

2024 Mid-South Model UN Conference



SOCHUM

Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee

Chairs: Lucy Fornetti, Victoria Hibbs, and Lauren Bottom

Introduction to the Committee

The United Nations Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Council is the Third Committee of the General Assembly. Our important work focuses on examining human rights questions, including reports of the Human Rights Council.

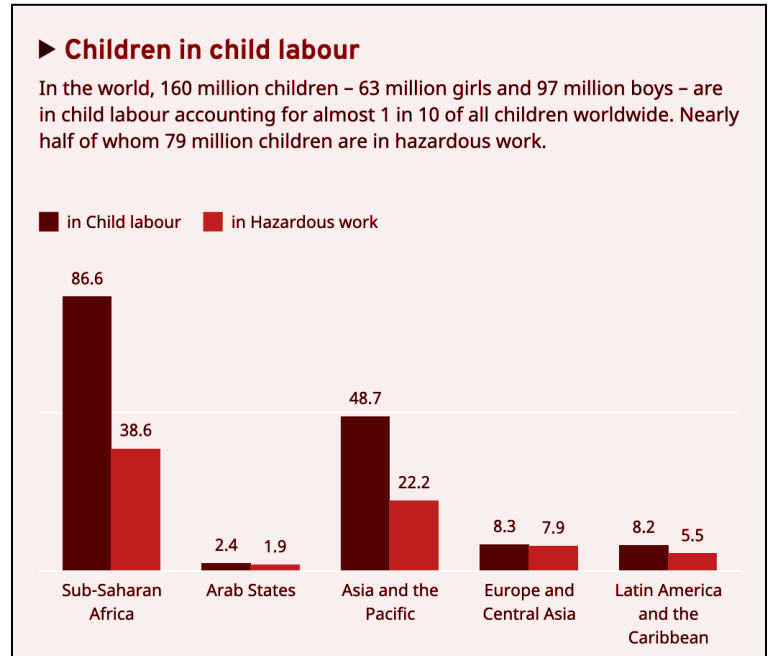
SOCHUM was founded in 1945 to promote the principles established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Our work enforces and promotes the ideals of fundamental freedoms which ought to be enjoyed by the entirety of the international community. These include the right to life, the expression of cultures, the freedom of political participation, the protection of children's rights, and the promotion of social development, among many others. We seek to design peaceful settlements for these issues in the international community, initiating studies to encourage cooperation and popularizing freedom for all.

The Committee discusses questions relating to the advancement of women, the protection of children, indigenous issues, the treatment of refugees, the promotion of fundamental freedoms through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and the right to self-determination. The Committee also addresses important social development questions such as issues related to youth, family, ageing, persons with disabilities, crime prevention, criminal justice, and international drug control.

Topic A: Child Labor in Developing Nations

1. History and Past UN Action

The United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child on November 20th, 1989. This development aimed to protect the rights of children, specifically in developing nations where the children's right to an education, and health or social development is impeded by child labor. Article 32 states that, in a state's legislation, they must establish a minimum age for employment, provide the regulation of working hours and conditions, and, finally, enforce penalties or sanctions to uphold these mandates.



2. Current Situation

Figure 1.

Child labor in developing nations affects the economy of those nations and impedes their growth. Recognizing the use of child labor around the world is a necessary step in understanding the detrimental impacts of having children in the workforce.

With the use of child labor in developing countries, it amplifies the risk of health problems and a lapse in education for the children as well as causing economic struggles that could keep the country from further developing. When children are working, they do not have the capacity to attend schooling institutions and receive an education. When children do not receive an education, the future of the country is at stake. Children are the future of the world and without protecting their mental and physical health as well as their opportunities to learn, they will not be able to work for the greater goals of their country in the future.

Currently, there are 86.6 million child laborers in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), around 70% of child laborers work in agriculture, followed by factories and forced labor, such as child soldiers.

