

**SRMUN Charlotte 2015**  
***Preserving Fundamental Human Rights:***  
***Our Responsibility to Protect***  
**April 9-11, 2015**  
**Charlotte, NC**  
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Dear Delegates,

It is an honor to welcome you to the General Assembly (GA) Plenary committee at SRMUN Charlotte 2015. My name is Michael Oleaga, and I have the privilege to serve as the Director for the GA Plenary. With Assistant Director Susan Ramsey-French, we have collaborated and worked to provide a background guide that will serve as a resource for delegates to utilize in preparation for committee. Susan and I have strong hopes for the delegates, from comprehending the background guide, to writing position papers, and developing resolutions to solve the issues outlined before you.

The GA Plenary was established in 1945 as the central body of the United Nations (UN). As one of the six major organs of the UN, the GA consists of policymaking and representation for all 193 Member States and two observer states – Holy See and Palestine. The GA is ultimately responsible for maintaining peace and security, as defined in the UN Charter; however, it also oversees the budget, appoints non-permanent members to the Security Council, receives reports from other branches and organs in the UN system and makes recommendations, known as resolutions. In spirit of the theme for SRMUN Charlotte 2015, "*Preserving Fundamental Human Rights: Our Responsibility to Protect*," two topics have been developed for the GA Plenary to address:

- I: Communicable Diseases: Countering the Threat of the Ebola Virus Disease; and
- II: Enhancing Water Quality Management and Sustainability.

Each delegation is required to submit a position paper that addresses and outlines their Member State's policies based on the two aforementioned topics. Position papers should include insight to the Member State's policies from the past, present, and future, as well as recommendations for resolve. The position papers serve as a critical document for delegations in preparation for the conference. Delegates should follow SRMUN's policies regarding position papers, which include format and style structure. For specific details on formatting, or if you need help in shaping a position paper, please visit the SRMUN website ([www.srmun.org](http://www.srmun.org)). **All Position papers MUST be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on Friday 20 March 2015, via the online submission system.**

Susan and I look forward to the prospects delegates have to offer in the GA Plenary. We are eager to see each delegation's ideas and research come to fruition for the prepared topics. Susan and I also send the best regards as delegations prepare for the SRMUN Charlotte 2015 conference and look forward to meeting you all in April. Please feel free to contact Director General Devin McRae, Susan, or myself if you have any questions.

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## History of the General Assembly Plenary

The General Assembly (GA) is the central body of the United Nations (UN) and was established by the UN Charter as one of the six principle organs.<sup>1</sup> The GA is the heart of the UN serving as a “deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ” and operating as a platform for dialogue and debate.<sup>2</sup> On 10 January 1946, 51 Member States met for the first session of the GA at the Central Hall in Westminster, London, United Kingdom.<sup>3</sup> On 24 January 1946, the GA adopted its first resolution, A/RES/1, and its main focus was “peaceful uses of atomic energy and the elimination of atomic and other weapons of mass destruction.”<sup>3</sup> Today, the GA is comprised of 193 Member States and provides a distinctive forum for open discussion on multifaceted international issues.<sup>4</sup>

The GA is comprised of six committees, including: First Committee (Disarmament and International Security Committee); Second Committee (Economic and Financial Committee); Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee); Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization Committee); Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary Committee); and Sixth Committee (Legal Committee).<sup>5</sup> The GA can further be broken down into subsidiary organs and divided into categories of boards, commissions, committees, councils and panels, and working groups among others.<sup>6</sup>

According to the Charter of the UN, the GA may consider general principles of cooperation for maintaining international peace and security and discuss questions relating to said peace and security, except in situations when the Security Council is also discussing said questions.<sup>7</sup> In addition, questions within the parameters of the Charter, or affecting the powers and functions of any organ of the UN, may be discussed in the GA.<sup>8</sup> Member States may initiate studies “to promote international political cooperation, the development and codification of international law, the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and international collaboration in the economic, social, humanitarian, cultural, educational and health fields.”<sup>9</sup> Per the UN Charter, the GA has the authority to oversee the budget, appoint non-permanent members to the Security Council, receive reports from other branches and organs of the UN, and make recommendations, known as resolutions.<sup>10</sup> The GA is also recognized to reach goals in “peacekeeping, peacebuilding, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance.”<sup>11</sup>

At the beginning of each plenary session, a new president is elected. As of 11 June 2014, Uganda Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sam Kutesa, was elected the president of the 69th GA Plenary. Regular sessions run from September until their suspension in December, after which time if there are still pressing matters, the GA may reconvene at a later date.<sup>12</sup> GA committee sessions consist of debate on a variety of issues that are most pressing to Member States; these issues are then distributed to the most prevalent of the six main GA committees to be debated and addressed via draft resolutions. After resolutions are drafted, they are presented before the GA in which all Member States will vote. Resolutions are non-binding, but carry much weight for States both politically and in regards to international law. In certain instances, under A/RES/377(V) “Uniting for Peace,” the GA may consider matters immediately and issue recommendations deemed necessary to restore international peace and security when there is a lack of unanimity amongst the five permanent members of the Security Council.<sup>13</sup> A/RES/377(V) was

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<sup>1</sup> “*Charter of the United Nations, Chapter III Organs.*” The United Nations.

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter3.shtml> (accessed 29 August 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> “History of the United Nations: 1941-1950,” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/history/1941-1950.shtml> (accessed 29 August 2014).

<sup>4</sup> “General Assembly of the United Nations,” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/ga/> (accessed 4 September 2014)

<sup>5</sup> “Main Committees,” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/ga/maincommittees/> (accessed 30 August 2014).

<sup>6</sup> “Subsidiary Organs of the General Assembly,” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/subsidiary/index.shtml> (accessed 4 September 2014).

<sup>7</sup> “About the General Assembly,” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/index.shtml> (accessed August 30, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> “UN at a Glance,” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/index.shtml> (accessed 4 September 2014).

<sup>12</sup> “UN Documentation: General Assembly,” United Nations Research Guides, <http://research.un.org/en/docs/ga> (accessed 4 September 2014).

<sup>13</sup> “Uniting for Peace General Assembly resolution 377 (V),” The United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law, <http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/ufp/ufp.html> (accessed 5 September 2014).

adopted on 03 November 1950, as a response to a stalemate incurred by the Security Council from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).<sup>14</sup>

Non-Member States wishing to become part of the UN can do so by filling out an application.<sup>15</sup> Membership requires a two-thirds majority vote and becomes effective the date the resolution becomes adopted for admission.<sup>16</sup> Voting on important questions, such as recommendations concerning peace and security, budgetary concerns, elections, admissions, suspension or expulsions of Member States, requires a two-thirds majority vote by those present and voting.<sup>17</sup> All other questions are decided by a simple majority vote.

Article 18 of the UN Charter, rules 82-95, outline the Rules of Procedure for voting within the GA.<sup>18</sup> All 193 Members have voting rights; additional States and Entities that have observer privileges, the right to participate in debate without the ability to vote.<sup>19</sup> Currently, there are two permanent observers in the GA: Holy See and the State of Palestine.<sup>20</sup> A Member State can lose their voting rights by having due payments in arrears that equals or exceeds contributions due for two preceding years, as outlined in Article 19 of the UN Charter.<sup>21</sup> If a Member State can show that extraordinary circumstances contributed to their inability to pay their dues, they may be granted an exception and their voting rights will remain intact.<sup>22</sup>

Budgetary aspects for the GA Plenary are reserved for the Fifth Committee, as stated by Chapter IV, Article 17 of the UN Charter.<sup>23</sup> Within the Fifth Committee exists the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), whose primary responsibilities include examining and reporting on the UN Secretary-General's proposed budget and providing advice to the GA on administrative and budget issues.<sup>24</sup> GA plenary adopts resolutions and decisions about the budget that may include any aspect of planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation cycle.<sup>25</sup> The GA approved a USD 5.53 billion budget for the operating 2014-2015 year.<sup>26</sup>

All Member States are represented in the General Assembly Plenary.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> "Charter of the United Nations, Chapter IV: The General Assembly." The United Nations. <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter4.shtml> (accessed 29 August 2014).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> "General Assembly Voting," United Nations Research Guides, <http://research.un.org/en/docs/ga/voting> (accessed 29 August 2014).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> "Non-Member States," The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/members/nonmembers.shtml> (accessed 4 September 2014).

<sup>21</sup> "About the General Assembly: Countries in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions under the terms of Article 19 of the UN Charter," The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/art19.shtml> (accessed 4 September 2014).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> "UN Documentation: Regular Budget," United Nations Research Guides, <http://research.un.org/en/docs/budget/bodies> (accessed 29 August 2014).

<sup>24</sup> "About the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)," The United Nations Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, <http://www.un.org/ga/acabq/about> (accessed 30 August 2014).

<sup>25</sup> "UN Documentation: Regular Budget," United Nations Research Guides, <http://research.un.org/en/docs/budget/bodies#11738360> (accessed 5 September 2014).

