



SRMUN Charlotte 2018
Global Interdependence and the Changing Role of the United Nations
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Esteemed Delegates,

I welcome you to SRMUN Charlotte 2018 and the Economic and Social Council, also known as ECOSOC. I am Garrison Davis and it is my distinct pleasure to serve as your Director for this stimulating and exciting committee. This is my second year on staff, previously serving as the Assistant Director for the General Assembly Second Committee. Additionally, I am a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Pembroke and hold a Bachelor's degree in Political Science with a focus in International Relations.

Serving, as your Assistant Director for this committee is Callahan Moore. For Callahan, this is her first time as a staff member but she has participated in MUN since her sophomore year of high school, and has served as the Secretary-General for Clemson University's high school MUN conference. Callahan is currently a sophomore at Clemson University, pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Political Science with a double minor in German and History. She hopes to someday work as a public policymaker addressing international human rights matters, and is excited to work with the delegates of ECOSOC to discuss topics of global significance!

ECOSOC has played a part in international relations since the creation of the United Nations. The council was formed as one of the six main principle organs of the UN and still plays a key part in the organization today. ECOSOC is tasked with coordinating the economic and social responses of multiple UN agencies including making recommendations towards key bureaus such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). ECOSOC focuses on goals relating to sustainable development, economic stability, and continued economic growth for the benefit of the entire global market.

Keeping in mind the mandate and pillars of the United Nations, ECOSOC, and the theme of SRMUN Charlotte 2018 conference, we have chosen the following topics to discuss at this year's conference:

- I: Developing Sustainable Food Systems in Post-Conflict Areas
- II: Addressing the Rising External Debt in Developing Member States

The background guide serves as a foundation for your research, however, it should not be utilized as a delegation's entire means for the above topics. Each individual topic is prepared in depth and it is expected that delegates research beyond the guide in preparation for their position paper as well as in preparation for the conference itself. Each delegation is required to submit a position paper no longer than two pages in length (single spaced) which should showcase your Member State's position, policies, and recommendations on each of the two topics. More information regarding formatting and examples for position papers can be found at srmun.org. **All position papers MUST be submitted no later than March 23, 2018 by 11:59 pm EST via the SRMUN website.**

Callahan and I send you the warmest regards in preparation for the SRMUN Charlotte 2018 and look forward to reviewing your position papers. Please feel free to contact Kayla, Callahan, or myself should you have any questions during your preparation for the conference.

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Committee History of the Economic and Social Council

In 1945, the United Nations (UN) Charter designated the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to serve as one of the six main organs of the UN.¹ Since then, this body has coordinated the creation of UN economic, social, and environmental policy, and has guided the UN in the implementation of its development goals.² In recent years, the General Assembly has reformed and strengthened ECOSOC to ensure more coherent implementation of the outcomes of UN summits and conferences relevant to economic, social, and environmental issues, three concepts central to sustainable development.³

ECOSOC serves as a forum for a variety of UN entities to collaborate and accomplish the UN's development goals, specifically those outlined in the UN's *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.⁴ ECOSOC played an especially important role in reviewing the outcome of the Millennium Development Goals, analyzing the transition to a new set of development goals, and assisting in the execution of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.⁵ The entities comprising the ECOSOC system include functional and regional commissions overseeing various development issues and geographical regions, a variety of UN programmes and funds, certain specialized UN agencies, expert committees, and research and training institutes, among other bodies.⁶ These subsidiary organizations meet through a series of annual, biannual, or more frequent meetings to discuss development-related issues.⁷ Every year, ECOSOC establishes a central theme around which it organizes its development efforts.⁸ The theme for July 2017-July 2018 is "from global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities."⁹

Member States in ECOSOC organize meetings through a number of different forums and segments that address a variety of aspects of sustainable development. The Integration Segment emphasizes the integration of economic, social, and environmental factors within development initiatives.¹⁰ The Humanitarian Affairs segment addresses humanitarian concerns, while the Operational Activities for Development Segment coordinates and guides the development efforts of various bodies across the UN.¹¹ The Youth and Partnership Forums ensure that young global citizens and interested private entities and foundations can contribute to international development work.¹² ECOSOC also hosts Coordination and Management Meetings, which evaluate the reports submitted by the Council's associated entities and address Member State and region-specific development issues.¹³ Perhaps most notably of all of these, ECOSOC's annual High-Level Segment provides guidance and recommendations to the Council's overall development work.¹⁴ The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, established

¹ "About Us," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/about-us> (accessed November 15, 2017).

² "Main Organs," United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/main-organs/> (accessed November 15, 2017).

³ "About Us," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/about-us> (accessed November 15, 2017).

⁴ "About ECOSOC," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/> (accessed November 15, 2017); "About the Development Cooperation Forum," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/about-the-dcf> (accessed November 15, 2017).

⁵ "Promoting sustainable development," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/promotion-du-développement-durable> (accessed November 15, 2017).

⁶ "ECOSOC System," United Nations Economic and Social Council, http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/pdf/ecosoc_chart.pdf (accessed November 15, 2017).

⁷ "About ECOSOC," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/> (accessed November 15, 2017).

⁸ "About Us," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/about-us> (accessed November 15, 2017).

⁹ Nathalie Risse, "ECOSOC Sets Themes for 2017-2019 Sessions," SDG Knowledge Hub, November 29, 2016. <http://sdg.iisd.org/news/ecosoc-sets-themes-for-2017-2019-sessions/> (accessed November 15, 2017).

¹⁰ "About ECOSOC," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/> (accessed November 15, 2017).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ "About ECOSOC," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/> (accessed November 15, 2017).

¹⁴ Ibid.

following the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012, is responsible for reviewing and continuing progress towards achieving the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.¹⁵

The General Assembly elects 54 Member States to serve on the ECOSOC for overlapping terms, each of which lasts three years.¹⁶ These seats are divided among several geographical regions, with 14 apportioned to African Member States, 11 to Asian Member States, six to Eastern European Member States, 10 to Latin American and Caribbean Member States, and 13 to Member States in Western Europe and other regions.¹⁷ The Council makes decisions through a simple majority vote.¹⁸ Additionally, ECOSOC is governed by a bureau elected by the Council's Member States every July.¹⁹ This bureau suggests an agenda and develops a work program for the body.²⁰ The President of ECOSOC, who serves on the bureau along with four Vice-Presidents, is currently Her Excellency Ambassador Marie Chatardova of the Czech Republic.²¹ Finally, the UN Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions allocates a budget biennially for ECOSOC based on specific funding requests submitted by the Council to the General Assembly.²²

In both 2006 and 2013, the General Assembly adopted resolutions designed to strengthen ECOSOC.²³ Resolution 6/16, *Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council*, elevates the significance of the Council's Development Cooperation Forum and enables ECOSOC to establish stronger partnerships with a broader coalition of private, UN-associated, financial, regional, and other organizations to further its development work.²⁴ Resolution 68/1, *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council*, authorizes the establishment of annual themes from which the Council bases its work and reorganizes the Council's structure to ensure it can efficiently implement its mandate.²⁵ The Resolution also reaffirms ECOSOC's role as a leader in international development efforts and emphasizes the importance of balancing the three elements of sustainable development.²⁶

The most significant work of ECOSOC, to date, has been its role in the implementation of the UN's goals for sustainable development, to include both the Millennium Development Goals and the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, as well as other development initiatives.²⁷ Recent resolutions passed by ECOSOC have addressed issues including implementation and follow-up to UN summits and conferences, human trafficking, counter-terrorism, prisoners' rights, coordinating the UN's emergency humanitarian assistance mechanisms, partnership for development, women's and gender issues, disease, and tax matters.²⁸ Based on the provisional agenda for 2017-2018 year, the Council's priorities will focus on the strengthening of humanitarian assistance and strategies for

¹⁵ "High-level Political Forum," Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf> (accessed November 15, 2017).

