

KENTUCKY UNITED NATIONS ASSEMBLY 2025

SECRETARY GENERAL'S AGENDA

To help facilitate broader understanding of international issues facing the UN, our KUNA Secretaries General and their Presiding Officer teams have published the Secretary General's Agenda.

The Secretary General's Agenda is a list of international issues organized using the 6 Main Committees* of the UN General Assembly (www.un.org/en/ga):

- **First Committee | Disarmament & International Security**
Concerned with disarmament and related international security questions
- **Second Committee | Economic & Financial**
Concerned with economic questions
- **Third Committee | Social, Humanitarian, & Cultural**
Deals with social and humanitarian issues
- **Fourth Committee | Special Political & Decolonization**
Deals with a variety of political subjects
- **Fifth Committee | Administration & Budgetary**
Deals with the administration and budget of the UN
- **Sixth Committee | Legal**
Deals with international legal matters

Each issue includes a one-page briefing:

- **Background on Issue**
Summary and background information on the issue
- **Questions to Address in Resolutions**
Guiding questions/problems that any resolutions on the issue should look to answer/solve
- **Sources for Research**
Links to research, articles, and other resources for your delegations

HOW TO USE THE AGENDA

- The best way to use the Agenda is to review each issue and explore whether your countries have taken a position on any of them (or has a vested interest in addressing an issue).
- While multiple countries may address the same issue in their resolutions, each country will likely have a different answer or solution to the problems that must be addressed.

Do our countries have to write resolutions on these topics?

These topics are not mandatory (only recommended by your KUNA Presiding Officers), nor are they tied to awards, but these topics will be taken into account by each Secretary General when determining which resolutions they choose to endorse, and which resolution they choose as Secretary General's Choice for the final session of the General Assembly.

Does the Agenda take a position on an issue?

The agenda does not take positions on issues (or endorse any solutions), but provides "Questions to Address in Resolutions" so countries can research their own positions when drafting their resolutions.

2025 AGENDA ISSUES

First Committee | Disarmament & International Security

Nuclear Disarmament & Arms Control

Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament

Autonomous and Space-Based Weapons

Second Committee | Economic & Financial

Economic Interdependence

Interconnected Market Reliance

Fair Trade in Developing Nations

Third Committee | Social, Humanitarian, Cultural

The Refugee Crisis

Access to Education for Refugee Children

Cultural Heritage in Conflict Zones

Fourth Committee | Special Political & Decolonization

Sovereignty of Occupied Territory

Enhancing Civilian Protection in Peacekeeping Initiatives

Impact of EVs on Oil-Dependent Nations

Fifth Committee | Administrative & Budgetary

Financial Oversight and Accountability

Reduction of Financial Inefficiencies

Transparency and Accountability in UN Finances

Sixth Committee | Legal

International Justice

Environmental Protection Strengthening

Prosecution of War Crimes/Crimes Against Humanity

Prepared by your **2025 KUNA Secretary Generals**
Position HS KUNA 1 HS KUNA 2
Secretary General Amal Kalik Anthony Northington Shaan Bains

Nuclear Disarmament & Arms Control

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Amal Kalik, Secretary General | HS KUNA 1

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

Nuclear and Arms Warfare, both destructive measures utilized in war to uphold order, can rather be most damaging to peace. Although only used twice, nuclear warfare has led to devastating results. 15,000,000+ casualties, lingering radiation, and contamination of the environment. Arms Warfare is used much more commonly, and is seen as the standard/conventional course of action to enter combat., with a staggering amount of 30,000,000+ deaths worldwide.

Recognizing the disastrous results of each, many nations have fought for the need to ensure control. Ranging from radical solutions of a complete eradication of arms, assuming a pacifistic route rather than a ration one, to insignificant ones, such as a reduction of classes of weapons.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

- How can governing bodies ensure the compliance of such nuclear disarmament and arms control resolutions?
- What measures can be taken to mitigate the humanitarian and environmental consequences of nuclear and arms warfare?
- What incentives should be given to encourage participation for nuclear disarmament and arms control?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

United Nations. (n.d.). Disarmament. United Nations.