<sup>26</sup> "U.N. General Assembly Approves \$5.5 Billion Budget for 2014/15," Reuters. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/12/27/us-un-budget-idUSBRE9BQ0JX20131227> (accessed 18 September 2014).

## I: Communicable Diseases: Countering the Threat of the Ebola Virus Disease

*"The Ebola crisis has evolved into a complex emergency, with significant political, social, economic, humanitarian and security dimensions. The suffering and spillover effects in the region and beyond demand the attention of the entire world. Ebola matters to us all."<sup>27</sup>*

*- United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon*

### **Introduction**

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) can result in the deaths of approximately 29 million people, worldwide, but cannot be transmitted from person to person.<sup>28</sup> Communicable diseases, however, can spread from one person to another, even from an animal to a person.<sup>29</sup> The spread of communicable diseases may occur if the disease becomes airborne and/or through the exchange of bacteria, blood or other bodily fluids.<sup>30</sup> Examples of the most common communicable diseases include hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, malaria, polio, tuberculosis, and influenza. The "size, health status, and living conditions of the population" are often contributors to an outbreak of communicable diseases, in addition to "crowding, inadequate water and sanitation, and poor access to health services."<sup>31</sup>

The Ebola hemorrhagic fever, also referred to as the Ebola virus disease, has been recognized for approximately four decades but, throughout 2014, an outbreak of the communicable disease has "alarmed" populations, notably in western Africa.<sup>32,33</sup> Ebola, recognized as a "severe, often fatal illness," has an average fatality rate of 50 percent, but previous outbreak cases have had a fatality rate of up to 90 percent.<sup>34</sup> The first outbreaks of the Ebola virus occurred in isolated villages in Africa, typically near tropical rainforest locations. It first appeared in 1976 in Nzara, Sudan, and Yambuku, Democratic Republic of Congo.<sup>35</sup> The outbreak in Yambuku occurred in a village near the Ebola River, which is where the communicable disease's name originated.<sup>36</sup> Recent outbreaks have shed light that the communicable disease can endure in major urban areas but efforts such as community engagement, contact tracing, intervention, and safe burials have been considered key to successfully maintaining the epidemic.<sup>37</sup>

According to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, the latest Ebola outbreak is the largest the international community has ever witnessed.<sup>38</sup> In a statement to the UN Security Council on 18 September 2014, Ki-moon said the rate of Ebola cases had doubled nearly every three weeks.<sup>39</sup> The Secretary General also said there would be more confirmed Ebola cases within Liberia than in the four-decade history of the communicable disease.<sup>40</sup> Although the Ebola virus has largely affected the western African Member States of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, the communicable disease has been evolving into a "complex emergency" with affects on economic, humanitarian,

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<sup>27</sup> "New York, 18 September 2014 - Secretary-General's Remarks to the Security Council on Ebola," The United Nations, 18 September 2014, <http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7999> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>28</sup> "Media Centre: Noncommunicable diseases," World Health Organization, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs355/en/> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>29</sup> "Global Health Topics: Communicable Diseases," United States Department of Health and Human Services, <http://www.globalhealth.gov/global-health-topics/communicable-diseases/> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> "Communicable diseases following natural disasters," World Health Organization, 2006, [http://www.who.int/diseasecontrol\\_emergencies/guidelines/CD\\_Disasters\\_26\\_06.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/diseasecontrol_emergencies/guidelines/CD_Disasters_26_06.pdf?ua=1) (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>32</sup> "Media Centre: Ebola virus disease," World Health Organization, 2014 September, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs103/en/> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>33</sup> "Humanitarian Health Action: Communicable diseases and crises: Technical Guidelines," World Health Organization, <http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/pht/comdisease/en/> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>34</sup> "Media Centre: Ebola virus disease," World Health Organization, 2014 September, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs103/en/> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> "New York, 18 September 2014 - Secretary-General's Remarks to the Security Council on Ebola," The United Nations, 18 September 2014, <http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7999> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

political, security and social realms.<sup>41</sup> As Ki-moon recognized, the Ebola virus' economic toll has included surges in food prices and inflation, as well as the disruption of transport and social services.<sup>42</sup>

The transmission of the Ebola virus among human populations occur by close interaction with another person's blood, broken skin, organs, secretions and/or other bodily fluids.<sup>43</sup> An individual could also acquire Ebola from infected animals including "chimpanzees, gorillas, fruit bats, monkeys, forest antelope and porcupines found ill or dead or in the rainforest."<sup>44</sup> According to the World Health Organization (WHO), men who have recovered from the disease could still transmit Ebola through their semen for at least seven weeks after recovery.<sup>45</sup> People may not experience symptoms of the virus until at least three weeks after contact with the communicable disease. Initial symptoms include fatigue, headache, muscular pain, and sore throat.<sup>46</sup> Additional symptoms of the virus include external and internal bleeding, rash, weakened kidney and liver function, and vomiting.<sup>47</sup>

### ***Current Situation***

The current Ebola virus outbreak has more reported cases and deaths than all previous outbreaks combined.<sup>48</sup> The first reported cases in 2014 originated in Guinea then progressed to neighboring Member States Liberia and Sierra Leone.<sup>49</sup> Individual cases were also reported in Nigeria and Senegal. The Member States encountering the brunt of the latest Ebola outbreak are Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone due to insufficient health systems, humanitarian resources, and infrastructure, primarily caused by long periods of conflict.<sup>50</sup> Based on WHO statistics as of December 2014, the Ebola virus has killed over 6,370 people, most residing in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.<sup>51</sup>

Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone have totaled more than 17,900 cases.<sup>52</sup> Many of these cases require laboratory testing, however, proper equipment is limited in certain areas. As the United States (U.S.) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) noted, a laboratory-confirmed case occurs after "one or more" laboratory methods are conducted under the Laboratory Criteria for Diagnosis.<sup>53</sup> Ebola cases confirmed through laboratory research revealed that Sierra Leone totaled 6,375 cases, followed by Guinea with 2,051 cases, and Liberia with 2,830 cases.<sup>54</sup> The majority of the Ebola virus' casualties are from Liberia with 3,177 deaths; Sierra Leone ranked second with 1,768 deaths followed by 1,428 deaths in Guinea.<sup>55</sup>

The communicable disease has also affected Mali, Nigeria, and Senegal.<sup>56</sup> The cases in Mali and Senegal have been categorized as "travel-associated" cases. Mali's first case of a two-year-old child also resulted in the first death within the Member State caused by the virus.<sup>57</sup> Mali has had six additional confirmed cases, each resulting in the

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> "Media Centre: Ebola virus disease," World Health Organization, 2014 September, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs103/en/> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> "UN health agency moves to allay mounting fears over Ebola spread," The United Nations News Centre, 30 July 2014, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48376#.VE145UsdJG5> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> "Media Centre: Ebola virus disease," World Health Organization, 2014 September, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs103/en/> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> "2014 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa - Case Counts," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 25 October 2014, <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/case-counts.html> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> "National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS): Key Terms," United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/nndss/script/terms.aspx> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>54</sup> "2014 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa - Case Counts," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 25 October 2014, <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/case-counts.html> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> "Mali's first Ebola case, a 2-yr-old girl, dies -officials," Reuters, 24 October 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/10/24/health-ebola-mali-idUSL6N0SJ4PV20141024> (accessed 26 October 2014).

patients' death as of 11 December 2014.<sup>58</sup> Senegal's Ebola patient was working on behalf of WHO in Sierra Leone and has since recovered.<sup>59</sup> Following the patient's recovery, Senegal is not considered at risk of an outbreak.<sup>60</sup> Nigeria has encountered 19 laboratory-confirmed cases resulting in eight confirmed deaths; however, like Senegal, WHO has declared that Nigeria is not at risk of an Ebola virus outbreak.<sup>61,62</sup>

Two Member States outside the African continent have also encountered the Ebola virus: Spain and the United States (U.S.). In early October 2014, the patient in Spain, nursing-aide Teresa Romero Ramos, was the first-known case of the latest Ebola outbreak outside of western Africa.<sup>63</sup> The Spaniard had participated in the extraction of two Ebola patients from western Africa to the Spanish capital city of Madrid. As of late October, Ramos has tested negative for the communicable disease on four occasions. Despite the negative results, the Spaniard remained isolated for side effects of the virus but was later released from the hospital on 05 November 2014.<sup>64</sup> Ramos' doctors medically treated her with various treatments; however, they were not able to determine which factors directly contributed to her survival.<sup>65</sup> Despite her release, WHO has not officially cleared Spain from a potential outbreak.<sup>66</sup>

The U.S. has four confirmed cases of the Ebola virus. The first confirmed case was Liberian national Thomas Eric Duncan, who traveled to the U.S. and became the first patient diagnosed with the Ebola virus in the western hemisphere.<sup>67</sup> Duncan also became the first Ebola-related death in the U.S. as of 08 October 2014.<sup>68</sup> Two nurses from the hospital facilitating Duncan would also become the second and third confirmed Ebola cases in the U.S. As of 24 October 2014, the two nurses have tested negative for the virus.<sup>69</sup> The fourth Ebola case confirmed came from a staff member of the non-governmental organization, Doctors Without Borders.<sup>70</sup> Dr. Craig Spencer was diagnosed on 23 October 2014, and as confirmed by Doctors Without Borders, he was in Guinea treating Ebola-stricken people.<sup>71</sup> Spencer was cured of the communicable disease after several weeks at a New York City hospital and was released on 11 November 2014.<sup>72</sup>