¹⁶ "Main Organs," United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/main-organs/> (accessed November 15, 2017).

¹⁷ "ECOSOC Members," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/members.shtml> (accessed November 15, 2017).

¹⁸ "Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)," International Drug Policy Consortium, <http://idpc.net/profile/economic-and-social-council-ecosoc> (accessed November 15, 2017).

¹⁹ "Bureau," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/bureau> (accessed November 15, 2017).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² A/71/633, *Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council during 2016*. United Nations General Assembly. (accessed November 15, 2017).

²³ A/RES/61/16. *Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council*. United Nations General Assembly. (accessed November 15, 2017).

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ A/RES/68/1. *Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council*. United Nations General Assembly. (accessed November 15, 2017).

²⁶ "Further review of the implementation of Resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/strengtheningofecosoc.shtml> (accessed November 15, 2017).

²⁷ "Resolutions," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/documents/resolutions> (accessed November 15, 2017).

²⁸ Ibid.

achieving the SDGs by 2030.²⁹ In conjunction with the Council's usual agenda topics, it will also concentrate on the implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits such as the International Conference on Financing for Development and the review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020.³⁰

ECOSOC engages a wide variety of stakeholders in its work: policymakers, parliamentarians, academics, major groups, foundations, business sector representatives, and NGOs.³¹ The inclusiveness of this dialogue creates conditions which enable full and active participation of Member States and stakeholders in all aspects of the decision making process for economic, social, and environmental sectors of international development.³² The broad scope of ECOSOC's work continues to reflect its status as a leader among the UN circuit.

²⁹ E/2018/1, *Adoption of the Agenda and Other Organizational Matters*, United Nations Economic and Social Council, 21 July 2017, <http://undocs.org/E/2018/1> (accessed January 7, 2018).

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ "About ECOSOC," United Nations Economic and Social Council, <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/> (accessed November 15, 2017).

³² Ibid.

I: Developing Sustainable Food Systems in Post-Conflict Areas

“We face a great challenge. But, we have the tools and the commitment to end global hunger.”
—António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General³³

Introduction

The end of a war can bring great relief to a state that has been embroiled in conflict. Conflict, in this context, refers specifically to violent armed encounters between two or more states or non-state groups.³⁴ The peace that emerges after armed conflict, however, is not always accompanied by a restoration of government, infrastructure, education, food systems, or other entities necessary for maintaining a sovereign state. An area is said to be “post-conflict” when one or more of the following takes place: violence ends, peace agreements are signed, fighters are disarmed and reintegrated, refugees are given homes, the government functions normally, or the economy recovers.³⁵

One significant crisis a post-conflict area must address is ensuring that it has adequate and sustainable food systems in place to support its population.³⁶ The United Nations (UN) defines a food system as “a system that embraces all the elements (environment, people, inputs, processes, infrastructure, institutions, markets and trade) and activities that relate to the production, processing, distribution and marketing, preparation and consumption of food and the outputs of these activities, including socio-economic and environmental outcomes.”³⁷ Also according to the UN, a sustainable food system “delivers food and nutrition security for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations [is] not compromised.”³⁸ A population is food secure when it has “availability and adequate access at all times to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life.”³⁹ Problems such as lingering conflict, weak government, broken infrastructure, loss of resources, and lack of education can damage food systems, leading to widespread food insecurity.⁴⁰

Armed conflict is a leading cause of global hunger, as it adversely affects access to resources.⁴¹ A recent UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) publication states that 489 million of the 815 million people around the globe in 2016 who were undernourished live in Member States “struggling with conflict, violence and fragility.”⁴² Conflict-affected residents make up 21 percent of all estimated undernourished global citizens.⁴³ Conflicts often affect poor areas disproportionately, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) are about two times more likely than

³³ “We Have Tools, Commitment to End Global Hunger, Secretary-General Tells Food Security Committee,” United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, October 9, 2017. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sgsm18738.doc.htm> (accessed December 2, 2017).

³⁴ “Chapter 4: Types of armed conflict,” State Library New South Wales, <http://legalanswers.sl.nsw.gov.au/hot-topics-80-international-humanitarian-law/types-armed-conflict> (accessed January 13, 2018).

³⁵ Graham Brown, et al. “A Typology of Post-Conflict Environments,” Centre for Research on Peace and Development, September 2011, <https://soc.kuleuven.be/web/files/12/80/wp01.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

³⁶ “The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017,” Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

³⁷ *All Food Systems Are Sustainable*. The Secretary-General’s High-Level Task Force on Global Food and Nutrition Security. [https://www.un.org/en/issues/food/taskforce/pdf/All food systems are sustainable.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/issues/food/taskforce/pdf/All%20food%20systems%20are%20sustainable.pdf) (accessed January 13, 2018).

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ “What is Food Security?” World Food Programme, <https://www.wfp.org/node/359289> (accessed January 13, 2018).

⁴⁰ Graham Brown, et al. “A Typology of Post-Conflict Environments,” Centre for Research on Peace and Development, September 2011, <https://soc.kuleuven.be/web/files/12/80/wp01.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017); “Post-Conflict/Post-Disaster Areas,” World Education, <http://www.worlded.org/WEIInternet/international/whoweserve/display.cfm?tid=1024&id=788> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁴¹ “2016 World Hunger and Poverty Facts and Statistics,” World Hunger Education Service, <https://www.worldhunger.org/2015-world-hunger-and-poverty-facts-and-statistics/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁴² *Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Africa 2017*. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Accra: United Nations. 2017. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7967e.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁴³ “2016 World Hunger and Poverty Facts and Statistics,” World Hunger Education Service, <https://www.worldhunger.org/2015-world-hunger-and-poverty-facts-and-statistics/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

refugees to die from causes such as disease and starvation.⁴⁴ A lack of basic resources and services can bolster conflict and cause a “conflict trap,” in which a lack of amenities causes further conflict.⁴⁵ This, in turn, exacerbates shortages.⁴⁶ The considerable impact of conflict on global hunger indicates the importance of developing more sustainable food systems for the world’s population.⁴⁷

The second goal of the United Nations’ *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* calls on Member States to “end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.”⁴⁸ With this in mind, Member States should consider the impact that a conflict may have on an entire region following its conclusion.⁴⁹ They must especially recognize factors such as agriculture, poverty, and displaced populations.⁵⁰ Addressing these issues is critical to the development of sustainable food systems in post-conflict areas around the world.⁵¹

Current Situation

The FAO’s 2017 report *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World* states that food systems have recently weakened in sub-Saharan Africa, South-Eastern Asia, and Western Asia, due to regional conflict.⁵² Global conflict has increased as well.⁵³ In 2016, the number of people experiencing “crisis-level food insecurity” around the world increased by 25 percent to 100 million.⁵⁴ Increased conflict has led to the rise of food insecurity.⁵⁵

Agriculture is the primary source of income for 40 percent of the world’s population.⁵⁶ Conflict can decrease food production when individuals are forced to flee their farms, causing subsistence farmers, especially, to lose their own sources of food.⁵⁷ Individuals who are forced to flee may seek shelter with friends, family, or in refugee settlements, making them dependent on other individuals and organizations for nutrition.⁵⁸ Conflict further threatens agriculture by decreasing the amount of land available for livestock cultivation.⁵⁹ By damaging a population’s sustainable food and income sources, conflict jeopardizes a Member State’s ability to provide food for its citizens.⁶⁰

