2013

NWMUN

Background guide for the

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PLENARY

(GA)

Northwest Model United Nations | November 22-24, 2013 | Seattle, Washington, USA

August 1, 2013

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2013 Northwest Model United Nations (NWMUN) Conference and the General Assembly. The committee staff of the General Assembly, consisting of Director Amanda Wong, Assistant Director Thejasvi Ramu, Chair Glen Tokola, and Special Adviser Bob Cahill, is looking forward to working with you at our conference.

The entire Secretariat is very excited to work with you in November and appreciate the hard work and research you are undertaking in preparation for what we are confident will be a great conference!

We are immensely pleased to present to you the background guide, written by the General Assembly committee staff.

The topics for the General Assembly Plenary are:

I.   Trafficking in Women and Girls
II.   The Situation in the Syrian Arab Republic
III.   Security Council Elections

Every participating delegation is required to submit a position paper prior to attending the conference. NWMUN will accept position papers until **Sunday, November 10th at 11:59 pm Pacific Time. Please submit all position papers to ga@nwmun.org AND positionpapers@nwmun.org.**

Please refer to the following pages for position paper requirements, as well as an example position paper. Delegates' adherence to these guidelines is crucial, because it not only ensures a well-prepared committee, but is also a key component of the awards process.

We wish each of you the best as you prepare for this conference and committee. We urge you to move beyond the background guide as you learn more about both the Member State you will represent and the topics we will be discussing. Please do not hesitate to direct any questions or concerns toward your Director or the Director-General. We look forward to meeting you at the conference!

Sincerely,

Amanda Wong	**Thejasvi Ramu**	**Glen Tokola**	**Sasha Sleiman**
Director,	Assistant Director,	Chair,	Director-General
General Assembly Plenary	General Assembly Plenary	General Assembly Plenary	NWMUN 2013
ga@nwmun.org	ga@nwmun.org	ga@nwmun.org	dg@nwmun.org

Position Paper Guidelines

Your position paper should consist of a well-developed introduction and a summary of the position of your country on each of the topics to be discussed in your committee. It is important to remember that while you will have lots of information on your country's actions on a local or national level, you must discuss your country's position on an international level, particularly including suggestions for policies and future action that could be taken by the committee. Additional examples of high quality position papers are available on the NWMUN website.

Formatting
Position papers should be formatted using the following specifications:
1. Times New Roman
2. Size 10 – 12 font
3. Single spaced
4. 2 pages in length

Please Note: Anything over two pages will not be read.

Submission Process
NWMUN will accept position papers until **Sunday, November 10th at 11:59 pm Pacific Time.**

1. Please **send each position paper in a separate e-mail to the committee** with the subject line: COUNTRY – COMMITTEE
   a. Example: BELARUS – HRC
   b. Example: TRINIDAD & TOBAGO – GA

2. Please **CC all position paper submissions** to **positionpapers@nwmun.org.**

General Assembly Plenary:	ga@nwmun.org	**Economic and Social Council:**	ecosoc@nwmun.org
UN Environment Programme:	unep@nwmun.org	**Security Council:**	sc@nwmun.org
Reformed Security Council	rsc@nwmun.org	**UN High Commissioner for Refugees:**	unhcr@nwmun.org

Please Note: Delegates who have not submitted a position paper by the specified deadline will not be given consideration for awards.

Content Requirements
Position papers should include, and will be graded, on the following items:

1. **Formatting** and presentation;

2. **Spelling and grammar that is reflective of the level of education** being pursued by attendees to the conference.

3. The content should include:
    a. **Background information on the topic**, why your country thinks it is important, relevant national commitments and action on the issue. Remember to focus on national policies which influence your country's action on this topic within the UN and internationally.
    b. **International commitments and your country's support of specific resolutions**, initiatives, conventions or treaties. Describe what actions have been taken by your country to address prior international agreements made by your country.
    c. **Specific and concrete proposals** for next steps on the topic, priority issues, and how your country can move forward on addressing the topic. This is the most important section of the position paper, and should be the longest paragraph.

Research Tips
1. Look for statements made by your country – you will often find the exact position of your country within a speech that they have been made.
2. Look for the voting record of your country, which indicates its support or lack of support for particular resolutions on the topics when they were previously discussed.
3. Look for recommendations made in Secretary-General reports or within resolutions that have been adopted in order to identify the ways in which you can move forward or take action on the topic.

Key Resources
1. **UN Website "On the Record": http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/unms/**
   This website provides direct access to official documents reflecting the views of United Nations Member States.

2. **UN Website "Global Issues": http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/**
   This website offers an overview of some of the global issues we will be discussing at NWMUN, and links to other resources where you can get additional information.

3. **UN General Assembly Website: http://www.un.org/en/ga/**
   This is the official website of the General Assembly. Included in this website is information on the Assembly's role in the broader UN, its powers and functions, its Main Committees and its subsidiary bodies. Delegates can also use it to find past documentation about the Assembly as well as documents created by the Assembly, including agendas, resolutions and other information.

Sample Format & Content of Position Papers

Delegation from   *Delegation from*
(Bold, Italicized, Times New Roman, Size 10-12)   *(Bold, Italicized, Times New Roman, Size 10-12)*
[Member State]   **[Member State]**
(Bold, Times New Roman, Size 10-12)   **(Bold, Times New Roman, Size 10-12)**

Position Paper for [Committee Name]
(Bold, Italicized, Times New Roman, Size 10-12, Centered)

Introductory sentence providing an overview of the topics and, if appropriate, your delegation's relationship with the committee. (Times New Roman, Size 10 – 12)

I. Topic One Title
(Bold, Italicized, Times New Roman, Size 10-12, Centered)

Paragraph #1: Background information on the topic, why your country thinks it is important, relevant national commitments and action on the issue. Remember to focus on national policies which influence your country's action on this topic within the UN and internationally. (Times New Roman, Size 10 – 12)

Paragraph #2: International commitments and your country's support of specific resolutions, initiatives, conventions or treaties. Describe what actions have been taken by your country to address prior international agreements made by your country (Times New Roman, Size 10 – 12)

Paragraph #3: Specific and concrete proposals for next steps on the topic, priority issues, and how your country can move forward on addressing the topic. This is the most important section of the position paper, and should be the longest paragraph. (Times New Roman, Size 10 – 12)

II. Topic Two Title
(Bold, Italicized, Times New Roman, Size 10-12, Centered)

Paragraph #1: Background information on the topic, why your country thinks it is important, relevant national commitments and action on the issue. Remember to focus on national policies which influence your country's action on this topic within the UN and internationally. (Times New Roman, Size 10 – 12)

Paragraph #2: International commitments and your country's support of specific resolutions, initiatives, conventions or treaties. Describe what actions have been taken by your country to address prior international agreements made by your country (Times New Roman, Size 10 – 12)

Paragraph #3: Specific and concrete proposals for next steps on the topic, priority issues, and how your country can move forward on addressing the topic. This is the most important section of the position paper, and should be the longest paragraph. (Times New Roman, Size 10 – 12)

(Repeat the topic header and content for other topics if your committee has more than two.)

Example Position Paper

Delegation from
Canada

<div align="right">

Represented by
University of Southern Washington

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Position Paper for the Economic and Social Council Plenary

The topics before the Economic and Social Council are: 1) Promoting Economic and Social Gender Equality as a Means to Achieve Sustainable Peace, 2) Implementing International Agreements to Ensure Global Public Health, and 3) Promoting Sustainable Cities. Canada is committed to strengthening the role of ECOSOC on the issues before it, and looks forward to promoting enhanced cooperation amongst Member States in order to reach consensus and take concrete action.

I. Promoting Economic and Social Gender Equality as a Means to Achieve Sustainable Peace

In conflict and post-conflict societies, economic and social rights are often given lower priority than political and civil rights. In these cases, women are not treated equally, and are often the victims of gender discrimination, which manifests itself in violations of human rights such as rape, violence and displacement. The prevalence of these crimes is exacerbated by a lack of protection for women, who often do not possess the right to own land, have no means to receive adequate health care and have no access to justice.

Canada has long been a champion of women's economic, social, and cultural rights. As an original signatory of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Canada has a formal commitment to gender equality and, more specifically, supports the explicit and systematic integration of a gender perspective into all peace-building and foreign aid initiatives. Canada continues to press for specific initiatives with concrete and measurable outcomes when addressing gender inequality. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has developed its own Framework for Addressing Gender Equality Results. This framework has been an important advance in assessing the effectiveness of its initiatives and has consistently provided CIDA with useful and relevant data. Canada recognizes the advancements made in Security Council resolution 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009) to strengthen the original principals of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). However, Canada firmly believes that ensuring the implementation of SCR 1325 (2000) at the national level is vital. That is why Canada suggests that the CEDAW committee issue recommendations to both the Security Council and ECOSOC on positive models for National Action Plans (NAP) for incorporating SCR 1325 (2000), a set of progress and impact indicators through which its implementation can be monitored, and benchmarks designed towards strengthening the principals of SCR 1325 (2000).

Canada recommends that the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), along with the ECOSOC Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) reach out to local NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) to coordinate the monitoring of, and reporting on, the progress of these NAPs. CSW will then report its findings to ECOSOC, the Security Council, and the Secretary General. Canada urges for the adoption of benchmarks requiring 30% of UN-mandated peacekeeping forces and negotiating delegations be women. Canada also believes that while peacekeeping troops are vital to facilitating the cessation of hostilities, a separate unit with a specialized mandate is necessary to deal with the psychological and health issues of women that continue in post-conflict situations long after the

violence is over. The specialized mandate will also lay the groundwork for legal procedures that may need to be taken to ensure just peace. Canada calls for the creation of this specially trained unit to be deployed in post-conflict situations, with a specific mandate to address sexual and gender based violence, help to eliminate impunity, and offer same-sex interviewers for rehabilitation purposes. The newly created unit will facilitate reconciliation and violence prevention.

