

HANDBOOK



CONGRESMUN XII

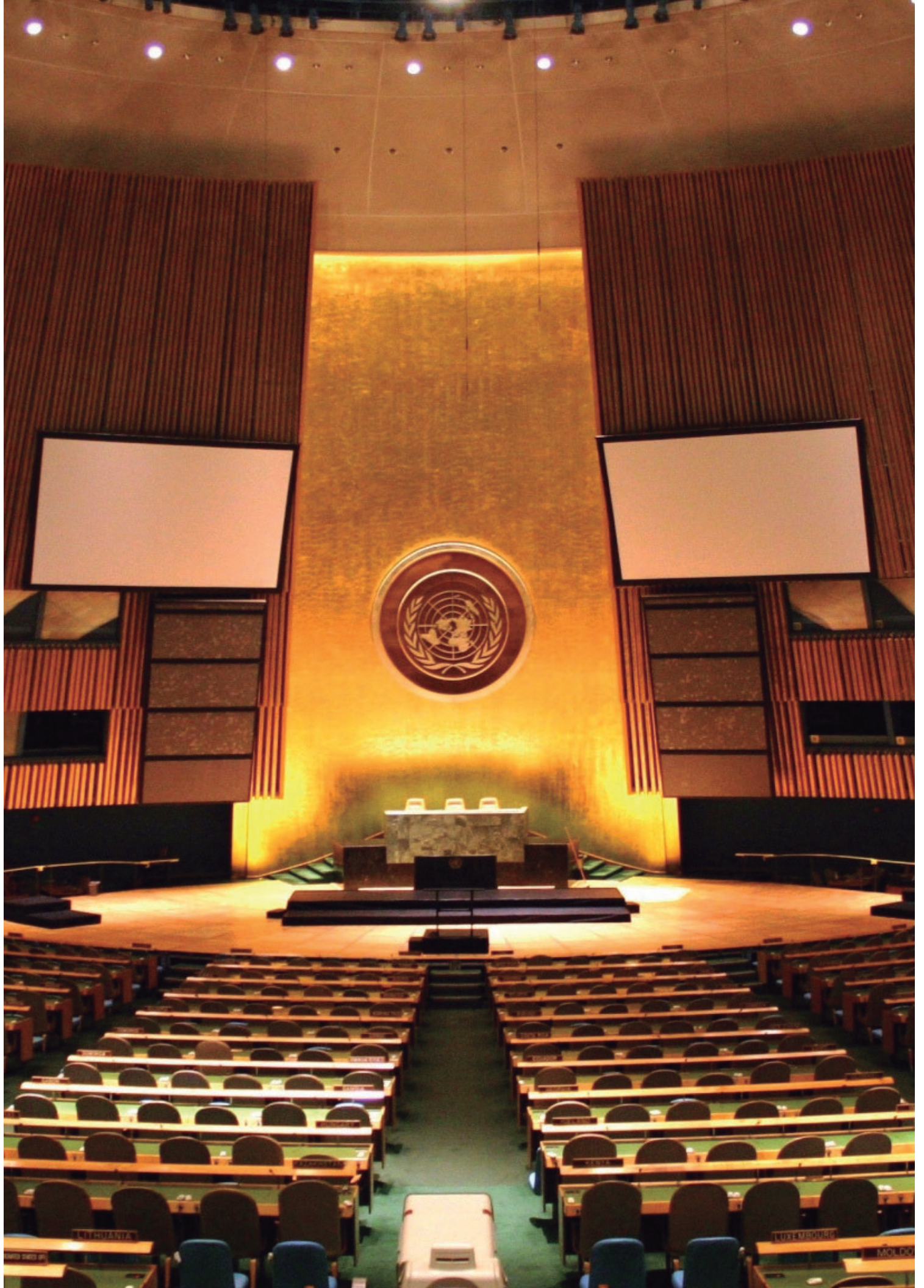




UNITED NATIONS GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



HANDBOOK



Presentation of the Committee

Honorable Delegates:

On behalf of the executive committee, feel welcomed to the twelfth edition of CONGRESMUN, the greatest Model United Nations in Mexico; and of course, welcome to the United Nations General Assembly. Established in 1945, the Committee is by far the largest in the Organization and with the highest responsibility. The Assembly gathers together all the members to discuss global problems to find a common solution. Furthermore, all the members have an equal vote and voice, which allows the committee to seek for the common good of all its members in the most democratic way possible which will also be your main goal in the next days.

