



American Model United Nations

**Economic and Social Commission
for Western Asia**

**Report to the Economic and Social Commission
for Western Asia on The Governance Deficit and
Conflict Relapse in the ESCWA Region**

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1 Executive Summary

2 At the 2015 session, held from 21 November 2015 to 24 November 2015, the Economic and Social Commission
3 for Western Asia (ESCWA) considered "Governance Deficit and Conflict Relapse in the ESCWA Region" the topic
4 for the 2015 session.

5 The second chapter of this report submits for consideration Resolution I/1 pertaining to States that are
6 bordering conflict. This resolution deals with the issues that refugees may face and the strain that a large influx
7 of refugees places on the economies and institutions of States bordering conflict. The second chapter of the report
8 also submits for consideration Resolution I/2 pertaining to states currently in conflict. The issues discussed in this
9 resolution include internally displaced persons, rebuilding infrastructure post conflict and the role of governments
10 during conflict. The second chapter of this report also submits for consideration Resolution I/3 pertaining to States
11 affected by a region experiencing conflicts. This resolution deals with issues of institutional capacity, economic
12 development and modernization and transparency and trust in government. All three resolutions were adopted
13 without objection. Tunisia would like it noted that they abstained from Resolution I/2.

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21 development and modernization and transparency and trust in government. All three resolutions were adopted
22 without objection. Tunisia would like it noted that they abstained from Resolution I/2.

23 The third chapter of this report details the discussions from the committee on governance deficit and conflict
24 relapse. It is organized into an introductory section, a section on Resolution I/1, a section on Resolution I/2, and
25 a section on Resolution I/3. The introductory section outlines the initial brainstorming of the committee as well as
26 the reasoning behind our separation of sub-groups. Each subsequent section on the three resolutions describes the
27 process that each sub-group and the body as a whole went through to write the resolution. Ultimately this committee
28 is pleased with the innovative solutions we were able to agree upon dealing with this complex and daunting topic of
29 governance deficit and conflict relapse.

2 Matters calling for action

2.1 ESCWA I/1

Recognizing that 41% of refugees are children under the age of 18,

Concerned about the strain that refugees have on the host States' economy and institutions,

Bearing in mind Section H of the United Nations High Commission on Refugees Executive Committee Conclusion on Children at Risk,

Observing the need for transparency in identifying and accounting for refugees,

Convinced that the undocumented flow of goods and services across borders leads to instability,

1. *Calls upon* Member States to act in accordance with the United Nations High Commission on Refugees and the United Nations Children's Fund's policies on refugees;

2. *Expressing the hope* that Member States and other relevant agencies aid any Member State that chooses to take in refugees, including but not limited to:

(a) Financial aid;

(b) Medical supplies;

(c) Basic amenities;

(d) Impartial volunteers, upon Member States' request;

3. *Emphasizing* the importance of support networks for refugees, especially children under the age of 18, such as:

(a) Providing a secure environment;

(b) Promoting the provision of alternative care and accommodating environments for orphans or children who are separated from their families;

4. *Encourages* Member States' participation in collecting and sharing information with other Member States regarding refugees, with regards to sovereignty, through taking steps such as:

(a) Taking note of the need of all Member States to identify refugees who enter their sovereign territory, using forms of identification, such as:

(i) Birth certificates;

(ii) Passports;

(iii) Other forms of legal identification;

(b) Drawing attention to the need of all children to have forms of identification, as noted by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees;

(c) Calls upon Member States to establish or strengthen existing refugee status or identification, including;

(i) A form of identification specific to refugees;

(ii) Ensuring that refugees granted this status are catalogued, with the intention of sharing this information with other Member States, at the discretion of the hosting Member States' governmental policies;

(iii) Further requests the human rights of refugees are observed, including their inclusion under domestic labor laws if employed in the host country;

5. *Encourages* Member States to strengthen institutions that account for goods and services that move across their borders through the following measures:

- (a) Recommends that bordering Member States apply tighter controls on the flow of foreign fighters, weapons, drugs and other harmful materials that threaten the rule of law;
- (b) Enhance coordination between Member States in preventing the flow of such materials.

