



SRMUN ATLANTA 2017

Development through Dialogue: Using Global Cooperation to Build Lasting Change

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Esteemed Delegates,

Welcome to SRMUN Atlanta 2017 and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). My name is Khoi Tran, and I have the honor of serving as your Director. This will be my second conference as a SRMUN staff member. I have been involved with SRMUN for five years, previously serving as the Assistant Director for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) at SRMUN Atlanta 2016. I graduated with a double major in Economics and Political Science with a double minor in Business Administration and Social Sciences. I am currently pursuing a Masters Degree in Higher Education Administration.

Yanelle Cruz is the Assistant Director for ESCAP. This is Yanelle's second time as a SRMUN staff member and her first time participating with SRMUN's Atlanta Conference. She previously served as the Assistant Director for the United Nations Human Settlements Programme at SRMUN Charlotte 2017. She currently lives in Washington, D.C. and has recently graduated with a degree in Sociology.

ESCAP was established in 1947 in Shanghai, China as the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) to assist in post-WWII economic reconstruction. Its mission is to serve as the regional developmental arm of the United Nations for the Asia-Pacific region. Through regional cooperation and diplomacy, ESCAP provides a forum for Member States to promote regional collaboration and collective action to assist Member States in building and sustaining shared economic growth and social equality.

By focusing on the mission of ESCAP and the SRMUN Atlanta 2017 theme of "Development through Dialogue: Using Global Cooperation to Build Lasting Change," we have developed the following topics for delegates to discuss at the conference:

- I. Developing an Action Plan to Address Urban Growth in the Asia-Pacific Region
- II. Examining the Impact of Organized Crime on Sustainable Development

This background guide is intended to provide a foundation and introduction to the committee and topics covered by SRMUN Atlanta 2017. Through in-depth research and analysis demonstrated in this guide, it is our hope that this will be the start to a positive experience at ESCAP. Delegates are expected to use the background guide as one holistic analysis, and to engage in research that would engage in intellectual inquiry. Each delegate is also expected to create a position paper that reflects the complexity of these issues from the perspective of their Member State. This position paper is meant to be the motivation for vigorous discussion during committee meetings. Position papers should be no longer than two pages in length (single spaced) and demonstrate your Member State's position, policies, and recommendations on each of the two topics. For more detailed information about creating and formatting position papers, delegates can visit srmun.org and use the "Delegate Preparation" tab. ***All position papers MUST be submitted no later than 11:59 PM on Friday, October 27, 2017 via the SRMUN website.***

Yanelle and I are enthusiastic about serving as your dais for ESCAP. We wish all delegates the best of luck in conference preparation and look forward to working with you in the near future. Please feel free to contact Deputy Director-General Keith Brannum, Yanelle, or myself if you have any inquiries while preparing for the conference.

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Committee History for the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is one of the five regional commissions for the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).¹ The Body was originally founded as the UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) in 1947 in Shanghai, China.² Up to this time, a majority of the states that made up ECAFE were recovering from the effects of the Second World War. In 1949, ECAFE moved its headquarters to Bangkok, Thailand, where it remains to this very day.³ The Organization's name was changed in 1974 to reflect the changing needs of the region. Decolonization and the emergence of developing Member States from the former empires required addressing new economic and social issues such as rising healthcare costs, education for a growing population, and sustainability of existing infrastructure.⁴ The mandate of ESCAP was broadened in 1977 by the United Nations General Assembly.⁵ Originally, the mandate for ESCAP was simply focused on economic development of Member States. The regional commissions have grown to become the forum for the region to create conversation and dialogue to further regional solidarity.

ESCAP's vision is to create a stronger Asia-Pacific region through economic success. Specifically, the vision of ESCAP promotes a comprehensive multilateral platform for promoting cooperation among Member States to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in the region.⁶ These areas of interest include Macroeconomic Policy, Financing for Development, Energy, Transport, Social Development, Trade & Investment, and Innovation.⁷ ESCAP has several regional institutions that assist in addressing the needs of the region: Center for the Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (Bogor, Indonesia), Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (Makuhari, Japan), Center for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization (Beijing, China), and Asian and Pacific Center for the Development of Disaster Information Management (Tehran, Iran).⁸

In its early days and foundation, ESCAP helped Member States pioneer institutional decisions and policies.⁹ Despite the division of the Cold War with Member States divided along East/West or Capitalist v. Communist lines, ESCAP still played a major role in creating discussion for economic issues, regardless the economic system or international bloc each Member State was a part of.¹⁰ Several major projects that took shape during the 1970s include creating the Indian-based Asian Pacific Center for the Transfer of Technology (APCTT).¹¹

The Asian Pacific Center for the Transfer of Technology has the status of a subsidiary body of ESCAP, and its primary objective is to assist ESCAP Member States by strengthening their capabilities to develop and manage national innovation systems, and identify the development and transfer of technologies relevant to the region.¹² The Center also hosts a Technical Committee consisting of experts from Member States and intergovernmental organizations.¹³ The APCTT is the main body for Member States to gain assistance for the utilization of technology for development; the Government of Japan as well as the United Nations Development Programme primarily funded

¹ "About ESCAP," United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. <http://www.unescap.org/about> (Accessed March 28, 2017).

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ "Regional Institutions." United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

<http://www.unescap.org/regional-institutions>

(Accessed April 4, 2017).

⁹ "From ECAFE to ESCAP." Ralph Bunche Institute for International Studies. <http://www.unhistory.org/brief/20Asia.pdf>

(Accessed April 8, 2017)

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² "Strategy of Regional Institutions on Information and Communications Technology." Economic and Social Commission for Asia and The Pacific. <http://www.unescap.org/resources/asian-and-pacific-centre-transfer-technology-english> (accessed May 20, 2017)

¹³ Ibid.

the programmes sponsored by the APCTT. The APCTT has grown as it was once focused solely on developing technology and now addresses the importance of technological utilization to enhance Member States' capacity building.¹⁴ One of the ACPTT's largest networks is the Asia-Pacific Traditional Medicine and Herbal Technology Network that connect 14 member States to develop traditional medicine while also promoting industrial and technical cooperation for efficiency and the dissemination of information.¹⁵ Lastly, the ACPTT's latest initiatives involve the introduction of technology transfer capabilities from intermediaries to governmental organizations and local communities.¹⁶ The applications of the ACPTT have developed throughout the past four decades, and continue to be a major hub of connectivity for Member States.

Post-1970s, the Asia and Pacific region faced significant economic growth in specific Member States throughout the 1980s and 1990s. South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan (also known as the Four Tigers) joined Japan in unprecedented economic growth after reconstruction from the Cold War.¹⁷ These Member States were having growth of annual rates of output of over 6 percent which was sustained throughout the three decades.¹⁸ However, these economic successes were mostly agglomerated in Eastern Asia. Other parts of Asia and the Pacific faced rates of growth similar to the rest of the world averaging at around 2-2 percent growth in annual rates of output.¹⁹ Abundance of labor, capital, and technology helped drive Asia as the fastest-growing economic hub of the world, and gave the North America and Western Europe new frontiers to create new international ventures. Though the other parts of the region were not growing as quickly as the leaders in the region, other Member States were able to gain increased foreign investment and involved participation in the global supply and value chain. Developing Member States throughout the region were gaining more employment and overall productivity averaging about an average of 72 percent growth in capital accumulation for the entire region.²⁰

