



**United Nations Economic and Social Council  
Background Guide**

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The Economic and Social Council (commonly referred to as ECOSOC) was established in 1945 as one of the six main organs of the UN. ECOSOC is the United Nations' largest and most complex subsidiary body and works to emphasize the importance of sustainable development around the world. Over the last decade, reforms have strengthened ECOSOC's leading role in identifying emerging challenges, promoting innovation, and achieving a balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. ECOSOC partners with the UN, policymakers, parliamentarians, academics, foundations, businesses, youth, and over 3,200 registered non-governmental organizations (NGOs), providing overall guidance and coordination on sustainable development.

**I. Reducing the Growing Economic Inequality Between the Global North and South**

**Statement of the Issue**

The global North-South divide describes a grouping of countries along socio-economic, cultural, political, and developmental characteristics, with the Global North representing the market economies of the Western world and the Global South representing less developed countries (LDCs) in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America.<sup>1</sup> One very important distinction must be made in that the Global North and South divide line does not correspond with the line between the Northern Hemisphere and the Southern Hemisphere. In fact, most of

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<sup>1</sup> "A 60 Second Guide to . . . the Global North/South Divide" (Royal Geographical Society), accessed September 21, 2021, <https://www.rgs.org/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?nodeguid=9c1ce781-9117-4741-af0a-a6a8b75f32b4&lang=en-GB>.

the Global South nations are located in the Northern Hemisphere and many Global North nations are found in the Southern Hemisphere.<sup>2</sup>

The terms “Global North” and “Global South” were first used by governmental and developmental organizations in an attempt to replace terms such as “Third-World country” and “developing nation”. Concerns have been raised over these terms, noting that nations grouped in the Global South are classified by the World Bank to be low-middle income in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean; however, low-middle income nations in Eastern Europe are not included despite some having problems with poverty.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, critics of the North-South divide would argue that these distinctions are inaccurate. For example, today, Brazil, China, Indonesia, India, and Mexico have the largest economies and populations among the Global South. China comprises 18.34% of the global gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>4</sup> Since 1978, many Asian countries have grown their economies and Asia is now beginning to rival the Global North as the main economic force.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, economic growth in the South sees almost all but 60 nations in the Global South gaining on the Global North in the areas of income, diversification, and participation in the world market.<sup>6</sup>

These developing changes are largely due to globalization. Originally, the North-South divide was drawn based on the developmental work of international agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, World Trade Organization (WTO), and various UN affiliated agencies despite the fact that all of these agencies vary in their perception of globalization and its relation to inequality.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, despite evidence pointing towards a growing decrease in the economic gap between the Global North and the Global South, a substantial gap still exists. Numerous worldwide efforts have been mobilized to lift millions out of absolute poverty, but there is substantial evidence that the gap between the world’s highest and

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<sup>2</sup> Andrea Hollington et al., “Introduction: Concepts of the Global South,” Introduction: Concepts of the Global South | GSSC (Global South Studies Center Cologne, January 2015), <https://web.archive.org/web/20160904205139/http://gssc.uni-koeln.de/node/451>.

<sup>3</sup> David Satterthwaite, “Why This Book?,” in *Urban Poverty in the Global South: Scale and Nature* (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 1-13, <https://books.google.com/books?id=GYdeNdKrp8sC&pg=PA13#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

<sup>4</sup> Caleb Silver, “The Top 25 Economies in the World,” Investopedia (Investopedia, July 16, 2021), <https://www.investopedia.com/insights/worlds-top-economies/>.

<sup>5</sup> Philip S Golub, “From the New International Economic Order to the G20: How the 'Global South' Is Restructuring World Capitalism from Within,” Taylor & Francis, July 25, 2013, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01436597.2013.802505>.

<sup>6</sup> Paul Collier, “Development Economies in Retrospect and Prospect,” Oxford Academic (Oxford Review of Economic Policy, October 8, 2015), <https://academic.oup.com/oxrep/article-abstract/31/2/242/2452807>.

