

# **Best Delegate Model United Nations**

## **Background Guide**

### **UNICEF- Rights of the Child**



## Topic Background

Although the Convention on the Rights of the Child has been recognized by almost every Member State of the United Nations, millions of children are not afforded a quality living experience, suffering discrimination and marginalization often due to poverty, violence and inequality.<sup>1</sup> Many are subject to working under hazardous conditions, to engagement in armed conflict as soldiers, to suffering inhumane conditions, and to receiving no access to education.<sup>2</sup> Due to the age of these children, many suffer from exploitation and unfair working conditions.<sup>3</sup> Many are even unaware of their rights.

Children are defined as individuals “under the age of majority in [a] country.”<sup>4</sup> They are usually under the age of 18.<sup>5</sup> Children comprise almost one third of the entire global population (2.3 billion people).<sup>6</sup> In the same vein that adults are afforded access to human rights, children are entitled the same access to human rights.<sup>7</sup> The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) outlines the rights of each child. The UNCRC aims to protect children from harm, provide them support in growth and development, and support them in the tools to be active members of society at large. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989. It outlined standards for protecting children’s rights.<sup>8</sup> It contains three optional protocols which were adopted in 2000 and 2011.<sup>9</sup>

## Past International Action

Before the twentieth century, there were no standard international legislation measures on the rights of children.<sup>10</sup> Often children were subject to unclean and unsafe work environments, along with adults.<sup>11</sup> Below is a timeline of the development of children’s rights, in the context of the United Nations.<sup>12</sup>

**1924:** The League of Nations adopts the Geneva Declaration on Rights of the Child, which declares that all children have the right to support in times of need, deserve priority in times of relief, deserve support in their development, access to economic freedom, to be protected against exploitation, and brought up in manners that promote social consciousness.

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<sup>1</sup> Children's Rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” OHCHR. Accessed November 27, 2022. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/children/childrens-rights-and-2030-agenda-sustainable-development>.

<sup>2</sup> Children's Rights.” Children's Rights | Human Rights Watch, November 21, 2022. <https://www.hrw.org/topic/childrens-rights>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Children's Human Rights.” Amnesty International, November 23, 2022. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/child-rights/>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> “The 17 Goals | Sustainable Development.” United Nations. United Nations. Accessed November 27, 2022. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> History of Child Rights.” UNICEF. Accessed November 26, 2022. <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/history-child-rights>.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

**1946:** The International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) is established by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

**1948:** The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is passed by the UNGA. Article 25 states that mothers and children should be supplied with ‘special care and assistance’ and ‘social protection.’

**1959:** The UNGA adopts the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which recognizes the diverse rights of a child.

**1968:** The International Conference on Human Rights audits how member states have adopted the UDHR and drafts a plan for future dedication to upholding human rights across the world.

**1973:** Convention 138, which distinguishes the minimum working age as 18 when pursuing work that is hazardous to one’s health, safety, or morals, is adopted by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

**1974:** The UNGA asks Member States to recognize the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict, which focuses on the imprisonment of women and children during conflict and encourages that their rights are upheld despite the situation.

**1979:** This year is the International Year of the Child; it recalls the twentieth anniversary of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

**1985:** The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice outlines how a justice system can support the rights of children.

**1989:** The UNGA adopts the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which determines the standards for protecting children’s rights. UNICEF is key in drafting this document.

**2000:** The UNGA adopts two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child which tackle the role of children in armed conflict, sexual abuse, and other forms of exploitation that children may face.

**2011:** New Optional Protocol is added to the Conventions on the Rights of the Child. It includes measures on providing complaints on child rights violations and possible investigations.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was established in 2015 after the formation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)<sup>13</sup>; they highlight the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They serve to achieve 17 Goals to attain Sustainable Development which are demonstrated through targets and indicators. The goal of the SDGs is to end poverty and

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<sup>13</sup> Sustainable Development Goals.” World Health Organization. World Health Organization. Accessed November 27, 2022. <https://www.who.int/europe/about-us/our-work/sustainable-development-goals>

inequality, protect the planet, and equally provide people across the world with health, justice, and prosperity.<sup>14</sup> Children are affected by every Sustainable Development Goal. Thus, each of the SDGs must be observed in the context of how it can apply to children and support children.<sup>15</sup>

