

## KENTUCKY UNITED NATIONS ASSEMBLY 2023

# SECURITY COUNCIL ISSUES

At KUNA, the Security Council will address **3 Issues** pertaining to international security in a specialized debate format. This year's issues are as follows:

- **Energy Insecurity: The Global Energy Crisis**
- **Economic Insecurity in Growing Regions**
- **Children and Armed Conflict**

Each issue includes a resource guide with the following sections:

- **Background on Issue**  
Summary and background information on the issue
- **Conflicts**  
Summary of ongoing or recently concluded conflicts associated with the issue
- **Questions to Address**  
Guiding questions/problems to address in position papers and resolutions
- **Sources**  
Links to research, articles, and other resources on the issue

All Security Council members - both Middle School and High School - will prepare and submit a **Position Paper** stating the position of their country on each of these 3 issues prior to KUNA. You must submit a position paper, or your country risks losing its vote during Security Council debate.

Position Papers are submitted using the link below (NOT on your delegation's registration form), and are due by the registration deadline for your Assembly:

[www.kyymca.org/kuna/security-council](http://www.kyymca.org/kuna/security-council)

The page above also includes links to the Security Council Resource Folder, which contains additional resources and templates for preparing for your role as a member of the Security Council.

At the Assembly, members of the Security Council will work together to draft, debate, and vote on **Resolutions** addressing each of the issues.

Our Security Council will also participate in a **Crisis Scenario**, which will be facilitated by the President of the Security Council President and YMCA Staff. Details regarding the scenario will be revealed at KUNA.

## Security Council | Issue 1

# Energy Insecurity: The Global Energy Crisis

**Author:** Hannah Hutchinson, President of the Security Council | HS KUNA 1

### **BACKGROUND ON ISSUE:**

The UN Security Council was created with the duty to maintain peace and security internationally on various levels, including energy security. Over the years, energy has become an inaccessible or unsustainable resource for countries across the globe and has been discussed consistently within the Security Council. In 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals as the blueprint for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and preserving peace internationally. Goal 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy – specifically relates to making energy more widely accessible, especially in countries without that dependability. Without viable energy resources, countries become unstable due to the relationship between energy and economic security. Energy is necessary for a nation's ability to produce resources for its people, as well as economic development, which makes the issue of its stability so pressing.

While multiple Security Council meetings have been called to address energy insecurity, the issue of how to solve this ever-changing crisis remains inconsistent. As of recent news, the UN Security Council has been targeting financial and conflict prevention strategies for climate change, specifically its impact on international security. However, climate change has not been the only energy crisis the UN has had to face. There has been environmental degradation, the exploitation of natural resources, financial insecurity, and even global pandemics that have threatened energy sustainability worldwide. One recent example was the Arria-formula meeting for climate finance convened by the United Arab Emirates, which emphasized a need for developed countries to provide a commitment to climate finance for underdeveloped countries without the means to do so. In October of 2021, the 26th UN Climate Change Conference was held in the UK, leading to promises to cease deforestation, decrease methane emissions, and decrease the use of coal. However, the premise of these plans requires the commitment of financially solid nations, as is with most solutions discussed by the Security Council. Although, many nations fail to meet these standards that were once previously promised, whether it be due to inability or lack of priority. If the world does not have the support of developed countries willing to contribute to the critical energy crisis, how are more underdeveloped nations able to receive the energy, as well as the basic necessities created from the energy, without stable access?

While the fight for clean and stable energy is far from finished, that does not discount all of the progress that has been made thus far. More people have access to electricity than ever, even in spite of the Covid-19 pandemic, as seen by the advancement in the electrification of rural areas. In 2010, 17% of the world had no access to electricity, but as of 2020, that number has decreased to only 10%. The number of people with access to clean and safe fuels increased to 61% in 2017 and renewable energy consumption to 17.5%, but these numbers fall below to expectations of the UN Security Council. Almost half of the world does not have access to clean and safe fuel, and over 700 million people have no access to electricity at all. While cleaner energy resources are appealing, for many countries they are just unattainable due to the instability of the resource and their own economy. Even developed countries have struggled to switch to renewable energy because of unpredictable changes in the world, from civil wars to even viral diseases that have crippled their value of life. In a world where clean energy is too expensive and affordable energy is harmful to our world, energy insecurity and the global energy crisis are issues that are crucial to our future, yet have inconsistent solutions and even slower progress.