We are looking forward to see you and hope you have an exceptional debate experience; we are also excited to hear your arguments, rhetoric, and proposals. This Committee will be the best opportunity to practice your best skills and learn to work in a team, as well as practice a foreign language and take on the challenge it represents. Nonetheless, every amazing debate reflects an accurate preparation. We do expect you to be well prepared.

In the next days, you will debate some of the world's current problematics, and assuredly, make consciousness about them. Maybe, those problems won't be solved tomorrow, nor the day after, but as a delegate, you are gaining the tools to change and improve our own current concerns in our shared present and future.

Finally, we are here to guide and help you during your preparation and the debate. Please, do not hesitate to ask for advice. We are glad to help.

See you soon!



The United Nations General Assembly

María Inés Provencio L.
President

Felipe Mayagoitia R.
Moderator

Sergio Alberto Vargas S.
Conference Officer



Introduction to the Committee

Founded in 1945 under the UN Charter, the General Assembly is one of the six main organs within the organization. It is also the only committee in which all its 193 members have equal representation and vote. "It occupies the central position as the chief deliberative, policy making, and representative organ."¹ All the Member States have a forum to discuss the world's conflicts and issues treated by the Charter, such as peace and security, international law, development, education, etc. The annual session takes place in September in the General Assembly Hall in New York.²

Moreover, in the United Nations Charter, the organization "is open to all peace-loving States that accept the obligations contained in the Charter and, in the judgment of the Organization, are able to carry out these obligations". However, if a country delays its payments, it can be suspended or lose its vote until the nation fulfils its fee, according to article 19. By the way, only Comoros, Somalia, Sao Tome and Principe, and Guinea-Bissau are allowed to vote regarding its arrears, decided on the resolution 72/2. The only current member without the right to vote in the General Assembly is Libya.³

Faculties

According to the United Nations Charter, the General Assembly has the faculty to:

1. Consider and approve the United Nations budget and establish the financial assessments of Member States;
2. Elect the non-permanent members of the Security Council and the members of other United Nations councils and organs and, on the recommendation of the Security Council, appoint the Secretary-General;
3. Consider and make recommendations on the general principles of cooperation for maintaining international peace and security, including disarmament;
4. Discuss any question relating to international peace and security and, except where a dispute or situation is currently being discussed by the Security Council, make recommendations on it;

¹ United Nations. (Unspecified). Functions and powers of the General Assembly. 2018, from United Nations Website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>

² United Nations. (2017). General Assembly of the United Nations. 2018, from United Nations Website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>

³ United Nations. (Unspecified). Countries in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions under the terms of Article 19 of the UN Charter. 2018, from United Nations General Assembly Website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/art19.shtml>



5. Discuss, with the same exception, and make recommendations on any questions within the scope of the Charter or affecting the powers and functions of any organ of the United Nations;
6. Initiate studies and make recommendations to promote international political cooperation, the development and codification of international law, the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and international collaboration in the economic, social, humanitarian, cultural, educational and health fields;
7. Make recommendations for the peaceful settlement of any situation that might impair friendly relations among countries;
8. Consider reports from the Security Council and other United Nations organs.⁴

With the determinations of safeguard, the first chapter, first article, of the Charter of the United Nations, the General Assembly recognizes the following purposes:

1. To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace;
2. To develop friendly relations amongst nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of people, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace;
3. To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and
4. To be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.⁵

⁴ United Nations. (Unspecified). Functions and powers of the General Assembly. 2018, from United Nations Website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>

⁵ United Nations. (Unspecified). Chapter I: Purposes and Principles. 2018, from United Nations Website: <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-i/index.html>



According to the first Chapter, second article, of the United Nations Charter, the General Assembly shall maintain the following principles, acting in accordance of its purposes:

1. The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members.
2. All Members, in order to ensure to all of them the rights and benefits resulting from membership, shall fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed by them in accordance with the present Charter.
3. All Members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered.
4. All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.
5. All Members shall give the United Nations any assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the present Charter and shall refrain from giving assistance to any state against which the United Nations is taking preventive or enforcement action.
6. The Organization shall ensure that states which are not Members of the United Nations act in accordance with these Principles so far as may be necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security.
7. Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.⁶

The Assembly may as well act in case of a threat if the Security Council fails to respond due to the negative vote of a permanent member. It might intervene to safeguard the international peace, security and stability. The resolution 377 “Uniting for peace” supports this action.⁷

⁶ United Nations. (Unspecified). Chapter I: Purposes and Principles. 2018, from United Nations Website: <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-i/index.html>

⁷ United Nations. (1950). Uniting for peace. 2018, from United Nations Website: [http://undocs.org/en/A/RES/377\(V\)](http://undocs.org/en/A/RES/377(V))



