

**Committee:** General Assembly

**Topic:** Food Security

**Country:** Democratic Republic of the Congo

### **1. Topic Background**

In 1996, the World Food Summit defined food security as “people at all times having access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle.” With the United States producing enough food to feed the entire world, one might logically assume that global food security must already be achieved; however, according to the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the UN, over 842 million people globally suffer from food insecurity. The issue of food insecurity can be broken down into many culprits. First, low food production in a nation can be caused by lack of water, lack of arable land, or lack of farming equipment and technology such as tractors, fertilizers, and irrigation systems. Second, food must be transported to the people, which can be interrupted by lack of infrastructure and wars. Third, citizens must be able to purchase this food, which requires jobs with adequate salaries and stable, affordable food pricing. If these criteria are not met, the effects of food insecurity can be devastating. Not only can individuals die directly from starvation, malnutrition, or diseases associated with these, food insecurity shatters a nation’s economy. All citizens are forced into agrarian roles, allowing for no specialization or business that allows a nation’s economy to grow. Furthermore, food shortages can lead to conflict, as was shown during civil wars in Somalia during the 1990s.

### **2. Past Action**

In 1948, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, one of the first major works of the United Nations, established the right of all people to have access to adequate food. Since then, the United Nations has continued to emphasize food security, such as through the first Millennium Development which aimed to cut in half the people who suffer from hunger from 1990 to 2015. To reach this goal, the United Nations has passed numerous resolutions on the matter, such as draft resolution A/C.3/69/L.42, passed in 2014, which focused on equal access of food to women, children, and the disabled, and the use of farming technology, infrastructure, and irrigation to increase food production. Furthermore, the United Nations formed the Food and Agricultural Organization in 1945, established with the goal to combat world hunger by allowing nations to debate food security and agricultural policies and provide policy advice to struggling nations. With 2015 coming to a close, the Millennium Development Goals will soon expire, so the Sustainable Development Goals will replace them. One of these will also focus achieving complete food security worldwide.

### **3. Country Policy**

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the most underdeveloped nations in Africa, with a GDP per capital of roughly 700\$. It is also a highly agrarian society with over 40.4% of the nation’s GDP coming from the agricultural sector, and with the vast majority of the population living in rural areas supported by family farms. The food security issues of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is further aggregated by the lack of clean water, with only 29% of rural areas having access to clean water. Another contributing factor is civil warfare and rebellion in the Eastern Region. Many militants have targeted farms and food supply routes, leading to food shortages such as a recent large shortage in the capital, Kinshasa. As a result of this, the Democratic Republic of the Congo relies heavily on UN and other nation’s food aid, such as the United Nations Humanitarian Air Services to reach remote areas. As food security is such a prevalent issue in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it has participated actively in UN programs addressing food security and is a member of the Food and Agricultural Organization. It has also shown support for the use of Genetically Modified Organisms to combat food insecurity in Africa, although it does call for the regulation of such products.

#### 4. Possible Solutions

In order to coherently combat the issue of food scarcity, the United Nations must address all three main components of the issue: production, distribution, and access. To increase production, organizations such as the FAO and World Food Program should continue to share sustainable and successful farming policies with governments, who in turn should share these practices with their populations, placing a high emphasis on rural populations where food security tends to be the worse. Second, Farming technologies and materials including tractors, good seeds, fertilizers, and irrigation systems should be either shared or sold at a reduced price to farmers in developing nations to maximize food output. Third, nations should consider implementing GMOs to maximize production, biomass, and nutrition of food output. Monsanto has already voluntarily provided GMO seeds to developing nations free of charge, so further work with GMO companies to expand such practices could significantly increase food production without the need for outside funding. To address distribution, nations must focus on quelling internal conflicts and building infrastructure. There are other UN programs in place to address such issues and thus would fall outside of the scope of the FAO or other agricultural agencies. To address access, nations will need to focus on improving the economic situation of citizens, especially rural farmers, as they are ironically those most afflicted with food insecurity. Many farmers suffer from food insecurity due to aggressive, high interest loans, lack of good seed and fertilizer, and poor irrigation. This can be addressed by providing microloans to individual rural farmers, giving them the money necessary to purchase farming technology, good seeds, and fertilizers, allowing them to produce a surplus in a given year. This surplus can be used to continue to grow their farm in years to come, allowing them to successfully pay back the loan and become self-sufficient. Thus, this strategy is far more economically sustainable than simply dumping funds into food aid every year. Funding for these programs could come from developed nations, loans from the World Bank, or funding from agrarian companies in developed nations who would benefit from increased advanced farming across the world, as it would increase their target market.

#### 5. Sources

[http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/food\\_security.shtml](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/food_security.shtml)

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