⁴⁴ Zoe Marks, “Poverty and conflict,” GSDRC Applied Knowledge Services, October 2016, <http://www.gsdrc.org/professional-dev/poverty-and-conflict/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Zoe Marks, “Poverty and conflict,” GSDRC Applied Knowledge Services, October 2016, <http://www.gsdrc.org/professional-dev/poverty-and-conflict/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁴⁸ “Hunger and food security,” United Nations Sustainable Development, <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/hunger/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ “Hunger and food security,” United Nations Sustainable Development, <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/hunger/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁵² *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017*. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Rome: United Nations. 2017. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-17695e.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017*. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Rome: United Nations. 2017. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-17695e.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁵⁶ “Hunger and food security,” United Nations Sustainable Development, <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/hunger/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁵⁷ Philip Verwimp, “Food Security, Violent Conflict and Human Development: Causes and Consequences,” United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Africa, January 2012, <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rba/docs/Working Papers/Food Security Violent Conflict.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Philip Verwimp, “Food Security, Violent Conflict and Human Development: Causes and Consequences,” United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Africa, January 2012, <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rba/docs/Working Papers/Food Security Violent Conflict.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

Another way in which conflict can be devastating to food systems is by disrupting food markets, as it can prevent farmers from selling their crops.⁶¹ Violent, armed conflict can restrict sellers' access to roads, destroy physical marketplaces, and otherwise impede farmers from selling food in marketplaces.⁶² In this way, even if a violent conflict does not prevent a farmer from producing food, conflict may still cause food insecurity by preventing populations from purchasing it.⁶³

A recent crisis simulation conducted by the World Wildlife Fund and the Center for American Progress modeled how various crises may affect global food production over the next two decades.⁶⁴ Participants at this simulation addressed three gaps threatening the sustainability of current food systems: knowledge, productivity, and collaboration.⁶⁵ The "knowledge gap" refers to a global lack of information regarding food stockpiles, supply and demand for foods, disruptions to food systems, and at-risk geographic areas.⁶⁶ The "productivity gap" relates to the differences in food production between lower-income and higher-income Member States.⁶⁷ This gap is caused by unequal production technologies and storage systems, the uneven distribution of climate change impacts, and differences in crop management systems and conservation practices.⁶⁸ The "collaboration gap" addresses the need for stronger partnerships between Member States, the public and private sectors, and other entities involved in food systems and security.⁶⁹ This gap exhibits the importance of considering how conflict and other crises disrupt food systems. It indicates that Member States must have disaster management plans to address these issues before they arise.⁷⁰

These gaps are significant because they show that even without violent conflict, there is a need for global food systems to be strengthened and made more sustainable.⁷¹ Disruptions to trade and security systems, as well as climate changes and natural disasters, can negatively affect food systems by eliminating markets and decreasing food production.⁷² These problems, in turn, can cause food prices to rise and can trigger refugee crises, tightening food supplies that are already insufficient.⁷³ Participants in the simulation called for the gaps in food production to be closed to create more secure food systems for future generations.⁷⁴ They also emphasized the importance of greater communication and collaboration between governments and non-governmental organizations to set goals and solve problems related to improving food sustainability.⁷⁵ In addition, these experts recommended improving agricultural research, especially in developing Member States, to ensure that governments leverage the best technologies for creating sustainable food systems.⁷⁶ Violent conflict can exacerbate weaknesses in food systems

⁶¹ "Hunger and food security," United Nations Sustainable Development, <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/hunger/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁶² Philip Verwimp, "Food Security, Violent Conflict and Human Development: Causes and Consequences," United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Africa, January 2012, [http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rba/docs/Working Papers/Food Security Violent Conflict.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rba/docs/Working%20Papers/Food%20Security%20Violent%20Conflict.pdf) (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ "About Food Chain Reaction," Food Chain Reaction, <http://foodchainreaction.org/index.php/about/> (accessed December 1, 2017); *Climate, Conflict and Global Food Systems: Findings and Recommendations*. Food Chain Reaction. <http://foodchainreaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Findings-Report.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ *Climate, Conflict and Global Food Systems: Findings and Recommendations*. Food Chain Reaction. <http://foodchainreaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Findings-Report.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ *Climate, Conflict and Global Food Systems: Findings and Recommendations*. Food Chain Reaction. <http://foodchainreaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Findings-Report.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² *Climate, Conflict and Global Food Systems: Findings and Recommendations*. Food Chain Reaction. <http://foodchainreaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Findings-Report.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ *Climate, Conflict and Global Food Systems: Findings and Recommendations*. Food Chain Reaction. <http://foodchainreaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Findings-Report.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁷⁶ Ibid.

that are initiated by climate change and other crises.⁷⁷ Taking these steps to ensure that food systems are more sustainable will prevent individuals from going hungry, in times of both conflict and peace.⁷⁸

As a primary source of food for many populations, it is also important to examine agriculture within the broader context of a Member State's food production chain, as well as the general disruption a Member State's social and political systems experience during a conflict. Member States in conflict face a general reduction in food production of about 10 percent.⁷⁹ Conflict not only threatens agriculture itself; it also threatens food storage and distribution systems.⁸⁰ As a result of supply decreases, food must be imported from other sources.⁸¹ This, in turn, can raise prices.⁸² The resilience of infrastructure during conflict helps determine the extent to which prices are increased.⁸³ If existing social and political systems do not support food transport during conflict, a population is likely to face increased food shortages and may potentially experience famine.⁸⁴

Actions Taken by the United Nations

The UN has served as a global leader in developing sustainable food systems in post-conflict areas.⁸⁵ The ECOSOC High-Level Political Forum of July 2017 addressed the importance of sustainable food systems in ending global poverty.⁸⁶ At this forum, an FAO representative noted that conflict detracts from previous developments to end hunger.⁸⁷ Representatives of various organizations at the forum repeatedly emphasized the importance of empowering farmers and providing social protections to those who are vulnerable.⁸⁸ To accomplish this, they called for government leaders to change economic structures such as privatization and trade liberalization, which some claim cause poverty and diminish the sustainability of food systems.⁸⁹ Doing so, representatives agreed, will help protect over 20 million individuals from famine and food insecurity.⁹⁰ Equally important to eradicating poverty and ensuring food sustainability is promoting a "sense of ownership among... actors" in food systems, according to Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General for the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA).⁹¹ When individuals take personal responsibility for their roles in food systems, they actively participate in making them more sustainable.⁹²

In November 2017, the UN's World Health Organization (WHO) and FAO led a joint Africa Regional Symposium on Sustainable Food Systems for Healthy Diets and Improved Nutrition with the theme "The Food Security and

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ *Climate, Conflict and Global Food Systems: Findings and Recommendations*. Food Chain Reaction. <http://foodchainreaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Findings-Report.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁷⁹ Philip Verwimp, "Food Security, Violent Conflict and Human Development: Causes and Consequences," United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Africa, January 2012, [http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rba/docs/Working Papers/Food Security Violent Conflict.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rba/docs/Working%20Papers/Food%20Security%20Violent%20Conflict.pdf) (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Philip Verwimp, "Food Security, Violent Conflict and Human Development: Causes and Consequences," United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Africa, January 2012, [http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rba/docs/Working Papers/Food Security Violent Conflict.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rba/docs/Working%20Papers/Food%20Security%20Violent%20Conflict.pdf) (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ "Strong Social Protections, Food Systems Key to Ending Poverty, Hunger, Speakers Stress, as High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development Continues," United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, July 11, 2017. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/ecosoc6856.doc.htm> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ "Strong Social Protections, Food Systems Key to Ending Poverty, Hunger, Speakers Stress, as High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development Continues," United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, July 11, 2017. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/ecosoc6856.doc.htm> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ "Strong Social Protections, Food Systems Key to Ending Poverty, Hunger, Speakers Stress, as High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development Continues," United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, July 11, 2017. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/ecosoc6856.doc.htm> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁹² Ibid.