### **Subtopic 1 - Child Labour/Working Conditions**

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), child labour is “work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.”<sup>15</sup> Child labour is mentally, physically, socially, or morally dangerous and harmful to children and interferes with their schooling.<sup>16</sup> The definition of what defines child labour sometimes differs from nation to nation, which makes it difficult to tackle as different countries define ‘child labour’ under different terms.<sup>17</sup> This can often provide for variance in a globally accepted standard, which means some children are subject to working conditions that could be detrimental to their health.

Approximately 1 in 10 of all children is involved in child labour globally; this adds up to 160 million children across the world.<sup>18</sup> Child labour takes on many different forms. Some forms of child labour include enslavement, separation from families, and exposure to hazards and sicknesses.<sup>19</sup> In the world, more boys are involved in child labour than girls.<sup>20</sup> Article 3 of the ILO Convention No. 182 condemns the worst forms of child labour and establishes a priority to eliminate these without delay.<sup>21</sup> The worst forms of child labour including slavery, forms of trafficking, debt bondage, forced and compulsory involvement of children in armed conflict, child prostitution, the use of children in illicit activities, such as drug trafficking and production, and any form of child labour that compromises the health, safety, or morals of a child, such as hazardous labour.<sup>22</sup> Hazardous work is defined as work that exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse, work underground, under water, at dangerous heights, and in confined spaces. It is also defined as work that requires children to be involved with dangerous equipment and tools, unhealthy environments that could expose children to agents that are damaging for their health, or make children work long hours or throughout the night.<sup>23</sup> In lower income countries, more than 1 in 5 children are involved in child labour.<sup>24</sup>

This is likely due to the labor and income conditions, children are more likely to need to work for economic stability. Although there are many harmful forms of child labour, it is important to note that when children work in specific situations that do not not affect their health,

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> “The 17 Goals | Sustainable Development.” United Nations. United Nations. Accessed November 27, 2022. <https://sdgs.un.org/goal>

<sup>16</sup> “What Is Child Labour (IPEC).” International Labour Organization. Accessed November 27, 2022. <https://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/lang--en/index.htm>.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> “Child Labor Statistics.” UNICEF DATA, May 20, 2022. <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-labour/>.

<sup>24</sup> “What Is Child Labour (IPEC).” International Labour Organization. Accessed November 27, 2022. <https://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/lang--en/index.htm>.

development, or prevent their schooling, children working in safe environments for few hours is often viewed as positive.



## Subtopic 2 - Education

Often, a challenge that children face is a lack of access to quality education.<sup>25</sup> Although many countries have increased access to education, many children who attend school are not afforded the adequate resources or an adequate learning environment to retain the information they learn.<sup>26</sup> For instance it can mean that children do not have basic skills to navigate the greater world at large. Over 600 million children and adolescents do not attain minimum proficiency levels in math and reading, despite attending school.<sup>27</sup>

Many children do not have basic skills, such as the ability to read or solve simple math equations.<sup>28</sup> Although this may seem minor it can have wide reaching effects, having the potential to affect their future lives and careers. Some children are not afforded access to education due to poverty, economic fragility, political instability, conflict, and natural disasters.<sup>29</sup> Some children attend a school that is an untravelable distance from their home and struggle with poor nutrition which affects brain development.<sup>30</sup> Many schools don't have adequately trained teachers, sufficient education materials, or high quality infrastructure. Children who live in situations of economic instability often come to classes ill, hungry, and exhausted from different forms of work that they must engage in to survive.<sup>31</sup> Additionally, reduced internet access has influenced the ability of many children to attend school and expand their skills. Children who have disabilities, are ethnic minorities, and who are girls often have reduced access to education.<sup>32</sup> Lack of access to quality education means that children are more likely to face barriers to employment, future earning, and have lower health outcomes in the future. They are also less likely to participate in processes that apply to decision making that may affect their lives, having

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<sup>25</sup> "Education." UNICEF, November 9, 2022. <https://www.unicef.org/education>.