2.2 ESCWA I/2

Recognizing that conflicts are occurring at an alarming rate in the region,

Reaffirming the willingness of the Member States of the Economic and Social Council of Western Asia (ESCWA) to work in collaboration to achieve the goal of ending current and preventing future conflict,

Bearing in mind that the collaboration with the Member State in conflict is essential to the national sovereignty of each state,

Deeply concerned by the 8.5 million internally displaced people residing in the Western Asia region,

Concerned that current conflicts have the potential to require large amounts of humanitarian aid,

Recalling the content of the E/ESCWA/AECRI/2011/1 report: "economies and trust in government are two key elements in reducing government deficit and civil disturbances",

Lamenting the devastating effects of conflict on non-aggressors and the need for effective reconstruction of destroyed infrastructure and re-habitation of the area,

Confident that these steps will help to end current conflicts and prevent future conflict,

1. *Explores* options for extended loans to Member States who will need to rebuild after conflict, examples are Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO), Asian International Investment Bank (AIIB), New Development BRICS Bank, Islamic Finance, private investors and other Member States;

2. *Calls* for further attention to the particularly vulnerable position of refugees;

3. *Asserts* that maintaining stable infrastructure is essential to lessening the amount of humanitarian aid needed in a State, which thereby helps to maintain sovereignty;

4. *Endorses* the use of safe zones to protect innocent civilians from conflict:

(a) Emphasizes government's responsibility to maintain schools, health care and other basic institutions as well as protection;

5. *Welcomes* humanitarian aid to Member States in conflict:

(a) Reminding that national sovereignty must be respected when delivering humanitarian aid;

(b) Recommends using government approved safe zones to deliver humanitarian aid;

(c) This process will ensure that aid is provided for those in dire need;

6. *Notes* the need of governments to provide basic services such as clean water, electricity, waste management and food security;

7. *Further notes* governments' responsibility to maintain law and order even during dire situations;

8. *Reminds* governments of their responsibility in times of conflict to work for an expedient end of the conflict and the overall betterment of the Member State;

9. *Expresses* its hope that post-conflict Member States are able to rebuild and modernize with all deliberate haste.

2.3 ESCWA I/3

Recognizing the negative consequences of systemic political corruption,

Drawing attention to the importance of fighting corruption in building public trust,

109 *Noting with concern* the decades of conflict and its destabilizing effect on the Member States of the Economic
110 and Social Commission for Western Asia,

111 *Also recognizing* the strong connections between regional employment and sustainable economic growth and
112 the prevention of conflict relapse,

113 *Acknowledging* the work of the Arab Administration Reform and Development Organization (ARADO)
114 within the Arab League towards combating the problems associated with government deficit and conflict relapse,

115 *Reaffirming* the agreements made at the first annual Arab Conference on Administrative Reform and De-
116 velopment,

117 *Emphasizing* the connection between governance deficit and conflict relapse,

118 *Deeply concerned* about dependence on a small number of natural resources, especially petroleum-based
119 products, and the vulnerability that has been so clearly displayed by the recent fluctuations in oil prices,

120 *Encouraging* a comprehensive, regional approach to the diversification of the economies of each Member
121 State,

122 *Reminding* each State that primary education is a universal human right and should be prioritized in our
123 region,

124 *Also acknowledging* the importance of universal education comprised of basic literacy, mathematics and
125 vocational training for the welfare of our citizens and the overall economic and political stability of the region,

126 *Stressing* every Member State's national sovereignty,

127 1. *Encourages* the development of education in the region through:

128 (a) Physical development of primary, secondary, vocational and higher educational institutions, with
129 an emphasis on primary education where it does not exist;

130 (b) A focus on establishing national programs which specifically target illiteracy;

131 (c) Structural development of government systems through which States provide access (and knowl-
132 edge to all citizens of such access) to technology which will allow the citizens of our region to access and compete in
133 the global job market;

134 (d) Vocational training and re-education programs for adults who need increased human capital in
135 order to enter new markets, diversifying Member States' economies;

136 2. *Stresses* the importance of entrepreneurship in our attempt to modernize our region and enter new
137 markets, and suggests:

138 (a) Accelerator programs intended to provide personal support, lend financial assistance, and offer
139 networking opportunities to young entrepreneurs be made widely accessible to citizens of all backgrounds across each
140 State, with an emphasis on the establishment of mentorship programs which allow citizens to be quickly connected
141 to existing support structures;

142 (b) Microfinance loans for small business development, utilizing existing funding organizations such
143 as ARADO, Kiva, Grameen Bank, etc.;

144 (c) The establishment of meaningful connections between local investors and local startups;

145 3. *Recommends* international cooperation on encouraging transparency within regional hydrocarbon indus-
146 tries because:

147 (a) Transparency in negotiations with domestic and foreign hydrocarbon companies can help prevent
148 corruption;

149 (b) Funds freed by decreased corruption in the hydrocarbon industry can be allocated to benefit
150 the citizens of Member States, especially through the development of education and entrepreneurship programs
151 mentioned above;

