

The Thirtieth Annual
Virginia Model United Nations Conference

Presents...

United Nations Millennium Development Goals

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Dear Delegates,

It is such a pleasure to be chairing the United Nations Millennium Development Goals Summit 2015 for VAMUN XXX this year. While I anticipate a great weekend of engaging debate and productive resolution writing, I also look forward to meeting and getting to know all of you! I am currently a Second Year, tentatively double majoring in Commerce and Chinese. I was born in China, spent most of my childhood in Thailand, and currently live in Maryland. While I am not doing Model UN, I can be found coordinating events for the Chinese Student Association, another organization I have been involved in since First Year.

Although I have been involved in Model United Nations since my freshman year in high school, this is my first time chairing a committee at UVa; during VAMUN XXIX, I served on the crisis staff for the Chinese Politburo Committee. Additionally, I served as the Crisis Director of a committee simulating the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia-People's Army, FARC-EP), in UVa's International Crisis Simulation, the collegiate version of VAMUN. With a great deal of experience in historical and crisis committees, I hope to bring an element of surprise to this futuristic committee as well. I hope that you will all enjoy conducting research for what I think are the most relevant and pressing issues of our time. Universal Education, Environmental Sustainability and Global Partnership are three of the key goals that we must achieve in the next few decades if we want to eradicate poverty and improve the lives of those living in developing nations. Now, more than ever, our economies and governments are interdependent, giving us no other option than to collaborate in order to reach the UN Millennium Development Goals. In fact, there was a world summit held this September for the purpose of addressing the UN MDGs. The structure of this committee will bear resemblance to this upcoming summit. Thus, I expect all delegates to keep themselves updated on current events, as this background guide only provides a starting point for further research. Please visit my blog about this committee, linked on the VAMUN XXX website, for more resources and interesting information. Do not hesitate to comment on my blog, or email me if you have any questions. I am very much looking forward to an exciting weekend with all of you in November.

Sincerely,
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Summary of the History of the UN Millennium Development Goals:

In September of 2000, at the dawn of a new millennium, world leaders gathered at the United Nations Headquarters to reaffirm their faith in the international organization and adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration. In this historic document, each nation pledged to recognize individual societies and to take collective responsibility to the global society. Attendees of the summit rededicated themselves to establishing a “just and lasting peace all over the world.”¹ The committee outlined eight goals, known as the United Nations Millennium Development Goals with specific targets to be achieved by the year 2015:

1. **To eradicate extreme hunger and poverty** with targets to halve the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger
2. **To achieve universal primary education** by: ensuring that children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling
3. **To promote gender equality and empower women** by eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education
4. **To reduce child mortality**, specifically the under-five mortality rate by two-thirds
5. **To improve maternal health** by reducing the maternal mortality rate by three-quarters
6. **To combat HIV/AIDs, Malaria and other diseases** by: halting and reversing the spread of these diseases
7. **To ensure environmental sustainability** by: integrating the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources; by halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic

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<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf>

sanitation; and to improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

8. **To develop a global partnership for development** by: developing an open, rule-based, nondiscriminatory trading and financial system; addressing the special needs of Least Developed Countries; addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing states; dealing comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures; cooperating with developing countries to develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth; cooperating with pharmaceutical companies to provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries; cooperating with the private sector to make the benefits of new technologies available.

to formulate a concrete plan of action to reduce poverty, disease and hunger. In January of 2005, an independent advisory board presented its final report, *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*.² Not only did this report provide suggestions for how to reach the Millennium Development Goals, it also emphasized the importance of achieving these goals: Globalization has reduced the proportion of people living in extreme poverty, but some regions are still desperately poor. For example, disease, food shortages, deteriorating shelter and environmental degradation continue to affect the lives of African citizens. Therefore, the committee recognized the urgency of putting the Goals on the fast-track that they require and deserve because they are the “first international goals to recognize, at the highest political levels, that poverty in the poorest countries can be dramatically reduced only if developing countries put well designed and well implemented plans in place to reduce poverty—and only if rich countries match their

Two years later, the Millennium Project was commissioned by the UN Secretary General

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<http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/reports/index.htm>

efforts with substantial increases in support.”³

Upon the completion of the report, world leaders gathered once more on September 14th, 2005 for a two-day summit. The outcome was a document, the *2005 World Summit Outcome*, which included resolutions that vowed to eradicate poverty and made the commitment to promote sustained economic growth and universal education free of discrimination of any kind. Other results of the 2005 summit included a pledge to give an additional \$50 billion a year by 2010 for fighting poverty and a commitment by all developing countries to adopt national plans for achieving the MDGs by 2006 and to commit innovative sources of financing for development.⁴



Three years later at the High-Level Event held in September of 2008, governments, foundations, businesses and civil society groups met and agreed to slash poverty, hunger and disease by 2015, by announcing new commitments to meet the Millennium Development Goals and raising an estimated \$16 billion, with \$1.6 billion allotted to bolster food security, more than \$4.5 billion dedicated towards education and \$3 billion reserved to combat malaria. Since the new millennium, other UN agencies have also increased their involvement with the MDGs.