As said, each Member State has one vote. With the purpose of finding consensus, the votes considered on selected important matters, such as security and peace, the election of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council requires a qualified majority of Member states (a two-thirds majority, 66%). Other issues or questions require only a simple majority (50% plus one).⁸

Structure

The General Assembly subsidiaries multiple organs⁹, divided into five categories:¹⁰

- *Commissions*: Disarmament Commission, International Civil Service Commission, International Law Commission, United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission.¹¹
- *Committees*: Investments Committee, Committee for Programme and Coordination, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), and the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, among other committees.¹²
- *Boards*: Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund¹³, among others.
- *Councils¹⁴ and Assemblies*: United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, Human Rights Council, Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN - Habitat and the Council of the United Nations University.¹⁵

⁸ United Nations. (Unspecified). The search for consensus. 2018, from United Nations General Assembly Website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>

⁹ For more information visit: United Nations Information Centre. (Unspecified). Structure and Organization. 2018, from United Nations Website: http://www.un-ir.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&layout=edit&id=1609&lang=en&Itemid=118

¹⁰ General Assembly. (Unspecified). Subsidiary organs of the General Assembly. 2018, from General Assembly Website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/subsidiary/index.shtml>

¹¹ United Nations. (Unspecified). Subsidiary organs of the General Assembly. 2018, from United Nations General Assembly Website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/subsidiary/commissions.shtml>

¹² United Nations. (Unspecified). Subsidiary organs of the General Assembly. 2018, from United Nations General Assembly Website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/subsidiary/committees.shtml>

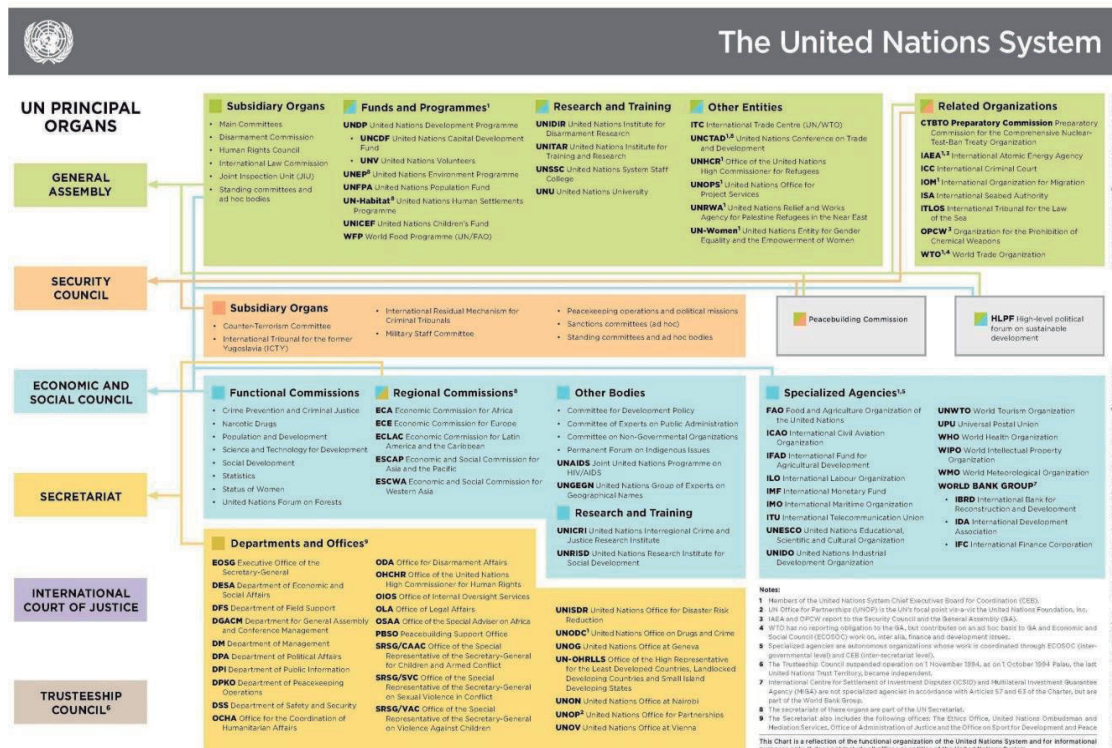
¹³ United Nations. (Unspecified). Subsidiary organs of the General Assembly. 2018, from United Nations General Assembly Website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/subsidiary/boards.shtml>

¹⁴ Councils: those are advisory, legislative or deliberative bodies. They are formally constituted and meet regularly. One of the most significant councils within the organization is the Security Council.