ESCAP seeks to implement long-term solutions that would ensure Member States are well-supported through all steps of implementation. Through collective research provided by partner organizations such as the Statistical Yearbook and the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanisms as a means to coordinate between inter-agencies.²¹ The Secretariat of ESCAP has also requested for Member States to share information and knowledge among the body to help foster collective success throughout the region to combat the polarization that exists currently.²² The Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform as well as the Urban SDG Knowledge Platform, helps to assist ESCAP, Member States, and private organizations in their journey toward sustainable growth.²³

The following Member States are offered at SRMUN Atlanta 2017:

AFGHANISTAN, AUSTRALIA, BANGLADESH, CAMBODIA, CHINA, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA, FRANCE, GEORGIA, INDIA, INDONESIA, IRAN, JAPAN, KAZAKHSTAN, KRGYZSTAN, LAOS, MONGOLIA, NEPAL, NETHERLANDS, PAKISTAN, PALAU, PHILIPPINES, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SAMOA, TAJIKISTAN, THAILAND, TURKEY, TUVALU, UNITED KINGDOM, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND VIETNAM.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ "Growth in East Asia: What We Can and What We Cannot Infer." International Monetary Fund. <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/issues1/> (Accessed May 19, 2017)

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ "Achieving Sustainable Development Goals in East and North-East Asia." United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. <http://www.unescap.org/resources/achieving-sustainable-development-goals-east-and-north-east-asia> (Accessed April 7, 2017).

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

I. Developing an Action Plan to Address Urban Growth in the Asia-Pacific Region

"Urbanization is a driving force as well as a source of development. It has the power to change and improve the lives of those there. Urban areas are at the heart of many great challenges, opportunities, and promises."

– United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

United Nations Conference On Housing And Sustainable Development, September 2014²⁴

Introduction

The urban population in the Asia-Pacific region is growing rapidly. By 2020, projections estimate that the Asia-Pacific urban population will make up over 50 percent of the entire Asia-Pacific population. By 2050, it is estimated that over 3 billion people will be residing in the region's urban areas.²⁵ The Asia-Pacific region is home to over 53 percent of the global population living in urban areas, which amounts to over 4 billion; these cities also account for 80 percent of the region's economic output.²⁶ For much of the Asia-Pacific region, the rapid growth of urban areas unveiled both new opportunities and many challenges. Higher levels of development create higher costs at the risk of endangering the population if implemented in an unsustainable way; improper management with scarce resources can lead to greater levels of poverty. Commercial and urban land use eliminates natural resources from both the civilian population and the various domestic species residing in that area. Differences in what the community can utilize land for can create hesitation toward development ventures. Limited space inhibits future expansion of urban areas, but can also directly impede construction and renovation of existing structures. As governments are tasked with addressing challenges of growing urban centers, there is a need for all Member States to ensure adequate shelter, healthy lifestyles, and desirable conditions for their citizens. This responsibility is even greater when considering the internal migration within Member States. It is understandable that people move to urban communities to gain greater access to services and opportunities. However, space use and commercial opportunities are not available for every citizen, yet every citizen requires similar resources to survive. This unequal balance only creates more pressure for Member States to develop more sustainable urban centers.

Notably in South and Southeast Asia, rapid economic growth creates strong pressure to convert rural land to industrial, residential, or commercial use. These land use transitions are common throughout cities in Asia and are described as "peri-urban areas," often characterized as urban sprawl.²⁷ Peri-urbanization is the transition of land use from rural to urban purposes; however, the transition period can create a conflict for commercial, residential, and infrastructural uses.²⁸ Peri-urban areas in the region will account for 40 percent of urban population growth over the next 25 years.²⁹ With major enterprises looking to expand in peri-urban areas, foreign direct investment (FDI) flowing to the region, along with existing domestic investment, could exert more external pressure. Civilians in these areas will face unique pressure brought on by a lack of adequate services in water, sanitation, and farmland degradation. Economic and social barriers such as unequal pay, lack of proper representation, and additional barriers for the lower-middle class limits a large amount of mobility for these citizens. The prices of public goods have been known to rise in reaction to population saturation, but a rise in income is not necessarily simultaneous with this increased cost of living which causes financial burden.³⁰

²⁴ "We committed ourselves to implement the Habitat Agenda – Ban Ki-Moon." United Nations Habitat, <https://unhabitat.org/we-committed-to-implement-the-habitat-agenda-ban-ki-moon/>. (accessed May 25, 2017)

²⁵ "Urban Development." United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, <http://www.unescap.org/our-work/environment-development/urban-development/about>. (accessed May 19, 2017)

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Rural-To-Urban Transitions And The Peri-Urban Interface." East-West Center, <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/research/research-projects/environment-rural-urban-transitions-and-peri-urban-interface-identifying->. (accessed May 21, 2017)

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ "Public-Private Partnerships In Infrastructure Development: A Primer." United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, <http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/PPP-Primer-Final-Original-edited.pdf> (accessed July 14, 2017), p. 39

The urban landscape was often idealized as the economic, administrative, and cultural hub for Member States such as the case within London and Paris. However, the emergences of megacities in recent decades have created a new expectation out of urban activity. In the 1950s when the word “megacity” was coined, there were only 2 cities that fit its basic definition of harboring 10 million inhabitants: New York City, USA and Tokyo, Japan.³¹ By 2010, the number had increased to 24 (17 of which are from the Asia-Pacific region) and UN projections expect 39 megacities by 2025.³² Megacities not only share a gigantic population; each megacity has a different skyline, administration, and urban culture that are unique to the area. Residents of each megacity share a unique culture which separates them from the region, continent, and the world. Addressing urban growth must remain honest to each area’s culture when addressing future needs.

Distinctions of Urban Growth Challenges

The Asia-Pacific region is home to six different sub-regions: the Pacific, East Asia, South-East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East. Difficulties have emerged for ESCAP to create a comprehensive solution because problems in each region are unique to that specific area. While many cities in Asia are growing, others are experiencing stagnation or even a population decline. Member States like Japan and South Korea are facing a demographic crisis with an ageing population and may rely on migrant workers to help supplement the shrinking working population.³³ Permanent jobs are in a decline in urban areas, so rural migrants are unable to stake claim to a permanent home.³⁴ Member States should consider how to encourage balanced urban growth. Steering private capital expenditure towards cities of differing sizes, rather than focusing on large economic hubs, can be beneficial to help spread the success rather than concentrating it. Improper efforts to ensure better management of physical and natural resources, and a lack of water availability, cripple many cities’ ability to stimulate healthy lifestyles for their citizens.³⁵ It is important for the success of ESCAP’s Member States that each region is able to identify and rectify the challenges unique to each area.

The varying regions of Asia and the Pacific face unique challenges of urban growth. Additionally, many Member States have unique definitions for urban areas. Of the 26 Member States and territories surveyed by ESCAP, fifteen define urban areas based on administrative criterion only, four are based on population size and/or density, two definitions focus on the functions or services the area provide, and the last five use a combination of these criteria.³⁶ Patterns of urbanization have varied significantly throughout Asia and the Pacific. Notably, four specific situations have emerged. Well-developed Member States such as Japan and South Korea combine high rates of urbanization (defined as urban development growth exceeding 60%) with low urban growth rates (defined as population growth in the designated area).³⁷ Many Pacific and island Member States such as Singapore and the Philippines feature moderate urbanization rates with moderate-to-high urban growth rates when compared the global average.³⁸ Notably in South Asia, the Middle East, and China, low rates of urbanization, around 40%, in addition to the fast-growing urban population in these Member States.³⁹ Lastly, most of Southeast Asia is facing slow urban growth rates in addition to low urbanization.⁴⁰ Population and development are intertwined at every point, so governments must utilize large amounts of resources to insure planning and implementation will be effective.

