



SRMUN ATLANTA 2021
Fostering Global Youth Empowerment and Leadership
November 18 - 20, 2021
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Greetings Delegates,

Welcome to SRMUN Atlanta 2021 and the United Nations (UN) General Assembly (GA) Plenary. My name is Kathleen Conow, and I am honored to serve as your Director for the GA Plenary. This will be my fourth conference as a SRMUN staff member and my first time serving as Director. Previously, I have served as an Assistant Director for both the Atlanta and Charlotte conferences in the Security Council, GA Plenary, and the Food and Agricultural Organization. I recently earned a certificate in International Studies and continue to actively pursue my Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Political Science and International Studies. In addition to my studies, I have also worked as a legal assistant at a local immigration law firm. Serving as your Assistant Directors in the GA Plenary will be Michael Bovi and Xander Swain. Michael has previously served as an Assistant Director for the International Atomic Energy Agency at SRMUN Atlanta 2019 and for the GA Fourth Committee at SRMUN Charlotte 2021. Prior to joining staff, he participated in Model United Nations for three years with his Alma Mater and attended SRMUN Atlanta every year as a delegate during that time. Michael graduated in December 2018 with a B.S in Computer Science with a concentration in Software, Systems, and Networking from the University of North Carolina. Xander Swain will also serve as our committee Assistant Director, and this is his inaugural year serving in the role at SRMUN Atlanta. Xander has previously participated in two SRMUN conferences as a delegate in the GA Plenary and the Peacebuilding Commission.

Founded in 1945, and headquartered in New York City, New York, the GA Plenary holds general debate that addresses a range of issues with a focus on maintaining international peace and security, fostering diplomatic relations, encouraging international cooperation, promoting human rights. By focusing on the mission of the UNGA and the SRMUN Atlanta 2021 theme of "*Fostering Global Youth Empowerment and Leadership*," we have developed the following topics for the delegates to discuss come conference:

- I. The Role of Youth in Utilizing Media to Promote a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence
- II. Establishing Internet as a Critical Infrastructure in Developing Member States

The background guide provides a strong introduction to the committee and topics that will be debated at SRMUN Atlanta 2021. It should be utilized as a foundation for a delegate's independent research. However, while we have attempted to provide a holistic analysis of the issues, the background guide should not be used as the single mode of analysis for the topics. Delegates are expected to go beyond the background guide and engage in intellectual inquiry of their own. The position papers for the committee should reflect the complexity of these issues and their externalities. Delegations are expected to submit a position paper and be prepared for a vigorous discussion at the conference. 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 formatting and how to write position papers, delegates can visit srmun.org. **All position papers MUST be submitted no later than Friday, October 29, 2021, by 11:59pm EST via the SRMUN website in order to be eligible for Outstanding Position Paper Awards.**

Xander, Michael, and I are delighted to be serving as your dais for the GA Plenary. We wish you all the best of luck in your conference preparation and look forward to working with you soon. Please feel free to contact Rachael, Michael, Xander or myself if you have any questions while preparing for the conference.

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Committee History of the General Assembly Plenary

The United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945 after the end of World War II. The UN was created with a focus on maintaining international peace and security, fostering diplomatic relations, encouraging international cooperation, promoting human rights, and helping Member States meet these goals.¹ The General Assembly (GA) was established in Article 7 of the UN Charter (1945) along with the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat.² The GA is the only portion of the UN that has universal membership making it the most inclusive and open body within the UN.³

Non-Member States, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) can participate in GA sessions with the status of Observer, and these groups do not have voting rights.⁴ The GA aims to pass most of its decisions by consensus but also allows for standard voting. Regular decisions during GA sessions only require a simple majority vote. In the event of electing Member States to the Security Council or the expulsion of a Member State, then a two-thirds majority is required.⁵

The GA's mandate, outlined in Chapter IV (Articles 10-22) of the UN Charter, is to discuss "any questions or any matters within the scope of the [Charter] or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the [Charter]."⁶ The GA also has the ability to make recommendations to the Security Council and all Member States.⁷ The GA recommends peaceful measures and must seek to protect the general welfare of Member States and promote friendly relations among Member States. Article 13 allows the GA to conduct studies and make recommendations based off the findings to promote "international co-operation in the political field and encouraging the progressive development of international law and its codification" in addition to "promoting international co-operation in the economic, social, cultural, educational, and health fields, and assisting in the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion."⁸

The GA is a collection of six Main Committees that are based on the primary fields of responsibility: the Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee); the Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee); the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (Third Committee); the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee); the Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee); the Legal Committee (Sixth Committee).⁹ Each of these committees are assigned to different agendas to work to create and adopt resolutions to then be submitted to the GA Plenary.¹⁰ The GA Plenary can also choose to address issues without referring them to one of the other committees.¹¹ The GA Plenary takes the reports provided by the committees to debate, deliberate, and vote on them.¹² In the GA, all 193 Member States each receive one vote.¹³ Each of the six committees elect a chair, three vice-chairs and a rapporteur.; all Member States are eligible to hold these positions.¹⁴ The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) advises the GA on the organization of conferences within the UN. The department work closely with the Secretary-General to schedule conferences and meetings. The DGACM also works to balance the calendars of all GA bodies and "ensure the optimum utilization of conference-servicing resources."¹⁵

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

² *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 7.

³ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 9.

⁴ Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook*, p. 30.

⁵ New Zealand, *United Nations*, p. 12.

⁶ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 4.

⁷ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 10.

⁸ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 13.

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

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

¹¹ New Zealand, *United Nations*, p. 23.

¹² Smith, *Politics and Process at the United Nations: The Global Dance*, 2006, p. 161; Switzerland, *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 62.

¹³ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Art. 18.

¹⁴ New Zealand, *United Nations*, p. 23.

¹⁵ "Mandate | Department for General Assembly and Conference Management." *United Nations*, accessed February 9, 2021, <https://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/coc/mandate>.

The GA's regular session is scheduled each year on the Tuesday of the third week of September.¹⁶ General debate is normally the beginning of the session and lasts seven to nine days.¹⁷ Debate is centered around a theme chosen by the President-elect of the GA and the Secretary-General.¹⁸ The theme of the 75th session of the GA is "The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism - confronting COVID-19 through effective multilateral action."¹⁹ Other than the yearly session, the GA can also call for special or emergency special sessions.²⁰ Special sessions are called upon by the Secretary-General at the request of either the Security Council or a majority of the members of the UN.²¹ The last special session that convened was in December 2020, and it was requested by a majority of Member States to address COVID-19.²² An emergency special session can be convened within 24 hours and called on by any seven members of the Security Council, or by a majority of the members of the UN when the Security Council "fails to exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security..."²³ The last emergency special session to convene was June 13, 2018, to address the draft resolution, "Protection of the Palestinian Civilian Population."²⁴ The session ultimately adopted the draft resolution to "[deplore] the use of excessive, disproportionate and indiscriminate force by Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory..."²⁵

Maintaining the priorities outlined in the Decade of Action, while also keeping in mind the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the UN's goals, the Declaration for the Commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the UN was passed.²⁶ In this document, the GA addressed diverse issues from the effects of climate change on developing Member States, ongoing armed conflicts, to increasing youth participation and development, and fully addressing the current COVID-19 pandemic, among others.²⁷ Other actions taken by the GA include the first Summit on Biodiversity.²⁸ At the summit, 150 Member States participated in the dialogue on biodiversity.²⁹ More than 150 Member States also participated in the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women.³⁰ Through this event, Member States discussed actions to empower women and girls.³¹

¹⁶ UN DPI, *Basic Facts about the United Nations: 42nd Edition*, 2017.

