Background Guide 15th Annual AUSMUN



United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

Welcome Letter from the Director of Research

Greetings fellow delegates,

It's a pleasure to see you attending the American University of Sharjah's 2022 Model United Nations Convention (AUSMUN 2022). As the age-old adage goes, "with great power comes great responsibility," as delegates of nations at the world's largest international forum, you have a heightened degree of power and responsibility. Not only do you have a say in shaping solutions for the world, and bringing glory to your country, but also the pressure of ensuring that those solutions are pragmatic, feasible, and effective in solving the issues you have set to resolve. Not only do you have a space at the international platform, but also the responsibility to ensure that you set an apt example of your nation for the world to see.

With that being said, I wish you all the best for your preparations and I am really excited to see what your wonderful minds and enthusiastic selves come up with in the committee rooms. Finally, also remember that your responsibilities include having fun and making the best of your time at AUSMUN 2022!

Best Regards, Mohammad Amaan Siddiqui Director of Research - AUSMUN 2022

Welcome Letter from the Dais

Dear Distinguished Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) committee at AUSMUN 2022! We are delighted to serve as your chairs for this upcoming conference and look forward to meeting and interacting with each of you on the committee. For this conference, we will be going in-depth with topics of concern affecting children internationally.

We understand that being a delegate is an exciting experience and is well worth it towards the end of the day thanks to the memories, knowledge, and skills that you will all acquire throughout the conference. We assure you all that we will do our best to make this conference memorable, educational, and most importantly, enjoyable. We encourage you to go through the background guide thoroughly to understand your topics further and hope you do your own detailed research on the topic, and on your country's stance regarding the topic. Don't forget that you will be drafting resolutions, therefore, we suggest you think about possible effective solutions that you believe could aid in eradicating the issue before the conference.

We wish you all the best in your research and do not hesitate to ask us any questions you have before the conference. We look forward to meeting you all at AUSMUN 2022!

Best Regards,

Neda Nabulsi and Mayar Nasr, Chairs

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Overview of the Committee

We live in a world filled with constant terror, where we feel the need to look over our shoulders every second to guarantee safety. Every day, children face danger much worse than the rest of the world. Children face issues such as hunger, diseases, violence, and much more, where they lack protection and are forced to deal with the chaos of war, flee their homes and find a safer place, and before it all, they are denied an education.

After World War Two, Ludwik Raichman, a Polish physician and bacteriologist, took matters into his own hands to ensure safety for all children, who we know today as the founder of UNICEF, created on December 11, 1946, in New York, United States. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was established for one clear mandate; to help children whose lives were in danger, no matter where they come from and what position their country had played during the war. What made a difference to UNICEF was to get to each child who was in need, securing kids' privileges to endure, flourish, and arrive at their maximum capacity. This is the root purpose of UNICEF. From the remains of battle to the worldwide difficulties that influence millions today, our command has never faltered. UNICEF has reliably attempted to ensure freedoms and prosperity, everything being equal, whoever they are, wherever they live. After 1950, the asset coordinated its endeavors toward general projects for the improvement of children's government assistance, especially in less-developed nations and in different crisis circumstances. UNICEF has worked towards offering types of assistance to essential medical services, ensuring youngsters in regard to their endurance, arranging assets for workforces, preparing specialized supplies to wellbeing facilities, helping governments in arranging aid for kids/moms during crisis, forestalling sicknesses, providing training foundations and security for kids from misuse, expanding children's endurance rate, and empowering sexual orientation uniformity.

In this committee, our aim has been narrowed down to two ongoing troubles children face around the world: "Increasing Equitable Access to Education for Children with Disabilities" and "Mitigating Child Labor in Poverty Struck Areas." About 93 million children all over the world struggle with some form of disability. Like any other child, they all have dreams and ambitions for their futures and deserve their right to education equally as any other child, allowing them the opportunity to build their skills and meet their full potential. However, youngsters with disabilities are frequently neglected in policymaking, restricting their admittance to schooling and their capacity to take part in friendly, financial, and political life.

Financial difficulty claims a cost for a great number of families around the world and in certain spots, it comes at the cost of a child's security. About 160 million children were exposed to child labor toward the start of 2020, with 9 million extra kids in danger because of the effect of Coronavirus. This records for about 1 in 10 children are exposed to child labor across the world, and almost half of them are in dangerous work that straightforwardly jeopardizes their wellbeing and moral turn of events. Kids might be crushed into work for different reasons.