Nutrition – Conflict Nexus: Building Resilience for Food Security, Nutrition and Peace.”⁹³ The FAO confirmed that conflict, among other factors, significantly damages food security in sub-Saharan Africa.⁹⁴ In its event report *Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Africa 2017*, the FAO encouraged initiatives to support populations of post-conflict regions.⁹⁵ These include cash transfers to stimulate the economy, using community-based plans to re-strengthen conflict-torn societies, and strengthening government services and infrastructure in post-conflict areas.⁹⁶ Such programs have helped individuals begin farming again after natural disasters, rebuilding food systems so that disasters and conflicts do not jointly amplify food insecurity.⁹⁷ Additionally, in the past, school feeding programs have helped prevent students from going hungry, while also improving farmers’ access to food markets, a critical step towards providing food for a population.⁹⁸ These positive results exemplify sustainable improvements to food systems that can ensure populations have long-term access to nutritious food.⁹⁹

One of the most widely-recognized agencies confronting global hunger, the World Food Programme (WFP), provides food assistance to 90 million individuals living in over 70 Member States.¹⁰⁰ The WFP views its work as the source of a cure rather than prevention.¹⁰¹ Although such systems provide desperately-needed aid to individuals at risk, providing aid to a Member State without also working to develop local food systems is unsustainable and can provoke further conflict within the state.¹⁰² The WFP notes that effective systems for developing sustainable post-conflict food systems include implementing “cash-or food-for-work programmes” that pay workers with money or food to help build a conflict-torn state’s infrastructure.¹⁰³

A UN-supported partnership between corporations and community members in Nairobi, Kenya has led to the development of a “Community Cooker” project that promotes the sustainability of local food systems.¹⁰⁴ Women and youth have built “community cookers” that convert solid waste to energy.¹⁰⁵ They then use this energy to power large ovens to cook food in an environmentally-friendly manner.¹⁰⁶ The project provides local jobs, food for around 1,500 community members, and leadership opportunities for women and youth.¹⁰⁷ It also gives communities more autonomy in developing their own sustainable food systems.¹⁰⁸ Systems such as these serve as a model for other community-based initiatives to increase food security in post-conflict regions.¹⁰⁹

In addition to these efforts, in 2011, ECOSOC invited the Chair of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to submit an annual report detailing the Committee’s decisions, suggestions, and outcomes regarding working with

⁹³ “Conflicts, climatic change drive food insecurity and undernourishment in sub-Saharan Africa – UN,” UN News Centre, November 16, 2017. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58104-.Wg4167Q-eCT> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ *Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Africa 2017*. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Accra: United Nations. 2017. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7967e.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ *Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Africa 2017*. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Accra: United Nations. 2017. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7967e.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Mark Notaras, “Food Insecurity and the Conflict Trap,” United Nations University, August 31, 2011. <https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/food-insecurity-and-the-conflict-trap> (accessed November 17, 2017).

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Mark Notaras, “Food Insecurity and the Conflict Trap,” United Nations University, August 31, 2011. <https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/food-insecurity-and-the-conflict-trap> (accessed November 17, 2017).

¹⁰⁴ David L. Caprara, “Slums, youth, and social enterprise: Nairobi’s Community Cooker project,” The Brookings Institution, September 27, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2017/09/27/slums-youth-and-social-enterprise-nairobis-community-cooker-project/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ David L. Caprara, “Slums, youth, and social enterprise: Nairobi’s Community Cooker project,” The Brookings Institution, September 27, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2017/09/27/slums-youth-and-social-enterprise-nairobis-community-cooker-project/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

food security and nutrition.¹¹⁰ The 2016 *Report on the Main Decisions and Policy Recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security* emphasizes the importance of addressing urgent humanitarian and nutritional needs, protection of at-risk individuals, advancement in gender equality by empowering women, encouragement of stakeholders to invest in food systems by ensuring that systems are well-financed, promotion of environmental sustainability, and using food security to advance peacebuilding efforts.¹¹¹ The efforts of bodies such as the CFS are crucial to the work of ECOSOC, the UN, and the global community as a whole in promoting the development of strong, successful, and sustainable post-conflict food systems.¹¹²

Sub-Saharan Africa

One of the regions most widely affected by post-conflict food insecurity is sub-Saharan Africa.¹¹³ About 200 million people—almost a third of the population—in this region are undernourished.¹¹⁴ About 60 percent of these individuals live in conflict-affected Member States.¹¹⁵ Globally, this is the only area in which hunger is likely to worsen over the next twenty years if Member States and organizations do not take action to end conflict, promote economic development, and strengthen government.¹¹⁶

As an example, the Central African Republic (CAR) has lost 54 percent of its food production since it experienced an outbreak of conflict in 2012.¹¹⁷ The conflict caused the Member State to lose 46 percent of its cattle, and as a result, one in four livestock farmers has had to find a new livelihood.¹¹⁸ More than 400,000 IDPs, and about half the Member State's total population, now depend upon food aid to receive sufficient nutrition.¹¹⁹

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a Member State also embroiled in conflict, has plenty of water and natural resources, but it is still extremely poor and underdeveloped.¹²⁰ Poverty in the DRC is caused mainly by conflict and instability.¹²¹ 5.4 million individuals died as a result of conflict between 1998 and 2007.¹²² Most of these deaths were caused by starvation or disease.¹²³ Eight percent of the DRC's population rely upon aid for nutrition.¹²⁴ Among the individuals in this population who are facing malnutrition, 1.9 million are children.¹²⁵ Extreme hunger has increased both mortality and morbidity in the DRC.¹²⁶ Since 1973, the WFP has been working in the DRC to end hunger, save lives, and help the Member State recover from conflict, but there remains much work to be done to ensure the whole population has access to sustainable food sources.¹²⁷

¹¹⁰ A/71/89–E/2016/69. *Main decisions and policy recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security*. United Nations General Assembly and Economic and Social Council. (accessed November 17, 2017).

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ *Food Security and Agricultural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: Building a case for more public support*. United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. <https://www.oecd.org/tad/agricultural-policies/36784159.pdf> (accessed December 2, 2017).

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Food Security and Agricultural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: Building a case for more public support*. United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. <https://www.oecd.org/tad/agricultural-policies/36784159.pdf> (accessed December 2, 2017).

¹¹⁷ *Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Africa 2017*. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Accra: United Nations. 2017. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7967e.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ “Democratic Republic of the Congo,” World Food Programme, <http://www1.wfp.org/countries/democratic-republic-congo> (accessed December 2, 2017).

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ “Democratic Republic of the Congo,” World Food Programme, <http://www1.wfp.org/countries/democratic-republic-congo> (accessed December 2, 2017).

¹²⁴ *Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Africa 2017*. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Accra: United Nations. 2017. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7967e.pdf> (accessed November 17, 2017).

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ “Democratic Republic of the Congo,” World Food Programme, <http://www1.wfp.org/countries/democratic-republic-congo> (accessed December 2, 2017).