¹⁷ "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) | General Assembly of the United Nations," *United Nations*, accessed January 21, 2021, <https://gadebate.un.org/en/faq>

¹⁸ "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) | General Assembly of the United Nations," *United Nations*.

¹⁹ Bozkir, Volkan, "Letter on the Theme of the General Debate for UNGA75," August 8, 2020. Letter. *United Nations*. Accessed February 1, 2021. <https://www.un.org/pga/74/2020/08/10/theme-for-the-general-debate-of-the-75th-session/>

²⁰ *Basic Facts about the United Nations: 42nd Edition*, New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 2017.

²¹ "Special Sessions," *United Nations*, accessed February 1, 2021, <https://www.un.org/en/ga/sessions/special.shtml>.

²² United Nations General Assembly resolution 75/4, *Special Session of the General Assembly in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic*, A/RES/75/4, (November 9, 2020), <https://undocs.org/a/res/75/4>.

²³ "Emergency Special Sessions," *United Nations*, accessed February 21, 2021, <https://www.un.org/en/ga/sessions/emergency.shtml>.

²⁴ "Tenth Emergency Special Session," *United Nations*, accessed February 1, 2021, <https://www.un.org/en/ga/sessions/emergency10th.shtml>.

²⁵ UN DPI, *General Assembly Adopts Resolution on Protecting Palestinian Civilians Following Rejection of United States Amendment to Condemn Hamas Rocket Fire*, 2018.

²⁶ "Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the United Nations," October 20, 2020, *United Nations*, <https://www.un.org/en/un75/commemoration#:~:text=Titled%20%E2%80%9CDeclaration%20on%20the%20commemoration,centre%2C%20build%20trust%2C%20improve%20digital>.

²⁷ "Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the United Nations," *United Nations*.

²⁸ "United Nations Summit on Biodiversity," *United Nations*, accessed February 1, 2021. <https://www.un.org/pga/75/united-nations-summit-biodiversity/#:~:text=The%20United%20Nations%20Summit%20on%20Biodiversity%20will%20be%20convened%20by,with%20and%20depend%20on%20biodiversity>

²⁹ "United Nations Summit on Biodiversity." *United Nations*. Accessed February 1, 2021. <https://www.un.org/pga/75/united-nations-summit-obiodiversity/#:~:text=The%20United%20Nations%20Summit%20on%20Biodiversity%20will%20be%20convened%20by,with%20and%20depend%20on%20biodiversity>

³⁰ "UNGA High-level Meeting to Celebrate 25th Anniversary of Beijing Women's Conference." *IISD*, accessed February 21, 2021, <https://sdg.iisd.org/events/unga-high-level-meeting-to-celebrate-25th-anniversary-of-beijing-womens-conference/>.

³¹ "UNGA High-level Meeting to Celebrate 25th Anniversary of Beijing Women's Conference." *IISD*.

Looking to the future, the President of the GA, Volkan Bozkir, launched an initiative, #Vaccines4All, “to support multilateral efforts to achieve fair and equitable access to [COVID-19] vaccines.”³² The President of the UNGA shared his current vision, stating, “The world is facing pressing problems...COVID-19 has shown us more clearly than ever that countries cannot address these challenges on their own. Global problems require global solutions, and that is why we need to recommit to multilateralism...”³³ Most recently, the GA has requested for a special session beginning June 2, 2021.³⁴ The session will address the “Challenges and measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation.”³⁵ The 2021 Parliamentary Hearing of the UNGA will support the special session by focusing on corruption and international cooperation.³⁶

³² Bozkir, Volkan. “Briefing to the General Assembly on Priorities.” January 21, 2021. *United Nations*.

<https://www.un.org/pga/75/2021/01/21/briefing-to-the-general-assembly-on-priorities/>

³³ “PGA 75,” *United Nations*, accessed February 1, 2021, <https://www.un.org/pga/75/>.

³⁴ “Special Sessions.” *United Nations*, accessed February 1, 2021, <https://www.un.org/en/ga/sessions/special.shtml>.

³⁵ “Special Sessions.” *United Nations*.

³⁶ “Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations.” *IPU*, accessed February 1, 2021, <https://www.ipu.org/event/annual-parliamentary-hearing-united-nations-1>.

I: The Role of Youth in Utilizing Media to Promote a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence

*“Since war begins in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defense of peace must be constructed.”
– The Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO.”³⁷*

Introduction

The definition of “youth” carries a wide range of interpretations by the different bodies of the United Nations (UN) and can vary between Member States.³⁸ The most general definition of *youth* is, “persons between the age of 15 and 24,” as defined by the UN Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly (GA) on International Youth Year.³⁹ As of 2020, there are an estimated 1.2 billion youth globally, aged from 15 to 24-years-old, according to the UN World Population Prospects.⁴⁰

Currently, the UN has no clear definition of what “media” entails. However, the most general sense of the term includes any form of technology or medium used to transfer information.⁴¹ The most common forms of media, and the forms used by the UN Department of Global Communications (DGC), include but are not limited to: photography, video, radio broadcast, television, the Internet, and print and press.⁴² Moreover, according to the World Programme of Action for Youth, “young people are often the leading innovators in the use and spread of information and communication technologies.”⁴³ It is important to note that when communicating about the importance of media and information, the discussion should include all forms of media, not exclusively the Internet.⁴⁴

The Culture of Peace is an essential and continuous framework for the promotion and educational transition from a culture of war.⁴⁵ Within the UN, “A Culture of Peace,” by definition, according to the A/RES/52/13, “consists of values, attitudes and behaviors that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that reject violence and endeavor to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their society.”⁴⁶ Today's youth consistently represent the majority of populations in Member States with ongoing conflict.⁴⁷ Despite the existing obstacles youth face, such as being excluded from political conversation and policy writing, the global youth population through various peace approaches (Twitter, TikTok, other social media, peaceful protests, petitions, rallies, etc.) have significantly impacted today's political and social disputes. As Member States look to promote a Culture of Peace, they must look towards the impact that young people have on their use of media.

History

³⁷ United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. UNESCO Constitution, November 16, 1945.

³⁸ “Definition of Youth Fact Sheet,” The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf> (Accessed April 18, 2021).

³⁹ The United Nations General Assembly, Report of the Secretary-General, International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace, A/36/215, June 19, 1981, <https://undocs.org/en/A/36/215>

⁴⁰ “Data Query: Population by age and sex (thousands).” United Nations Population and Development, <https://population.un.org/wpp/DataQuery/> (Accessed April 18, 2021).

⁴¹ “ICT WPAY,” Department of Economic and Social Affairs, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/ict-wpay.html> (Accessed April 18, 2021).

⁴² “Home,” United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/department-global-communications> (Accessed May 15, 2021).

⁴³ “ICT WPAY,” Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

⁴⁴ “ICT WPAY,” Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

⁴⁵ “Education for a Culture of Peace: The Culture of Peace News Network as a Case Study,” Journal of Peace Education, https://www.culture-of-peace.info/vita/2011/journal_peace_education.html (Accessed May 15, 2021).