II. Implementing International Agreements to Ensure Global Public Health

Effectively addressing global public health lies at the center of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Through agreements such as the Paris Declaration on AID Effectiveness, the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), and global health initiatives such as the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations (GAVI), and the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria, the international community has made significant progress in addressing the world's health concerns. Canada is focused on creating frameworks and resolutions that foster greater coordination, eliminate corruption and overlap, improve AID consistency, encourage the untying of AID, emphasize a focus on national health systems, and hold all the countries involved accountable for producing tangible and measurable results.

Canada has been a leader in the use of innovative funding mechanisms, such the Advance Market Commitment (AMC), which provides incentives for pharmaceutical companies to accelerate the development of vaccines and sell them at prices that poor countries can afford. This project, which is being implemented in coordination with the World Bank and GAVI, is expected to save an estimated 7.7 million lives by 2030. Canada will continue to urge its fellow member states to become more involved in the creation and implementation of such innovative funding mechanisms.

Especially now, due to the downturn in the global economy, where the world's poor are disproportionately suffering, there is a greater need for all donor countries to fulfill their Official Development Aid (ODA) commitments. Canada was the first country to fulfill its G8 commitment to double ODA in Africa by 2008, and throughout the world by 2010. This has been accomplished through both the African Health Systems Initiative (AHSI) and the Catalytic Initiative to Save a Million Lives. Canada has not only committed USD 450 million to these initiates, but with them has demonstrated its focus on both strengthening, and developing local ownership, of national health systems. Canada urges the implementation of year-by-year funding targets to ensure that ODA commitments for health initiatives are kept. Currently The Measles Initiative is facing a funding gap of $59 million for 2010, and the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria is also facing a funding crisis of $5 billion for this year. These gaps in funding could cause millions their lives. Canada strongly urges it fellow member states to fulfill their commitments to these funds.

Canada is also a strong proponent of the International Health Partnership & Related Initiatives (IHP+). The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), through the IHP+ framework, is the chair of the Mozambique National AIDS Council (CNCS) and has made long-term financial commitments to IHP+. Canada believes that IHP + will not only prove to be extremely effective in addressing the issues of AID effectiveness, redundancy, and accountability, but will also go a long way towards creating a united front dedicated to improving global public health. Canada urges for the creation of new commitments that compel 15 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries to join in either bilateral or compact agreements through IHP+ by 2020.

The General Assembly Plenary at NWMUN 2013

The NWMUN Secretariat works each year to create as accurate a simulation as is possible for our delegates. Therefore, we have developed some additional ways for delegates to interact within the simulation, including enabling delegates to take multiple forms of action on an issue, including but not limited to adopting resolutions. This section aims to provide additional, specific information for the General Assembly Plenary at NWMUN 2013.

Briefings

While discussing a topic, General Assembly delegates are able to receive briefings from representatives of relevant member states or UN subject matter experts. The specific thematic experts available will be announced on the NWMUN website, as well as the beginning of the conference.

Mandate

The mandate of the General Assembly Plenary at NWMUN 2013 is:

The General Assembly may discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of the [UN] Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the present Charter, and […] may make recommendations to the Members of the United Nations or to the Security Council or to both on any such questions or matters.

Selected Functions & Powers

- To recommend to the Security Council or UN Member States actions that would help achieve the principles of the United Nations with regard to "disarmament and the regulation of armaments";
- To discuss any "questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security" referred to the Assembly by the Security Council and/or individual State;
- To recommend to the Security Council the consideration of any situations "which are likely to endanger international peace and security";
- To promote "the progressive development of international law and its codification";
- To promote "international co-operation in the economic, social, cultural, educational, and health fields".

Outcome Documents

When taking action, the General Assembly Plenary may adopt **resolutions**. General Assembly Plenary resolutions are non-binding, but are recommendations to the Economic and Social Council, Security Council, or other international organizations or United Nations entities that may encourage those latter bodies to take action as well. Additionally, the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly carry considerable weight behind them, as the Assembly represents the entirety of the membership of the United Nations, and the assessments of the General Assembly Plenary are therefore "world opinion." Additionally, the General Assembly Plenary conducts **elections** to choose which UN Member States are also to serve in the non-permanent seats on the Security Council and other committees; they also elect the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the recommendation of the Security Council.

Rules of Procedure

The General Assembly Plenary will use the standard NWMUN rules of procedure, available on our website as well as at the conference.

Members of the General Assembly Plenary at NWMUN 2013

The General Assembly Plenary will include all Member States of the United Nations, as well as two observer delegations, the delegations of the Holy See and Palestine. The General Assembly Plenary's membership will reflect the current membership of the United Nations at the time of the conference, and should Palestine or any other prospective member achieve UN membership prior to NWMUN 2013, the General Assembly Plenary at NWMUN 2013 will include these new members with full membership and voting rights.

General Assembly Plenary Committee History

"We cannot stand by while populations fall victim to grave crimes and violations.
We must uphold the core responsibilities of the United Nations."
- Ban Ki-Moon, United Nations Secretary-General[1]

Introduction
In 1945, the General Assembly (GA) was created under Chapter IV of the Charter of the United Nations.[2] Article 14 of the Charter authorizes the GA to "recommend measures for the peaceful adjustment of any situation, regardless of origin, which it deems likely to impair the general welfare or friendly relations among nations."[3] The GA is a forum for the United Nations' 193 Member States to express the views and opinions of their governments.[4] The GA holds annual sessions, and may hold special sessions at the request of the Security Council (SC) or of a majority of Member States.[5] The GA may discuss topics relating to international peace and security, except when a situation is currently being discussed by the SC.[6]

General Assembly Structure and Mandate
The GA meets in regular session from September to December each year, and thereafter as required.[7] Six GA Main Committees exist, each consisting of all members of the GA. Currently, the committees are assigned specific subjects: The First Committee (Disarmament and International Security), The Second Committee (Economic and Finance), The Third Committee (Social Humanitarian and Culture), The Fourth Committee (Political and Decolonization), The Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary), and The Sixth Committee (Legal).[8] The General Assembly also has other subsidiary organs, including various boards, commissions, committees, councils, and working groups.[9] Some of the more notable subsidiary organs are the Human Rights Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Disarmament Commission, and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People...[10] Subsidiary bodies hold meetings and consultations on issues within their mandate, and then craft reports and in some cases draft resolutions for discussion and consideration by the General Assembly or one of its Main Committees.[11] Main Committee resolutions, once adopted, become draft resolutions for the Plenary to consider and potentially adopt as well.

The GA elects the non-permanent members of the SC and the members of other United Nations (UN) councils and organs and, on the recommendation of the SC, appoints the Secretary-General.[12] The GA's mandate includes initiating studies and making recommendations to promote disarmament, international collaboration, and the

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[1] United Nations General Assembly, *Responsibility to Protect Faces Urgent Test 'Here and Now', Secretary-General Tells General Assembly, Stressing Immense Human Cost of Failure in Syria*, 2012.
http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/sgsm14490.doc.htm

[2] United Nations General Assembly, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.
http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter4.shtml

[3] United Nations General Assembly, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.
http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter4.shtml

[4] United Nations General Assembly, *UN at a Glance*, 2013. http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/index.shtml

[5] United Nations General Assembly, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.
http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter4.shtml

[6] United Nations General Assembly, Functions and Powers of the General Assembly, 2013.
http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml

[7] United Nations, *General Assembly of the United Nations*, 2013. http://www.un.org/en/ga/

[8] United Nations General Assembly, *Main Committees.* 2013. http://www.un.org/en/ga/

[9] United Nations General Assembly, *Subsidiary Organs of the General Assembly*. 2013,
http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/subsidiary/

[10] United Nations General Assembly, *Boards*, 2013. http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/subsidiary/boards.shtml

[11] United Nations General Assembly, Subsidiary Organs of the General Assembly, 2013.
http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/subsidiary/

[12] United Nations General Assembly, *Background of the United Nations*, 2012. http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml

improvement of international law.[13] For example, in 2012, the GA discussed issues including global climate change (A/RES/67/211), greater engagement with developing states (A/RES/67/207), and human rights (A/RES/67/233).[14]

The authority of the GA includes the ability to make non-binding recommendations to the SC relating to questions of international peace, security, and disarmament, as well as the ability to consider reports from the Council and other UN bodies.[15] Since 1950, the provision has been implemented ten times with the most recent emergency special session in 1997 dealing with the topic of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory.[16] Currently, the situation within the Syrian Arab Republic is an example in which the GA remains cautious and will pay further attention as things progress.[17]

Membership and Voting Patterns

In 1945, the United Nations was founded with 54 members; membership of the United Nations has expanded by 139 members for a total of 193 UN Member States, all of which are also members of the General Assembly.[18] The GA is unique in that every UN Member State is represented and able to cast one vote. The GA also has representatives from Permanent Observers (the Holy See and the State of Palestine), Intergovernmental Organizations such as the European Union, and Non-Governmental Organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross.[19]

The normal threshold for adopting resolutions and taking other decisions within the GA is a simple majority of members present and voting.[20] However, elections require a two-thirds majority.[21] Additionally, other topics may have their voting threshold raised at the discretion of the Assembly itself; issues usually discussed with this voting threshold include recommendations to the SC on peace and security, admission of new members of the United Nations and appointment of the Secretary-General[22] Most votes by the General Assembly are relatively non-controversial, and state collaboration is strong, which has led to the vast majority of General Assembly resolutions being adopted by acclamation.[23]

Conclusion

In September 2009, Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon congratulated the GA for adopting its first resolution on the *Responsibility to Protect* (R2P), an initiative to protect persons from genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, crimes against humanity and other atrocities despite state sovereignty.[24] Forward progress from the global community may solve the situation in Syria, the political declaration on a peaceful resolution of conflicts in Africa, or assistance to the Palestinian people. Regardless of the topics and situations, the GA has moved forward with political, economic, humanitarian, social and legal actions which have impacted the lives of billions of people around the world.[25]

[13] United Nations General Assembly, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly*, 2013.
http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml

[14] United Nations General Assembly, *Resolutions Adopted by the General Assembly at its 67th session, 2013.*
http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/r67.shtml

[15] United Nations General Assembly, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.
http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter4.shtml

[16] Tomuschat, *Uniting for Peace,* United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law, 2008, p.2.
http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/pdf/ha/ufp/ufp_e.pdf

[17] United Nations General Assembly, General Assembly Adopts Text Condemning Violence in Syria, 2013.
http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2013/ga11372.doc.htm

[18] United Nations General Assembly, *Growth in United Nations Membership*, 1945-present, n.d.