Uganda provides a positive example of a post-conflict increase in food security.¹²⁸ Uganda's Acholi population, which was predominantly food secure before 20 years of violent conflict began, was relocated to camps and thus became dependent upon international aid for food.¹²⁹ Following the conflict, however, the government prioritized repairing the state's agriculture sector.¹³⁰ Various groups supplied the population with seeds, tools, and other materials and resources necessary to redevelop agriculture.¹³¹ The government implemented the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) and National Development Plan (NDP) in 1997 and 2010, respectively.¹³² The PEAP aimed to improve food security by reducing poverty.¹³³ The NDP addressed the poor use of Uganda's natural resources, the need for better farming technologies, the lack of strong governmental policies and legal frameworks, the inadequacy of current infrastructure and information systems, the importance of lower-risk agricultural investments, the need for better food safety, the weakness of current weather services and disease and pest controls, and variances in cultural and traditional attitudes towards farming.¹³⁴ By targeting specific issues through these development plans, the government made its food systems more sustainable and helped re-strengthen its populations following protracted violent conflict.¹³⁵ By 2011, the Acholi population was no longer reliant upon food assistance.¹³⁶

Although the experiences faced by the populations of the CAR and the DRC indicate the urgency with which all Member States must address the issue of strengthening post-conflict food systems, the positive post-conflict experiences of the population of Uganda indicate the feasibility of finding solutions for this global problem.

Conclusion

The work of the United Nations, World Food Programme, and other organizations to end hunger and establish sustainable post-conflict food systems has saved lives and ensured that many individuals do not go hungry. Many post-conflict areas still do not have adequately sustainable food systems, however. Member States, non-governmental organizations, and inter-governmental organizations must collaborate if they are to successfully provide all global citizens with access to sustainable sources of nutrition, especially those living in regions marred by violent armed conflict. To establish sustainable food systems, the importance of agriculture, education, infrastructure, and government stability, among other factors, must be considered. Although there remains much to be accomplished concerning the development of sustainable food systems, successful efforts towards achieving the second goal of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* indicate, as Secretary-General *António Guterres* stated in a recent speech, the global community truly has "the tools and commitment to end global hunger."¹³⁷

Committee Directive

Developing sustainable food systems in post-conflict areas is a multifaceted issue that will require delegates to analyze the complex relationship between conflict and food security. Keeping in mind the conference theme "Global Interdependence and the Changing Role of the United Nations," delegates should note the central role that collaboration plays in establishing secure food systems in a post-conflict area. Delegates should also consider issues regarding how conflict affects food systems and how food systems are developed. Explore whether there is a clear connection between higher food prices and the rise of poverty. How can Member States ensure their food systems

¹²⁸ "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017," Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017," Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

¹³² *Review of Food and Agricultural Policies in Uganda 2005-2011*. Monitoring African Food and Agricultural Policies. Rome: United Nations. 2013. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-at594e.pdf> (accessed January 13, 2018).

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017," Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/> (accessed November 17, 2017).

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ "We Have Tools, Commitment to End Global Hunger, Secretary-General Tells Food Security Committee," United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, October 9, 2017. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sgsm18738.doc.htm> (accessed December 2, 2017).

are sustainable? What are the long-term impacts of food insecurity in a region? What kinds of infrastructure or stability are necessary for a region to establish sustainable food systems? Climate change is having a negative influence on food security and prices. What kind of investments should we be making to ensure a community can withstand both short term and long-term issues pertaining to food instability? What role does ECOSOC play in assisting Member States with developing sustainable food systems following conflicts? Delegates will want to explore these and other questions in their efforts to address this issue completely and with the appropriate level of urgency. As conflict increases globally, Member States will need to strengthen their partnerships with one another through entities like ECOSOC and the UN to address this issue quickly and effectively.

II. Addressing the Rising External Debt in Developing Member States

*“The international community must realize that no path to growth can be construed or fostered with unsustainable debt overhang. As such, any debt restructuring exercise should have as its core element a determination of real repayment capacity. If the real repayment capacity of any country is not properly addressed...such outcome would further affect growth and good faith creditors.”*¹³⁸

- J.V. Bainimarama

Introduction

The United Nations defines external debt as “the outstanding amount of those actual current, and not contingent, liabilities that require payments of principal and/or interest by the debtor at some point in the future and that are owed to nonresidents by residents of an economy.”¹³⁹ This definition simply means that external debt includes all debt liabilities of a Member State, including public and private, which are owed to outside creditors such as international commercial banks, developmental banks, governments, and international organizations like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF).¹⁴⁰ These debts come in many different forms and are often called debt instruments because they can be compromised of numerous agreements like: contractual and traditional arrangements, the force of law, and other agreements requiring future payments.¹⁴¹

The two primary organizations that focus on global finance and economics are the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.¹⁴² Both organizations work to find solutions to issues such as the rising international debt and setting a plan for how to sustain such debt.¹⁴³ Together in 2005, they created the Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries.¹⁴⁴ Within this framework there exists the Debt Sustainability Analysis (DSA) that is used regularly to guide Member States’ borrowing decisions and to help international organizations understand which economies may qualify as developing.¹⁴⁵ The DSA includes three factors that organizations use to determine the likelihood that a Member State can take on more debt.¹⁴⁶ These three factors look at the history of the Member State’s borrowing and how they reacted to policy shocks, their debt distress which analyzes their ability to repay the debt, and the strength of the Member State’s policies and institutions.¹⁴⁷ These three components allow the IMF and World Bank to determine the average external debt accumulation for a Member State, their vulnerability to that amount of debt, and the ability to manage that vulnerability.¹⁴⁸ This information is then presented to international lenders to help with responsible and sustainable lending.¹⁴⁹

¹³⁸ Group of 77, *Statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China by H.E. Mr. J.V. Bainimarama, Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji, Chairman of the Group of 77, at the Special High Level Meeting of Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on “External Debt Sustainability and Development: Lessons Learned from Debt Crisis and Ongoing Work on Sovereign Debt Restructuring and Debt Resolution Mechanisms (New York, 23 April 2013)* (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹³⁹ UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Finance Statistics, *External Debt Statistics Guide for Compilers and Users*, 2012, p. 7. (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² A/67/174, *External debt sustainability and development: Report of the Secretary-General*, United Nations General Assembly, 2012. (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ International Monetary Fund, *Debt Sustainability Analysis Low-Income Countries*, 2017. <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/dsa/lic.aspx> (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁴⁵ World Bank, *How to do a Debt Sustainability Analysis for Low-Income Countries*, 2006, p. 2. (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁴⁶ International Monetary Fund, *The Joint World Bank-IMF Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries*, 2017. <https://www.imf.org/en/About/Factsheets/Sheets/2016/08/01/16/39/Debt-Sustainability-Framework-for-Low-Income-Countries> (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ International Monetary Fund, *Debt Sustainability Analysis Low-Income Countries*, 2017, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/dsa/lic.aspx> (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

It should be understood that the accumulation of external debt is often a necessary and needed step in the natural development of an economy.¹⁵⁰ If these borrowed funds are invested in responsible areas of the Member State such as social welfare, civil society, infrastructure, and economic productivity, then this debt can actually increase development.¹⁵¹ Taking on too much debt or wasting the money in areas that do not expand a Member State's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) could create a long-term imbalance in what type of repayments can be made.¹⁵² This means that debt repayments would soon become more than a Member State could afford because economic growth did not meet goals expected to be reached when the money was initially borrowed.¹⁵³ As a result, transitioning Member States have to pull funds from other areas focusing on development to barely meet the minimum repayments on loans; this concept is commonly referred to as being "upside down" on a loan.¹⁵⁴ In addition to having to shift their budgets, further debt is taken on solely to repay the original loan amount.¹⁵⁵ This can cause a chain reaction as too much debt causes a Member State's credit rating to drop which means rates on future loans will go up.¹⁵⁶

