



Arizona Model United Nations 64

UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)

Background Guide

Hello! My name is Sophia Birkholz and I am the chair for the UN Peacebuilding Commission. I am a freshman at the University of Arizona, and I am earning a dual degree in Medicine and Political Science, with a minor in Health and Human Values. I've been competing in Model United Nations since my sophomore year of high school, and loved it so much that I wanted to be a part of Model UN in college! I like Model UN because it is such a unique opportunity to learn more about the current political climate and world we live in, as well as an opportunity to build speaking and collaborative skills. I'm very excited to be chairing this committee because its topics focus not only on resolving global conflicts and disparities, but dives into specific ways in which this can be obtained. Above all, I hope to see each delegate actively learning from this experience. One of the greatest gifts from Model UN is what you will learn about the world, your committee's topics, and even yourself! Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions prior to the conference; I can be reached at sophiabirkholz@arizona.edu.

The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is a group within the United Nations that focuses on helping countries move from war to peace. The PBC was created in 2005 after the UN realized that many countries returning from conflict did not receive enough long-term support and often fell back into violence. The goal of the Commission is essentially to help prevent future conflicts by supporting nations, encouraging reconciliation, and ensuring peace lasts.

Unlike the Security Council, the PBC does not send troops or impose sanctions. Instead, it gives advice and helps coordinate efforts between different groups. It brings together UN organizations, donor countries, regional groups, financial institutions, and civil society to make sure everyone is working toward the same peacebuilding goals. This helps countries not only avoid violence, but also rebuild their governments, economies, and communities. The Peacebuilding Commission has an advisory role. This means it does not create laws or force countries to follow rules. Instead, it gives recommendations to the General Assembly, Security Council, and ECOSOC. It also writes reports with such advice to best address countries that could return to conflict. This allows the PBC to focus on long-term solutions rather than short-term military action.

In South Sudan, the world's newest country since 2011, the PBC plays an important role. South Sudan has experienced years of civil war, displacement, and weak government institutions. While the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement represented a significant step toward peace, the country continues to face ongoing violence, humanitarian crises, food insecurity, and governance challenges. The PBC works to support reconciliation, strengthen the government, and rebuild trust between the people and the state. Peacebuilding in South Sudan is not just about stopping violence, but also about addressing deeper problems like inequality, ethnic tensions, and lack of basic services so the country can achieve lasting peace.

Topic I: Preventing future conflicts through education and dialogue

Topic History

South Sudan's education system has suffered because of many years of civil war and political instability. Before and after the country gained independence in 2011, fighting destroyed schools, forced teachers and students to flee their homes, and stopped many children from going to school. Because of this, South Sudan has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world, with only about 34% of people able to read and write. Girls and women are especially affected and often have fewer opportunities to receive an education.

Ethnic divisions have also made national unity and peace difficult. Inequality, competition over land and resources, and political leaders using ethnic differences for power, have increased tension between groups. Without strong education systems or opportunities for peacebuilding conversations, these problems have continued and have contributed to repetition of violence.

Statement of the Issue

Education and open dialogue are essential to preventing conflict in South Sudan. When young people lack access to education, they are more likely to be susceptible to false information, taken advantage of by political leaders, or recruited into armed/dangerous groups. In addition, without inclusivity, conflict between ethnic and regional communities remains unresolved, hurting peace agreements.

Education that includes lessons on peace, citizenship, and conflict resolution can help build stability and peace. It promotes understanding between groups and teaches nonviolent ways to solve conflict.

Previous Solutions and UN Involvement

Past efforts have mainly focused on emergency education programs during times of conflict. These include temporary classrooms, fast learning programs for students who missed school, and training teachers in unstable areas. Local peace programs led by community leaders, religious leaders, and civil society groups have also helped reduce tensions in some regions.

UN agencies such as UNICEF and UNESCO have supported education during emergencies, while the UN Peacebuilding Fund has financed programs that connect youth education with reconciliation efforts. The Peacebuilding Commission has stressed the importance of education and youth involvement in achieving peace.

Bloc Positions

African countries generally view education as essential for rebuilding after conflict and emphasize the importance of national leadership and strengthening local systems. European and Western countries often focus on gender equality, improving school curriculum, and including peace education. Other developing regions, such as parts of Asia and Latin America, tend to support community-based approaches and collaboration between developing countries, based on their own conflict experiences.

