



Security Council

Directed By: Sean Rutten

TSMUN MMXXII BACKGROUND GUIDE 2022

Topic I: The Situation in Afghanistan

**Topic II: Promoting Economic, Social, and Humanitarian Recovery
from the Covid-19 Pandemic**



Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2022 Tallahassee Southern Model United Nations (TSMUN) Conference. My name is Sean Ruten, and I am the Director of the Security Council. I am studying Political Science at Tallahassee Community College and Florida State University. This is my third year participating in Model United Nations and I am currently serving as President for the Model United Nations Team at Tallahassee Community College.

The topics under discussion for this year's Security Council are:

- I. The Situation in Afghanistan
- II. Promoting Economic, Social, and Humanitarian Recovery from the Covid-19 Pandemic

The United Nations (UN) Security Council is one of the six main organizations of the UN. The Security Council is tasked with sustaining international peace and security. It is the only UN body with the authority to adopt binding resolutions as well as impose economic sanctions and military power. The Council is made up of fifteen Member States, which include five permanent members with the power of veto. The membership, functions, and governance of the Security Council make it a unique body of the UN.

I hope you find this background guide useful in your preparation for the conference. This background guide is meant to introduce delegates to the topic that will be discussed in committee and provide guidance as delegates begin their research. Delegates are strongly encouraged to research the positions, views, and opinions of their countries as well as relevant regional and international frameworks, past resolutions, organizations and initiatives.

Each delegation will submit a position paper for the committee. Delegates must turn in their papers before the start of the first committee session. Papers may be emailed to sc@tsmun.org and can also be submitted through a USB drive or hard copy. For a position paper guide and an example position paper, please visit <http://www.tsmun.org/position-papers.html>. Papers that are not in the correct format will not be eligible for awards. For conference information, resources for preparation, scholarships, and other useful information, visit <http://www.tsmun.org/>. If you have any questions leading up to the conference, feel free to contact me at sc@tsmun.org. I look forward to seeing you all in committee.





Sincerely,

Sean Rutten, Security Council Director

sc@tsmun.org

Committee Overview

Introduction

Since its creation in 1945 with the ratification of the United Nations (UN) Charter and its first assembly in January of 1946, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has stood as the foremost international body for maintaining “International peace and security”¹. The UN Charter gives the UNSC the primary responsibility to maintain this peace and security and grants it the power to deploy peacekeeping operations to fulfill its responsibility². These peacekeeping measures can include peacemaking, sanctions, and military force³. The UNSC normally convenes at the UN headquarters in New York, in both private and public sessions, continuously throughout the year and when emergency sessions are called⁴.

Committee Mandate

Under the United Nations Charter, the UN has four main purposes: to maintain international peace and security, to develop friendly relations among nations, to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights, and to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations⁵. Among the six main parts of the UN is the UNSC. The role of this 15 Member State council is to maintain and ensure international peace and security

¹ “Security Council.” United Nations. United Nations.

² UN Peace Keeping editors. “Mandates and the Legal Basis for Peacekeeping Peacekeeping.” United Nations. United Nations.

³ Nadin, Peter. “United Nations Security Council 101.” United Nations University. United Nations University, March 24, 2014.

⁴ Sarooshi, Dan. Security Council.

⁵ “What Is the Security Council? Security Council.” United Nations. United Nations.





through minimum armaments⁶. It may respond to breaches of the peace and acts of aggression and is authorized to deploy peacekeeping operations, including military operations, in areas where a Member State is unable to maintain security and/or public order.

History

The Security Council originally consisted of 11 Member States; five permanent Member States (P5) including, the Republic of China, the Soviet Union, France, the United States, and the United Kingdom and six non-permanent Member States which are elected by the General Assembly (GA) on a two-year term basis.

