



CHAPTER FIVE

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC)

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France	Norway	Venezuela
Germany	Pakistan	Zambia
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Guatemala	Poland	

Purview of the Simulation

The Economic and Social Council is the principal UN organ responsible for coordinating economic, social and related works of 14 specialized agencies, 10 functional commissions and five regional commissions. ECOSOC accepts reports and recommendations from other UN bodies, including the Commission on Status of Women (CSW) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). Along with its coordinating role, ECOSOC gathers information and advises Member States on economic, social, humanitarian and human rights programs. ECOSOC also coordinates and collaborates with autonomous specialized agencies that work closely with the United Nations. These organizations include multilateral financial and trade institutions, such as the World Bank and the World Trade Organization.

Website: www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/

PROTECTION AGAINST PRODUCTS HARMFUL TO HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

In recent years, news headlines have increasingly reported incidents where lead, melamine, salmonella, and e. coli have been discovered in globally traded consumer products such as foods, toys, and hygiene products. These products have been found to cause serious infection, poisoning, and other adverse reactions in children and adults. While many countries have regulated the use of harmful ingredients in domestically-produced products, regulations on imported items have not always followed a uniform standard, with political considerations sometimes taking precedence over health and wellbeing-based criteria. In light of the increasingly interconnected nature of global trade, the international community has a vested interest in strengthening international law and agreements to protect individuals and the environment from harmful products.

As early as 1979, the General Assembly recognized the need to address at an international level the adverse health and environmental effects of exported hazardous chemicals and unsafe pharmaceutical products. In 1982, to alleviate the potential dangers of these products on importing countries, the UN mandated that the Secretary-General compile a list of products whose consumption and/or sale have been banned, withdrawn, severely restricted or, in the case of pharmaceuticals, not approved by governments. This list, first published in 1983, was created with the help of various importing countries, United Nations bodies, and intergovernmental organizations. Updated and revised annually, the list has since been divided into two separate lists: chemicals and pharmaceuticals. In addition to the publication of the consolidated lists, the Secretary-General was mandated in 1984 to report every three years to the GA, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of resolutions pertaining to protection against products harmful to health and the environment. The triennial reports began in 1986, and the most recent report was presented in 2007.

Since its inception, the Consolidated List has been a valuable tool for Member States, acting as a source of both current information on the regulatory decisions of other Member States and guidance for future regulatory action regarding usage of hazardous chemicals and unsafe pharmaceuticals. At the same time, the debate over the inclusion of certain chemicals has at times been contentious, with Member States at times differing sharply over whether the benefits of using a certain chemical outweighed its negative impacts. Debate is often contoured by countries' differing resource abilities and levels of national development. Examples in recent years include the widespread use of asbestos in building materials and the controversial usage of DDT in anti-malarial efforts in developing countries. As technical capacity also affects the ability of developing countries to implement guidance provided from the Consolidated List, Resolution 39/229 tasked relevant bodies of the United Nations with providing technical assistance to developing countries that request assistance in establishing or strengthening systems to use the information provided in the list, as well as providing assistance to adequately monitor the importation of those products.

As the production and distribution of hazardous chemicals and unsafe pharmaceutical products has expanded, so has the number of organizations, conventions, and treaties that oversee their production and distribution. In 1998, the Conference of Plenipotentiaries in Rotterdam, the Netherlands adopted the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, which is more simply known as the Rotterdam Convention. It entered into force in 2004 and creates legally binding obligations on states to share responsibility and information with regard to the international trade of certain hazardous chemicals. The Convention applies to chemicals that, for health or environmental reasons, have been banned or severely restricted. Specifically, the Convention seeks to advance information sharing through labeling and notification requirements surrounding the import and export of certain chemicals.

In 2002, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation was agreed upon at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). Among other things, it laid out initiatives to ensure that chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize significant adverse effects on the environment and human health by 2020. The Plan also includes a globally-harmonized system for labeling chemicals. In 2006, the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) adopted the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), a policy framework meant to achieve the 2020 goals stated in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The combination of these initiatives, as well as the 1992 Basel Convention and 2004 Stockholm Convention, have in many ways replaced the need for the mandated triennial report of the Secretary-General.

