

Forum: Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Issue: Post-war recovery

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Introduction

Establishing peace in regions heavily burdened by conflicts is one of the most convoluted challenges we are forced to tackle now, in order to ensure global safety. Post-war recovery plays a vital role both within the country and on a global scale through social, political, and economical perspectives.

Socially, severe injuries, loss of lives, depressions, increased number of refugees and displaced persons and the spread of contagious diseases (especially in refugee camps) are hazards that can have radical demographic effects for a lasting period of time. Also, what role should women play in post-war recovery? With the tumult of the situation, mothers and young girls are often neglected and least prioritized when the resources of food and other necessities are scarce.

Furthermore, resolutions are expected to deal with a political aspect where the most vital question is: who will be awarded the task of rebuilding the country? It is crucial to ensure that power is not abused after a conflict, when the population and country is the most vulnerable, in order to avoid a relapse to a violent conflict. This can be approached through methods such as monitoring political elections, demobilizing military forces, aid with the reformation or creation of governments, publicly support all democratic movements, encouraging reconciliation and prioritizing the respect for human rights.

Similarly to the previous factors, post-conflict regions often require external financial aid in order to restore infrastructure, help those who have lost relatives or homes, treat the injured and sick, as well as the political elements mentioned require investment. Yet, it is important to remember that the intention should be to provide financial support to help the victimized country to re-establish political, social and economical stability and security; not to create a dependence on international aid.

Definition of Key Terms

Recession: A general decrease in economic activity.

Soft loan: A loan with a below-market interest rate.

Sustainability: Meeting the needs of present, without compromising those of the future.

Concessional Loan: A loan (often provided to a poor country) with interest rates and grace periods much more generous than in the standard market.

Grace period: A fixed amount of time after the payment is due, during which it can be repaid without further interest or penalty.

Inflation: A general increase in prices of goods and services in an economy, beyond a country's growth, during a certain amount of time.

Background Information

Throughout time, conflicts ranging from local to national to global scale have caused long-lasting difficulties to burden countries politically, economically and socially. These conflicts have ranged from civil wars to world wars to genocide, and from conflicts based on ethnic or religious reasons to reasons such as territorial expansion.

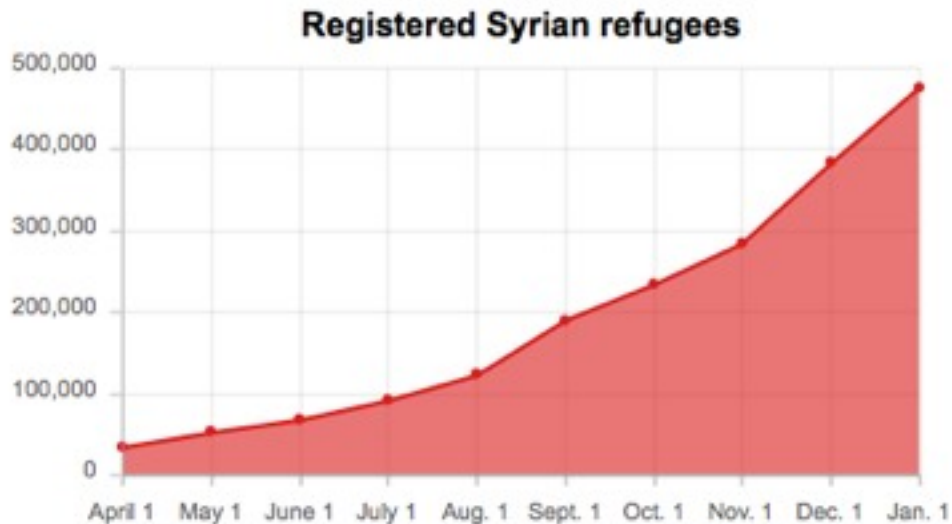
In the aftermath of the Second World War, in which 50 countries took part, a new conflict (The Cold War) arose between USA and the USSR, making peace agreements difficult. It was not until 1951, that all countries (except for the USSR) signed peace treaties, and Austria only regained her independence in 1955. Territorially, some may argue that Europe and Japan was still undergoing reconstruction up until 1990, when Western and Eastern Germany were re-united. Moreover, it may even be believed that we are still living in a post-Second World War era, and that tension between different ethnicities and countries is still tangible. Economically, 70 % of Europe's industrial infrastructure was demolished in the war, and countries such as the UK, experienced continuous struggles even after the conflict, as 55% of their workers had been ordered to weaponry production units. 1/4th of the National economy had been spent during the war, and the country experienced a recession, due to lack of money amongst potential customers as well as there was a lack of products, which caused an inflation.

In Rwanda, April-June 1994, 800,000 people were murdered in just a matter of 100 days! This genocide was an ethnic conflict between the Hutus and the Tutsis, forcing neighbours and even family members to kill each other. How do you restore peace after such brutality? After the victory of the Tutsis, attempts at a multi-cultural government were made, however after the Hutu president Bizimungu was jailed for charges of human violence, the government became nearly completely Tutsu-ruled. 2 million Hutus fled to the neighbour country DR Congo, where violence has continued. The two bordering countries have frequently threatened each other that they will expel the other race.

