



HARVARD MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2011

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ERFAN SOLIMAN, UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL

TOPIC AREA SUMMARIES

Disarmament and International Security Committee

Benjamin Philipson, Director

Topic Area A: **International Response to Natural Disasters**

Natural disasters are as ancient in their origins as the planet itself. However, the intersection of natural disasters and human life has only recently become a regular concern. In the relatively brief history of humanity, there have been many tales of ships sinking in cursed waters, aircrafts mysteriously disappearing, and entire cities destroyed by the acts of angry gods. Today, we know these events to often be the result of natural disasters: earthquakes, volcanoes, tornados, hurricanes, tsunamis, etc. Despite our thorough knowledge of these phenomena, how they work and how to predict some of their behavior, we do not have a cohesive or effective response to them.

Over the past several years, a number of natural disasters have decimated densely populated areas in both developing and developed nations. The Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004 wiped out an estimated 230,000 people and caused an immeasurable amount of damage. In 2005, hurricane Katrina almost obliterated the city of New Orleans and the surrounding areas, causing over 80 billion USD in damage and killing close to 2000 people. In 2008, an earthquake in China's Sichuan province left over 68,000 people dead. Hurricane Ike, also in 2008, killed close to 200 people and caused over 24 billion USD in damage. This year there have already been a number of devastating natural disasters. First, an earthquake decimated almost all of Haiti. Then another earthquake struck Chile and another struck China. These disasters have served to point out a key flaw in the international response to such events. They have exposed a potential for global panic should such a disaster hit a vital area.

The disaster in Haiti is particularly central in exposing this vulnerability. In the case that a natural disaster strikes a densely populated area, especially in developing nations, the damage can set back the country by decades and kill hundreds of thousands or even millions of people. Although loss of life is a terrible thing, it is not the only disastrous consequence of these phenomena. If a natural disaster were to strike a nuclear power plant, for example, the damage would be incredibly high. However, if one were to strike a weapons depot or an oil distribution facility, it could bring the entire world to a screeching halt. Terrorists could obtain weapons of mass destruction, or, possibly worse, the entire world economy would freeze. Yet, despite these terrible possibilities, the world has not yet created any strong guidelines for dealing with natural disasters in any major multinational organization.

Today, relief efforts are mostly coordinated by a combination of governments and non-governmental organizations. Often there are miscommunications, international laws are broken, and after a short time, few parties continue to assist in relief efforts. This leaves devastated areas vulnerable and helpless. Thanks to the international response in Haiti, many lives were saved, but many more will be destroyed by the lack of continued rebuilding efforts. Therefore, a cohesive set of guidelines and perhaps even an international organization should be created to respond to such massive disasters.

Topic Area B: **Nuclear Proliferation**

Since World War II, nuclear weapons have been the most potently destructive weapons on the planet. These weapons, which were once based on fission reactions, are primarily based on the fusion reaction of hydrogen isotopes with plutonium or uranium. These reactions are a microcosm of the reactions that power the sun and are as powerful as kilotons of TNT. The potential destruction with the use of nuclear weapons is not limited to their massive blast radius. Areas exposed to nuclear explosions are highly radioactive and uninhabitable for hundreds of years after a detonation. Although the United Nations and other multinational groups have written numerous resolutions and statements regarding nuclear weapons, they remain in the forefront of many forums.

After World War II, nuclear power and weapons rapidly multiplied and spread. The United States and Soviet Union were the primary creators of these weapons, but they were introduced or invented in other areas as well. Through various means, the United Kingdom, France, China, Pakistan, India, and Israel all have nuclear weapons. Throughout the cold war, many other nations developed nuclear power, often with the assistance of one of the other nations. After the end of the cold war, a new threat arose. Many of the nuclear weapon stockpiles in the former Soviet Union were not accounted for. Throughout the 1990s, many agreements and treaties were signed in order to reduce the number of operable nuclear warheads and lockdown all of the missing nuclear material.

Recently, North Korea and Iran have actively pursued nuclear programs against the will of the international community. A

few years ago, North Korea secretly tested a nuclear device leading the world to the conclusion that North Korea does have nuclear weapons. In the past, North Korea has agreed to shut down its nuclear facilities in exchange for various kinds of aid and rescinded sanctions. However, today North Korea has not agreed to restart multinational talks about its nuclear program and was even implicated in the construction of a nuclear facility in Syria. Iran has been a different case from North Korea. Iran is currently pursuing nuclear power, and continuing to build various nuclear facilities throughout their nation. Despite many calls from the international community to stop and allegations of a nuclear weapons program, Iran's leadership has remained steadfast in its pursuit of nuclear power, and perhaps nuclear weapons.