Proposed Solutions

The United Nations encourages expanding access to education for all, adding peacebuilding and civic education to school programs, and supporting dialogue that includes youth, women, and traditional leaders. Delegates should consider how international support can match different nation's priorities while ensuring long-term peace and strong local involvement.

Questions to Consider

How can schools help bring different ethnic groups together?

What role should young people and women play in peacebuilding discussions?

How can traditional leaders be involved without excluding certain groups?

How can peace education reach rural and conflicted areas?

How can the international community support education reform while respecting national sovereignty?

UN Documents

UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015)

[https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2250\(2015\)](https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2250(2015))

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Topic II: Improving access to basic services

Topic History

Years of conflict in South Sudan have made it very difficult for the government to provide basic services like healthcare, clean water, food, and transportation. Fighting has destroyed hospitals, roads, and water systems, especially in rural areas. Many people have been forced to flee their homes, which has disrupted supply routes and made it harder for aid to reach those in need.

Since gaining independence, violence has stopped development. As a result, millions of people depend on humanitarian aid to survive. Large numbers of displaced people have also put pressure on host communities, increasing competition over food, water, and land.

Statement of the Issue

South Sudan ranks very low on the Human Development Index, showing that many people lack basic needs. Poor access to services increases conflict, worsens inequality, and causes people to

lose trust in their government. If basic services are not improved, peace efforts may fail because communities may continue to see the government as weak instead of supportive and protective.

Previous Solutions and UN Involvement

Humanitarian organizations such as the World Food Programme, World Health Organization, and UNICEF have provided emergency food, healthcare, and clean water. These efforts have saved lives, but they are short-term and do not always help build long-lasting solutions.

Other groups, like UNDP and the World Bank, have supported early recovery projects and rebuilding infrastructure. The UN Peacebuilding Commission has worked to improve coordination between emergency aid and long-term development efforts.

Bloc Positions

African countries usually focus on strengthening national systems so countries can rely less on foreign aid in the future. Western and European countries often stress the importance of government accountability, transparency, and strong institutions. Other developing nations often support investing in infrastructure and encouraging regional cooperation.

Proposed Solutions

The United Nations encourages connecting emergency aid with development plans, improving coordination between donors, and giving local governments more power to manage aid. Delegates should consider how providing basic services can help bring communities together and increase trust in the nation.

Questions to Consider

Which basic services should be addressed first after conflict?

How can emergency aid support long-term national development goals?

How can better services reduce tensions caused by displacement?

What role should local governments play in delivering services?

How can improved services help rebuild trust in government institutions?

UN Documents

UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
<https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/70/1>

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www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence.

Topic III: Strengthening local governance and the rule of law in post-conflict areas

Topic History

Since becoming independent in 2011, South Sudan has had difficulty building a strong government and justice system. Many government offices lack the resources and training they need to work effectively, and corruption has weakened public trust. In many parts of the country, people cannot easily access courts or legal help. Because of this, conflicts over land, cattle, and natural resources often go unresolved. Without trusted legal systems, some communities turn to violence or revenge instead of peaceful solutions.

Statement of the Issue

Weak government institutions and a lack of rule of law threaten long-term peace in South Sudan. When people do not have access to fair justice or accountability, conflict increases. This weakens trust in the government and increases the risk of conflict. Strengthening both national legal systems and local governance is necessary to maintain peace.

Previous Solutions and UN Involvement

Past efforts have included rewriting parts of the constitution, giving more power to local governments, and creating local peace committees. UNMISS and UNDP have helped by training judges and police, supporting community policing, and working to reduce corruption.

The UN Peacebuilding Commission has stressed the importance of inclusive governance, accountability, and allowing South Sudan to lead its own peacebuilding efforts.

Bloc Positions

African countries often focus on protecting national independence and strengthening domestic institutions. Western and European countries usually focus on independent courts, transparency, and anti-corruption efforts. Other regions support combining traditional justice practices with formal legal systems.

Proposed Solutions

The United Nations supports strengthening local governments, improving training and resources for courts, and expanding access to justice. It also encourages inclusive governance and balance between formal legal systems with traditional practices. Delegates should consider how to combine these approaches.

Questions to Consider

How can corruption be reduced in conflicted countries?

What role should traditional law play in the justice system?

How can local governments be made stronger and more effective?

How can people in rural areas gain better access to justice?

How can accountability help create lasting peace?

UN Documents

UN Security Council Resolution 2155 (2014)

[https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2155\(2014\)](https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2155(2014))

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