This committee's aim during this conference is to focus mainly on finding solutions regarding both topics previously mentioned to improve the lives of children internationally suffering from predicaments.

Overview of the Committee

Structure and Function

UNICEF is administered by a Chief Board composed of 36 individuals chosen for terms of three years by the Unified Countries' Monetary and Social Committee. Every district that UNICEF serves is allotted various seats on the Leader Board, so all locales are addressed. UNICEF is based in New York City in the United States. There are additionally 36 public councils across the globe, which are nongovernmental associations that assist with advancing the freedoms of kids and gather pledges.

While UNICEF is settled in the US, it is dynamic in no less than 190 nations all throughout the planet, with a local office situated inside every area. Every country office helps out UNICEF's central goal through an interesting system of participation created with the host government. This five-year program centers around functional ways of understanding the freedoms of youngsters and ladies. Their necessities are investigated in a circumstance report created toward the start of the program cycle. Local workplaces guide this work and give specialized help to country workplaces depending on the situation. UNICEF's work is completely essential for other joined countries' exercises in a country. Many individuals in industrialized nations initially find out about UNICEF's work through the exercises of 36 Public Boards for UNICEF. These non-administrative associations advance youngsters' freedoms, raise reserves, sell UNICEF welcoming cards and items, make key corporate and common society organizations, and offer other important help. Additionally, the boards raise 33% of UNICEF's assets.

UNICEF's exercises incorporate giving vaccinations and sickness anticipation, directing therapy for kids and moms with HIV, upgrading adolescence and maternal nourishment, further developing sterilization, advancing schooling, and giving crisis alleviation because of fiascos. UNICEF's projects stress creating local area-level administrations to advance the wellbeing and prosperity of youngsters. The majority of its work is in the field, with an organization that incorporates 150 nation workplaces, base camp, and different offices, and 34 "public councils" that help out its main goal through programs created with have legislatures. Seven provincial workplaces give specialized help to country workplaces on a case-by-case basis, while its Stock Division situated in Copenhagen and New York gives more than \$3 billion in basic guidance and administrations.

Overview of the Committee

Voting

As for voting rights, abiding by rule 38 of the UNICEF ROP, each member of the Board is required to have one vote, and the decision shall be concluded by a majority of the members who are present and voting.

Funding

UNICEF's work is financed completely through the willful help of millions of individuals all throughout the world and their accomplices in government, common society, and the private area.

Assets to UNICEF's projects come from the deliberate commitments of state-run administrations, intergovernmental associations, establishments, the private area, and people. UNICEF depends on this combination of hearty subsidizing sources to maintain our central goal of understanding the privileges of each kid, particularly the most helpless. Directed by the Supportable Advancement Objectives, our essential arrangement expects to reinforce lucidness in organizations and in the conveyance and estimation of results. We work intimately with accomplices on compelling subsidizing game plans to guarantee every dollar goes further to help kids all throughout the planet. Pooled Subsidizing – which covers Topical Financing, joint projects, and trust reserves – is an essential piece of Different Assets. Multi-year financing of various kinds permits UNICEF to work on the plan and execution of our projects, increase the visibility of our promotion endeavors, and lower functional expenses to convey higher social profits from speculation.

Summary and History of the Issue

For over generations, children with disabilities have been less likely to receive an education in comparison to their peers as they are considered different and incapable by the public eye. Roughly, 90% of differently abled children in developing nations do not receive an education, while the few that do attend are sent to specialized, inferior schools, in which they lack the specialties in providing differently abled children with assistance. Not only are they segregated, but are usually separated from their families and placed in institutions that educate them in isolation from the rest of the community (Walker, 2014).

According to UNICEF (n.d), 93 to 150 million out of a billion people are differently abled in some form where these children are ten times less likely to attend schools than other children. Indeed, children with disabilities face a range of barriers, physically and mentally, when it comes to engaging equitably in society. The main factor contributing to that is their right to an education that is not being recognized equally. This, in turn, hinders their other rights and deprives them of future benefits that accompany obtaining an education. Furthermore, the degree to which a kid with a disability is excluded is determined not just by the social attitudes, but also by contextual factors such as class, location, culture, disability type, and the environment's overall physical, political, and behavioral barriers. Therefore, the issue of equitable access to education lies with children who already are receiving an education and those who do not.