<https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/disarmament>

Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Anthony Northington, Secretary General | HS KUNA 1

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

The frequently proposed topic in regard to preventing the continued spread of nuclear weapons and to decrease previously existing nuclear stockpiles. Also, works to strengthen the already existing Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1970), thus promoting alternative, and more peaceful uses of nuclear energy/power, and furthering the end goal of disarmament.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

1. Internationally, how can states (countries) strengthen compliance mechanisms under the NPT?
2. What can further encourage nuclear-armed states to commit to increased reductions to their arsenal?
3. For states that rely on their nuclear arsenal for international leverage, such as North Korea, how can the treaty strengthen to better accommodate for a countries' loss in power—if they were to follow the treaty and reduce their arsenal.

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

Arms Control Association. (2021). *Nuclear weapons: Who has what at a glance*.
<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Nuclearweaponswhohaswhat>

International Atomic Energy Agency. (2020). *Annual report 2020*.
<https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/publications/reports/2020/gc65-2.pdf>

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. (n.d.). *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty*. <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/>

Autonomous and Space-Based Weapons

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Shaan Bains, Secretary General | HS KUNA 2

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE: Autonomous and space-based weapons represent a significant development in military technology, with uses for global security, warfare, and international law. Autonomous weapons, which can operate without human control, pose ethical and legal challenges, especially regarding accountability and the potential for unintended consequences. Space-based weapons, which can include anything from satellites capable of deploying kinetic strikes to directed-energy weapons, could lead to a potential arms race where humanity's survival is not confirmed.

These are becoming larger issues every single day that passes without regulation. Artificial intelligence is helping accelerate the development of autonomous weapons. Autonomous weapons could revolutionize warfare by reducing human casualties and increasing efficiency, but they also raise concerns about malfunctions, hacking, and the ethical implications of machine decision-making in life-and-death situations.

Space technology is also becoming more advanced day by day and space-based weapons threaten to extend conflicts beyond Earth, potentially violating existing treaties like the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, which promotes the peaceful use of outer space and prohibits the placement of nuclear weapons in space.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS:

1. What measures can be implemented to regulate the development and deployment of autonomous weapons to ensure they comply with international humanitarian law?
2. How can the international community prevent the militarization of space and ensure that space remains a domain for peaceful exploration and use?
3. How can existing treaties, such as the Outer Space Treaty, be updated or expanded to address the challenges posed by new space-based weapons technologies?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH:

Scharre, P. (2018). *Army of None: Autonomous Weapons and the Future of War*. W. Norton & Company.

Gilli, A., & Gilli, M. (2020). *The Diffusion of Drone Warfare: Industrial, Organizational, and Infrastructural Implications of the Proliferation of Unmanned*

Aerial Vehicles. *International Security*, 45(1), 50-95.

https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00388

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. (2021). *Outer Space: Militarization, Weaponization, and the Prevention of an Arms Race*. Retrieved from

<https://www.un.org/disarmament/topics/outerspace/>

Maas, M. M. (2019). *How Viable is International Arms Control for Military Artificial Intelligence? Three Lessons from Nuclear Weapons*. *Contemporary Security Policy*, 40(3), 285-311. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2019.1576464>

U.S. Department of Defense. (2021). *DoD Directive 3000.09: Autonomy in Weapon Systems*. Retrieved from

<https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodd/300009p.pdf>

Economic Interdependence

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Amal Kalik, Secretary General | HS KUNA 1

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

Since World War II, economic interdependence has significantly increased due to technological advancements and the integration of national economies into the global marketplace. This interdependence stems from industrialization, economic development, regional production, labor specialization, and more. The world is now deeply interconnected, with some viewing this as a path to peace and others as a source of conflict.

The rise of economic interdependence has fostered the creation of a global market where goods and services move freely across borders, promoting international trade and economic diversification. This increased trade has led to higher-quality production through outsourcing and has driven globalization, enhancing international relations and creating efficient trading systems that protect the rights of states, such as NAFTA.