Throughout the years, the Statistics Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the MDG Gap Task Force have released annual reports on the progress of the MDGs. The Secretary-General himself has also released reports, encouraging nations to put the MDGs on the fast track. Secretary-General Ban-ki Moon has named 2010 as a critical year for the development of MDGs. In March of 2010, he called for the adoption of a “global action agenda for accelerating progress towards the

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<http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/MainReportChapter1-lowres.pdf>

⁴ <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/487/60/PDF/N0548760.pdf?OpenElement>

Goals.”⁵ Furthermore, he organized a summit to be held from September 20th to the 22nd in New York so that world leaders can identify the success factors and lessons learned, highlight gaps, anticipate emerging challenges and opportunities, and lay out specific recommendations for action to boost progress towards the Goals for the next five years. The purpose of our committee will be similar to that of this 2010 summit, but we will focus our efforts on identifying new challenges and opportunities and creating specific recommendations and a timeline for action.

A Brief History of the Issues addressed by the MDGs:

In the 1990s, absolute poverty remained a daily reality for more than 1.8 billion people, as they subsisted on less than \$1 a day. Throughout the 1990s, extreme poverty dropped in much of Asia, but changed little in Northern and Western Africa. Poverty and hunger came hand in hand, and in the 1990s, approximately there were 824 million hungry people in the developing world.⁶ Food shortages were widespread, due to the

growing populations and poor agricultural productivity in the developing nations, especially sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia. Poverty and the physical effects of hunger, such as malnutrition, often affect the ability for children to attend school, thus leading to lower rates of enrollment.

Diseases such as AIDS and malaria also take a toll on education, as many teachers are lost due to AIDS. The effects of these deaths place an untenable burden on many countries that already lack sufficiently trained teachers. In addition, children are also pulled out of school when their parents become ill with AIDS. Thus, these children must take on other household responsibilities to support the family rather than attend school. Therefore, it is evident that many of these issues are interrelated and must be tackled with a comprehensive plan.

By 2006, in almost all regions, the net primary school enrollment rate exceeded 90%, with some nations close to achieving universal primary enrollment⁷. Thousands of people still die from AIDS every day, but the number of people newly infected with HIV decreased from 3 million in 2001 to 2.7 million in 2007⁸. According to the new 2010

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http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/mdg_pressre1_sept2010.pdf

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<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/pdf/MDG%20Book.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.undp.org/mdg/progress.shtml>

⁸ <http://www.undp.org/mdg/progress.shtml>

Progress Report, the developing world as a whole is on track to achieve the poverty reduction target by 2015. The 1.8 billion people living on less than \$1 a day had been reduced to 1.4 billion in 2005. Although the 2008 financial crisis is estimated to have added an additional 50 million people to extreme poverty, poverty rates are still expected to decline by 2015.⁹ Asia still has the fastest reductions in poverty and all developing regions except sub-Saharan Africa, Western Asia and parts of Eastern Europe and Central Asia are expected to achieve the MDG target. The financial crisis also hurt progress in reducing poverty levels, due to the food crisis in 2008, which increased the prices of staple foods. Combined with a reduction in incomes of poor households, the effective purchasing power of poor consumers has been further reduced.

With so much progress already made, it is easy to lose sight of the obstacles that still lie ahead of us. With just five years left, world leaders wonder whether it will be possible to achieve all eight of the MDGs. While all of the MDGs are important, there

is simply not enough time to discuss and resolve all eight goals. Furthermore, it is my hope that by 2015, only a few of these goals will remain unattained. Therefore, this futuristic committee will address three goals that will surely be the most challenging to reach: Universal Education, Environmental Sustainability, and Global Partnership. Since this committee is futuristic, delegates will receive news briefings at the beginning of each committee session that will provide updates on the situation of the world as of 2015 in order to place the issues debated into perspective. Therefore, it is expected that delegates are thoroughly updated on current events and bring innovative ideas to debate, while keeping their country's (or organization's) best interest in mind.

Topic 1: Universal Education

The first topic to be addressed in this committee is Universal Education. Universal Education has been part of a long tradition of far-reaching, high-level goals established by UN agencies and other international bodies. The UN Millennium Project believes that “education has the potential to transform societies and to fully realize human capabilities, to prepare workers to participate in the global economy, and to

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<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202010%20En%20r15%20-low%20res%2020100615%20-.pdf>

provide citizens with the tools for full engagement in public life.¹⁰ In order to ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling, individual governments and the broader international community must dramatically step up the level and nature of their financial, political & technical commitments. While girls are disproportionately affected, the completion of schooling for both genders is a significant problem, as many children drop out before finishing the fifth grade. In Africa, only 51% of children complete primary school and in South Asia, 74% of children do so. Enrollment issues are also of concern in certain segments of population within nations, as income gaps exacerbate the ability of children to obtain an education. Therefore this MDG requires a global effort, as the cooperation of individual nations is needed to make domestic changes in order to contribute to the global changes. Furthermore, it should be noted that the