The U.S. cases resulted in air travel precautions within the Member State's mainland borders. Travelers from Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone were only allowed to enter the U.S. through one of five major airports in order to

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<sup>58</sup> "2014 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa - Case Counts," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 25 October 2014, <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/case-counts.html> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>59</sup> "US launches Ebola response team," Al Jazeera America, 14 October 2014,

<http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/10/14/ebola-un-germany.html> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>60</sup> "Ebola contained in Nigeria, Senegal - US health officials," BBC News, 30 September 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-29436851> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>61</sup> "2014 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa - Case Counts," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 25 October 2014, <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/case-counts.html> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>62</sup> "Nigeria Declared Ebola-Free by WHO," The Wall Street Journal, 20 October 2014, <http://online.wsj.com/articles/nigeria-declared-ebola-free-by-who-1413802813> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>63</sup> "Spanish nurse free of Ebola after more than two weeks in hospital," The Guardian, 21 October 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/22/spanish-nurse-teresa-romero-ramos-clear-ebola> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>64</sup> "Free of Ebola, Nurse's Aide Leaves Spanish Hospital," The New York Times, 5 November 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/06/world/europe/ebola-outbreak-spain.html> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> "Nigeria Declared Ebola-Free by WHO," The Wall Street Journal, 20 October 2014, <http://online.wsj.com/articles/nigeria-declared-ebola-free-by-who-1413802813> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>67</sup> "Did Ebola victim Thomas Eric Duncan enter the United States with an elevated temperature?" PolitiFact, 26 October 2014, <http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2014/oct/26/darrell-issa/did-ebola-victim-thomas-eric-duncan-enter-united-s/> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> "Two US nurses are declared cured of Ebola," Yahoo News, 24 October 2014, <http://news.yahoo.com/texas-nurse-nina-pham-cured-ebola-151931146.html> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>70</sup> "MSF Protocols for Staff Returning from Ebola-Affected Countries," Doctors Without Borders, 23 October 2014, <http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/article/msf-protocols-staff-returning-ebola-affected-countries> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>71</sup> "U.S. doctor free of Ebola -- turn focus back to West Africa," CNN, 11 November 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/11/11/health/ebola-craig-spencer/> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

conduct enhanced screenings of Ebola.<sup>73</sup> Recommendations for a travel ban were made but not finalized due to concerns that the virus would not be contained by such a manner. Member States, such as the Dominican Republic, placed a 30-day travel ban for foreigners who visited any of the three aforementioned African Member States.<sup>74</sup>

### *Actions Taken by the United Nations*

On 15 September 2014, the UN Security Council responded to the outbreak by extending the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) mandate to 31 December 2014. UNMIL was charged to further follow and monitor the "human rights situation and facilitate humanitarian assistance" by ensuring security conditions while the virus outbreak remains at high alert.<sup>75</sup> With SC/RES/2176 (2014), the 15 Member States of the Security Council expressed intentions to further increase the UNMIL mandate to 30 September 2015.<sup>76</sup> In S/RES/2177 (2014), the Security Council acknowledged the Ebola outbreak could reverse progress made in Africa. The UN recognized the efforts of the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States' (ECOWAS), in addition to the bilateral and multilateral partnerships that created a "united, comprehensive and collective" African response to the virus outbreak.<sup>77</sup> The UN also commended the AU and ECOWAS initiatives to deploy healthcare workers and defense forces in the region.<sup>78</sup>

The presidents of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone sent letters to the UN Secretary General requesting aid in their respective responses to Ebola. The presidents noted the need for assistance in societies and economies affected by restrictions on trade and transportation since the latest outbreak.<sup>79</sup> According to the President of the 69th Session of the GA, Sam Kahamba Kutesa of Uganda, the Ebola virus outbreak should not be considered a sub-regional or regional "calamity," but an "international crisis."<sup>80</sup> Kutesa recognized the latest Ebola outbreak as "unmatched" in terms of deaths and damage to the already "fragile" health systems.<sup>81</sup>

The UN Secretary General helped establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER), with a mission of "stopping the outbreak, treating the infected, ensuring essential services, preserving stability and preventing further outbreaks."<sup>82</sup> The UNMEER efforts, however, required capabilities to combat the communicable disease to be increased by "some 20 times."<sup>83</sup> The UN requested approximately USD 1 billion for UNMEER funding while other Member States, such as the U.S., deployed resources and troops to assist in Ebola eradication efforts.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> "U.S. to funnel travelers from Ebola-hit region through five airports," Reuters, 21 October 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/10/21/us-health-ebola-usa-idUSKCN0IA20320141021> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Adopting Resolution 2176 (2014), Security Council Approves Three-Month Extension for United Nations Mission in Liberia, with Further Renewal under Review," The United Nations, 15 September 2014, <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/sc11559.doc.htm> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>76</sup> SC/RES/2176 (2014). Adopted by the Security Council at its 7263rd meeting, on 15 September 2014. The United Nations. 15 September 2014. [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2176%20\(2014\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2176%20(2014)) (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>77</sup> S/RES/2177 (2014). Adopted by the Security Council at its 7268th meeting, on 18 September 2014. The United Nations. 18 September 2014. [www.ifrc.org/docs/IDRL/UN%20SC%20Res.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/docs/IDRL/UN%20SC%20Res.pdf) (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> "With Spread of Ebola Outpacing Response, Security Council Adopts Resolution 2177 (2014) Urging Immediate Action, End to Isolation of Affected States," The United Nations, 18 September 2014, <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/sc11566.doc.htm> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>80</sup> "Statement By H.E. Sam Kahamba Kutesa President of the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly At Plenary Meeting On Ebola," The United Nations, 19 September 2014, [http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/69/pdf/pr\\_statements/190914 Ebola-plenary.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/69/pdf/pr_statements/190914 Ebola-plenary.pdf) (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> "With Spread of Ebola Outpacing Response, Security Council Adopts Resolution 2177 (2014) Urging Immediate Action, End to Isolation of Affected States," The United Nations, 18 September 2014, <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/sc11566.doc.htm> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

The GA passed A/RES/69/1 for all Member States and relevant UN bodies to "provide their full support" to UNMEER.<sup>85</sup> A/RES/69/1 also welcomed the UN Secretary General to take measures to issue "prompt execution" in order to address the Ebola outbreak with a report submitted for consideration by the GA.<sup>86</sup> Preliminary plans of UNMEER were underway with the Office of the Special Envoy on Ebola following the passage of A/RES/69/1.<sup>87</sup> Requirements for UNMEER and the Office of the Special Envoy on Ebola were detailed in A/69/404 with a requested budget not exceeding USD 49,943,600.<sup>88</sup> The GA has so far endorsed the UN Secretary General's recommendations and conclusions.<sup>89</sup>

UNMEER has since issued reports to the GA on the Ebola situation in the African continent. According to UNMEER Secretary-General's Special Representative (SRSG), Anthony Banbury, "[The] international community is having enough challenges trying to mobilize resources to respond to the crisis in hardest-hit Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea and any outbreaks in other [Member States] would be 'truly devastating.'"<sup>90</sup> Ebola's socio-economic impact affected households' purchasing power as a decline occurred by 25 percent in Liberia and 20 percent in Sierra Leone.<sup>91</sup> UNMEER and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) revealed households' purchasing power declined due to limits and slowdowns in agricultural activities.<sup>92</sup> Farmers abandoned their fields due to movement restrictions and the inability to sell produce.<sup>93</sup>

The Ebola virus has taken the lives of three UN employees as of 18 October 2014.<sup>94</sup> Two volunteer medics of the UNMIL succumbed to the virus, despite efforts to treat one patient at a German hospital.<sup>95</sup> The third death was a local driver for a UN office in Sierra Leone.<sup>96</sup>

### ***Case Study: Guinea Outbreak***

For the West African Member State, Guinea, the Ebola outbreak required an "emergency response" as early as March 2014.<sup>97</sup> WHO recognized the latest Ebola outbreak started in Guinea before "spreading" into Liberia and Sierra Leone.<sup>98</sup> In March 2014, Doctors Without Borders confirmed the deployment of 24 doctors, nurses, logisticians, and hygiene and sanitation experts to Guinea, but more were sent within "days" of the "emergency response" declaration.<sup>99</sup> In partnership with the Guinea Ministry of Health, isolation units have been created even for individuals suspected of the communicable virus.<sup>100</sup> Guinea's Ministry of Health has been credited to reacting

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<sup>85</sup> A/RES/69/1. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 September 2014. The United Nations. 23 September 2014. [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/1](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/1) (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> A/69/404. United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response and the Office of the Special Envoy on Ebola. The United Nations. 24 September 2014. <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1454811.pdf> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> A/RES/69/3. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 9 October 2014. The United Nations. 14 October 2014. [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/3](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/3) (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>90</sup> "UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) External Situation Report 14 November 2014," The United Nations, 14 November 2014, [http://www.un.org/ebolareponse/pdf/Situation\\_Report-Ebola-14Nov14.pdf](http://www.un.org/ebolareponse/pdf/Situation_Report-Ebola-14Nov14.pdf) (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> "Third UN employee dies of Ebola," Al Jazeera, 21 October 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/10/third-un-employee-dies-ebola-2014102017928949662.html> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> "Guinea: Ebola epidemic declared, MSF launches emergency response," Medecins Sans Frontieres, " 22 March 2014, <http://www.msf.org/article/guinea-ebola-epidemic-declared-msf-launches-emergency-response> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>98</sup> "Media Centre: Ebola virus disease," World Health Organization, 2014 September, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs103/en/> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>99</sup> "Guinea: Ebola epidemic declared, MSF launches emergency response," Medecins Sans Frontieres, " 22 March 2014, <http://www.msf.org/article/guinea-ebola-epidemic-declared-msf-launches-emergency-response> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.