While economic interdependence has brought many advantages, these benefits are not equally distributed. Advanced economies tend to gain the most, while less developed nations can be exploited. Dependent on a limited number of suppliers, these nations often struggle to adapt, risking production halts and economic vulnerability. This dependency can also lead to competition and tension, potentially escalating into disputes between states.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

- How can international trade agreements be designed to reduce economic inequality and prevent exploitation of weaker economies?
- How can economic interdependence be managed to reduce the risk of conflicts arising from trade disputes or economic competition?
- How can global supply chains be regulated to ensure that economic interdependence does not lead to human rights abuses, such as forced labor or environmental degradation?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

United Nations. (n.d.). Globalization and interdependence. United Nations.
Retrieved August 19, 2024, from

<https://www.un.org/esa/coordination/globalization.htm>

Carbon Collective. (n.d.). Economic interdependence. Carbon Collective.
Retrieved August 19, 2024, from

<https://www.carboncollective.co/sustainable-investing/economic-interdependence>

Study.com. (n.d.). Economic interdependence: Definition, causes & effects.

Study.com. Retrieved August 19, 2024, from

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/economic-interdependence-definition-causes-effects.html>

Interconnected Market Reliance

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Anthony Northington, Secretary General | HS KUNA 1

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

The interconnectedness of global markets is beneficial and positive to international economic growth and development; however, it is widely dependent on global financial stability and economic contagion. Therefore, we need to create a system where national economies can become increasingly more self-reliant.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

- What policies can effectively enhance the independence of national economies against global fluctuations?
- What measures can ensure global trade is more balanced, and countries such as China and the USA don't have as much influence and power on the international trade stage?
- How can international market crises be better managed via international cooperation?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

World Trade Organization. (2021). World Trade Report 2021: Economic Resilience and Trade. https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/wtr21_e/wtr21_e.pdf

International Monetary Fund. (2021). World Economic Outlook: Managing Divergent Recoveries.

<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2021/03/23/world-economic-outlook-april-2021>

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2021). Trade and Development Report 2021.

<https://unctad.org/webflyer/trade-and-development-report-2021>

Fair Trade in Developing Nations

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Shaan Bains, Secretary General | HS KUNA 2

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE: Fair trade is a social movement aimed at helping producers in developing nations achieve better trading conditions and promote sustainable farming. It focuses on ensuring that farmers and workers receive a fair price for their products, improving working conditions, and promoting environmental sustainability.

Promoting fair trade in developing nations is crucial for achieving several Sustainable Development Goals, including poverty eradication, decent work and economic growth, and responsible consumption and production.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS:

1. What policies can be implemented to increase the accessibility and affordability of fair trade certification for small-scale producers in developing nations?
2. How can international trade agreements be restructured to support fair trade principles and ensure equitable market access for producers from developing countries?
3. How can fair trade initiatives be integrated into national development strategies to maximize their impact on poverty reduction and sustainable development?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH:

Nicholls, A., & Opal, C. (2005). *Fair Trade: Market-Driven Ethical Consumption*. SAGE Publications.

Raynolds, L. T., Murray, D., & Wilkinson, J. (2007). *Fair Trade: The Challenges of Transforming Globalization*. Routledge.

Fairtrade International. (2021). *Fairtrade Standard for Small Producer Organizations*. Retrieved from <https://www.fairtrade.net/standard/spo>

Jaffee, D. (2007). *Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability, and Survival*. University of California Press.

International Labour Organization. (2020). *The Impact of Fair Trade on Workers and Small Producers*. Retrieved from https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_743146.pdf

The Refugee Crisis

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Amal Kalik, Secretary General | HS KUNA 1

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

As of June 2024, the global refugee crisis has reached an unprecedented level, with approximately 117 million people displaced worldwide. These refugees are fleeing conflict, violence, persecution, human rights abuses, natural disasters, and other life-threatening situations. Major sources of displacement include crises in Ukraine, Afghanistan, Latin America, Somalia, Myanmar, and Sudan, contributing to the largest numbers of refugees.

Refugees face numerous challenges, including limited access to clean water, food, shelter, personal security, healthcare, and other essential needs. Many endure extreme poverty and are vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, and child marriage, often while living in overcrowded refugee camps. The strain on host communities is significant, as they frequently struggle with their own conflicts and resource limitations, leading to refugee populations remaining in camps for years, if not decades. This overwhelming number of refugees contributes to an asylum backlog, and those who do seek refuge often face social rejection and xenophobia.