In 1965, an amendment was added to the UN charter widening the UNSC's membership to 15 Member States, with the same P5 Member States apart from the Russian Federation⁷. In late 1950, the UNSC employed its military authority for the first time in its history to intervene in North Korea's invasion of South Korea in a conflict that would be the UNSC's first test of its ability to maintain peace.⁸ On June 25th and 27th the UNSC ratified a directive urging for a ceasefire between the Soviet Union Occupied North Korea and the United States occupied South Korea and urging all Member States to support South Korea⁹. Between the years of 1987 and 2000 there was a rise in peacekeeping operations authorized by the UNSC. The operations included, but were not limited to, operations in Sierra Leone, Angola, the Balkans, Haiti, Liberia, and Somalia. The UNSC's became more reputable as a peacekeeping organization leading to its awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988¹⁰. This peacekeeping reputation was bruised in its failures in dealing with the Genocide in Rwanda and the Bosnian War leaving many critics questioning the effectiveness of the UNSC¹¹. The UNSC continues to respond to crises like these, however, and continues to promote peace and stability around the globe.

⁶ United Nations. "Chapter V: The Security Council." United Nations. United Nations.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ "Soviets Boycott United Nations Security Council." History.com. A&E Television Networks, November 13, 2009.

⁹ Truman Library Institute. "The United Nations in Korea." The United Nations in Korea | Harry S. Truman, 2016.

¹⁰ The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. "History." Edited by Michael Ray. Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., January 2, 2020.

¹¹ Ibid





Governance, Structure and Membership

As stated previously, The UNSC is composed of five permanent Member States (the P5s) and ten non-permanent Member States. The P5 Member States include China, France, Russia, The United Kingdom, and The United States. The ten non-permanent Member States are elected by the General Assembly every two years. The council shall adopt a President, which according to rule 18 of the UNSC’s provisional rules of procedure, is held in turn by Member States in alphabetical order (of the English alphabet) of Member States for one month, who will represent the UNSC¹². All Members of the UNSC may have one representative and one vote. Only P5 Member States hold the right to veto, or to reject a resolution made by the UNSC¹³. Decisions of the UNSC require nine affirmative votes to pass for procedural matters and nine affirmative votes including affirmative votes of all P5 Member States, unless the Member State obtains, to pass for all other matters¹⁴. Member States who are not on the UNSC may participate in the council’s discussion if the President believes that Member State is “specially affected,” however, they may not vote¹⁵.

Conclusion

The Security Council is the most powerful body of the UN, holding the responsibility of maintaining international peace and justice. In order to achieve its mandate, it may employ peacekeeping operations, including peacemaking, sanctions, and military force. Because the UNSC is the only body that can make binding resolutions that Member States are obligated to follow, it is an integral part to attaining the goals of the UN.

Topic I: The Situation in Afghanistan

Introduction

¹² Ibid

¹³ United Nations. “Chapter V: The Security Council.” United Nations. United Nations.

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Ibid





Afghanistan has been a Member State in conflict for decades, from revolts against the self-declared monarch in 1926, Amunullah, along with several military coups relating to the monarchy, to the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in December of 1979 to expand their communist regime. By the time the US invaded Afghanistan, it had already been through several periods of conflict. The conflict intensified after the September 11 attacks in the United States. During this attack, operatives from the terrorist group known as Al-Qaeda hijacked commercial airlines and crashed them into the two towers of the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington DC, with a fourth plane crashing in a field in Pennsylvania before it could reach its target. In response to this, on September 18th of 2001, US President George Bush signed a joint resolution authorizing the use of force to seek out the people responsible for the attack¹⁶. When the Taliban regime in Afghanistan refused to deliver the leaders of Al-Qaeda to the US, the US began operations to topple the Taliban regime and find the Al-Qaeda leaders, working with special operations forces from the Member States of Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, and Norway. The UNSC and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) also played important roles in the conflict, sending troops and other forms of support.

The war that followed included three phases. The first was to topple the Taliban regime providing sanctuary to Al-Qaeda. The second phase was to rebuild Afghanistan after the defeat of the Taliban military, including the implementation of a transitional government. The third phase US troop presence was increased in Afghanistan and the strategy shifted to protecting civilians from Taliban attacks and slowly giving the Afghan military police more power over time.¹⁷.