"swiftly" to the Ebola outbreak and launching isolation units in the districts of Gueckedou and Macenta, the areas most affected by the communicable disease.<sup>101</sup> Doctors Without Borders Tropical Medicine Advisor, Dr. Esther Sterk, acknowledged isolation units are "essential" in preventing the spread of the Ebola virus.<sup>102</sup> The NGO also delivered approximately 33-tons of supplies, ranging from medicine, medical equipment, sanitation measures, and isolation unit supplies, to Guinea.<sup>103</sup>

The timing of the Ebola virus outbreak in Guinea came while the Member State's public health infrastructure was considered "severely strained."<sup>104</sup> Travel restrictions were implemented, including an issued "warning" by the U.S. for residents to avoid nonessential travel to the West African Member State.<sup>105</sup> With similar travel restrictions put in place, Guinea encountered economic problems and setbacks. According to the World Bank, early growth estimates in Guinea decreased from 4.5 percent to 2.4 percent due to the Ebola outbreak; specifically, the agricultural industry experienced the largest loss as farm workers were forced to lower exports of their key products.<sup>106</sup>

Guinea's short-term fiscal impacts have been considered much greater to those of Liberia and Sierra Leone.<sup>107</sup> Nearly USD 120 million was projected to be lost in Guinea due to the Ebola outbreak, which equated to 1.8 percent of the Member State's GDP.<sup>108</sup> For 2014, Guinean areas affected by the virus were expected to grow by 3.3 percent, which is a decline from the original projection of 5.7 percent.<sup>109</sup> Despite the projections, Guinea has been considered the "more successful" Member State in western Africa to contain the Ebola virus compared to Liberia and Sierra Leone.<sup>110</sup> Guinea President Alpha Condé said the Member State's economy would need USD 100 million by December 2014 if it were to cover a budget gap, which continues to grow due to Ebola eradication efforts.<sup>111</sup> The Guinean president has remained optimistic with the UN's plans to help combat Ebola and believes the organization's initiatives could defeat the communicable disease.<sup>112</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The communicable disease outbreak of the Ebola virus disease elevated concerns for UN Member States, both developing and developed. UN Secretary General Ki-moon highlighted the latest outbreak as the "largest" the international community has ever encountered. The international community has addressed the outbreak that has primarily affected three African Member States – Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Member States and NGOs' efforts in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone included deployment of doctors, nurses, troops, and supplies.

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<sup>101</sup> "The Economic Impact of the 2014 Ebola Epidemic: Short and Medium Term Estimates for Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone," The World Bank, 17 September 2014, [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/09/17/000470435\\_20140917071539/Rendere d/PDF/907480REVISED.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/09/17/000470435_20140917071539/Rendere d/PDF/907480REVISED.pdf) (16 November 2014).

<sup>102</sup> "Guinea: Ebola epidemic declared, MSF launches emergency response," Medecins Sans Frontieres, " 22 March 2014, <http://www.msf.org/article/guinea-ebola-epidemic-declared-msf-launches-emergency-response> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> "Ebola in Guinea," The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 13 November 2014, <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/ebola-guinea> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> "Ebola: Economic Impact Could Be Devastating," The World Bank, 17 September 2014, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/region/afr/publication/ebola-economic-analysis-ebola-long-term-economic-impact-could-be-devastating> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>107</sup> "The Economic Impact of the 2014 Ebola Epidemic: Short and Medium Term Estimates for Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone," The World Bank, 17 September 2014, [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/09/17/000470435\\_20140917071539/Rendere d/PDF/907480REVISED.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/09/17/000470435_20140917071539/Rendere d/PDF/907480REVISED.pdf) (16 November 2014).

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> "Ebola Could Cause 'Economic Collapse' Guinea's President Warns," The Wall Street Journal, 01 October 2014, <http://blogs.wsj.com/frontiers/2014/10/01/ebola-could-cause-economic-collapse-guineas-president-warns/> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

Although communicable diseases have long existed, with notable cases including hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, malaria, polio, and influenza, the latest Ebola virus outbreak has been given more consideration due to its rapid infection rates. With Guinea being routed as the starting point of the latest Ebola outbreak, its neighboring Member States of Liberia and Sierra Leone have surpassed Guinea in terms of laboratory-confirmed cases and deaths. Tens of thousands of people, including healthcare professionals, have succumbed to the communicable virus in the developing African Member States. While select developed Member States have welcomed Ebola-affected individuals, deaths have continued, namely healthcare and laboratory workers, including two in Spain.<sup>113</sup> Developed Member States such as France, Norway, The Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have also accepted individuals who were suspected of having the virus.

The General Assembly and fellow UN organs have responded to the Ebola outbreak with the creation of UNMEER and the expansion of UN missions in affected Member States, specifically Liberia with UNMIL. UNMEER's mandate has been to neutralize the virus and act as "crisis manager" for the affected Member States, ensure support, and "fill gaps where appropriate" in addition to consultations with international leaders.<sup>114</sup> With outbreak cases continuing to increase in western Africa, the UN has urged Member States to remain active and to assist programs to alleviate the communicable disease's bearing on populations.

### ***Committee Directive***

Communicable diseases such as the Ebola virus are not an issue exclusive to developing Member States. Cooperation between developing and developed Member States is required to cease the impact of communicable diseases, such as the Ebola virus, on the international community. As the GA's 69th Session President Kutesa said, the latest Ebola outbreak is not a sub-regional or regional concern but an international crisis. Delegates are to be cognizant of their Member State's response to the Ebola virus outbreak. Is the Member State's Ebola response similar to the handling of other or overall communicable and non-communicable diseases within and outside its borders? How has the Member State addressed the Ebola virus outbreak in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone? What was the Member State's response to how African officials handled the Ebola virus outbreak? Has the Member State contributed in humanitarian missions to ease the virus outbreak? Has the Member State engaged in bilateral or multilateral agreements on communicable diseases? Delegates are to be aware of the preventative measures, which may range from scientific research and counter such viruses. Delegates should recommend steps for Member States to prevent future outbreaks.

## **II: Enhancing Water Quality Management and Sustainability**

*"The children who have no clean water to drink, the women who fear for their safety, the young people who have no chance to receive a decent education have a right to better, and we have a responsibility to do better. All people have the right to safe drinking water, sanitation, shelter and basic services."<sup>115</sup>*  
- Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General

### ***Introduction***

Water has been regarded as "essential" to life and plays a vital role in sustaining life, health, and overall well-being of humans and ecosystems.<sup>116</sup> Over 71 percent of the Earth's surface is covered in water and 96 percent of that water supply is comprised of saltwater.<sup>117</sup> While water has not always been viewed as a human right, the UN has taken

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<sup>113</sup> "Epidemiological update: outbreak of Ebola virus disease in West Africa," European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 21 October 2014, [http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/press/news/layouts/forms/News\\_DispForm.aspx?List=8db7286c-fe2d-476c-9133-18ff4cb1b568&ID=1097](http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/press/news/layouts/forms/News_DispForm.aspx?List=8db7286c-fe2d-476c-9133-18ff4cb1b568&ID=1097) (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>114</sup> "United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) Weekly Situational Analysis - 26 October 2014," ReliefWeb, 26 October 2014, <http://www.reliefweb.int/report/liberia/united-nations-mission-ebola-emergency-response-unmeer-weekly-situational-analysis-26> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>115</sup> "International Decade for Action 'Water for Life' 2005-2015," The United Nations, [http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human\\_right\\_to\\_water.shtml](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human_right_to_water.shtml) (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>116</sup> "Water and Life," All-Water.org, <http://www.all-water.org/Life.html> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>117</sup> "How much water is there on, in, and above the Earth?" The United States Geological Society, <http://water.usgs.gov/edu/earthhowmuch.html> (accessed 29 September 2014).