Moreover, equitable access to education is considered a basic human right. Therefore, governments must begin to incorporate inclusivity into their educational systems as it is fundamental to providing quality education. The specialized schools differently abled children are already being sent to typically provide a poor education, fail to address negative social attitudes that restrict a child's life outside of the classroom, and are too specialized to accommodate the broad range of "disabilities" that the students have.

Key Issues

Inclusive Education Systems

Inclusive education systems provide a chance for all children, despite their background or disability, to learn and develop the skills used in their day-to-day life. All children, irrespective of their background, are enrolled in the same school where they can not only learn several skills but can also benefit from the diversity present in the school. Inclusive education systems promote diversity, aid in the fight against discrimination, and give all children the basic human right of education. Currently, there lies a need for proper legislation that caters towards the rights of education for differently abled children. This is primarily due to governments' lack of knowledge in translating international standards into practice (e.g. Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities). Finally, inclusive education systems, based on a rights-based approach, must no longer be considered a side issue, but rather a critical component of achieving high-quality education for all students and the growth of a more inclusive society.

Discrimination

A new report by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that a quarter of young people with disabilities feel discriminated against in schools. Indeed, discrimination against persons with disabilities occurs when students with disabilities are treated worse than children without disabilities, or when schools do not behave differently towards students with disabilities as needed. There currently lies among societies where there is an association between persons with disabilities and their abilities to contribute to our society as others do; this undoubtedly uses others to treat them in a less favorable manner. With such treatment, differently abled children feel as though they do not belong, being the main reason behind the high rates of high school dropouts in differently abled children. This issue does not only apply to those attending school or receiving an education, but differently abled children and adults face discrimination on a day-to-day basis. Governments and educational institutions face a lack of legislation in terms of discrimination against persons with disabilities. This certainly interferes with their basic human rights and could jeopardize their future. Adding onto that, differently abled children face harassment and personal victimization due to their nature, therefore, there requires an international foundation of a constitution that tackles discrimination in the workplace to ensure that equitable access to education exists for all.

Government Behavior Towards Children with Disabilities

Governments frequently declare their commitment to inclusive education, but unfortunately fail to put real policies, plans, and strategies in place, or track progress. Few countries, if any, invest adequate resources to provide universal education. For instance, where funds are available, they are not being used in the most cost-effective way and funding is being directed ineffectively toward a few students in segregated schools rather than being distributed more equally through inclusive education techniques that increase the overall quality. As a result, governments and donors must enhance funding for inclusion while also ensuring that it is used fairly and efficiently. The lack of funding is evident in events where children with disabilities are often isolated from social activities and community participation. This problem is often seen in areas with unavailable access to transportations, buildings, and the stigma surrounding obstacles. This negative notion may discourage families from seeking help and information, leading to unawareness of their rights and available support. In addition, there is a lack of government support towards teachers, and as a result, the inclusion in education systems is not effective and in some cases not established. Teachers that are supported and valued by the government are capable of becoming more effective in class for all pupils, which makes inclusion education more effective and successful. Therefore schools must be improved, and policies must be enhanced so that teachers can respond positively to students' diversity. This encourages teachers to perceive individual differences as opportunities for learning instead of problems to be resolved.

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) - Article 24

In 2006, the UN had begun establishing a vision to deliver the right education for differently abled children, where they recognize inclusive education as the key method to improving their quality of teaching and stress the need for equal access to education. The convention was aimed at articulating what their new method would look like in practice, in which the article stressed the need for equitable access to education for persons of disabilities and how governments must begin to provide reasonable accommodation and specialized support services to ease their education. In fact, the CRPD highlights the rights enforced in international treaties relating to education for all, with an emphasis on disability, while outlining how governments can meet such obligations.