## **CONFLICT 1: Covid-19 Energy Declines in Ethiopia**

Ethiopia is one of the many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa without stable access to energy, and millions in the country were reported not having energy access as of 2019. However, this is extremely surprising due to Ethiopia's abundance of natural and renewable resources. In recent years, Ethiopia Electric Power (EEP) has created a plan to maximize the country's potential with hydropower and wind power plants, but they have been performing below their stated capacity. Ethiopia has more than enough resources, yet they still experience consistent power outages nationwide, and many have considered why this is. One major reason is the country's dependence on hydropower, which makes up approximately 90% of their generation capacity. This becomes a problem due to the constant droughts in the nation that make their hydropower plants and energy income inconsistent overall. While this is a major concern, the underlying issue of Ethiopia's lack of energy is a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the strike on the economy.

During the peak of the pandemic, Ethiopia was one of many Sub-Saharan African countries that saw significant decreases in people with energy access. Ethiopia, along with Nigeria, Kenya, and Tanzania accounted for 70% of the population that did not have access to energy during this time. While the country was able to combat issues such as the drought by focusing on solar and wind power instead, the rising cost of energy and shift of funding to emergency measures has left Ethiopia in a state without financial availability. Without the support and investment of more developed countries, Ethiopia and the UN's Goal 7 seem unattainable. However, at a time when all nations are facing economic stress, universal access to clean electricity seems implausible with this solution.

## **CONFLICT 2: Russian tensions and the global market**

Russia is one of the world's largest fossil fuel exporters, earning billions of dollars from crude oil production and exportation. Countries all over the world relied on Russia for their fossil fuels, with some nations even importing more than 99% of their crude oil from the country, including Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Cuba. However, the entire global market would change after Russian armies began to invade Ukraine in February of 2022, turning the whole world against the nation. After the height of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, many countries decided to put sanctions against Russia for their war crimes, and many others decided to stop buying exports from the country as a whole. This decision does have its consequences, not just for Russia, but for people across the globe.

The EU was one of the largest importers of Russian fossil fuels prior to 2022, importing millions of petroleum barrels daily. Although the EU already had planned on leaning away from fossil fuels in recent years, the sudden pause in oil imports has made this plan more difficult. Similar to other nations, the EU recognized the damage fossil fuels place on the environment and proposed options to shift to more environmentally friendly energy sources, such as hydro, solar, and wind power. However, with the EU no longer accepting Russian exports in support of Ukraine, their plans no longer have the financial stability they once had. With so many European countries struggling to find ways to power their cities, there is no longer any room to consider cleaner, but more expensive energy. With the price of fossil fuels reaching record highs, even stable countries in the EU are struggling to find solutions to making clean energy accessible for their own nations. Taking a step back, countries around the world do not have the stability to handle this influx in prices, so now other resources seem completely inaccessible as a whole.

The sudden loss of Russian fossil fuels is taking a huge toll on the world, and now many countries have dropped the conversation of clean energy because they now have to focus on maintaining a stable energy income. If clean energy is so expensive in the modern world, how are countries meant to be able to improve the environment when they are not stable themselves?

### **CONFLICT 3: The Chernobyl disaster**

Since fossil fuels cause critical damage to the environment and more clean forms of energy are too expensive, one solution that many countries have turned to is nuclear energy. The use of nuclear energy creates low carbon emissions and minimal waste compared to fossil fuels, and once the power plant is built, it is relatively cost-effective to produce. Many countries have found this energy source to be more effective because the only main costs come from building the power plant, and many believe it to be safer than other forms of energy, however, that may not be the case. On April 26th, 1986, the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in Pripyat, Ukraine would have a disastrous accident that leaves the city abandoned to this day.

During a test to see what would happen if the reactors suddenly lost power, the operators of the Number Four RBMK reactor made a fatal mistake by not shutting down the reactor in time. The reactor had become too unstable and the cooling systems meant to stop a meltdown made the situation worse, due to the intense steam and pressure in the reactor it created. The steam caused an explosion and eventually a second explosion soon after, killing two people and starting multiple fires in the process. Radioactive waste was released into the surrounding area due to the numerous safety violations from the operators of Reactor Number Four, and 28 people died during the process of containing Chernobyl. Emergency personnel called "Liquidators" were sent inside of the power plant to clean up the aftermath of the explosions, stopping the radioactive material from spreading all across Ukraine and its surrounding countries. Thousands of these workers received intense radiation poisoning from being at the site, causing intense sickness and even death in some cases. Eventually, a concrete sarcophagus was built around Reactor Number Four a month later, containing any remaining radioactive waste, but the area was still dangerous to inhabitants. Very few have returned to the surrounding communities and some animals as well, but the area is still considered abandoned because of the lingering radiation. Without the multiple people who risked their lives to contain the meltdown, the explosions at Chernobyl would have plagued Europe with its radioactive fallout.