One of the most important factors of borrowing money is the interest rate at which it is borrowed.¹⁵⁷ These rates largely determine what type of external debt is sustainable since the higher the interest rate the higher the Member State's future economic output needs to be.¹⁵⁸ This type of paradox creates a potentially catastrophic situation for developing Member States taking on massive amounts of external debt.¹⁵⁹ Economies that are developing and already struggle to spur growth will only be further hindered, or have their development stopped entirely as their credit rating worsens and interest rates on loans rise.¹⁶⁰ Special attention should be given to the debt levels of developing Member States and the current international lending system.¹⁶¹ A system that focuses on penalizing developing economies with high interest rates to ensure payments continually go to interest and not the principle of the loan.¹⁶²

Current Situation

Shortly after the global recession of 2009 the external debt of developing Member States topped \$3.5 trillion USD and was growing at an annual rate of 3.5 percent.¹⁶³ In 2010 that debt grew by 12 percent to reach \$4 trillion USD with experts predicting it to reach \$4.5 trillion in 2011.¹⁶⁴ External debt is most often associated with developing Member States since a high percentage of debt does in fact belong to transitioning regions of the world.¹⁶⁵ In 2011, developing economies accounted for \$65.1 trillion of the \$69.6 trillion total amount of external debt.¹⁶⁶ However, this issue is still a threat to developed Member States as the global debt continued to grow in 2012 reaching \$72.85 trillion.¹⁶⁷

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 1

¹⁵¹ Pattillo, et al., *External Debt and Growth*, 2002 (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Pattillo, et al., *External Debt and Growth*, 2002 (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Penalver & Thwaites, *Working Paper no. 307: Fiscal rules for debt sustainability in emerging markets: the impact of volatility and default risk*, 2006, pp. 3-4. (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Roubini, *Debt Sustainability: How to Assess Whether a Country is Insolvent*, 2001, pp. 3-4. (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Roubini, *Debt Sustainability: How to Assess Whether a Country is Insolvent*, 2001, pp. 3-4. (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ UN General Assembly, *External debt sustainability and development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/66/164)*, 2011. (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁶⁴ UN General Assembly, *External debt sustainability and development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/67/174)*, 2012. (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁶⁵ UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Finance Statistics, *External Debt Statistics Guide for Compilers and Users*, 2012, p. 7. (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁶⁶ United States, *World: Economy*. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/xx.html> (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

In a 2007 report from the Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, external debt in developing Member States increased by \$100 million while the percentage of debt owed to foreign creditors also increased by 4 percent.¹⁶⁸ As a result, some of the hardest hit regions include Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and North Africa.¹⁶⁹ These regions often fall victim to financial malpractice which includes sovereign debt buybacks known to relieve domestic debt owed to other sectors of government by refinancing loans to foreign creditors.¹⁷⁰ A lot of discussion has surfaced within the various developing Member States regarding the risks of sovereign debt buybacks.¹⁷¹ This is an important issue to discuss going forward to ensure that external debt is not just being shifted around, especially to less suitable creditors who are not influenced or governed by international monetary organizations. These types of creditors could be commercial banks headquartered in other regions, or within the Member State itself, which only provide temporarily relief and have no real aid available should a developing Member State default on the loan.¹⁷²

Progress and the International Situation

As previously mentioned, the World Bank and IMF use the Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries to guide their decisions when discussing external debt with developing Member States.¹⁷³ The information gathered from the Framework does not solely go to lenders to aid with determining who to give loans to.¹⁷⁴ Much of the information is used to assess economic stability and the Member State's physical policy to determine if aid is necessary.¹⁷⁵ This aid can come in many different forms such as: debt limits and forgiveness, grants, and loan assistance to low-income Member States.¹⁷⁶ One of the most critical programs that rely on such information is the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative.¹⁷⁷ The Initiative is a joint program between the IMF and World Bank established nearly a decade before the Framework itself was created.¹⁷⁸ The HIPC Initiative now relies heavily on information from the Framework and helps to meet the IMF's and World Bank's goal of "ensuring that no poor country faces a debt burden it cannot manage."¹⁷⁹ The HIPC consists of a two-step process the helps decide if a Member State is eligible for interim debt relief or full debt relief pending further eligibility.¹⁸⁰ The first step is titled the "decision point" and it serves to define the eligibility criteria.¹⁸¹ The criterion requires that the Member State is eligible to borrow from the World Bank's International Development Agency and the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust.¹⁸² Both programs consist of interest-free or subsidized loans and grants for developing Member States who would most likely struggle with even moderate external debt.¹⁸³ Other criteria includes not being able to contain debt in traditional ways such as scheduled repayments; the Member State receiving aid must create a record of reform, prove they operate by fiscally responsible policies, and must then

¹⁶⁸ United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General on Recent Developments in External Debt*, (2007), p.3 (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General on Recent Developments in External Debt*, (2007), p.3 (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ World Bank, *How to do a Debt Sustainability Analysis for Low-Income Countries*, 2006, p. 2 (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ International Monetary Fund, *The Joint World Bank-IMF Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries*, 2017, <https://www.imf.org/en/About/Factsheets/Sheets/2016/08/01/16/39/Debt-Sustainability-Framework-for-Low-Income-Countries> (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ World Bank, *The Enhanced HIPC Initiative – Overview*. <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTDEBTDEPT/0,,contentMDK:21254881~menuPK:64166739~pagePK:64166689~piPK:64166646~theSitePK:469043,00.html> (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ International Monetary Fund, *Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative*, 2017. <http://www.imf.org/en/About/Factsheets/Sheets/2016/08/01/16/11/Debt-Relief-Under-the-Heavily-Indebted-Poor-Countries-Initiative> (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ International Monetary Fund, *Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative*, 2017. <http://www.imf.org/en/About/Factsheets/Sheets/2016/08/01/16/11/Debt-Relief-Under-the-Heavily-Indebted-Poor-Countries-Initiative> (accessed November 4, 2017).

establish a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.¹⁸⁴ Once a Member State reaches those requirements the Executive Boards of both the IMF and World Bank determine if the Member State qualifies for the second step which would be full debt forgiveness.¹⁸⁵ Once approved, the international community agrees to work towards reducing said Member State's debt to a sustainable level or forgiving the debt entirely should the prior qualifications be met.¹⁸⁶ Of the 39 developing Member States able to qualify for this aid, 36 are currently receiving debt relief by meeting the previously stated qualifications.¹⁸⁷

More recent efforts to aid Member States struggling with external debt include the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI). The idea was first created in June of 2005 by the Group of Eight (G8) and served as a foundation to help Member States reach the eighth Millennium Development Goal (MDG) which focuses on "developing a global partnership for development."¹⁸⁸ The G8 advised that the IMF, the African Development Fund, and the International Association of the World Bank cancel all of their debt claims in low-income Member States.¹⁸⁹ These lost profits would then be replaced by international donors to match the exact amount of the debt forgiven.¹⁹⁰ The MDRI would go into full effect in 2006 and was seen as building upon what the HIPC Initiative was already doing.¹⁹¹ In some cases prequalification under the HIPC Initiative can automatically qualify a Member State for aid under the MDRI, including total debt forgiveness.¹⁹² In 2007, the MDRI saw itself legitimized as the Inter-American Development Bank agreed to aid in debt relief to Member States located in the western hemisphere.¹⁹³ Before this inclusion of the Intern-American Development Bank, most of the aid from both the HIPC Initiative and MDRI was directed towards Africa.¹⁹⁴ This continued expansion is no doubt a serious key factor in the continued success of both programs. Further expansion allows the MDRI to work as an extension to the HIPC Initiative.¹⁹⁵ Thirty-five Member States participating in the HIPC Initiative are also eligible for aid and debt forgiveness under the MDRI.¹⁹⁶ This type of comprehensive approach, combined with goalsetting for Member States receiving aid, such as the demonstration of responsible economic policies, and the creation of a poverty reduction strategy help to not only sustain external debt, but to aid in long-term socioeconomic development.¹⁹⁷

Although the IMF and World Bank are the two main financial institutions to confront global debt relief, the UN has taken many steps throughout recent history to bring attention to the issue.¹⁹⁸ During the 67th session, the General Assembly recognized the benefits of having programs such as the Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries and acknowledged the momentous effort put in by both the World Bank and IMF.¹⁹⁹ However one key aspect of the acknowledgement was the constructive criticism given to both organizations by the UN.²⁰⁰ The General Assembly recommended that the World Bank and IMF consider a broader set of factors when analyzing whether a

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ International Monetary Fund, *Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative*, 2017.

