doctor; cholera has claimed thousands of lives and remains a major threat to public health and more than 70 percent of the workforce is under or unemployed – many of these are problems that existed for years before the earthquake.<sup>213</sup> Another major problem that has risen questions worldwide is the billions of dollars of aid pledged for Haiti's reconstruction.<sup>214</sup> According to the UN, as of the end of September 2011, donors had disbursed just 43 percent of the 4.6 billion USD that they pledged for reconstruction in 2010 and 2011.<sup>215</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

Looking overall at the 2010 earthquake, Haiti has seen plenty of tragedy as well as hope and unfortunately empty promises. As we have processed the stages of the natural hazard process, what has occurred in Haiti is both unacceptable and unforgivable two years later and there is still much work to be done in the recovery phase and mitigation for future catastrophes. Recalling the United Nations General Assembly's Report of the Secretary General, Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, A/66/301, its five priorities for action at the international level include: (1) Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority; (2) Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning; (3) Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels; (4) Reduce the underlying factors; and, Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.<sup>216</sup> Thus looking solely at these priorities it is pertinent that Member States not only explore disaster risk reduction but as well natural hazards in all its phases. A key question to be answered will be along the areas of how can the national, regional and international arenas prevent natural hazards from occurring and simultaneously how can these bodies' best address these crises as they come along.

### ***Committee Directive***

As delegates begin to explore this topic, research should be directed towards effective emergency response initiatives. Delegates can find these initiatives in a myriad of organizations such as but not limited to the ones detailed in this topic. For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) can be extremely helpful organizations in your research and will have countless information not only on emergency management as a whole but as well on a country by country basis.

After the initial research is completed, delegates should then embark on solutions to the topic at hand. The following questions should be considered: On a national level, has your Member State declined or increased in natural hazards? If it has declined, why so? If it has increased, what best practices were implemented? Does your Member State have factors that may lead to a decline in natural hazards? If so

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<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> United Nations General Assembly's Report of the Secretary General, Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, A/66/301; Annex—Specific information on progress made in implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action, C. Action at the International Level, Priorities 1-5, Pgs. 20-23 <http://www.unisdr.org/files/resolutions/A66301E.pdf>

what factors are these? On a regional level, has your region been affected by the economic crisis and further has economic mobility decreased or increased?

Each of these questions is pivotal to the committee and deserve equal attention and consideration while writing your Member State's position paper as well as writing a draft resolution to ultimately become a resolution during the duration of the conference.

Delegates should not explore deeply into the global financial crisis but rather the affect is has placated on the emergency preparedness and response. Delegates should be focused on instrumental methods that have worked in the past or in current time and either reinforce, reinstate, or reform these initiatives rather than create a new program. A new program/ conference/ agreement shall only be used if said initiative is explicitly focused on new and innovative ways to reform and innovate current or previous practices.

Lastly, Delegates are encouraged to visit the not only all the footnotes found in this guide but as well the Technical Appendix Guide (TAG) found at the end of this background guide.

## **Technical Appendix Guide (TAG)**

### **Topic I: Assessing the Impact of Long-Term Refugee Camps, Squatter Villages and Slums in Developing Member States**

"Guide to Monitoring Target 11: Improving the Lives of 100 Million Slum Dwellers." UN-Habitat.  
<http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=1157>

This document put out by the UN-Habitat organization should be the first document delegates read as it highlights the UN's goals on the issue as well as more detailed information on topics presented in the background guide. Delegates should take note of the five key dimensions for improving slums as well as the section on global trends on slums. Delegates will need to be able to reference these in committee as these facts are the groundwork for work on slums improvement.

"Where We Work." United Nations High Commission on Refugees.  
<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c206.html>

This website is the main source of reference for delegates doing research on where refugee camps are today and how the UN is currently addressing the needs of refugee camps. Delegates can search by region, as well as by country. Each fact file includes the mission's working environment, strategy for 2012, constraints, operations and budget. All of this information is useful when delegates attempt to write working papers and need recent statistics. At the country level, pages include the contexts of the camps as well as needs and main objectives. This website is one of the most useful for delegates needing to a deeper understanding of the situation on the ground.