On May 1st of 2003, the US declared that the major combat was over, however, by 2006 the violence in Afghanistan increased across the country, partly due to the lack of international troop support for security. On November 17th, after years of continuing violence and failed diplomatic interventions, the US announced that it would be withdrawing its troops from Afghanistan and NATO forces would be withdrawn as well. Almost a year after the announcement of this withdrawal in August of 2021, the Taliban overtook the Afghan capital of Kabul and gained control of the presidential palace. Through the creation of a council to facilitate a peaceful transition, the Taliban gained control of the Afghan government¹⁸. The conflict has claimed many lives as violence has continued to ravage the Member State, claiming the lives of soldiers and citizens alike. According to the *Global Conflict Tracker*, as of September 23rd, 2021, nearly 111,000 civilians have died in conflict in Afghanistan since 2009, and approximately 104.5

¹⁶ "Timeline: U.S. War in Afghanistan." Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations, 2021

¹⁷ Witte, Griff. "Afghanistan War." Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., August 16, 2021

¹⁸ ibid





billion dollars of US foreign aid had been dispersed¹⁹. As violence continues to evolve, the end of the conflict remains uncertain.

Current Situation

Since the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, escalations in violence and limitations on human rights and humanitarian aid have made the situation in the Member State dire for many people. On August 24th of 2021, Michelle Bachelet, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR) released a statement concerning reports of “serious violations of international humanitarian law, and human rights abuses, taking place in many areas under effective Taliban control.” These reports include executions of Afghan national security forces, the restriction of women’s rights, the restriction of girls’ right to attend schools, the recruitment of child soldiers, and suppression of peaceful protest²⁰.

The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) also released their mid-year update on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, reporting 1,669 civilians killed and 3, 254 wounded in the first half of 202. Among those numbers, fourteen percent of them were women (219 killed, 508 wounded) and 32 percent children (468 killed, 1,214 wounded). The number of casualties amounted to more injured and killed women and children of Afghanistan during this time as compared to the first half of the year since 2009. The UNAMA report attributed most of these civilian casualties (64 percent) to “anti-government elements,” including the Taliban and the Islamic State-Khorasan Province (ISIL-KP), with the second highest percentage of civilian casualties (25 percent) being attributed to pro-government forces such as the Afghan national security forces²¹. After the Taliban gained control of the Afghan state, it announced that women would not be allowed to hold senior positions in the new government, and that they have “no place in the new order.” On September 4th of 2021, around 100 women gathered to protest the Taliban’s restrictions on women in front of the presidential palace but were met with violence

¹⁹ Council on Foreign Relations. (2021, September 23). War in afghanistan | global Conflict Tracker. Council on Foreign Relations.

²⁰ Bachelet, M. (2021, August 24). 31St special session of the Human Rights Council the serious human rights concerns and situation in Afghanistan. OHCHR.

²¹ United Nations. (2021, July 26). Afghanistan: Record number of women and children killed or wounded | | UN NEWS. United Nations.





from the Taliban security forces, who stopped the protest and beat at least ten percent of the women²².

Similarly to the UNAMA update, the *Fifth Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in Afghanistan*, published on July 16th of 2021, has found Afghanistan to be an especially dangerous place for children. According to the report, a third of civilian casualties are children, with 6,473 serious human rights violations committed against 6,131 children within the two-year period the report covers. Most of these violations were attributed to the Taliban, with the most prevalent attacks being on schools and hospitals. The report also reveals that in the span of the two years, two hundred and sixty boys were recruited, mostly for combat roles, primarily by the Taliban. This makes up 88 percent of total recruitment. Furthermore, there have been 46 incidents, according to this report, of humanitarian access to children in Afghanistan being denied. These issues for children have only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic²³.

As of September 24th, of 2021, the *Reuters COVID-19 Tracker* reported that Afghanistan had 154,800 confirmed cases of COVID-19, with 7,200 deaths. By that time, Afghanistan had already administered 3,133,227 vaccine doses, which is enough to vaccinate about 4.1 percent of Afghanistan's population with two doses, assuming two doses are necessary. Having so little of the population vaccinated, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a persisting problem in the Member State²⁴. With the Taliban takeover, vaccination has been drastically slowed, and with Afghanistan's health care system unable to accommodate all the needs that are being put upon it, the humanitarian crisis has been exacerbated²⁵.

