



THESSISMUN

THESSALONIKI INTERNATIONAL STUDENT
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3rd Committee of the United Nations General Assembly

*Topic Area A: "Conflict, Food Security and
Nutrition: An Imperative to Sustainable
Peace in the 21st Century"*



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Topic Area A: Conflict, Food Security and Nutrition: An Imperative to Sustainable Peace in the 21st Century

TABLE OF CONTENTS

0.	Table of Contents	2
1.	Welcoming Letter	4
2.	Introduction to the Committee	5
3.	Introduction to Topic Area	6
4.	Key Terms' Definitions	8
4.1.	<i>Conflict and Armed Conflict</i>	8
4.2.	<i>Nutrition and Malnutrition</i>	9
4.3.	<i>Food Security and Insecurity</i>	9
4.4.	<i>Hunger</i>	12
4.5.	<i>Food Safety and Unsafe Food</i>	12
4.6.	<i>Famine</i>	12
4.7.	<i>Sustainable Development</i>	14
4.8.	<i>Sustainable/Sustaining Peace</i>	15
5.	Discussion of the Topic	16
5.1.	<i>The Importance of Nutrition: The Right to [Adequate] Food</i>	16
5.2.	<i>The Nexus Between Conflict and Food (In)security</i>	18
5.2.1.	<i>The changing Nature of Conflicts</i>	18
5.2.2.	<i>Conflict as a cause of food insecurity</i>	19
5.2.3.	<i>Conflict as a consequence of food insecurity</i>	20
5.3.	<i>Climate Change, Natural Hazards, Conflict and The Further Degradation of Food Security</i>	21
5.4.	<i>Sustainable Peace; Conflict-sensitive Food Policies & Food Security-sensitive Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Policies</i>	22
6.	Case Studies	23
6.1.	<i>The World's Worst Human-Made Humanitarian Crisis</i>	23
6.2.	<i>Famine in the World's Newest Country</i>	24
7.	Legal Framework	25



7.1. <i>International Human Rights Law (IHRL); On the right to [adequate] food</i>	25
7.2. <i>On the right and concept of [sustainable] development and sustainable peace</i>	26
7.3. <i>Food Assistance Convention</i>	29
7.4. <i>International Humanitarian Law (IHL); Geneva Conventions (1949) and Additional Protocols</i>	30
7.5. <i>World Humanitarian Summit & Agenda for Humanity</i>	30
7.6. <i>UN Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025</i>	31
8. Conclusion	31
9. Points To Be Addressed	32
10. Bibliography	33
11. Further Resources	39



1. Welcoming Letter

Esteemed delegates,

We would like to welcome you all to the Thessaloniki International Student Model United Nations (ThessISMUN) 2019 and, more specifically, to the 3rd Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations. As Board members, we are delighted to preside this Committee in this year's conference and to, of course, meet you in person and participate with you in the committee sessions, since we are utterly confident that you are capable to negotiate, cooperate, debate and argue diplomatically, in order to achieve the goal of the Committee.

This goal is for all of us to expand our knowledge in matters that baffle the international community, to sensitise ourselves when it comes to humanitarian and social issues, to learn how to be diplomats, and, of course, to enjoy ourselves throughout this whole experience.

This year's Topic Areas are quite interesting, rather thought-provoking and also of very high importance. Therefore, very thorough preparation, attention to detail and accurate understanding of the topics are required.

The following Study Guide aims to assist you in your preparation for the Committee Sessions regarding Topic Area A of the Agenda, namely "Conflict, Food Security and Nutrition: An Imperative to Sustainable Peace in the 21st Century". The detection and examination of the relation between conflict, the right to food, nutrition, food security and sustainable peace and development is not an easy task. Instead, it is a challenging and aspiring one, thus rendering our Topic Area a means to create fertile ground for extensive and even heated debates.

Last but not least, given the fact that there are currently numerous case studies that refer to this correlation, each country's policy and stance on each case study can not only prove detrimental for its general position on the matter under discussion, but it can also trigger strong alliances and heated disagreements. Therefore, we urge you to pay attention to the contents of this Guide, a Guide that contains most aspects of the Topic. But, you should always bear in mind that further personal research, focused both on the topic in general, and on your country's policy is more than necessary for a successful preparation.

In conclusion, you may reach us at any point until the very end of the conference. We are here to provide guidance and support, answer your inquiries, and make further explanations, if needed. Take this chance that you have been given and gain a new experience full of new knowledge, acquaintances, confidence and diplomatic courtesy. Use your time

wisely and be prepared, start your research and understand the world around you step by step. We cannot wait to yield the floor to you and hear your thesis!