steps to ensure quality water is seen as a basic human right.<sup>118</sup> Poor sanitation and declining water conditions has increasingly become a global problem with the growth of human populations, evolution in agricultural and industrial trades, and the impacts of climate change.<sup>119</sup> The International Decade for Action ‘Water for Life’ 2005-2015 campaign addresses the water and sanitation emergency in which it states that water “is a prerequisite for human health and well-being as well as for the preservation of the environment.”<sup>120</sup>

Sustainable development has long been a concern of the UN as witnessed by A/RES/38/161 in 1983, in which the GA welcomed, “a special commission that should make available a report on environment and the global problématique to the year 2000 and beyond, including proposed strategies for sustainable development.”<sup>121</sup> In 2000, as part of the International Decade for Action ‘Water for Life’ 2005-2015, it was realized that sustainability “was not included and human rights and inequalities were also largely ignored in the [MDGs] framework.”<sup>122</sup> Thus, branches such as UN-Water have been established to focus on this growing international dilemma. UN-Water’s overall goal is to address “the development aims of societies, promote human dignity and ensure achievements are sustainable over the long term.”<sup>123</sup> UN-Water also concedes, “water is at the core of sustainable development and is critical for socio-economic development, healthy ecosystems and for human survival itself.”<sup>124</sup>

In March 2010, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) conveyed that while improvements have been made for much of the population’s water supply, “...the risk of water pollution remains, often due to environmental factors such as increasing urbanization, industrialization and poor sanitation.”<sup>125</sup> Nearly one billion people, worldwide, do not have access to a sustainable water supply, making clean water a commodity “as we continue to pollute water systems with human, agricultural and industrial waste.”<sup>126</sup><sup>127</sup> In 2002, the UN’s Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) wrote General Comment No.15, stating that “the human right to water is indispensable for leading a life in human dignity,” and further recognizing, “it is a prerequisite for the realization of other human rights.”<sup>128</sup> General Comment No. 15 also ascertains that water should be physically accessible and affordable.<sup>129</sup> The World Health Organization (WHO) has acknowledged that poor quality water conditions, specifically dependency on unsafe water for drinking and hygiene, lead to sanitation and hygiene problems.<sup>130</sup>

## ***Current Situation***

### *Agriculture*

In regards to water and food security, it is acknowledged that, “[W]ater is key to food security. Crops and livestock need water to grow. Agriculture requires large quantities of water for irrigation and of good quality for various

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<sup>118</sup> “International Decade for Action ‘Water for Life’ 2005-2015,” The United Nations, [http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human\\_right\\_to\\_water.shtml](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human_right_to_water.shtml) (accessed 30 September 2014).

<sup>119</sup> “Water Quality,” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/quality.shtml> (accessed 14 November 2014).

<sup>120</sup> “International Decade for Action ‘Water for Life’ 2005-2015,” The United Nations, [http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human\\_right\\_to\\_water.shtml](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human_right_to_water.shtml) (accessed 30 September 2014).

<sup>121</sup> “Development and International Co-Operation: Environment,” The United Nations, <http://www.un-documents.net/a42-427.htm> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>122</sup> “International Decade for Action ‘Water for Life’ 2005\*2015: Water and Sustainable Development,” The United Nations, [http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/water\\_and\\_sustainable\\_development.shtml](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/water_and_sustainable_development.shtml) (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> “Deteriorating water quality threatens global gains made towards access to safe drinking water,” 22 March 2010, The United Nations Children’s Fund, [http://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_53102.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_53102.html) (accessed 2 October 2014).

<sup>126</sup> “Facts and figures on water quality and health,” World Health Organization, [www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/facts\\_figures/en](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/facts_figures/en) (accessed 29 September 2014).

<sup>127</sup> “Global WASH Fast Facts,” The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/global/wash\\_statistics.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/global/wash_statistics.html) (accessed 30 September 2014).

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> “General Comment No. 15: The right to water,” United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2002, <http://www.unhcr.org/49d095742.html> (accessed 20 September 2014).

<sup>130</sup> “Unsafe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene,” World Health Organization, <http://www.who.int/publications/cra/chapters/volume2/1321-1352.pdf> (accessed 07 December 2014).

production processes.”<sup>131</sup> The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is the primary entity charged with addressing issues relating to hunger and malnutrition.<sup>132</sup> FAO has reported concerns of the agricultural community’s potential use of arsenic-laden water.<sup>133</sup> FAO recognizes that while water is needed to grow crops, it also can be a contributor to the problem of contaminating clean water sources. The “expansion and intensification of agriculture have led to an increasing use of fertilizers and pesticides that, if not well managed, can degrade water quality of rivers, lakes and marine water bodies.”<sup>134</sup> The FAO-Water program has put focus on separating water pollution and agricultural production, in hopes of mitigating this issue.<sup>135</sup>

UNICEF reports that farmers and waged workers tend to be less industrious in areas where lack of sanitation exists due to more frequent illness and health care systems being overwhelmed with casualties of these conditions.<sup>136</sup> Both of these affect a Member State’s economic status.<sup>137</sup> In 1995, the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) World Summit for Social Development Programme of Action indicated that a Member States’ socio-economic viability and livelihood centers proportionately on sustainable livelihoods.<sup>138</sup> These livelihoods are affected by conditions surrounding the causes of extreme poverty. Chapter 2 of the World Summit for Social Development specifically addresses absolute poverty and identifies it as living without basic necessities such as “food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education, and information.”<sup>139</sup> Poor water conditions and lack of sanitation does not only disturb the humans living in these conditions but also the crops and livestock, which in turn affects the food supply.<sup>140</sup> Livestock also tend to lead to sanitation problems, especially in larger farming areas. This is due to the lack of sanitation to contain and break down feces and urine of animals.<sup>141</sup>

### *Sanitation*

The United States (U.S.) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines sanitation as “having access to facilities for the safe disposal of human waste (feces and urine), as well as having the ability to maintain hygienic conditions, through services such as garbage collection, industrial/hazardous waste management, and wastewater treatment and disposal.”<sup>142</sup> Sanitation, as part of daily life, includes hand washing, dental, and body hygiene.<sup>143</sup> The WHO reports that unsanitary conditions account for nearly 25 percent of deaths due to conditions such as poor water quality, availability, and sanitation, within developing and lower socio-economic regions.<sup>144</sup> The WHO further reports that about two million people die annually due to diarrheal-related diseases, the majority of which were children less than five years old.<sup>145</sup> The UNICEF identified that half of the deaths occurred in five Member States: China, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), India, Nigeria, and Pakistan.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> International Decade for Action ‘Water for Life’ 2005-2015: Water and Food Security, The United Nations, [http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/food\\_security.shtml](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/food_security.shtml) (accessed 2 October 2014).

<sup>132</sup> “FAO and the Challenge of the Millennium Development Goals: The Road Ahead,” The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/meeting/009/j5259e/j5259e00.pdf> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>133</sup> “Water Quality,” Food and Agriculture Organization, [http://www.fao.org/nr/water/topics\\_quality.html](http://www.fao.org/nr/water/topics_quality.html) (accessed 15 November 2014).

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> “Water, Sanitation and Hygiene,” The United Nations Children’s Fund, <http://www.unicef.org/wash/> (accessed 2 October 2014).

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> “World Summit for Social Development Programme of Action- Chapter 2,” The United Nations: Social Development, <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/wssd/text-version/agreements/poach2.htm> (accessed 11 December 2014).

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> “Pollution from Giant Livestock Farms Threaten Public Health,” Natural Resources Defense Council, <http://www.nrdc.org/water/pollution/nspills.asp>, (accessed 11 December 2014).

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> “Sanitation & Hygiene,” The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/global/sanitation/index.html> (accessed 22 October 2014).

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>144</sup> “Environment and Health in Developing Countries,” World Health Organization, <http://www.who.int/heli/risks/ehindevcoun/en/> (accessed 2 October 2014).

<sup>145</sup> “Water supply, sanitation and hygiene development,” World Health Organization, [http://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/hygiene/en/](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/hygiene/en/) (accessed 2 October 2014).

<sup>146</sup> “Children dying daily because of unsafe water supplies and poor sanitation and hygiene, UNICEF says,” The United Nations Children’s Fund, [http://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_68359.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_68359.html) (accessed 26 October 2014).