The United States and Russia have recently taken steps to reduce their own nuclear arsenals, while also promoting continued lockdown of nuclear weapons throughout the world. Russia and the US recently signed an agreement promising to decrease their nuclear stockpiles by 33% over a number of years. Both Presidents Barak Obama and Dmitriy Medvedev made statements on the importance of securing nuclear stockpiles throughout the world and especially in volatile areas of the world. Despite their efforts, nuclear material falling into the hands of terrorists and other non-state actors is still a great danger. The international community still needs to address the threats of nuclear proliferation to such groups and prevent the development of new nuclear weapons programs.

Economic and Financial Committee

Maximilian Evans, Director

Topic Area A: The Role of Health and Education in Development

Development is considered one of the main goals of humanity and the path that should be taken to improve our general standard of life. The Millennium Development Goals are a world road map whose purpose is to guide countries towards development. While we draw near the 2015 mark, we might want to reconsider the approach we are taking to achieve these goals and perhaps implement new and innovative methods of development.

Education has for a long time been viewed as the primary source of development and the primary spring-board from which equality, cooperation, and better economic standing can be achieved. It is no coincidence that the countries with a high alphabetization rate also have high standards of living and better socioeconomic conditions. From an economic perspective, one of the main determinants of economic growth is human capital. This human capital can be expanded by two ways. The first is through expansion of the population and the second through education, which improves the quality of the human resources. Now to increase economic development by just increasing population will have no effect on the average person as the PIB per capita will remain relatively equal. On the other hand, education makes the population more productive, and increases wages and innovation. The secondary effects which derive from an increase in education are numerous as people become more aware of the environment, their society, and even themselves, helping with the development of a country by almost every measurable standard.

Health is also an important yet constantly overlooked aspect of development. It is important to note that maternal health and children's health are two of the eight millennium goals. Health in itself is an important goal as it improves one's life style. With good health practices, much sorrow and unnecessary suffering can be avoided. From an economic perspective health has not been considered a goal which can further economic development. The pursuit of health has been viewed from a purely humanitarian and social perspective. However, health can also further economic development in a similar way as education. Health can also increase the quality of human resources, as healthy people can be more efficient workers and thinkers. Some secondary effects might be that a longer life expectancy can motivate people to increase their lifetime savings, which would increase the available capital for investment. Furthermore, as people expect a longer and healthier life they will be more aware of their education and surroundings, positively affecting society and human interactions. In this manner, it is possible to incorporate health into an economic growth model and justify the investment and active involvement of the government and international community in health programs.

The goal of this committee would be to explore both possibilities of development in a present context and then integrate them. Some possibilities that could be considered are projects that not only motivate the study of medicine, but also the application of this knowledge in areas with a dangerously low doctor-to-patient ratio. We might look upon Doctors Without Borders as a model of international programs that attempt to achieve development through health and education.

Topic Area B: Microeconomic Incentives of Grass-root Economics

Grassroots economics is a new humanitarian branch of economics which attempts to bring the 60% of the population that live under poverty into the economic system. Lately, the whole concept of giving aid to countries has come under scrutiny since the results from decades of financial aid show little or no result. Countries have become dependent on aid, and the corruption and instability in these nations have worsened rather than improved under aid-giving policies. Often times, aid does not even reach its intended target, but rather is lost somewhere in the process. One problem associated with aid policies might be that western countries have provided aid to certain nations without taking into account the cultural and social implications of their actions. The solution might lie in grass-root economics. The fundamental concept is that aid should not come from the top down, as a few wealthy benefactors would be making the decisions that influence billions of lives, but rather that aid should

empower people in developing nations to help themselves, and achieve development through their own means.