[19] United Nations General Assembly, *Permanent Observers: Non-Member States and Entities*, 2008.
http://www.un.org/en/members/nonmembers.shtml

[20] United Nations, *Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly,* A/520/Rev.16, 2006.

[21] United Nations General Assembly, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.
http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter4.shtml

[22] United Nations General Assembly, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945.
http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter4.shtml

[23] United Nations General Assembly, *By Acclamation, General Assembly Elects Joseph Deiss of Switzerland as President of Sixty-Fifth Session, 2010.*
http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/ga10947.doc.htm

[24] United Nations News Centre, *General Assembly Agrees to Hold More Talks on Responsibility to Protect*, 2009,
http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32047

[25] United Nations General Assembly, *Functions and Powers of the General Assembly*, 2013.
http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml

I. Trafficking in Women & Girls

Introduction

Women and girls constitute a significant proportion of those who are victims of human trafficking. Furthermore, the practice of human trafficking is intrinsically linked to other socioeconomic motivations, including slavery, organ harvesting, and sexual coercion.[26] The internationally recognized definition for trafficking is the "recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation."[27] Approximately 79% of all human trafficking is meant for sexual exploitation, which is why there seems to be an increased focus on mechanisms to aid women who are affected by such an industry.[28] The second most common form of exploitation through human trafficking is labor exploitation, at 18%.[29] According to the data provided by the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, 30% of traffickers are women.[30] Furthermore, approximately 20% of trafficking victims are children; however, in some West African states, up to 100% of human trafficking victims are children.[31] While the adoption of the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, adopted by the General Assembly on 15 November 2000 as resolution 55/25, was hailed as a cornerstone in the global endeavor to end the trafficking of women and children.[32] The United Nations continues to press for improved implementation and enforcement of this Protocol.[33]

Human trafficking is not strictly a challenge involving developing States, as individuals are often trafficked to developed States, and citizens of developed States can also become victims of all forms of human trafficking.[34] As this is a global problem, it is important to promote international principles and mechanisms and to address the need for further collaboration amongst Member States. When addressing this issue, it is important to not simply look at the causes of the trafficking of women, but also the protection of the victims from a culturally sensitive context.

International Framework

The *Global Plan of Action Against Human Trafficking* (A/RES/64/293) was adopted by the General Assembly in 2010.[35] This plan encourages and pledges international support and cooperation in addressing human trafficking.[36] The resolution proposes actions designed to combat many forms that human trafficking may take, including sexual and labor exploitation.[37] Furthermore, it also addresses the prosecution of offenders and the rehabilitation of victims

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[26] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Human Trafficking,* n.d. https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html

[27] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol Thereto,* n.d. http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/index.html

[28] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *UNODC report on human trafficking eposes modern form of slavery,* 12 February 2009, https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html

[29] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *UNODC report on human trafficking eposes modern form of slavery,* 12 February 2009, https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html

[30] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *UNODC report on human trafficking eposes modern form of slavery,* 12 February 2009, https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html

[31] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *UNODC report on human trafficking eposes modern form of slavery,* 12 February 2009, https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html

[32] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto,* 2000. http://www.unodc.org/unodc/treaties/CTOC/

[33] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Human Trafficking,* 2013, https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html

[34] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Human Trafficking FAQs,* n.d., http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/faqs.html - Which_countries_are_affected_by_human_trafficking

[35] United Nations General Assembly, *United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (A.64.L.64),* 12 August 2010. http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/United_Nations_Global_Plan_of_Action_to_Combat_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf

[36] United Nations General Assembly, *United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (A.64.L.64),* 12 August 2010. http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/United_Nations_Global_Plan_of_Action_to_Combat_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf

[37] United Nations General Assembly, *United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (A.64.L.64),* 12 August 2010. http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/United_Nations_Global_Plan_of_Action_to_Combat_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf

from the physical and psychological trauma of trafficking.[38] The plan also addresses the need for further funding in order to improve and maintain operations that monitor and research the movement of trafficking, as a lack of data often inhibits governments from implementing policies.[39]

The UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking is administered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to provide help to victims of human trafficking in a "practical and tangible manner," through networks between various independent and government agencies and organizations and the private sector.[40] This year, the GA is discussing the trust fund hoping to review mechanisms that are in place to ensure its efficiency.[41] The review includes the general provisions of the fund due to the lack of progress that has been made; however, data collection is low and 39 Member States still need to ratify the Trafficking in Persons protocol.[42] Also, there is general consensus that the trust fund does not meet "the levels appropriate to give victims worldwide full assistance and support," and therefore it is important that the review takes place to attempt to improve the institution.[43]

The UN *Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime* (A/RES/55/25), which was adopted by the GA in 2000, plays an important role in ensuring border security, addressing this as a significant factor needing to be addressed as a preventive measure when dealing with trafficking.[44] This Convention specifically addressed trafficking as it relates to transnational organized crime, and its provisions to address trafficking of women and girls are limited. However, this also ensures that preventative measures for certain factors, such as border security and the role of organized crime groups – which plays a significant role in this form of trafficking – have legal structures.[45] The three assisting protocols are the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*; the *Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air*; and the *Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearms*.[46] Some of the preventative measures include defining the status of victims of trafficking persons in receiving States, and the repatriation of those victims.[47]

The United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) was established in 2007.[48] The mandate of the initiative is to reduce the vulnerability of potential victims and promote awareness through state and

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[38] United Nations General Assembly, *United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (A.64.L.64),* 12 August 2010. http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/United_Nations_Global_Plan_of_Action_to_Combat_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf

[39] United Nations General Assembly, *United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (A.64.L.64),* 12 August 2010. http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/United_Nations_Global_Plan_of_Action_to_Combat_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf

[40] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund For Victims of Human Trafficking,* n.d. http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking-fund.html

[41] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *General Assembly Reviews Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking,* 13 May 2013, http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2013/May/general-assembly-reviews-efforts-to-combat-human-trafficking.html

[42] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *General Assembly Reviews Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking,* 13 May 2013, http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2013/May/general-assembly-reviews-efforts-to-combat-human-trafficking.html

[43] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *General Assembly Reviews Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking,* 13 May 2013, http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2013/May/general-assembly-reviews-efforts-to-combat-human-trafficking.html

[44] United Nations General Assembly, *United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (A/55/383),* 8 January 2001. http://www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/a_res_55/res5525e.pdf

[45] United Nations General Assembly, *United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (A/55/383),* 8 January 2001. http://www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/a_res_55/res5525e.pdf

[46] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto,* December 2000, http://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNTOC/Publications/TOC%20Convention/TOCebook-e.pdf

[47] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto,* December 2000, http://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNTOC/Publications/TOC%20Convention/TOCebook-e.pdf

[48] United Nations Global Initiatives to Fight Human Trafficking, *About UN GIFT,* n.d. http://www.ungift.org/knowledgehub/en/about/index.html

non-state actors.[49] This initiative is a collaborative project of the International Labor Organization (ILO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), among others.[50] The initiative works with other UN bodies such as the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the Commission on the Status of Women, which works on behalf of women and girls that are victims, or potential victims, of all forms of human trafficking.[51] Furthermore, the initiative urges States not party to the protocol to sign the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children*.[52]

Key Issues
Criminal organizations use trafficking as a way to transport illegal goods and to acquire persons for labor and sexual exploitation or organ harvesting, across territories and international borders.[53] Victimization takes place due to displacement from political conflict, or illegal migration; these issues increase vulnerability to being trafficked that an individual may face.[54] Vulnerability, although without an agreed definition, refers to the factors, including environmental and contextual factors, which increases the probability of an individual or group to being trafficked.[55] Absence of domestic prevention and re-victimization policies and programs, along with the lack of data and coordination between non-governmental organizations and civil society prevents existing legal frameworks from being effective in addressing the overall issues.[56]

Vulnerability is not limited to the conditions in the state of origin. It is also influenced by the "allure of opportunity," the increasing demand for goods and services, and the desire for income, which increases the risk of exploitation in other States that encourages one to migrate.[57] Economic and social factors such as employment opportunities, integration into a society and lack of a legal status will also influence the degree of vulnerability.[58] The impacts of economic and social factors for victims in conflict zones are especially acute.[59] It is largely from these zones that trafficking victims originate, due to the commonality of displacement of peoples and a lack of political stability, which generates social discrimination and lack of legal status.[60] These factors, taken together,