By the end of 2013, the CDC reported 2.5 billion people are without access to proper sanitation, and it impedes upon the aim of the MDGs.<sup>147</sup> MDG 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability's Target 7.C addresses safe drinking water and basic sanitation further confirming that 748 million people still "remained without access to an improved source of drinking water," as well as the lack of improved sanitation facilities.<sup>148</sup> While strides have been made on the sanitation platform, one billion people still report open defecation is practiced.<sup>149</sup>

The UN Deputy Secretary-General, Jan Eliasson, has launched the Call to Action on Sanitation campaign addressing MDG 1: Extreme Poverty, by explaining that the one billion people worldwide who still practice open defecation, are identified as "one of the clearest manifestations of extreme poverty"<sup>150</sup> The UN Open Defecation campaign further expounds, "open defecation is when people have no choice but to defecate outside onto the ground, and in full view of other people."<sup>151</sup> This practice leads to diseases and is a significant threat to human sustainability by threatening cognitive function and nutrition.<sup>152</sup> This practice is still in use by more than one billion people worldwide, with the most of the population in sub-Saharan Africa and India.<sup>153</sup> The Member States that are unable to access proper sanitation have the highest risks of cholera, diarrhea, dysentery, hepatitis A, and typhoid, further contributing to income inequalities and greater risks of death.<sup>154</sup> This practice also threatens agricultural and water sustainability.<sup>155</sup>

### *Sustainability*

Sustainability is clearly defined in A/42/427, Our Common Future, as, "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."<sup>156</sup> The UN has reported significant progress in MDG 7, by halving the number of people without access to "improved sources of water, five years ahead of schedule."<sup>157</sup> The WHO reported "even though progress towards the MDG target represents important gains in access for billions of people around the world, it has been uneven. Sharp geographic, sociocultural and economic inequalities to access persist and, in some areas have increased."<sup>158</sup>

Water resource management and sustainability is not an easy task. UN-Water provides a clear picture of the issue by stating, "the management of water is not merely a technical issue; it requires a mix of measures including changes in policies, prices and other incentives, as well as infrastructure and physical installations."<sup>159</sup> It is estimated that nearly two billion people rely on groundwater as their mainstay for water supply.<sup>160</sup> With this amount of people relying on ground water for their supply of water, sanitation becomes a significant issue, along with water quality.

Quality water helps prevent disease and lends to sustainable agriculture for developing Member States. With the demand for agriculture and food supply increasing as populations increase, water quality has been impacted.

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<sup>147</sup> "Sanitation & Hygiene," The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/global/sanitation/index.html> (accessed 22 October 2014).

<sup>148</sup> "Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability," The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/envIRON.shtml> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> "Open Defecation: Breaking the silence on open defecation," The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/endopendefecation.shtml> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>151</sup> "Open Defecation," The United Nations, <http://opendefecation.org/> (accessed 22 October 2014).

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> "One billion people still defecate in public despite health risks- UN," Reuters, <http://in.reuters.com/article/2014/05/08/uk-health-defecation-idINKBN0DO1CC20140508> (accessed 14 November 2014).

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> "Open Defecation," The United Nations, <http://opendefecation.org/> (accessed 22 October 2014).

<sup>156</sup> "Our Common Future, Chapter 2: Towards Sustainable Development," The United Nations, <http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm#I> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>157</sup> "Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability," The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/envIRON.shtml> (accessed 22 October 2014).

<sup>158</sup> "Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation: Joint Monitoring Programme Update 2014," World Health Organization, [http://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/publications/2014/jmp-report/en/](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/2014/jmp-report/en/) (accessed 22 October 2014).

<sup>159</sup> "Water Resources Management," The United Nations: Water, <http://www.unwater.org/topics/water-resources-management/en/>, (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

Agriculture has not only been affected by requiring a viable water quality source, but also the quantity of product.<sup>161</sup> As demand has grown, supply must meet these expectations resulting in the increased use of fertilizers and pesticides.<sup>162</sup>

### *Water Quality*

In order for water sustainability to procure the results necessary for long term advancements, the quality level of the sustainable water is crucial. Tropical diseases are often factors of water quality in developing Member States. For example, between October 2011 and May 2012, Kenya experienced outbreaks of typhoid fever resulting in a total of 4,185 identified cases.<sup>163</sup> The median age was 15 years old, and of this, 52 cases were confirmed either through blood or stool cultures.<sup>164</sup> Over half of these infected were females and a reported 1,788 were hospitalized for treatment, with two confirmed deaths.<sup>165</sup> While no specific causes were stated why women were more affected, it is assumed that diseases, such as cholera and typhoid, are more prevalent among women and children; women tend to be the gatherers of water, and malnourished children are more highly susceptible to such disease.<sup>166</sup> Further investigations conducted by members of the CDC-Atlanta, CDC-Kenya, Kenya Medical Research Institute and the South Africa Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program, concluded that several locations tested positive for *Escherichia coli*. The contamination of these water sources, including “six public boreholes, seven shallow wells and three municipal taps,” is an indicator that fecal contamination is the culprit of the typhoid fever outbreak.<sup>167,168</sup>

UN-Water reports that poor water quality “incurs many economic costs: degradation of ecosystem services; health-related costs; impacts on economic activities such as agriculture, industrial production and tourism; increased water treatment costs; and reduced property values among others.”<sup>169</sup> WHO also reports that unsanitary conditions account for nearly 25 percent of deaths due to conditions such as poor water quality, availability, and sanitation, within developing and lower socio-economic regions.<sup>170</sup>

### *Education*

The lack of sanitary conditions also has a direct correlation to the denied rights of education to children around the world; this is especially true for young girls due to the lack of privacy and sanitation facilities.<sup>171</sup> Poor water quality also leads to a decrease in productivity. Aside from water-borne illnesses, unclean water can lead to lack of energy, preventing students from either attending or staying in school.<sup>172</sup> Education can also be hindered in developing Member States by such practices as open-defecation.<sup>173</sup> Economic and social developments are affected by the lack of sanitary conditions enabling children to attend school.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> “Chapter 1: Introduction to Agricultural Water Pollution,” Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/w2598e/w2598e04.htm> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> “Notes from the Field: Salmonella Typhi Infections Associated with Contaminated Water- Zimbabwe October 2011-May 2012,” The World Health Organization, [http://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/diseases/en/](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/diseases/en/) (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> “Typhoid Fever Targets Children in Kenyan Urban Slums,” The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/countries/kenya/blog/typhoid.htm> (accessed 11 December 2014).

<sup>167</sup> “Typhoid outbreak investigation in Dzivaresekwa, suburb of Harare City, Zimbabwe, 2011,” Pan African Medical Journal, <http://www.panafrican-med-journal.com/content/article/18/309/full/> (accessed 16 November 2014).

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> “Water Quality,” The United Nations: UN-Water, <http://www.unwater.org/topics/water-quality/en/> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>170</sup> “Environment and health in developing countries,” World Health Organization, <http://www.who.int/heli/risks/ehindevcoun/en/> (accessed 2 October 2014).

<sup>171</sup> “Water, Sanitation and Hygiene,” The United Nations Children’s Fund, <http://www.unicef.org/wash/> (accessed 02 October 2014).

<sup>172</sup> “Improving Health in Africa,” The Water Project, <http://thewaterproject.org/health>, (accessed 09 November 2014).

<sup>173</sup> “Open Defecation Reporting,” Sanitation Hackathon, <http://www.sanitationhackathon.org/open-defecation-reporting> (accessed 11 November 2014).

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

UNICEF reports that in 60 Member States in the developing world, 272 million school days are missed each year due to diarrhea.<sup>175</sup> Girls are more likely to not attend school once they reach a certain age due to the lack of “toilets and washing facilities are not private, not safe, not clean, or simply not available.”<sup>176</sup> UN Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson has further stated, “Girls are more likely to drop out of school if they don’t have access to a safe and clean toilet. Women and girls can also risk harassment and sexual abuse when trying to use public toilets or when trying to find somewhere to defecate in the open.”<sup>177</sup> UNICEF has a mission of providing basic education -- as recognized in MDG2 to achieve universal primary education -- to children on the notion that it, promotes MDG3: Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. This goal focuses on lessening the death toll rates of children, while focusing on socio-economic stability through the overall empowerment and health of women, as well as their safety.<sup>178</sup> It also helps lower child mortality rates and promotes concern for the environment.<sup>179</sup> By empowering women and children through basic education, they are able to contribute more to a household income and the overall economic status of a Member State.<sup>180</sup>

### *Actions Taken By the United Nations*

Although the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was established in 1948 and recognized the right to food as basic human right, it was in 2010 when water would also be documented as a basic human right.<sup>181</sup> Clean water is needed to grow sustainable food, which is also addressed in the UDHR, in addition to clothing, housing, and medical care. In 1992, the UN addressed water quality and sustainability at the International Conference on Water and Sustainable Development. The concern of misuse, overconsumption and pollution of water sources resulted in recommendations that can be addressed at the local, national, and international level driven by four guiding principles.<sup>182</sup> Principle 4 states, “[It] is vital to recognize first the basic right of all human beings to have access to clean water and sanitation at an affordable price.”<sup>183</sup> Article 12 of A/RES/54/175 further states that “the rights to food and clean water are fundamental human rights and their promotion constitutes a moral imperative both for national Governments and for the international community.”<sup>184</sup>

On 28 July 2010, the GA, through A/RES/64/292, recognized the human right to “water and sanitation and acknowledged that clean drinking water and sanitation are essential to the realization of all human rights,” further considering them as “an integral component of the realization of all human rights.”<sup>185</sup> A/RES/64/292 provided a platform for developing Member States to receive help from fellow Member States, not only financially, but also to assist with “capacity-building and technology transfer” in order to have access to safe, clean, and affordable water and sanitation.<sup>186</sup> The World Water Council, an international multi-stakeholder platform, works in conjunction with resolutions of the GA on the topics of water quality and sanitation. The World Water Council further invites all Member States that “have declared their support for the right to water and sanitation in different declarations to turn

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<sup>175</sup> “Lack of safe water and sanitation in schools affects children’s learning – and their lives,” The United Nations Children’s Fund,” [http://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_53234.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_53234.html) (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> “Beyond Infrastructure: Building New Attitudes Also Needed to End Open Defecation, UN Says,” The United Nations: End Open Defecation, <http://opendefecation.org/news/2014/11/19/worldtoiletday/#more-331> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>178</sup> “Achieve Universal Primary Education,” The United Nations Children’s Fund, <http://www.unicef.org/mdg/education.html>, (accessed 08 December 2014).