One example that shows a similar concept to that of grassroots economics is the contemporary notion of microcredit. These are small loans which are targeted to the poor recognizing that they are a large market that does not have access to credit. In particular these loans focus on lending to women, as recent statistics show that they are the best borrowers; they have lower default ratios and they use their profit to benefit their family and community. Now, grassroots economics can be used to take the notion a step further, and engage people in a new form of credit. Is there any national or cultural entity which can give credit and purchasing power to the people? One might begin to consider a way in which the people themselves might engage in a communal bank or its equivalent. Perhaps a practice of pooling resources, or facilitating the borrowing and lending of goods might be beneficial for all the parties involved. One example could be cell phone services in remote areas. A few inhabitants would purchase a cell phone and rent it to the rest of the village for a suitable fee, providing a necessary service of communication. Further attempts to expand the banking system and incorporate it into cell phone systems have also had some progress. The question to consider is not how we can give aid to the nations that desire to further develop, but rather how we can aid them in the process.

Grass-root economics avoids the intrinsic notion of a savor and a victim, because distinctions between traditional roles of giver and receiver are blurred. The purpose is to create a sense of collaboration toward a common good. One of the main issues that the committee will have to address is that the principle of grass-root economics lies in direct conflict with the principle behind the United Nations. We must find a way to transcend the attitude of delegates giving solutions or writing resolutions to problems, but rather become the framework from which entrepreneurial men and women can gain support to engage in a communal activity, and extend their reach to opportunities which might have previously been unavailable to them.

Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee

Juliana Cherston, Director

Topic Area A: International Collaboration in Science

On 30 March, 2010, the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), the world famous physics research facility based in Geneva, Switzerland, successfully achieved high-energy particle collisions at 7 TEV. These collisions occurred within the Large Hadron Collider (the LHC), a giant particle accelerator buried under Switzerland and France in which particles are propelled around at speeds nearing that of light. This success represented a grand step for physicists in their quest to seek scientific evidence for the great mysteries of the universe. As spokesperson Fabiola Gianotti stated in CERN's press release: "With these record-shattering collision energies, the LHC experiments are propelled into a vast region to explore, and the hunt begins for dark matter, new forces, new dimensions and the Higgs boson."

CERN is the epicenter of great excitement in the frontier of physics, but with great excitement comes a number of concerns that have been vocalized by various countries. Namely, recent developments at CERN compel us to examine how scientific research is conducted on a global scale, and to examine the potential for future international collaboration in science. One concern that has been raised is how to justify spending so much money, and dedicating so much energy towards theoretical fields of science in the context of poverty, hunger, and issues that are perceived by some as more directly of our concern. Austria, for example, briefly considered pulling funding from CERN last year, and Germany, France, and the UK currently top the list of financial contributors. Furthermore, the LHC alone has an annual power consumption of 800,000 megawatt hours.

When CERN was first created in the early 1950's (in collaboration with UNESCO), Isador Rabi, an American physicist, tabled a resolution that would have fought for the development of a number of regional scientific laboratories in order to motivate collaboration. Instead, in 1951 UNESCO passed the resolution that formally established CERN, and by 1953 12 founding states signed the CERN convention. Over fifty years later, we ask: what now? The primary goal of this committee is to analyze CERN's relationship with various blocks of countries—namely developing countries, European countries, Middle Eastern countries, and East Asian countries—and to play a role in policy reform to continue motivating the progress of scientific understanding within a cohesive and collaborative environment. Under CERN's current philosophy, developing countries are asked to produce materials used to build the detectors rather than provide financial contributions, and CERN has made great efforts towards data distribution in these nations. Are there additional initiatives that should be taken?

This topic is meant to forge a reactionary debate following events at CERN, and while debate should center around the future role of CERN within the international community, there is also room to talk more broadly about how to forge better communication in scientific research, and furthermore how to prioritize scientific research. Analyze and react to your country's policies with CERN, consider CERN's role in contemporary society, and create a vision for the future of scientific collaboration that is in line with your country's policies in preparation for debate.

Topic Area B: Internet Censorship

In April, 2010, Google released a tool entitled Government Requests which disclosed government data requests directed at Google. Brazil, Germany, India, and the United States top the list for removal requests, and Brazil, the United States, the United Kingdom, and India top the list for data requests. Meanwhile, following a cyber attack in January of 2010, Google officially stopped

censoring data in China, redirecting users to uncensored data from Hong Kong's servers. The trouble that Google has faced in its quest to divulge the world's information is illustrative of the conflict between governmental censorship and the right to maintain access to global information.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has attempted to perform thorough investigations into censorship throughout the world. In one case study, HRW reported that a Tunisian internet café had a sign reading: "Opening disk drives is strictly forbidden. Do not touch the parameters of the configurations. It is forbidden to access prohibited sites. Thank you." Tunisia is not alone in regularly blocking information concerning human rights abuses. Human Rights Watch also writes that Iran is known to imprison journalists and bloggers that publish words of dissent against the government, and Egypt has detained people in the past for various illegal online activities.