⁴⁶ United Nations General Assembly. Resolution 52/13, Culture of Peace, A/RES/52/13, January 15, 1998, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/249723?ln=en>

⁴⁷ “ICT WPAY,” Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

The Culture of Peace was first officially introduced in Resolution 5.3 in the 28th session of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).⁴⁸ The project, titled, *Towards a Culture of Peace*, planned to establish support for “education for peace, human rights, democracy, international understanding and tolerance.”⁴⁹ *Towards a Culture of Peace* set the foundation for future resolutions and documents that created and promoted a Culture of Peace. A Culture of Peace was not fully implemented until the *Declaration on a Culture of Peace* was adopted on September 13, 1999, by the UNGA.⁵⁰ The declaration, in whole, promotes a cultural shift towards peace and sets the foundation for the *Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace*.⁵¹ *The Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace* adopted a series of defined actions aimed to promote international peace and security through complete democratic and participatory education and understanding.⁵² The Culture of Peace was further promoted through Resolution 53/25, *International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010*, which was adopted November 10, 1998.⁵³

The role of the media in promoting a Culture of Peace has been notably crucial since Article 15 of the original *Programme of Action*, which brought attention to and supported actions “to support participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge.”⁵⁴ Media and information has also been cited to be essential in the promotion of peace in the *Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding*.⁵⁵ Adopted in 1978, the declaration establishes the crucial role of media and information to strengthen peace and the “countering of racialism, apartheid, and incitement to war.”⁵⁶

Youth participation has been another crucial facet in the promotion of peace.⁵⁷ Despite this, young people across the globe are hindered in their efforts for peace due to an active feeling of negligence by their own systems of government and the international community.⁵⁸ *The missing peace: independent progress on youth and peace and security*, which was mandated by the Security Council in resolution 2250 (2015), tracked and studied the progress of youth involvement in peace, and addresses the multiple negative stereotypes regarding young people such as the perception of young men as “violent predators and potential spoilers of peace,” or young women as “passive victims.”^{59, 60} The study focused on “face-to-face consultations...with a total of 4,230 young people.”⁶¹ It also used research from “27 country-focused studies, 19 thematic submissions from partners, [five] online thematic consultations, a global survey of youth-led civil society peacebuilding organizations and ...interventions by

⁴⁸ United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Resolution 5.3, Transdisciplinary project: Towards a culture of peace, General Conference 28 C/123, September 20, 1995, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000101803/PDF/101803eng.pdf.multi>

⁴⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Resolution 5.3.

⁵⁰ United Nations General Assembly, Agenda Item 31, Declaration on a Culture of Peace, A/RES/53/243 A, September 13, 1999, <http://www.un-documents.net/a53r243a.htm>

⁵¹ United Nations General Assembly, Agenda Item 31, Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, A/RES/53/243 B, September 13, 1999, <http://www.un-documents.net/a53r243b.htm>

⁵² United Nations General Assembly, Agenda Item 31, Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

⁵³ United Nations General Assembly, Agenda Item 31, International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010, A/RES/53/25, <http://www.un-documents.net/a53r25.htm>

⁵⁴ United Nations General Assembly, Agenda Item 31, Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

⁵⁵ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racialism, apartheid and incitement to war, November 28, 1978.

⁵⁶ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding...

⁵⁷ “Young People Powerful Agents for Resolving, Preventing Conflict, Speakers Tell Security Council Open Debate amid Calls to Change Negative Stereotypes,” The United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, April 23, 2018, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13312.doc.htm>

⁵⁸ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 86, The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security, S/2018/86, March 2, 2018, <https://undocs.org/en/S/2018/86>

⁵⁹ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2250 (2015), S/RES/2250 (2015), December 9, 2015, [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2250\(2015\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2250(2015))

⁶⁰ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 86, The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security.

⁶¹ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 86, The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security.

Member States and United Nations entities focused on young people in relation to peace and security.”⁶² In all, the study coins young people as the “missing peace.”⁶³ The end of the report made recommendations to initiate a significant shift to recognizing the vital role of youth in the promotion of peace, and establishes a framework in which Member States and other international entities can achieve meaningful change.⁶⁴

Actions Taken by the United Nations

The Mano River Women’s Peace Network (MARWOPNET), created in 2001, supports peace and development in the Mano River region, which comprises of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.⁶⁵ The organization aims to educate young women in the Mano River region in peace education and conflict prevention.⁶⁶ Through radio broadcast, the testimonies of young girls, literacy programs, and training journalists, MARWOPNET continues to make progress in the area of peace.⁶⁷ MARWOPNET has helped develop the operation of radio stations in Sierra Leone; MARWOPNET has also partnered with the Women in Peace Building Network (WANEP) to “address low skills...of rural young women in [five] communities, and enables them to share their entrepreneurial experiences on community radios,” in Liberia; and in Côte d’Ivoire, they helped 600 girls “benefit from peace and restoration of social cohesion trainings.”⁶⁸

When Member States adopt a Culture of Peace, they are combating the culture of war.⁶⁹ One organization actively doing this is the Culture of Peace News Network (CPNN), which was originally launched by UNESCO in 1998.⁷⁰ The organization is owned and managed by the Culture of Peace Corporation.⁷¹ The CPNN supports the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace through the publication and spread of information.⁷² Despite being limited to the Internet, the CPNN continues to spread peace related information almost daily.⁷³ The CPNN relies on the important role that mass media plays in the promotion of peace, and the freedom of information.⁷⁴ Many of the CPNN’s reporters and writers are youth who have worked with the Youth Solidarity Fund of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), an organization created in 2005 with the goal of addressing and reducing the increased polarization between different cultures and groups.^{75,76} Since 2008, the Youth Solidarity Fund (YSF) has financially supported organizations focused on and led by young people.⁷⁷ There have been a total of 68 projects funded, and continues to be critical in young people’s mission for peace.⁷⁸ Combining Culture of Peace education and media, the CPNN looks to redefine the idea of peace not just being the absence of conflict, but to be an entire culture dedicated to education, tolerance, democracy, the free flow of information, disarmament, sustainable development, and human

⁶² United Nations Security Council, Resolution 86, The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security, S/2018/86, March 2, 2018, <https://undocs.org/en/S/2018/86>

⁶³ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 86, The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security.

⁶⁴ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 86, The missing peace: independent progress study on youth and peace and security.

⁶⁵ “Mano River Women’s Peace Network (MARWOPNET),” International Security Sector Advisory Team (ISSAT), <https://issat.dcaf.ch/Share/People-Organisations/Organisations/Mano-River-Women-s-Peace-Network2> (Accessed April 25, 2021).

⁶⁶ “Africa Sources and Resources for a Culture of Peace, United Nations Educational,” Scientific and Cultural Organization, http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/AFR/images/Brochure_Africa_EN_web.pdf (Accessed April 25, 2021).

⁶⁷ “Africa Sources and Resources for a Culture of Peace, United Nations Educational,” Scientific and Cultural Organization.

⁶⁸ “Africa Sources and Resources for a Culture of Peace, United Nations Educational,” Scientific and Cultural Organization.

⁶⁹ “Education for a Culture of Peace: The Culture of Peace News Network as a Case Study,” Journal of Peace Education, https://www.culture-of-peace.info/vita/2011/journal_peace_education.html (Accessed April 21, 2021).

⁷⁰ “Front Page,” Culture of Peace News Network, <https://cpnn-world.org/new/> (Accessed April 21, 2021).

⁷¹ “Front Page,” Culture of Peace News Network.

⁷² “About Us,” Culture of Peace News Network, https://cpnn-world.org/new/?page_id=783 (Accessed April 21, 2021).

⁷³ “Front Page,” Culture of Peace News Network.

⁷⁴ “Education for a Culture of Peace: The Culture of Peace News Network as a Case Study,” Journal of Peace Education.

⁷⁵ “About Us,” Culture of Peace News Network.

⁷⁶ “Who We Are,” United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, <https://www.unaoc.org/who-we-are/> (Accessed May 17, 2021).

⁷⁷ “Youth Solidarity Fund,” United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, <https://www.unaoc.org/what-we-do/grants-and-competitions/youth-solidarity-fund/> (Accessed May 25, 2021).

⁷⁸ “Youth Solidarity Fund,” United Nations Alliance of Civilizations.

rights.⁷⁹ The CPNN uses numerous types of media including online bulletins and news articles posted on their website.