<sup>7</sup> Therien, Jean-Philippe (2010). "Beyond the North-South divide: The two tales of world poverty". *Third World Quarterly*. **20** (4): 723–742. doi:10.1080/01436599913523. JSTOR 3993585.

lowest income earners is widening. Reports show that in 1820, western Europe's per capita income was only three times bigger than Africa, but by 2000, this gap between Western Europe and Africa was 13 times larger and it has only grown in the last two decades. In 2013, Oxfam International reported that the "85 richest people in the world owned the same amount of wealth as the poorest half of the world's population."<sup>1</sup>

There has been growing concern within academia, politics, and civil society that today's broader economic crisis is an "inequality crisis," which is detrimental to economic growth, undermines social cohesion, and threatens democracy. In 2013, President Barack Obama described rising levels of inequality as "the defining issue of our time."<sup>8</sup> This inequality can be clearly seen in the differences in the types of goods produced by the Global North and Global South. The North – which is generally comprised of wealthier, less unequal, and more democratic countries – specializes in skill-intensive goods and export technologically advanced manufactured products. They encompass one quarter of the world's population and four-fifths of the income earned anywhere in the world; 90 percent of manufacturing industries are owned by and located in the North.<sup>9</sup> The South – which comprises newly industrialized or industrializing countries that tend to have younger, more fragile democracies – are generally heavily dependent on primary sector exports and frequently share a history of past colonialism by Northern states. They encompass three quarters of the world's population, but only one fifth of the world's income.<sup>10</sup> Additional concerns center on the deterioration of the terms of trade against countries of the Global South whose comparative advantage is in their natural resources, cheap labor, and lax environmental standards, as well as the distribution of environmental goods and burdens. It is in the interest of ECOSOC and members of the Global North and South who are committed to advancing the three dimensions of sustainable development to address this inequality crisis.

## History

Countries were first formally categorized based on their economic and development statuses during the Cold War when nations were classified as the "East" and the "West" with the Soviet Union and China representing the East, while the United States of America and their

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<sup>8</sup> "Inequality Is 'the Defining Issue of Our Time'," The Washington Post (WP Company, April 22, 2019), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/plum-line/wp/2013/12/04/inequality-is-the-defining-issue-of-our-time/>.

<sup>9</sup> Mimiko, Oluwafemi (2012). *Globalization: The Politics of Global Economic Relations and International Business*. Durham, N.C.: Carolina Academic. p. 47.

<sup>10</sup> Jean-Philippe Therien, "Beyond the North-South Divide: The Two Tales of World Poverty," *Third World Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (1999): pp. 723-742, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436599913523>.

allies represented the West. These classifications notably excluded a large part of the world and the term “Third-World” began to be used to categorize all of the other nations that were excluded from the East-West grouping. The term “Third World” also encompassed many nations that were colonized by the very nations that are now part of the Global North. Many Third-World countries, now considered the Global North, also share a number of experiences that have resulted in widespread poverty, only adding to the economic inequality existing between the Global North and the Global South.<sup>11</sup>

The drastic divide between the Global North and the Global South was explicitly identified in a report written in 1980 titled “North-South: A Programme for Survival,” by the Independent Commission on International Development Issues. This report is regarded as the “most comprehensive and solutions-oriented analysis of critical global economic issues” and is now widely referred to as the “Brandt Report” after former German Chancellor Willy Brandt who was the first Chairman of the Independent Commission. The Brandt Report ultimately helped gain a global understanding of the substantial differences between the economic development in the East and West while also suggesting a great disparity in the standards of living that existed along the North-South divide.<sup>12</sup>

The Brandt Line was proposed by Willy Brandt in the 1980s and divides the world at a latitude of 30° north, sitting between North and Central America, above Africa, India, and China, but dips to include Australia and New Zealand above the line. Brandt drew this line based on the GDP per capita of countries.<sup>13</sup> Brandt goes on to suggest that the North was wealthy due to their successful trade in manufactured goods while the South was in poverty due to trading intermediate goods that yielded low export incomes. Due to this gap in the standard of living that existed along the North-South divide, Brandt suggested for there to be a large transfer of resources from developed to developing countries. Despite the report receiving widespread publicity and acceptance as a way for nations to reduce economic inequality between the North-South divide, the proposals put forward found little traction or adoption by eastern and western governments due to the Cold War and a general lack of cooperation and cohesion among world

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<sup>11</sup> B.R. Tomlinson, “What Was the Third World?,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 2 (April 1, 2003), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022009403038002135>.