While countries recognize the necessity of the internet in the regulation of economics and politics in modern times, many countries simultaneously have blocked massive amounts of data from users. The goal of this topic area is to consider various proposals for reacting to internet censorship, and also to develop new and innovative policies. Human Rights Watch, for example, has suggested releasing all those detained for "exercising their right to free expression," unblocking websites "that carry material protected by the rights to free expression and free information," among other strict and clear courses of action. Amnesty International has also performed extensive research into online censorship, and in 2006 presented their findings at the UN Internet Governance Forum. In particular, Amnesty urged China to give domestic journalists the same rights as foreign journalists.

The primary questions that need to be addressed concern reacting to Google's latest stance on censorship, as well as deciding when, by national and international standards, a country is just in requesting information from companies or denying information from their citizens. The issue of censorship is highly complex and has recently drawn significant international attention, following Google's policy modifications. Thus, this is a particularly opportune time for the United Nations to outline clear suggestions for reform in relation to censorship.

Special Political and Decolonization Committee

Stephen Ethan Lyle, Director

Topic Area A: **The Question of Anti-Personnel and Sea Mines**

Mines have been very dangerous, but often overlooked, weapons of war across the globe. These destructive mechanisms are often devastating during combat, but have proven to be even more horrific in post-conflict regions as explosive remnants of war (ERW). Mines are particularly problematic since they are indiscriminate weapons, meaning they are designed to detonate under certain influences regardless of whether the target is an enemy or a civilian. Land and sea mines were used as early as the 13th and 14th centuries in China, and proliferated at increasing rates leading up to the First and Second World Wars, where they played a significant strategic role for both sides.

Anti-personnel mines plague countries with the scourges of war long after the fighting ceases. Mines can hamper numerous societal functions including resettlement, agriculture and tourism. They can be triggered by numerous means, such as pressure, movement, sound, magnetism or vibration. They are typically designed to maim and wound as opposed to kill, and are deliberately difficult to disarm and clear. Strategically, anti-personnel mines can be used to deny terrain to an enemy force, focus the opposition's troop movements into specific kill zones, and even as tools of psychological warfare.

Numerous efforts have been made to regulate, outlaw and eliminate anti-personnel mines completely. On 10 October, 1980 the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects was held in Geneva to foster international collaboration for curbing the damages of indiscriminate weapons. Protocol II of the Convention called for the need of additional conventions to prohibit specific methods and means of warfare; Protocol II was later amended in May 1996. More recently, the Ottawa Treaty of 18 September 1997 explicitly called for the total prohibition of anti-personnel mines, and laid out provisions for completely eliminating stockpiles and clearing all devices still deployed in the field.

The Ottawa Treaty, along with subsequent international efforts, has been very successful in addressing the problem of anti-personnel mines, yet serious obstacles remain. First off, numerous states still have not signed on to the treaty (e.g. the United States and the People's Republic of China.) Additionally, in the past few years certain signatories had failed to meet the required deadlines for eliminating stockpiles, while others have sought extensions on their efforts to remove all mines in their sovereign territories. There is also the challenge of establishing organized standards for assisting and rehabilitating past and future victims of these harmful weapons.

A sea mine, defined in the San Remo Manual on International Law Applicable to Armed Conflicts at Sea as "an explosive device laid in water, on the seabed or in the subsoil thereof, with the intention of damaging or sinking ships or of deterring ships from entering the area," present a unique series of challenges. The international regulation on sea mines is far more scant in comparison to their land-based counterparts.

The main international convention on the use of sea-mines is The Hague Convention VII, which dates back to 1907 and does very little to set norms for regulating this brand of warfare. In 1994, the aforementioned San Remo Manual was published

by a series of international lawyers and naval experts in an attempt to modernize the laws applicable to armed conflict at sea and included restrictions on sea mines. However, the provisions of this document are not binding. The adverse effects of sea mines were demonstrated in June 1995 when a ship belonging to the International Committee of the Red Cross sank after striking a sea mine en route to Sri Lanka with relief supplies. Significant efforts are still required to address this crucial problem.