Last year, the 5th Global Conference for the Elimination of Child Labor passed the Durban Call to Action, urging work toward the end of child labor in agriculture and the elimination of child labor by 2025. They also pushed to strengthen barriers to keep children from the workforce, including its worst forms, and called for the

realization of the right to education. We will review their goals and discuss how best countries can work toward their implementation.

3. Problems a Resolution Should Address, & Possible Solutions

In achieving the liberation of children from the workforce, a country must consider all possible outcomes and effects it could have on itself. The end of child labor means an increase in health, education, and economic stability in a nation. In order to stop child labor and save children from health problems, minimal education, and economic woe, SOCHUM urges nations to consider these questions.

Some questions to consider:

1. In what ways can SOCHUM provide aid, monetary or structural, to countries who are trying to put an end to child labor?
2. What direct actions, such as defunding companies and instituting mandatory school attendance, can countries take in order to stop child labor?
3. How can your country reallocate funds in order to effectively put an end to child labor?

4. Resources

www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/WCMS_817699/lang--en/index.htm

www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child

www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/genericdocument/wcms_845907.pdf

www.worldvision.org/child-protection-news-stories/child-labor-facts

www.un.org/en/ga/third/index.shtml

www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/05/un-experts-urge-action-address-alarming-increase-child-labour-agriculture

Topic B: International Drug Control

1. History and Past UN Action

In 1961, the United Nations began to hold conferences surrounding the issue of drug control. Based on these conferences, three major drug control treaties were made. The first treaty, the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, was developed in March 1961 and coordinated international intervention to limit the production and sale of drugs for only medical and scientific purposes. The second treaty, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, established an international control on synthetic drugs depending on their potential for illicit use. Lastly, the third treaty, the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, was adopted in 1988, which focused on preventing drug trafficking, including provisions against money laundering and the diversion of substances used to create illicit drugs—also known as precursor chemicals.

In 1997, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was created in order to address the interwoven issues of drugs, crime, and international terrorism. The UNODC acts as a supervisor to conventions relating to these issues while also providing assistance to those in need around the world who use drugs and suffer from drug disorders.

2. Current Situation

For many years, drug use has adversely affected many people around the whole world in both developed and developing nations. Drugs have directly caused various deaths and health problems to all people who partake in the usage of them. Because of the adverse health effects on people, it is costing governments millions of dollars that adversely affects their economies.

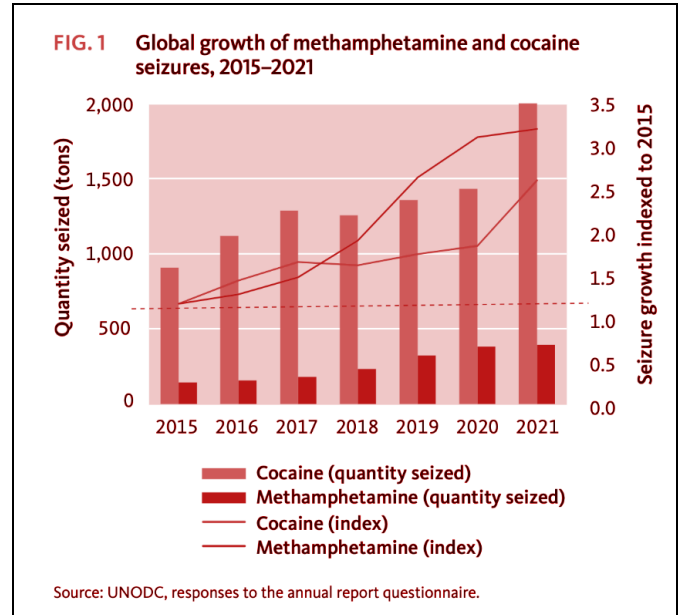


Figure 2.

