

Background Guide



International Labour Organization

Topic A: Disability Inclusion in the Workplace

Topic B: Creating Safe and Sustainable Child Labour Practices

Chair: Mariam Elhelaly

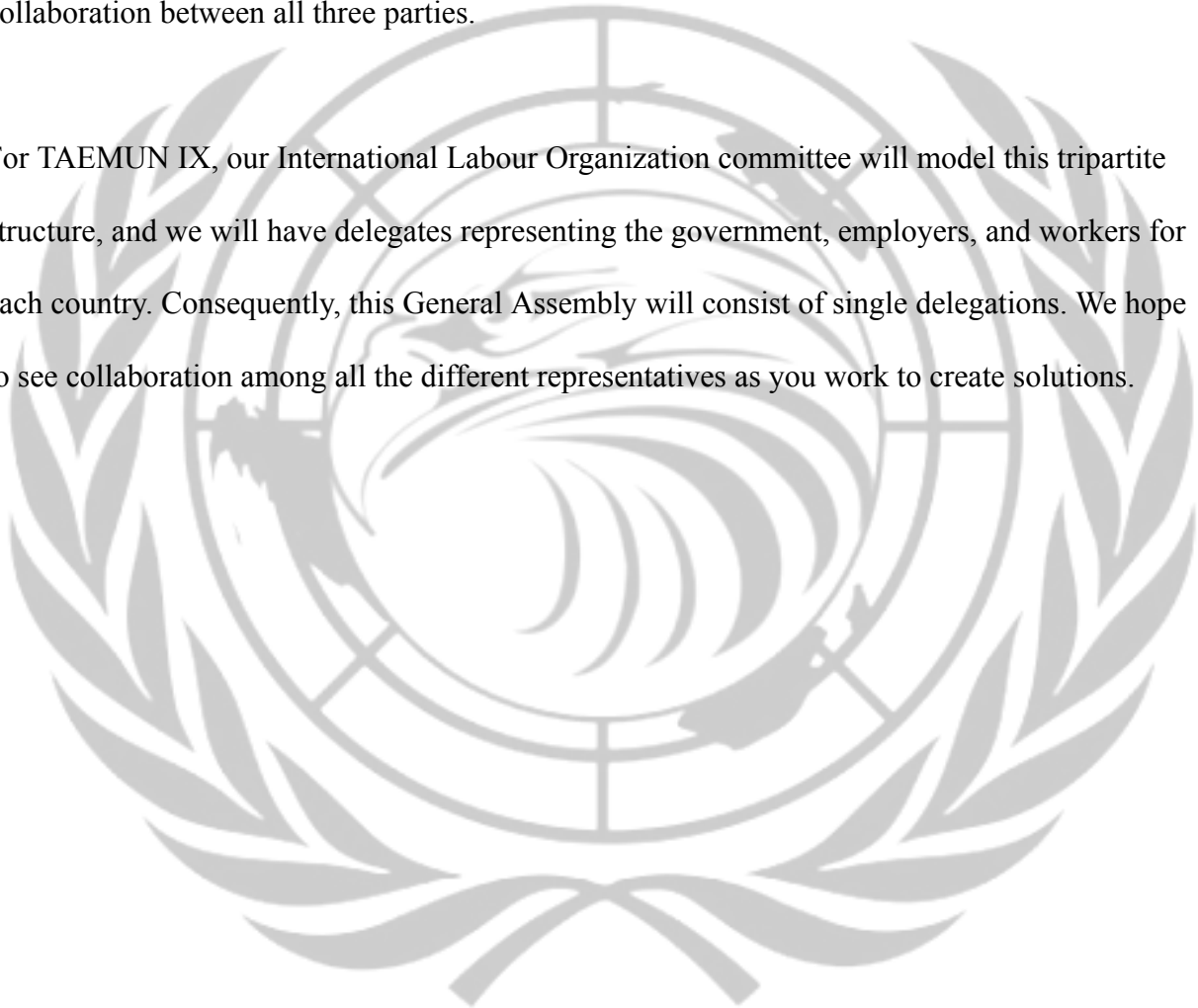
TAEMUN IX

December 8-9, 2023

Note to the Delegates:

The International Labour Organization is a unique body of the United Nations that follows a tripartite structure. This means that they have representatives from the government, employers and workers for each member state. Standards and policies are created with the cooperation and collaboration between all three parties.

For TAEMUN IX, our International Labour Organization committee will model this tripartite structure, and we will have delegates representing the government, employers, and workers for each country. Consequently, this General Assembly will consist of single delegations. We hope to see collaboration among all the different representatives as you work to create solutions.