PLURAL+ is a youth video festival that encourages young people to create and promote their productions to combat and “explore the pressing social issues of migration, diversity, social inclusion, and the prevention of xenophobia.”⁸⁰ The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) launched the program in 2009.⁸¹ According to PLURAL+, the annual festival aims to foster the “creative vision” of young people and media created by young people.⁸²

In 2020, the GA adopted the *Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace*.⁸³ In the resolution, the GA outlines the current and future implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. Part of the implementation includes the encouraged use of media and public information “in promoting a culture of peace and non-violence, with particular regard to children and young people.”⁸⁴

Current Situation

Various Member States across the globe conduct municipal elections. These elections occur to elect office officials in local governments (such as: mayors, police chiefs, councilors, city attorney, city councils, etc.). In Livity, South Africa, the community firmly believes the youth of today's generation plays a vital role in encouraging change throughout their society.⁸⁵ The younger generation has utilized innovative media to encourage and educate their peers regarding political issues.⁸⁶ During the elections in Livity, the community's objective was to produce a vigorous multimedia campaign with the intention of encouraging progressive conversations among South Africa's youth.⁸⁷

The Africa's Voices foundation (AVF) organized this initiative through analyzing various social media data provided by numerous platforms such as TikTok, Twitter, and Facebook⁸⁸ In addition, the AVF developed online surveys in order to produce credible information regarding the impact their campaign has on youths voting behavior.⁸⁹ The foundation also designed a diverse collection of graphic formats (advertisements, statistics, etc.) that capture the youths attention by incorporating them in their daily social media - this increases their engagement within political matters.

The data received after the election demonstrated the escalating conversations the youth had on social media and their discontent with their local government regarding discrimination, prejudice, and injustice.⁹⁰ The data collected provided the AVF with increased insight on the youths' frustration on how the aforementioned challenges affected their daily lives. Through the power of social media, the AVF concluded that rather than having a “top-down agenda” — rules introduced at the top of the chain, creating policies aligned with those rules — future campaigns may require considering the interest and concerns of the community's youth.⁹¹

⁷⁹ “Education for a Culture of Peace: The Culture of Peace News Network as a Case Study,” Journal of Peace Education.

⁸⁰ “About PLURAL+,” PLURAL+, <https://pluralplus.unaoc.org/about/> (accessed April 25, 2021).

⁸¹ “About PLURAL+,” PLURAL+, <https://pluralplus.unaoc.org/about/> (Accessed April 25, 2021).

⁸² “About PLURAL+,” PLURAL+.

⁸³ United Nations General Assembly, Agenda Item 15, Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, A/RES/75/25, December 9, 2020, <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/75/25>

⁸⁴ United Nations General Assembly, Agenda Item 15.

⁸⁵ “Youth Priorities for 2016 municipal elections in South Africa,” African Voices, <https://www.africasvoices.org/case-studies/youth-priorities-for-2016-municipal-elections-in-south-africa-livity-africa/> (Accessed April 25, 2021).

⁸⁶ “Youth Priorities for 2016 municipal elections in South Africa,” African Voices.

⁸⁷ “Youth Priorities for 2016 municipal elections in South Africa,” African Voices.

⁸⁸ “Youth Priorities for 2016 municipal elections in South Africa,” African Voices.

⁸⁹ “Youth Priorities for 2016 municipal elections in South Africa,” African Voices.

⁹⁰ “Youth Priorities for 2016 municipal elections in South Africa,” African Voices.

⁹¹ Youth Priorities for 2016 municipal elections in South Africa,” African Voices, <https://www.africasvoices.org/case-studies/youth-priorities-for-2016-municipal-elections-in-south-africa-livity-africa/> (Accessed April 25, 2021)

During 2010, the Thai family business of the Wongsapakdee's burned down, thus bankrupting the family.⁹² While battling bankruptcy, Keskanok, a recent political science graduate from the Chulalongkorn University experienced the injustice and neglect of Thailand's governmental system.⁹³ Due to these events, Keskanok became a social media activist and established *Free Youth*, a pro-democracy youth advocacy group. Free Youth was initially created with the sole objective of providing a "free-thinking" online platform for Thailand's youth to exchange and discuss various ideas regarding Thailand's imminent future.⁹⁴

Over the last decade, the *Free Youth* platform has flourished.⁹⁵ Currently, with over two million followers on Twitter and Facebook, in addition to being responsible for over 500 protests throughout Thailand in 2020, this youth advocacy group led several of the most significant and largest youth-led anti-government protests in Thailand's modern history.⁹⁶ During the 2020 Thailand LGBTQ protests, two male youth activists, Tattap Ruangprapaikitseree and Panumas Singprom brought significant media attention to the *Free Youth* group following their kiss in front of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Thailand.⁹⁷ This controversial event led to the development of the Free Youth Movement (FYM). This movement sought after social and political change.⁹⁸

In August 2020 at a demonstration at Thammasat University, protestors led demonstrations calling for governmental reforms.⁹⁹ Students gave a list of ten demands, known as Declaration No. 1, calling for numerous reforms to the laws governing the monarchy and its budget.¹⁰⁰ In light of the success the Free Youth Movement has achieved, pro-democracy protestors have recognized the influential impact social media has acquired in advocating for progressive change.¹⁰¹

Conclusion

The Culture of Peace is an ever-evolving framework that is vital to the pursuit of peace. It is essential that Member States foster a culture of peace, rather than a culture of war through the leadership and participation of young people. The role of social media and the many other forms of media information is significant in the Culture of Peace. Programs like #FreeYouth, PLURAL+, CPNN, and others all utilize media to promote peace. Moreover, these programs prioritize young people to lead and participate in this culture of peace. CPNN is a prime example of using the media to promote peace. By publishing and spreading peace-related news, young people can efficiently combat the culture of war that may be spread through other news outlets. In the face of COVID-19, promoting a Culture of Peace is as important as ever. With increased rates of poverty, climate change, and severe effects on humanitarian issues across the board, the pandemic requires Member States to leave their culture of war behind.

Committee Directive

The Culture of Peace is an essential part of the United Nations. With the increased presence of media in daily life, it is important to note how it may play a role in the promotion of peace, and how young people may be able to use media to promote peace in their own communities. While conducting their research, delegates should consider the following: How does media vary between different Member States, and how may this affect the use in the promotion

⁹² "Hashtag activism: social media and the #FreeYouth protests in Thailand, *Critical Asian Studies*," Taylor & Francis, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14672715.2021.1882866> (Accessed April 25, 2021)

⁹³ "Hashtag activism: social media and the #FreeYouth protests in Thailand, *Critical Asian Studies*," Taylor & Francis.

⁹⁴ "Hashtag activism: social media and the #FreeYouth protests in Thailand, *Critical Asian Studies*," Taylor & Francis.

⁹⁵ "Hashtag activism: social media and the #FreeYouth protests in Thailand, *Critical Asian Studies*," Taylor & Francis.

⁹⁶ "Hashtag activism: social media and the #FreeYouth protests in Thailand, *Critical Asian Studies*," Taylor & Francis.

⁹⁷ "Hashtag activism: social media and the #FreeYouth protests in Thailand, *Critical Asian Studies*," Taylor & Francis.

⁹⁸ "Hashtag activism: social media and the #FreeYouth protests in Thailand, *Critical Asian Studies*," Taylor & Francis.