³¹ “The rise and rise of the Asian megacity (and why ‘metacities’ are the next big thing).” South China Morning Post, <http://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/article/1530748/larger-life-rise-and-rise-asian-megacity>. (accessed May 21, 2017)

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ “State of the World’s Cities 2010/2011-Cities for All: Bridging the Urban Divide.” UN-HABITAT, https://unhabitat.org/?mbt_book=state-of-the-worlds-cities-20102011-cities-for-all-bridging-the-urban-divide (accessed July 16, 2017), p. 29.

³⁵ Ibid, p.29.

³⁶ Ibid, p.28.

³⁷ Ibid, p.28.

³⁸ Ibid, p.28.

³⁹ Ibid, p.28.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.28.

Case Study: Tokyo, Japan

The core municipality of Tokyo, Japan has been identified as a megacity since becoming the world's largest urban area in the 1950s. The city has served as the Member State's capital since the early 1600s when it was known as Edo.⁴¹ Edo expanded and grew to be one of the world's largest metropolises by the early 1700s. During the Meiji Restoration in the 1860s, reformers had overthrown the centuries old feudal system in favor of modernizing the country. One major overhaul was the transformation of Edo to Tokyo (which incidentally means East Capital City) and included new projects, such as the introduction of mass public goods like public parks, mass transit trains and trams, and modern water supply systems.⁴² Up until the 1920s, Tokyo was able to renew itself within the Edo framework; however, at this point, development required the city to expand beyond its original boundary.⁴³ The city looked to Western capitals for inspiration of city planning, and used London and New York City as primary examples. The city planning encouraged more suburban expansion for the slowly emerging middle-class families seeking more opportunities within the city.

Before 1960, Japan was still predominantly rural where over half the households lived in rustic areas; however, the 1960s saw post-war baby boomers from rural areas immigrate to the cities for jobs and educational opportunities.⁴⁴ With more Japanese citizens taking advantage of new educational opportunities, the 1960s and the 1970s sparked an era of social thinking for Japan. Cold war tensions, along with the Korean and Vietnam Wars, brought both positive and negative consequences to Japan. Student protests were extremely popular throughout the island Member State, forcing the closure of numerous college campuses throughout cities within Japan.⁴⁵ However, with mainland Asia caught in war, Eastern Europe ravaged with political strife and famine, and the rising tensions in the Middle East, Japan was in a unique space to become a major stakeholder in the international economy since facing deep loss from World War II.⁴⁶ Japan's per capita GDP was growing to the rates of Western European and American economies and opportunities were plentiful for the average Japanese citizen.⁴⁷ Failing socialist movements in Eastern Europe presented Japanese socialist organizations huge obstacles; awareness of the global climate (which was not necessarily transparent before and during WWII) created an emerging Japanese electorate that overcame usual political apathy.

Tokyo, Japan became a prime spot for international commercialization which saw massive exports and set the bar for innovation in technology and other market sectors for over three decades. Tokyo's models of the financial, automotive, and high-industry sectors were seen as improvements compared to models within the US. By the early 1970s, Japan had surpassed West Germany to be the second largest economy in the world behind the United States. Japan prioritized labor security and consensus-seeking management style boosted morale for multiple enterprises; however, it would be these same developments that would eventually weaken it.⁴⁸ To capture all the economic potential, the State intervened heavily throughout to fund the necessary development. The utilization of an expansionary monetary policy ensured that there would be Yen to spend. However, the cost of living rose exponentially within Japan, most notably in Tokyo, where the opportunities were plentiful. Families took out multigenerational loans since land was so scarce.⁴⁹ The government of Japan took considerable amounts of debt to stimulate the economy after the 1990s brought what was known as the "Lost Decade" for Japan. From 1985 to 1990, the Nikkei 225 stock index rose by about 60 percent to approximately 35,000 points compared to the present-day 9,000-10,000 point range. A large asset bubble was taking shape; banks continued to loan out for more assets to be collected. However, once more economic partners emerged in China and Russia, the worldwide trade balance for

⁴¹ "Tokyo's Urban Growth, Urban Form, and Sustainability." Junichiro Okata and Akito Murayama, <http://www.thecandlelightclub.com/Sakura%20in%20Old%20Tokyo/9784431992660-c1.pdf> (accessed May 30, 2017)

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ "Japan's 1968: A Collective Reaction to Rapid Economic Growth." Oguma Eiji, <http://apjif.org/2015/13/11/Oguma-Eiji/4300.html> (accessed July 15, 2017)

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ "The Recession in Japan, Part 1: Lost Decade Revisited." Stratfor, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/recession-japan-part-1-lost-decade-revisited> (accessed July 15, 2017)

⁴⁹ Ibid.

Japan had quickly diminished. Interest rates were dropping, and the high volume of assets were not matching in value compared to just a few years back. Interest rates had dropped considerably when compared to the earlier decades, and inflationary expectations grinded the Japanese economy to a halt. The debt and spending would bring the economy back for small return only to be followed by a small contraction. This cycle repeats to the present where Tokyo's miraculous economy had finally come to a halt, with a government debt that is one of the largest in the world.

Urban growth has been a constant in Tokyo's lifespan; however, Tokyo has been in dire need of revitalization in several of its districts and local communities. Many older areas are facing infrastructural problems created from high population density and a lack of resources. Older properties are becoming outdated in terms of desirable living conditions for such a developed city; however, the high cost of land acquisition creates a difficulty in pursuing further urban development beyond the city core. Renewing and rebuilding these older communities would call for displacement of many Japanese citizens and would create roadblocks in a deeply gridlocked city already plagued by traffic. Many Japanese families already spend on current expenditures with rental space and utilities; the idea of displacement in an area farther away from the center of Tokyo for a period of time is unattractive to most citizens. These spaces can also be even more expensive to live when taking in the factors of newer spaces having higher prices as well as the money that would be necessary to spend for a new lifestyle. Private enterprises looking to renovate spaces do not receive the approval from tenants to do so, and the desire to live outside the city is less than appealing than to live in the city.

Private transit is essentially a non-viable option for many citizens as the road system within Tokyo stemmed from a system that radiates the city center without traffic bypass options; most space is used for residential or commercial purposes.⁵⁰ Public transit as an alternative has reached its capacity for minimal safety conditions. Subways and trains offer riders little room and scheduling is strictly enforced. Buses and vans sponsored by the city have not been effective in cutting commute times; many Tokyo workers live outside the city due to the expensive urban land costs. Some of the busiest lines carry over 100,000 citizens throughout the 30 trains per hour in one direction only.⁵¹ The current Tokyo highway system does not have a traffic bypass route in its infrastructure.⁵² Private sector and local participation efforts to create unique neighborhoods have not met government expectations of a cohesive community effort. Spending on community projects from the government account for 75-85 percent when the ideal desire is to cut down to approximate 55-65 percent spending.⁵³ Despite a period of stagnation or a decreasing population over the past decade, the Tokyo metropolitan area has been growing. Tokyo's share of Japan's natural growth has reached 400 percent in 2010, but the decline in the national fertility rate could have severe economic impact on Tokyo's national efforts.⁵⁴