Addressing the refugee crisis requires an end to conflict, violence, and persecution—an ideal, but often unattainable goal. Practical solutions include voluntary and safe repatriation, local integration with continuity and stability, or full resettlement, allowing refugees to begin new chapters in their lives.

The UNHCR, established after World War II, is a UN Refugee Agency dedicated to protecting forcibly displaced people and ensuring their safety while working towards a better future. The Global Compact on Refugees has also been established to ease pressures on host countries, enhance refugee self-reliance, expand access to third-country solutions, and support safe and dignified returns to countries of origin. These organizations offer hope, striving for a brighter tomorrow amid the ongoing crisis.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

- What strategies can be implemented to prevent and resolve the conflicts, persecution, and human rights abuses that cause people to flee their homes?
- How can the international community ensure that refugees have access to basic needs such as food, shelter, healthcare, and education?
- What measures can be taken to protect refugees from exploitation, abuse, and human trafficking during their journey and in host countries?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

United Nations. (n.d.). Refugees. United Nations. Retrieved August 19, 2024, from

<https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/refugees#:~:text=At%20the%20end%20of%20June,events%20seriously%20disturbing%20public%20order>

Concern Worldwide USA. (2023, June 15). Global refugee crisis explained.

Concern Worldwide USA. Retrieved August 19, 2024, from

<https://concernusa.org/news/global-refugee-crisis-explained/>

Access to Education for Refugee Children

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Anthony Northington, Secretary General | HS KUNA 1

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

Education is crucial for development and social progress of all individuals in this world. Children displaced by varying factors such as conflict and natural disasters often face challenges in accessing quality education. Unfortunately, these children are stunted for great periods of their life and are oftentimes unable to advance throughout life due to access to education.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

1. What strategies can ensure greater/more significant amounts of refugees can access quality education?
2. How can host countries be better supported in adjusting to large amounts of youth refugees into their education systems?
3. Should there be one internationally recognized education system that is accessible to refugees within host countries?
4. Where could money for funding refugee education be allocated from within the UN budget?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

Global Partnership for Education. (2020). Education for Refugee Children: Policy Brief.

<https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/education-refugee-children-policy-brief>

Save the Children. (2020). Education Against the Odds: Meeting the Educational Needs of Displaced Children.

<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/education-against-odds-meeting-educational-needs-displaced-children>

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2019). Stepping Up: Refugee Education in Crisis. <https://www.unhcr.org/steppingup/>

Third Committee | Social, Humanitarian, & Cultural

Cultural Heritage in Conflict Zones

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Shaan Bains, Secretary General | HS KUNA 2

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE: Cultural heritage in conflict zones encompasses tangible and intangible assets such as monuments, artifacts, traditions, and customs that are at risk of destruction or loss due to armed conflict. The deliberate targeting and collateral damage of cultural heritage sites have become a significant concern in modern warfare. This not only results in the loss of historical and cultural identity for affected communities but also impacts global heritage and diversity.

Historical examples include the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan, the looting of the National Museum of Iraq during the Iraq War, and the recent targeting of cultural sites in Syria and Yemen. The protection of cultural heritage is crucial for post-conflict recovery, national identity, and the preservation of humanity's shared history.

International legal frameworks, such as the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954) and its Protocols, aim to safeguard cultural heritage. However, enforcement and adherence remain challenging in conflict situations. Enhancing cooperation between international organizations, governments, and local communities is essential to protect and preserve cultural heritage in conflict zones.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

1. What measures can be implemented to strengthen the enforcement of international laws and conventions aimed at protecting cultural heritage in conflict zones?
2. How can post-conflict recovery efforts integrate the restoration and preservation of cultural heritage as a key component of rebuilding communities?
3. What role should international organizations, such as UNESCO, play in providing resources, training, and support to protect cultural heritage in conflict zones?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

Bevan, R. (2016). *The Destruction of Memory: Architecture at War*. Reaktion Books.

UNESCO. (2017). *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*. Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>

Stone, P. G. (2013). *Cultural Heritage, Ethics, and the Military*. Boydell & Brewer.