⁹⁹ Jarempanit, Thannapat, "The Free People Movements and Political Awakening in Thailand" *Asia Global Online*, October 22, 2020 <https://www.asiaglobalonline.hku.hk/free-people-movements-and-political-awakening-thailand> (accessed August 26, 2021)

¹⁰⁰ Jarempanit, Thannapat, "The Free People Movements and Political Awakening in Thailand"

¹⁰¹ "Hashtag activism: social media and the #FreeYouth protests in Thailand, *Critical Asian Studies*," Taylor & Francis.

of a Culture of Peace? What existing programs can be improved upon or developed to further spread a Culture of Peace? How can young people, specifically, play a role in the use of media to promote peace? What are the different forms of media that may be available in the differing Member States, and are some more effective than others? What are potential issues or problems to promote a Culture of Peace? How can delegates address these issues while also ensuring young people have a voice?

II: Establishing Internet as a Critical Infrastructure in Developing Member States

“It is now our collective responsibility to use digital technologies and solutions as an implementation tool for the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and a means to improving public service delivery; increasing people’s engagement; enhancing transparency, accountability and inclusion; and making life better for all.”

- LIU Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs¹⁰²

Introduction

The Internet has become a commonplace tool in modern communication and one of the leading platforms for facilitating international trade.¹⁰³ The United Nations (UN) recognizes users of the platform as “those who use the Internet from any location.”¹⁰⁴ The Internet plays a vital role in modern life, as observed by a study from the UN. According to the study, 44 Member States’ access to smartphones and other Internet-capable devices is limited or, in some regions, entirely unavailable to citizens and refugees alike.¹⁰⁵

Since its creation in January 1983, the Internet has been expanding in scope and connectivity.¹⁰⁶ Tim Berners-Lee created the first modern iteration of the public Internet in 1990, known as the World Wide Web.¹⁰⁷ As the Internet evolved, governments and private entities started to explore the economic benefits of this new communication technology.¹⁰⁸ In the 1990s, the projected benefits of the Internet as an economic force included greatly reducing the cost of transactions.¹⁰⁹ Production and distribution of goods would see an increase in efficiency provided by knowledge that is accessible.¹¹⁰ The Internet would also offer a wider selection of consumer products to customers and allow for expanded outreach by companies to new markets that were previously inaccessible.¹¹¹ The ability for consumers to shop digitally allowed companies to reach new customers without the overhead cost of establishing a physical store in a new location.¹¹²

The Australian government noted that critical infrastructure is “services that are essential for everyday life such as energy, communications, water, transport, health, food and grocery, banking and finance...”¹¹³ As technology advances, the Internet is becoming more integral to the facilitation and creation of additional infrastructure.¹¹⁴ Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) help connect Member States in the Global North, serving to drive innovation that improves the living conditions of citizens in the Member States.¹¹⁵ Member States in the

¹⁰² “Compendium of Digital Government Initiatives in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic”, The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/Portals/egovkb/Documents/un/2020-Survey/UNDESA%20Compendium%20of%20Digital%20Government%20Initiatives%20in%20Response%20to%20the%20COVID-19%20Pandemic.pdf> (Accessed April 15, 2021).

¹⁰³ “Challenges and Opportunities of the Internet of Things for Global Development to Achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals”, IEEE Access, <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/abstract/document/9004570> (Accessed April 15, 2021).

¹⁰⁴ “Internet Users”, United Nations, https://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/indicators/methodology_sheets/econ_development/internet_users.pdf (Accessed April 15, 2021).

¹⁰⁵ “Refugees without mobile and internet access lack a vital “lifeline””, UN News, <https://news.un.org/en/audio/2016/09/616902> (Accessed April 15, 2021).

¹⁰⁶ “Who Invented the Internet?,” History, <https://www.history.com/news/who-invented-the-internet#:~:text=ARPANET%20adopted%20TCP%20on.invented%20the%20World%20Wide%20Web> (Accessed April 15, 2021).

¹⁰⁷ “Who Invented the Internet?,” History.

¹⁰⁸ “The Economy and the Internet: What Lies Ahead?”, Brookings, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-economy-and-the-internet-what-lies-ahead> (Accessed April 15, 2021).

¹⁰⁹ “The Economy and the Internet: What Lies Ahead?”, Brookings.

¹¹⁰ “The Economy and the Internet: What Lies Ahead?”, Brookings.

¹¹¹ “The Economy and the Internet: What Lies Ahead?”, Brookings.

¹¹² “The Economy and the Internet: What Lies Ahead?”, Brookings.

¹¹³ “What is the Critical Infrastructure Centre?”, Critical Infrastructure Centre, <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/nat-security/files/cic-factsheet-what-is-critical-infrastructure-centre.pdf> (Accessed April 15, 2021).

¹¹⁴ “What is the Critical Infrastructure Centre?”, Critical Infrastructure Centre.

¹¹⁵ “Digital Government”, The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/ict4d>, (accessed April 15, 2021).

Global South suffer from a lack of ICT resources causing the economic gap between Developed Member States and developing ones to expand.¹¹⁶ One of the most beneficial communication tools to emerge from the rapid growth of the Internet has been the accessibility of social media networks, which allows for increased interaction between citizens and their governments. Developing Member States have utilized social media in times of political strife to increase international awareness involving problems affecting the general population.¹¹⁷

The creation and maintenance of critical infrastructure depend on Internet access and reliable connections. The Internet itself has become a critical infrastructure that supports developed Member States.¹¹⁸ Even with a significant difference in accessibility, developing Member States try to utilize the Internet in a similar manner to developed Member States.¹¹⁹ The UN notes that less than one in five people have reliable access and can viably use the Internet in developing Member States.¹²⁰ The expansion of access is a critical factor in helping to uplift developing Member States and strengthen their economies.¹²¹ Lack of legislation that provides for Internet regulation and expansion leaves developing Member States struggling to keep pace.¹²²

Current Situation

The UN has included Internet access and infrastructure in Sustainable Development Goal 9 to “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation,” stressing the benefits of connectivity while trying to establish other critical infrastructure.¹²³ The most direct body related to the discussion and outlining of guidelines for development is the IGF, with contributions from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).¹²⁴ In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the UN DESA released a compendium of initiatives for Member States to address the pandemic using their existing Internet infrastructure effectively.¹²⁵ UN DESA endorses the use of the Internet as a vital communication tool in times of crisis to quickly convey crucial information to citizens due to its ease of access in areas with established infrastructure.¹²⁶

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for reliable Internet access for citizens to better communicate with their governments during times of crisis. The Internet helps governing bodies in, “providing information, monitoring and setting up dedicated COVID-19 portal[s].”¹²⁷ As of April 2020, about 1.6 billion students globally were at risk of falling behind in their educational careers due to not having the necessary Internet access to continue their education virtually.¹²⁸ While a lack of Internet access already posed a threat to students’ educational careers,

¹¹⁶ “Digital Government”, The Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

¹¹⁷ “Digital Government”, The Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

¹¹⁸ “Challenges and Opportunities of the Internet of Things for Global Development to Achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal,” IEEE, <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/9004570>, (Accessed May 8, 2021).

¹¹⁹ “The role of smartphones and the internet in developing countries,” Revista Espacio, <http://www.revistaespacios.com/a19v40n27/19402710.html> (Accessed May 8, 2021).

¹²⁰ “Sustainable Development Goal: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”, United Nations, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal9> (Accessed April 15, 2020).

¹²¹ “The role of smartphones and the internet in developing countries,” Revista Espacio.

¹²² “The role of smartphones and the internet in developing countries,” Revista Espacio.

¹²³ “Sustainable Development Goal: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”, United Nations.

¹²⁴ “Good Practices for Digital Government”, The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/internetgovernance> (Accessed April 15, 2021).

¹²⁵ “Compendium of Digital Government Initiatives in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic”, The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/Portals/egovkb/Documents/un/2020-Survey/UNDESA%20Compendium%20of%20Digital%20Government%20Initiatives%20in%20Response%20to%20the%20COVID-19%20Pandemic.pdf> (Accessed April 15, 2021).