Actions Taken by the UN

After the Taliban took control of Kabul, several UN organizations have taken an active stance in assisting people in Afghanistan. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has deployed teams to Kabul to evaluate the humanitarian needs in order to optimize UN assistance. The OCHA has also partnered with other organizations to launch a \$1.3 billion appeal for Afghanistan. Despite the low level of refugees leaving Afghanistan to seek asylum,

²² Abbasi, Fereshta. "Afghan Women Protest AGAINST Taliban Restrictions." Human Rights Watch, September 7, 2021.

²³ Rep. Fifth Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in Afghanistan. United Nations Security Council, 2021.

²⁴ Bhatia, G., Dutta, P. K., & McClure, J. (2021, September 24). Afghanistan: The Latest CORONAVIRUS counts, charts and maps. Reuters.

²⁵ Essar, Mohammad Yasir, Mohammad Mehedi Hasan, Zarmina Islam, Mehr Muhammad Adeel Riaz, Abdullahi Tunde Aborode, and Shoab Ahmad. "COVID-19 and Multiple Crises in Afghanistan: An Urgent Battle." Conflict and Health. BioMed Central, September 17, 2021.





the UNHCR and Secretary-General have urged Member States to temporarily halt deportations of failed asylum seekers, releasing a *non-return advisory*. Several UN organizations have also released statement concerning the importance of international unity in the face of the crisis in Afghanistan²⁶.

On August 30th, 2021, the UNSC adopted *resolution 2593*, which strongly condemns deadly attacks that took place on August 26th near the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan. It called for Member States to combat terrorism and to increase humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan, including the hosting of Afghan refugees. The resolution also stresses the importance of upholding human rights, including women, children, and minorities, and encourages those populations to pursue inclusive and equal political settlements²⁷.

On September 17th, 2021, the UNSC adopted *resolution 2596* which emphasizes the importance of an inclusive government and respecting human rights. It also authorizes the extension of the UN mission’s mandate in Afghanistan for another six months, stressing the importance of UN presence in the Member State to promote peace and stability. This authorization includes the creation of another 2022 UNAMA in Afghanistan. The resolution pledges over a billion dollars to assist civilians in need of humanitarian assistance and includes a great deal of language concerning women’s and children’s rights²⁸.

Regional and International Framework

Before the recent installment of a Taliban government in Afghanistan, there were regional refugee response frameworks in place to aid displaced Afghan refugees. These frameworks are now more important than ever as the crisis has escalated. In 2019, the previous government of Afghanistan, and the governments of Iran and Pakistan established the Support Platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR). This initiative aimed to coordinate donated resources for a regional response to Afghan refugees and established a framework of engagement for Member States and agencies.²⁹

On September 17th of 2021, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), an organization originally formed by China and ex-Soviet central Asian states that has recently expanded its ambitions to wider regional security and stability, hosted a summit concerning the rights

²⁶ “The United Nations Intends to Remain in Afghanistan.” United Nations Western Europe, September 14, 2021.

²⁷ “Adopting Resolution 2593 (2021), Security Council Condemns Deadly Attacks in Afghanistan, Calls for Combating Terrorism, Upholding Human RIGHTS | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” United Nations. United Nations, August 30, 2021.

²⁸ “Afghanistan: Security Council Resolution Calls for 'Equal and Meaningful Participation of WOMEN' | | UN NEWS.” United Nations. United Nations, September 17, 2021.

²⁹ Lang, Harding, Sarah Miller, Daphne Panayotatos, Yael Schacher, and Eric Schwartz. “After the Airlift: Protection for Afghan Refugees and Those Who Remain at Risk in Afghanistan.” Refugees International. Refugees International, September 8, 2021.





violations in Afghanistan. During the summit, regional Member States, including Russia, China, Pakistan, India, and Iran called on the United States to engage with the Taliban and to give aid to the Afghan people. The Member States also urged the Taliban to yield its power to a more inclusive government. By reinforcing mutually beneficial cooperation, preventing confrontation and conflict, and maintaining equal and indivisible security, SCO aims to build a just polycentric world order³⁰.