Chernobyl is not the only example of nuclear power plants going unstable and killing people, there was also the nuclear disaster at Fukushima and Three Mile Island almost melting down as well. If nuclear energy is considered so safe, why are there multiple cases of power plants causing death and illness? The main reason behind these nuclear events is due to poor design and improper training, leading to accidents such as Chernobyl. Some have considered the true safety of nuclear energy because of its instability, and a conversation has started on the pros and cons of its use. It only takes a small accident for another Chernobyl to occur, so is it truly beneficial to the nations, or does it pose a threat to the security and peace of the world?

## QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

1. What are your country's main forms of energy consumption and how do they achieve this? (i.e. Importing resources from other countries, power plants, or even no stable energy income)
2. What suggestions, if any, would your country make on how to help the UN achieve Goal 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy)
3. Has your country had to deal with energy insecurity? (Whether it be during the Covid-19 Pandemic or even prior)
4. What are your country's stance on fossil fuels and clean energy?
5. What changes, if any, would your country do to make clean energy more accessible to nations without the financial stability to do so?
6. Does your country use nuclear energy as a consistent energy income?
7. How does your country view nuclear energy, is it beneficial or too dangerous?

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## Security Council | Issue 2

# Economic Insecurity in Growing Regions

**Author:** Katelyn Thatcher, President of the Security Council | HS KUNA 2

### **BACKGROUND ON ISSUE:**

As our world continues to develop and grow, economic insecurity remains a large problem. The UN's sustainable development goals still include issues such as financial inclusion, employment, and food insecurity as some of the biggest challenges for the world today. And yet, many regions, both growing and developed, are still struggling. As the economic needs of citizens change, many government programs are blatantly ignoring these needs and supporting their own programs. A lack of support for the people is creating not only economic inflation, but an increase in general worry among the people.

Not only is the issue general inflation, but certain causes of inflation have drastically increased over the past decade. As the war in Ukraine and Russia continues, there has been a major loss in fossil fuels, which are largely produced in the region. Since proxy wars are stemming from the conflict, the effects are even more widespread. While prices continue to rise, many countries lack a legally established minimum wage. More and more are struggling to keep up with today's economy, especially those who work in developing countries. Although initiatives have started to send aid specifically to nations with vulnerable households of producers, the continued loss of jobs is undeniable. Global covid cases have intensified this pattern as many businesses have stalled out following the pandemic, losing workers or the ability to pay said workers. This struggle within businesses has also contributed to the minimum wage crisis, which is increasingly existing in all parts of the world rather than just those lacking minimum wage laws.

The increase in inflation is also linked to natural disasters, not only man made ones. As some resources are getting destroyed by the aforementioned armed conflict, many other resources are either struggling due to drought and shortages in crops or the global COVID pandemic. In the Horn of Africa, many are struggling to support themselves and their businesses as more and more crops disappear. Yet the drought rages on, touching every corner of the world as far as loss of food and increase in prices. Aside from natural disasters increasing every year, the COVID pandemic has created a stall in the market's patterns, lessening jobs and killing businesses. With so many factors causing economic tension, there is more pressure to fix the issue. In response, many governments have created relief programs and tried to aid businesses harmed by covid, but little has been done in the areas suffering from natural disasters the most. Although little has been done, the UNSGA's move towards financial inclusion in several focus regions is a positive move towards change, bringing back the idea that the voice of citizens in economic struggles will be heard soon again by those in power to bring about changes.

## **CONFLICT 1: Ukraine/Russia's economic effects**

Both Ukraine and Russia are widely depended upon for resources. As both countries pour more and more resources into the ongoing war and other global conflicts, there has been a massive loss in production and its demand. These countries are major suppliers of fossil fuels, and thus have contributed to the rising expense of gas, oil, and coal as they fall behind in the global market. The focus on war has also created large conflicts within Russia/Ukraine as the citizens who produce items now have a harder time marketing their products or even producing them, as more and more citizens are pushed into the war effort.