¹²⁶ “Compendium of Digital Government Initiatives in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic”, The Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

¹²⁷ “Compendium of Digital Government Initiatives in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic”, The Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

¹²⁸ “How Many Children and Young People Have Internet Access at HOME? Estimating Digital Connectivity during the COVID-19 Pandemic - World,” Relief Web, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/how-many-children-and-young-people-have-internet-access-home-estimating-digital> (Accessed July 3, 2021).

the COVID-19 pandemic only heightened this issue.¹²⁹ This can be seen in the shift of in-person activities including work and education to virtual mediums that require an Internet connection to participate.¹³⁰ In this shift, individuals have not been able to continue their education or work in their respective Member States due to the lack of proper Internet infrastructure and necessary technology, such as computers.¹³¹ The shift of normally in-person activities to online formats has remained a salient issue in Member States lacking the proper Internet infrastructure to support this shift.¹³² Capable Internet infrastructure that would benefit such Member States includes physical material such as computers, cables, media, and software that is used to connect technology and people to the Internet.¹³³ This infrastructure also works together to process, store, and serve information that creates online content for users.¹³⁴

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) was created in 2006 to help facilitate conversations surrounding Internet access and infrastructure between Member States and private entities to discuss best practices as well as risk minimization.¹³⁵ The IGF's 16th annual meeting will take place in Katowice starting on December 6, 2021.¹³⁶ The conference's main focuses will be "Economic and social inclusion and human rights" and "Universal access and meaningful connectivity" related to maintaining Internet infrastructure.¹³⁷

Actions Taken by the United Nations

In 2014, the *Strengthening of Capacities of Developing Countries to Provide Access to Information for Sustainable Development through Open Government Data* (OGD) was established and implemented through the UN DESA.¹³⁸ OGD is an initiative sponsored by the IGF to increase the ability for citizens to "be aware of important issues and to be part of the decision-making process to address policy issues," using the Internet.¹³⁹ The use of OGD can be beneficial for developing Member States in regards to "development programmes and track progress, prevent corruption and improve aid effectiveness."¹⁴⁰ The initiative aims to develop policy frameworks for developing Member States and outline the required infrastructure to utilize OGD initiatives.¹⁴¹

In 2017, the UN General Assembly (GA) highlighted the need for a multilateral response to creating sustainable Internet infrastructure in developing Member States in A/RES/71/212.¹⁴² Continuing to update Internet infrastructure as technology evolves is crucial to help developing Member States keep pace with developed Member States.¹⁴³ The UN also recognizes the need for assistance and investment from the private sector to help fund the creation and maintenance of these frameworks.¹⁴⁴

Since 2017, the GA has recognized the ability for the Internet and related communication technologies to be utilized as tools to help combat development challenges such as access to education materials while also increasing the

¹²⁹ "What Does Normal Look like Now? COVID's Impact on the Internet," Internet Society, <https://www.internetsociety.org/blog/2020/09/what-does-normal-look-like-now-covids-impact-on-the-internet/> (Accessed July 2, 2021).

¹³⁰ "Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and Beyond." United Nations, https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/08/sg_policy_brief_covid-19_and_education_august_2020.pdf (Accessed May 1, 2021).

¹³¹ "Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and Beyond." United Nations.

¹³² "Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and Beyond." United Nations.

¹³³ "What Is the Internet's Infrastructure? [Video]," Internet Infrastructure Coalition, <https://www.i2coalition.com/what-is-the-internets-infrastructure-video/> (Accessed April 26, 2021).

¹³⁴ "What Is the Internet's Infrastructure? [Video]," Internet Infrastructure Coalition.

¹³⁵ "Internet Governance", The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/internetgovernance>, (accessed April 15, 2021).

¹³⁶ "Internet Governance", The Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

¹³⁷ "Internet Governance", The Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

¹³⁸ "Open Government Data and Services", The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/ogd> (accessed April 15, 2021).

¹³⁹ "Open Government Data and Services", The Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

¹⁴⁰ "Open Government Data and Services", The Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

¹⁴¹ "Open Government Data and Services", The Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

¹⁴² United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/71/212.

¹⁴³ United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/71/212.

¹⁴⁴ United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/71/212.

globalization of Member States.¹⁴⁵ The expanded access to information afforded to Member States with access to the Internet can help tackle challenges such as poverty and social isolation through the creation of new jobs and a greater sense of connection as a society.¹⁴⁶ The expansion of access and reliability stands to help integrate developing Member States into the global economy by equipping them with the same tools used by developed Member States.¹⁴⁷

In January 2020, the GA stressed the importance of both the public and private sectors helping to establish Internet infrastructure within Member States.¹⁴⁸ The GA encourages voluntary donations from both developed Member States and private entities to help fund the expansion of Internet infrastructure in developing Member States.¹⁴⁹ One private entity, SpaceX, is working to develop a global network of satellites to provide Internet anywhere in the world.¹⁵⁰ The service, Starlink, aims to offer Internet access to underserved communities quicker than traditional cable Internet through a reduced need for physical infrastructure and construction within physical communities.¹⁵¹

Case Study

Kenya

Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted social and economic inequalities amongst Member States. Of these inequalities, there has been an increased need for greater access in developing Member States.¹⁵² Kenya is currently experiencing problems resulting from the lack of equitable Internet access, affordability, and digital literacy as a result of lack of Internet.¹⁵³ Currently, about 3.5 million Kenyans do not have any form of Internet access. Seventy-one percent of Kenyans who do have access to mobile Internet face the possibility of losing their Internet access due to its high cost.¹⁵⁴ Such obstacles to Internet access have prompted Kenyans to resort to other methods of accessing and distributing their educational content, including using apps like WhatsApp and Facebook, and tuning into radio stations.¹⁵⁵ For every one million people of the general population in Kenya, there are only an estimated 248.2 secure Internet servers available for use as of 2019.¹⁵⁶ As for Kenyans working from home, they have encountered difficulties when working from home, including power outages and Internet loss due to increases in bandwidth demand, which have made it difficult to continue working from home.¹⁵⁷

Prior to the pandemic, UNICEF and the International Telecommunication Union began working together on an initiative known as the Giga Project.¹⁵⁸ This initiative began in 2019, and its goal was to increase Internet access in

¹⁴⁵ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 212, *Information and communications technologies for development*, A/RES/71/212, January 18, 2017, https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/71/212.

¹⁴⁶ United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/71/212.

¹⁴⁷ United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/71/212.

¹⁴⁸ United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 197, *Information and communications technologies for sustainable development*, A/RES/74/197, January 10, 2020, <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/197>

¹⁴⁹ United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/74/197.

¹⁵⁰ “Starlink explained: Everything you should know about Elon Musk’s satellite internet venture,” Ry Crist, <https://www.cnet.com/home/internet/starlink-satellite-internet-explained/> (Accessed August 21, 2021).

¹⁵¹ “Starlink explained: Everything you should know about Elon Musk’s satellite internet venture,” Ry Crist.

¹⁵² “Giga,” UNICEF Office of Innovation, <https://www.unicef.org/innovation/giga> (Accessed July 2, 2021).

¹⁵³ “Kenya-Opportunity-Brief,” Giga, <https://gigaconnect.org/kenya/> (Accessed April 26, 2021).

¹⁵⁴ “Kenya-Opportunity-Brief,” Giga.

¹⁵⁵ “How the Internet Is Making Stay-At-Home Difficult for Africans,” Deutsche Welle, <https://www.dw.com/en/how-the-internet-is-making-stay-at-home-difficult-for-africans/a-53048013> (Accessed April 26, 2021).