¹⁵ United Nations. (Unspecified). Subsidiary organs of the General Assembly. 2018, from United Nations General Assembly Website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/subsidiary/councils.shtml>



- *Working Groups and Panels:*¹⁶ Panel of External Auditors of the United Nations, the Specialized Agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects, Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on the Integrated and Coordinated Implementation of and Follow-up to the Major United Nations Conferences and Summits in the Economic and Social Fields, among others.¹⁷



Picture 1. "The United Nations System"¹⁸

¹⁶ Panels: United Nations has a few public organizations which debate a specific topic. For example, the UN Panel of External Auditors, Panel of Ethics, and so on.

¹⁷ United Nations. (Unspecified). Subsidiary organs of the General Assembly. 2018, from United Nations General Assembly Website: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/subsidiary/other.shtml>

¹⁸ IMAGE: United Nations Department for Public Information. (2017). The United Nations System. 2018, from United Nations Website: http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/structure/pdfs/17-00023e_UN%20System%20Chart_8.5x11_4c_EN_web.pdf



Topic A. Strengthening of the Coordination of Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance in Palestine

António Guterres, the Secretary General of the United Nations, declared in 2017 to have a renewed vision of the United Nations. Reforms have to be applied to focus on the new strategic priorities: prevention, development, and peace. Therefore, every agency of the United Nations must work together towards collective achievements, including the humanitarian response.¹⁹ In order to accomplish an upgrade in the humanitarian response and assistance, the Assembly has to take a few key points into consideration.

Topic Overview

The United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (hereinafter CERF), as it was upgraded through the resolution 60/124²⁰, is in charge to rapidly respond to a humanitarian crisis, bringing a better balance to the assistance. This modern version of the Fund should ensure immediately available resources and support to quickly respond to humanitarian emergencies. In order to fulfil the previous key strategies, the report also requested the General Assembly to support the update of the Fund to address the humanitarian assistance more predictable.²¹ Nevertheless, since it was updated, the fund operates mainly with voluntary donors. It also means the budget might not be consistent.

The CERF has a 450 million target for its annual contributions, but since 2006, it has only been achieved five times. Until July 2018, the contributions amount to 262.3 million. In comparison to 2017, the total donations were up to 514 Million.²² Initially, the fund had a target of 500 Million United States' dollar, according to the resolution

¹⁹ International Committee of the Red Cross. (2017). Strengthening coordination of UN humanitarian and disaster relief assistance: ICRC statement to the United Nations, 2017. 2018, from International Committee of the Red Cross Website: <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/strengthening-coordination-un-humanitarian-disaster-relief-assistance-icrc-statement>

²⁰ General Assembly. (Unspecified). Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations. 2018, from United Nations Website: http://www.un.org/en/ga/63/plenary/E_ha_emergency.shtml

²¹ United Nations General Assembly. (2005). Improvement of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund Report of the Secretary-General. 2018, from United Nations Website: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/60/432

²²United Nations Central Emergency Response Found. (2018). CONTRIBUTIONS. 2018, from United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance Found Website: <http://www.unocha.org/cerf/donors/donorspage>



A/60/432. Besides, it is also important to bear in mind other tools which can be used to aid humanitarian crises or support globally. For Example, the United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA).²³

On the other hand, the General Assembly has reviewed the Topic (Strengthening of the Coordination of Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance) almost every year. The topic has been handled always as humanitarian assistance; nonetheless, it has mainly been used for natural casualties. For the same reason, it lacks the specifications and the guidelines for the humanitarian assistance in case of conflict. These necessary guidelines have to bear in mind the principle of "preventions, response, and recovery". Additionally, other organs of the UN have discussed the need for military assistance in coordination with the UN missions.

According to a report by the Economic and Social Council, the situation and relationship between humanitarian participants in conflict and post-conflict scenarios and the UN peacekeeping and political missions are still complicated. UN missions and military with non-UN forces have played a confident and assertive role protecting civilians, but they also have caused "many debates among humanitarians". There is a tremendous responsibility since even UN missions can create conflict settings if it is not managed with the right care.²⁴

Palestine

In 1990, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on the Assistance to the Palestinian people, aware of the need to provide economic and social assistance to support its stability during the Israeli occupation. The Resolution A/RES/45/183 also requested the World Food Programme, the international community, United Nations Organizations, non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations to provide and increase the necessary support to the Palestinian People. This was established in

²³ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (2018). Occupied Palestinian Territory. 2018, from United Nations Website: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-snapshot-casualties-context-demonstrations-and-hostilities-gaza-30-march-19>

²⁴ United Nations Economic and Social Council. (2014). 2014 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment. 2018, from United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance Website: <https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/dms/Documents/ECOSOC>



close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).²⁵ One year later, the Assembly called once again for cooperation and assistance to Palestine through the resolution A/RES/46/201.²⁶ Nonetheless, the situation remained unchanged.