TAEMUN IX

International Labour Organization

Esteemed Delegates,

My name is Camden Doyle, and I am the director of the International Labour Organization at TAEMUN. I am currently a senior at Thomas A. Edison High School and this is my second year in MUN. Aside from MUN, I play on the varsity field hockey team, I am a co-editor of the Erudite magazine, and I am part of the Interact club and Student Ambassador program. Outside of school I play guitar, enjoy story-driven video games, do just about any kind of art you can think of, and go to punk shows with my friends. I never expected MUN to be my thing, but last year my friend insisted I volunteer at TAEMUN and I loved the whole ordeal. MUN has allowed me to develop my public speaking skills and gain confidence in myself. I hope you guys like these topics and at the very least make some fun memories during this conference. Have fun and Good luck!

Best regards,

Camden Doyle

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Topic 1: Disability Inclusion in the Workplace

Topic 2: Creating Safe and Sustainable Child Labour Practices

Topic 1: Disability Inclusion within the Workplace

Background:

Disabled refers to a wide range of people, anywhere from physical disabilities to mental disabilities to chronic illnesses. Throughout the world, 1.3 billion people, approximately 16% of the world's population, have a disability of some kind. Although about 80% of these people are of working age, they are frequently denied the right to work. The broad scope of this issue makes it a very difficult one to tackle. Disability inclusion in the workforce refers to more than just hiring those with disabilities. A truly inclusive workplace creates a space where both people with and without disabilities can comfortably work and succeed. This also includes creating a space where, if needed, an employee could have any accommodations they may need, anywhere from working elevators and ramps to providing sign language interpreters or materials available in braille. Although the unemployment rate of those with disabilities has been going down in recent years, during the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment spiked. This spike, of course, included those with disabilities dramatically, going from a 7.8% unemployment rate in February of 2020 to 18.9% in April of 2020. In addition to the high unemployment rate, those with disabilities make 87 cents for every dollar earned by their non-disabled counterparts. People with disabilities face not only physical barriers in their struggle for employment, but also social barriers. Whether it is the attitudes of the employers themselves, or simply their coworkers and clients, many people throughout the world still have immense bias against those with disabilities. Statistically, one in four adults have a disability, so it is imperative that we figure out a way to deal with this situation and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to make money for themselves.

Current Situation:

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities took place in 2006 and marks the shift when combatting disability discrimination and promoting disability inclusion started to become emphasized. Despite this, the unemployment rate for those with disabilities has consistently been higher than those without disabilities. In the United States in 2022, 65.4 percent of people without disability were employed, compared to 21.3% of people who were employed when they had a disability. As bleak as these statistics sound, the situation has been getting better in recent years. From 2021 to 2022, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities decreased by 2.5% and has been on a steady downward trend for a few years now. However, despite this trend, many people with disabilities feel underestimated or ostracized from their coworkers because of their disabilities. Having a disability is often referred to as “The minority group you could join at any time” by many activism groups. This means that, at any point, something could happen and you could be disabled too. The idea of having a disability is looked down upon, which makes it difficult for those with disabilities to thrive in a work environment.

Past Actions:

In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the ADA, was the world's first comprehensive civil liberties law passed. This law was created to protect those with disabilities from facing discrimination. However, the ADA has many flaws, such as not requiring clear and accurate signage for ramps or elevators and not requiring every floor of a building to have an accessible bathroom. The ILO also created the Disability Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2017. This plan works to emphasize equal opportunity, accessibility and more. There are already international standards in place from the ILO Convention, but employers have not been

held accountable for these standards. The ILO Global Business Disability Network (GBDN) are different companies working with the ILO to adhere to their ten disability inclusion principles. They have created a framework for business to have workplaces with better disability inclusion while still being able to be successful. There are a number of initiatives in place with their own goals and plans of action, but the issue is still evident.

Questions to Consider:

- How are smaller companies and businesses going to be able to pay for accommodations for their employees?
- How can the ILO's international standards be better upheld?
- How will employers be held accountable for creating a workplace environment inclusive for those with disabilities?