Conclusion

After decades of conflict in Afghanistan and thousands of lives lost every year, the rise of the Taliban into power has been one of many developments that have complicated humanitarian relief to the people of Afghanistan. Reports from within the Member State detail serious human rights violations in Taliban controlled area including executions, serious gender-based discrimination and violence, and the recruitment of child soldiers. Furthermore, the continuing spread of COVID-19 has made the situation for many even more dire as vaccination rates have drastically slowed down and the healthcare system struggles to accommodate Afghan health needs. What can be done to better provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan? How can a more peaceful, stable, and inclusive Afghanistan be promoted? How can the COVID-19 situation in the Member State be improved?

Topic II: Promoting Economic, Social, and Humanitarian Recovery from the Covid-19 Pandemic

Introduction

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in December of 2019, the world and its institutions have been shaken to the core. Lockdowns and restrictions have led to the damaging of economies around the world and mental and physical health problems have been exacerbated as well due to isolation and confinement. Further, the virus continues to spread and mutate, creating new challenges for the world to face while it recovers. COVID-19 plunged the world into economic

³⁰ “Regional Powers at Summit Demand U.S. Fund Afghan Aid.” Reuters. Thomson Reuters, September 17, 2021.





crisis as markets came to a halt and productions slowed or stopped altogether as their workforces quarantined and Member States implemented strict regulations to stop the spread of the virus. Social health drastically dropped as isolation drew out through the months followed by months of the pandemic. People’s health around the world suffered as people’s lifestyles changed and as the virus negatively affected health. The pandemic has severely affected Member States’ economies, social well-being, and health, and although as it has slowed down some, there is still much recovery to be made for most, if not all, Member States. According to the World Trade Organization (WTO), the pandemic caused the worst global recession in decades, with a 5.2 percent contraction in global GDP, sending economic shock through the world³¹. These contractions have left deep scars in the world economy that will take years to fully heal, and with new strains and waves of COVID-19 emerging continually, it may be much longer than expected. Many Member States and UN bodies are calling not just for recovery from the pandemic, but to build back better than before and make progress towards the SDGs.

Current Situation

The global economic outlook has shown trends of growth, especially in Member States with strong and stable economies such as the United States. This growth however is constantly under threat from new COVID-19 variants and inadequate vaccination progress in Member States, and in contrast to those Member States who have their mostly stable economies to protect them from the constantly shifting economic prospects, many Member States’ economic growths remain unstable and unsure³². Furthermore, data from the two economies that make up over half the world’s economic growth, China and the United States, shows that with the rise in the Delta variant of COVID-19, global economic growth has slowed down and prices for both finished goods and raw materials have increased³³. Despite this uncertainty, the *World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP)* revealed in its mid-2021 report, that after the sharp economic contraction of the global economy in 2020 of 3.6 percent, it was projected to grow by 5.4 percent in 2021, and these prospects brighten with every improvement of vaccination progress and fiscal and monetary support measures³⁴. Despite these increases in economic recovery, the World Bank

³¹ “The Global Economic Outlook during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Changed World.” World Bank. World Bank, June 8, 2020.

³² “Economic Recovery under Threat Amid Surging Covid Cases and Lagging Vaccination in Poorer Countries.” United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. United Nations, 2021.

³³ Carvalho, Ritvik, and Saikat Chatterjee. “Warning Signs for Global Recovery as Delta DIMS Outlook.” Reuters. Thomson Reuters, July 22, 2021.

³⁴ *ibid*





projects that the level of global GDP will remain below pre-pandemic levels³⁵. According to the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), In the first quarter of 2021, the world’s trade recovery from the pandemic reached a record high, with a year-over-year growth of ten percent, representing a substantial rebound. As one of the sectors most affected by the pandemic, however, the tourism industry does not have a share in this economic rebound. The number of international tourist arrivals has sparsely improved since the decline of 84 percent between March and December of 2020. The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimates that the economic losses would possibly range from \$1.7 trillion to \$2.4 trillion in 2021 and that around 100-120 million direct tourism jobs would be at risk as well. Member States that heavily rely on tourism are especially impacted by this. The UNWTO emphasizes the importance of vaccine progress for the recovery of the tourism sector and has set a goal of vaccinating 60 percent of the world’s population by mid-2022, with an estimated cost of \$50 billion³⁶.