[49] United Nations Global Initiatives to Fight Human Trafficking, *About UN GIFT,* n.d. http://www.ungift.org/knowledgehub/en/about/index.html
[50] United Nations Global Initiatives to Fight Human Trafficking, *About UN GIFT,* n.d. http://www.ungift.org/knowledgehub/en/about/index.html
[51] United Nations Global Initiatives to Fight Human Trafficking, *About UN GIFT,* n.d. http://www.ungift.org/knowledgehub/en/about/index.html
[52] United Nations Global Initiatives to Fight Human Trafficking, *About UN GIFT,* n.d. http://www.ungift.org/knowledgehub/en/about/index.html
[53] Federation For American Immigration Reform, *Human Trafficking – Exploitation of Illegal Aliens,* n.d. http://www.fairus.org/issue/human-trafficking-exploitation-of-illegal-aliens
[54] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action,* n.d., http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/An_Introduction_to_Human_Trafficking_-_Background_Paper.pdf
[55] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Abuse of a position of vulnerability and other "means" within the definition of trafficking in persons*, 2013. http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2012/UNODC_2012_Issue_Paper_-_Abuse_of_a_Position_of_Vulnerability.pdf
[56] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action,* n.d., http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/An_Introduction_to_Human_Trafficking_-_Background_Paper.pdf
[57] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action,* n.d., http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/An_Introduction_to_Human_Trafficking_-_Background_Paper.pdf
[58] United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, *Abuse of a position of vulnerability and other "means" within the definition of trafficking in persons*, 2013. http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2012/UNODC_2012_Issue_Paper_-_Abuse_of_a_Position_of_Vulnerability.pdf
[59] United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, *Abuse of a position of vulnerability and other "means" within the definition of trafficking in persons*, 2013. http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2012/UNODC_2012_Issue_Paper_-_Abuse_of_a_Position_of_Vulnerability.pdf
[60] United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, *Abuse of a position of vulnerability and other "means" within the definition of trafficking in persons*, 2013. http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2012/UNODC_2012_Issue_Paper_-_Abuse_of_a_Position_of_Vulnerability.pdf

prevent local law enforcement from fulfilling its responsibility.[61] Women in these situations are more likely to be subjugated due to lack of economic opportunities and independence to make decisions regarding their lives.[62] This may be more likely to occur in regions where social status differs for women.[63] For example, the lack of "satisfactory" employment, particularly in regions where there is ongoing conflict, would increase the vulnerability of women being trafficked.[64]

A significant risk factor is unequal access to education, which limits access to economic opportunities and independence, regardless if it is a conflict zone and area stricken by poverty.[65] In such conditions, women have fewer options, and pursue the few economic opportunities that are available, even though it may mean a greater risk of sexual and/or labor exploitation.[66] Some of these professions are also a part of the sex industry.[67] According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 500,000 women are forced to enter the profession of prostitution each year; this forced entry into prostitution is a form of trafficking.[68]

It is difficult to address the stigmatization of women particularly when determining what their social status is within society.[69] It takes effort to address the lack of social status of women, particularly through educational programs, such as those promoted by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) whose work focuses on women, and national policies to improve the status of women.[70]

Difficult economic situations may force parents to allow the sexual and labor exploitation of children, as they are considered to be financial commodities in a last resort.[71] In areas of conflict and severe poverty, there tends to be a large displacement of peoples, particularly children.[72] Children are more likely to be enrolled as a child soldier in conflict zones because they lack "stabilizing" factors such as family, dependable income, or any form of protection from militia groups and human traffickers.[73]

Traffickers are individuals who contribute to the act of exploiting individuals in any of its forms. This includes those individuals who "recruit, transport, harbor, obtain, and exploit" victims.[74] Human trafficking is an industry that brings a constant profit, and is very low risk.[75] Many times, traffickers prey on victims who are vulnerable and are

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[61] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action,* n.d., http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/An_Introduction_to_Human_Trafficking_-_Background_Paper.pdf

[62] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action,* n.d., http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/An_Introduction_to_Human_Trafficking_-_Background_Paper.pdf

[63] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action,* n.d., http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/An_Introduction_to_Human_Trafficking_-_Background_Paper.pdf

[64] The Advocates for Human Rights, *Trafficking in Women,* n.d. http://www.stopvaw.org/trafficking_in_women

[65] End Human Trafficking Now, *Quick Facts About Human Trafficking,* n.d. http://www.endhumantraffickingnow.com/?page_id=113

[66] The Advocates for Human Rights, *Trafficking in Women,* n.d. http://www.stopvaw.org/trafficking_in_women

[67] The Advocates for Human Rights, *Trafficking in Women,* n.d. http://www.stopvaw.org/trafficking_in_women

[68] End Human Trafficking Now, *Quick Facts About Human Trafficking,* n.d. http://www.endhumantraffickingnow.com/?page_id=113

[69] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action,* n.d., http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/An_Introduction_to_Human_Trafficking_-_Background_Paper.pdf

[70] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action,* n.d., http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/An_Introduction_to_Human_Trafficking_-_Background_Paper.pdf

[71] End Human Trafficking Now, *Quick Facts About Human Trafficking,* n.d. http://www.endhumantraffickingnow.com/?page_id=113

[72] United Nations Children's Fund, *Displaced Children,* 21 April 2003, http://www.unicef.org/emergencies/index_displacedchildren.html

[73] Protection Project, *A Human Rights Report on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children,* n.d. p. 2, http://www.protectionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/Colombia.pdf

[74] Protection Project, *The Traffickers,* n.d., http://www.polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/overview/the-traffickers

[75] Protection Project, *The Traffickers,* n.d., http://www.polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/overview/the-traffickers

looking for opportunities to better their lifestyles.[76] Traffickers also employ psychological and physical violence to exploit the victims into jobs they do not wish to perform.[77]

Case Study: Nepal
Human trafficking in Nepal is of particular concern in the areas of sexual and labor exploitation. Nearly 38% of Nepal's population lives below the poverty line, and trafficking in Nepal is largely driven by the economic and social deficits of the state.[78]

Most Nepali individuals who are victims of human trafficking are transported within the Asian region, particularly the Indian sub-continent, the Middle East, and Malaysia, where they are forced to become prostitutes, domestic workers, mine workers and other labor-intensive jobs.[79] Lack of economic opportunities for women in these urban centers encourages them to enter sex-related and labor-exploitative jobs.[80] There are some individuals who are voluntarily allow themselves to partake in such activities, while many are forced to do such jobs without their consent; this has made the issue difficult to resolve from a legal perspective.[81]

In addition, Nepal's borders with India are not well monitored.[82] This gives way to the relatively unmonitored flow of illegal traffic of women and girls between countries.[83] In India, they are trafficked for sexual and labor purposes, with many cases of sexual exploitation attributed to a perception that Nepalis are fairer-skinned and that this is more appealing in India.[84] Many Nepali victims found in India result from mistrusting traffickers when attempting to find better employment. Furthermore, some women wishing to work abroad lack legal documentation and are therefore dependent on illegal migration methods.[85]

However, there are also victims who migrate for work purposes through legal networks.[86] Such victims may face sexual or labor exploitation from their employers.[87] Many women are also willing to take up domestic work in the households. As they are doing this willingly, when their work is being exploited, or if they face sexual harassment from their employees, these women are unable to use the legal system to protect their rights.[88]

There are many internally displaced children due to the political crisis that was once present in Nepal.[89] Economic instability aggravated by the conflict also exacerbated the displacement.[90] According to the report published by

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[76] Protection Project, *The Traffickers,* n.d., http://www.polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/overview/the-traffickers

[77] Protection Project, *The Traffickers,* n.d., http://www.polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/overview/the-traffickers

[78] Richardson, D., Poudel, M. & Laurie, N., *Sexual trafficking in Nepal: Constructing citizenship and livelihoods,* 2009, 260. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09663690902836300.

[79] International Labor Organization, Investigating the Worst Forms of Child Labour No. 2: Nepal: Trafficking in Girls With Special Reference to Prostitution: A Rapid Assessment, November 2001, 29. www.**ilo**.org/ipecinfo/product/download.do;jsessionid...?**type**...id...

[80] Subedi, G., *Trafficking in Girls and Women in Nepal for Commercial Sexual Exploitation: Emerging Concerns and Gaps,* 2009, 123.

[81] Subedi, G., *Trafficking in Girls and Women in Nepal for Commercial Sexual Exploitation: Emerging Concerns and Gaps,* 2009, 123.

[82] Kansakar, V., *Nepal-India Open Border: Prospects, Problems and Challenges*, n.d. 9. http://www.fes.de/aktuell/focus_interkulturelles/focus_1/documents/19.pdf

[83] Kansakar, V., *Nepal-India Open Border: Prospects, Problems and Challenges*, n.d. 16. http://www.fes.de/aktuell/focus_interkulturelles/focus_1/documents/19.pdf

[84] Subedi, G., *Trafficking in Girls and Women in Nepal for Commercial Sexual Exploitation: Emerging Concerns and Gaps,* 2009, 124.

[85] Subedi, G., *Trafficking in Girls and Women in Nepal for Commercial Sexual Exploitation: Emerging Concerns and Gaps,* 2009, 130.

[86] British Broadcasting Corporation, *Nepal women banned from Middle East over exploitation,* 9 August 2012, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-19196245

[87] British Broadcasting Corporation, *Nepal women banned from Middle East over exploitation,* 9 August 2012, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-19196245

[88] British Broadcasting Corporation, *Nepal women banned from Middle East over exploitation,* 9 August 2012, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-19196245

[89] Frederik and Tamang, *Asylums of Exploitation: Internally Displaced Children in the Worst Forms of Child Labor Due to the Armed Conflict in Nepal,* June 2006, http://www.humantrafficking.org/publications/411

[90] Frederik and Tamang, *Asylums of Exploitation: Internally Displaced Children in the Worst Forms of Child Labor Due to the Armed Conflict in Nepal,* June 2006, http://www.humantrafficking.org/publications/411

Terre des Hommes Foundation, rural families send their children to urban centers, to ensure that they were provided with an income, as it is in urban areas where there is more job availability.[91] However, the children often receive poor pay and work long hours.[92]

Despite these problems, there is a growing presence of government and NGO action towards dealing with this issue.[93] There are legal mechanisms installed for the criminalization of those instigating human trafficking, and the government attempts to follow the protocols as set by international law.[94] However, Nepali law enforcement is considered corrupt, and social conventions prevent the victim from being protected, particularly those involved in sexual exploitations.[95] According to UN Women, in nearly 70% of trafficking cases, police play a significant role in delaying the submission of the investigation report and government attorneys fail to attend hearings.[96]

Remaining Challenges
As trafficking is a transnational issue, there is a need for the reconciliation of international law with domestic law. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), UN Women and other UN bodies are significant players in addressing human trafficking. These UN bodies also emphasize transparency in immigration procedures, which can help to reduce trafficking and raise awareness of instances of trafficking as well.