Useful Links:

- <https://www.ada.gov/>
- <https://www.businessanddisability.org/>
- <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/disabl.pdfm>
- https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_103324.pdf
- https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/genericdocument/wcms_370772.pdf
- <https://www.ilo.org/infostories/en-GB/Stories/Employment/The-win-win-of-disability-inclusion#everybody-gains-from-disability-inclusion>

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Topic 2: Creating Safe and Sustainable Child Labour Practices

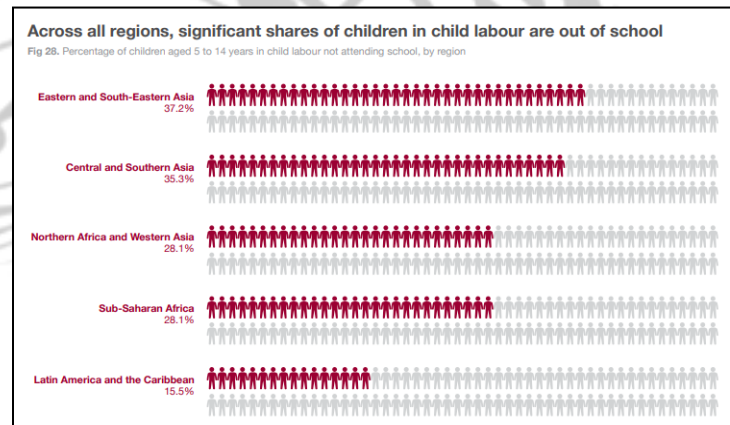
Background:

Child labour is a pressing issue seen globally, and it comes at the risk of the lives of many children. Not to mention the fact that it is often a matter of the universal human rights that everyone has. Many children are forced into child labour because of their familial situation, whether is be financial hardness or health issues. Unfortunately, when children step up to help their family, they are putting their own lives at risk. Child labour is known to have many consequences on a child's physical and mental health. Much of child labour is hazardous, and according to the Global Estimates of Child Labour of 2017, of 152 million children in child labour, 73 million are involved in hazardous work. Hazardous work can be found in any sector, agriculture, mining, construction, manufacturing, service, retail, and more often than not the children end up there. Agriculture, above all, has the most dangerous condition with 71% being dangerous. It is estimated that 22,000 children are killed working, and this is only from the known child labour, much of child labour is unaccounted for. Since children are more vulnerable than adults due to their stage of development, they are at a higher risk for more diseases and lasting effects. In addition, these workplaces can lead to abuse, exploitation, and trafficking. All of this can lead to health problems later in life, children who worked in hazardous conditions are more susceptible to cancer, infertility and other chronic issues. There is also an evident relationship between child labour and education. Majority of children in child labour are deprived of education, which sets them up for even more difficulty later in life by decreasing their job and life opportunities, but they do not have the time to work and go to school. Children are suffering on so many accounts due to child labour.

Current Situation:

Since 2000, child labour trends have declined, but the rate at which it is declining has begun to decrease. In America, there seems to be upward trend in child labour. The number of children employed as a violation of child-labour laws has increased 37% from 2022 and 283% from 2015, and this is only the recorded child labour, there is likely more that is unaccounted for. Many employers are desperate for workers. There is a high demand, and children are the solution, but they are being taken advantage of. In Sub-Saharan Africa about 8.6 million children were subject

to child labour in 2021. These children along with many others are also out of school, meaning they are not getting an education, which is a fundamental human right. There is not one single reason for children, but COVID-19



worsened the situation. Many children left school to work during that time. There is a call to end child labour by 2025, but the question arises on whether or not that is a feasible solution. With the severity of the issue it should be considered how practical ending child labour completely is. There are many initiatives currently in place that are working towards decreasing child labour, or at least making it safe.

Past Actions:

The ILO and UNICEF often work in conjunction to help combat child labour. The ILO has created a plan, Ending Child Labour by 2025 to combat child labour, but many people think ending child labour completely is an impossible feat simply because some countries and families are reliant on children working. Because of that, there are initiatives to make child labour safe

versus ending it completely. One example of this is the CLEAR Cotton project in Pakistan, where the ILO and the Food Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) work to protect children from harmful pesticides. This supports the children that have to work in the cotton field by minimizing the health consequences. The ILO is implementing a TACKLE project to *tackle* child labour with the help of education. The project uses education to prevent child labour and increase opportunities for children.

Questions to Consider:

- How should countries with aging populations deal with child labour when the size of their current workforce is dwindling quickly?
- Is ending child labour completely the solution, or should child labour be accepted but used in a safe manner?
- How can children be ensured their fundamental rights are protected, especially education?

Useful Links:

- <https://endchildlabour2021.org/>
- <https://www.unicef.org/protection/child-labour>
- https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---ipec/documents/publication/wcms_653987.pdf
- https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/news-and-events/stories/child-labour-has-profound-impact-health-and-wellbeing-children_en

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