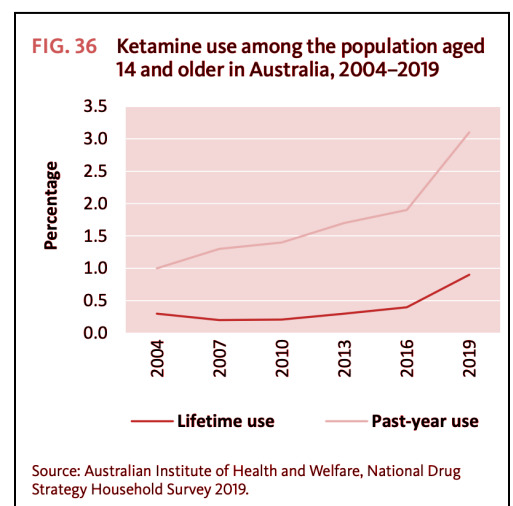


Figure 3.



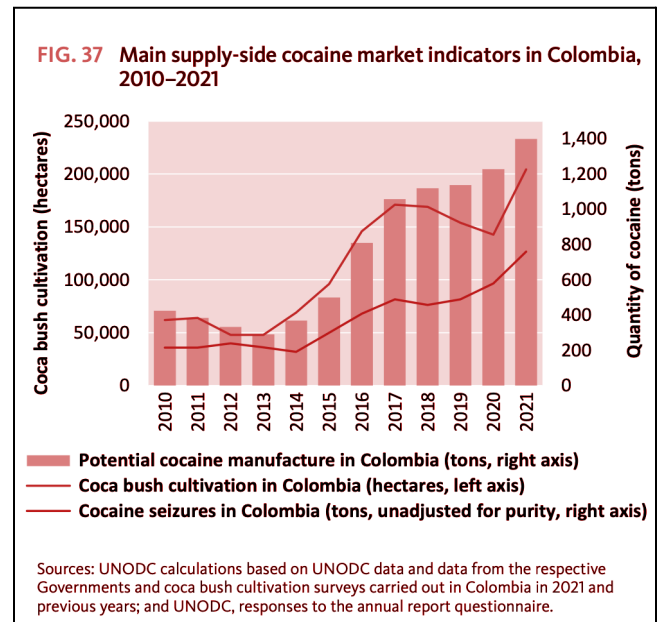
Figure 4.

Because of the health problems and subsequent economic strain, drugs must be controlled for the betterment of our world and its people. Drug control is a necessary element in creating a better world for ourselves and our countries. Drug control in one country is not enough, we must work toward drug control in all countries across the world so that the effects may be widespread and long-lasting. Moreover, there are certain circumstances which propagate the issue of substance abuse. Displaced people, such as refugees or the homeless, and those in poverty are more likely to fall prey to the escape drugs can temporarily offer. They are generally the target of many traffickers, and when they fall into this vicious cycle, it is difficult to escape. (See Figure 4.)

In the past several decades, technology has evolved to make the production of drugs more efficient, subsequently allowing more to be made in less time than ever before. Additionally, social media and the evolution of the Internet has streamlined communications to make these drugs more accessible. This facilitates the trade of new “designer” drugs and chemicals, which may fly under the radar of officials.

Figure 5.

The cannabis market still remains the largest drug market worldwide, with nearly 219 million estimated users in 2021 and production reported in almost every country. Ketamine is a synthetic drug which has also been popularized in recent years, with its use spiking in the past decades in many western countries. Moreover, the cocaine supply has also increased in recent years at a concerning rate.



3. Problems a Resolution Should Address, & Possible Solutions

The goal of drug control is to decrease, and eventually limit, the production, distribution, and use of drugs around the world. Drug Control can have various beneficial effects such as higher education levels, lower unemployment, better health, a more stable economy, etc. However, without drug control, countries are susceptible to numerous crises that can arise as a result of instability. These questions are some that you, as a country, should consider when discussing drug control.

Some questions to consider:

1. What areas of drug control should countries focus on the most?
2. How should countries be working together to implement drug control policies?
3. What can SOCHUM do to better foster communication between countries on the matter of drug control?
4. What sort of new international institutions could be created in order to help countries with drug control?