The Salamanca Statement - 1994

The World Conference on Special Needs Education was organized in Salamanca, Spain in June 1994, with representatives of 92 governments and 25 international organizations, where they agreed on a statement that provides inclusive education for all children. The conference adopted the Salamanca Statement based on the needs of differently abled children acquiring education and a framework for action. The general premise is that schools should accommodate all individuals, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other circumstances. The World Conference went on to urge all governments to give the highest policy and budget to the education system for all students to be included. In an attempt to ensure all organizations of differently abled people, families, and the community are part of the decision-making and establish programs and promote exchanges with nations that have inclusive schools. The Statement also calls upon the international community to support both an inclusive schooling approach and the development of special needs education as an integral part of all educational programs. In particular, the conference called upon UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, and the World Bank to provide their assistance.

Questions a Resolution Should Address

- 1. How can governments create appropriate legislative frameworks to promote inclusive education systems for children with disabilities?
- 2. How can governments improve the current reputation associated with differently abled children to counteract the discrimination they face in educational institutions?
- 3. What methods, strategies, and qualities must governments consider when creating an exclusion-free educational system? And how must they collect data and allocate their resources to ensure that the educational systems are suitable for all students?
- 4. How can the international community contribute to promoting equitable access to education for children with disabilities? How can they improve the broader social, cultural or economic barriers faced by differently abled children?
- 5. What traits and qualities would teachers need to have to be appropriately qualified for an improved and inclusive education system?

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Summary and History of the Issue

Child labor is still a problem around the world today. According to the most recent global estimates, 160 million children – 63 million girls and 97 million boys – were working as youngsters during the beginning of 2020, accounting for nearly one in ten of all children on the planet. Nearly half of all children in child labor were engaged in hazardous work that directly jeopardized their health, safety, and moral development. Since 2016, global progress against child labor has stalled by nearly a four-year period, with the total number of children in child labor climbing by over 8 million. Similarly, the number of children working in hazardous conditions increased by 6.5 million.

In Asia and the Pacific, as well as Latin America and the Caribbean, sustained progress against child labor is hidden behind the public view. In both regions, child labor has decreased in percentage and absolute terms during the last four years. Since 2012, the number and percentage of children engaged in child labor in this region have increased. Sub-Saharan Africa today has more children engaged in child labor than the rest of the world combined. Without a breakthrough in this region, global child labor goals will not be met.

Over the last four years, children aged 12-17 have made steady progress. To illustrate, child labor decreased in both percentage and absolute terms in both age groups, continuing a declining trend seen in prior estimates. Child labor increased among young children aged 5 to 11, despite global figures from 2016 indicating a declining trend for this age group. In 2020, 16.8 million more children aged 5 to 11 worked as children than in 2016. Unless immediate mitigation steps are done, the COVID-19 situation threatens to destroy worldwide advances against child labor. According to new research, 8.9 million more youngsters will be working as children by the end of 2022, as a result of increased poverty brought on by the pandemic.

The ILO-UNICEF global forecasts for 2020 show a turning point in the global fight against child labor. Global progress has come to a halt in the last four years, after slowing significantly in the previous four years. The current COVID-19 crisis threatens to undercut previous accomplishments even more. While there are approximately 86 million fewer children in child labor now than when we started tracking it in 2000, recent trends indicate that we are lagging far short on our common promise to eradicate child labor in all forms by 2025. We must act with increased haste in this United Nations International Year for the Elimination of Child Labor to get back on track.

To prevent slipping further behind during the continuing COVID-19 issue, immediate action from the committee is required. The epidemic has obviously increased the risk of child labor, particularly, due to a rapid rise in poverty, which may increase families' dependency on child labor, and school closures, which deprive families of a reasonable alternative to sending their children to work. Expanded financial assistance measures for vulnerable families, such as child benefits and other methods, will be crucial in reducing these risks.

Key Issues

Child Slavery

Today, more than a quarter of the world's slaves are children. These children are forced into commercial sexual activity, forced into a system of domestic binding, and employed in professions that are psychologically, physically, socially, and morally harmful. The need for supply and industrial demand for cheap and unskilled labor, are some of the main causes of child labor. Specifically, production processes that require certain physical characteristics, such as short stature and swiftness, lead to the employment of children. In addition, price pressures help suppliers, especially those at the top of the supply chain, find the cheapest workforce. Poverty puts these children to work, or their parents ask them to work to supplement their family's income. These supply and demand factors are exacerbated by systematic and structural problems such as lack of access to education, inadequate employment opportunities for educated people, corruption, and social stratification. Difficulty in work and harsh working conditions lead to many problems such as premature aging, malnutrition, depression, and drug addiction. These children are abducted from underprivileged backgrounds, minority groups, or families that have no form of protection.