Topic Area B: **The Role of Illegal Drug-Trafficking in Financing Terrorist Organizations**

Acts of terrorism have been a corruptive and vicious parasite for the international community for quite some time. Following the attacks of 11 September 2001 on United States soil, seeking out and eliminating terrorist threats in all corners of the world has become an issue of the highest priority. As more is learned about the inner-workings of many terrorist organizations, the sources of funding for terrorist operations are being revealed. Studies have shown that terrorist groups are placing an increased reliance on the trafficking of drugs for financial support.

In recent studies, numerous governments have failed to find strong evidence that transnational crime organizations operating within their borders coordinate with the terrorist groups for shared objectives. Moreover, these alliances are seen purely as arrangements of convenience. Terrorist organizations benefit from the financial yield of the drug trade, as well as from the access to equipment and recruits. Conversely, organized crime networks enjoy the presence of terrorist cells that can be hired for protection. Terrorist groups also contribute to the destabilization of state structures for law enforcement in the region.

There are a plethora of terrorist groups known for financing their illicit activities through illegal drug trade. In Latin America, groups such as the United Self-Defense Force of Colombia (AUC), the Marxist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and the National Liberation Front (ELN) are known rebel factions that have used cocaine sales to fund subversive guerilla action against the Colombian government. In Afghanistan, the trade of opium and heroin constitutes a large percentage of the Afghan GDP, and several smaller terrorist organizations operating in the region like the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan have latched on to this source of funds. A myriad of terrorist groups in South-East Asia operating in locations from Sri Lanka to the Philippines have started to fund their criminal infrastructure using drug trade. Finally, a recent phenomenon that has challenged the global community is the increasing interconnectedness between drug trafficking operations in Latin American and Asia and terrorist networks in West Africa.

The United Nations has hosted many conventions over the last fifty years to eliminate certain illicit actions completely from countries that sign onto them, and yet the problem has persisted. In order to draft additional measures for furthering the fight against terrorism, the issue surrounding the use of drug trafficking for financial gains in terrorist plots must be addressed. It would be possible to design a strategy for interdiction at the source of the drug trade, or attempt to disrupt the actual distribution of drugs into the market for profit. These, along with other potential strategies, must be carefully evaluated and crafted to bring a halt to the illicit dealing of drugs, as well as the widespread practice of acts of terror.

Legal Committee

Rachna Raina, Director

Topic Area A: **Patent Law**

A patent is, by definition, a copyright on a particular idea or object, which gives rights solely to the owner of that idea. According to the World Trade Organization, patents should last 20 years—though this is variable—and should be applicable for anything. Patents can be very useful for industries and governments attempting to use new technology, material, or processes to increase production efficiency, thereby giving themselves an advantage in the production or execution of whatever object or process is being undertaken. This advantage can be a significant bolster to the economy of any particular nation or company, and can completely alter the industry of a nation.

The critical issue with patent law is that there is great discrepancy with the laws used by particular nations in terms of what areas of discovery are patented, the terms under which things are patented, and the length of time for which a patent is viable.

Attempts have been made in the past to alleviate the developing issues in patent law, but the attempt to standardize the effects and mandates in patent laws is somewhat lagging in effectiveness. One of the critiques of the current patent system is that there can be monopolies on the patents, and that industries can be shut out of progress by a certain group of patent holders. These holders are generally entitled “patent trolls,” and they prevent others from innovation, along with restricting trade. There are also loopholes in the patent system that result in patents being issued for well-known, already existing technologies, which is counterproductive to the progression of industry and technology.

In many developing countries, pharmaceuticals have patented their drug technologies, preventing generic drug makers from being able to capitalize on the technology and create more affordable drugs, which is becoming a critical issue for many patients with high medical drug costs, such as those with HIV/AIDs. This is an issue that many people are currently dealing with, and becomes even more of an issue as the implications become clearer for the health of the people involved. In some nations, the international patent laws are not recognized, however. Developed nations who have patented their pharmaceutical drugs cannot enforce their patent laws, and developing nations are bypassing the laws to produce low-cost generic drugs. Therefore, the issue of patent law surpasses an issue for just developing or developed nations – it in fact involves both. Nations such as Brazil have filed complaints that

the power wielded by those few who can file for patents on technology, and the many that are negatively affected by these patents, render it necessary for a revamping of the current patent law methodology. That is the goal of this committee – to properly revamp the laws surrounding patent law internationally, and to stress within nations a reconsideration of current patent laws.