There is a pattern of constant attention given by the UN and NGOs to trafficking, as is evidenced by meeting records, consultations and a stream of resolutions on the subject... However, the lack of a truly global framework to address trafficking greatly impacts the degree to which global plans are effective. This lack is caused in part by some states not being party to the international agreements already in place; it is important to ensure that all Member States sign and ratify the agreements and protocols that have already been negotiated to strengthen preventative mechanisms and the protection of victims of human trafficking.

Corruption enables human trafficking and prevents legal mechanisms from actually being employed. Often victims lack access to services from NGOs, that can help them progress with their lives. More interconnectedness must be encouraged between Member States and UN agencies, to ensure that progress for installing mechanisms to fight human trafficking, whether these are education programs, increasing job opportunities for women, or other rehabilitation programs, are available to affected populations regardless of geography, and for these mechanisms to be available in a safe and confidential environment.

Questions for Further Consideration
What incentives can be provided to Member States to ensure that they practice the protocols and international policies currently in place?

What measures can Member States take, as a unit, to address the issue of sex-related jobs that is instigated by the tourist industry?

What mechanisms or measures can Member States take to provide equal opportunity in employment to women and children?

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[91] Frederik and Tamang, *Asylums of Exploitation: Internally Displaced Children in the Worst Forms of Child Labor Due to the Armed Conflict in Nepal,* June 2006, http://www.humantrafficking.org/publications/411

[92] Frederik and Tamang, *Asylums of Exploitation: Internally Displaced Children in the Worst Forms of Child Labor Due to the Armed Conflict in Nepal,* June 2006, http://www.humantrafficking.org/publications/411

[93] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action,* n.d., http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/An_Introduction_to_Human_Trafficking_-_Background_Paper.pdf

[94] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action,* n.d., http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/An_Introduction_to_Human_Trafficking_-_Background_Paper.pdf

[95] Subedi, G., *Trafficking in Girls and Women in Nepal for Commercial Sexual Exploitation: Emerging Concerns and Gaps,* 2009, 134.

[96] Subedi, G., *Trafficking in Girls and Women in Nepal for Commercial Sexual Exploitation: Emerging Concerns and Gaps,* 2009, 135.

II. The Situation in the Syrian Arab Republic

"The Government of Syria cannot win by military means. Nor can the opposition.
The only thing they will succeed in is to drag the country further into an abyss
from which it will already take many years to recover."
– Ban Ki-Moon, United Nations Secretary-General [97]

Introduction

The conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic has seen tens of thousands of Syrians lose their lives in an escalating conflict between loyalists to President Bashar al-Assad and those that oppose his rule. However, the history of the conflict goes back to several decades.[98] Dissatisfied with the union between Syria and Egypt as the United Arab Republic, the Ba'ath Party was formed in 1964 after a successful coup d'état.[99] In 1966, Ba'ath party leaders were overthrown and in 1970 Hafez al-Assad, a former Minister of Defense, declared himself Prime Minister.[100] Hafez al-Assad held this title until his death in 2000 and his son, Bashar al-Assad, was appointed President.[101] By December 2010, the Arab Spring, a series of national uprisings in the Arab world, brought its momentum to Syria.[102] Peaceful demonstration in Syria turned violent on March 15, 2011, when protestors clashed with police forces, which led to civilian causalities.[103] In July 2012, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) formally declared the clashes in Syria to be a civil war.[104]

The Alawite minority, of which Assad is a member and which makes up 12% of the country's population, and the Christian minority both support President Assad over the possibility of control by the Sunni majority, which many fear would become an Islamist government.[105] As well, Russia has been an outspoken supporter of President Assad, but recent support for this position among the Russian public has been decreasing.[106]

In November 2012, the Syrian National Coalition for Opposition and Revolutionary Forces became the official representatives of the opposition, bringing together various religious sects opposing the Assad regime.[107] Furthermore, the Free Syrian Army, composed of protestors and former members of Assad's forces, has become the primary armed group opposing President Assad.[108] Since the start of the conflict, President Assad and the Syrian security forces have been accused of human rights violations.[109] There are also growing concerns of Islamic extremism such as that of the Jabhat al-Nusra, which has taken responsibility for suicide bombings on Syrian government targets.[110] The United States has been supporting the opposition with what they describe as "non-lethal aid."[111]

International Framework

In the *Charter of the United Nations,* Article 2 paragraph 7 notes that the United Nations is based on the principle of state sovereignty.[112] The Charter goes further to say that nothing "authorize(s) the United Nations to intervene in

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[97] United Nations Department of Public Information, *With Entire Generations of Syrian Children at Risk of Being Scarred for Life, Secretary-General Urges Unified Position to Persuade Actors to Negotiate (SG/SM/14986)*, 2013. http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2013/sgsm14986.doc.htm.

[98] BBC, *Syria: The Story of the Conflict*, 2013. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-19331551.

[99] BBC, *Syria* Profile, 2013. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703995.

[100] BBC, *Syria* Profile, 2013. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703995.

[101] BBC, *Syria* Profile, 2013. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703995.

[102] BBC, *Syria* Profile, 2013. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703995.

[103] BBC, *Syria* Profile, 2013. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703995.

[104] CBC News, *Syria rebellion declared a civil war*, 2012. http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/story/2012/07/15/syria-denies-use-of-heavy-weapons-tremseh.html.

[105] CBC News, *Syria's civil war: key facts, important players*, 2013. http://www.cbc.ca/news/interactives/syria-dashboard/.

[106] CBC News, *Russia will not shelter Syria's al-Assad*, 2012. http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/story/2012/12/22/syria-russia-assad.html.

[107] CBC News, *Syria's civil war: key facts, important players*, 2013. http://www.cbc.ca/news/interactives/syria-dashboard/.

[108] CBC News, *Syria's civil war: key facts, important players*, 2013. http://www.cbc.ca/news/interactives/syria-dashboard/.

[109] CBC News, *Syria's civil war: key facts, important players*, 2013. http://www.cbc.ca/news/interactives/syria-dashboard/.

[110] CBC News, *Syria's civil war: key facts, important players*, 2013. http://www.cbc.ca/news/interactives/syria-dashboard/.

[111] CBC News, *Syrian rebels to start getting direct U.S. aid*, 2013. http://www.cbc.ca/news/story/2013/02/28/syria-conference-us-aid.html.

[112] United Nations, Charter of the United Nations, 1945. http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/.

matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State."[113] However, in more recent years, the UN has also pushed for the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) initiative, which premises sovereignty not as a right but a responsibility.[114] As such, R2P purports that there are times when it would be appropriate for the international community to intervene in domestic affairs, especially if the welfare of persons is threatened.[115]

International humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions, is applicable in the situation in Syria, with the declaration of the situation as a civil war by the ICRC.[116] One of the major issues stemming from the conflict in Syria is the human rights of persons and the protection of human rights under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[117] Similarly, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child is a commitment to the protection of children.[118] Both of these Declarations protect the inalienable fundamental human rights of persons to freedom of speech, access to basic needs and protection from cruel acts.[119] Both were also later codified into international law as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, all three of which have been ratified by Syria.[120] Amnesty International has been monitoring the situation and has regularly confirmed the violation of human rights by both the Syrian Government and by armed opposition groups, and has called for the situation to be referred to the International Criminal Court.[121]

Finally, Syrians have been fleeing the civil conflict into neighboring countries, which places stresses on these states.[122] As such, the Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (the Refugee Convention) is applicable in the cross border issues being faced by neighboring countries.[123] The Convention also helps to tackle the issue of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), which in this case are Syrians that are displaced as a result of the conflict.[124]

United Nations Involvement

In February 2012, the General Assembly of the United Nations (GA) passed resolution 66/253A, condemning human rights violations in Syria.[125] The resolution condemns the Syrian government for its human rights violations, attacks on the public and the use of heavy weapons.[126] In addition, the resolution requested access for the Commission of Inquiry, and for the Syrian authorities to work with the UN and Arab League.[127] At the same time, the GA passed resolution 66/176, which specifically dealt with the human rights violations in Syria, citing the arbitrary execution of persons and the excessive use of force.[128] The resolution also demanded that the Syrian

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[113] United Nations, Charter of the United Nations, 1945. http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/.

[114] United Nations, *The Responsibility to Protect*, n.d. http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/responsibility.shtml.

[115] United Nations, *The Responsibility to Protect*, n.d. http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/responsibility.shtml.

[116] NPR, *Red Cross Declares Civil War in Syria*, 2012. http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2012/07/15/156808427/red-cross-declares-civil-war-in-syria.

[117] United Nations, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948. https://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/.

[118] United Nations, *Declaration of the Rights of the Child*, 1959. http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/child.asp.

[119] United Nations, *Declaration of the Rights of the Child*, 1959. http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/child.asp.

[120] United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, *Status of Ratification of Human Rights Instruments,* n.d. www2.ohchr.org/english/law/docs/HRChart.xls

[121] Amnesty International, *Annual Report 2013: Syria*, 2013. http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/syria/report-2013.

[122] United Nations High Commission on Refugees, *Syria Regional Refugee Response*, 2013. http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php.

[123] United Nations, *Convention relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951. http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.html.

[124] International Committee of the Red Cross, *Refugee & Displaced Persons*, 2013. http://www.icrc.org/eng/war-and-law/protected-persons/refugees-displaced-persons/index.jsp.

[125] United Nations General Assembly, *The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/RES/66/253 A)*, 2012. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=%20A/RES/66/253.

[126] United Nations General Assembly, *The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/RES/66/253 A),* 2012. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=%20A/RES/66/253.

[127] United Nations General Assembly, *The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/RES/66/253 A)*, 2012. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=%20A/RES/66/253.