¹⁵⁶ “World Development Indicators,” World Bank, <https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=2&series=IT.NET.SECR.P6&country=KEN> (Accessed April 26, 2021).

¹⁵⁷ “The Resilience of Kenya’s Internet Freedoms during the COVID-19 Pandemic,” Association for Progressive Communications, <https://www.apc.org/en/news/resilience-kenyas-internet-freedoms-during-covid-19-pandemic> (Accessed April 15, 2021).

¹⁵⁸ “Giga – Connecting Every School to the Internet.” ITU, <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Initiatives/GIGA/Pages/default.aspx> (Accessed July 3, 2021).

developing Member States, such as Colombia, Honduras, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritania and Sierra Leone among other Member States, with a particular focus on providing Internet to schools.¹⁵⁹ As the COVID-19 pandemic began to highlight inequities in Internet accessibility, the Giga Project became even more valuable in the areas it was being implemented.¹⁶⁰ The Giga Project has been working to bring and improve Internet connection in Kenyan schools as the country currently has 23,300 schools lacking consistent Internet access.¹⁶¹ The Giga Project's main focus in increasing Kenya's Internet connectivity is in the Member State's public primary schools.¹⁶² By making it possible for these schools to access the Internet, an estimated 12.8 million local individuals will benefit from connectivity and, therefore, be able to continue their education.¹⁶³ The Giga Project hopes to reach 100 percent of Internet connectivity in schools by 2030.¹⁶⁴

While the Giga Project works closely with the Kenyan government to increase Internet connection growth, the Kenyan government has also released and implemented its own currently in-progress goals regarding Internet connection and bandwidth access.¹⁶⁵ The Kenyan government has obtained the necessary fiber cable that will connect all 47 Kenyan counties once installed. This new connectivity will then facilitate communication across counties and improve the delivery of government documents to citizens, as they will be able to access e-government services. Other entities, including Mobile Network Operators (MNO's) have also contributed to these technological efforts by establishing 3rd generation (3G) and 4th generation (4G) technology base stations throughout Kenya to increase mobile connectivity.¹⁶⁶ Respectively, 3G and 4G base stations are a wide area cell-based network, and the integration of wireless local area networks with the previous wide area cell-based infrastructure. Importantly, coverage increases from residential to enterprise usage in the shift from 3G to 4G technology.¹⁶⁷ Both are generations of mobile broadband Internet, with 3G providing at least 200 kilobits per second, and 4G providing at least 100 megabits per second.¹⁶⁸

Other Internet-related goals have been implemented in Kenya as well, including the Kenya National Broadband Strategy 2018-2023.¹⁶⁹ This objective aims to significantly increase available Internet infrastructure to reach a 95 percent of broadband coverage in Kenya nationally.¹⁷⁰ To encourage longer-term Internet and technological capabilities within Kenyan society, the Kenya Digital Literacy Programme aims to teach the necessary digital skills to students to ensure that they will fully take advantage of the Internet.¹⁷¹

Conclusion

¹⁵⁹ "Project Connect," UNICEF, <https://projectconnect.unicef.org/about> (Accessed July 2, 2021).

¹⁶⁰ "Giga – Connecting Every School to the Internet." ITU, <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Initiatives/GIGA/Pages/default.aspx> (Accessed July 3, 2021).

¹⁶¹ "Kenya-Opportunity-Brief." Giga, <https://gigaconnect.org/kenya/> (Accessed April 26, 2021).

¹⁶² "Kenya-Opportunity-Brief." Giga.

¹⁶³ "How Many Children and Young People Have Internet Access at HOME? Estimating Digital Connectivity during the COVID-19 Pandemic - World," Relief Web, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/how-many-children-and-young-people-have-internet-access-home-estimating-digital>.

¹⁶⁴ "Giga Initiative Aims to Connect the World's Schools to the Internet." UNICEF USA, December 4, 2020. <https://www.unicefusa.org/stories/giga-initiative-aims-connect-worlds-schools-internet/37582>.

¹⁶⁵ "Kenya-Opportunity-Brief." Giga.

¹⁶⁶ "National Optic Fibre Backbone (NOFBI)." ICT Authority, <https://icta.go.ke/national-optic-fibre-backbone-nofbi/> (Accessed April 26, 2021).

¹⁶⁷ "3G vs. 4G: What's the Difference?" Digital Trends, <https://www.digitaltrends.com/mobile/3g-and-4g-whats-the-difference/> (Accessed April 26, 2021).

¹⁶⁸ "3G vs. 4G: What's the Difference?" Digital Trends.

¹⁶⁹ "Kenya-Opportunity-Brief." Giga. Accessed April 26, 2021. <https://gigaconnect.org/kenya/>

¹⁷⁰ "Kenya-Opportunity-Brief." Giga.

¹⁷¹ "Kenya-Opportunity-Brief." Giga.

The Internet has become an integral part of everyday life in the Global North and has slowly spread to the Global South. As communication technologies including the Internet become more commonly relied upon, access to these technologies for individual citizens continues to improve. As the Internet becomes more readily available, Member States must recognize the critical role the Internet has in establishing and growing their economies. Expanding access to individuals helps connect them with others around the world, which helps make globalization efforts easier with direct input from citizens. The Giga project is expanding Internet access in schools in developing Member States that lack Internet access. The Giga project's work in increasing Internet access in developing Member States coincides with Sustainable Development Goal nine, which focuses on industries, innovation, and infrastructure in its efforts to connect schools to the Internet. Efforts like these will help develop proper Internet infrastructure that will aid Member States in keeping pace with developed Member States that will close the detrimental economic gap between them.¹⁷² The IGF also work to advance Internet as a critical infrastructure through yearly conferences and Member focused initiatives.¹⁷³ The initiatives and resolutions of third party entities helps to bolster and advance the UN's goal of establishing Internet as crucial infrastructure globally.¹⁷⁴

Committee Directive

Delegates should be prepared to answer the following: What is the largest challenge in setting up Internet infrastructure? Who should fund the development of this infrastructure? Should developing Member States prioritize Internet infrastructure over others? How would Internet infrastructure improve the lives of individual citizens in their respective Member States? What are some incentives to developing communication technologies in Member States? How do strong communication technologies affect Member States relations with one another? How can Member States motivate one another to pursue advancement in communication technologies?

¹⁷² United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/71/212.

¹⁷³ "Internet Governance", The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/internetgovernance>, (accessed April 15, 2021).

¹⁷⁴ "Internet Governance", The Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Annotated Bibliography

Topic I: The Role of Youth in Utilizing Media to Promote a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence

Biały, Beata. "Social Media—From Social Exchange to Battlefield." *The Cyber Defense Review* 2, no. 2 (2017): 69-90. Accessed March 12, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26267344>.

Social media has held an influential role in disseminating information. With this in mind, it has played a major benefit for state and non-state actors to amass support for their initiatives and influence people to accept their beliefs and behaviors. Alarming, social media is used to support potentially dangerous campaigns. Social media specifically is used to support military objectives through intelligence collection, targeting, cyber operations, command and control, defense, and psychological warfare. This study concludes that users should interact with credible content, promote a narrative of advocacy, recognize underlying psychological motivations in the media seen, and take advantage of the features that technology offers to effectively receive information.

Iqbal, M., & Shah, N. (2015). The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline: Political and Economic Impacts for the Region. *Pakistan Horizon*, 68(1), 69-81. Retrieved April 15, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44988735>

This journal article examines the nature of media coverage of severe conflicts in Pakistan, such as the Taliban conflict, the Baluchistan conflict, and the sectarian and ethno-political conflict in Karachi. It further elaborates on the role media played in establishing narrative on the issues, contending that Pakistan news TV channels contributed to the escalatory nature surrounding the Taliban and conflict in Karachi, while de-escalating the Baluchistan issue. This conclusion is also stated to be shared in other academia surrounding conflict journalism, in that media will create a nationalistic atmosphere when there are national threats, and a humanistic stance when the conflict is not a severe threat to national security.