Meanwhile, lower class citizens globally are suffering as conflict-induced inflation takes over prices of virtually everything. Although inflation has shaken up every country's market, more developed countries continue to send large amounts of aid to lesser developed countries as they fall further behind due to the simultaneous loss of production and rising prices. According to the World Bank's website, these inflated prices aren't predicted to return to normal until the end of 2024. Despite the struggles of their own citizens, developed countries like the United States continue to aid other countries rather than aiding their own citizens. With the changing market, it seems there isn't a balanced market to be seen within the next few years as conflict and drastic global changes continue.

## **CONFLICT 2: Minimum Wage Crisis**

While inflation continues to affect the wider world, the simultaneous issues with minimum wage are making life increasingly difficult for many people. Minimum wage may seem like a standard idea for many, but in other lesser-developed countries, a minimum wage hasn't been implemented. This lack of government involvement has only worsened the issue in these regions, as the poor get paid less and less and the rich seem to thrive. The world bank has begun to send aid to countries with vulnerable households and producers, but it seems there has been minimal done by the governments in these countries themselves.

The issue isn't isolated in these lesser developed countries. While America likes to be an economic example, their minimum wage system is a glimpse into the government's refusal to change. As the cost of living steadily rises, the minimum wage has seemingly hit a wall. The U.S. government continues to fund resources that aren't struggling quite as much as those struggling with finances, including the education system and the underpayment of its workers. As this continues, the United States seems to be spending more and more on the wars of other countries, such as Senegal's ongoing crisis, rather than the problems of its own people.

### **CONFLICT 3: Food Insecurity**

The drastic changes in land patterns and conditions has undoubtedly contributed to the high numbers in food insecurity today. With disease, war, climate, and production all being factors in this issue, it seems like an easy time for food insecurity to persist. While the specific issue mostly affects rural populations, it is slowly spreading out to other communities and contributing to inflation. In countries such as Senegal that have been involved in armed conflict, food supply has been drastically lessened following the destruction of resources and the stall in production. Additionally, more natural disasters have contributed to the issue, especially in areas like the Horn of Africa, where severe drought persists. The world bank has set aside money for the food crisis in both Eastern and Southern Africa, as well as Egypt, but the prediction for when agricultural production will get back to normal is unclear. These shortages in both food resources and production have caused food prices to increase steadily, as well as a loss in the market structure in these countries. The inability to contribute to the global market only causes greater loss and these areas lose income that could be used to aid the problem.

The destruction of natural resources isn't the only issue causing insecurity. The past few years of dealing with global COVID cases has put a massive wrench in the economy. According to a CEPR article from September of 2021, the volume of world merchandise trade had already fallen by 5.3%, and foreign direct investment had dropped by 42%. As this change becomes a fact of life, the rising prices have meant issues affording everyday resources amidst the first global pandemic in nearly a century.

### **QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS:**

1. What does your country do to assist people struggling with food insecurity?
2. Has your country gone through severe economic changes recently?
3. What, if any, economic changes has your country made recently to account for crisis or insecurity?
4. What is your country's position on the minimum wage crisis?
5. Has your country given or received economic aid due to the aforementioned issues? To what extent?
6. What relief programs would your country implement for the aid of production and agriculture?

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2. <https://www.ilo.org/infostories/en-GB/Campaigns/Wages/globalwagereport#effective/rates>
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4. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/agriculture/brief/food-security-update>



## Security Council | Issue 3

# Children and Armed Conflict

**Author:** Spandana Pavuluri, President of the Security Council | HS KUNA 3

### **BACKGROUND ON ISSUE:**

Despite an increased emphasis on human rights, our world still sees some of the most alarming human rights violations, especially in regard to children. The prevalence of children involved or affected by armed conflict is detrimental to our world but, most importantly, to the children that are endangered by their forced participation in this violence. A child soldier is defined as “any person below 18 years of age who is, or who has been, recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, spies or for sexual purposes.”

The mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict was approved by GA in 1996 as a representation of the UN's commitment to protecting the children affected by these conflicts. In 2005, The Security Council passed resolution 1612 to create a Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict to respond to the reports and data on respective countries. Over the past 20 years, the Security Council has solidified its commitment to this issue through the #ChildrenNotSoldiers campaign, resolution 2068, and resolution 2143, among others. The specific mission of UN Security Council action involves protecting children from conflict and targeted attacks, preventing their involvement as soldiers/service people in conflict, and accounting for and reporting on situations involving children. In 2000, the General Assembly adopted the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict as a commitment to combat the use of children in conflict. Additionally, according to human rights law, 18 is the minimum legal age for the use of children in these situations.