"UNRWA: Homepage." United Nations Relief and Works for Palestine Refugees.  
<http://www.unrwa.org/>

The UNRWA represents the refugees from the numerous Israel-Palestinian conflicts beginning in 1948. Due to the protracted nature of the conflict, the UN set up a special agency to work with these refugees. Although not covered in the background guide, the situation regarding Palestinian refugees may come up in committee debate. This official website on the program includes history, current programmes as well as recent news. Delegates wishing to include Palestinian refugees in their working papers are advised to spend some time researching this agency.

Prof. Vinit Mukhija, "Enabling Slum Redevelopment in Mumbai: Policy Paradox in Practice." *Housing Studies* (2001) 18(4) [www.spsr.ucla.edu/UP/.../EnablingRedevelopment\\_HStudies .pdf](http://www.spsr.ucla.edu/UP/.../EnablingRedevelopment_HStudies.pdf) 213-222.

This research project by Professor Mukhija of UCLA is an important in-depth case study of slum redevelopment programs run by government agencies. Prof. Mukhija analyzes the history of the slum programs in Mumbai including topics such as private sector action, slum investments, and the problems posed by a decentralized response to the problem. Delegates wanting a better understanding of the threats posed by mega-city slums should read this document.

Development Planning Unit, "Understanding Slums: Case Studies for the Global Report 2003." UN-Habitat. [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu-projects/Global\\_Report/home.htm](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu-projects/Global_Report/home.htm)

This website is a compilation of authors funded by UN-Habitat and includes case studies on dozens of slums and squatter settlements throughout the world. This is an invaluable website for delegates to acquire a better knowledge of slums that may be in their own Member State or in the region. Each city has a short summary page that includes history, major problems and context. Each pdf file is a short document that gives in-depth information on the settlements found in each city as well as assets to slum dwellers current successes, and national policies. All delegates are highly encouraged to read one case study for use in committee debate.

## **Topic II: Resource Security: Combatting the Depletion of Natural Resources and Addressing the Need for Renewable Energy.**

"The Impacts of Relying on Desalination for Water" Earth Talk. *Scientific American*. 2009. <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=the-impacts-of-relying-on-desalination>

The process of desalination is much more complex than we could ever hope to cover in the background guide for this topic. This article gives delegates a look at the consequences of using this technology but also a look at the great things that could come of it with more research and development. This is a good place for delegates to start when thinking about alternative means to getting clean water to everyone.

Hoel, M. and Snorre Kverndokk. *Depletion of fossil fuels and the impacts of global warming*. Resource and Energy Economics 18 (1996) 115-136. <http://www.uio.no/studier/emner/sv/oekonomi/ECON4925/h11/depletion%20of%20fossil%20fuels...%5B1%5D.pdf>

This PDF file is a very technical explanation of how the depletion of fossil fuels and the impact of global warming impact the environment. This is a really great resource to get the technology of the depletion of our natural resources and a scientific perspective on global warming and the future. Delegates, if they take the time could get a lot out of this resource.

Renewable sources of energy with special emphasis on biomass: progress and policies. Report of the Secretary-General. Economic and Social Council. E/C.13/1996/CRP.1. United Nations. <http://www.un.org/documents/ecosoc/c13/1996/ec131996crp-1.htm>

This is a report of the Secretary-General to ECOSOC on renewable sources of energy with a special emphasis on biomass from 1996. Although slightly outdated, this is a great source for delegates to compare the knowledge of the technology from then to now and plan ahead for the future. Learn from the mistakes of the past.

## **Topic III: Developing Strategies for Disaster Risk Reduction and Economic Mobility in a Turbulent Economy**

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)  
The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development 1992  
<http://www.unep.org/Documents/Multilingual/Default.asp?documentid=78&articleid=1163>

The Rio Declaration on environment and development was approved by the United Nations during the Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 1992. Its aims were to reaffirm the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, adopted at Stockholm in June 1972. The Declaration adopted a set of principles to guide the future development and its principles define the right of people to development, and their responsibilities to safeguard the common environment.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development  
Agenda 21 [http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/res\\_agenda21\\_00.shtml](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/res_agenda21_00.shtml)

Agenda 21 is a comprehensive plan of action to be taken globally, nationally and locally by organizations of the United Nations System, Governments, and Major Groups in every area in which human impacts on the environment. Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the Statement of principles for the Sustainable Management of Forests were adopted by more than 178 Governments at the UNCED held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3 to 14 June 1992.