Picture 2. "State of Palestine Political Map"²⁷

Through the resolution A/RES/47/170, the General Assembly urged once again for support to the Palestinian people. However, this time the Assembly also called for the "immediate lifting of Israeli restrictions and obstacles hindering the implementation of assistance projects by the United Nations Development Programme". Furthermore, it requested the facilitation of the endowment of banks in order to promote the economic development of the region.²⁸

During the next two years, the Economic and Social Council, and the General Assembly adopted two further resolutions in order to improve the economy and social

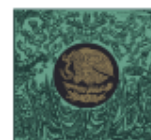
²⁵ United Nations General Assembly. (1990). Assistance to the Palestinian people. 2018, from United Nations Website: <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/D3FE0627320E604E852560C80040DD74>

²⁶ United Nations General Assembly. (1991). Assistance to the Palestinian people. 2018, from United Nations Website: <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/46/a46r201.htm>

²⁷ IMAGE: "State of Palestine Political Map" (State of Palestine Political Map, taken from <https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-illustration-state-palestine-political-map-designated-capital-east-jerusalem-claiming-west-bank-gaza-strip-borders-image74413499>)

²⁸ United Nations General Assembly. (1992). Assistance to the Palestinian people. 2018, from United Nations Website: <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/197351E083106FFD852560C2005E0522>





situation of the occupied territory.²⁹ The Economic and Social Council pointed out the importance of the engagement of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories to secure the accomplishment of a coordinated collaboration.³⁰ Additionally, the General Assembly kept their efforts to assist the territory.³¹

In the past years, various resolutions have been adopted by the General Assembly. But, regardless of the previous efforts of the United Nations to improve the conditions of Palestine, they remain dire. Moreover, in the Gaza Strip descents of Palestinians, have been injured and over 1,400 might suffer from long-term inability due to critical injuries. The health system in Gaza is already fragile, but it is still working to improve the living conditions of the civilians and the shortfalls of humanitarian agencies. Additionally, the living and household conditions are critical; about 19,700 inhabited houses need to be reconstructed and 24,000 need to be urgently repaired. The primary reasons for the substandard housing in the region are the lack of financial resources, unemployment, and poverty.³²

Furthermore, due to the rising number of casualties (mainly unarmed Palestinian demonstrators), the health sector in Gaza is struggling. There is a mass inrush of injured civilians, chronic energy crisis, and internal conflicts. All those make it difficult for the system to cope. Among other humanitarian needs, it is critical for the region to obtain medical access outside Gaza, mental health and psychological support for children, and medical supplies.³³

²⁹ United Nations General Assembly. (1993). Assistance to the Palestinian people. 2018, from United Nations Website:

<https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/1D6705821B444C1D8525607E00716D22>

³⁰ Economic and Social Council. (1994). Assistance to the Palestinian people. 2018, from United Nations Website:

<https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/1ce874ab1832a53e852570bb006dfaf6/ff37f96a61117b908525623c00749001?OpenDocument>

³¹ General Assembly. (1994). Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions. 2018, from United Nations Website:

<https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/5076BE4546D21DE28525615B00608842>

³² United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (2018). Occupied Palestinian Territory. 2018, from United Nations Website: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/overview-june-2018>

³³ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (2018). Humanitarian snapshot: casualties in the context of demonstrations and hostilities in Gaza. 2018, from United Nations Website: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-snapshot-casualties-context-demonstrations-and-hostilities-gaza-30-march-19>



Guide questions

1. How can the General Assembly strengthen/update the humanitarian assistance?
2. Which measures are necessary to improve Palestine's current situation?
3. How can the missions and logistic improve to tackle Palestine's conflict areas?
4. How can the Assembly ensure the founding of new humanitarian and political missions?
5. Which guidelines can the Assembly establish for an efficient conflict response and prevention of humanitarian assistance?