152 4. *Encourages* the establishment of "Wakf-el-Fassad" an investigative and judicial body at local, state and
153 federal levels in order to investigate and prosecute issues of corruption in the public and private sectors that for
154 example could have a:

155 (a) Judicial/Investigative body, as appointed through the State government, which will use infor-
156 mation sent through the local bodies to judge and prosecute investigated issues of corruption;

157 (b) a legislative body comprised solely of multiple local offices where corruption complaints can be
158 made and that will compile various reports to be sent to the State government;

159 5. *Also recommends* that the Economic and Social Council encourage Member States of the Economic and
160 Social Council for Western Asia meet for a summit in six months time to discuss issues of corruption within our
161 region including:

162 (a) discussion of the creation of a regional body for governments to collaborate on issues regarding
163 corruption and to assist Member States with their own corruption based investigations;

164 (b) discussion of guidelines to help States deliberate upon their own policies regarding corruption;

165 6. *Stresses* that Member States with proper infrastructure should collaborate on using technological and
166 analytical advancements to deter supply-side systemic corruption, especially at higher levels;

167 7. *Asks* States to investigate their own various government agencies in an attempt to reduce corruption in
168 all interconnected sectors and levels of government;

169 8. *Requests* States to evaluate their legal system in order to analyze laws and regulations that may endorse
170 or support corruption;

171 9. *Suggests* Member States adopt regional participation in a civil servant exchange program to facilitate the
172 improvement of bureaucratic capacity throughout the region:

173 (a) The civil servant exchange is a voluntary program determined on a State-by-State basis;

174 (b) Involves the voluntary swapping of civil servants between subscribing States in the hopes that the
175 individual servants will take their experience back to their home State and help improve the institutional operations
176 of their domestic civil service;

177 10. *Promotes* transparency and accountability in the operation of State governments through programs in
178 which:

179 (a) Citizens are engaged in the process of governance;

180 (b) Governments would have the right to determine what is considered sensitive information, but
181 otherwise must provide the requested information under the stipulations outlined in the individual laws;

182 11. *Recommends* that the Economic and Social Council reference existing methodology in measuring citizens'
183 trust in government and adapt such methodologies to create a new formula to measure citizen trust in governments
184 in Western Asia and that the council report back to Member States with their findings.

3 Consideration of the Governance Deficit and Conflict Relapse in the ESCWA Region

When the Economic and Social Council for Western Asia (ESCWA) began session the body elected to set the topic of discussion on Governance Deficit and Conflict Relapse. The committee began with general brainstorming on the most efficient and effective way to address the topic. Upon deliberation the committee came up with three subgroups that each Member State could join and focus on a specific set of issues. The three subgroups were States in conflict, States directly bordering conflict, and States affected by a region experiencing conflicts. Every State within the committee self identified with a group that described their situation.

Each sub-group proceeded to meet and began brainstorming possible solutions that could be included in a report. Throughout the deliberations the entire body came together and held consultative sessions to ensure every subgroup was communicating effectively with the hope that the body would ultimately find innovative solutions to a complex and convoluted problem affecting our entire region.

The below deliberations are organized into the three individual sub-groups deliberations. Each individual section describes the entire debate surrounding their resolution, and together all sections describe the debate of the issue of Governance Deficit and Conflict Relapse.

3.1 Deliberation of ESCWA Resolution I/1

Though each State has the responsibility for implementing its own governance practices, there are certain aspects of governance that are outside of individual Member States' control. An example of such an aspect includes conflict in neighboring regions or States. Member States agreed that conflict within neighboring States is problematic when such conflict spreads beyond the conflict regions. Member States additionally expressed that addressing these problems is critical for stability within the Member States surrounding conflict regions, and requires commitment and solidarity on the part of all Member States.

There are a number of problems that States neighboring conflict zones may need to address. The Member States of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia focused on the following areas: the importance of basic human rights for all refugees, the specific problems facing refugees under the age of 18, the usefulness of information sharing between Member States, the seriousness of identifying refugees in host States and strengthening restrictions against illicit trade.

Refugees, upon entry of a new State, do not have the same protections as naturalized citizens. Member States expressed concern that this is problematic when the refugees are subjected to substandard labor conditions, forced to work for extremely low wages or in poor working environments. In order to combat this problem, many Member States agreed that States should extend the same labor conditions and other human rights protections to refugees as their domestic citizens possess.