Yours sincerely,
Fotini Zarogianni, **Chair**
Irene Giannopoulou, **Co-Chair**

2. Introduction to the Committee

The 3rd Committee of the United Nations General Assembly is one of the six main thematic Committees of the United Nations General Assembly. Along with the other five specialised Committees and the UNGA itself, the 3rd Committee was established in 1945¹.

The 3rd GA Committee is the primary forum for the discussion upon all social, cultural and humanitarian issues, as well as human rights questions, including Special Reports of the Human Rights Council². According to the official UNGA website, the topics that the Committee is allowed to address include the following: “*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, the right to self-determination, social development questions such as issues related to youth, family, ageing, persons with disabilities, crime prevention, criminal justice, and international drug control*”³.

The Committee operates under the rules of the United Nations General Assembly, which constitute *Chapter IV* of the Charter of the United Nations. Resolutions passed within its context are **not** binding⁴. On the contrary, they constitute a set of **recommendations** for the Member States to ratify and in accordance to which Member States will adjust themselves⁵. In order to be fully aware of possible proposals and recommendations set within the Committee’s mandate, we totally advise you to examine past recommendations of the 3rd Committee, that can found in its official website⁶.

¹ Ishr.ch. (2018). [online] Available at: https://www.ishr.ch/sites/default/files/article/files/ishr_3rd_com_handbook_eng_web.pdf [Accessed 21 Nov. 2018].

² Un.org. (2018). UN General Assembly - Third Committee - Social, Humanitarian & Cultural. [online] Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/third/> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

³ Ibid.

⁴ Humanrights.ch. (2018). UN General Assembly / Third Committee - humanrights.ch. [online] Available at: <https://www.humanrights.ch/en/standards/un-institutions/ga/> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid, 2.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is the main substantive secretariat to the 3rd Committee⁷. The works of the Committee are attended by all 193 sovereign UN Member States, while non-Member States (e.g. Holy See, State of Palestine) or other entities may be granted the “Permanent Observer” status and, thus, attend and participate in the Committee deliberations by holding the rights of a Full Member, apart from the right to vote, to sponsor, and to nominate candidates⁸.

3. Introduction to the Topic Area

Between 1871 and 1902, a series of famines gave birth to the then known as “Third World”, to the now known as “Developing World”⁹. But hunger was not and is not an issue concerning only countries of this [economic] category, it is something broader, more complex than that.

After a prolonged decline, according to recent reports, hunger seems to be once again on the rise, shifting the attention of the international community¹⁰. On the other hand, conflicts – their number is rising nowadays¹¹ – constitute the single greatest driver of humanitarian crisis today, and the biggest threat to the achievement of a more prosperous, stable and sustainable future¹².

Mass starvation is not only caused by climatic crises or natural disasters; on the contrary, it is the result of social systems that make people vulnerable to the effects of those crises, the result of state practice – the conflict factor can be attached here – the result of global economics etc. In fact, according to an often-quoted passage by Susan George, “*hunger is not a scourge but a scandal*” and starvation is ultimately a *lato sensu*¹³ “policy option”, something that urges the scientific community to go against the ideology that solely

⁷ Unitar.org. (2018). [online] Available at: https://www.unitar.org/ny/sites/unitar.org/ny/files/UN_PGA_Handbook.pdf [Accessed 21 Nov. 2018].

⁸ Un.org. (2018). About Permanent Observers. [online] Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/sections/member-states/about-permanent-observers/index.html> [Accessed 18 Nov. 2018].

⁹ Marks, S. and Clapham, A. (2013). International human rights lexicon. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, pp.163-178.

¹⁰ Fao.org. (2002). *Food, Security, Justice and Peace*. [online] Available at: <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsummit/msd/Y6808e.htm> [Accessed 18 Nov. 2018].

¹¹ (www.dw.com), D. (2018). *Global conflict continues to rise, index shows | DW | 06.06.2018*. [online] DW.COM. Available at: <https://www.dw.com/en/global-conflict-continues-to-rise-index-shows/a-44090159> [Accessed 24 Nov. 2018].

¹² Ibid, 10.

¹³ Meaning in the broad sense, generally.

blames hunger on nature and, more importantly, to question “*the role of human agency in causing and sustaining [food crises]*”¹⁴.