Conference on Sustainable Development (CSD)  
Rio+20, United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development  
<http://www.uncsd2012.org/>

At the Rio+20 Conference, world leaders, along with thousands of participants from governments, the private sector, NGOs and other groups, will come together to shape how we can reduce poverty, advance social equity and ensure environmental protection on an ever more crowded planet to get to the future we want. The CSD is being organized in pursuance of General Assembly Resolution 64/236 ([A/RES/64/236](#)), and took place in Brazil on 20-22 June 2012 to mark the 20th anniversary of the 1992 UNCED, in Rio de Janeiro, and the 10th anniversary of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg. It is envisaged as a Conference at the highest possible level, including Heads of State and Government or other representatives.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)  
Children and Disasters: Building Resilience Through Education  
<http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/24583>

This publication focuses on the importance of education in disaster prevention and makes recommendations on how to support and build on local and national initiatives to reduce the risk of disasters through education. It provides a brief overview of major hazards and disaster risks in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. It presents a snapshot of national disaster risk reduction structures and key legislations. It also briefly outlines disaster risk reduction activities related to education undertaken by national agencies and activities by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and UNICEF.

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)  
Gender and Natural Disasters Fact Sheet  
<http://www.paho.org/english/dpm/gpp/gh/genderdisasters.pdf>

This brief two page fact sheet is a product of the PAHO, a regional office of the World Health Organization (WHO), which outlines why women are vulnerable in times of disasters, how they respond to these situations as well as gives a general look at natural disasters from a gender perspective.

American Redcross  
Emergency Disaster Response and Preparedness  
<http://www.redcross.org/portal/site/en/menuitem.d229a5f06620c6052b1ecfbf43181aa0/?vgnextoid=cc0795e5ded8e110VgnVCM10000089f0870aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=5002af3fbac3b110VgnVCM10000089f0870aRCRD>

This site is a good tool for those delegates whom are interested in the role that non-governmental organizations play in disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Other key non-profit organizations that can be useful can as well include but not limit Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders), Amnesty International, Save the Children, etc.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)  
Handbook for Emergencies, Third Edition  
<http://www.unhcr.org/472af2972.html>

A reference tool which serves to reinforce a common understanding among the many key actors in emergency situations. The handbook highlights key areas such as emergency management, operations, and support to operations. As well these key areas breakdown into further subsets such as community distribution, sanitation, food and nutrition, health, communications, working with military, etc. all of which are instrumental in times of a catastrophe.

World Food Programme (WFP)

Ready to Help, Reaching the right people, in the right places, fast

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/newsroom/wfp207110.pdf>

Preparedness is an investment against man-made and natural disasters. It means we use our resources wisely and efficiently, and our knowledge to reduce the risk of a bad situation becoming even worse. When disaster strikes, the clock starts ticking. Time is often our worst enemy. Being as prepared as possible – to save lives and livelihoods – is a top priority for the WFP and this report details the multiple sets of projects/teams of the WFP that are in place to address situations of disaster/hazard.

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Program Library

<http://library.wmo.int/opac/index.php?lvl=infopages&pagesid=21>

Disaster risk reduction is at the core of the mission of the WMO, and the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs). WMO, through its scientific and technical programmes, its network of Global Meteorological Centres and Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres, and the NMHSs, provides scientific and technical services including observing, detecting, monitoring, predicting and early warning of a wide range of weather-, climate- and water-related hazards. Besides being a leader in the international community in terms of early warning systems, the WMO holds a DRR Program Library that holds the most up to date reports and publications which can be useful to each and every delegation.

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)

<http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/>

The IASC is a unique inter-agency forum for coordination, policy development and decision-making involving the key United Nations (UN) and non-UN humanitarian partners. The IASC was established in June 1992 in response to UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182 on the strengthening of humanitarian assistance. The IASC develops humanitarian policies, agrees on a clear division of responsibility for the various aspects of humanitarian assistance, identifies and addresses gaps in response, and advocates for effective application of humanitarian principles. Together with the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA), the IASC forms the key strategic coordination mechanism among major humanitarian actors.