[128] United Nations General Assembly, *Situation of Human Rights in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/RES/66/176)*, 2012. http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=A/RES/66/176.

government comply with prior resolutions of the Human Rights Council (HRC).[129]

In August 2012, the GA passed resolution 66/253B condemning again the human rights violations and the use of force against civilians.[130] The resolution also supported actions taken by the United Nations Security Council (SC) to cease violence in Syria, deplored the inaction of local authorities as it pertains to the humanitarian situation, and supported movement towards a democratic political system with greater cohesion of the Syrian opposition.[131] Finally, in May 2013 the GA passed resolution 67/262 regarding its concerns of the escalating violence in Syria.[132] The resolution reiterates the call for rapid progress on a political transition. Furthermore, the resolution draws attention to the high death toll as a result of the conflict, the increased use of heavy weapons, and systemic violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.[133]

The Council has also taken action through Resolution 2042 (2012) which authorized an advance team to monitor the ceasefire in Syria.[134] At the same time, SC resolution 2043 (2012) was adopted; this resolution created the UN Supervision Mission Syria (UNSMIS).[135] The mandate of the UNSMIS was to monitor the violence in Syria and assist in implementing the Joint Special Envoy's six-point plan to end the conflict in Syria.[136] The mission's duration was from April 2012 to August 2012, and no further extension was given to the UNSMIS' work owing to the lack of reduction in the levels of violence from both sides.[137]

The Office of the High Commission for Human Rights' (OHCHR) UN Commission of Inquiry has been monitoring humanitarian and human rights issues in Syria and has found consistent violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.[138] The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has been responding to issues related to Syrian Refugees in neighboring Member States and also issues associated with Internally Displaced Persons.[139] Finally, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) has been investigating the use of chemical weapons in the conflict and has confirmed allegations that chemical weapons have been used in Syria.[140]

Key Issues

A primary issue that remains unresolved is the negotiation of a ceasefire between the two sides. Under SC resolution 2042 (2012), a Six-Point Proposal was suggested by the Joint Special Envoy; the plan was to be implemented by the UN and the League of Arab States.[141] Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan was tasked to lead negotiations between the Syrian Government and the opposition by addressing the legitimate aspirations and concerns of the Syrian people.[142] In addition, the plan demanded an immediate end to troop movement, support for humanitarian

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[129] United Nations General Assembly, *Situation of Human Rights in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/RES/66/176)*, 2012. http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=A/RES/66/176.

[130] United Nations General Assembly, *The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/RES/66/253 B)*, 2012. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/66/253%20B.

[131] United Nations General Assembly, *The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/RES/66/253 B)*, 2012. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/66/253%20B.

[132] United Nations General Assembly, *The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/RES/67/262 B)*, 2013.

[133] United Nations General Assembly, *The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/RES/67/262 B)*, 2013.

[134] United Nations Security Council, *resolution 2042 (2012)*, 2012. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2042(2012).

[135] United Nations Security Council, *resolution 2043 (2012)*, 2012. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2043(2012).

[136] United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria, *UNSMIS Background*, 2012. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unsmis/background.shtml.

[137] United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria, *UNSMIS Background*, 2012. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unsmis/background.shtml.

[138] Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, *Commission of Inquiry and Fact-finding mission on Syria*, n.d. http://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/menaregion/pages/syindex.aspx.

[139] United Nations High Commission on Refugees, *Syria Regional Refugee Response*, 2013. http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php.

[140] Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, *Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic*, 2013. http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/CoISyria/A-HRC-23-58_en.pdf.

[141] United Nations Security Council, *Six-Point Proposal of the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States*, 2012. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/six_point_proposal.pdf.

[142] United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria, *UNSMIS Background*, 2012. http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unsmis/background.shtml.

access and freedom of movement and association.[143] Between April and early May of 2012, the UNSMIS observed low-intensity fighting and a general reduction in violence but by mid-June hostilities had increased to pre-April 2012 levels.[144] With the high levels of violence, the UNSMIS was rendered incapacitated and stalled the implementation of the Six-Point Proposal.[145] A report in July 2012 to the Council indicated the deteriorating conditions in Syria and the difficulties in implementing the Proposal.[146] The Council authorized the continued efforts of UNSMIS for an additional 30 days under the condition that "cessation of the use of heavy weapons and a reduction in the level of violence sufficient by all sides" are observed.[147] By August 2012, these conditions were not met, the UNSMIS' mandate had not been met and as such the Six-Point Proposal was not achieved.[148]

Another ongoing issue is the role of non-state actors in the Syrian conflict.[149] In one OHCHR report, the UN recognized that the 300,000-strong Syrian army is bolstered by militia forces with up to 10,000 civilians armed by the government and 100,000 reservists from the People's Army.[150] The report claims that the military and militia groups have been given 'shoot to kill' orders in order to control demonstrations.[151] In addition, the opposition group is composed of mainly army defectors and has taken responsibility for the attacks on the government forces.[152] Non-state actors from both sides of the conflict have been accused of human rights violations.[153] Though human rights laws have been traditionally been applied to States when evaluating their actions towards individuals, international organizations such as the Red Cross and Amnesty International have called upon the international community to recognize the accountability that non-state actors also have in complying with human rights.[154]

Syria was one of three Member States that blocked the adoption of an international Arms Trade Treaty by consensus at the Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty; the treaty was subsequently adopted by the GA on April 2, 2013.[155] With the conflict in Syria being fueled by the illegal arms trade, Oxfam reported that there has been a 580 percent increase from 2002-2006 and 2007-2011 in the import of major weapons into Syria, and there are claims that Russia is one of the biggest suppliers of arms.[156] In June 2013, Russia indicated that it was intending to move forward with a major arms trade deal with Syria.[157]

The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, under the OHCHR, has reported

[143] United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria, *UNSMIS Background*, 2012.
http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unsmis/background.shtml.
[144] United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria, *UNSMIS Background*, 2012.
http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unsmis/background.shtml.
[145] United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria, *UNSMIS Background*, 2012.
http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unsmis/background.shtml.
[146] United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria, *UNSMIS Background*, 2012.
http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unsmis/background.shtml.
[147] United Nations Security Council, *resolution 2059*, 2012.
http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2059(2012)&referer=/english/&Lang=E.
[148] United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria, *UNSMIS Background*, 2012.
http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unsmis/background.shtml.
[149] Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, *Syria – Non-State Armed Groups*, 2013.
http://www.geneva-academy.ch/RULAC/non-state_armed_groups.php?id_state=211.
[150] Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, *Syria – Non-State Armed Groups*, 2013.
http://www.geneva-academy.ch/RULAC/non-state_armed_groups.php?id_state=211.
[151] Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, *Syria – Non-State Armed Groups*, 2013.
http://www.geneva-academy.ch/RULAC/non-state_armed_groups.php?id_state=211.
[152] Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, *Syria – Non-State Armed Groups*, 2013.
http://www.geneva-academy.ch/RULAC/non-state_armed_groups.php?id_state=211.
[153] Amnesty International, *Annual Report 2013: Syria*, 2013. http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/syria/report-2013.
[154] International Commission of the Red Cross, *Human Rights Obligations of non-state actors in conflict situations*, 2006.
http://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/irrc_863_clapham.pdf.
[155] Reuters, *Iran, Korea, Syria blocks U.N. arms trade treaty*, 2013. http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/29/us-arms-treaty-un-idUSBRE92R10E20130329.
[156] Oxfam International, *Oxfam Media Briefing Spring 2012*, 2012. http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/arms-trade-treaty-abc-oxfam-2012.pdf.
[157] Times World, *Top Russian Diplomat Explains Reasons for Syrian Arms Sale*, 2013. http://world.time.com/2013/05/17/top-russian-diplomat-explains-logic-behind-syrian-arms-sales/.

human rights violations committed within the country via 1,400 witness interviews.[158] In 2011, the HRC released a report (A/HRC/18/53) which found a pattern of human rights violations including murders, disappearances, torture, deprivation of liberty and wrongful persecution.[159] There are also accusations that the use of force on civilians has been disproportionate and violates the Syria's international human rights obligations.[160] However, the Syrian government has not allowed the commission to undertake investigations inside the country and as such has hampered the investigations.[161] In May 2013, the panel found 'no conclusive findings' regarding the use of chemical weapons by any parties in the Syrian conflict.[162] However, in June 2013, the commission confirmed that there were reasonable grounds that toxic chemicals have been used, though the perpetrators could not be confirmed.[163]

The conflict has also caused more than 5 million persons to be displaced either internally within its borders or into neighboring countries.[164] Impacted neighbors include Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and parts of North Africa.[165] Syrian refugees have caused strains on the public resources of these states, including health services.[166] Furthermore, an increasing number of Palestinian refugees in Syria are being killed as a result of the conflict.[167] Palestinian refugee camps within Syria have caused an estimated 235,000 Palestinians to be displaced and small arms strikes have damaged refugee homes and killed and injured refugees.[168]

Remaining Challenges and Next Steps
In regards to displaced persons and refugees, the UN has called for $81 million to be provided to assist 2.5 million malnourished persons in Syria and 1 million refugees in neighboring regions.[169] The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has also stated that humanitarian assistance to 100,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan may stop due to lack of funding.[170] UNICEF has been providing provision of water, sanitation, immunization, nutrition and education through the funding.[171]

Escaping Syria as a refugee is an often difficult and dangerous journey, made by foot.[172] Since the beginning of