Progress in Developing Countries

Enrollment in primary education has continued to rise. The world net enrollment ratio was 85% in 2000 and increased to 89% in 2007. However, the 2010 Report indicates that there are still many challenges in developing nations to achieve this goal by 2015, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, the percentage of children expected to never enroll is alarmingly large. In Western Africa, an estimated 65% of children are expected to never enroll in school, in Sub-Saharan Africa, 63% and in developing regions overall, 46% of children are expected to never enroll.¹¹ In another aspect, completion of a full course of primary schooling is necessary to achieve universal primary education. However, that is not to

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<http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/Education-complete.pdf>

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http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG_Report_2009_ENG.pdf (page 17)

say that this region has not made any progress since the beginning of the millennium. For example, in Burundi, primary school fees were abolished, which resulted in a threefold increase in primary-school enrollment since 1999. Similarly, the United Republic of Tanzania has doubled its enrollment ratio in the same period of time.¹² Reducing tuition will help increase enrollment, as studies show that increase in school enrollment is directly related to spending. However, it is undeniable that the economic crisis of 2008 played an integral role in changing the way nations allocate and spend their money.

Although income and net primary school enrollment are correlated, some countries with little income, like Rwanda and Viet Nam, still have higher enrollment rates than richer countries such as Costa Rica and Turkey. Therefore, there must be other factors that affect enrollment. Some of these factors are: social mobility, cultural norms that limit or encourage girls' attendance and the ability of a nation to ensure affordable and accessible education. Studies that followed the achievements of low-income

countries indicate that successful interventions have guided policymakers in making improvements in the education system. For example, Ethiopia and West Africa implemented the pragmatic approach of using contract teachers to make the cost of expanding coverage more affordable and also shifted to low-cost construction methods, which included setting up open-air classrooms.¹³ While these success stories are encouraging, it should be noted that many education systems are still plagued by irregularities, poor management and budgeting. For instance, the Ministry of Education in Peru does not even have a record of how many teachers exist in its education system, despite the fact that it manages the payroll. These issues, along with teacher absenteeism, violence/conflict, poor expenditure management and other corrupt practices remain unresolved, thus further delaying the achievement of the second MDG.

Getting students into school is a first step, but we must also consider how to keep students in school. Therefore, dropout rates must also be taken into consideration, as an estimated 29% of children in developed

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<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202010%20En%20r15%20-low%20res%2020100615%20-.pdf>

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<http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/Education-complete.pdf> (page 70)

nations and 23% of children in developing regions end up dropping out. In sub-Saharan Africa, more than 30% of primary-school students drop out before reaching the final grade.¹⁴ Another issue that should be addressed is the gender gap in education. Girls in the poorest 20% of households have the least chance of getting an education and are 3.5 times more likely to be out of school than girls in the richest households and 4 times more likely to be out of school as boys in the richest households. Income aside, the fact that girls are less likely to be educated is also a cultural phenomenon, since educating girls are perceived as being of less valued than educating boys. The combination of these factors makes this MDG a truly difficult one to accomplish. It is advised that delegates research case studies to find methods that have worked to increase enrollment, keep students in school and to diminish the gender gap in education.

Key Elements and Strategies

As pointed out in the section above, there are several key elements to achieving this goal, as observed through the progress made by various countries. Delegates are advised

to be pragmatic in reducing costs and to take individual nation's financial abilities into account. Countries should also focus on finding methods to establish equal education systems with modest standards that focus on recruiting qualified teachers and designing good-quality curricula in a cost-effective manner. On the other hand, nations are also advised to make use of the private sector and to work with families and communities to relieve household constraints to schooling. The UN Millennium Project identifies two major strategies that can be used to address the challenges of shortfalls in access and quality of education: "getting out-of-school children into school and creating better institutions and more favorable incentives."¹⁵ Following these two strategies will result in the improvement in quality of information about education sector performance, a stronger constituency for national commitment to education, and more educational opportunities. However, these strategies, despite being recommended by the UN Millennium Project, merely serve as guidelines, giving individual nations the freedom to craft their own approaches that are appropriate to local contexts. Therefore, the majority of the reform has been left up to

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<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202010%20En%20r15%20-low%20res%2020100615%20-.pdf>

¹⁵

<http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/Education-complete.pdf> (page 76)

individual countries. As a futuristic committee, it is up to you, the delegates, to decide whether the best course of action in the year 2015 is to put these MDGs on the fast track by holding nations accountable for their actions/inactions, or to continue a more passive path

Problems that the committee should address:

1. How can this committee address the overemphasis on increasing enrollments and the little emphasis on retention and completion?
2. How can this committee reach out to civil society representatives, policymakers and other stakeholders to eliminate bribery, corruption, poor management and other such obstacles that prevent universal education?
3. What can this committee do to address gender disparity in education?
4. What recommendations does this committee have to address the negative impact that income/wealth gaps, cultural values and social norms have on educational achievement or attainment?
5. Should Millennium Development Goals documents be more specific in

outlining strategies, since some individual nations have not taken the initiative to implement interventions?