Topic Area B: **Rights of Ethnic and Religious Minorities**

Any topic involving religious and ethnic minorities is going to be one of contention in the international scope. For centuries, religious persecution against those who have political, financial, or demographical disadvantage has been common. There has also been a great deal of ethnic discrimination, either based on appearance, cultural celebration, or family makeup. As we approach modern day, these discriminations have not necessarily lessened, but instead have become subtler. It is the goal of this committee to reduce these discriminations, and ensure that regardless of religion and ethnicity, all have an equal opportunity to achieve a satisfactory and healthy lifestyle.

An area that may be significantly affected by religious or ethnic affiliation is the ability to secure a steady job. Though most nations have laws explicitly stating that job discrimination is illegal based on religion or ethnicity, hiring is not necessarily exemplary in following these laws. A great deal of research has been done about racial job discrimination. A study in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, United States by the Economic Policy Institute found that when both white and black applicants did not have a criminal record, approximately 34% of white applicants were called back for job interviews, while only 14% of black applicants were called back. This trend is prevalent in the United States and even more so in various other nations. There are some nations where a worker's pay level can be raised or lowered based on ethnic background. These violations must be addressed, and it is the goal of this committee to create a more standardized and efficient jurisdiction regarding this type of discrimination.

Another significant area where religious and ethnic minorities are discriminated against is in the purchase of homes. The National Fair Housing Alliance is an organization dedicated solely to insuring that regardless of background, all will have equal access to homes in the housing industry. In some nations, especially where clean resources such as water are lacking, the ethnicity in the majority will subjugate the other and force them into housing where the natural resources are not as prevalent, so as to ensure that those of their religious persuasion or ethnicity are guaranteed clean resources. This practice is not acceptable and those participating in this activity should be subject to international discrimination laws, or more stringent governmental laws in the nations in which these discriminatory acts are occurring.

For this topic, this committee must focus on the discriminations that are apparent due to the lack of stringency in the legal system, both internationally, and in individual nations. This must be addressed with efficiency, because many people find themselves unable to live healthy lives due to this restriction from equal opportunities.

World Trade Organization

Damon Meng, Director

Topic Area A: **Building Trade Capacity**

In November 2001, ministers from all member nations of the WTO met in Doha, Qatar. At the conference, WTO members launched the Doha Development Agenda. The goal of the agenda is to give developing countries a greater share of the benefits from world trade. The first step toward achieving that goal is the building of trade capacities of developing nations.

How do developing countries build trade capacity? These countries need to develop their infrastructure and human capital systems so that they may enter the global value chains. Developing countries must be able to produce the high quantity and quality levels demanded by other markets. They must also ensure that they have the physical capacity to manufacture goods that conform to various national and international standards. However, developing only the infrastructural aspects of the manufacturing sector is not enough. Developing countries also need a better understanding of the growing complexities of world trade regulations. The faster their trade capacity grows, the quicker they must learn the subtleties of international trade agreements.

This is where the WTO comes in. The WTO is at the center of international trade agreements involving multiple nations. It is the only international organization that has the research and tools to help developing countries overcome the knowledge and infrastructural gap that stands between them and trade prosperity. More importantly, the WTO is a forum where nations can come together to address some important questions. Who should help fund trade capacity building? What kind of assistance—monetary, technological, or others—would achieve the best results? How can the WTO work with other institutions such as the World Bank to aid developing countries?

Topic Area B: **Trade and the Environment**

Concern of the environment is one of the core elements of the WTO's mandate. In the Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization, members recognized that trade policy should seek "the optimal use of the world's resources in accordance with the objective of sustainable development, seeking both to protect and preserve the environment and to enhance the means for doing so in a manner consistent with their respective needs and concerns at different levels of economic development."

With the intensity of debate regarding the environment heating up throughout the world, trade has come to the center.