<sup>12</sup> Nicholas Lees, “The Brandt Line after Forty Years: The More North–South Relations Change, the More They Stay the Same?,” *Review of International Studies* 47, no. 1 (November 16, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1017/s026021052000039x>.

<sup>13</sup> Saroj Kumar Pal, “A Perspective of Changing World: The Global Countries of North and South ,” in *Lexicon on Geography of Development* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 2005), pp. 43-45.

leaders.<sup>14</sup> However, since the Cold War, a multitude of efforts have been put in place in an attempt to lessen the economic gap between the North and South divide.

In 2000, the United Nations published their Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This initiative by the UN saw a galvanization of “unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world’s poorest...all agreed to by all the world’s countries and all the world’s leading development institutions.”<sup>15</sup> The MDGs was a set of goals that ranged from eradicating extreme poverty and hunger to ensuring environmental sustainability. These goals were crucial in that they symbolized a world effort to uplift the globe, regardless of regional location. These goals were set to be achieved by 2015. When the deadline closed in, the UN introduced 17 new goals under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) project. The 17 SDGs serve as the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that was adopted by all UN Member States in 2015. This agenda “provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.”<sup>16</sup>

While the global efforts to reduce the economic inequality between the Global North and South are pertinent to this topic, it is also important to consider the collaborative efforts among the Global South to aid one another. One aspect of coining the “Global South” was “in part to aid countries in the southern hemisphere to work in collaboration on political, economic, social, environmental, cultural, and technical issues. This resulted in the creation of South-South Cooperation (SSC), “a political and economic term that refers to the long-term goal of pursuing world economic changes that mutually benefit countries in the Global South and lead to greater solidarity among the disadvantaged in the world system.”<sup>17</sup> This collaborative effort was born out of the hope that the Global South would assist each other with a mutual understanding of their unique geographical, cultural, and political differences while being guided by the principles of

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<sup>14</sup> “The Brandt Report: A Summary,” Share The World’s Resources (STWR), January 31, 2006, <https://www.sharing.org/information-centre/reports/brandt-report-summary>.

<sup>15</sup> “United Nations Millennium Development Goals,” United Nations (United Nations), accessed September 21, 2021, <https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.

<sup>16</sup> “THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development,” United Nations (United Nations), accessed September 21, 2021, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

<sup>17</sup> Kevin Gray and Barry K. Gills, “South–South Cooperation and the Rise of the Global South,” *Third World Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (March 24, 2016): pp. 557-574, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2015.1128817>.

respect for national sovereignty, national ownership, independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs, and mutual benefit.<sup>18</sup>

At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Global South leaders have become more prominent and assertive in world politics and now not only work to better their regions, but also to “challenge the political and economic dominance of the North.”<sup>19</sup> SSC has gained political and economic power due to large geographical migrations of manufacturing and production activity to nations such as Mexico and China.<sup>20</sup> This prosperity has influenced a renewed SSC target to “loosen the structures imposed during the colonial era and transcend the boundaries of postwar political and economic geography.”<sup>17</sup>

Together, the MDGs, SDGs, and SSC have laid a strong blueprint for global and regional efforts to bridge the gap between the Global North and the Global South, but there is still much work to be done as globalization and rapid evolution of technology continue to drive an increasing gap in economic inequality.

## Analysis

Since the early 1970s, there have been attempts at dialogue between the Global North and Global South to address the inequalities that exist. These talks have been called “North-South Dialogue.”<sup>21</sup> These talks were prompted by a few main factors. First was the rapid growth of the United Nations by 1970, growing from 50 countries in 1945 to 150 in 1969. Second was the continued economic growth in the Global South, namely the rising power of oil-producing countries in the Arab World. Third was the United States’ loss in the Vietnam War. These factors drew attention to a growing balance in global economic power. Nonetheless, Global South nations believed that the international economic system benefitted Global North nations at the expense of Global south nations, creating a global imbalance.