Topic 2: Environmental Sustainability

Climate change has been a much-debated topic for the past few decades. However, it is only recently that we are beginning to take responsibility for our actions and to engage in environmentally sustainable practices. Even the Arctic, the most remote region of the world is experiencing the detrimental effects of global warming. This situation begs the question: how much longer can the earth's current resources sustain its global citizens? According to UN statistics, it would take nine planet Earths to absorb the world's carbon if every person had the same energy-rich lifestyle as people in developed countries¹⁶. Therefore, the 7th UN Millennium Development Goal addresses four targets:

- A. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources.¹⁷

¹⁶ http://www.unwater.org/statistics_res.html

¹⁷ <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/envIRON.shtml>

- B. Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss
- C. Halve by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.
- D. By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

For the purpose of our committee, we will primarily focus on targets A, C and D.

Statistics

Water is the most valuable and needed natural resource on the planet. Of the world's total water, only 2.5% is freshwater and 70% of that freshwater is trapped in the form of ice and permanent snow cover. The other 30% is stored underground in the form of groundwater. Therefore, the total usable freshwater supply for ecosystems and humans is less than 1% of all freshwater resources.¹⁸ Not only are resources scarce, sanitation of water is also a major problem

¹⁸ http://www.unwater.org/statistics_res.html

in developing nations. It is estimated that one in six people worldwide don't have access to the 20-50 liters of safe freshwater necessary for their basic needs.¹⁹ Currently, an estimated 2.5 billion people live without basic sanitation.²⁰ Roughly half of the world's population lives in rural areas and more than 70% of the rural dwellers live without improved sanitation.²¹ Lack of sanitation is a major public health problem, since it can perpetuate the spread of diseases such as cholera, which is highly infectious. Diarrhea, another result of poor sanitation

kills about 2.2 million people each year. These diseases make people unfit to work, thus affecting their income and contributing to the poverty level.

As the lack of improved sanitation and water are two of the defining characteristics of urban slums, more than one third of the urban populations in developing regions live under such conditions. Slums are a "physical and spatial manifestation of increasing urban poverty

¹⁹ http://www.unwater.org/statistics_res.html

²⁰ http://www.unwater.org/statistics_san.html

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http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2008/MDG_Report_2008_En.pdf#page=40 (pg 43)



and intra-city inequality.”²² The generic definition of a slum, as defined by UN experts is: “a contiguous settlement where the inhabitants are characterized as having inadequate housing and basic services, and is often not recognized or addressed by the public authorities as an integral or equal part of the city.”²³ When the MDGs were first adopted in 2000, the urban slum population was 924 million, mainly in the Asia Pacific and Africa.²⁴ At first, public decision-makers generally took negative approaches to slums, often resorting to eviction, benign neglect and involuntary resettlement. Now, however, the policies have shifted to self-help and rights-based policies. However, the numbers remain grim—even if we reached the target of improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, it would only be 10% of the estimated world slum population, which is expected to triple to a total of 3 billion by 2050.²⁵ The improvement of slum conditions has a direct

correlation with the work that is to be done to increase access to safe water and sanitation. Therefore, it is a key issue that our committee must address.

Another pressing issue is the rapid rate of environmental degradation and deforestation. According to the World Resources Institute, more than 80% of the Earth’s natural forests have been destroyed, putting 70% of the Earth’s land animals and plants in danger.²⁶ However, many developing nations need to clear forests for lumber and for agricultural land, thus destroying their environment. In fact, lack of arable land is a reason for many major conflicts such as the genocide in Sudan. Furthermore, there is a lack of affordable access to clean modern energy services, as people in developing countries primarily depend on wood, dung and agricultural residues for fuel. Not only are these sources of energy harmful to the environment, they may also give users respiratory diseases.

Therefore, the task of finding alternative fuels is an issue that affects many aspects of people’s lives, including their health and safety. We must ask ourselves what we can do to achieve this goal, despite the bleak

²² <http://www.scribd.com/doc/31529357/Improving-the-Lives-of-100-Million-Slum-Dwellers-Guide-to-Monitoring-Target-11>

²³ <http://www.scribd.com/doc/31529357/Improving-the-Lives-of-100-Million-Slum-Dwellers-Guide-to-Monitoring-Target-11>

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http://globalpoverty.change.org/blog/view/urban_slums_a_millennium_development_success

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<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2008highlevel/pdf/newsroom/Goal%207%20FINAL.pdf>

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<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/eye/deforestation/effect.html>

statistics. We must also consider and learn from the progress that has already been made.