Recommended sources

- International Committee of the Red Cross. (2017). Strengthening coordination of UN humanitarian and disaster relief assistance: ICRC statement to the United Nations, 2017. 2018, from International Committee of the Red Cross Website: <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/strengthening-coordination-un-humanitarian-disaster-relief-assistance-icrc-statement> (Statement of the International Committee of the Red Cross about United Nations Humanitarian Assistance).
- United Nations Economic and Social Council. (2014). 2014 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment. 2018, from United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance Website: <https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/dms/Documents/ECOSOC> (one of the Latest documents released from the Economic and Social Council about the topic).
- United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund. (2018). CONTRIBUTIONS. 2018, from United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance Fund Website: <http://www.unocha.org/cerf/donors/donorspage> (information about the new, updated Central Emergency Response Fund. Its goals, budget, contributions, and so on).
- United Nations General Assembly. (2005). Improvement of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund Report of the Secretary-General. 2018, from United Nations Website:





http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/60/432 (information about the update of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund).

- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (2018). Occupied Palestinian Territory. 2018, from United Nations Website: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/overview-june-2018> (more information about the current assistance in Palestine).

Keywords: UN missions prevention, response, recovery, economic assistance, OCHA, CERF, economic assistance in Palestine, coordinated humanitarian response.



Topic B: Implementation of the Declaration of The Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace

Topic Overview

In 1971, the General Assembly passed the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace after Sri Lanka requested that the Ocean should be demilitarized. The Declaration stated as well, that the littoral hinterland States and the members of the Security Council should pursue the establishment of international cooperation and security to consult the implementation of the Declaration.

A year after, the General Assembly created the Ad Hoc Committee of the Indian Ocean to find a viable implementation of the Declaration. Nevertheless, after decades of efforts, none of the goals of the Declaration have been successfully achieved. However, a revision of the Declaration and a new implementation of the Ad Hoc Committee are possible.

During the last forty-seven years, the social, economic, and political situation of the Indian Ocean and its littoral States has changed radically. Therefore, the original goals and requests should be renewed in the current political context to fulfil its objectives and achieve a safe zone of peace.

Historical Background

During the late cold war, specifically during the sixties and seventies, the United States purchased Diego Garcia Island, located in the Indian Ocean, from the United Kingdom to establish a military base and gain advantage to command areas of South and Central Asia, the Middle East, Russia, Africa, and China. Within the next years, other countries like France and the United Kingdom developed their own bases in the islands of the region.

Their geographical position was crucial, since the nuclear weaponry, based on some of the islands, could easily reach Africa, Asia, Europe or Oceania. However, the increase of the naval presence in the region provoked the counter presence of the Russian fleet in the Indian Ocean, increasing the warships and weaponry in the area.³⁴

³⁴ K. Raja. (2012). Short essay on the Historical Background of Indian Ocean. 2018, from Preserve Articles Website: <http://www.preservearticles.com/2012013022165/short-essay-on-the-historical-background-of-indian-ocean.html>



As a reaction, the United Nations General Assembly approved a referendum and declared the Indian Ocean as a Zone of peace in December 1971, within the "Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace". The organization feared an escalation on the existent tensions and arms race of the region. Nonetheless, the resolution did not define the limits of the zone. Another important detail of the document was the elimination of military bases, including nuclear and mass destruction weaponry. Besides, the Assembly called upon the Security Council to establish a system of "universal collective security without military alliances"³⁵.

A year later, in December 1972, the United Nations created the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, established by the resolution A/RES/2832 (XXVI). The committee has the mandate to study the implications of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace of 1971.³⁶

In the next years, the Ad Hoc committee sent reports to the General Assembly to find a viable strategy and implementation of the Declaration. Nonetheless, the organization could not successfully achieve the goals of the Statement. At its 81st plenary meeting in December 1992, the General Assembly reviewed again the Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, taking note on the reports of the Ad Hoc Committee to examine new alternative approaches to accomplish the goals embraced in the resolution. With the same purpose, the Assembly requested the permanent members of the Security Council to participate within the work of the Ad Hoc Committee, as well as the littoral states of the Indian Ocean.³⁷

The political situation of the region has changed since the establishment of the Declaration, mainly due to the end of the Cold War. Since the "Super-Power" rivalry and military race decreased, the Indian Ocean has been a more stable area in which a number of initiatives have brought both economic and social development.