[158] Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *About the Commission of Inquiry, n.d.* http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/IICISyria/Pages/AboutCoI.aspx.
[159] United Nations General Assembly, *Report on the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/HRC/18/53)*, 2011. http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=A/HRC/18/53.
[160] United Nations General Assembly, *Report on the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/HRC/18/53)*, 2011. http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=A/HRC/18/53.
[161] Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *About the Commission of Inquiry, n.d.* http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/IICISyria/Pages/AboutCoI.aspx.
[162] United Nations News Centre, *Syria: UN human rights inquiry has 'no conclusive findings' on use of chemical weapons*, 2013. http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44834&Cr=syria&Cr1=#.UYw8i6XAK9a.
[163] Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, *Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic*, 2013. http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/CoISyria/A-HRC-23-58_en.pdf.
[164] United Nations News Centre, *Syrian Refugees straining health services in region, UN warns in new report*, 2013. http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44761&Cr=syria&Cr1=#.UYw9OqXAK9Z.
[165] United Nations High Commission on Refugees, *Syria Regional Refugee Response*, 2013. http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php.
[166] United Nations News Centre, *Syrian Refugees straining health services in region, UN warns in new report*, 2013. http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44761&Cr=syria&Cr1=#.UYw9OqXAK9Z.
[167] United Nations News Centre, *Palestinian refugees displaced in greater numbers by Syrian violence, says UN Agency*, 2013. http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44794&Cr=palestin&Cr1=#.UYw826XAK9Z.
[168] United Nations News Centre, *Palestinian refugees displaced in greater numbers by Syrian violence, says UN Agency*, 2013. http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44794&Cr=palestin&Cr1=#.UYw826XAK9Z.
[169] United Nations News Centre, *UN says $81 million urgently needed for food relief to 3.5 million Syrians*, 2013. http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44635&Cr=syria&Cr1=#.UYw8UqXAK9Z.
[170] United Nations News Centre, Assistance to Syrian refugees in Jordan threatened by lack of funding, 2013. http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44576&Cr=syria&Cr1=#.UYw-4KXAK9Y.
[171] United Nations News Centre, Assistance to Syrian refugees in Jordan threatened by lack of funding, 2013. http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44576&Cr=syria&Cr1=#.UYw-4KXAK9Y.
[172] United Nations High Commission on Refugees, *Refugees from embattled Syrian Town report harsh conditions, difficulties in reaching safety*, 2013. http://www.unhcr.org/51adb9a02.html.

2013, there has been a massive exodus of Syrian refugees into Lebanon, with over 1 million refugees registered.[173] The rise in the number of refugees has placed a strain on Lebanese social services, infrastructure and communities.[174] The Syrian Civil War has increased conflicts between the Sunni rebels and Shia rival groups who support President Assad within Lebanon.[175]

The civil conflict in Syria has also threatened the ceasefire between Syria and Israel.[176] The ceasefire has existed between the two states since the Yom Kippur War of 1973.[177] But with Syrian forces crossing into the ceasefire area to pursue Syrian rebel groups, this had led to concerns from the UN Secretary-General.[178] Some UN monitors have pulled out of the region as a result of the inherent threat brought on by the military activities in the area.[179] In March 2013, 21 Filipino monitors were held captive and demanded that the Syrian Army withdraw from contested town. Negotiations led to the monitors being released safely.[180] In May 2013, four UN peacekeepers were captured from the Golan Heights.[181] There have also been numerous reports of Israeli air strikes on Syria, which threatens peace in the region.[182]

Conclusion
Given the length of the conflict and the number of civilians that have been impacted by the Syrian crisis, there is an urgency to resolve this situation as quickly as possible. In addition to achieving a ceasefire and peace in the region, there are a number of social and humanitarian issues that remain outstanding. Specifically, there are concerns related to the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms on the local population and the use of chemical weapons in the conflict. Furthermore, the strains that this civil war has had on neighboring states threaten both resources and the peace and security in the region. Increased refugees in neighboring states mean increased pressures on the local services and infrastructure in the recipient states. As well, there are issues related to the sustainability of camps for refugees, with funding and resources decreasing while the number of refugees continues to rise.

Questions for Consideration
There are differing opinions on the role of intervention through the international community with the United States, United Kingdom and France pushing for more intervention and Russia asserting that intervention into domestic matters is unacceptable.[183] Given these differing opinions, what is the role of the GA in domestic crises?

How does the GA handle issues of human rights violations, refugees, internally displaced persons and the use of chemical weapons given its existing mandate?

Furthermore, how does the Responsibility to Protect complement the right to a state's self-determination and how does the GA take action given these competing values?

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[173] United Nations High Commission on Refugees, *Stories from Syrian Refugees*, 2013.
http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/syria.php.
[174] United Nations High Commission on Refugees, *Stories from Syrian Refugees*, 2013.
http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/syria.php.
[175] BBC, *Syria's sectarian conflict spreads to Lebanon*, 2013. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-22963320.
[176] The Washington Post, *U.N. Leader: Syrian Civil War threatens cease-fire with Israel*, 2013.
http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-03-21/world/37892174_1_cease-fire-syrian-civil-war-syrian-army.
[177] The Washington Post, *U.N. Leader: Syrian Civil War threatens cease-fire with Israel*, 2013.
http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-03-21/world/37892174_1_cease-fire-syrian-civil-war-syrian-army.
[178] The Washington Post, *U.N. Leader: Syrian Civil War threatens cease-fire with Israel*, 2013.
http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-03-21/world/37892174_1_cease-fire-syrian-civil-war-syrian-army.
[179] The Washington Post, *U.N. Leader: Syrian Civil War threatens cease-fire with Israel*, 2013.
http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-03-21/world/37892174_1_cease-fire-syrian-civil-war-syrian-army.
[180] The Washington Post, *U.N. Leader: Syrian Civil War threatens cease-fire with Israel*, 2013.
http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-03-21/world/37892174_1_cease-fire-syrian-civil-war-syrian-army.
[181] United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 2059*, 2012.
http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2059(2012)&referer=/english/&Lang=E.
[182] United Nations News Centre, *UN chief calls for maximum calm and restraint after reported Israeli air strikes in Syria*, 2013.
http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44829&Cr=Syria&Cr1=#.UYw7dKXAK9Z.
[183] The Guardian, *Yes, the UN has a duty to intervene. But when, where and how?*, 2013.
http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/may/04/un-syria-duty-to-intervene.

If there is a place for the GA in resolving the issue, what actions can the international community take to bring stability to the region and to sustain peace through this ongoing domestic conflict?

What actions can be taken specifically on the rebel groups and other non-state actors contributing to the conflict?

<center>**III. Security Council Elections**</center>

"The United Nations remains our most important global actor. These days we are continuously reminded of the enormous responsibility of the Security Council to uphold international peace and stability."
- Anna Lindh, Foreign Minister of Sweden[184]

Introduction

The preamble of the Charter of the United Nations states that the organization's mandate is "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind."[185] The principal United Nations (UN) body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security is the Security Council (SC), which draws its mandate from Chapters VI, VII, VIII and XII of the Charter.[186] Powers designated by the Charter to the SC to accomplish this responsibility include, but are not limited to, settling disputes between Member States, and the call for mobilizing armed forces from the Members of the UN.[187] The SC is comprised of permanent and non-permanent members. Non-permanent members are elected by the General Assembly (GA) and require a two-thirds majority vote, as per Article 18 of the Charter.[188]

At Northwest Model United Nations (NWMUN) 2013, the GA will elect the next five non-permanent members to the SC replacing the five members whose terms end on December 31, 2013.[189] A non-permanent member that sits on the SC at the time of election cannot run for re-election, and a Member State may be excluded from the voting process should it fail to fulfill its financial obligations to the UN, as stated in Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations.[190]

Security Council Membership

The 5 permanent members are China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.[191] Under Article 27 of the Charter, permanent members are able to veto any substantive proposals, including draft resolutions, amendments to the UN Charter, or any other proposal that would require action from the Security Council.[192]

GA resolution 1991 states that the 10 non-permanent seats (each serving a two year term) are organized by region, with five for African and Asian States, one for Eastern European States, two for the Latin American and Caribbean States, and two for Western European and other States.[193] The UN has officially recognized the existence of these regional groups within the General Assembly.[194] This is in order to provide the best representation in the major decisions that come to the SC.[195] Electoral groups have been established in the following regions:

The African Group

The African Group is the largest regional bloc, with 54 Member States in the UN and three seats on the SC.[196] The three seats are divided into African sub-regional groups to ensure full representation of the African Regional Bloc among the non-permanent membership. These sub-regional groups are divided as West Africa, North Africa, Central

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[184] Lindh, *Searching for Global Partnerships*, 2002. http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/1111

[185] United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1946. http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/

[186] United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Principles and Guidelines*, 2008.
http://pbpu.unlb.org/pbps/library/capstone_doctrine_eNg.pdf

[187] United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1946. http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/

[188] United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1946. http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/

[189] Global Policy Forum, *Elected Members of the Security Council*, n.d.
http://www.globalpolicy.org/security-council/security-council-as-an-institution/membership-of-the-security-council/40015.html

[190] United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1946. http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/

[191] United Nations, *Current Members*, 2013. *http*://www.un.org/en/sc/members/

[192] United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1946. http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/

[193] United Nations General Assembly, *Question of equitable representation on the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council A/RES/1991(XVIII).* 1963. http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/18/ares18.htm

[194] United Nations, *Members of the General Assembly Are Arranged in Current Regional Groups*, n.d.
http://www.un.int/wcm/webdav/site/gmun/shared/documents/GA_regionalgrps_Web.pdf

[195] Lai and Lefler, *U.N. Security Council Non-Permanent Membership: Equitable Distribution for Equitable Representation,* 2009. http://myweb.uiowa.edu/bhlai/workshop/lailefler.pdf

[196] United Nations, *Members of the General Assembly Are Arranged in Current Regional Groups*, n.d.
http://www.un.int/wcm/webdav/site/gmun/shared/documents/GA_regionalgrps_Web.pdf

Africa, East Africa and South Africa.[197] The North African turn for the non-permanent membership is used for the Arab Swing Seat, fulfilling an agreement between the African and Asian members to elect one Arab member in alternate elections.[198] Although there is an informal agreement that a suitable Arab candidate would occupy a seat on the Security Council every four years, a seat has been occupied by an Arab State continuously since 1968.[199] From the African Group, Togo as well as the current Arab seat holder Morocco will be ending their term on the Security Council as non-permanent members on December 1, 2013.[200] As per current rotational patterns, the Asian Group would elect an Arab seat in 2013, with the North African seat passing to the Central Africa sub-grouping.[201] Togo's seat would normally remain in the West Africa sub-grouping, as this group does not alternate with another sub-group every two years and instead holds the seat at all times.[202]