Progress and Recommendations

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with funding from the Global Environment Facility, has been able to fund more than 8,400 projects by NGOs and community organizations around the world.²⁷ For example, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) promotes environmentally friendly ways of cultivating coffee by combining \$12 million of GEF-financing with over \$70 million mainly from Kraft. This act of kindness by GEF has enabled Kraft to increase its purchase of certified coffee. The UN Millennium Development Goals Project recommends introducing more innovative financial mechanisms to significantly increase financing for the environment and scaling-up programs and



initiatives to deliver pro-poor environmental outcomes.²⁸

Carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases have also been on the forefront of the global warming debate. Since the first warnings about these harmful gases, many international agreements have been made. The Kyoto Protocol (2008) in particular sets binding targets for 37 industrialized countries for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.²⁹ While this protocol sets up a monitoring system for emission targets, it is only the first step towards a truly global emission reduction, especially since the United States, a major contributor of greenhouse gases, refused to sign the protocol because then president George W. Bush viewed the treaty as too costly and unrealistic. The Montreal Protocol, another attempt to curtail environmental degradation, has resulted “in the phasing out of over 96% of all ozone-depleted

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<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2008highlevel/pdf/newsroom/Goal%207%20FINAL.pdf>

²⁹ http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/items/2830.php

²⁷ <http://www.mdgmonitor.org/story.cfm?goal=7>

substances (ODSs).³⁰ On September 2007, the 20th anniversary of the Montreal Protocol, governments acknowledged the benefit to both ozone protection and climate change by agreeing to advance by up to 10 years the final phase-out date for hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs). The success of the Montreal Protocol gives hope that future negotiations can be just as effective. It is important to note that environmentally sustainable policies and the development of alternative fuels are often expensive; in a time of economic hardship, nations, firms and individuals will need to make tough fiscal decisions. However, in the EU, despite the economic crisis, the cost of cutting greenhouse gas emissions has been reduced to 48 billion Euros from 70 billion Euros.³¹ Therefore, there is no doubt that any changes in the global economy will affect the aid pledges nations make and how effective and aggressive environmental policies will be. Delegates should take note of the methods used in these protocols during their research, as it serves as a strong

starting point from which delegates can develop their own ideas and propositions.

While there are other UN agencies and world summits that can specifically address the issue of global warming, there are few forums in which to address the issue of slum conditions. Despite the overwhelming number of people without access to water, conditions have improved since 1990. Progress has been the most pronounced in Eastern Asia, where over 400 million people in Eastern Asia have gained access to improved drinking water since 1990, and 1.6 billion people have gained access to safe water (water without toxins).³² At this rate, the world is expected to meet the target of having 89% of the population in developing regions use improved sources of drinking water by 2015. In order to reach this goal, the UN urges nations to increase spending on water and sanitation from the current average of 0.5% to at least 1% of GDP to ensure increased access.³³ Furthermore, spending should be increased to scale-up slums and nations should invest in

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http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2008/MDG_Report_2008_En.pdf#page=40 (page 39)

³¹ "UPDATE: Lower Cost of EU CO2 Cuts By A Third." *Wall Street Journal*.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/BT-CO-20100526-709720.html>

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http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2008/MDG_Report_2008_En.pdf#page=40 (pg 44)

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<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2008highlevel/pdf/newsroom/Goal%207%20FINAL.pdf>

affordable housing for the poor. The Global Urban Observatory highlights five dimensions for improving slum conditions: increasing access to safe water, access to sanitation, durable housing, securing tenure, and creating a sufficient living area.³⁴

Therefore, our task of increasing access to safe water and sanitation and our task of eliminating the number of slum dwellers worldwide are related. The focus of the background information on slums has been on water and sanitation, but housing and tenure are two important aspects of eliminating slums. Providing legal security of tenure and access to land to all peoples will reduce homelessness and forced evictions. However, it is to be noted that securing tenure will require good governance, long term planning and the cooperation of public authorities. Therefore, delegates should research their own nation's tenure and property rights in order to best represent their country's point of view. It is also to be noted that while financial support is integral to achieving these goals, the committee must be wary of the unstable state of the global economy and look to other methods of achieving this goal,

especially ones that are affordable and pragmatic.

Problems that the committee should address:

1. What methods should be taken to increase access to safe drinking water?
2. What guidelines should nations follow to improve their sanitation methods?
3. Will addressing these two issues remove people from slums or will it simply improve slum-life? If the latter is the case, then what can the committee do to reduce the number of people living in slums?
4. What kind of incentives and support are needed to support sustainable forest management and conservation practices? Are there cultural values or practices that affect how people engage with their natural environment that the committee must consider before making recommendations?
5. For any recommendations the committee makes, what are the fiscal restraints if any?