Discussions on global hunger always begin with statistics; in 2016, the number of chronically undernourished people in the world is estimated to have increased to 815 million, while, in 2017, almost 124 million people across 51 countries faced critically acute food insecurity and required urgent humanitarian action¹⁵. Despite the fact that such food crises are driven by numerous factors – varying from natural to man-made ones – evidence shows that, in 2017, conflict and insecurity were the major drivers of acute food insecurity, even famines, in 18 conflict-torn countries, leaving behind millions of food insecure people both on the move and within their own borders (Northern Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, area of Palestine, Afghanistan and Myanmar)¹⁶.

With the most notable case studies being Yemen, Syria, and the wider African region, it is visible that there is a two-fold nexus between conflict and food insecurity; on the one hand, conflict causes and/or exacerbates food insecurity and related diseases, while, on the other, issues such as long-standing disputes over the allocation of land and other resources, constitute elements that may lead to the outbreak of conflicts. Conflicts are both a driving factor and a consequence of food insecurity; they cause and are caused by it.

With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016–2025 calling on all countries and stakeholders to act together to end hunger and prevent all forms of malnutrition by 2030, the aforementioned nexus between conflict and food (in)security should be further examined, while the way conflict-sensitive approaches to food (in)security and nutrition could vitally contribute to sustaining peace and sustainable development – therefore a second nexus – ought to be placed on the negotiating table.

4. Key Terms’ Definitions

Within this chapter of this Guide, all important terms relevant to the topic under discussion will be defined and presented in order for the content of the topic to be understood perfectly.

¹⁴ Ibid, 6.

¹⁵ The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017. Building resilience for peace and food security. (2017). [ebook] Rome, FAO.: FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-17695e.pdf> [Accessed 18 Nov. 2018].

¹⁶ Ibid, 10.

4.1. Conflict and Armed Conflict

A “conflict” is the fighting between two or more groups of people or countries¹⁷. “Armed conflict” is more complex; there are only two distinguishable types of it:

- i. International armed conflict, namely the conflict between two or more states¹⁸. This is the most common type of armed conflict, meaning that it is similar to the traditional legal meaning of the concept of “war”¹⁹. Common Article 2 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 indicates that such a conflict exists when two or more of the High Contracting Parties (to the Conventions) resource to armed force against another State, regardless of the justification, background or intensity of this confrontation²⁰.
- ii. Non-international armed conflict, namely the armed conflict between governmental forces and non-governmental armed groups, or between such groups only²¹. On the one hand, this conflict is defined in Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 as the ‘armed conflict not of an international character occurring in the territory of one of the High Contracting Parties’²². In order to be characterised as such, the hostilities should reach a minimum level of intensity, meaning that they must rise above mere “riots or internal and sporadic acts of violence”, and, secondly, the involved non-governmental armed groups should have such a decent level of organisation and such an effective command that their ability to efficiently carry out military operations is visibly facilitated²³.

On the other hand, another definition can be found in Article 1 of the Additional Protocol II of 1977 to the Geneva Conventions²⁴. The latter can be characterised as

¹⁷ Dictionary.cambridge.org. (2018). *CONFLICT* | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. [online] Available at: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/conflict> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

¹⁸ State Library of NSW. (2018). Types of armed conflict. [online] Available at: <https://legalanswers.sl.nsw.gov.au/hot-topics-80-international-humanitarian-law/types-armed-conflict> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ International Committee of the Red Cross, “How is the Term “Armed Conflict” Defined in International Humanitarian Law?” Opinion Paper, March 2008, [online] Available at: <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/opinion-paper-armed-conflict.pdf> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid, 18.

²³ Ibid, 5.

²⁴ Ihl-databases.icrc.org. (2018). Treaties, States parties, and Commentaries - Additional Protocol (II) to the Geneva Conventions, 1977 - 1 - Material field of application. [online] Available at: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Article.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=93F022B3010AA404C12563CD0051E738> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

narrower than the former, since there are two qualifiers that narrow its applicability. Firstly, it introduces a requirement of territorial control by the involved non-governmental militia, something that increases their ability to maintain well-organised military operations, and, secondly, it applies only when governmental forces clash with non-governmental armed forces or other organised armed groups and not between multiple non-governmental ones as foreseen in Article 3²⁵.

4.2. *Nutrition and Malnutrition*

The term “nutrition” refers to the process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health and growth²⁶. It envisages the intake of food, considered in relation to the body’s dietary needs.

On the other hand, poor nutrition or malnutrition refer to deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person’s intake of energy and/or nutrients²⁷. It can lead to reduced immunity, increased susceptibility to disease, impaired physical and mental development, while undernutrition, including micronutrient deficiencies, and overweight/obesity constitute two types of malnutrition^{28 29}. Acute malnutrition is distinguishable from food insecurity in general, but its existence can be taken into account during the examination process on whether food insecurity conditions are met.