The pandemic has exacerbated many systematic and structural global health inequalities, with those that face challenges from poverty, access to healthcare, race, ethnicity, gender, and social incohesion being most at risk³⁷. Young and lower-skilled workers are included in this, particularly due to the post-COVID-19 labor market fallout. The pandemic allowed for the acceleration of the employment trend that favored shifting to automation of certain jobs, leaving these groups increasingly vulnerable to unemployment³⁸. A rise in food prices due to the pandemic has also led to increased food insecurity in many low-income Member States, particularly affecting the populations listed above, though recovery in trade has opened the opportunity for changes to the global food infrastructure to make it more resistant to crises like COVID-19³⁹. Women are especially among those most severely affected by the pandemic. 58 million women were pushed into poverty because of it, and with more men than women forced to leave the labor force due to the 2 percent global reduction in the labor force, the gender gap in employment and wages has further increased⁴⁰.

³⁵ “Global Economic Prospects: The Global Economy: On Track for Strong but Uneven Growth as Covid-19 Still Weighs.” World Bank, June 8, 2021.

³⁶ “COVID-19 and Tourism: an Update.” unctad.org. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, June 30, 2021.

³⁷ Reid, Michael, Quarraisha Abdool-Karim, Elvin Geng, and Eric Goosby. “How Will Covid-19 TRANSFORM Global Health Post-Pandemic? Defining Research and Investment Opportunities and Priorities.” PLOS Medicine. Public Library of Science, March 11, 2021.

³⁸

“World Economic Outlook, April 2021: Managing Divergent Recoveries.” International Monetary Fund, April 2021.

³⁹ *ibid*

⁴⁰ *ibid*





The pandemic led to a substantial increase in the amount of mental health issues worldwide, especially in young, unemployed, and financially insecure people. This has led to levels of anxiety and depression to double in some Member States and a high amount of social and economic costs⁴¹. Not only has the pandemic exacerbated mental health problems, but it has also disrupted or halted crucial mental health services in around 93 percent of Member States, according to a survey released by WHO in 2021. Of the participants in this survey, over 60 percent reported disruptions in their mental health services, including older adults (70%), children and adolescents (72%), and women requiring antenatal and prenatal services (61%). Furthermore, 67% of participants reported disruptions to psychotherapy and counseling and 45 % reported disruptions for opioid dependence⁴². The pandemic has also exacerbated physical health issues as well. Physical inactivity is one of the leading causes of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, and premature mortality around the world, and with physical distancing measures and lockdowns put in place due to COVID-19, the levels of physical activity after the appearance of COVID-19 has been significantly reduced compared to before the pandemic. This has also led to an increase in mental health issue due to the tight connection between physical health and mental health⁴³.

One of the greatest challenges the world faces to global recovery from COVID-19 is vaccine inequity. The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) stated recently that “vaccine inequity is the world’s biggest obstacle to ending this pandemic and recovering from COVID-19⁴⁴.” While richer Member States are able to recover more quickly from the pandemic with their ability to have faster vaccination rates, the lower to middle income Member States, some with less than one percent of their population having received at least one dose of vaccine as of late September 2021⁴⁵. The UN Development Programme (UNDP), WHO, and the University of Oxford estimated that these inequities will have a profound and lasting impact on socio-economic recovery of Member States in the low to middle income ranges and estimates

⁴¹ “Improving Mental Health Care Key To COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery.” OECD, August 6, 2021.

⁴² “How COVID 19 Pandemic Affected Global Mental HEALTH, Reveals WHO.” Medical Concierge. Rach

⁴³ Puccinelli, Paulo Jose, Taline Santos da Costa, Aldo Seffrin, Claudio Andre Barbosa de Lira, Rodrigo Luiz Vancini, Pantelis T. Nikolaidis, Beat Knechtle, Thomas Rosemann, Lee Hill, and Marilia Santos Andrade. “Reduced Level of Physical Activity During COVID-19 Pandemic Is Associated with Depression and Anxiety Levels: An Internet-Based Survey.” BMC Public Health. BioMed Central, March 29, 2021.

⁴⁴ “Vaccine Inequity Undermining Global Economic Recovery.” World Health Organization. World Health Organization, July 22, 2021.