4. Resources

www.un.org/en/conferences/drug

www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/wdr-2023_booklet-2.html

www.unodc.org/res/WDR-2023/WDR23_B3_CH2_psychedelics.pdf

www.un.org/en/ga/third/index.shtml

Note to the Delegates

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2024 Mid South Model United Nations Conference (MSMUN) and to the Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Committee (SOCHUM). My name is Lucy Fornetti, and I will be one of your 2024 SOCHUM chairs. I am a freshman planning to major in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) as well as Politics & Law, and minor in Economics. Lauren Bottom and Victoria Hibbs will also be chairing SOCHUM with me. Lauren is a freshman planning to major in International Relations and Spanish with a minor in Computer Science. Victoria is a freshman planning to major in International Relations, Russian, and Music.

We are all very excited to chair the SOCHUM committee. The 2023 Agenda of the Human Rights Council encourages us to better pursue past resolutions to respect the intrinsic value of human life in the international community. Therefore the topics we will be discussing this year are child labor in developing nations and international drug control. Both topics have a significant impact on the humanitarian and social aspects.

We look forward to meeting all of you at the conference and hope that these issues will inspire debate and cooperation. Please do not hesitate to email Lauren, Victoria, or me if you have any questions.

Regards,

Lucy Fornetti

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Victoria Hibbs: hibva-27@rhodes.edu

List of Countries:

China: While legally child labor under the age of sixteen is prohibited, as of 2022, many children work in the production of goods. A list of such goods can be found here:

https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/reports/child-labor/list-of-goods-print?items_per_page=10&combine=china#:~:text=Information%20from%20media%20sources%20and,guards%2C%20and%20denied%20sufficient%20food.&text=There%20are%20reports%20that%20children%20are%20forced%20to%20pick%20cotton%20in%20China.

Honduras: Honduras has some of the worst forms of child labor, including commercial sexual exploitation and selling drugs. For commercial items, child laborers are most seen in the production of melons and coffee.

India: India is reported to have the highest percentage of child laborers.

United States: The U.S. has many laws and regulations against child labor, although there have been various cases of recent violations.

France: France is committed to the elimination of child labor and aims to eradicate all forms of child labor by the year 2025.

United Kingdom: The UK struggles with issues of forced labor, or also known as modern slavery, where children are forced to work in illegal enterprises, such as drug manufacturing.

Yemen: In 2022, Yemen made minimal advancements to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. Usually, children living in rural areas are forced to work in the agriculture sector.

Mexico: As of 2022, Mexico has made moderate advancement to eliminate child labor. The government approved the ratification of the International Labor Organization's Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labor Convention.

Pakistan: In 2022, Pakistan made moderate advancement in eliminating child labor as the government increased penalties to violations of child labor laws.

Russia: Russia has made minimal advancement to eradicate child labor. Most areas of labor include bricks, sexual exploitation, and timber.

Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe made minimal advancements in ending child labor, but not enough to make a real difference; law enforcement also lacks resources in order to stop child labor.

Afghanistan: Afghanistan has implemented next to no new policies to end child labor and therefore, children are subject to various kinds of child labor including as militants in the Taliban.

Egypt: Egypt passed a significant policy change in 2022 that helped lessen the degree to which child labor was being used; however, the government does not publish data on child labor.

Ghana: In 2022, Ghana increased the number of labor inspectors and labor inspections; however, it is not illegal to use child labor in illicit activities such as the drug trade.

Central African Republic: Central African Republic has not made any substantial changes in their views on child labor; children are used heavily for diamond mining.

Guatemala: In recent years, Guatemala had a large media campaign to help raise awareness about child labor and its repercussions; however children are still used for labor in many agricultural settings.

Brazil: Brazil has made efforts to decrease child labor, but it is still very prevalent especially in agricultural sectors.

Iraq: Iraq has made barely any policy changes in regard to child labor and there are many children working in hazardous conditions and being taken advantage of on a daily basis.

South Africa: In 2022, South Africa made advancements in limiting child labor, but child labor is still prevalent in illegal businesses such as human trafficking.

Turkey: In 2018, Turkey implemented major policy changes in order to reduce and attempt to eliminate forced child labor; however, children are still forced into non-government sponsored labor such as in military groups.