In 2011, natural disaster and nuclear radiation threatened the livelihood for over 50 million Japanese citizens. The Tōhoku earthquake and subsequent tsunami on March 11, 2011 ravaged the Tōhoku region of Japan approximately 200 miles away from Tokyo.⁵⁵ Though this disaster caused an estimated \$235 billion and took the lives of over 15,000 people, Tokyo remain relatively untouched and calm facing such large threats of disaster.⁵⁶ Most major train lines and airports stemming from Tokyo to other areas were reopened in less than 24 hours. City officials, with the help of humanitarian aid, were able to begin the restoration of this region; many people remained displaced, but daily functions resumed. Tokyo, using this as an example, ceased nuclear production temporarily and called for a renewal in natural disaster preparation as a focus. Following the disaster, city laws in Tokyo required energy companies to maintain disaster readiness plans, which would be reviewed by governmental organizations and

⁵⁰ "New Agglomeration and 'Tokyo Problems.'" United Nations University, <http://archive.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu11ee/uu11ee0g.htm> (accessed July 16, 2017)

⁵¹ "Transportation Problems in Japan." Hideo Nakamura, http://www.jrtr.net/jrtr04/f02_nak.html (accessed August 18, 2017)

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ "New Agglomeration and 'Tokyo Problems.'" United Nations University, <http://archive.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu11ee/uu11ee0g.htm> (accessed July 16, 2017)

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ "Fukushima: Tokyo was on the brink of nuclear catastrophe, admits former prime minister." The Telegraph, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/japan/12184114/Fukushima-Tokyo-was-on-the-brink-of-nuclear-catastrophe-admits-former-prime-minister.html> (accessed July 16, 2017)

⁵⁶ Ibid.

uphold specific thresholds and standards. New buildings are expected to have deep foundations, as well as massive shock absorbers to withstand earthquakes. Tokyo walls and tunnels were built and expanded to channel overflowing sea water from tsunamis and floods. Emergency preparedness drills have quickly assimilated into Tokyo lifestyles and are commonly expected to be taught to everyone from schoolchildren to businessmen and women. Through calamity and the costliest natural disaster, Tokyo has been able to rebuild from debris and become a worldwide leader in natural disaster preparedness.

Case Study: Delhi, India

In 1911, Delhi became the capital of the British Raj and has since become one of India's main hubs of activity since gaining independence in 1947.⁵⁷ However, rural-urban transitions have not been smooth for many Indians. Though the desire for a better life and more opportunity motivate millions of Indians to move to urban areas, they are often met with less-than-ideal conditions. Delhi's urban area has more than doubled in the past 20 years, which creates small, daily hardships while also rippling into larger consequences.⁵⁸ Commuting distances have gone from an average of 8.5 kilometers to 10.4 kilometers.⁵⁹ With Delhi's urban sprawl growing, increased traffic congestion and carbon emissions from automobiles have a negative impact on citizens' health and productivity. Proper city planning could reverse the measures made by urban sprawl; however, high pressure on the rapidly industrializing Delhi has only made it more difficult to implement sustainable practices. Delhi officials pushed for more private partnerships to incorporate sustainable infrastructure in private residential areas. Incentives are available for companies that assist in the development of green buildings and eco-roofs in new residential areas, but the partnership could expand to urban buildings. Delhi could benefit tremendously from stricter policy implementation with regards to scaling back waste and limiting fossil fuel consumption. Nearly 410 tons of carbon monoxide are released into Delhi air every day, which only negatively impacts Indians' health and lifestyles.⁶⁰ Stricter policy control can tie Delhi citizens to become more active in the public sector with a more active government.

Rapid urbanization has endangered other biodiversity from the necessity of expansion. Lowlands have been utilized for residential areas, natural forests have been cut down, and storm water drains are now being used for dirty water discharge.⁶¹ Total area under water bodies has declined from 14.41 km² to 8.51 km² for the use of expanding roads across the city. From 1980 to 1981, the total road length of 14,361 kilometers nearly doubled to 28,508 kilometers.⁶² As recent as 2007 has shown the total road length to be 42,663 kilometers.⁶³ Delhi made the space and room for the 1982 Asian Games complex by clearing the Siri Fort forest and the swimming stadium for the grand sports event was built using the Talkatora water reservoir.⁶⁴ Later, the city of Delhi permitted the construction of the games village for the 2010 Commonwealth Games directly over the flood bed of the Yamuna River.⁶⁵ Without consideration of the economic benefits of sustainable development, they are facing little encouragement for proper sustainable development. Proper valuation exercises could facilitate better decision-making processes for Delhi

⁵⁷ "History of Delhi." Government of Delhi, <http://delhi.gov.in/wps/wcm/connect/DoIT/delhi+govt/travel/delhi+history> (accessed June 2, 2017)

⁵⁸ "3 Challenges Facing India's Growing Cities." World Resources Institute, <http://www.wri.org/blog/2014/03/3-challenges-facing-india%E2%80%99s-growing-cities> (accessed June 2, 2017)

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Sustainable Urban Environment in Delhi: Emerging Problems and Prospective for Innovative Solutions." University of Delhi, India, https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6494108_Singh%20and%20Grover_Sustainable%20Urban%20Environment%20in%20Delhi.pdf (accessed July 17, 2017)

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² "Sustainable Urban Environment in Delhi: Emerging Problems and Prospectives for Innovative Solutions." University of Delhi, India, https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6494108_Singh%20and%20Grover_Sustainable%20Urban%20Environment%20in%20Delhi.pdf (accessed July 17, 2017)

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ "Challenges and Opportunities of Sustainable Urbanization in Delhi, India." University of Delhi, India, <https://isscbookofblogs.pressbooks.com/chapter/challenges-and-opportunities-of-sustainable-urbanization-in-delhi-india/> (accessed June 3, 2017)

⁶⁵ Ibid.

officials.

Delhi hosted a plethora of biodiversity that intertwined within its original city layout as protected by the Delhi Development Authority, however, expansion for urban use called for the destruction of many natural habitats. Delhi is home to many natural landscapes such as the Yamuna River, the Aravallis mountain range, and the Delhi Ridge, all of which are vital living systems for fauna, flora, and microbial life.⁶⁶ The Delhi Ridge in particular at one point accounted for approximately 15 percent of the Delhi area, however, dense population in Delhi created a need for an expansion of the Guargon, Faridabad, and Noida townships surrounding the city.⁶⁷ Realizing the ecological impact, Delhi officials created the Asola Wildlife Sanctuary which preserves over 19,000 acres of Delhi.⁶⁸ Though just a fraction of the original area, the Sanctuary has been able to save hundreds of species from extinction, as well as protect their home from urban development. In just 10 years, the Sanctuary has grown to almost 20 distinct forest communities with thousands of plant species. The Asola Wildlife Sanctuary has also proved to be beneficial for citizens' health and became a popular tourism spot in Delhi. Approximately 300 acres of the area is open to the public through the approved trails. There are even tours that highlight the benefits of this sanctuary while also being a resource to better Indians' health and exploration of knowledge. Serving as one of the largest cities in the world, while also holding a park aimed for biodiversity, is an achievement that is sure to serve for future sustainable urban practice.

ESCAP & Sustainable Development Goal 11

The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (also known as the UN Habitat III Conference) adopted the New Urban Agenda to set global standards of achievement for sustainable urban development.⁶⁹ The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development included 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); SDG 11 focuses on cities and urban areas.⁷⁰ Making cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable is a hefty goal for the global community to take on, in particular for the Asia-Pacific region.

MakeMyIsland was a new-age innovation in the Maldives for waste management.⁷¹ It was launched in December 2015 as a mobile telephone application to create a communication link between residents and the administration.⁷² This application allows residents to report to the authorities if individuals were discarding garbage in non-designated areas. Each complaint is recorded and mapped out digitally and sent to the government council to be ranked and addressed accordingly. Waste management has improved significantly since launching in the Maldives and has been a critical part in public administration for the Member State.