Section "H" of the United Nations High Commission on Refugees Executive Committee's Conclusion on Children at Risk explores the importance of the complex issues that face refugee youth. The Conclusion expressed that in particular, refugee children face constraints regarding identification. As acknowledged by the United Nations Children's Fund, children also require highly stable environments, including a supportive family structure. The United Nations Children's Fund expresses that this is even more imperative when the child is under stress, or suffers from anxiety or depression.

Refugees are often separated from family and friends when they leave their home State. Member States expressed concern that this is especially problematic when children are separated from their parents or other family members. Many Member States involved in deliberations agreed that cooperation between Member States to reunite separated family members and friends is a cost-effective and efficient solution to this problem.

Many of the problems faced by refugees are due to their lack of status in their host State. Many Member States agreed that this is a serious problem for refugees. Member States also agreed that the position of refugees must be recognized as temporary within their host States, but in order to respect State sovereignty and respect the status of refugees, the decision of whether or not the refugee will remain in the host State or return to their home State is up to the host State and the individual refugee.

232 Member States that neighbor conflict zones also face problems posed by the illicit trade and movement of
233 drugs, weapons and combat fighters across borders. Member States discussed that States can directly address these
234 issues by strengthening restrictions against illicit trade at their borders. Additionally, Member States agreed that
235 increasing coordination between Member States regarding trade and the movement of goods and services across
236 borders reduces the threat of instability caused by these illicit goods.

237 **3.2 Deliberation of ESCWA Resolution I/2**

238 Member States in conflict discussed how to support internally displaced people during times of conflict,
239 rebuilding infrastructure and the government's responsibilities, such as basic services, in conflict. Member States
240 discussed many different ideas and possible solutions to these problems, being sure to respect national sovereignty.
241 These internal issues were among the most important issues that many of the Member States in conflict agreed
242 needed the most attention. Most Member States agreed that these internal issues needed to be fixed by the Member
243 States and, should a Member State in conflict deem it appropriate, the Member State in conflict would request aid.

244 Also, Member States discussed avenues to request money for purposes of post-conflict reconstruction. Op-
245 erative clause one of resolution I/2 lists several organizations and other options that could possibly loan money to
246 Member States. These included the Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO), Asian International
247 Investment Bank (AIIB), New Development BRIC Bank and other Member States. Representatives purposefully
248 removed the World Bank and International Monetary Fund from the list due to high interest rates, unrealistic time-
249 lines for repayment and refusal to loan money to some Member States. This money would be used to rebuild and
250 modernize post-conflict Member States.

251 Finally, Member States attempted, in the resolution, to find a way to bring about an expedient end to
252 conflict. Some Member States expressed that they may need to execute appropriate military action. These actions
253 would be to end conflict as quickly as possible. Although this may be a necessary step to ending conflict, it is not
254 in the purview of the Economic and Social Council of Western Asia and therefore is only included here. However,
255 some Member States do suggest that the relevant bodies of the United Nations examine military action.

256 **3.3 Deliberation of ESCWA Resolution I/3**

257 Many Member States agreed that poor governance practices have contributed to the conflict, conflict relapse
258 and a general governance deficit within Western Asia. The body further agrees that good governance practices are
259 useful at any stage of conflict or government development. Aware of the potential outcomes, the body would like
260 to highlight the role that political transparency, measuring trust in government and institutional capacity play in
261 facilitating public trust in government.

262 The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia determined that political transparency plays an
263 integral role in creating trust between the people and the government by allowing public access to non-sensitive
264 government information and actively fighting the presence of corruption through the "Wakf-el-Fassad" (The Stand
265 Against Corruption) judicial body. During discussion, the body determined that combating corruption was a priority.
266 The first proposal for "Wakf-el-Fassad" sought to establish an independent government body that was tasked with
267 recording and investigating citizen complaints of corrupt officials on the local and Member State levels. The ensuing
268 discussion involved a proposal to establish a regional body to monitor the national "Wakf-el-Fassad" for corruption,
269 which met opposition from a minority of States claiming it was a direct violation of national sovereignty. The belief
270 of a majority of the body is that it would be beneficial to create a method for local sectors of Member States to send
271 corruption reports directly to a regional body in an effort to prevent interference by corrupt officials in higher sectors
272 of government. This topic, among others, is what this body believes should be discussed at an upcoming summit.