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<sup>18</sup> United Nations. "[United Nations: Special Unit for South-South Cooperation](#)" (PDF). United Nations Development Programme. Archived from [the original](#) (PDF) on 2015-09-19.

<sup>19</sup> United Nations. "[United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation](#)". United Nations Development Programme. Archived from [the original](#) on 2012-12-03.

<sup>20</sup> Amitav Acharya, “Studying the Bandung Conference from a Global IR Perspective,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 70, no. 4 (June 13, 2016): pp. 342-357, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2016.1168359>.

<sup>21</sup> Alexander Nnaemeka Agbaenyi and Michael Chedebe Oddih, “North-South Dialogue and Global Inequality: Meaning, Challenges and Prospects,” *Nnamdi Azikiwe Journal of Political Science* 3, no. 1 (August 2012): pp. 118-132.

Through the 1970s, North-South dialogue addressed issues pertaining to trade and tariffs, foreign aid, international finance, and governance. During this time, there was an increased global willingness to cooperate; however the era of detente came to an end by 1980 due to the increased tension among the United States and the Soviet Union. As conflict loomed, industrialized nations turned their energy away from development issues and refocused their resources on the Cold War. While some dialogue on the economic disparities between the Global North and South persisted, the discussions never led to any workable solutions. More recently, economists have reviewed the proposals put forth by the Global South and have concluded that “they were fundamentally unworkable or designed to benefit only certain segments of the Third World,” while other economists claim that the southern proposals were designed to set a strong negotiating anchor with the industrialized north. Others believe that the discussions were ultimately creating a space for Southern nations to unite and vie for international power within the United Nations in order to counter the North’s ability to drive the course of world affairs.<sup>22</sup>

As global inequality continues to serve as a pressing matter within the United Nations, a growing number of factors are contributing to economic inequality between the Global North and Global South. In addition to the longstanding implications of the era of colonialism and industrialization, the roles of media representations, technology, and international free trade have compounded the complexity of the North-South divide.

## **Conclusion**

When comparing the state of the world in 2021 against the state of the world in 1970, nations now face a myriad of interconnected issues all contributing to economic inequality. These issues include unequal access to natural resources; gaps in healthcare and education access; international trade policies, relationships, and access to markets; state of government and international political relations; conflict between and within countries; a country’s level of vulnerability to climate change and other natural hazards.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, inequality no longer exists solely across global divides, but it exists within nations in both the Global North and South. For example, India has the largest concentration of people living in poverty while also being home to a class of very rich elite citizens. Countries in the North, such as the United States, are also home to a growing economic gap between their richest and poorest citizens. As

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<sup>22</sup> “The North-South Dialogue and Economic Diplomacy,” U.S. Department of State (U.S. Department of State), accessed September 21, 2021, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/qfp/103527.htm>.

the world becomes more interconnected, the United Nations ECOSOC must continue to work to close the economic and social gaps between, among, and within nations.

### **Questions a Resolution Must Answer**

1. What are the modern, present-day factors of the inequality that exists between the Global North and South?
2. How can the Global North and Global South come together to have dialogue and create mutually beneficial solutions?
3. What factors, actions, and frameworks can contribute to the creation of long-lasting and sustainable solutions to lessen the inequality between the Global North-South?