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> “Measuring the Economic Gain of Investing in Girls,” The World Bank, <http://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/pdf/10.1596/1813-9450-5753> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>181</sup> “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml> (accessed 14 November 2014).

<sup>182</sup> “The Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development,” The United Nations, <http://www.un-documents.net/h2o-dub.htm> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>183</sup> “The Human Right to Water and Sanitation,” The United Nations, [http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/pdf/human\\_right\\_to\\_water\\_and\\_sanitation\\_milestones.pdf](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/pdf/human_right_to_water_and_sanitation_milestones.pdf) (accessed 15 November 2014).

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> “General Assembly A/Res/64/292,” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/es/comun/docs/?symbol=A/RES/64/292&lang=E> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

their commitments into concrete and measurable actions,” and calls for clean water to be at the top of the international agenda.<sup>187</sup>

In 2009, resolution A/RES/64/236 established the UN Conference on Sustainable Development. A derivative of the Conference on Sustainable Development, resolution A/RES/66/288, addresses water as the core of sustainable development.<sup>188</sup> Known as, “The future we want,” A/RES/66/288 was drafted in June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to focus on sustainability and the ability to provide a future that will improve quality of life within “Earth’s life support systems.”<sup>189</sup>

On 24 July 2013, the UN proclaimed 19 November as “World Toilet Day.”<sup>190</sup> The representative of Singapore stated, “Ending open defecation will lead to a 35 percent reduction in diarrhea, which results in over 750,000 deaths of children under five years of age every year.”<sup>191</sup> The Steering Committee of the Group of Friends of Water, in which 39 Member States are currently members, was created for the platform of A/RES/64/198 titled, “The Midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005–2015.”<sup>192</sup> This group called for bold actions to be taken to not only address sanitation, but also issues of water-resource management, water quality and wastewater.<sup>193</sup> Addressing open defecation and eradicating these types of actions would not only improve these Member States overall medical health, but also economic health.

### *Case Study: India*

Narendra Modi, the newly elected prime minister of India, previously a “little-known chief minister of the western state of Gujarat [in India],” has set out to improve India’s hygiene and sanitation dramatically.<sup>194</sup> His determination to do so after only six months in office, led U.S. President Barack Obama to pledge “concrete support” through 2019, in time for the Swachh Bharat Mission’s completion.<sup>195</sup> Launched on 2 October 2014, Mahatma Gandhi’s birthday, “its mission will aim to make India ‘clean’ by the end of 2019,” making the elimination of open defecation a priority.<sup>196</sup> This problem is found in cultural habits where Hindu texts “advised people to relieve themselves far from home.”<sup>197</sup> The Research Institute for Compassionate Economics recently conducted a survey in over 3,000 households, finding that most people prefer to defecate outside despite having a toilet.<sup>198</sup>

Similar groups in India continue to improve water quality and sanitation. One of which includes the Community-Led Environment Action Network (CLEAN-India), an ambitious program that brings together youth leaders around India in an effort to improve their environmental decisions of today for a better tomorrow. These leaders work as

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<sup>187</sup> “The Right to Safe Water and Sanitation,” The World Water Council, [http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/fileadmin/wwc/Library/Publications\\_and\\_reports/3.Flyer\\_Right-to-water.pdf](http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/fileadmin/wwc/Library/Publications_and_reports/3.Flyer_Right-to-water.pdf) (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>188</sup> “General Assembly A/RES/66/288,” The United Nations: Sustainable Development, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1250> (accessed 26 October 2014).

<sup>189</sup> “About: Introduction,” The Future We Want, <http://futurewewant.org/about/> (accessed 14 November 2014).

<sup>190</sup> “General Assembly, Acting without Vote, Adopts Draft Resolution Designating 19 November ‘World Toilet Day,’” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/press/en/2013/ga11397.doc.htm> (accessed 14 November 2014).

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> “The Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the International Decade for Action, ‘Water for Life,’ 2005–2015,” The United Nations, <http://www.un.org/es/comun/docs/?symbol=A/RES/64/198&lang=E> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> “I will help you clean up India, Obama tells Modi,” The Telegraph, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/india/11133582/I-will-help-you-clean-up-India-Obama-tells-Modi.html> (accessed 09 November 2014).

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> “Modi launches ‘My Clean India’ campaign,” The Hindu, <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/modi-launches-my-clean-india-campaign/article6468047.ece> (accessed 06 December 2014).

<sup>197</sup> “Poor Sanitation in India May afflict Well-Fed Children with Malnutrition,” The New York Times, [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/15/world/asia/poor-sanitation-in-india-may-afflict-well-fed-children-with-malnutrition.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/15/world/asia/poor-sanitation-in-india-may-afflict-well-fed-children-with-malnutrition.html?_r=0) (accessed 06 December 2014).

<sup>198</sup> “Squat Survey,” Research Institute for Compassionate Economics, <http://squatreport.in/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/SQUAT-one-page-memo.pdf> (accessed 09 November 2014).



ambassadors of change to “lead Student-led Awareness Campaigns in their local communities.”<sup>199</sup> They work to improve figures from 2009, when only 50 percent of government schools had toilets for students, and no separate ones for girls.<sup>200</sup> By implementing projects in Uttar Pradesh, Chennai and Haryana, the CLEAN-India campaign hopes to reduce the number of children dropping out of school due to a lack of water at schools and poor sanitation.<sup>201</sup> Current efforts to construct toilets in India are being led by UNICEF and its Total Sanitation Campaign program (TSC). In the province of Andhra Pradesh, UNICEF provided a 15-day training to local brick construction workers in an effort to lower costs associated with constructing functioning toilets. The program has proven successful, as costs for building a toilet under the TSC have fallen from USD 88.60 to USD 55.70 each.<sup>202</sup> Continuing efforts by the Indian government to improve water quality and sanitation to its people are likely to bear fruit in better school attendance by boys and girls, as well as a better performing society free of communicable diseases and hindrances to their overall health.<sup>203</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

Addressing issues of clean water, sanitation, and sustainability are the cornerstones of achieving many of the MDGs. Sustainable development cannot be fully accomplished without ending many of the sanitary practices seen today and ensuring clean drinking water for everyone. Addressing global agricultural issues and how to sustain viable food supplies without polluting natural water resources is a big component to this global crisis, especially in developing Member States. Basic hygiene cannot be achieved in some Member States due to polluted water that cannot be used for bathing and personal hygiene. Cost-effective options for waste management are needed across the international community for collection, disposal and treatment of human waste.

Mr. Eliasson has said that addressing the issue of open defecation goes beyond the physical infrastructure because it really is a cultural practice and requires an understanding of social norms. He further has noted, “Throughout all life stages, women and girls bear the greatest burdens caused by the lack of toilet access. Girls are more likely to drop out of school if they don’t have access to a safe and clean toilet. Women and girls can also risk harassment and sexual abuse when trying to use public toilets or when trying to find somewhere to defecate in the open. Universal access to sanitation has a clear role to play in defending women’s safety, dignity and equality.”<sup>204</sup>

UNICEF currently estimates that while there has been much improvement in sanitation, the MDG sanitation goal of 75 percent will be missed by half a billion people.<sup>205</sup> Sanitation is important not only to Member States socio-economic status, but also to their overall health as can be evidenced in still developing Member States. Disease outbreaks, such as the Kenya typhoid outbreak, can be avoided by addressing clean water practices, sanitation, and hygiene measures such as hand washing. In recent developments, world leaders called for those practicing open defecation to desist following the Ebola outbreak. The Ebola outbreak showcased a “public spotlight on the open defecation issue in West Africa where worried health officials in Lagos and Nigeria, citing human waste as a vector of the virus.”<sup>206</sup>

### ***Committee Directive***

Two issues have to be addressed when observing this global issue. First, delegates should address water quality management. Secondly, delegates should also address the sustainability. One issue should not be addressed without the other, as they are heavily supplementary of each other. Can technology play a role in either of these issues and

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<sup>199</sup> “Water and Sanitation,” CLEAN-India, Community Led Environment Action Network, [http://www.cleanindia.org/index.php/what-we-do/?page\\_id=447](http://www.cleanindia.org/index.php/what-we-do/?page_id=447) (accessed 06 December 2014).