The Exploitation of Children

During times of conflict or dispute, the most abusive forms of child labor become more common. Children, often boys, are kidnapped and forced to join militant groups as child soldiers or domestic employees. Girls, on the other hand, are usually forced into sex slavery and work as "wives" for militants or are coerced into prostitution or transactional sex as a way of survival. Over 93,000 children were verified as being recruited and utilized by parties to conflict between 2005 and 2020, while the true number of incidents is expected to be substantially higher (UNICEF, 2020). They are frequently referred to as "child soldiers," but these boys and girls are subjected to a wide range of exploitation and torture that the word does not adequately describe. Children are used by warring parties as scouts, chefs, porters, guards, messengers, and other roles, where gender-based violence affects many people, particularly girls. Armed actors kidnap, threaten, coerce, or manipulate some children, others are pushed by poverty to work and support their families. Others band together for the sake of survival or to preserve their communities. Armed forces' recruitment and use of minors, regardless of their role, is a major violation of children's rights and international humanitarian legislation.

The Involvement of Children in Illicit Activity

Children could usually be involved in illegal activity or a crime against their own will or through manipulating them to believe that the job would financially provide them well. Illicit crimes could include the production, trafficking, and trading of drugs, buying stolen goods, theft, hijacking or burglary, and shoplifting. Children could also be involved in organized beggary, in which they are purposely disfigured to attract passers. Innocent minors are targeted by drug traffickers and expand their market through children as police and authorities usually do not suspect them. Moreover, children involved in drug sales and trafficking, are difficult to track and identify due to the illegal and hidden nature of trafficking and the social and political sensitivities of the phenomenon (Porio & Crisol, 2004). If identified, minors are placed under the strict supervision of their parents/guardians or in a rehab center, unlike adults who face severe penalties such as imprisonment and the death penalty. Being exposed to such violence and activity could lead to numerous factors that affect a child's wellbeing that include: a great risk of severe physical and mental abuse, substance abuse, identity difficulties, or even, fatalities (ILO, n.d.)

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 (No. 182) & The Minimum Age Convention, 1973

The Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention passed a treaty by the International Labor Organization member states of Geneva in 1999. Its purpose is to protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including slavery, prostitution, trafficking, the use of children in armed conflict, and other conditions that affect general well-being. The Minimum Age Convention in 1973, was hosted with the purpose of preventing children under the minimum age from working. Convention No. 182 and the 1973 Minimum Age Convention are both of the eight major ILO Conventions that embody the spirit of the 1998 Declaration on Labor Principles and Rights.

The International Labor Organization's 2006 Global Action Plan

In 2006, the International Labor Organization (ILO) had set out a global action plan to eliminate child labor by 2016. The ILO Member States had designed and planned on implementing appropriate time-based measures by the end of 2008 in accordance with Convention No. 182. As part of that, the ILO planned to step up its efforts to develop a coherent and comprehensive approach to the global elimination of child labor. The Global Action Plan was based on three pillars: Firstly, Support the State's response to child labor, in particular by effectively addressing child labor concerns within the national development and policy framework. Secondly, Deepen and strengthen global movement as a catalyst. Thirdly, Promote further integration of child labor concerns into general ILO priorities, such as the Decent Work Country Program.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - 1989

The United Nations Convention on Children's Rights (CRC or UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty signed on the 20th of November, 1989 that defines children's civil, political, economic, social, healthy and cultural rights. The Convention defines a child as a person under the age of 18 unless he or she reaches the age of majority under national law. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, consisting of 18 independent experts, oversees the implementation of the Convention by ratifying countries. Governments are expected to regularly report to and appear before the UN Commission on Children's Rights to review progress in the implementation of the Convention and the status of children's rights in their country. Their reports and the Commission's written views and concerns are available on the Commission's website.

Questions a Resolution Should Address

- 1. How can governments begin to track and identify children exposed to child labor and those recruiting them?
- 2. What methods should governments use to tackle the issue of child slavery and exploitation?
- 3. What legislative framework must be implemented to eliminate child labor? What resources are required to execute such laws?
- 4. What precautions must the government educate their people with regards to child labor? How can the international community contribute to terminating the issue?

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