In the Secretary-General's May 2007 report (E/2007/62), three recommendations were made to the Economic and Social Council to aid in the achievement of the 2020 goals of the WSSD. The first recommendation encourages Member States to implement national strategies to achieve the 2020 goals, noting that the adoption of strategies that are consistent with life-cycle management approaches to chemicals is essential to effectively monitoring potentially dangerous substances. The second recommendation urges multilateral, bilateral, and donor agencies continue the work of capacity building in developing countries to improve the environmentally sound management of hazardous chemicals, as greater technical assistance and capacity building will be necessary for developing countries to comply with existing international protocols. Finally, the Secretary-General requested that in light of the chemical conventions like the Stockholm and Basel Conventions, the Council consider recommending the elimination of the original mandate of resolution 37/137 to regularly update the Consolidated List.

In light of the Secretary-General's report, the Economic and Social Council will need to discuss how overlapping international efforts regarding harmful chemicals can be further harmonized, and in particular whether the continuance of the Consolidated List is desirable.

Questions to consider from your government's perspective include the following:

- What can be done to eliminate the confusion that occurs as a result of various conventions, treaties, and oversight organizations orchestrating the production, use, distribution, and disposal of hazardous chemicals and unsafe pharmaceuticals?
- Should any special circumstances be granted to developing countries in their use, distribution, and disposal of hazardous chemicals and unsafe pharmaceuticals?
- Would the elimination of the mandate of resolution 37/137 to regularly update the Consolidated List help or hinder the process of achieving the 2020 goals as laid out in the 2002 WSSD's Johannesburg Plan of Implementation?

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- "UN Outlines Global E-Waste Goals," *BBC News*, 6 March 2007, online.

UN Documents

- A/RES/39/229
A/RES/38/149
A/RES/37/137
A/53/156
ECOSOC Resolution 2008/13
ECOSOC Resolution 2007/264
ECOSOC Resolution 2004/55
ECOSOC Resolution 2001/33
E/2010/84
E/2007/62
Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development - Johannesburg Plan of Implementation

Additional Web Resources

- <http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/public.htm> - Consolidated List of Products
- <http://www.pic.int/> - Rotterdam Convention Website
- <http://chm.pops.int/> - Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FORUM: SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Since its founding, the United Nations has placed a strong emphasis on sustainable development. Traditionally, efforts focused on North-South Cooperation (NSC) relationships, which are usually characterized by the transfer of financial and technical support from a northern donor nation to a southern beneficiary. In recent decades, South-South Cooperation (SSC), or southern nations providing financial and technical development assistance to another southern nation, has emerged as a strong complement to traditional NSC. Within the past decade, SSC has evolved to include Triangular South-South Cooperation (Triangular SSC). Triangular SSC pairs a northern donor with a southern nation that is assisting another southern nation. The northern donor covers the financial costs, and the southern donor provides the technical assistance.

As of 2006, nearly ten percent of all aid assistance - equivalent to more than twelve billion US dollars - was defined as either South-South or Triangular. As development aid flows from developed countries were significantly affected by the global financial crisis, South-South development cooperation rose sharply to US\$16.2 billion in 2008; it is widely believed that the scope of such practices has continued to comprise a growing percentage of development assistance.

Triangular SSC projects are currently operating across the globe, though a large number are concentrated in Africa, and most projects fall within infrastructure, medicine, and agricultural sectors. Approximately 90 percent of SSC focused on project finance and technical assistance. The 2010 Secretary General's report noted a high degree of complementarity in infrastructure development aid,

with South-South cooperation gaining prominence in assistance for roads, water supply, power systems, electrification, and telecommunications. South-South medical cooperation has been largely focused on health delivery, and is often targeted at problems specific to developing countries (e.g., malaria). South-South and triangular cooperation in the agricultural sector has been primarily comprised of technical cooperation and technology transfer, with the Arab States, Brazil, China, India and South Africa as primary providers, mostly in partnership with Africa.

Due to the rising emphasis on Triangular SSC, the United Nations has chosen to make it one of the key themes of the 2010 Development Cooperation Forum (DCF). The DCF was established by A/RES/60/1 and first took place in July 2008. The second DCF took place in July 2010.

The 2010 DCF is not the first time the UN has focused resources on efforts to study and better implement SSC and Triangular SSC. UN Resolution 3251 of 4 December 1974 established the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Special Unit for Technical Cooperation between Developing Countries (TCDC). In 2003, the name of the unit was changed to the UNDP Special Unit for South-South Cooperation. The unit serves as the main secretariat to the General Assembly's High Level Committee on South-South Cooperation, which was established in response to the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. Triangular SSC has also been a key focal point of the Marrakesh Framework for the Implementation of South-South Cooperation (2003), the Paris Declaration (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), and efforts by the Group of 77.