4.3. *Food Security and Insecurity*

The concept of food security is a quite complex and sometimes controversial, but also a flexible one. It has, in fact, troubled the international community for a long time; it came to its attention as early as the 1940s, but it really came to the fore at the 1970s and never left the spotlight since³⁰.

The 1974 World Food Summit defined food security as the “*availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food*”

²⁵ Ibid, 20.

²⁶ Oxford Dictionaries | English. (2018). *nutrition* | Definition of nutrition in English by Oxford Dictionaries. [online] Available at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/nutrition> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].

²⁷ World Health Organization. (2018). What is malnutrition? [online] Available at: <http://www.who.int/features/qa/malnutrition/en/> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

²⁸ World Health Organization. (2018). Q&A: Malnutrition and emergencies. [online] Available at: <http://www.who.int/features/qa/malnutrition-emergencies/en/> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

²⁹ World Health Organization. (2018). Nutrition. [online] Available at: <http://www.who.int/topics/nutrition/en/> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

³⁰ Christensen, C. (1978). *The Right to food*. Delhi: Centre for the Study of Developing Societies.

consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices”³¹. A 1983 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) extended definition, as well as a 1986 World Bank and a 1994 United Nations’ Development Program (UNDP) view of the term were to follow³². In 1996, the World Food Summit adopted a more complex definition: “Food security, at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels [is achieved] when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”, while this definition is again refined in The State of Food Insecurity 2001 as follows: “Food security [is] a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”³³.

Given that apart from the official definitions above, there are hundreds more in theory and science, the FAO itself presented two useful working definitions:

Food security exists when all people, and at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life³⁴. Household food security is the application of this concept to the family level, with individuals within households as the focus of concern³⁵. Thus, it is appropriate to indicate the dimensions/constituents of food security, all of which must be fulfilled simultaneously, in order for food safety to be considered as existing^{36 37}:

- i. [Food] Availability: It refers to the “supply side” of food security and is determined by the level of food production, stock levels and net trade³⁸.
- ii. Economic and Physical [Food] Access: Access is defined as the affordability and allocation of food, as well as the preferences of individuals and households. It depends on whether people have enough income to purchase food at prevailing prices or have enough land and other resources to grow their own food³⁹.

³¹ Un.org. (2018). United Nations Official Document. [online] Available at: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CONF.65/20 [Accessed 23 Nov. 2018].

³² TRADE REFORMS AND FOOD SECURITY: CONCEPTUALIZING THE LINKAGES. (2003). [ebook] FAO. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-y4671e.pdf> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2018].

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Fao.org. (2006). [online] Available at: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/al936e/al936e00.pdf> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2018].

³⁷ Fao.org. (2003). [online] Available at: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/faotaly/documents/pdf/Food_Security_Concept_Note.pdf [Accessed 23 Nov. 2018].

³⁸ Ibid, 32.

³⁹ Ibid, 32.

iii. Utilisation: Utilization is commonly understood as the way the body makes the most of various nutrients in the food through an adequate diet, in combination with clean water, sanitation and health care, in order to reach a state of nutritional well-being where all physiological needs are met. It is, thus, visible that *non-food inputs* affect food security as well⁴⁰.

iv. Stability: Access to adequate food must exist at all times and in all cases. Stability is, thus, interconnected both with availability and accessibility⁴¹.

On the other hand, food insecurity exists when people do not have adequate physical, social or economic access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food as defined above. Based on duration, experts identify two types of food insecurity, namely chronic and transitory food insecurity, while seasonal food insecurity lies somewhere in-between these two⁴². Based, now, on severity, and given the spectrum nature of food insecurity, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), which includes specialists from humanitarian agencies, including the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the UN World Food Programme (WFP), as well as leading Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Government Aid Agencies, has identified the following phases^{43 44}: i. (Generally) Food Secure, ii. Chronically Food Insecure, iii. Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis, iv. Humanitarian Emergency, v. Famine/Humanitarian Catastrophe.

Generally, food insecurity constitutes a strong biological and psychosocial stressor that increases the risk of poor mental, social, physical, and psycho-emotional development of individuals across their life course.

4.4. *Hunger*

⁴⁰ Ibid, 32.

⁴¹ Ibid, 32.

⁴² Ibid, 19.

⁴³ Ipcinfo.org. (2018). IPC Global Platform. [online] Available at: <http://www.ipcinfo.org/> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

⁴⁴ Ipcinfo.org. (2018). IPC Overview and Classification System | IPC Global Platform. [online] Available at: <http://www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-website/ipc-overview-and-classification-system/en/> [Accessed 24 Nov. 2018].