## **II. Supporting African Countries Emerging from Conflict**

### **Statement of the Issue**

Conflict, especially civil wars can devastate a nation and their neighboring countries. In the short term, civil war can wreak havoc on a country's resources, infrastructure, the standard of living for their people, and the people's trust in society and/or government. Civil war can also negatively affect a country's foreign direct investment, expertise, and aid. Civil wars can spark or create dormant grievances that increase the likelihood of future recurrence of conflict. Additionally, civil wars can carry negative effects on the neighboring countries of a war-torn country such as but not limited to lost trading opportunities, an influx in refugees, and even the spread of violence across borders. These civil wars have been shown to threaten a neighboring country's internal stability. For example, Liberia's, Sierra Leone's, and Guinea's civil wars became intertwined. Burundi's civil war spread to Rwanda, the Congo, and Uganda. The Balkans experienced civil war after it spread following the breakup of Yugoslavia's civil war. Finally, Afghanistan's civil war spread to Pakistan's north-western provinces.<sup>23</sup>

Violent conflict also takes a significant toll on the public infrastructure of a nation. During war, many adults and children have decreased or no access to health or education services, and studies have found that "exposure to conflict during childhood or adolescence in particular can have large, persistent effects on health, education, and labor productivity outcomes for a generation." Following civil wars, especially in Africa, aid and redevelopment strategies focusing

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<sup>23</sup> Maarten Bosker and Joppe de Ree, "The Spread of Civil War," VOX, CEPR Policy Portal, January 18, 2012, <https://voxeu.org/article/spread-civil-war>.

on children and adolescent health and education are crucial for the present and future of that nation.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to health and education, violence in a nation can also fuel large-scale human displacement, and this can destabilize a country's previous regional and global relationships. The United Nations High Commission on Refugees estimates that during the average civil war, 600,000 people leave their country. Of those individuals, about 80% of refugees return home within a year following the end of the conflict, but about 10% do not return.<sup>25</sup>

Economically, civil wars have large and significant negative implications on macroeconomic indicators such as GDP and trade.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, more recent studies on microeconomic indicators suggest that the economic insecurity spread by violence can result in increased labor and transportation costs in countries with civil war. These impacts, combined with the previously listed consequences of civil war, pose trouble for leaders of countries torn apart by civil war.<sup>24</sup> Leaders of these countries may face difficulty in restoring damaged infrastructure due to the damage done to their nation's economic power and access to resources.

Decades of observing how conflict can impact countries and their ability to thrive has highlighted the need to support these nations economically, mobilize support for post-conflict reconstruction, and structure development on continent of Africa. Supporting African countries emerging from conflict is not a regional issue. The effects of conflict is relevant for all nations because the impact of large African conflicts can reverberate and potentially impact the United Nations and other states' efforts to promote stability and the UN Sustainable Development Goals across the globe.

## History

The origins of modern conflicts in Africa are complex and rooted in the continent's history. The legacy of the Atlantic slave trade, which resulted in economic underdevelopment and weak national identities throughout the continent, is continuing to exacerbate certain forms

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<sup>24</sup> Hannes Mueller and Julia Tobias, "The Cost of Violence: Estimating the Economic Impact of Conflict," International Growth Centre, December 13, 2016, <https://www.theigc.org/reader/the-cost-of-violence-estimating-the-economic-impact-of-conflict/the-economic-effects-of-civil-war-often-last-well-beyond-the-conflict-period-and-can-spill-over-to-other-countries/>.

<sup>25</sup> Mueller, H. (2016). *Growth and Violence: Argument for a Per Capita Measure of Civil War*. *Economica*.

<sup>26</sup> Martin, P., Mayer, T. and Thoenig, M. (2008). 'Civil wars and international trade'. *Journal of the European Economic Association*.

of violence, most notably ethnic conflict and rioting, today.<sup>27</sup> Colonialism also helped establish a foundation for regional violence. Poorly managed decolonization processes created conditions ideal for conflict in the continent which set the stage for fighting after colonial rule ended in the region.<sup>28</sup>

The 20th and 21st century saw significant conflict in the region. The civil war in Sierra Leone exemplifies the damaging impact of 20th and 21st century conflicts in Africa. What originally started as a conflict between Sierra Leone's government and rebel groups was quickly followed by a military coup which escalated the impact of the fighting. The international community intervened in 1999 which helped lead to the end of the war in 2002, but the impact on the country's people and economy was significant.<sup>29</sup> The war displaced civilians and caused them to relocate to new areas, resulting in overpopulation in cities such as Freetown, which has made it hard for people to find jobs in post-war Sierra Leone.<sup>30</sup> Industries such as agriculture were hurt as well, furthering unemployment and the damage caused to infrastructure such as roads, hospitals, and power systems have all further slowed the country's recovery.