⁴⁵ Bhatia, Gurman, Prasanta Kumar Dutta, and Jon McClure. “COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout: Charts, Maps and Eligibility by Country.” Reuters. Thomson Reuters, September 28, 2021.





that if vaccine equity existed among Member States, those low to middle income Member States would have received a \$38 billion boost to their GDP in 2021⁴⁶.

Actions Taken by the UN

In response to the urgent need for recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN has launched the *UN Research Roadmap for the COVID-19 Recovery*. This framework is designed to support socio-economic recovery by identifying 25 research priorities, key scientific strategies, and actions that researchers, Member States, civil society organizations, and UN bodies can act upon. Its goal is to stimulate recovery that is equitable, resilient, sustainable, and progresses towards the SDGs⁴⁷. The UN has also created the *Covid-19 Socio-Economic Response Plans*, which includes investments in “concrete investments” for pandemic recovery and focuses on areas where investments will have the greatest impact in hopes of leaving no one behind⁴⁸. Within it, the *UN Framework for the Immediate Response to the Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19*, a data and information dashboard with data collected by UNCT and reported through the UN INFO platform, holds indicators that monitor the health and humanitarian responses and human rights impact of COVID-19, composing the core basis for the UN system’s indicator framework for COVID-19. The framework is split up into 5 pillars: Health First, People Protecting, Economic Response, Macroeconomic Response, and Social Cohesion. This framework allows for more efficient and effective COVID-19 recovery and helps ensure no Member State is left behind⁴⁹. The UN Secretary-General has also launched the COVID-19 Recovery Trust Fund to work hand in hand with Member States to help them recover from the social and economic impacts of the pandemic. One main focus of the fund is to ensure no one is left behind, so all Member States and populations recover together⁵⁰. This fund has supported projects in Jordan to alleviate socio-economic impacts from the pandemic with USD 850,000. One of these projects, *The Socio-Economic Empowerment of Vulnerable Women in Ghor Al Safi through Improving Access to Safe and Green Public Spaces*, helps improve socio-economic

⁴⁶ *ibid*

⁴⁷ “UN Research Roadmap for the COVID-19 Recovery.” United Nations. United Nations, January 29, 21AD.

⁴⁸ “Coronavirus | Recover Better.” United Nations. United Nations, 2021.

⁴⁹ “COVID-19 Data Portal.” COVID-19 data portal. UN INFO, 2021.

⁵⁰ “Coronavirus | Recover Better.” United Nations. United Nations, 2021.





conditions for vulnerable women by creating safe and green public spaces for them as well as creating livelihood opportunities⁵¹.

The UN has especially been focused on building back better in their recovery measures. During the G-7 summit on June 11th, 2021, hosted by Britain, and attended by leaders of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the US, the members discussed recovery from the pandemic, the theme of which being, according to British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, “building back better, building back greener, building back fairer, and building back more equal and in a more gender-neutral and perhaps more feminine way⁵².” On March 10th, 2021, an online UN-Oxford panel discussion was held with leaders from key Member States and international institutions to discuss the question “are we building back better?” The conference served as the launch pad for a new report and data set from the Global Recovery Observatory which detailed the recovery efforts from the economies of the top 50 Member States and whether these efforts align with environmental goals. The report from this conference presents ways Member States’ recovery efforts can be done in a way that is more environmentally clean, including improvement of green energy with low carbon emission, green transport such as electrical vehicles, public transportation, and cycling and walking, green building upgrades and energy efficiency like rooftop solar installations, natural capital, and green research and development. These efforts are believed to help Member States rebuild in ways that are long-term and will help prevent and reduce environmental problems in the future⁵³. Similarly, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) released a report that outlines an ambitious policy agenda that recommends Member States use protectionist measures that favor regional solidarity and facilitate decarbonization. It also recommends that Member States orient their spending towards developmental areas and use tax reforms to mitigate inequalities⁵⁴.

Regional and International Framework

⁵¹ “UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund Supports a Project to Alleviate Socio-Economic Impact of the Pandemic In Jordan: UN-Habitat.” UN Habitat for a Better Future. UN Habitat, February 2021.