United Nations. (2016). *Report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, Karima Bennouna*. Retrieved from <https://undocs.org/A/71/317>

International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). (2019). Heritage at Risk: ICOMOS World Report 2016-2019 on Monuments and Sites in Danger. Retrieved from <https://www.icomos.org/en/what-we-do/focus/heritage-at-risk>

Fourth Committee | Special Political & Decolonization

Sovereignty of Occupied Territory

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Amal Kalik, Secretary General | HS KUNA 1

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

The sovereignty of occupied territory refers to the legal and political status of a region that is under the control of a foreign power. In international law, the sovereignty of an occupied territory typically remains with the original state, even if another power has taken control of the area temporarily. The issue of sovereignty in occupied territories is often fraught with legal complexities, historical grievances, and political disputes, making it one of the most contentious topics in international relations.

Key international laws and conventions address this issue. The Hague Regulations stipulate that occupation does not transfer sovereignty and that the occupying power must respect the laws in force in the occupied territory unless absolutely prevented. The Fourth Geneva Convention elaborates on the occupying powers duty to protect the population's rights and refrain from making permanent changes to territory.

A primary challenge in occupied territories is the conflict between the occupying power and the original state's sovereignty. In some cases, such as the Palestinian territories and Ukraine, the treatment of the original population is a major concern, and often results in violations of human rights.

The sovereignty of occupied territory remains one of the most complex and sensitive issues in international law and politics. While the legal framework clearly distinguishes between occupation and sovereignty, the realities on the ground often blur these lines, leading to prolonged conflicts and significant humanitarian challenges.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

- How can the international community ensure clear and consistent recognition of the legal status of occupied territories?
- What strategies can be developed to facilitate negotiations between occupying powers and the original state to resolve disputes over sovereignty?

- What mechanisms can be established to hold accountable those responsible for violations of international law in occupied territories?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

Guide to Humanitarian Law. (n.d.). Occupied territory. Guide to Humanitarian Law. Retrieved August 19, 2024, from

<https://guide-humanitarian-law.org/content/article/3/occupied-territory/>

Al Jazeera. (2024, July 19). World Court says Israel's settlement policies breach international law. Al Jazeera. Retrieved August 19, 2024, from

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/7/19/world-court-says-israels-settlement-policies-breach-international-law>

International Committee of the Red Cross. (n.d.). International humanitarian law: The occupying power's responsibilities in occupied Palestinian territories.

International Committee of the Red Cross. Retrieved August 19, 2024, from <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/ihl-occupying-power-responsibilities-occupied-palestinian-territories>

Enhancing Civilian Protection in Peacekeeping Initiatives

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Anthony Northington, Secretary General | HS KUNA 1

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

Peacekeepers often face inefficient resources and complex conflict dynamics which makes it more difficult for them to uphold the core values of peace and security—especially in conflict zones.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

- Where can the monetary funds necessary to enhance peacekeeper efforts be allocated from UN budgets?
- How can the accountability of peacekeeping missions be improved?
- How can the UN improve the effectiveness of civilian protection in all peacekeeping operations?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

Center for Civilians in Conflict. (2020). Civilian Protection: Current Practices and Future Directions.

<https://civiliansinconflict.org/publications/policy/civilian-protection-current-practices-and-future-directions/>

International Peace Institute. (2019). Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping: The Way Forward.

<https://www.ipinst.org/2019/06/protection-of-civilians-in-un-peacekeeping-the-way-forward>

United Nations Peacekeeping. (2020). Protecting Civilians in Peacekeeping.

<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/protecting-civilians>

Impact of EVs on Oil-Dependent Nations

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Shaan Bains, Secretary General | HS KUNA 2

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE: The rapid growth of the electric vehicle (EV) market is poised to significantly impact oil-dependent nations. As EVs become more prevalent, the demand for oil, particularly for transportation, is expected to decline. This shift presents both challenges and opportunities for countries whose economies heavily rely on oil exports.