The 2010 *Human Development Report* launched the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which assists Member States for planning, targeting, and allocating resources in the Asia-Pacific.⁷³ The index measures deprivation using ten indicators under three dimensions: health, education, and standards of living. The government of Vietnam has developed a new multidimensional poverty line and piloted it in Ho Chi Minh City in 2014.⁷⁴ From there, the Vietnamese government has utilized it in other cities to identify non-income poor households in order to better provide appropriate social protection. The use of the MPI in Vietnamese cities have brought an additional two million urban people into the poverty net who were above the poverty line but still poor in terms of the non-income dimensional criteria.⁷⁵ With this, Vietnamese citizens will now be eligible to receive assistance for housing, health

⁶⁶ "Restoring Delhi's Environment." The Indian Express, <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/restoring-delhis-environment/> (accessed July 17, 2017)

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ "UN Habitat III Conference." United Nations, <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/habitat3/> (accessed May 29, 2017)

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ "Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity in a Changing Asia-Pacific." United Nations Development Programme, <http://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/rbap/en/home/library/sustainable-development/eradicating-poverty-and-promoting-prosperity-in-a-changing-asia-.html> (accessed June 2, 2017)

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

insurance, education, and other needs form the various poverty reduction programs in these cities.

ESCAP has prioritized knowledge-sharing as an important tool in order for Member States to become closer to equitable levels of urban development in a sustainable way. Through the partnership with the Seoul Metropolitan Government and CityNet, the Urban SDG Knowledge Platform was created in March 2017.⁷⁶ This platform encourages the innovation of local action to create sustainable solutions towards the 2030 Agenda. The Urban SDG Knowledge Platform includes a database of policies, initiatives, and proper city practices is available to Member States and other stakeholders.⁷⁷ Regional cooperation is encouraged by linking cities to develop solutions that may be similar in practice and gives local communities a voice in the international forum to further themselves.

Conclusion

The Asia-Pacific region has experienced rapid urbanization at an unequal rate. This trend of rapid urbanization is projected to continue but will surely bring unprecedented demographic, economic, and social shifts throughout the continent. The urban context has mostly been treated as a blanket problem; urbanization has seemingly been linked to higher rates of displacements, health concerns, as well environmental degradation. However, urban development has brought countless opportunities to citizens who would be subject to huge inequalities in power and wealth. The asymmetrical rates of urban development that varies significantly throughout each Member State has drawn fair amounts of skepticism in developing a regional action plan for ESCAP to implement. However, as urban areas turn into engines of innovation, development, and advancement, attention must be drawn to the minimization of risk.

The advantages of urbanization can be the catalyst for success for each Member State. The cities of Tokyo, Japan, and Delhi, India are just two examples of how urbanization can create great change both positively and negatively for its residents. Cities are becoming increasingly complex and call for comprehensive action to address the intersectionality of its identities. Governance must take into account the vast amounts of stakeholders within civil society of a city and expand its decision-making process to consider those perspectives. Urban areas are unable to follow linear patterns and take in conventional policies as the culture of each area is not only unique from other Member States but also dynamic in nature. Modern frameworks must consider the venture of integrated solutions to set expectations for resource use and assessment. Proper management must take in hands-on efforts and link the local community to implementation. These urban networks can bring about positive agents of change for Member States if handled with proper care and considerate attention.

Committee Directive

When considering the existing regional frameworks and cooperation between Member States, how can we create a comprehensive action plan that gives consideration to each unique identity as well as a shared identity? The challenge of urban areas being inherently unequal in urban migration and urban size growth rates adds a layer of difficulty for united action. Member States and the committee should be prepared to decide how the emerging problems of urban growth can threaten the livelihood of its citizens. How will the culture of each city be preserved in the face of leveling income inequality, environmental degradation, and natural disaster management? What solutions will be the most effective in encouraging local communities in taking initiative and seek collaboration with other stakeholders for the betterment of their neighbors? How can Member States assess the consequences of increasing urban growth and empower new residents to integrate safely in their new homes? Lastly, the committee must call into question the effectiveness of existing frameworks in addressing urban growth to each Member State's desire and expectation.

⁷⁶ "Urbanization and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific: Linkage and Policy Implications." United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, https://www.unescap.org/commission/73/document/E73_16E.pdf (accessed July 15, 2017)

⁷⁷ Ibid.

II. Examining the Impact of Organized Crime on Sustainable Development

“We need a global response that addresses the root causes of conflict, and integrates peace, sustainable development and human rights in a holistic way – from conception to execution,”

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres

United Nations High-Level Dialogue on Building Sustainable Peace for All, January 2017⁷⁸

Introduction

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly successfully adopted A/RES/70/1 on the topic of “*Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*,” which set the tone for 17 new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 169 targets, and a new global agenda.⁷⁹ Alongside continuing development priorities, such as poverty eradication, health, education, food security, and nutrition, the SDGs set out a wide range of economic, social, and environmental objectives to be achieved by 2030.⁸⁰ By adopting E/ESCAP/RES/72/6, “*Committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific*,” ESCAP outlined a specific 2030 agenda unique to the region and developed the framework towards achieving all SDGs within the region.⁸¹

While establishing these goals and targets, five areas of critical importance were highlighted, which are as follows: people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership.⁸² Despite there being five main targets that make each goal unique, all SDGs share the same common goal: sustainable development. The SDGs aim to significantly reduce all forms of violence, and work with governments to find sustainable and lasting solutions to conflict and insecurity. Strengthening the rule of law and promoting human rights is essential to this process, as is reducing the flow of illicit arms and strengthening the participation of developing Member States in the institutions of global governance.⁸³ By achieving all of these goals, the SDGs will successfully build a more sustainable world.

Specifically related to peace and prosperity, SDG 16’s mission is to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.”⁸⁴ In short, SDG 16 seeks to promote just, peaceful, and inclusive societies across the globe. Like all other SDGs, there are challenges specific to SDG 16 that act as a barrier towards achieving this goal, and one of the biggest challenges is organized crime. A sustainable world cannot be built without stable and peaceful societies; organized crime threatens peace and human security, violates human rights, and undermines various aspects of the development of societies around the world.

Overview of Organized Crime

When thinking about organized crime, it is vital to understand no single example of it exists. Organized crime has

⁷⁸ “Guterres highlights importance of recognizing the links between peace and sustainable development,” United Nations, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2017/01/guterres-highlights-importance-of-recognizing-the-links-between-peace-and-sustainable-development/> (accessed May 23, 2017)

⁷⁹ A/RES/70/1. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. United Nations General Assembly. (accessed April 5, 2017)

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ E/ESCAP/RES/72/6. *Committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific*. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. (accessed April 8, 2017)

⁸² “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” UN Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld> (accessed April 5, 2017)

⁸³ “Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions,” United Nations Development Programme, <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-16-peace-justice-and-strong-institutions.html> (accessed May 16, 2017)

⁸⁴ “SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels,” ESCAP, <http://www.unescap.org/resources/sdg-16-promote-peaceful-and-inclusive-societies-sustainable-development-provide-access> (accessed May 7, 2017)

become such an evolved practice that there are many different kinds of crimes that can constitute as such, therefore it is a very complex issue. The United Nations does not have a precise definition for what constitutes as organized crime. This is intentional because it allows for a broader applicability of the Organized Crime Convention (OCC), drafted and guarded by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), to include new types of crime that emerge constantly as global, regional, and local conditions change over time.⁸⁵ However, the OCC does identify four characteristics to define an ‘organized criminal group’ which are as follows: (1) a group of three or more persons that was not randomly formed, (2) existing for a period of time, (3) acting in concert with the aim of committing at least one crime punishable by at least four years’ incarceration, and (4) in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit.⁸⁶ Additionally, UNODC uses the term ‘transnational organized crime (TOC)’ rather than just organized crime to recognize that criminal networks forge bonds across borders and have been able to overcome cultural and linguistic differences in the commission of their crime. UNODC intentionally defines the term ‘transnational’ broadly in order to recognize the global complexity of the issue and allows cooperation on the widest possible range of common concerns.⁸⁷