The physical, mental, and socioemotional tolls on children who are recruited by these forces and their communities are extremely detrimental. UNICEF has implemented a 3-year reintegration program for any child involved in these conflicts to receive proper support and return to their communities, and this costs around \$2000 per child (USD). This program is critical to children involved in conflicts, but the true goal of the UN Security Council is to prevent the use of children beforehand and ensure that every child in this situation is accounted for and supported to get out of it.

## **CONFLICT 1: Recruitment of Children in the South Sudan Civil War**

The conflict in South Sudan began in 2013 when struggles between President Salva Kiir Mayardit and Vice President Riek Machar caused Machar to be removed. Conflict broke out between the Dinka ethnic group, which is primarily associated with Kiir, and the Nuer ethnic group, which is aligned with Machar. This violence has rapidly spread throughout the country and has included forms of harassment, and sexual violence, along with child recruitment into war efforts. Though a peace agreement was signed in 2025 to reestablish Machar's role, it caused a massive uproar between the government and groups that did not support its terms. This civil war continued to progress, causing civilians to be displaced and having to flee. In 2018, both Kiir and Machar signed the Khartoum Declaration of Agreement to establish peace after five years of civil war, and they also signed another final agreement in August. However, there has been ongoing violence, and there are still threats to security and basic civilian safety within the country. The Security Council's involvement included the deployment of security forces and peacekeepers in 2013, and the council voted to promote civilian protection in 2014 (forces could use force if necessary).

This conflict has taken a massive toll on the South Sudanese people, especially the children. In 2018, Children Soldiers International reported an estimate of around 19,000 children who had been recruited in the war since 2013. Boys tend to be recruited more frequently than girls. However, the girls that are recruited by the armed forces often are subject to sexual violence, which makes reintegration difficult after they are released. UNICEF freed around 800 children in 2018, but the fight to ensure children are no longer involved in armed conflict is ongoing.

## **CONFLICT 2: Child Soldiers in the DRC**

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has had continued conflict fighting numerous armed rebel groups for over 25 years. Spillover from the Rwandan genocide and refugee groups exacerbated the conflict as armed groups became extremely prevalent in the country while the DRC government struggled to control them. In 1998, Rwanda and Uganda invaded eastern DRC because this area contained many Hutu armies. This resulted in the 5-year-long Second Congo War, which involved the DRC (aligned with Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe) against Ugandan and Rwandan groups. After the war, the M23 group emerged, which rebelled against the Congolese government, and though the Congolese government, with UN support, defeated the group in 2013, many other groups still pose threats.

Children have been heavily involved in this instability in the DRC. The children who have joined these armed forces may be forced to because of a lack of other options as opposed to direct coercion to join. There, again, tends to be a skew towards boys in the recruitment process, and often, these boys are faced with much violence and are simultaneously taught to use an extreme amount of violence. Girls tend to be used as spies or scouts rather than soldiers while also being used for domestic duties and sexual encounters. The UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict has reported 1,991 cases of children used in this armed conflict, 557 cases of sexual violence against children, and 1,192 cases of abduction of children.

## **CONFLICT 3: The Syrian Civil War and Children**

In 2011, protests arose against the authoritarian Assad regime, which resulted in a full-fledged and ongoing civil war. The government used violence in order to combat these protests, and this war has resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians and more than 12 million people fleeing and being displaced. The protests were in favor of more democratic processes and were also influenced by the widespread poverty from the droughts in 2006–2010. There is also a huge religious layer to the conflict as many of the protesters were Sunni (majority), while the Assad family is part of the Alawite minority.

As the civil war progresses, it continues to endanger civilians and children. According to Save the Children, 5.3 million children across Syria need urgent humanitarian aid. The war effects, including loss of loved ones, constant bombings and violence, higher poverty rates, movement and fleeing, along with constant fear, have resulted in “toxic stress” for many children and families. Since the beginning of the war, human rights grievances against children have been more common in the form of child abuse, child marriage (often with the intent to protect daughters), and child exploitation. The UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict has reported 1,301 cases of recruitment and use of children, 961 cases of killing and maiming of children, and 46 attacks against schools and hospitals.

### **QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS**

1. Does your country actively recruit or involve children in armed conflict? Has it in the past?
2. What are the most prevalent ongoing conflict(s) in your country?
3. What are the primary reasons for the endangerment of children in your country?
4. What has your country done to prevent children from being involved in conflict, violence, etc.?
5. What relations does your country have with countries that do engage in child soldier recruitment?
6. What conflicts could potentially

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