<sup>26</sup> "The Education Crisis: Being in School Is Not the Same as Learning." World Bank. Accessed November 27, 2022. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2019/01/22/pass-or-fail-how-can-the-world-do-its-homework>.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Rueckert, Phineas. "10 Barriers to Education That Children Living in Poverty Face." Global Citizen. Accessed November 2022. <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/10-barriers-to-education-around-the-world-2/>.

<sup>32</sup> "Education." UNICEF, November 9, 2022. <https://www.unicef.org/education>.

### **Subtopic 3 - The Justice System**

Millions of children come into contact with the justice system every year.<sup>34</sup> International legal standards dictate that children must be treated in a manner that protects their dignity and worth, not having to go through formal proceedings as a preference, and detention should be the last resort for as limited an amount of time as possible.<sup>35</sup> However, many children face issues in justice systems across the world. In some countries, children are detained at a young age for small and minor crimes. Sometimes children are detailed for migrating or having mental health issues.<sup>36</sup> Often detention centers are overcrowded and unsanitary. These conditions deprive children of their rights—primarily rights to healthcare and education. These situations can also affect children’s mental and physical health.<sup>37</sup> Children can be malnourished due to inadequate diets and exposed to different diseases.<sup>38</sup> Children may also suffer trauma and mental health issues due to confinement. When children are detained with adults, they may be exposed to different forms of violence, exploitation, and abuse.<sup>39</sup>

Many children are not aware of their rights, how to contact legal support, or have money for legal support.<sup>42</sup> These factors tend to disproportionately affect children in vulnerable groups, such as minority children, children with disabilities, migrant children, and children detained in various detention centers and jails.<sup>40</sup> Additionally, many legal support workers do not have training to work with children victims, survivors, witnesses, or alleged offenders.<sup>41</sup>

The juvenile justice system should function on the belief that intervening in delinquent behavior early on will prevent children from engaging in criminal activity when they are older.

### **Possible Solutions**

When determining solutions to address the issues on the rights of children it is key to consider the deficits in addressing the rights of children across the world. It must be noted that different countries have varying legislation and standards on how children are to be treated. It is key to account for these differences in determining solutions that apply to multiple countries. Member States must come to common solutions that are wide-reaching enough to be implemented across different countries and a wide variety of contexts.

Solutions should focus on specific issues that children face in having equal access to opportunity and resources across the globe. Member States should determine the main challenges that children face in having fair rights in their individual countries, consider the legislation that

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33 Ibid.

34 “Education.” UNICEF, November 9, 2022. <https://www.unicef.org/education>.

35 “Justice for Children | UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children.” United Nations. United Nations. Accessed November 2022. <https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/content/justice-system>.

36Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

they have to address these issues, and use that as a starting point to address formation of solutions. Delegates should seek to determine where shortcoming exists in the national policy of the country they represent, and how that shortcoming can be addressed both in terms of their own country and applied to the global community.

Solutions that protect the dignity of children and are in alignment with the Convention on the Rights of the Child should be sought out. For instance, in the case of the justice system, delegates should consider child-sensitive investigations & court procedures, keeping children away from formal criminal proceedings, determining alternatives for pre-trial and post-trial detention, providing recovery and reintegration services, preventing abuse, violence and exploitation.<sup>42</sup> In the case of education, delegates should consider measures that make quality education more available to people across the globe. In terms of working conditions, the delegates should think about how to ensure that children are ensured their rights while working or ways to stop children from working if possible. Although these suggestions serve as a starting point for the formation of solutions, delegates are encouraged to be as creative as they desire while still working within reasonable limits.

### Questions to Consider

1. What are the biggest challenges nations could encounter when ensuring children's rights across the planet?
2. How can your country work towards ensuring that the rights of children are protected in your nation?
3. What documents & legislation does your country have on protecting the rights of children? What works well? What could be improved?
4. What are other issues that children face in attaining equal access to opportunities and resources *specifically* in your country?

### Further Reading

- [Resources on the Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [Mapping the Global Goals for Sustainable Development and the Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [Convention on the Rights of The Child \(Children's Version\)](#)

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<sup>42</sup>“Justice for Children.” UNICEF, November 14, 2021. <https://www.unicef.org/protection/justice-for-children>

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<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2019/01/22/pass-or-fail-how-can-the-world-do-its-homework>.