Organized crime has evolved, diversified, and plagued every region across the globe overtime. TOC groups are diverse and may function as hierarchies, clans, networks, and cells, and may evolve into other structures.⁸⁸ Crimes such as drug trafficking, migrant smuggling, terrorism, human trafficking, money laundering, firearms trafficking, illegal gambling, extortion, counterfeit goods, organ trafficking, wildlife and cultural property smuggling, bank fraud, maritime crime, piracy, and cyber-crime are examples of the activity TOC groups engage in worldwide.⁸⁹ In the last couple of years, TOC groups have begun incorporating cyber techniques into their crimes due to the rapid increase of technology available around the world. This increase of technology has also allowed for crime to become even more transnational. For example, phishing and internet fraud attacks allow for TOC groups to target other continents without even having the need to travel to them. Technology also enables TOC groups to engage in traditional criminal activity, such as illegal gambling, but with a greater reach through use of the Internet and off-shore servers, thus expanding their global impact.⁹⁰

In past years, the Asia Pacific region has undergone economic growth and achieved a strong economic base globally. UNODC examined whether this economic prosperity has made the region more vulnerable to TOC and the Report found that Pacific island Member States are increasingly vulnerable to TOC, including drug, small arms, human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and unsanctioned environmental exploitation.⁹¹ Local law enforcement agencies are largely unable to manage territorial borders, allowing Member States in the region to be exploited as transit points – with serious consequences for nearby Member States as well.⁹² Asian criminal groups have prospered largely because of globalization, technology, international travel and the economic growth the area has seen so far. They conduct traditional activities associated with TOC like extortion, murder, kidnapping, illegal gambling, prostitution, and loansharking. They also smuggle aliens, traffic heroin and methamphetamine, commit financial frauds, steal autos and computer chips, counterfeit computer and clothing products, and engage in money laundering.⁹³

Case Study: Human Trafficking in Asia and the Pacific

Human trafficking, along with arms business, is the second largest criminal industry in the world and the annual

⁸⁵ “Organized Crime,” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/ar/organized-crime/index.html> (accessed May 19, 2017)

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ “Transnational Organized Crime,” Federal Bureau of Investigation, <https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/organized-crime> (accessed May 19, 2017)

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ “UN report finds Pacific nations’ vulnerability to trafficking, exploitation growing,” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, <https://www.ft.com/content/e8ff969f-077b-3078-9697-6fc9b8a665f8> (accessed by May 19, 2017)

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ “Transnational Organized Crime,” Federal Bureau of Investigation, <https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/organized-crime> (accessed May 19, 2017)

market is around \$150 billion earned by selling men, women, and children.⁹⁴ The UNODC defines human trafficking as the “recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.”⁹⁵ Said exploitation may occur as, but is not limited to, exploiting the prostitution of others, sexual exploitation, forced labor or servitude, slavery or similar practices, and the removal of organs. The UNODC focuses on three main divisions when it comes to their fight towards human trafficking and they are as follows: (1) prevention of trafficking in persons, (2) protection of victims of human trafficking, and (3) prosecution of trafficking offenders.⁹⁶ While both men and women can fall victims to human trafficking, it is children who are the most vulnerable to this issue. Sexual violence is one of the most unsettling of children’s rights violations. Globally, the share of girls and boys that fall victims to human trafficking stood at 18 percent and 7 percent, respectively in 2014.⁹⁷

In 2000, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the ‘*Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking In Persons, Especially Women and Children*’ and this marked a milestone in the global fight against human trafficking.⁹⁸ Guarded by the UNODC, the protocol has been ratified several times over the years, but it has remained problematic to implement. Human trafficking is a critical issue worldwide, but it particularly affects the Asia Pacific region making it more pertinent to the region. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), the Asia Pacific region has the highest absolute number of forced laborers with 56 percent or 11.7 million victims.⁹⁹ According to UNODC, the trafficking flow from East Asia remains the most prominent transnational flow globally and East Asian victims were detected in large numbers in many countries worldwide.¹⁰⁰ Human trafficking prevents the successful completion of SDG 16, more specifically target 16.2 which is to “end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children,” making it an even more urgent issue to significantly reduce or eradicate by 2030.¹⁰¹

Human trafficking is so prevalent in the Asia Pacific region that Member States in the region have started their own initiatives to combat this issue for several years now. For example, China developed their first National Plan of Action on Combatting Trafficking in Women and Children in 2007 and Myanmar passed an Anti-Trafficking in Persons law in 2005. Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand concluded a bilateral arrangement to use information from the community to trace missing persons and safely repatriate them. Vietnam implemented its national plan of action on human trafficking through the protection of victims of sex trafficking as well as through the prosecution of sex traffickers.¹⁰² These are only some examples of actions Member States in the region have attempted to combat human trafficking but the issue is so complex that more drastic actions need to be taken specifically for Member States in the region with the highest human trafficking rates in the world.

⁹⁴ “Human Trafficking: Global Perspective,” Foreign Affairs Insights & Reviews, <http://fairbd.net/human-trafficking-in-bangladesh-an-overview/> (accessed May 21, 2017)

⁹⁵ “Human Trafficking,” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html?ref=menuaside> (accessed May 21, 2017)

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ “Progress of Goal 16,” Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg16> (accessed May 18, 2017)

⁹⁸ “Human Trafficking,” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html?ref=menuaside> (accessed May 21, 2017)

⁹⁹ “ILO 2012 Global Estimate of Forced Labor Executive summary,” International Labor Organization, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_181953.pdf (accessed May 21, 2017)

¹⁰⁰ “Global Report on Trafficking in Persons,” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/Trafficking_in_Persons_2012_web.pdf (accessed May 21, 2017)

¹⁰¹ “The SDG targets,” SDG Compass, <http://sdgcompass.org/sdgs/sdg-16/> (accessed May 21, 2017)

¹⁰² “Regional Cooperation Critical to Ending Human Trafficking in Asia-Pacific,” <http://www.unescap.org/announcement/regional-cooperation-critical-ending-human-trafficking-asia-pacific> (accessed May 21, 2017)

Bangladesh is one of the biggest sources, transfer, and destination points for human trafficking. Bangladesh sends out the most people to be trafficked, serving as a point of travel for those who have been trafficked, and serves as a destination for trafficking as well. A 2015 study found that an estimate of 400 children and adults are trafficked out of Bangladesh every month.¹⁰³ Bangladesh falls victim to many of the factors that make a Member State vulnerable to trafficking such as poverty, poor governance, gender discrimination, social exclusion, lack of awareness, and illiteracy. For example, trafficking groups use illiteracy in their favor by promising potential laborers a high salary, great work conditions, and a prestigious employer and make them sign contracts for this. In reality, these are often scams and laborers have signed their way into a trafficking contract.