In advance of the July 2010 meeting, the Secretary-General issued a report which addressed trends and progress in international development cooperation. Noting that the global economic climate had fundamentally shifted since the 2008 DCF, the Secretary-General noted with alarm that "development gains made over the past decade or more are beginning to erode." The report emphasized the renewed importance of effective development cooperation in light of the economic situation, as well as further South-South and triangular cooperation. The report also recommended that the DCF further strengthen its work on policy coherence, in particular through identifying best practices for policies which "go beyond aid" and promote other types of financing for development.

As Triangular SSC continues to play a larger role in the development agenda, the UN is currently focusing on three areas of improvement to ensure the continued success of Triangular SSC. The first is ensuring that the goals of the development assistance are in alignment with the priorities of the beneficiary nation, as emphasized in the Paris Declaration in 2005. Second, beneficiary nations must be actively engaged in the project; national leadership is a vital component of any development strategy, and developing nations must ensure they are showing national leadership to their residents. And third, that there are clear assignments of roles and responsibilities designated within the framework of the project to ensure each member is confident of their duties and are able to carry them out. Establishing clear goals also ensures no action is being duplicated and that all resources are being used efficiently.

In preparatory meetings leading up to the 2010 DCF, two issues have received extensive attention: the lack of a standard definition of Triangular SSC and the need to create better reporting and accountability mechanisms. Without a definition for Triangular SSC, the research and data collection is not as accurate as possible, and there are concerns about aid transfers being double counted or not counted at all.

With South-South trade growing at almost double the rate of overall global trade, Triangular SSC will continue to rise as a complement to North-South Cooperation. As the UN moves closer to the 2015 deadline for the Millennium Development Goals, Triangular SSC will continue to play a vital role in helping to eradicate extreme poverty and provide employment opportunities. Member States must continue their efforts to better streamline the aid process overall and to utilize the benefits of Triangular SSC to the maximum potential.

Questions to consider from your government's perspective include the following:

- How should Triangular and South-South Cooperation be defined?
- How can the matching of needs and assets in triangular cooperation be promoted? In other words, how can the international community better identify and match developing countries with relevant expertise to offer to other developing countries?
- What mechanisms should be put in place to promote information gathering and sharing? Should it be placed on individual organizations and governments or should there be a central source?
- What lessons can Member States learn from Triangular SSC and how can those lessons be transferred to concurrent North-South Cooperation efforts?

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- A/RES/64/1
A/RES/63/233
A/RES/62/209
A/RES/60/1 – Word Summit Outcome
A/RES/60/212
A/RES/59/250
A/60/111 – Doha Declaration
A/60/257
E/2010/93
E/2008/56

Resolution 3251 (December 1974)
Buenos Aires Plan of Action for promoting and Implementing
Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (1978)
Marrakesh Framework for the Implementation of South-South
Cooperation (2003)
Paris Declaration (2005)
Accra Agenda for Action (2008)

Additional Web Resources

<http://ssc.undp.org/> - UNDP Special Unit on South-South
Cooperation
<http://southsouthconference.org/> - High Level Conference on South-
South Cooperation
www.un.org/ecosoc/dcf - Development Cooperation Forum

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND PROTOCOLS RELATING TO TERRORISM

In striving to keep with its mission of bringing together the world for peace and development, the United Nations has taken a stance towards combating and preventing terrorism. Accordingly, many Member States have entered into international conventions and protocols that focus on eliminating the threat of terrorism. An additional problem has arisen, however, where some Member States who have willingly joined into these conventions and protocols have been unable to implement them due to technological limitations. As such, technical assistance for these countries has become a priority in the mission to combat terrorism. The issue of terrorism has been dealt with extensively by many organs and agencies of the UN. As part of its mandate to encourage educational cooperation on international economic and social issues, the Economic and Social Council has addressed the specific issue of the provision of technical assistance.

In addition to numerous regional conventions and protocols, there currently are thirteen international conventions in place which relate to terrorism, and were developed through the United Nations, UN specialized agencies, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). These address a wide range of terrorism-related issues, including nuclear materials, hostages, maritime and airport protocols, plastic explosives, terrorist financing, and nuclear terrorism, among others. Most recently, a Global Counter Terrorism Strategy was universally adopted by all 192 Member States on 8 September 2006, marking the first time that all Member States reached agreement on a common approach to fighting terrorism.