Oil-dependent nations, such as those in the Middle East, parts of Africa, and Venezuela, face potential economic instability due to reduced oil revenues. This economic shift could lead to decreased government budgets, affecting social services and public infrastructure.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

1. What policies can oil-dependent nations implement to diversify their economies and reduce reliance on oil revenues in the face of growing EV adoption?
2. How can international organizations and developed countries support oil-dependent nations in their transition to sustainable energy sources and economic diversification?
3. How can oil-dependent nations balance short-term economic stability with long-term sustainability goals during the global shift towards EVs and reduced oil demand?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

1. International Energy Agency. (2020). *Global EV Outlook 2020*. Retrieved from <https://www.iea.org/reports/global-ev-outlook-2020>
2. BP. (2020). *BP Energy Outlook 2020 Edition*. Retrieved from <https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/energy-outlook/bp-energy-outlook-2020.pdf>
3. World Bank. (2021). *The Economic Impacts of the Transition to Electric Vehicles: A Review of the Evidence*. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/transport/publication/the-economic-impacts-of-the-transition-to-electric-vehicles>
4. El-Katiri, L., & Fattouh, B. (2017). *A Brief Political Economy of Energy Subsidies in the Middle East and North Africa*. *International Development Policy*, 7(2), 41-68. <https://doi.org/10.4000/poldev.2312>
5. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2015). *The Paris Agreement*. Retrieved from <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

Financial Oversight and Accountability

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Amal Kalik, Secretary General | HS KUNA 1

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

Financial oversight and accountability are essential for the effective governance and management in both public and private sectors. They ensure that financial resources are managed transparently, efficiently, and in accordance with legal and ethical standards. These practices are crucial for maintaining public trust, preventing corruption, and ensuring that financial activities align with organizational goals and regulatory requirements.

Key legal and regulatory framework include the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), that ensures consistency and transparency, the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), creating a common language for financial reporting to help enhance comparability and transparency, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (SOX) that prevents financial fraud, and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) is committed to highlighting and addressing misconduct. Additionally, the UNDP Anti-Fraud Policy enforces a zero-tolerance approach towards fraud.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

- What standards and practices can be adopted to ensure that financial statements are accurate, complete, and free from manipulation or misreporting?
- What strategies can be employed to identify and mitigate potential fraud risks within an organization?
- What mechanisms can be put in place to hold individuals and entities accountable for financial mismanagement, misconduct, or violations of financial policies?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

United Nations Capital Development Fund. (n.d.). Accountability and oversight. United Nations Capital Development Fund. Retrieved August 19, 2024, from <https://www.uncdf.org/accountability-and-oversight>

Reduction of Financial Bureaucratic Inefficiencies

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Anthony Northington, Secretary General | HS KUNA 1

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

Excessively complex regulations, administrative processes, and significant redundant procedures can slow economic development. Reducing such inefficiencies has the potential to improve transparency, reduce corruption, and increase the efficiency of financial systems.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

1. What measures can be taken to further enhance transparency within the United Nations' financial systems?
2. What best practices from member states can be shared and adopted to create more efficient regulatory frameworks within the UN system?
3. How can the Secretariat ensure that budget reallocations are transparent and accountable?
4. How can already existing evaluation processes be enhanced to guarantee accountability and transparency in UN financial management?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

International Monetary Fund. (2021). *Financial development in emerging markets: The role of financial bureaucracy*.

<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WP/Issues/2021/01/01/Financial-Development-in-Emerging-Markets-The-Role-of-Financial-Bureaucracy-49923>

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<https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2019>

United Nations. (2020). *Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization*. <https://www.un.org/en/content/sg/report/>

World Bank. (2020). *Doing business 2020: Comparing business regulation in 190 economies*. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/doing-business>

Transparency and Accountability in UN Finances

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Shaan Bains, Secretary General | HS KUNA 2

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE: Transparency and accountability in the financial operations of the United Nations are critical to maintaining the trust of member states and ensuring the effective use of resources. The UN manages a vast array of funds for various programs and initiatives aimed at promoting peace, security, development, and human rights globally. Given the scale and complexity of these operations, robust financial oversight mechanisms are essential to prevent mismanagement, corruption, and inefficiencies.

Current financial oversight mechanisms include audits by the UN Board of Auditors, internal audits by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), and reporting requirements to the General Assembly. Despite these measures, challenges persist in ensuring comprehensive transparency and accountability. Issues such as delayed reporting, lack of clarity in financial statements, and limited access to detailed financial information for member states have been identified.