Despite this being a very pressing issue, the government of Bangladesh has not put much effort into diverting the act of human trafficking. In 2012, they began drafting the country's very first Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act (PSHTA), but it was never officially completed and launched.¹⁰⁴ The PSHTA would prohibit and punish all forms of human trafficking in Bangladesh, as well as provide rules for implementation across the region. Unfortunately, the government has failed to complete and implement the act to its full extent, and, while it has used the act to persecute some offenders, the true impact of the PSHTA has yet to be seen. Additionally, the government has put forth limited effort to protect victims of trafficking and to prevent new people from becoming victims. For example, 2,621 victims were rescued in 2014, but only nine were placed in government-operated shelters due to a lack of a formal mechanism for authorities to refer victims to care.¹⁰⁵ The government also began drafting, but never completed, their 2015-2017 national plan of action to prevent human trafficking in the Member State. In the annual report published by the Ministry of Home Affairs, it was reflected that the government did not invest in trafficking awareness campaigns, and it did not demonstrate efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex or forced labor.¹⁰⁶

The situation in Bangladesh is not foreign to the Asia Pacific region as it is not the only Member State with similar circumstances. Human trafficking is a critical issue that not only affects those involved, but it deteriorates the development of Member States plagued by this issue. It prevents economic and social development which are critical to build a sustainable development framework that will be successful in each individual Member State. Human trafficking is not just a human rights issue, but it is also an economic, political, social, health, and educational issue. Just like other types of organized crime, we cannot hope for a sustainable world if concrete and strict measurements are not implemented to fight these issues that have plagued our world for decades.

The Impact of Crime on Achieving SDG 16

Building more effective and accountable institutions, and protecting human rights including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, is heavily investing in sustaining peace.¹⁰⁷ This is because without any of those aspects, a Member State or an organization cannot truly claim to be peaceful. By committing to the 2030 Agenda and peace-centered resolutions, Member States will begin to pave the way towards a safer and more sustainable world for all. Peace is important because it is an enabler of sustainable development and is a pre-condition for the establishment of the rule of law and efforts to reduce corruption.¹⁰⁸ The SDGs emphasize the importance of not leaving anyone behind which is why there was a high expectation for all Member States to commit to the 2030 agenda, but to also create regional processes to achieve these goals. The link between sustainable development and other relevant ongoing processes in the economic, social and environmental fields of each Member State is also

¹⁰³ "Human Trafficking in Bangladesh: An Overview," Foreign Affairs & Insights Review, <http://fairbd.net/human-trafficking-in-bangladesh-an-overview/> (accessed May 22, 2017)

¹⁰⁴ "Bangladesh," United States Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2015/243392.htm> (accessed May 22, 2017)

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ "Secretary-General's remarks to the General Assembly High-level Dialogue on 'Building sustainable peace for all: synergies between the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and sustaining peace,'" United Nations Secretary General, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2017-01-24/secretary-generals-remarks-general-assembly-high-level-dialogue-> (accessed May 15, 2017)

¹⁰⁸ "Governance," United Nations Global Compact, <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/our-work/governance> (accessed May 22, 2017)

crucial towards achieving the 2030 agenda.¹⁰⁹ However, none of this can be achieved if TOC is affecting more than half of our world, and it cannot be achieved in individual Member States if TOC is not eradicated.

High levels of armed violence and insecurity have a destructive impact on a Member State's development. This has the power to significantly affect economic growth and often result in long standing grievances that can last for generations.¹¹⁰ For example, global economic losses due to violent conflict amounted to over USD 9.8 trillion in 2014.¹¹¹ Such a high loss of economic value is problematic because that amount of money could have been used by Member States across the globe or even by the UN to alleviate certain issues affecting the world. An example of this is how corruption, bribery, theft and tax evasion cost about USD 1.26 trillion for developing Member States per year; this amount of money could be used to lift those who are living on USD 1.25 a day and alleviate poverty and hunger across the globe.¹¹² TOC not only amounts to high economic losses around the world but it also creates a high number of tangible and intangible economic costs for Member States. Some of the costs imposed are related to treating victims of crime, costs to families of victims, large costs on communities through lower property values, higher insurance premiums, and reduced investment in high-crime areas. Additionally, when there is a high level of crime there is a greater need for police and law enforcement in the area and hiring additional staff, as well as providing the adequate training and resources needed to combat crime, at greater cost to the community.

Another important aspect of SDG 16 that is affected by TOC is good governance and transparent and accountable institutions. Promoting good governance is a multi-dimensional challenge, which requires efforts that are mutually reinforcing. For example, anti-corruption is essential to the rule of law and peace-building because corruption negatively impacts state capacity, social inclusion, and management of resources.¹¹³ Corruption is more than often a direct symptom of the presence of TOC in a Member State. Criminals often use corruption, bribery, and threats to be able to freely continue committing crimes and this is a threat to good governance, especially when governments are complicit to criminals because of corruption and bribery. It is essential for governments to have good laws, institutions and processes in place to ensure accountability, stability, equality and access to justice for all. Governments also need to have a strong rule of law which is defined by the UN as: (1) clearly written and easily accessible laws that create certainty and enforceability of legal rights, (2) an independent and impartial judiciary that promotes fairness and ensures transparent, timely and predictable resolution of disputes, and (3) effective and efficient public institutions that empower business and individuals to make a positive contribution to the economy and society.¹¹⁴ Rule of law is essential in all governments to effectively address violent conflict, illicit financial flows, impunity, and to provide a legal framework which ensures impartiality and predictability. By achieving all this, governments can ensure citizens will have enough trust in them and this can prevent government disillusionment which often leads to other social issues.

TOC does not just prevent good governance, but it also halts a Member State's social development. When TOC plagues a society, it prevents it from functioning as it should. For example, the rate of children leaving primary school in conflict affected countries reached 28.5 million children in 2011.¹¹⁵ Children are the future of the world,

¹⁰⁹ "Secretary-General's remarks to the General Assembly High-level Dialogue on 'Building sustainable peace for all: synergies between the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and sustaining peace,'" United Nations Secretary General, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2017-01-24/secretary-generals-remarks-general-assembly-high-level-dialogue-> (accessed May 15, 2017)

¹¹⁰ "Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions," United Nations Development Programme, <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-16-peace-justice-and-strong-institutions.html> (accessed May 16, 2017)

¹¹¹ "Peace," United Nations Global Compact, <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/our-work/governance/peace> (accessed May 23, 2017)

¹¹² "Facts and figures," United Nations Development Programme, <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-16-peace-justice-and-strong-institutions/targets/> (accessed May 16, 2017)

¹¹³ "Governance," United Nations Global Compact, <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/our-work/governance> (accessed May 22, 2017)

¹¹⁴ "Rule of Law," United Nations Global Compact, <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/our-work/governance/rule-law> (accessed May 22, 2017)

¹¹⁵ "Facts and figures," United Nations Development Programme, <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-16-peace-justice-and-strong-institutions/targets/> (accessed May 16, 2017)

and by them not being able to attend school and earn an education it automatically affects the future development of a Member State. Additionally, TOC creates a culture of insecurity, hopelessness, and no opportunity in a society. It can force citizens out of their countries either by migration or by seeking refuge, sometimes even causing a ‘brain drain’ in a society. This is particularly damaging to developing Member States aiming to thrive socially and economically because losing a majority of its youth can result in lack of workforce growth and economic development. Additionally, Member States with high migration rates may lose a natural sense of patriotism in its citizens, thus creating a culture that does not care much about the well-being of their own home.