The annex to this strategy includes a section dedicated to capacity building, including thirteen key elements that should be undertaken to provide such technical assistance. Capacity building refers to the strengthening of a country's human, scientific, technological, organizational, institutional, and resource capabilities. In recent years, capacity building has been seen as an increasingly relevant aspect of terrorism prevention. First, capacity building may provide a country the ability to detect and prevent terrorist attacks. Second, effective capacity building can often dampen the ability of terrorist cells to recruit within a country. Thus, capacity building and the implementation of anti-terrorism protocols are interrelated. Capacity building is necessary to implement the conventions and protocols related to terrorism, and the act of capacity building itself may work alongside such conventions and protocols to reduce the threat of terror worldwide.

In recent years, a number of resolutions have addressed technical assistance with regard to the implementation of conventions and protocols on terrorism. The majority of these resolutions frame the technical assistance as a means to developing capacity building. Common among the resolutions are certain key aspects of technical assistance. First, when within its purview, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has been tasked to provide technical assistance to Member States in need of such assistance. Second, Member States have been encouraged to cooperate in both information sharing and technical assistance measures, especially in regard to training, so as to better allow the UNODC to provide technical assistance. Finally, the resolutions encourage Member States not already party to the relevant conventions and protocols regarding terrorism to enter into them.

Technical assistance for the implementation of conventions and protocols relating to terrorism is not without controversy. First is a question of what expectations are to accompany such technical assistance. The extent to which assistance can be utilized will differ from state to state, and often is dependent upon such key factors as size, geography, and individual needs. Second, the question arises as to which types of assistance are most effective. While assistance ought to be tailored to the particular needs of a country, it is often unclear whether the state in need or the body offering assistance has the final say in determining resource allocation. This also raises questions about the implementation of such assistance, as ineffective implementation may be counterproductive to the strategies laid out within past protocols and conventions.

The 13 protocols and conventions regarding terrorism, along with the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy and regional conventions and agreements, provide a strategic framework in which Member States may work together to combat terrorism. Recently, discussions on terrorism have also included efforts to negotiate an additional treaty that would serve as a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. However, the key to success for both ongoing and future efforts will lie in the abilities of Member States to effectively implement the conventions and protocols, and such successful implementation appears contingent on technical assistance geared towards capacity building.

Questions to consider from your government's perspective include the following:

- To which international conventions and protocols has your government signed on? How effective has your government been in implementing these agreements?
- Aside from technical assistance geared towards capacity building, what other technical assistance might allow for successful implementation of the conventions and protocols related to terrorism?
- What tools could be used by countries to more successfully implement terrorism protocols in the future?
- What further assistance is necessary for successful implementation of the conventions and protocols?

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A/RES/62/272

A/RES/60/288

A/RES/57/173

A/63/89

A/63/195

A/62/898

A/60/825

A/60/164

A/59/187

ECOSOC Resolution 2009/21

ECOSOC Resolution 2007/18

ECOSOC Resolution 2005/19

ECOSOC Resolution 2004/19

ECOSOC Resolution 2003/22

ECOSOC Resolution 2002/19

Additional Web Resources

www.un.org/terrorism - UN Action to Counter Terrorism

www.unodc.org - UN Office on Drugs and Crime

REPORTS OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA (ESCWA) AND THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW)

In addition to the three main topics on ECOSOC's agenda, the Council will also receive reports on the final day from the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). As functional and regional commissions established by ECOSOC, ESCWA and CSW are required to make annual reports on their activities to the members of ECOSOC. While these reports are generally accepted pro forma, ECOSOC may also choose to take some action on the recommendations contained in the report. These bodies may also present their recommendations in resolution format, allowing ECOSOC the chance to review and formally pass the proposals.

To facilitate this process, the final day will culminate in a joint session at which the reports and recommendations will be made to ECOSOC. Following each presentation, it will be up to the joint session to take further action. Please be aware that, as commissions of ECOSOC, these bodies have been given significant responsibilities to study, review, debate and decide on recommended actions within specific topical areas that ECOSOC felt should be dealt with in greater detail than could be addressed by the main body. It is recommended that all Representatives assigned to ECOSOC also review the background section on ESCWA (Chapter VI) and CSW (Chapter VII); Representatives may also choose to do some additional research on these topics in preparation.