Joseph, Teresa. "Mediating War and Peace: Mass Media and International Conflict." *India Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (2014): 225-40. Accessed March 10, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45072817>.

Peace journalism, therefore, studies the root causes of conflicts and strives to humanize conflicts and avoid creating enemies while encouraging peaceful resolution. Conventional news coverage contributes to the way conflicts are perceived in discourse and it is important that the media's power is recognized and used in a responsible manner to properly report domestic and international conflicts. This article supports peace journalism as a way to avoid dehumanizing war, demonizing enemies, biased reporting, and government interference with media, practices that are common in conventional news coverage. It upholds the strengths of peace journalism through the Mass Media Declaration of 1978, which reiterates that the media plays a vital role in strengthening peace and eliminating ignorance and conflict-prone misunderstandings among people.

Lanz, D., & Eleiba, A. (2018). (Rep.). *Swisspeace*. Retrieved April 15, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep25398>

This work examines the Cyber Mediation Initiative (CMI), which studies social media's impact on peace mediation, and overall, highlights the important insights of this initiative. CMI ultimately suggests that peace mediators take social media seriously and incorporate it as a way to communicate information to the audiences they are trying to reach. They recommend that peace mediators encourage participation and inclusivity, as well as provide reflection spaces to increase effectiveness of their work. Furthermore, they should uphold and openly receive constructive criticism from organizations that continually work with peacebuilding initiatives.

LeFebvre, Rebecca K. "Leveraging the Voices of Social Media for Peace and Security." *Sicherheit Und Frieden (S F) / Security and Peace* 34, no. 4 (2016): 231-35. Accessed March 10, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26429015>.

Recognizing that social media has become a way for users to receive news and information on current events prompts an urgency to highlight the spread of one-directional information and the ability for

malevolent groups to garner support for their causes. Social media is a strong tool that can be used to amass support for many kinds of movements, including dangerous ones sponsored by non-state actors like terrorist groups. While there are some measures set in place to counteract information with malicious intent, this article urges that there is still work that needs to be done to help promote peace and security through the Internet.

Savrum, Melike Yagmur, and Leon Miller. "THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN CONFLICT, PEACEBUILDING, AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS." *International Journal on World Peace* 32, no. 4 (2015): 13-34. Accessed April 16, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24543807>.

This research pushes for greater analysis of media and information communication technology (ICT) in the realm of international relations because of its relationship with conflict, security, and cross border social movements. With recognition of the growth in media use, this journal article highlights how the media contributes to peace agendas and social movements. As a reference point, Savrum and Miller examine the Cyprus conflict and specifically look to the media's factor in interethnic relations, conflict, and peace-building within the conflict. Ultimately, the objective seeks to determine how far the media supports state-centric approaches to the liberal peace agenda and likewise, how the media disregards necessary factors to promote democratic peace.

Topic II: Establishing Internet as Critical Infrastructure in Developing Member States

Dimelis, Sophia P., and Sotiris K. Papaioannou. "Technical Efficiency and the Role of ICT: A Comparison of Developed and Developing Countries." *Emerging Markets Finance & Trade* 47 (2011): 40-53. Accessed April 16, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23047100>.

According to this work, information, and communications technologies (ICT) help increase labor productivity and overall economic efficiency. Therefore, this journal article seeks to understand whether the further dispersion of ICT contributes to a decrease of technical inefficiency in examination of the aggregate cross-country level. It specifically examines the ICT technical efficiency relationship between developed and developing countries. While developing countries remain economically efficient, this work supports the further inclusion of ICT in developing countries as a way to increase efficiency and form a path of economic development in such countries.

Internet Governance Forum. "UN General Assembly Resolutions on ICTs for Sustainable Development." Internet Governance Forum, January 29, 2019. <https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/un-general-assembly-resolutions-on-icts-for-sustainable-development>.

This site lists various United Nations Resolutions on information and communications technologies (ICT's) and their role in sustainable development. Such resolutions range from the year 2001 to 2019 and may be useful in understanding the goals that the UN is hoping to reach by incorporating ICT's in sustainable development projects and updating their goals throughout the years. These resolutions range from the committees in which they were produced (General Assembly, Economic and Social Council) as well as the topic to which they pertain. All resolutions presented are in chronological order and documents with similar names and different dates are resolutions that have been updated with consideration to previous goals or elements stated in prior versions.

Kamssu, Aurore J., Jeffrey S. Siekpe, James A. Ellzy, and Aurora J. Kamssu. "Shortcomings to Globalization: Using Internet Technology and Electronic Commerce in Developing Countries." *The Journal of Developing Areas* 38, no. 1 (2004): 151-69. Accessed April 16, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20066700>.

Information and communications technology provides developing countries with the opportunity to continue growing in their economic, educational, and overall socioeconomic and political goals. This work embellishes the benefits of internet as a means to further connect information, business, and overall, productivity making it an important factor for production. Despite these benefits, not all countries have been able to properly implement the necessary internet infrastructure. Therefore, this work seeks to explain why some countries have yet to reach implementation goals and what differences in factors have contributed to the unequal implementation of internet infrastructure by studying socio-economic factors and internet adoption.

Oecd. "Spanning the Internet Divide to Drive Development." *Aid for Trade at a Glance 2017*, July 11, 2017. https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/aid-for-trade-at-a-glance-2017/spanning-the-internet-divide-to-drive-development_aid_glance-2017-8-en

While this overall publication looks at trends and aid in developing countries as they further interconnect with the global economic realm. Chapter five specifically studies the internet divide in developing countries and the potential benefits developing countries have not experienced because of the lack of growth in ICT infrastructure, connectivity, and the quality of ICT service within mobile and fixed-broadband internet. This work goes into detail on the progress developing countries have reached in regard to ICT establishment, the socio-economic boundaries that are preventing further ICT development, and the internet's inability to address inequalities due to a lack of focus on infrastructure.

Schia, Niels Nagelhus. *'Teach a Person How to Surf': Cyber Security as Development Assistance*. Report. Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), 2016. 11-15. Accessed April 16, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep08068.6>.

This work commends the efforts that have been taking to implement up to date technologies in developing countries and notes that although there are strong efforts to modernize technology in such areas, the creation of state institutions to withstand and support issues that may arise with such technology has been going at a slower rate, not keeping up with the technology being introduced. Schia suggests that the institutional shortcomings can be overcome by projects aimed at educating people in developing countries on how to properly use the technology given. Specifically, Schia notes that Cyber Security Capacity Building, when connected to Sustainable Development Goals, can support development goals in developing countries. This work furthermore highlights the importance of recognizing cybersecurity as an important element and one that should be assessed to determine developing countries' potential roadblocks to adopting the necessary infrastructure to support their new technologies.

Wang, Andy. "The Digital Desert: Opportunity and Challenges in Sub Saharan Africa." *Harvard International Review* 41, no. 1 (2020): 37-40. Accessed April 16, 2021. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26917280>.

Internet and technological growth in Sub-Saharan Africa are studied in this review, more specifically, the unequal distribution of technology throughout the region. The inequality in internet access, that of which is only 1 in 5 people, is exacerbated by the lack of necessary infrastructure for internet access. The overall lack of unequal internet access is also what contributes to the growing divide between rich and poorer classes. Overall, this review concludes that providing the infrastructure to increase internet access throughout the Sub-Saharan region, urban and rural divides will be lessened.