³⁵ United Nations General Assembly. (1971). Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace UN General Assembly Resolution 2832 (XXVI) 16 December 1971. 2018, from Tamilnation.org Website: http://tamilnation.co/intframe/indian_ocean/711216iopz.htm

³⁶ Dag Hammarskjöld Library. (2018). How was the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean established? 2018, from United Nations Website: <http://ask.un.org/faq/25921>

³⁷ General Assembly. (1992). Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. 2018, from United Nations Website: <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/47/a47r059.htm>



Nevertheless, the Ad Hoc Committee has not yet been able to reach an agreement to implement the Declaration of 1971, although the goals remain the same.³⁸

More recently in 2005, Prasad Kariyawasam, Chairman of the Committee, highlighted that, due to the transformation of the political situation of the region, it might be necessary to review the Declaration. Nowadays the area faces different threats, such as terrorism which need to be addressed. There are already new proposals for the future of the Ad Hoc Committee, including its transformation into a forum for littoral hinterland States, among others.³⁹

Current Situation

Regardless of the earlier efforts, the situation of the Indian Ocean has not yet changed. The theory of the declaration is that by only declaring the region as a "Zone of Peace", foreign military presence can effectively be reduced. Nonetheless, the reality is more complex. According to T.P Sreenivasa, India's delegate at the Ad Hoc Committee, the original declaration of 1971 is more about the restriction of western powers during the Cold War in the area rather than seeking peace in the region. Nowadays, other countries like India, China or Japan have increased their military interests in the area, inhibiting the effectiveness of the resolution.⁴⁰

Military infrastructure, as well as the increasing presence of external States, like China, represents a threat to the security interest of littoral hinterland States, particularly to India. There are several People's Liberation Army Navy (PLA-N) bases in the area, including in Sri Lanka. Although, the last-mentioned country was the main supporter of the resolution in 1971 since it made the first petition to declare the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. In 2014, Chinese submarines and warships were allowed to dock in Colombo's port (Sri Lanka's capital) despite India's concerns about the Chinese presence in the region. Because of that, India has raised awareness in order to safeguard its own safety protocols. Nevertheless, the political situation between

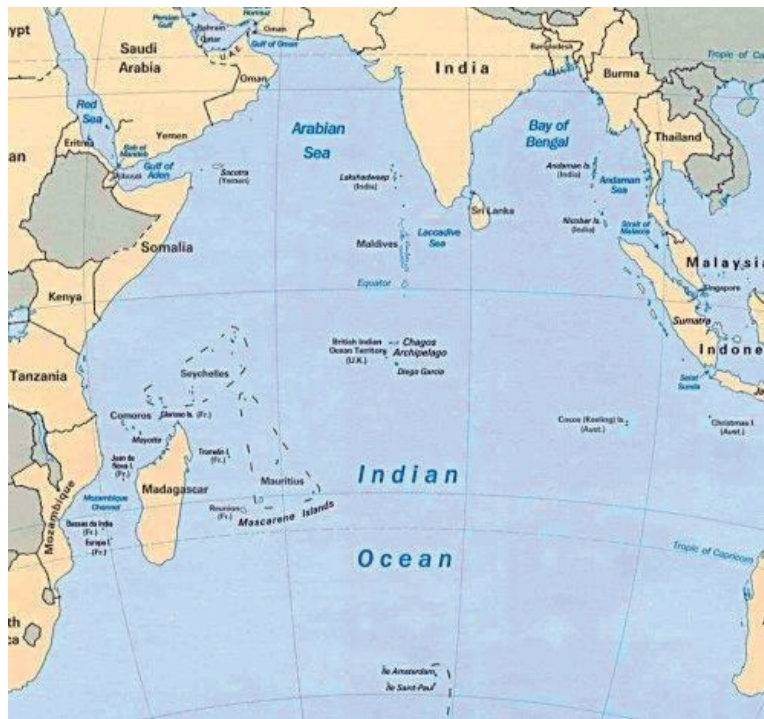
³⁸ United Nations General Assembly. (2005). AD HOC COMMITTEE ON INDIAN OCEAN ADOPTS REPORT TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY. 2018, from United Nations Website: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2005/gaio4.doc.htm>

³⁹ United Nations General Assembly. (2005). AD HOC COMMITTEE ON INDIAN OCEAN ADOPTS REPORT TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY. 2018, from United Nations Website: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2005/gaio4.doc.htm>

⁴⁰ Abhijit Singh. (2015). The Indian Ocean Zone of Peace: Reality vs. Illusion. 2018, from The Diplomat Website: <https://thediplomat.com/2015/01/the-indian-ocean-zone-of-peace-reality-vs-illusion/>



both nations might be tense. Besides, the PLA-N bases interfere with the goal of a Zone of Peace.⁴¹



Picture 3. "The Indian Ocean"⁴²

On the side, in 2016, India completed its nuclear triad, testing an intermediate-range missile which was launched from a nuclear submarine. The test raised alerts in Pakistan, whose foreign affairs adviser stated at the United Nations General Assembly that the Indian Ocean should be a "nuclear-free zone". Nevertheless, the Statement did not achieve any change regarding the situation.⁴³