³⁴ <http://www.scribd.com/doc/31529357/Improving-the-Lives-of-100-Million-Slum-Dwellers-Guide-to-Monitoring-Target-11>

Topic 3: Global Partnership

Perhaps the most important and difficult goal is Millennium Goal Eight: to develop a global partnership for development. This goal will be achieved by:

- A. Developing an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system that includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction.
- B. Addressing the special needs of least developed countries by lifting tariffs and providing quota free access for the least developed countries' exports, enhancing program of debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries, and cancelling bilateral debt
- C. Addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing States
- D. Dealing comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable for the future³⁵

Without global partnership and a commitment made by every nation to work towards achieving these goals, the progress that has already been made would be for naught. Developed nations need to be aware of the special needs of least developed countries (LDCs) and to provide more official development assistance (ODA) for countries committed to poverty reduction. Therefore, this goal emphasizes the spirit of collaboration and the growing interdependence of all nations.

A Brief History of the Doha Development Round

The Doha Development Round is the current trade negotiation round of the World Trade Organization (WTO). It commenced in 2001 and held its first conference in Doha, Qatar.³⁶ The objective of these negotiations is to lower trade barriers such as tariffs worldwide and to strengthen the powers of the WTO. The result of this first meeting was the *Ministerial Declaration*, which in brief, declared that the WTO will make “positive efforts designed to ensure that developing countries, and especially the least-developed among them, secure a share

³⁵ <http://www.mdgmonitor.org/goal8.cfm>

³⁶

http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/dda_e/negotiations_summary_e.htm

in the growth of world trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development.”³⁷ The document recognized the importance of a transparent, multilateral framework for trade and investment and also supported “the mutual supportiveness of trade and environment.”³⁸



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http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_e/min01_e/mindecl_e.htm

³⁸

http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_e/min01_e/mindecl_e.htm

Following this conference, ministerial discussions have also taken place in Cancun in 2003, Geneva in 2004, Hong Kong in 2005 and Geneva again in 2006 and 2008. The conference in Cancun was intended as a stock-taking meeting to follow up on the 2001 meeting. However, a discord on agricultural issues overshadowed other important issues. In Hong Kong, a final declaration that recorded the progress of the past few years was written. The committee resolved to finish negotiations by 2006. The most well-known negotiation of the Doha round is probably the Geneva discussion in 2008. Negotiations stalled for after nine days from the first day, when members could not agree over a safeguard mechanism that would protect developing countries. Some members did not want to give developing nations special and differential treatment in the form of import volume exemption.³⁹ The discussion became a battle between the developed and developing nations. Rich countries like the US said they could not cut national farm subsidies if the agreement would also allow other countries to dilute market access for their exporters.⁴⁰

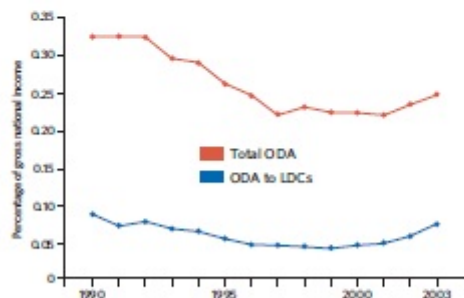
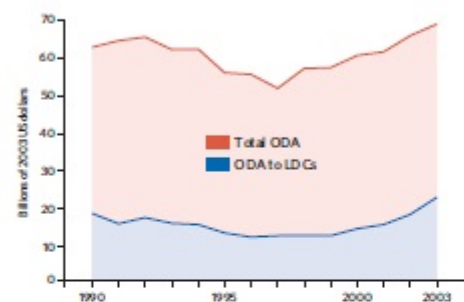
³⁹

http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/safeg_e/safeg_info_e.htm

⁴⁰ Lynn, Jonathan. "Doha Round negotiators bear down in hopes of deal this year", New York Times.

Overall, the US, India and China could not compromise over measures to protect farmers in developing countries from the greater liberalization of trade.⁴¹ This was a pivotal moment in history, because it illustrated the growing power of China and

Development aid has reached an all-time high, but remains at a historically low level as a share of donor country income



Official development assistance from developed countries, 1990–2003 (Constant United States dollars and as a proportion of donor country gross national income)

India. It is important to keep in mind that this committee is not the WTO. I advise

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/09/business/worldbusiness/09iht-wto.1.10832980.html?_r=1

⁴¹ Castle, Stephen. "After 7 years, Talks Collapse on World Trade." New York Times.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/30/business/worldbusiness/30trade.html?scp=9&sq=doha%20round&st=Search>

delegates to only discuss the targets of this specific MDG and not extraneous topics that should be left to the jurisdiction of the WTO. However, we will be building on the work of the WTO in terms of lowering trade barriers and creating a non-discriminatory financial system. Furthermore, advancement of this MDG requires multi-agency and multi-national efforts. It is my hope that this committee will not center debate on whether the topic of discussion is within the scope of the committee, but rather on how to incorporate the abilities of other agencies and organizations into our resolutions. This topic is certainly very broad, so I advise delegates to stay focused throughout debate so that we can create effective plans and suggestions.