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<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/dec2019/valuing-diversity-developing-understanding-behavior>.

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## UN Committee Pass - Delegate

COMMITTEE:

TOPIC:

COUNTRY:

CONFERENCE NAME:

CONFERENCE DATES:

AWARD:



SCAN or CLICK!

## Key Terms to Know:

**Chair:** Facilitates the debate using parliamentary procedure

**Delegate:** Country representative (you!)

**Placard:** Name card with your country (raise this/a virtual hand to participate!)

**Point of Inquiry:** Raise to ask a question

**Point of Order:** Raise to correct a mistake in parliamentary procedure

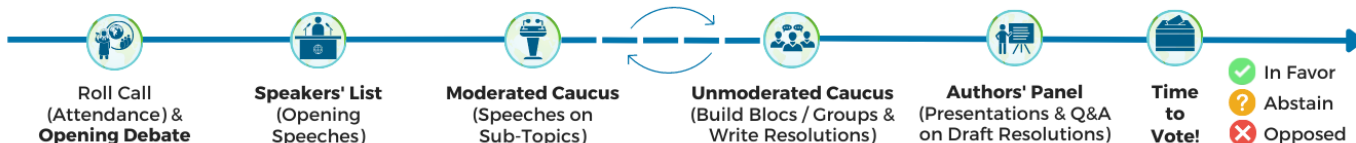
**Point of Personal Privilege:** Raise for issues preventing your participation

**Motions:** You make these to guide committee forward!



SCAN or CLICK!

## Committee Flow: Action-Items & Motions



## Motions Made Easy - Fill in the Blank!

- Motion to Open Debate
- Motion to Open the Speakers' List
- Motion for a [ ] Minute Moderated Caucus with a [ ] Second Speaking Time on the Topic of .....
- Motion for a [ ] Minute Unmoderated Caucus
- Motion to Introduce Draft Resolution .....
- Motion to Close Debate & Enter Voting Procedure
- Motion to Adjourn

### Moderated Caucus Topic Ideas (List of Issues/Sub-Topics):



### In-Committee Progress Tracker (Tally/Check):

# of Speeches:  
 # of Motions:  
 Authors' Panel? [ ] Yes [ ] No  
 Link to Resolution:  
 Feedback from Chair:



## Opening Speech

**Structure:** (1) Hook, (2) Point, (3) Action

- 1) Grab our Attention (Statistic, Quote, Short Story)
- 2) State Your Country's Policy (1-3 Points)
- 3) Tell us What to Do (Solution, Alliance)

### NOTES:



## Resolution Writing

**Resolution:** Document Containing Your Bloc/Group's Solutions to the Topic with 3 Sections (Written Collaboratively).

Committee: UNEP Topic: Climate Action Sponsors: Bangladesh, France, USA Signatories: Costa Rica, UK  Draft Resolution 1.1 The UN Environment Programme,  <i>Recognizing</i> the negative consequences of climate change including natural disasters,  <i>Reaffirming</i> the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal Agenda, with specific attention to SDG 13,  1. <u>Requests</u> that Member States switch to clean energy sources such as: a. Wind Turbines, b. Solar Power, c. Nuclear Energy; 2. <u>Calls Upon</u> countries to develop national strategies for climate-based education.	<b>Section I: Header</b> The header contains your committee & topic, as well as a list of <b>sponsors</b> (delegates who wrote the resolution) & <b>signatories</b> (delegates who want it presented).  <b>Section II: Pre-ambulatory Clauses</b> Pre-ambulatory Clauses are the <b>list of specific issues</b> your resolution will address or <b>past international actions</b> . The first word is italicized and they end with commas.  <b>Section III: Operative Clauses</b> Operative Clauses are your <b>solutions to the topic</b> (you should aim to solve each issue in your pre-ambulatory clauses). These are numbered, the first word is underlined, and end in semi-colons (last one with a period).
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### IDEAS FOR SOLUTIONS/OPERATIVE CLAUSES:

