Dear Delegates,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2014 Montessori Model United Nations Conference.

The following pages intend to guide you in the research of the topics that will be debated at MMUN 2014 in committee sessions. Please note this guide only provides the basis for your investigation. It is your responsibility to find as much information necessary on the topics and how they relate to the country you represent. Such information should help you write your Position Paper, where you need to cite the references in the text and finally list all references in the Modern Language Association (MLA) format.

The more information and understanding you acquire on the two topics, the more you will be able to influence the Resolution writing process through debates [formal and informal caucuses], and the MMUN experience as a whole. Please feel free to contact us if and when you face challenges in your research or formatting your Position Papers.

We encourage you to learn all you can about your topics first and then study your country with regard to the two selected topics. Please remember that both committee members need to be well versed and ready to debate both topics.

Enjoy researching and writing your Position Papers.

We look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION

Achieving food security for all is at the heart of FAO's efforts – to make sure people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives.

Our three main goals are: the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; the elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all; and, the sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, including land, water, air, climate and genetic resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

Source: http://www.fao.org/about/en/
Food Security

Topic Background

Food security is the accessibility of food as well as one’s access to it. Food security is a pressing international issue. It may be difficult to fathom but approximately 1/4th of the world’s populations does not have food security. There are one billion people who are hungry and another one billion who are malnourished everyday due to a lack of food security. Hunger is caused by a lack of food, and malnourishment is caused by either a lack or food or a lack of nutrients. There have been strides made by the United Nations to combat this international epidemic. The first aim of the UN’s Millennium Development Goal is to drastically reduce poverty and eliminate hunger by 2015.

There are four different issues affect food security: the physical availability of food, the financial access to food, food utilization, and consistency of the previous three issues over time. The level of production and supply of food is the physical availability of food. If there is a greater demand of food than there is a supply, this will cause a food shortage and prices to increase. If an individual does not have the financial means to purchase food, this affects his or her food security. Poverty, the global market and inflation play a large role in financial access to food. Food utilization is the way the body is able to use the nutrients that are food in food. To obtain and maintain food security, a person must have access to a supply of food that meets his or her nutrition needs. If the four aforementioned points above are not met a person does not have food security.

Food insecurity can be both long-term and short-term. Long-term food insecurity, also known as chronic food insecurity is caused by poverty whereas short-term food insecurity, also known as transitory food insecurity might be caused by the economy and inflations. Long-term food insecurity is being combatted by the United Nations, governments and nongovernmental organizations, however short-term food insecurity is much more difficult to deal with because it is unpredictable and at the whim of circumstance. Though, measures have been put into place to help short-term food insecurity such as soup kitchens and subsidizing like food stamps.

Food insecurity affects every country in the world, though it disproportionately affects developing countries.

- **Somalia**, a politically unstable country in the eastern Horn of Africa, has been devastatingly affected by food insecurity. In 2011 due to a drought, Somalia saw massive destruction of crops and livestock and the famine was declared a humanitarian crisis. The drought has continued into 2012 and the shortage of food and water along with increased inflation and political instability has caused food to become a scarce and expensive commodity. Children and pregnant women have been disproportionately affected by the famine. Although crop conditions have improved and international aid has been received by Somalia, 2.51 million people are still in dire need of food security.
• Another country that suffers from food insecurity is **Haiti**. High inflation has caused food prices to skyrocket in a country where the average person makes two dollars a day. Haiti also imports much of its food, which makes food prices more expensive. Many people cannot afford to buy food and with the multiple tropical storms that have recently hit the country they are struggling to rebuild their lives. Many governmental organizations are wary of giving aid to Haiti because of past corruption but the country does receive some aid from NGOs.\textsuperscript{v}

• Food insecurity in Asia has become a growing problem, though it has affected the Southeast Asian nation of **Laos** less than its neighbors. Though many in Laos still suffer from food insecurity with 50% of the population being malnourished. Food prices have continued to rise in Laos, causing many of the poor to not be able to afford food. Floods and an increase in pests have caused a decrease in the rice crop and the price to increase. The government has taken precautions such as stock piling rice and increasing loans to farmers to help the people during this time of inflation.\textsuperscript{vi}

**Past International Action**

The World Food Programme (WFP) is a voluntarily funded United Nations agency that provides humanitarian aid to stop world hunger. The WFP was founded in 1961, with the goals of ending world hunger by providing food to those in need, preparing for emergencies, helping countries deal with world hunger and helping aid in emergencies. On average, WFP aim to reach more than 90 million people, 58 million of who are children, with 3.6 million tons of food assistance in more than 73 countries. The WFP also aid rural farmers to help them compete in the global market. Around 11,000 people work for the organization, most of them in the field working in developing countries, directly serving the hungry poor. Some have criticized the WFP because of its aid to developing countries and believe that it causes an increase in corruption and makes people dependent on the agency.\textsuperscript{vii}

The Millennium Development Goals are eight international improvement goals that came out of the United Nations Millennium Summit and all member states have signed the goals. The first goal is the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. The two often go hand in hand as poverty affects one’s ability to purchase food. The goal to eradicate poverty and hunger has three targets. The first is to cut in half the number of people who live on $1 USD a day, the second is for both men and women, who are able to work, have the ability to acquire employment. The third is to cut in half the number of people in the world who suffer from hunger, specifically to lower the commonness of malnourished and underweight children. The results of the Millennium Goals have been uneven. Some countries have fulfilled all of their goals while some have not accomplished any.\textsuperscript{viii}

An NGO that works to end food insecurity is Hunger Free World (HFW).\textsuperscript{ix} HFW’s goals are creating access adequate food to end malnutrition, end world hunger and protect the fundamental human right to food security. HFW works to make sure the right to food is a right that everyone can enjoy. HFW is funded by donations and is a nonprofit organization. Its headquarters are in Japan, and organizes fieldwork in Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, and Uganda.
**Possible Solutions**

The UN believes that the eradication of hunger relies on a shift toward sustainable food production and consumption and improvements in national management of food systems.

Technological innovation can enhance the efficiency and production levels in the agricultural industry. Technology that increases the UN's ability to gather, analyze, and disperse information helps farmers plan their crops and helps the UN keep track of global statistics.

For these reasons, the UN is currently investing in the development of information management systems to collect and disperse data on the fish, forest, crop, and livestock industries and provide early warnings of the spread of pests and disease or climate changes.

The UN is also making efforts to decentralize so that it can work more closely with the field and local leaders. This will allow the UN to disperse its expert knowledge more directly to farmers, scientists, and policymakers.

**Further Research**

**Guiding Questions**

1. What are possible long-term and short-term solutions to eradicate world hunger?
2. What more can developed countries do to help stop food insecurity, particularly in under-developed countries?
3. How can the international community work to stop food insecurity that is cause by short-term issues like market instability and inflation?

**Research Sources**

- [UN World Food Program](http://www.un.org/foodsecurity)
- [Food and Agricultural Organization](http://www.fao.org)
- [World Health Organization: Food Security](http://www.who.int)

ii "Global Food Security under Climate Change." *Global Food Security under Climate*