Progress and Recommendations

According to the 2005 Report, almost two thirds of exports from developing countries can enter developed countries duty-free. However, developed countries' tariffs remain largely unchanged, as seen through a graph depicting the tariffs on imports of key products such as clothing, agricultural products and textiles.⁴² The same graph depicting tariffs on key products includes

⁴²

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/pdf/MDG%20Book.pdf>

data from 2004 through 2008 and shows downward sloping lines, rather than the horizontal lines depicted in the 2005 Report. The newest data shows that developed countries' tariffs on imports of agricultural products, textiles and clothing from developing countries were between 5% and 8% in 2008, which is about 2-3 percentage points lower than in 1998. Though this change is small, some of the LDC's have been able to increase their profits from the lowering of these tariffs and by specializing in exporting products in which they have higher preference margins.⁴³ It is important to remember that the 2008/2009 financial crisis also hurt international trade and caused a drop in the value and volume of trade in most developing countries. Delegates are advised to think about how another financial crisis will affect developing nations and what measures should be taken to protect their exports.

Debt burden is another area that should be discussed in our committee because a country's external debt burden affects its creditworthiness and vulnerability to economic shocks. Between 1990 and 2003,

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<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202010%20En%20r15%20-low%20res%2020100615%20-.pdf#page=69>

the future debt payments of the most heavily indebted countries were reduced by \$54 billion, bringing their payments down to 10% of export earnings.⁴⁴ In the new 2010 Report, the statistics are better, however. While in 2000, developing regions' debt consisted of 13% of their export revenues, by 2008, that number dropped to 3%. Between 2007 and 2008, the ratio of debt service to exports remained stable in developed nations and increased in Southern Asia and the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (the former Soviet Republics).⁴⁵

Trade aspects aside, another target of this MDG is to make the benefits of technology available to more global citizens. The number of people who use mobile phones has increased exponentially since the start of the new millennium. By the end of 2009, global subscriptions to mobile services reached 4.6 billion. Even in regions such as sub-Saharan Africa, that have difficulty establishing fixed telephone lines, about 30% of people have mobile services. While mobile subscriptions have made great

strides, access to the World Wide Web is still unavailable to the majority of the world's people. In developing nations, only 15% of people have access to the internet, while in developed regions 68% of people have internet access.⁴⁶ Although developed nations far exceed developing nations in terms of internet access, internet use in developing nations used to stand at 5% in the year 2000. Therefore, internet use has increased, and we should make sure that it continues to do so. A challenge in bringing the internet to people in developing countries is the limited availability of broadband networks. Because much of our world's activities are conducted on the internet, lack of internet access will prove to be increasingly detrimental to the lives of citizens in developing nations. Therefore, we must find ways to lessen the divide between those who enjoy fast internet access and those who still struggle with shared dial-up links.

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<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/pdf/MDG%20Book.pdf>

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<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202010%20En%20r15%20-low%20res%2020100615%20-.pdf#page=69>

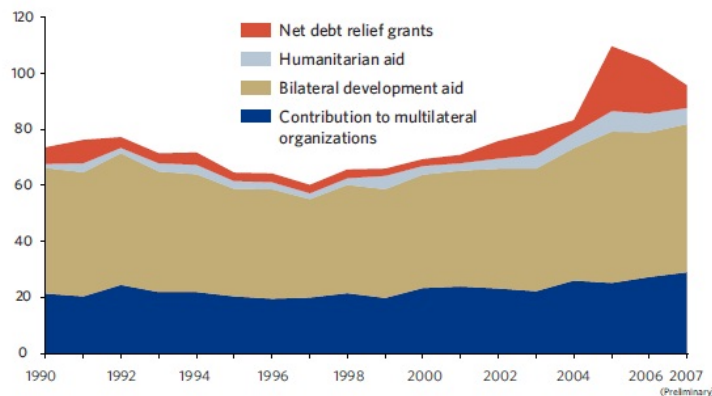
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<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202010%20En%20r15%20-low%20res%2020100615%20-.pdf#page=69>

The 2008/2009 financial crisis also affected the amount of aid given to developing nations by developed nations. At 2007 exchange rates, ODA continued to decline from an all-time high of \$107.1 billion in 2005 to \$103.7 billion in 2007.⁴⁷ The contribution of multilateral and bilateral organizations has remained somewhat constant from 1990 to 2007 and accounts for

Development aid falls for the second year, jeopardizing commitments for 2010

Official development assistance from OECD-DAC countries, 1990-2007
(Billions of constant 2006 United States dollars)



the majority of ODA. Humanitarian aid remains the smallest portion of ODA, but has increased slightly in the past twenty years. The channels of aid distribution have also undergone many changes since the 1990s, with special purpose funds, such as

the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria, becoming more prominent.