The shadow or underground economy is a direct consequence of TOC that can also halt achieving SDG 16. While the presence of an underground economy in a Member State might seem as a sign of economic development, it truly is not. For example, business or trades are considered underground when they fail to pay government taxes, while this may seem like a thriving way to save money for those business owners, it halts the amount of revenue a government can collect. Thus, limiting the government initiatives that can be set in place since there is less budget to invest in the society. Other illegal examples of the shadow economy are prostitution, drug dealing and manufacturing, gambling, smuggling, fraud, and trade in stolen goods. Additionally, the shadow economy or “black market” is extremely harmful to citizens of developing Member States because of the high prices that are often assigned to everyday items and because it can drive citizens to commit more crimes in order to be able to afford something from the black market. Contributing to the black market also contributes to its growth, which is contributing to TOC overall. Measuring the presence of a shadow economy in a Member State is notoriously difficult as it requires estimation of economic activity that is deliberately hidden from official transactions.¹¹⁶ However, it is estimated that there is a shadow economy present in every Member State but it is disproportionately present in developing Member States. Reducing the presence of shadow economies worldwide should be an important factor towards achieving SDG 16.

Conclusion

SDG 16’s ultimate goal is to provide a more just and peaceful world for all citizens of the world through good governance, access to justice for all, and accountable institutions and governments. Even though it is not explicitly stated in the UN Declaration of Human Rights, many consider having a peaceful and just society to live in to be a human right for all. Therefore, human rights must play a critical role when implementing SDG 16 and there have already been initiatives to do so. The proportion of countries with national human rights institutions has doubled, reaching 35.5 percent by the end of 2015.¹¹⁷ This shows an initiative to include human rights as an important component of all plans to achieve the 2030 agenda, and it reinforces the importance of a human rights angle when coming up with sustainable solutions.

However, no matter how many global or regional initiatives to achieve the 2030 agenda are established there cannot be a true achievement of SDG 16 if there are no plans to combat TOC. Crime plagues every Member State in the world - some significantly more than others - and it must be considered as a serious obstacle to all SDGs but particularly SDG 16. There must be a holistic approach when it comes to incorporating sustainable development in developing Member States because no matter how much economic or social growth a Member State can achieve, if TOC is a reigning force in the region it will interfere with this development, and quite possibly halt it altogether. Concrete steps must be taken to combat corruption and bribery, and governments that are known to fall victims to this must begin to be held accountable for their actions, especially if they affect the well-being of their citizens. Concrete consequences of TOC, such as the influx of immigrants and refugees worldwide, must be considered in frameworks built to achieve SDG 16 as well.

Committee Directive

Delegates should identify and address the root causes of conflict in each Member State. They must consider the

¹¹⁶ “The Shadow Economy,” The Institute of Economic Affairs, <https://iea.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/IEA%20Shadow%20Economy%20web%20rev%207.6.13.pdf> (accessed July 1, 2017)

¹¹⁷ “Progress of Goal 16,” Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg16> (accessed May 18, 2017)

state of crime in each individual Member State as well as in the region, and create comprehensive solutions that address crime on the individual level as well as the regional level. Delegates should keep in mind that some Member States are more vulnerable to organized crime than others, and find ways to address that. They should evaluate and consider initiatives already established by ESCAP and other UN agencies in the region such as UNODC. Delegates should question if these initiatives have been effective so far, and if not, what needs to change so that they become more effective? They should consider whether these initiatives are short term or long term solutions, and if not, how can they be transformed into sustainable long term practices for the region. Delegates shall take into account ESCAP's four main focuses when it comes to achieving the SDGs, and find ways to integrate these focuses into all potential resolutions. Lastly, delegates should highlight the importance of good governance, transparency, and accountable institutions and governments within each Member State because that is an effective way to prevent organized crime from taking over institutions and governments.

Technical Appendix Guide

Topic I: Developing an Action Plan to Address Urban Growth in the Asia-Pacific Region

“Addressing Urban Poverty, Inequality, and Vulnerability in a Warming World,” United Nations Humans Settlements Programme, 1-6,
http://www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org/programmes/ccci/pdf/1_Addressing_Urban_Poverty_Inequality_and_Vulnerability_in_a_Warming_World.pdf

Urban poverty challenges are multidimensional and are only growing as the poor make up an increasingly large component of Asia-Pacific developing Member States’ population. Many growing cities lack the basic infrastructure and services to accommodate growing populations. This paper explores the many development challenges such as job creation, access to services, and poverty reduction that will need to be focused in Member States’ cities.

“Challenges and Way Forward In The Urban Sector,” United Nations Economic and Social Council, 37-41,
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/challenges_and_way_forward_in_the_urban_sector_web.pdf

Comprehensive solutions are necessary for the multifaceted problems facing the region’s urban problems. Finding ways to integrate planning on multiple levels of urban development can be critical to the area’s success. This paper explores the challenges that exist in multiple regions’ urban areas and identifies specific successes that have been proven to be manageable for varying sizes of cities. These solutions include approaches that are not focused in just one sector of the economy and has various stakeholders partnering with implementation.

“Urban Green Growth in Dynamic Asia: A Conceptual Framework,” Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 5-9, <https://www.oecd.org/regional/regional-policy/Urban-GG-Dynamic-Asia-report.pdf>

The rapid development in many of the region’s urban centers can have lasting impacts on the human well-being as well as the environment on a local, national, and global scale. Implementing sustainable infrastructure will be much easier to implement in newer cities rather than updating in older cities. This paper explores the opportunities that can emerge from facing sustainability challenges in urban spaces. Urban growth focused on sustainability will be critical for the implications of citizens’ health.

“Urbanization Trends in Asia and the Pacific,” United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. <http://www.unescapsdd.org/files/documents/SPPS-Factsheet-urbanization-v5.pdf>

Identifying the symptoms of urban challenges is an important step in implementing policy to limit the growth of these challenges. Finding the sources of the problems can assist stakeholders identify what the scale of the impacts. It is important for the region to quickly act as the dynamic nature of the region’s urban growth can grow and unmeasured impact can be dangerous to the entire urban area. Keeping up with how the region is changing every year is an important consideration for who policies will impact in the long term.

Topic II: Examining the Impact of Organized Crime on Sustainable Development

Transnational Organized Crime in the Pacific: A Threat Assessment. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
https://www.unodc.org/documents/southeastasiaandpacific/Publications/2016/2016.09.16_TOCTA_Pacific_web.pdf

This is a great report to read because it evaluates the state of organized crime in the region. It is also the most recent threat assessment so even though it is from September 2016 it is the most relevant threat assessment produced to date. Delegates can read this report for more context and to understand the scope of the issue on the region which will prove to be extremely useful knowledge when coming up with resolutions.

United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

<https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNTOC/Publications/TOC%20Convention/TOCebook-e.pdf>

This is the official convention signed by Member States to combat organized crime worldwide. A useful research tool because it outlines the protocols that were initially set to combat this issue as well as the scope of the issue. While it is a bit dated, it is a useful document that will bring to context the current protocols and what should be improved and updated.

Goal 16 Advocacy Toolkit. Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform.

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/9935TAP%20Network%20Goal%2016%20Advocacy%20Toolkit.pdf>

An excellent resource for anyone trying to develop frameworks to achieve SDG 16. Delegates will find this to be a great resource because it breaks down SDG 16 as well as detailed plans of action.

Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Goals Outlook. Asian Development Bank.

<https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/232871/asia-pacific-sdgoutlook-2017.pdf>

This is an excellent report that analyzes every SDG in the context of the Asia Pacific region. It is unique from other reports because it does not just highlight challenges to each SDG but it does a great job at highlighting the opportunities and strengths in the region and how those will help achieve the SDGs. It is a great overview of where the Asia Pacific region stands when it comes to achieving the 2030 agenda.