273 The body recognized that citizens' trust in government is an important component in the overall health
274 of a government. If citizens do not trust their government, they are more likely to undermine its authority. With
275 this in mind, the body wanted to find a way that the Economic and Social Council could help States determine the
276 levels of trust in their government. Thus, Member States request that they develop a methodology for measuring
277 trust in government. This is a crucial step in attempting to reduce governance deficits in the region. Several
278 methods used by other non-governmental third parties, such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and
279 Development, World Value Survey, Transparency International and Edelman Trust Barometer can serve as models
280 that the Economic and Social Council can reference when developing its own methodology. A periodic measurement

281 of trust levels throughout our region will improve Member States' awareness of trust in government, governance
282 deficits and infrastructure. The dialogue within our region addresses this destabilizing issue.

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291 region will improve Member States' awareness of trust in government, governance deficits and infrastructure. The
292 dialogue within our region addresses this destabilizing issue.

293 Within the sub-topic of institutional capacity, Member States discussed the importance of the delivery of
294 social services, education and the development of an inclusive and strong civil service. Though the body does not
295 hope to limit the definition of social services, Member States have highlighted primary education, access to food and
296 clean water, sanitation and basic health care as specifically important. The body thus wanted to create a way to
297 strengthen institutions so that they can more efficiently deliver these social services to their citizens. In regard to
298 education, States kept in mind the diversity of the group of States represented within this report. The body believes
299 that a universal guarantee to primary education should be guaranteed to all citizens. Once this goal is achieved,
300 States discussed the belief that universal secondary education should be guaranteed. Once this goal is achieved, the
301 body believes the infrastructure and development of a post-secondary education system should be developed. Within
302 this model, States begin at whatever point currently applies to their education system.

303 The discussion of education brought up the role that Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) plan in some
304 of our education systems. The body wants to encourage every Member State to be open to NGOs, and utilize NGOs
305 in innovative ways. During this discussion, the body specifically considered NGOs who focus their efforts on training
306 teachers in how to implement better classroom techniques. In this situation, the teachers in the classroom with
307 school children would be part of their communities and thus more able to determine what is culturally relevant and
308 appropriate as well as given school children the opportunity to see a member of their community in a professional
309 setting. In an effort to promote a strong and durable civil service, the body discussed the establishment of a civil
310 service exchange program among any willing Member States.

311 The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia recognized that one of the challenges States face in
312 regards to governance deficit is that after a conflict the existing institutions of government, or the new institutions
313 that are created, are weak and easy to corrupt. With that in mind, the body discussed potential strategies to
314 strengthen institutions, specifically in regards to the civil service. States focused on the civil service specifically
315 because of its ability to influence citizens' opinion of their government, as civil service is responsible for social service
316 delivery. With this in mind, Member States suggest the creation of the civil service exchange program. Within this
317 program, the body would like individual States to identify institutions that they deem strong in other States. While
318 civil service officers are participating in the exchange, they may also take advantage of civil service schools where
319 they exist. In addition, any training used for civil service officers can be examined during the exchange and adapted
320 to fit the home State's needs.

321 Inspired by similar law in different States, the body also recommended the implementation of a mechanism
322 providing easy access to non sensitive government information for citizens of the respective States to promote trans-
323 parency and accountability in the operation of the government. This would help engage citizens in the process of
324 governance and make the government work more for their interests. It will help contain corruption and promote more
325 trust among citizens of the local government. Citizens could write a request for information relating to a particular
326 act or issue, and the government would be required to provide the information as long as it is not filed as "sensitive."

327 This body agreed upon the importance of sustainable economic growth that emphasizes economic diversi-
328 fication and builds upon our region's comparative advantages. Recent fluctuations in oil prices made the weakness
329 of such single resource dependency especially obvious to Member States of this commission. Through policies which
330 focus on diversification, the body hoped that the Economic and Social Council would work to ensure the stability of
331 our region and prevent the relapses into conflict that plague our Member States today.

332 Member States recognized the need for a comprehensive, regional approach to the issues mentioned above,
333 and applauded the work of the Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO), which has successfully

334 provided funding for job-creating projects in the Arab world, especially given the ways in which Non-State actors
335 prey on those who are unemployed and undereducated.

336 In light of the crucial role the hydrocarbon industry plays in the economies of Western Asia, this body
337 thought it important to further consider measures to increase transparency in said industry to prevent corruption
338 and sustainably utilize our natural resources for the benefit of our citizens.

339 The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia was pleased to see Resolution I/3 adopted unani-
340 mously. Member States agreed that individual States' concerns were addressed in this resolution. Although States
341 came with varying missions, debate on mentioned topics led to statements that embody all interests and work to ben-
342 efit all Members of the body. The primary clause disussing systemic corruption was amended following dissatisfaction
343 with the initial word choice and before the publication of this report.

Passed by consensus, with 0 abstentions