Despite many nations increasing their pledges, the total aid to LDCs remains below the UN target of 0.7% of the gross national income (GNI) of the members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). As of 2007, the total ODA was only 0.28% of the donors' gross national income.⁴⁸ Furthermore, studies show that agricultural subsidies by rich countries far overshadow money spent on development aid. In 2006, total agricultural support stood at \$372 billion and total ODA was only \$104 billion. In addition to providing monetary support, developed nations must also develop a non-discriminatory trading and financial

system for developing nations. However, there has been little progress in reducing trade barriers, despite there being several bilateral trade agreements, for the agreements did not provide any major initiatives favoring developing nations. As a

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http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2008/MDG_Report_2008_En.pdf#page=46 (page 46)

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http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2008/MDG_Report_2008_En.pdf#page=46 (page 47)

result, the proportion of developing countries' exports with duty-free access to developed countries' markets has remained constant ever since 2004.

In spite of the hard work of organizations such as the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance and increased pledges of ODA by developed nations, there are many nations that need to reaffirm and increase their commitment to bringing ODA back on track. The UN encourages partnerships with civil society, NGOs, the private sector and foundations to develop pro-poor urban and rural development strategies.⁴⁹ Much of the work regarding trade restrictions, however, should and will be left to the World Trade Organization. However, committee should still be prepared to make recommendations to the WTO, especially in regards to measures that nations can take to reach targets A and B. An issue that the committee can make specific recommendations for is the effort of improving affordable access to new technologies that enhance development, since they directly facilitate economic transactions and partnerships. Cooperation with the private sector is highly

recommended for making the benefits of new technologies available to developing regions, but the committee should also explore other methods of increasing internet access and access to general information and communication technologies.

Problems the Committee should address:

1. What are some new strategies to increase ODA that will be more practical during tough economic times?
2. What recommendations should be made to the WTO in regards to lifting tariffs, lowering quotas and creating a non-discriminatory trading and financial system?
3. How can developing nations be protected from future financial crises?
4. How can we balance the needs of developing and developed nations while trying to achieve this MDG?
5. How can technology be made more available and affordable for developing nations?

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<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2008highlevel/pdf/newsroom/Goal%208%20FINAL.pdf>

Bloc Positions

Aside from regional bloc positions, there are also special interest bloc positions in this committee, as the committee will be comprised of national leaders and spokespeople from Non-Governmental Organizations. Because the MDGs are goals that affect nearly every nation, in a different severity and manner, there are very few blocs that can be formed. The major blocs have been outlined below.

Developed Nations: There really isn't a cohesive developed nations' bloc, because the United States and many of the European nations disagree on many issues and have different methods and techniques for resolving international crises. Based on current policies, projections of their nation's future economic situation and future foreign policies, it is up to each delegate to decide whether their home nation should take a more involved and proactive role in the future.

African Bloc: As representatives of African nations, you must be assertive and provocative in pushing other world leaders to take more steps to make progress in Africa. Although our committee is not discussing some more the more pressing

issues that Africa is currently facing, universal education and global partnership are the two issues that should be more of interest to this bloc, especially since many aspects of environmental sustainability such as sustainable farming practices, may come at the cost of improving the livelihood of your citizens. However, sanitation, safe water and hygiene are of extreme importance⁵⁰, for without the resolution of these issues, many of the other MDGs will not be reached.

NGO Bloc: During the September Summit, many leaders of NGOs expressed their concern and disappointment with developed nations and their level of aid contribution. NGO leaders are more likely to advocate for cooperation between the private and public sectors and using multilateral approaches to reach the MDGs. Furthermore, they should be even more aggressive than developing nations in requesting pledges and fiscal aid.

⁵⁰ "The Millennium Development Goals Need Progressive UK Leadership," <http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters/2010/sep/23/millennium-development-goals-uk-leadership>

Conclusion

This background guide provides a general overview of the three topics that will be discussed in committee. As stated before, delegates are expected to do outside research on their country/ NGO's policies and attitudes towards the MDGs. The sources that have been cited in this background guide will serve as good starting points and my blog also has more current updates, specifically, news on what has occurred after the September MDG Summit.

Delegates should be able to find much more information on bloc positions and newly proposed resolutions now that the MDGs are being widely debated. It is also advised that although delegates are representing individual nations, they should also try to represent the interests of their bordering nations or "geographical blocs" so that the scope of debate is not too limited. This committee cannot possibly accommodate hundreds of students, so it is simply a model of the actual summit. And as a model, it should try to incorporate varying viewpoints of a region rather than simply the nations represented. For example, a delegate from Venezuela, being the only delegate from Central America, would represent the Central American viewpoint in addition to representing the Venezuelan viewpoint.

In the aftermath of the September 2010 Summit, the UN Millennium Development Goals are being put in the forefront of news and international attention. However, the focus of this year's summit was mostly on improving the lives of women and children. While there was debate on the issue of developed nations not providing enough aid for the development of these goals, the topics that we will be addressing in our committee were not addressed thoroughly. With so many new developments currently occurring, I am truly excited about the relevance of this committee and I hope that you are all just as impassioned as I am.