Since the end of the war, Sierra Leone has made great progress in recovering from its economic downfall. From 2002-2012, the country's GDP grew on average by 7.8% each year.<sup>31</sup> Following the war, Sierra Leone received a significant amount of foreign aid which helped make this growth possible.<sup>32</sup> With that being said, the country is still struggling to develop robust social services due to its ongoing issues with problems such as corruption and unemployment and so the impact of the war on the country is still very apparent.<sup>33</sup>

Sierra Leone is not alone in sustaining significant development setbacks because of conflict; the damage caused by African conflicts between 1992 and 2005 alone is estimated to

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<sup>27</sup> Yu` Zhang, Zhicheng Phil Xu and Shahriar Kibriya, "The long-term effects of the slave trade on political violence in Sub-Saharan Africa", *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jce.2021.02.004>. Accessed August 10, 2021.

<sup>28</sup> Fokem Achankeng, "Conflict and conflict resolution in Africa", last modified February 2013, <https://www.accord.org.za/ajcr-issues/conflict-and-conflict-resolution-in-africa/>. Accessed August 10, 2021.

<sup>29</sup> Samuel Momodu, "The Sierra Leone Civil War (1991-2002)", last modified January 2017, <https://www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/sierra-leone-civil-war-1991-2002/>. Accessed August 12, 2021.

<sup>30</sup> Sabrina Breher, "Sierra Leone After the Civil War", last modified May 2012, <https://www.faiobserver.com/region/africa/sierra-leone-after-civil-war/>. Accessed August 12, 2021.

<sup>31</sup> 75, "Sierra Leone - Market Overview," International Trade Administration | Trade.gov, September 14, 2021, <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/sierra-leone-market-overview>.

<sup>32</sup> Philip Michael Kargbo, "Impact of Foreign Aid on Economic Growth in Sierra Leone," United Nations University (UNU-WIDER), accessed September 21, 2021, <https://www.wider.unu.edu/publication/impact-foreign-aid-economic-growth-sierra-leone>.

<sup>33</sup> Sabrina Breher, "Sierra Leone After the Civil War", last modified May 2012, <https://www.faiobserver.com/region/africa/sierra-leone-after-civil-war/>. Accessed August 12, 2021.

be worth approximately \$300 billion, and the cost of the conflicts will continue to rise due to rebuilding costs. Member states in the region are committed to supporting members affected by conflicts. In 2014, African heads of state met at the “Africa Helping Africa” conference. An important part of the African Solidarity Initiative, their focus was on establishing intercontinental support for development and helping states rebuild after conflicts.<sup>34</sup> The African Union, a regional organization focused on improving intracontinental collaboration, is also working to implement policies focused specifically on African economic development, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) and the African Economic Forum (Platform) (AEP).<sup>35</sup>

The international community has worked to improve African economic growth and support countries emerging from conflicts as well. Founded in 1958, the African Economic Commission (ECA) is a United Nations commission focused specifically on African economic development that reports to ECOSOC. It operates through the framework of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 to support economic development in the region.<sup>36</sup> Starting in 2002, ECOSOC has used ad-hoc advisory groups to help emerging countries. Ad-hoc groups have been used for countries such as Burundi and Guinea-Bissau. They work in collaboration with not only the states the advisory groups focus on, but also other UN agencies such as the Security Council.

## Analysis

A framework for the creation of advisory groups on African countries emerging from conflict was created in the ECOSOC Resolution 2002/1 in response to a request made by the UN General Assembly in its 55/217 resolution “on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.”<sup>37</sup> Resolution 2002/1 aimed at the evaluation of the importance of humanitarian and economic needs of countries emerging from conflict and how a long-term program of support first needed the integration of relief and development in these nations.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, “Africa initiative pledges to support countries emerging from conflict”, Abbis Abbad (2014), <https://hdl.handle.net/10855/31672>. Accessed August 10, 2021.