<http://www.imf.org/en/About/Factsheets/Sheets/2016/08/01/16/11/Debt-Relief-Under-the-Heavily-Indebted-Poor-Countries-Initiative> (accessed November 4, 2017)

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ International Monetary Fund, *The Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative*, 2017. <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/mdri.htm> (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ International Monetary Fund, *Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI): Update on Debt Relief by IDA and Donor Financing to Date*, 2007, p. 1. (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁹¹ World Bank, *HIPC At-A-Glance*, 2017. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/Resources/468980-1256580106544/HIPC_Spring2013_ENG_web.pdf (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁹² International Monetary Fund, *The Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative*, 2017. <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/mdri.htm> (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁹³ World Bank, *Debt Relief and Development*, 2017. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/debt/overview> (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ International Monetary Fund, *The Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative*, 2017. <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/mdri.htm> (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ A/RES/67/198, *External debt sustainability and development*, UN General Assembly, 2013 (accessed November 4, 2017).

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

member state qualifies for aid.²⁰¹ Some of the factors recommended by the UN include a Member State's susceptibility to natural disasters and a more in-depth understanding of their economies, including analyzing trading versus exporting and how dependent the Member State is on those two sources of income.²⁰² The main theme of General Assembly resolution 67/198 was to put an emphasis on partnerships between both the indebted Member State and the international community.²⁰³ A key reason why the General Assembly emphasized this partnership was to try and minimize the potential for future financial crisis that closely resembled previous collapses.²⁰⁴ This mainly referred to the global recession of 2008 when more debt was taken on to prevent short-term defaults.²⁰⁵ Due to a lack of communication between creditors and debtors, coupled with confusing lending frameworks, most Member States were not presented with clear solutions to rising defaults.²⁰⁶ While much progress has been made concerning lack of communication the General Assembly still called for integrated policies that focus on malleable, quick, and substantial deliverance of aid.²⁰⁷ Those three factors would Member States to swiftly meet financial disparities so that debt does not become uncontrollable.²⁰⁸

Still, substantial proof that debt relief aids economic reform has yet to be attained, and a long-term solution to external debt in developing Member States continues to go undiscovered. While programs like the HIPC Initiative are taking steps towards aiding those struggling economies, many think that international monetary organizations could be doing much more.²⁰⁹ Experts point to our arbitrary lending system that continues to keep governments indebted and offers no real solution that eliminates a Member State's dependency on borrowed money.²¹⁰ In addition to an ineffective system, the only relief programs are created by the creditors themselves and therefore show a natural bias to ensure those creditors are always profiting somehow, whether financially or politically.²¹¹ Furthermore, these programs do little to educate developing Member States on international lending in general.²¹² Governments are not made aware of whom their debt may actually belong to as well as the hazards of refinancing that debt through uninsured domestic creditors such as commercial banks.²¹³ One of the most blatant flaws with the HIPC Initiative is that its goal is not to get rid of debt but instead to keep it at a sustainable level.²¹⁴ This guarantees that the creditors will receive the majority, if not all of their money back while certain sectors of the developing Member States economy continues to suffer.²¹⁵ The second major flaw is the threshold levels debt is required to be at as it eliminates many struggling Member States, who would otherwise be classified as developing, from receiving aid.²¹⁶ This flaw tends to disproportionately affect Member States in the Southern Hemisphere particularly South America, who has experienced some of the worst financial practices from foreign creditors throughout history.²¹⁷ In

²⁰¹ A/RES/67/198, *External debt sustainability and development*, UN General Assembly, 2013 (accessed November 4, 2017).

²⁰² A/RES/67/199, *Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development*, UN General Assembly, 2013 (accessed November 4, 2017).

²⁰³ A/RES/67/198, *Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development*, UN General Assembly, 2013 (accessed November 4, 2017).

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ A/RES/67/199, *Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development*, UN General Assembly, 2013 (accessed November 4, 2017).

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ Shah, A., *The Heavily In-debt Poor Countries Initiative is Not Working*. Global Issues, 2001. <http://www.globalissues.org/article/31/the-heavily-in-debt-poor-countries-initiative-is-not-working> (accessed November 4, 2017)

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² Shah, A., *The Heavily In-debt Poor Countries Initiative is Not Working*. Global Issues, 2001. <http://www.globalissues.org/article/31/the-heavily-in-debt-poor-countries-initiative-is-not-working> (accessed November 4, 2017)

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ International Monetary Fund, *Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative* [Website], 2013. <http://www.imf.org/en/About/Factsheets/Sheets/2016/08/01/16/11/Debt-Relief-Under-the-Heavily-Indebted-Poor-Countries-Initiative> (accessed November 4, 2017)

²¹⁵ Shah, A., *The Heavily In-debt Poor Countries Initiative is Not Working*. Global Issues, 2001. <http://www.globalissues.org/article/31/the-heavily-in-debt-poor-countries-initiative-is-not-working> (accessed November 4, 2017)

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

order to properly address external debt in developing Member States, future programs must make the advancement of struggling economies their priority, as well as finding ways to incorporate more Member States without first forcing them to adhere to strict criteria.²¹⁸

For example, Norway acknowledged and addressed the issue of debt reduction early on and announced that it would grant 100 percent debt reduction to some of the poorest Member States.²¹⁹ The Norwegian government created a Plan of Action for Debt Relief and Development in order to outline Norway's specific role within the HIPC and reaffirm its commitment to the success of the Initiative.²²⁰ A particular facet in Norway's approach to debt relief is that their debt relief and cancellation programs are not financed through their aid budget.²²¹ Norway sees debt relief as a necessary step in development and therefore sets aside finances that are solely dedicated to relieving Member States who are struggling with repayments.²²² On an international stage, Norway supports the G-77's idea of a Common Fund that would be dedicated to debt relief and cancellation.²²³ The Fund would agree to not intervene with markets, alter or break commodity agreements and contracts, and that the bulk of the financial resources would come from the developing Member States themselves.²²⁴ By displaying support for the G-77's recommendations, Norway is actively utilizing their role to seek an improvement in international debt relief.²²⁵

Conclusion

The amount of success that current debt programs have had towards qualifying Member States is worthy of attention, amounting to a 90 percent drop in external debt within those economies.²²⁶ Still there remains a group of Member States who do not qualify for that aid but still require some kind of assistance to reach their economic potential.²²⁷ External debt is a complicated issue and it will continue to be one as most of the short term solutions may not be what is best for the Member State in the long run. Too much debt is a hindrance on a Member State's economy but the first available solution to cancel the debt in its entirety may not always be the best decision. In a global economy where the only definite truth is change, the international system must continue to analyze the financial safety nets established to ease financial burdens on Member States. The Economic and Social Council must continue to focus strongly on increasing the capability of Member States to mitigate their debt without comprehensive international involvement. In the instances that a Member State requires international assistance, ECOSOC will continue to work within the UN and with other international organizations to ensure that frameworks and programs can better establish long-term debt sustainability.