The Eastern Europe Group
The Eastern Europe Group is the smallest of the Regional Blocs, with only 23 Members; it is represented by two members, with one being Russia as a permanent member and one a non-permanent seat elected by the General Assembly.[203] This was once one of the most heavily contested seats, with candidates receiving endorsements from either Soviet or Western powers.[204] In the post-Cold War era, this practice has since been non-existent, leaving the region with open candidacy to any interested and qualified Member States.[205] Turkey once occupied the Eastern European seat on the SC in 1961, but recently became an official member of the Western European and Others Group (WEOG). In more recent history, Slovenia and Azerbaijan both ran for the vacant Eastern Europe Group seat in 2011. This was another much contested election, as electing Slovenia would have introduced the sixth European Union (EU) country to the SC membership, leading to great opposition from non-EU Members.[206] Slovenia withdrew its candidacy after the 16th round of voting, leaving Azerbaijan uncontested. Azerbaijan's seat will be up for election in the 2013 Security Council Elections.[207]

The Western European and Others Group (WEOG)
Aside from the 3 permanent members on the SC, France, the United States and the United Kingdom, there are two non-permanent seats that represent the 28 members of the WEOG.[208] There are some members, however, who are affiliated with WEOG, but are not considered official members. For instance, the United States attends WEOG meetings as an observer and is considered a member of that group only for electoral purposes.[209] Israel is an unofficial member of WEOG, only able to participate in elections and only able to attend meetings of UN bodies held in New York. Israel is unable to attend WEOG meetings associated with the UN Human Rights Council.[210] Neither seat will be up for election this year, as both Australia and Luxembourg will be retaining their positions until

[197] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[198] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[199] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[200] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[201] Security Council Report, *Special Research Report No. 4: Security Council Elections 2011*, 2011. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/special-research-report/lookup-c-glKWLeMTIsG-b-7741609.php

[202] Security Council Report, *Special Research Report No. 4: Security Council Elections 2011*, 2011. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/special-research-report/lookup-c-glKWLeMTIsG-b-7741609.php

[203] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[204] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[205] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[206] UN Elections, *Security Council Elections to Temporary Seats-October 26*, 2011. http://www.unelections.org/?q=node/2382

[207] UN Elections, *Security Council Elections to Temporary Seats-October 26*, 2011. http://www.unelections.org/?q=node/2382

[208] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[209] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[210] United Nations Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, *United Nations Regional Groups of Member States*, n.d. http://www.un.org/depts/DGACM/RegionalGroups.shtml

December 1, 2014.[211]

The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC)
33 States are members of GRULAC.[212] Among the blocs represented on the SC, the two seats allocated to GRULAC came as a response to the consideration of inequitable and unbalanced representation that led to the drafting and passing of GA resolution 1991.[213] Non-Caribbean States have been the dominant presence on the SC for the past 60 years since their formal inclusion.[214] One seat, held currently by Brazil, will have a new member elected for the 2014-2015 term in 2013.[215]

The Group of Asia and the Pacific Small Island Developing States (The Asia-Pacific Group)
With 53 Members, the Asia-Pacific Group is the second largest Regional Bloc, with two non-permanent seats on the SC. China is also a member of the Asia-Pacific Group and a permanent member of the Council; however, permanent members are less representative of their Regional Blocs than their non-permanent counterparts, not needing to be elected by the GA.[216] The two seats do not have a rotation system, aside from the "Arab Swing Seat" agreement with the African Group. [217] The Arab Swing Seat agreement exists to represent the large geographical spread of the bloc, as it would be difficult for any one Member State to represent the cultural, economic and political diversity of such a vast region.[218] Both Africa and Asia are technically one electoral group, but under GA resolution 1991, there are three seats for Africa and two seats for Asia.[219] Historically, one seat will be allocated to an Arab State every two years as the seat is switched between the regional groups; in 2013, the normal rotational system would mean that Asia elects an Arab seat in 2013.[220]

Elections Procedure
To be elected, a candidate for a seat must receive two-thirds majority of the General Assembly, even if there is no other candidate for the position.[221] The first round is unrestricted, meaning there can be any number of candidates for each region's vacant seats, as long as the candidates have met the financial and legal prerequisites for candidacy.[222] For the purposes of NWMUN 2013, all delegates seeking candidacy for the vacant seats of their respective Regional Blocs have been approved. Under Chapter IV, Article 18(3) of the Charter, the two-thirds majority accounts for members within the GA who are present and voting.[223] Should a delegate abstain from voting, they are considered not voting, thus reducing the threshold of two-thirds necessary for a candidate to be elected.[224]

[211] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[212] United Nations, Members of the General Assembly Are Arranged in Current Regional Groups, n.d. http://www.un.int/wcm/webdav/site/gmun/shared/documents/GA_regionalgrps_Web.pdf

[213] United Nations, General Assembly, *Question of equitable representation on the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council*, (GA/RES/1991/XVIII), 12/17/1963. http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/186/66/IMG/NR018666.pdf?OpenElement

[214] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

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[216] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[217] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[218] Lai and Lefler, *U.N. Security Council Non-Permanent Membership: Equitable Distribution for Equitable Representation,* 2009. http://myweb.uiowa.edu/bhlai/workshop/lailefler.pdf

[219] United Nations, General Assembly, *Question of equitable representation on the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council*, (GA/RES/1991/XVIII), 12/17/1963. http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/186/66/IMG/NR018666.pdf?OpenElement

[220] Lai and Lefler, *U.N. Security Council Non-Permanent Membership: Equitable Distribution for Equitable Representation,* 2009. http://myweb.uiowa.edu/bhlai/workshop/lailefler.pdf

[221] UN Elections, *2012 Security Council Elections*, n.d. http://www.unelections.org/?q=node/33

[222] UN Elections, *2012 Security Council Elections*, n.d. http://www.unelections.org/?q=node/33

[223] United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, 1946, http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/

[224] Lai and Lefler, *U.N. Security Council Non-Permanent Membership: Equitable Distribution for Equitable Representation,* 2009. http://myweb.uiowa.edu/bhlai/workshop/lailefler.pdf

If the first voting period does not produce the necessary two-thirds majority, the GA will move into "restricted voting," whereby the number of candidates for this section of voting is limited.[225] The restricted voting procedure can be repeated up to three times. If no country is still able to procure the two-thirds majority of voting members necessary to be elected, unrestricted voting will be reopened for another three rounds.[226] For a candidate to advance to restricted voting, they must have been placed in the top number of candidates for the vacant seat, where the number of candidates in that round cannot exceed twice the number of vacant seats for that Regional Bloc.[227] These rounds repeat in cycles of three until all seats for a designated Regional Bloc are filled, per the Plenary Meetings segment of the GA Rules of Procedure.[228]

Candidates in the Security Council Elections
Traditionally, the first step for a Member State seeking candidacy for a SC seat would be to seek the sponsorship of their Regional Bloc, in addition to their sub-regional group should one exist.[229] Once a sub-regional endorsement has been secured, the Regional Group's chair officially announces the candidacy.[230] The Regional Group may decide to give its endorsement and inform the President of the GA as such so that other Member States are informed, and documents are prepared for the elections.[231] Rule 146 of the GA Rules of Procedures also prohibits retiring members of the Security Councils from immediate re-election; this means that Azerbaijan, Guatemala, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo are ineligible.[232]Additionally, the countries whose term continues until the end of 2014 are not eligible, as current and ongoing members, for election in 2013; these countries include Argentina, Australia, Luxembourg, the Republic of Korea and Rwanda.[233]

It would be advantageous for any delegate to understand how the regional groups work in order to maximize their chance at election. Candidates should arrive with a familiarity of their Regional Bloc, what other Member States are included, and how the dynamics of those Regions will affect who will be nominated for the election.

Considerations while Voting
The reasons why a Member State votes for the appointment of another could range from the contribution of troops to UN peacekeeping operations, to the representation of a significant demographic group, to financial contributions to the UN budget.[234] The reasons why a Member State would not vote for a particular state to be on the SC can range from the lack of domestic security in their home government, or if they are already running for another office or seat among other subsidiary bodies of the UN.[235]

Conclusion
The elections at the time of the conference will depend strongly on the political, financial and other elements for a Member State's decision to declare their candidacy and campaign for a seat on the SC. Thus, a strong emphasis must be placed at the time of the Security Council Elections as to what qualities a Member State may want to see in their SC, and which Member States have shown sound judgment, global community involvement and respect for the rulings of the UN.

If a delegate considers running for the SC on behalf of their Member State, they should understand the position of their State in the totality of UN operations, and their own "track record" within their regional bloc. Finally, bear in mind that a delegate's ability to successfully campaign for their respective contestable seats will not only rely on a

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[225] UN Elections, *2012 Security Council Elections*, n.d. http://www.unelections.org/?q=node/33

[226] UN Elections, *2012 Security Council Elections*, n.d. http://www.unelections.org/?q=node/33

[227] UN Elections, *2012 Security Council Elections*, n.d. http://www.unelections.org/?q=node/33

[228] General Assembly of the United Nations, *Rules of Procedure*, 2013, http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/ropga/plenary.shtml

[229] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[230] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[231] Security Council Report, *Security Council Elections 2012*, 2012. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/special_research_report_elections_2012.pdf

[232] General Assembly of the United Nations, *Rules of Procedure,* 2013, http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/ropga/elect.shtml

[233] United Nations Security Council, *Current Members*, 2013. http://www.un.org/en/sc/members/

[234] UN Elections, *2012 Security Council Elections*, n.d. http://www.unelections.org/?q=node/33

[235] UN Elections, *2012 Security Council Elections*, n.d. http://www.unelections.org/?q=node/33

deep understanding of their foreign policy, but also their understanding of the rules. Please read the General Assembly Rules of Procedure, specifically on "Plenary Meetings" in Section XII, and the "Elections to Principal Organs" in Section XV, prior to the conference.

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