<sup>35</sup> African Union, “Economic Integration & Private Sector Development”, n.d., <https://au.int/en/economic-integration-private-sector-development>. Accessed August 12, 2021.

<sup>36</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, “About”, n.d., <https://www.uneca.org/about>. Accessed August 10, 2021.

<sup>37</sup> 75th Economic and Social Council, “Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on African Countries Emerging from Conflict,” United Nations (United Nations), accessed September 21, 2021, <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/node/7884337>.

<sup>38</sup> “ECOSOC Resolution 2002/1,” United Nations (Ad hoc advisory group on African countries emerging from conflict, July 15, 2002), <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/documents/2002/resolution-2002-12.pdf>.

The framework created by ECOSOC set up two Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Guinea-Bissau and Burundi. These council were composed of a limited number of countries with both African and donor countries represented at the Ambassadorial level. The Groups “proved to be flexible and efficient mechanisms to bring synergies among development partners in support of countries searching for recovery and stability.”<sup>38</sup> According to ECOSOC, both Advisory Groups participated in on-the-ground missions and held consultations with many groups of people including government officials, major socio-economic interlocutors, representatives of United Nations agencies including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, civil society organizations, donors, and other development partners.

One of the key aspects of the work of these Groups was their emphasis on advocating in favor of the involved countries. The Groups highlighted the need to focus on building healthy relationships among the national authorities and the international community in addition to the need to mobilize donor assistance while simultaneously encouraging national authorities to work on creating an environment that would attract increased support. Finally, the Groups were able to draw strong coordination among the development partners of each concerned country at three instrumental levels: within the United Nations system, between ECOSOC and the Bretton Woods Institutions, and between ECOSOC and the Security Council.<sup>44</sup>

The Groups were the first institutionalized mechanism to address the issue of supporting African countries emerging from conflict. In a 2006 report, the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, noted that “Thanks to their [the Groups] informal and advisory nature, they have demonstrated a pragmatic, flexible and nonbureaucratic approach to the problems encountered and have promoted cooperation in a spirit of partnership.”<sup>39</sup> The success and commendation of the Groups led to the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) that was built on the ideals, actions, and mechanisms of the Ad-Hoc Advisory Groups. Today, the Peacebuilding Commission is comprised of 31 Member States and “...has a unique advisory role to the General Assembly and the Security Council as well as a bridging role between the Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.”<sup>40</sup>

## **Conclusion**

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<sup>39</sup> “E/2006/64,” E/2006/64 (United Nations Economic and Social Council, May 8, 2006), <https://undocs.org/E/2006/64>.

<sup>40</sup> “United Nations Peacebuilding Commission ”(United Nations, 2021), [https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/psc\\_brochure\\_may\\_2021.pdf](https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/psc_brochure_may_2021.pdf).

The efforts of the Groups and the PBC further emphasize the need and value of a global effort to support African nations emerging from conflict. While nations around the world struggle with conflict and civil war, there are unique historical and present-day forces acting on Africa. As the poorest continent in the world, people living in Africa also struggle with extreme hunger, malnutrition, disease, high rates of infant mortality, and child labor.<sup>41</sup> These issues are only exacerbated by conflict. When supporting nations emerging from conflict, it is of the utmost importance to advocate for these nations and take care in crafting solutions that will be effective in the immediate, short, and long term.

### **Questions a Resolution Must Answer**

1. How can this council work to support African nations post-conflict while also working to prevent future conflict and effectively address the root causes of the initial conflicts?
2. How could a stable infrastructure be built that will attract and support humanitarian aid and relief efforts?
3. Who are the bodies, organizations, and commissions already working on these issues, and how can this council leverage their efforts while continuing to build new initiatives?

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<sup>41</sup> "Poverty in Africa - The Indicators," SOS Children's Villages, accessed September 21, 2021, <https://www.sos-usa.org/about-us/where-we-work/africa/poverty-in-africa>.