Moreover, the United Kingdom established its first permanent base in Bahrain with the purpose to tackle threats together in cooperation with other countries located in the Gulf. Nevertheless, this also means a further militarization of the region. The

⁴¹ Shihar Aneez, Ranga Sirilal . (2014). Chinese submarine docks in Sri Lanka despite Indian concerns. 2018, from Reuters Website: <https://www.reuters.com/article/sri-lanka-china-submarine/chinese-submarine-docks-in-sri-lanka-despite-indian-concerns-idINKBN0IM0LU20141102>

⁴² IMAGE: "The Indian Ocean" (Indian Ocean Map, taken from the Website: <http://www.my-maldives-resorts.com/IndianOceanMap.html>)

⁴³ Amina Afzal. (2017). TROUBLED WATER: INDIA'S HISTORY WITH THE INDIAN OCEAN ZONE OF PEACE. 2018, from South Asian Voices Website: <https://southasianvoices.org/troubled-water-indian-ocean-zone-of-peace/>



new base, however, allows the Royal Navy to provide accommodations, as well as facilities to sustained operations.⁴⁴

Notwithstanding, the Indian Ocean faces threats beyond political tensions, nuclear weaponry, and military bases. The Indian Ocean connects Africa, Australia, and Asia, which implies it is one of the largest areas for transportation; half of the world's container traffic crosses through it, and their ports handle about thirty percent of the international trade. Besides, it is also abundant in mineral resources, fish, and energy (gas and oil). However, since it is such an essential strategic area, it also demands greater security.

The Indian Ocean has constantly been vulnerable to smaller, nonetheless dangerous, criminals, terrorism, piracy and anti-national activism. Some of the struggles within the conflict area are local, although others affect globally and are susceptible to the foreign interference. There are various cases of importation of illegal goods, drugs, weaponry, metals, explosives, and the infiltration of terrorists through the coast. Those problems also inhibit the withdrawal of military bases and warships, since they also represent an individual threat to the national security of the littoral hinterland States.⁴⁵

Guide Questions

1. How can the General Assembly finally achieve the Implementation of the Declaration?
2. Does the Declaration need to be reviewed?
3. How can the Ad Hoc Committee be adapted to the current Situation?
4. Which are the main concerns of the current situation?
5. How can they be efficiently tackled?
6. Which measures can the Committee adapt to ensure the security of the region?
7. Which geographical limits should the "Zone of Peace" have?

⁴⁴ BBC News. (2014). UK to establish £15m permanent Mid East military base. 2018, from BBC News Website: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-30355953>

⁴⁵ GS Score. (Unspecified). INDIAN OCEAN: MAJOR SECURITY THREATS. 2018, from GS Score Website: <http://www.iasscore.in/topical-analysis/indian-ocean-major-security-threats>



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Keywords: Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, Ad Hoc Committee of the Indian Ocean, Zone of peace, Indian Ocean military bases, Indian Ocean threats.



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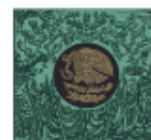
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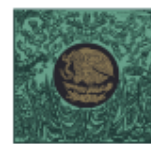
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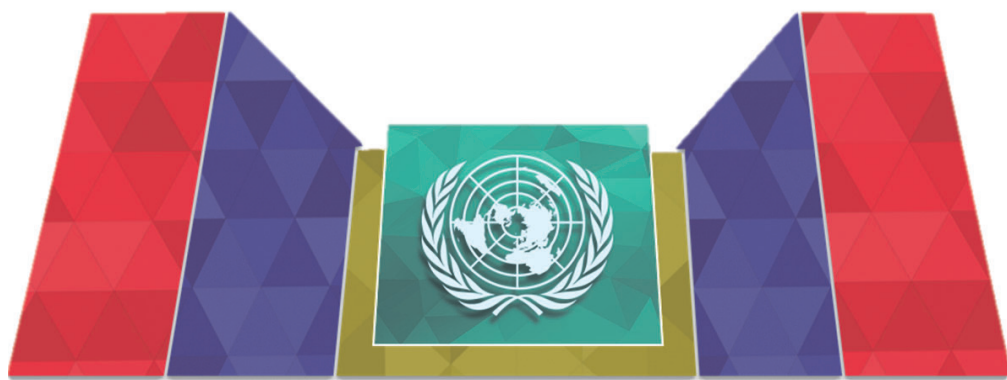




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CONGRESMUN XII