Committee Directive

While acknowledging the success of the HIPC Initiative and the MDRI it is important to focus on what expansions can be made to help Member States who may not meet the requirements set forth by the two programs. In addition, what debt relief programs could be created in the future that would accomplish its goals in a better way than the MDRI? In a broader sense, should the conversation of debt sustainability involve a wider range of organizations? Is there a role for credit ratings agencies in preventing unsustainable debt? Should special attention be given to debt that is owed to illegitimate or sanctioned regimes? Lastly, should more drastic measures or fail-safes be put in place to prevent debt from becoming uncontrollable? Although the discussion of external debt must continue to focus on

²¹⁸ Shah, A., *The Heavily In-debt Poor Countries Initiative is Not Working*. Global Issues, 2001. <http://www.globalissues.org/article/31/the-heavily-in-debt-poor-countries-initiative-is-not-working> (accessed November 4, 2017)

²¹⁹ Norwegian Embassy, Debt Reduction, 2009. (accessed November 4, 2017).

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Norwegian Embassy, Debt Reduction, 2009. (accessed November 4, 2017).

²²³ Crane, B.B, Policy Coordination by Major Western Powers in Bargaining with the Third World: Debt Relief and the Common Fund, 1984. (accessed November 4, 2017).

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Norwegian Embassy, Debt Reduction, 2009. (accessed November 4, 2017).

²²⁶ World Bank, HIPC At-A-Glance, 2013. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/Resources/468980-1256580106544/HIPC_Spring2013_ENG_web.pdf (accessed November 4, 2017).

²²⁷ International Monetary Fund, Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, 2013 <http://www.imf.org/en/About/Factsheets/Sheets/2016/08/01/16/11/Debt-Relief-Under-the-Heavily-Indebted-Poor-Countries-Initiative> (accessed November 4, 2017).

further analyzing methods that can more accurately determine debt sustainability, the overall conversation on alleviating unsustainable levels, and countering further build-up of unsustainable debt remains broad and extensive.

Technical Appendix Guide (TAG)

I: Developing Sustainable Food Systems in Post-Conflict Areas

“Conflict and Food Security,” International Food Policy and Research Institute, <http://www.ifpri.org/topic/conflict-and-food-security> (accessed December 3, 2017).

The International Food Policy and Research Institute’s webpage on the topic of Conflict and Food Security provides several resources relevant to the committee topic. These resources include three textbook chapters on conflict, hunger, and food security, as well as reports on specific subtopics relevant to these issues, such as refugees and hunger in Africa. The site also includes information on related conferences, datasets, and blogs. All of these resources provide valuable, in-depth information and policy recommendations related to the topic of developing sustainable food systems in post-conflict areas.

“Food Security and Peace Discussion Note,” Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/newsroom/docs/Peace_and_food8pp_web.pdf (accessed December 3, 2017).

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)’s “Food Security and Peace Discussion Note” provides a helpful introduction to the topic of developing sustainable food systems in post-conflict areas, as well as specific examples of development work in various Member States. It addresses the role of the UN, various UN bodies, and the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* in the post-conflict development process. Delegates will likely find the discussion note’s information regarding previous UN action to be helpful.

Henk-Jan Brinkman and Cullen S. Hendrix, “Food Insecurity and Violent Conflict: Causes, Consequences, and Addressing the Challenges,” World Food Programme, July 2011, http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/newsroom/wfp238358.pdf?_ga=2.41314598.542636021.1510811231-1336284139.1510811231 (accessed December 3, 2017).

The World Food Programme (WFP)’s paper “Food Insecurity and Violent Conflict: Causes, Consequences, and Addressing the Challenges” discusses the connections between conflict and food insecurity. It addresses food prices, how food insecurity can cause conflict, the fragility of governments, severing the connections between food insecurity and conflict, and the role of the international community in the process of developing sustainable food systems in post-conflict areas. This guide is particularly helpful because it offers multiple examples pertaining to the topic from various Member States, as well as statistics and details regarding conflict, food prices, and relief efforts carried out by the WFP.

Post-Conflict Economic Recovery: Enabling Local Ingenuity. United Nations Development Programme Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. New York: United Nations. 2008. http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/crisis_prevention/undp-cpr-post-conflict-economic-recovery-enable-local-ingenuity-report-2008.pdf (accessed December 3, 2017).

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)’s 2008 Crisis Prevention and Recovery Report, entitled *Post-Conflict Economic Recovery: Enabling Local Ingenuity*, addresses the role of local communities and Member States in post-conflict sustainable development. Although the global community plays an important role in post-conflict recovery, this report argues that individual Member States and local organizations must lead this process. It discusses the effects of conflict, sustainable economic recovery, and the role of government and policy in conflict recovery. Delegates may find this guide to be helpful as they work to determine the best practices and policies to ensure that post-conflict development is sustainable.

II. Addressing the Rising External Debt in Developing Member States

Cosio-Pascal, E. (2008). *The Emerging of a Multilateral Forum for Debt Restructuring: The Paris Club*. http://unctad.org/en/Docs/osgdp20087_en.pdf (accessed November 4, 2017)

The Paris club was formed in 1952 when Argentina and the creditors it owed debt to came together to negotiate renewed terms. Fast forward to present day and the Paris Club is now one of the most influential bodies presiding over global debt. Consisting of the 19 largest world economies they meet occasionally to discuss the role of finances as a whole and its impact on the global economy. As the primary provider in many global financial services including: debt restructuring, debt relief and cancellation, infrastructure aid packages, and war funding it would be vital to use this document to understand how the organization works in order to recommend more comprehensive solutions.

International Monetary Fund (2009, March 30). IMF Executive Board Discusses Changing Patterns in Low-Income Country Financing and Implications for Fund Policies on External Financing and Debt. <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pn/2009/pn0939.htm> (accessed November 4, 2017)

This page includes information on Member States that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has entered into a working relationship with. It also covers relatively new debt trends that could be used to predict future rates and defaults. Specific IMF policies regarding debt management and reduction are discussed as the need for a flexible strategy becomes more apparent. Solutions to reform the policies and how they are implemented are contained within the links on the page.

International Monetary Fund (2009, March 4). Managing Public Debt-Formulating Strategies and Strengthening Institutional Capacity. <http://www.imf.org/external/pp/longres.aspx?id=4326> (accessed November 4, 2017)

An excellent source that contains a lot of information regarding external and public debt. This page also gives specific information about the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) goals and outlook towards the future of debt. It contains an introduction to IMF strategies when handling medium-income and developing Member States that are struggling with rising debt levels.

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2004). *Debt Relief for Development: A Plan for Action*. <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/Documents/veiledninger/2004/Debt-Relief-for-Development.html?id=419443> (accessed November 4, 2017)

This source offers a specific overview of Norway's debt reduction strategy and its further efforts in the debt arena. It provides a useful point by point analysis of their policies and future goals towards the issue of uncontrollable external debt. It also includes the importance that Norway places on the HIPC as well as the effectiveness of the HIPC in international debt relief. This source will be useful to delegates so that they can compare Norway's methods to that of other Member States and organizations in order to discover various strengths and weaknesses.

Vilanova, J. & Martin, M. (2001). The Paris Club. http://www.dri.org.uk/pdfs/EngPub3_Paris_Club.pdf (accessed November 5, 2017)

The Paris Club has been able to adjust its goals and outreach throughout each decade to meet the demands of an ever changing global economy. In its early existence there were no international frameworks to help base their work and aid on. Their early work focused on simple negotiation and brought two parties together to discuss a better future for each. This is a valuable tool for delegates to study specifically as it relates to debt management and loan forgiveness. While the HIPC is considered to be backbone of the Paris Club it is important to still have diplomacy as negotiating as a tool in solving issues, especially if the HIPC begins to slow or become bogged down.