

MITMUNC 2011 Position Paper

The United Kingdom has always had a prominent role in the UN Security Council due to our status as both a diplomatic and economic world power, as well as a veto power. Although we do believe in the right of a nation to sovereignty, we believe even more firmly that the well-being of a nation's citizens takes precedence over such sovereignty. This belief applies very much to the current issues plaguing the Security Council in both Côte d'Ivoire and Myanmar. As such, although we do wish to abide by a nation's sovereign rights as much as possible, we will not hesitate to employ whatever forces we feel are necessary in order to prevent human rights violations in offending nations.

Political Conflict in Côte d'Ivoire

The United Kingdom views regaining political stability in Côte d'Ivoire as a necessity. This is due to the great example that such stability has set for surrounding African nations in the past, as well as the problems that may arise in said neighboring nations if stability is not restored. Although the United Kingdom and Côte d'Ivoire have not often interacted directly, the United Kingdom recognizes Côte d'Ivoire's government's western attributes, and will do our best to make sure that the current democratic republic system is maintained. It seems to the United Kingdom that, in looking at recent actions taken by the Ivorian government under president Ouattara, there are already steps being taken to ensure future political stability. As a power with a similar government system, we feel a certain responsibility to Côte d'Ivoire, and intend to monitor the progress of internal attempts at stabilization including the Truth, Reconciliation, and Dialogue Commission. The United Kingdom also proposes that the UNSC consider supplementing these internal improvements by solidifying more ethnically and religiously flexible election qualifications and continuing to send in UN peacekeepers to monitor election processes as deemed necessary. Côte d'Ivoire serves as a very valuable connection between the European nations and the rest of Africa, and the United Kingdom is determined to do whatever it may take to ensure the safety and political well-being of the people in this integral nation, even if it means breaching sovereignty.

Children in Armed Conflict in Myanmar

The United Kingdom was a prime influence in Myanmar back when it was Burma, one of our many colonies. Our influence is what allowed Myanmar to initially emerge as a thriving, independent democracy. Unfortunately, other influences, namely communist ones, took hold of the nation in its early years, leading to extreme poverty and escalation of both political and ethnic tensions to unforeseen levels. Myanmar is currently leaning towards a return to democracy, as is evident in the consistent protestation of any remnants of the communist regime and the formation of committees such as the Union Solidarity and Development Party. However, despite democratic intentions, Myanmar has been left in a very diminished state by the authoritarian rule, one of the most troubling issues being the usage of child soldiers in the many ethnically organized armies. Much like Côte d'Ivoire, Myanmar is abundant in human rights violations, and the United Kingdom takes a similar stance in that we feel that the safety and wellbeing of the citizens of Myanmar is of top priority. As such, sovereignty, although respected, may be breached if the safety of the children in Myanmar remains in question. The United Kingdom feels that one of the main focal points of the UNSC should be to decide what might constitute the usage of peacekeepers in Myanmar, and if this is even a viable option to consider in terms of child enlistment. Another important objective in regards to actions taken by the UNSC is that something should be done to reunite those of Myanmar under national terms rather than ethnic ones, as the uniting of the many ethnic armies would allow for enough soldiers so that children would not be exploited. The United Kingdom asserts that steps must be taken immediately by the UNSC in regards to child enlistment and other human rights violations in Myanmar, and that this fledgling nation cannot become an effective democracy until these violations are properly addressed.