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Belawadi, Vasuki. “Low-cost materials boost toilets construction in rural Andhra Pradesh,” The United Nations Children’s Fund, [http://www.unicef.org/india/reallives\\_3814.htm](http://www.unicef.org/india/reallives_3814.htm) (accessed 06 December 2014).

<sup>203</sup> “For Women, it’s Personal,” Water.org, <http://water.org/water-crisis/womens-crisis/> (accessed 06 December 2014).

<sup>204</sup> “Beyond Infrastructure: Building New Attitudes Also Needed to End Open Defecation, UN Says,” The United Nations: End Open Defecation, <http://opendefecation.org/news/2014/11/19/worldtoiletday/#more-331> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>205</sup> “The MDG sanitation target of 75% is unlikely to be reached,” The United Nations Children’s Fund, <http://www.data.unicef.org/water-sanitation/sanitation> (accessed 07 December 2014).

<sup>206</sup> “Beyond Infrastructure: Building New Attitudes Also Needed to End Open Defecation, UN Says,” The United Nations: End Open Defecation, <http://opendefecation.org/news/2014/11/19/worldtoiletday/#more-331> (accessed 07 December 2014).

would the Member State be able to obtain technological assistance? What is the Member State's water resources and access to sanitation? How has the Member State addressed the water and sanitation issues within their respective borders? What role has the delegate's Member State taken in national, regional, or international conferences or summits in regards to water management? What major elements is the Member State confronting; does it include pollution, sanitation, desertification, or toxicity? Delegates should also be familiarized with and able to discuss the strides their Member State's have made to provide access to safe water and adequate sanitation. Is the delegate's Member State encountering agricultural concerns due to inadequate safe water supplies? What can be done to further the GA's "Right to Water" initiative and what roles can the Member State provide? What other initiatives, such as "World Toilet Day," can be used to bring focus on issues such as open defecation and raise awareness in hopes of creating solutions to such problems?

## Technical Appendix Guide (TAG)

### I. Communicable Diseases: Countering the Threat of the Ebola Virus Disease

"Ban Ki-moon: The Ebola fight is far from over," The Washington Post, 07 November 2014, (accessed 16 November 2014) [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/ban-ki-moon-the-ebola-fight-is-far-from-over/2014/11/07/432a3378-667c-11e4-836c-83bc4f26eb67\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/ban-ki-moon-the-ebola-fight-is-far-from-over/2014/11/07/432a3378-667c-11e4-836c-83bc4f26eb67_story.html)

United Nations (UN) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon wrote an editorial about the Ebola virus outbreak. The Secretary General's op-ed detailed methods to neutralize the outbreak's threats, short-term goals, and long-term goals. He noted the international community is "on the right track" on combatting the latest Ebola outbreak but "huge gaps" is evident and time is of the essence.

"Global Ebola Response," The United Nations, (accessed 16 November 2014)

<http://www.un.org/ebolareponse/#&panel1-1>

The UN's Global Ebola Crisis Response features the latest data, news, resources, and other information about the virus. The Global Ebola Crisis Response website, available in English, French, and Spanish, informs people about "priority" requests and how the private sector could become more engaged. The website lists partners that have been active in combatting Ebola, ranging from fellow UN organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Doctors Without Borders. The UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) mission updates and statements by world leaders and press releases are also available.

"Gravely Concerned over Ebola Outbreak in West Africa, General Assembly Adopts Resolution Signaling Approval for Mission to Handle Response," The United Nations, 19 September 2014, (accessed 16 November 2014)

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/ga11552.doc.htm>

The 69th General Assembly's General Debate included an emphasis on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The UNGA adopted a resolution that not only "expressed grave concern" about the virus' effects but called for Member States to support the UN Secretary General to combat the outbreak. The UNGA President for the 69th Session, Sam Kutesa of Uganda, introduced the legislation and features statements from fellow international leaders from Africa, Europe, Latin America, and North America.

"UNDP's Ebola Response: Guinea," The United Nations Development Programme, 14 November 2014, (accessed 16 November 2014) <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/crisis-prevention-and-recovery/undp-ebola-response-guinea/>

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) published its response guide specifically on the Ebola virus' impacts in Guinea. The UNDP acknowledges Guinea's economic growth has been "devastated" as a result of the Ebola outbreak. The "Ebola Response in Guinea" also outlines efforts to strengthen coordination to ease Ebola's outbreak and push for community engagement. The UNDP explains how Guinea could recover its socio-economic losses following the outbreak.

"WHO Says Ebola Is Moderating in Guinea, Liberia," The Wall Street Journal, 12 November 2014, (accessed 16 November 2014). <http://www.wsj.com/articles/who-says-ebola-is-moderating-in-guinea-liberia-1415815085>

Updates of the Ebola virus outbreak are detailed in this report featuring sources from WHO. Information from eight African Member States, but specifically Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, is highlighted. The news report noted the "true toll" of the Ebola virus outbreak is "difficult to gauge" due to remote villages and locations of health clinics. WHO recognized the virus's transmission "remains strong" but evidence proved instances of improvements.

## II. Enhancing Water Quality Management and Sustainability

Baguma et al. “Rainwater and Health in Developing Countries: A Case Study on Uganda.” United Nations University, 11 October 2012. <http://unu.edu/publications/articles/rainwater-and-health-in-developing-countries-a-case-study-on-uganda.html>

An increasingly amount of people around the world are demanding safe drinking water for themselves and their families. An innovative yet clever approach has been practiced in several Member States, where rainwater harvesting is done to reuse water and in the long-run reduce water shortages. This article notes that in Uganda, promoting the use of rainwater harvesting in rural areas has not been enough to curtail the number of water-borne diseases. Instead of putting all efforts into water supply mechanisms by donor agencies and governments alike, as the article states, more emphasis should be placed on the water management aspect and translation of information to respective local languages.

“Clearing the Water, a focus on water quality solutions.” The United Nations Environmental Programme, March 2010. [http://www.unep.org/PDF/Clearing\\_the\\_Waters.pdf](http://www.unep.org/PDF/Clearing_the_Waters.pdf)

Aimed at mobilizing solutions to improve water quality, this paper provides three core areas which should be addressed when tackling water quality problems: pollution prevention, treatment of polluted water, and the restoration of ecosystems. Afterwards, recommendations are given on how to address the three core areas mentioned above. Through a variety of improved monitoring methods, effective communication, financial support and adequate leadership at the political and enforcement level, Member States would have better knowledge in improving their local issues for a better tomorrow.

Langford, Malcolm and Inga T. Winkler. “Quantifying Water and Sanitation in Development Cooperation: Power or Perversity?” Harvard School of Public Health, Harvard University FXB Center for Health & Human Rights and The New School, May 2013. [http://fxb.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2013/09/Langford-and-Winkler\\_Final-Working-Paper-92413.pdf](http://fxb.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2013/09/Langford-and-Winkler_Final-Working-Paper-92413.pdf)

This paper is concerned with the subject of quantitative target setting. Particularly with water and sanitation, the authors start their argument stating that international targets set in 1977 (established during the UN Water Conference in Mar del Plata) appeared to have progress in providing access to basic water and sanitation. This trend however, changed in the 1990s due to the international community shifting their attention “to privatization, permit systems, [and] water resources management.” In essence, this paper provides a historical background to the process of international target setting in regards to water sanitation, and whether it has been effective or not.

Opio, Christopher. “Building Effective Drinking Water Management Policies in Rural Africa: Lessons from Northern Uganda.” Africa Portal, 12 September 2012. <http://www.africaportal.org/articles/2012/09/12/building-effective-drinking-water-management-policies-rural-africa-lessons>

After the UN announced in 2012 that the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) on safe drinking water, which aimed to provide drinking water to 88.5 percent of the world’s population, had “been met well in advance of the 2015 deadline,” questions were raised on many others left with disease-ridden water. This is particularly seen in Sub-Saharan Africa, where only 61 percent of the population has access to safe drinking water. The sources of safe water are at times contaminated and therefore pose a health-risk. Ways to test the contents of the water are rarely done according to Opio, due to a lack of materials necessary for proper testing. Moreover, the study found that water stored in Ugandan households was more likely to be contaminated with E. coli and fecal coliform, than water retrieved from an adequately constructed well. As a result, it is encouraged for the international community to revise methods of storing water in order to prevent the spread of water-borne illnesses.

“Water Scarcity and Climate Change: Growing Risks for Businesses & Investors.” Ceres and Pacific Institute, February 2009. <http://pacinst.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2014/04/growing-risk-for-business-investors.pdf>

Analyzing the impact climate change is having on the world’s freshwater sources, this study by Ceres and the Pacific Institute incorporates how business and governments have already, and will continue to be affected as water scarcity persists. Information is presented on how certain industries have lost business due

to water shortages. This is seen with Coca-Cola and PepsiCo, as they recently lost operating licenses in India, and are facing stiff competition from others to operate bottling plants using local water sources. Moreover, the study gives recommendations to private businesses and investors on how to reduce their water impact. Member States will be able to further understand what they can do to advise local companies in order to reduce the overall water impact they are facing.