The impact of trade on the environment is substantial. There are hundreds of thousands of ships, planes, and trains that transport goods across the world. Massive amounts of energy are needed to fuel these machines; with more energy production comes more significant impact on the environment. With the entrance of the WTO into the environmental debate, the number of issues that need to be addressed have increased. Some argue that WTO's trade regulations have led to the decline of environmental health while others claim that trade liberalization helps promote sustainable development. The issue is much more complex. The WTO's trade regulations and decisions have the potential of conflicting with multilateral environmental agreements. What kind of agreements can the WTO obtain that will complement the multilateral environment agreements? Other questions raise concerns about promoting sustainability and helping developing countries cope financially and technologically with environmental regulations. Should "environmental goods" receive special consideration under WTO regulations? Who should fund initiatives that help developing countries implement environmental regulations domestically and deal with existing international regulations?

Special Summit on Globalization

Nora Tufano, Director

Topic Area A: **Local Entrepreneurship**

The word globalization, depending on its context, can draw to mind a wide range of issues. Issues of copyright, corporate hegemony, or just the Starbucks on every corner are all aspects of the phenomenon. Small businesses, despite being a hugely important aspect of globalization, are not often part of the equation.

Particularly in developing countries, encouragement of local entrepreneurship has changed significantly thanks to globalization. It has had dual effects – although the ease of transportation and spread of information technology has made it easier to gain access to resources in developed countries, such advancements have been much slower in reaching developing nations. Furthermore, the rise of transnational corporations, paired with the global economic recession, has made it more difficult for entrepreneurs to break into the industry and gain the resources necessary to start and maintain their businesses.

The questions at stake are ones that affect every level of the global economy, from America's highest paid CEO to a basket weaver in rural Africa. To effectively address the question, one must consider possible limitations to corporate conglomerates, but more importantly, issues of local encouragement of entrepreneurship, particularly in alleviating poverty. This should include provisions of technology and resources, particularly in developing nations, with careful consideration of how to accomplish this without infringing on national sovereignty.

Topic Area B: **Flow of Capital, Resources, and Information**

Globalization, for better or for worse, has made everything accessible. Every day people wear shirts that were made in China and sold in America by a European company, probably with several steps in between. Obviously, ease of transportation of physical goods due to globalization has made this possible, but it would also be impossible without the growing ease of transferring capital and information.

This has allowed corporations to become global as opposed to national, or even continental. However, it has blurred the rules on regulation of such transnational corporations. Unable to be bound to a single nation's rules, these companies are without clear guidelines for their actions—including, for example, corporate responsibility and trade—and in need of a global set of guidelines to act by. To reach a conclusion, the committee must decide first whether such a set of regulations is in the United Nation's domain, and if so, to create these rules with utmost respect towards national sovereignty.

Historic General Assembly, 1980

Gillian Farrell, Director

Topic Area: **The Soviet Occupation of Afghanistan, 1980**

It is 10 January, 1980, and the General Assembly has just been summoned to an Emergency Special Session, concerning the situation in Afghanistan and its implications on international peace and security. During the last twelve months, the Afghan government has experienced great dissent in response to its crack down on the traditional Islamic system in place in the region. Faced by these protests, the government responded with extreme violence, killing upwards of 35,000 suspected nonconformists. This clash has led to the organization and rise of the infamous mujahideen; as the Afghan government attempted to quell this uprising, it called upon the Soviet Union for military support and collaboration.

Two weeks ago, on 27 December, 1979, Soviet forces posing as Afghan troops shocked the world by invading and taking over the city of Kabul and assassinating the Afghan president, Hafizullah Amin. Since these events, the Soviet invasion has caused a surge of nationalism in the country and the Soviet troops have found themselves fighting the same Afghan forces they had previously been asked to ally. The humanitarian situation has become dire, and the official United State's backing of the mujahideen rebel group has made the crisis even more volatile.

Five days ago, the Security Council convened to discuss the Soviet occupation. The USSR and Afghanistan protested this intervention, claiming that it was a violation of national sovereignty and that the USSR had the right to intervene under the Soviet-

Afghan Treaty of Friendship. Acknowledging the division of the members, the Security Council invoked the General Assembly's "Uniting for Peace" resolution, effectively calling the General Assembly to an emergency session to attempt to resolve the matter.

It is now up to you, the delegates of the Sixth Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly, to debate, collaborate, and create a resolution to this impending international crisis.