⁵² Widakuswara, Patsy. “G-7 Summit Kicks off with 'Build Back Better' Message.” VOA. G-7 Summit Kicks Off With 'Build Back Better' Message, September 2, 2021.

⁵³ “Are We Building Back Better? - Un Environment Programme.” UN Environment Programme. UNEP. Accessed September 29, 2021.

⁵⁴ “Beyond the Pandemic: Building Back Better from Crises in Asia and the Pacific - World.” ReliefWeb, April 20, 2021.





The United States has provided its COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework, whose ultimate aim is to shorten the lifespan and end the COVID-19 pandemic. The five objectives the framework provides include: 1. the acceleration of widespread and equitable access to and delivery of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccinations, 2. the reduction of morbidity and mortality from COVID-19, mitigate transmission, and strengthen health systems, including to prevent, detect, and respond to pandemic threats, 3. to address the acute needs by COVID-19, mitigate household shocks, and build resilience, 4. the bolstering of economies and other critical systems under stress due to COVID-19 to prevent backsliding and enable recovery, and 5. the strengthening of the international health security architecture to prevent, detect, and respond to pandemic threats⁵⁵. The United States has also partnered with Latin American and Caribbean Member States for a six-point plan to help the region rebuild stronger. It includes investment in health, economic revitalization, the future of hemispheric commerce, climate action, education, and democracy and governance. Each of the six points include six-month goals and one-year goals that provide an outline for creating a prosperous and democratic hemisphere through regional cooperation, strong partnerships, and multilateralism⁵⁶.

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has developed a framework, aimed at providing regional and subregional solutions based on the UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19 to its 53 members and 9 associate members. ESCAP’s framework involves three main streams of work. First, protecting and investing in people and enhancing the resilience of societies and communities, especially women and vulnerable groups. Second, supporting the sustainable and inclusive economic recovery of Member States in accord with the 2030 Agenda and The Paris Agreement. Third, restoring and building resilient supply chains through regional cooperation and supporting small and medium enterprises. One of the overarching principles of this framework is to not only rebuild, but to build back better, using the “Leaving No One Behind” methodology, analyzing policies for improvement, enhancing sustainability, improving information communication technologies, developing policies on decarbonization, energy efficiency, reduction of pollution and climate change mitigation, and protecting and restoring ecosystems⁵⁷. As of May 2021, The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), has authorized \$730 billion in stimulus to combat the

⁵⁵ “U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework.” The White House. The United States Government, July 2, 2021.

⁵⁶ Marczak, Jason, and Cristina Guevara. “Covid-19 Recovery in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Partnership Strategy for the Biden Administration.” Atlantic Council, March 16, 2021.

⁵⁷ “Socio-Economic Response to Covid-19 : ESCAP Framework.” Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19 : ESCAP Framework. Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific. Accessed October 13, 2021





pandemic. The Member States of ASEAN have prioritized the disbursement of stimulus packages to support economic recovery, including the disbursement of cash assistance to retrenched workers and vulnerable groups, supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) operations, providing financial assistance and incentives to the heavily-hit critical economic sectors, namely aviation and tourism, and finally, what is considered most important, strengthening emergency health responses such as testing capacity and vaccination programs. There has been some criticism of ASEAN’s recovery measures, however, claiming that few ASEAN Member States’ measures include the elimination of environmentally harmful measures

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Conclusion

COVID-19 has proven to be one of the world’s greatest challenges of our time. With the severe economic contractions that followed the emergence of the virus, the exacerbation of systemic and structural global health inequalities, and the numerous negative physical and mental health impacts that have made the need for effective recovery measures are vital to Member States all around the world. The Security Council must rise to meet these challenges of global recovery and ensure that all Member States rebuild from the pandemic with no one left behind. What can be done to ensure that there is equitable economic recovery? How can the current health frameworks be modified to help deal with the effects of the pandemic and be more inclusive to all populations? How can Member States not only rebuild from COVID-19, but build back better to move closer to achieving the SDGs?

⁵⁸ Martinus, Melinda, and Sharon Seah. “ASEAN’s COVID-19 Recovery Measures ... - ISEAS.EDU.SG.” ISEAS Perspectives. Yusof Ishak Institute, July 9, 2021.





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