It is important to plan for the future, and with the conflicts of the Arab Spring, as well as in other regions such as Mali, these populations are, or will be, solving problems such as recession, inflation, cultural tension, damaged infrastructure and the question of refugees.

Currently, the UN estimates there to be a death toll of 40,000-60,000 in Syria, and below you can see the number of refugees registered by the UNHCR (The UN Refugee Agency).

Major Countries and Organizations Involved



Figures above refer to refugees registered with UNHCR. Totals are feared to be much higher.

European Union

The EU (European Union) is a social, economical and environmental partnership between 27 European countries. It was established after the Second World War, in order to avoid further major conflicts between each other. The idea was to encourage further trade amongst countries in order to cause a growing interdependence which was thought to lessen the risk of war. Although it began as a purely economical co-operation, it now focuses on other subjects as well such as human rights through the European Court. It is also to be noted that the EU is responsible for the creation of the Euro and has facilitated traveling and cross-border employments throughout Europe, and their successful anti-war policy was rewarded with the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

Barack Obama has stated that “the basic premise of NATO was that Europe’s security was the United States’ security and vice versa”. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a military and political alliance which promotes democratic values as well as it believes that an attack on one member country calls for the co-ordinated defense created by all member nations. NATO has 28 member countries.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

IMF is an international association containing 188 countries. Its main mission is to encourage global financial partnership and trade, a sustainable economic growth, high employment rates as well as loans to countries with heavy financial burdens.

United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF)

By a request from the UN General Assembly in 2006, the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund was founded. It presently supports 222 projects in 22 countries by assisting through two main departments: The Immediate Response Facility and the Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility. The first was created with a short-term objective, where projects can be supported for a period of maximum one year. The more long-term department aims to cooperate with national governments in order to fulfill objectives determined by the international community.

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)

The UNHCR was established by the UN General Assembly in 1950, and seeks to cooperate internationally in order to protect refugees and solve the question of refugees. The organization helps approximately 33.9 million people across the globe, with its primary focus being on the well-being and safety of displaced persons.

Rwanda

After the genocide in 1994, the country was deeply segregated into two camps: the Hutus and the Tutsis. Strong tension and sorrow was tangible in the atmosphere back then, and the ethnic conflicts are far from completely solved today.

Germany

As the country where the second world war originated, Germany was devastated after five years of fighting. Almost 10 million people died in Germany alone, and Nazi propaganda was still common even after the war. Today, Germany has developed to become a strong, united country, and has learnt from the lessons of the past.

USA

In the American Civil War, which begun in 1861 and ended in 1865, the United States of America was split up into two alliances: The Confederates (the pro-slavery states in the south) and the Union (the slavery-abolishers in the north). After much destructive fighting, the Confederate states were finally forced to surrender, but in order to restore the unity of their country, Lincoln decided to adopt a 'policy of reconciliation' where he chose to forgive and accept rather than take advantage of their weakened position.

Countries participating in the Arab Spring

Many of the Middle Eastern countries, such as Tunisia, Syria and Libya, have seen tumultuous times during the past two years. Revolts against non-democratic tyrants have caused large casualties, growing tension and much damage to cities and businesses. These countries are all facing problems that vary in urgency but that need to be tackled soon.

Timeline of Events

1945: The United Nations is created

1950: The UNHCR is established

2005: The Peacekeeping Commission is formed

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Establishment of the UNPBF (see section 'Major Organizations involved')
- Creation of the UNHCR (see section 'Major Organizations involved')
- Resolution 60/180
- Resolution 1645

Previous Attempts To Solve the Issue

In South Africa, all sectors of the nation suffered from the painful apartheid of the 1980s and 1990s. It was therefore decided at the end of the conflict to make an effort to forgive, rather than forget, the actions of the past, through the unique Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1995). The former Minister of Justice (Mr Dullah Omar) declared that "*... a commission is a necessary exercise to enable South Africans to come to terms with their past on a morally accepted basis and to advance the cause of reconciliation.*" All those who had been abused or had carried out violent actions earned the chance to speak about the trauma, and some of it was even selected for public hearing, and amnesty for their sins.

After World War II, all recognized former Nazi leaders were convicted in the Nürnberg trials for four offenses: crime against peace, crime against humanity, war crimes, and a "common plan to or conspiracy to commit" the criminal acts in the first three offenses. It was believed that these trials forced the war criminals to take responsibility for their acts, as well as it clearly defined violations of human rights, served justice and helped many victims as well as whole nations to acquire a sense of closure.

Possible Solutions

Solutions could highlight key ideas such as continuous development of global co-operation and methods on how this can be extended. Delegates should also explore all aspects of post-war matters (political, social and economical) and how they may vary in different

regions of the world. It is vital to think about loans and how to avoid trapping the victimized country in debts or causing a dependence on other countries.

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