Enhancing transparency and accountability not only strengthens the financial integrity of the UN but also contributes to more effective and efficient program implementation. This involves improving financial reporting, increasing access to financial data for member states, and implementing stronger internal controls and audit processes.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

1. What measures can be adopted to improve the transparency and accessibility of UN financial reports for member states and the general public?
2. How can the accountability mechanisms within the UN, such as internal audits and external oversight, be strengthened to prevent financial mismanagement and corruption?
3. How can member states and other stakeholders be more effectively involved in the financial oversight and decision-making processes of the UN?
4. What role should technological advancements, such as blockchain and data analytics, play in enhancing the transparency and accountability of UN finances?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

United Nations. (2020). Report of the Board of Auditors. Retrieved from <https://undocs.org/en/A/75/5>

Office of Internal Oversight Services. (2021). Annual Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. Retrieved from <https://oios.un.org/resources/reports>

Transparency International. (2019). Corruption and the United Nations: A Global Perspective. Retrieved from

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<https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/289>

Global Policy Forum. (2018). The Challenges of Financial Accountability in the UN System. Retrieved from

<https://www.globalpolicy.org/home/9-global-taxes/47769-the-challenges-of-financial-accountability-in-the-un-system.html>

International Justice

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Amal Kalik, Secretary General | HS KUNA 1

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

International justice refers to the pursuit of legal and moral accountability for crimes and violations that transcend national boundaries. It encompasses efforts to uphold human rights, enforce international law, and prosecute individuals for serious crimes such as war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and aggression. The field of international justice seeks to address global injustices and promote accountability, peace, and reconciliation on an international scale.

The main organizations that work towards international justice include the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The only international court that adjudicates general disputes between nations and gives advisory opinions on international legal issues. These ensure the meaningful justice for victims and survivors of serious international crimes and due process for the accused.

The Genocide Convention defines genocide and establishes obligations for states to prevent and punish this crime. The Geneva Conventions establishes the international standards for the treatment of individuals during armed conflict. The Rome Statute outlines the jurisdiction, structure, and functions of the ICC.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

- What strategies can be developed to ensure that states comply with international justice mandates, including the arrest and transfer of accused individuals?
- How can international justice mechanisms overcome obstacles related to non-cooperation from states or political interference?
- How can international justice mechanisms ensure that victims of international crimes receive adequate support, recognition, and reparations?

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Environmental Protection Strengthening

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Anthony Northington, Secretary General | HS KUNA 1

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

Significant and rising international environmental challenges such as climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. Require coordinated action from all—or most—member states. Strengthening and implementing greater accountability to member states is essential in creating real change on a world scale.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTION

1. What can be done to gain more international support from member states on challenging climate change and biodiversity loss?
2. What policies can be strengthened to include greater accountability for member states not following international climate and environmental law.
3. What. Strategies can promote sustainable development and reduce continued environmental degradation?

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Prosecution of War Crimes/Crimes Against Humanity

ISSUE BRIEF AUTHOR: Shaan Bains, Secretary General | HS KUNA 2

BACKGROUND ON ISSUE: The prosecution of war crimes and crimes against humanity is essential for maintaining international peace and justice. War crimes, as defined by the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, include serious violations of the laws and customs of war that affect civilians and combatants. Crimes against humanity, as defined by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), include widespread or systematic attacks directed against civilian populations, such as murder, enslavement, torture, and genocide.

International mechanisms for prosecuting these crimes include the International Criminal Court, ad hoc tribunals such as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), and hybrid courts like the Special Court for Sierra Leone. These institutions aim to hold perpetrators accountable, provide justice for victims, and deter future atrocities.

Despite these efforts, challenges persist. Issues such as political interference, limited jurisdiction, difficulties in evidence collection, and lack of cooperation from states hinder the effective prosecution of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Additionally, some powerful states have not ratified the Rome Statute, limiting the ICC's jurisdiction and enforcement capabilities.

Strengthening international legal frameworks, enhancing cooperation among states, and ensuring adequate resources for international courts are critical steps toward improving the prosecution of these grave crimes.

QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS IN RESOLUTIONS

1. What measures can be adopted to strengthen the jurisdiction and enforcement capabilities of the International Criminal Court?
2. What strategies can be developed to address the challenges of evidence collection and witness protection in the prosecution of these crimes?
3. How can states be encouraged to ratify and comply with the Rome Statute and other international legal instruments?

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