It is the feeling of discomfort or weakness caused by lack of food, coupled with the desire to eat⁴⁵. All people that are in a state of hunger are also food insecure, but not the opposite; all food insecure people are not hungry since there are other causes of food insecurity apart from the actual intake of food, including those due to poor intake of micro-nutrients⁴⁶.

4.5. *Food Safety and Unsafe Food*

Food safety is a scientific discipline describing the process of handling, preparation, cooking, preservation and storage of food in ways that prevent foodborne illness. If these conditions are not met, food becomes unsafe, creating fertile ground for infectious diseases to thrive⁴⁷.

Food safety constitutes the normality, while unsafe food and lack of food safety appear when the processes above are not met, something that usually happens amid or after a crisis or natural disaster faced by a nation⁴⁸. Food safety problems vary in nature, severity and extent, depend on the situation during the emergency or disaster and can happen at *all stages* of the food chain, from production to consumption. This is why, the World Health Organization (WHO) has created the “Five Keys for Safer Food”, namely i. Keep clean, ii. Separate raw and cooked, iii. Cook thoroughly, iv. Keep food at safe temperatures, v. Use safe water and raw materials⁴⁹. All of them aim at achieving and maintaining food safety, something that lies at the hands both of people themselves and of their Governments⁵⁰.

4.6. *Famine*

According to the Cambridge English Dictionary, famine is a situation in which there is not enough food for a substantial number of people, causing illness and death, or a particular

⁴⁵ Google.gr. (2018). *hunger definition - Google Search*. [online] Available at: <https://www.google.gr/search?q=hunger+definition&oq=hunger+defi&aqs=chrome.1.69i57j69i59j0l4.3309j1j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].

⁴⁶ Ibid, 19.

⁴⁷ Study.com. (2018). *Food Safety: Definition & Guidelines | Study.com*. [online] Available at: <https://study.com/academy/lesson/food-safety-definition-guidelines.html> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].

⁴⁸ Who.int. (2018). [online] Available at: http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/hygiene/emergencies/em2002chap9.pdf [Accessed 21 Nov. 2018].

⁴⁹ Apps.who.int. (2006). [online] Available at: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/43546/9789241594639_eng.pdf;jsessionid=F8929A127025ED5040C9FD3A0282E848?sequence=1 [Accessed 21 Nov. 2018].

⁵⁰ World Health Organization. (2018). *The Five Keys to Safer Food Programme*. [online] Available at: http://www.who.int/foodsafety/areas_work/food-hygiene/5keys/en/ [Accessed 21 Nov. 2018].

period when this happens⁵¹. The exact definition of famine, though, is a bit more complex than the aforementioned and its exact elements have long troubled the international community.

More specifically, a famine can be declared only when certain criteria of mortality, malnutrition and hunger are met. More precisely, at least 20% of households in an area under question must be facing extreme food shortages with a limited ability to cope with them, and significant mortality, directly attributable to outright starvation or to the interaction of malnutrition and disease, must be occurring (death rates must exceed two per 10,000 people per day)⁵². These standards have been developed by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)⁵³.

The strictness of the criteria clearly indicates that famine only applies to a situation of a sequential and causal series of events between severe food deficits, acute malnutrition and the final expression of numerous deaths. This way, it not only applies to extremely severe situations, as for example the current situation in Yemen, but it is also placed at the extreme end of a long spectrum of what is known as food security (food security, food insecurity, food crisis, famine) – famine is predictable, one can see it coming⁵⁴.

Moving on, it should be noted that famine severely weakens the immune system; the body becomes more susceptible to diseases that can be fatal if left untreated, such as cholera, diarrhoeal diseases, malaria, measles, pneumonia etc.⁵⁵. Technically, the one responsible for declaring famine in a country is the respective Government of the state itself. Sometimes, however, when the Government is unable or unwilling to do so – the latter happened in Niger in 2005 – the United Nations are the ones that will declare famine – happened in Somalia in 2011⁵⁶.

⁵¹ Dictionary, F. (2018). *FAMINE* | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. [online] Dictionary.cambridge.org. Available at: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/famine> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].

⁵² More information on the prerequisites of declaring famine can be found here: Ipcinfo.org. (2018). [online] Available at: http://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Famine_Guidelines_Nov16.pdf [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

⁵³ Ibid, 22.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 6.

⁵⁵ World Health Organization. (2018). *Food insecurity and famine*. [online] Available at: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/famine/en/> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

⁵⁶ The Guardian. (2017). *Famine: what does it really mean and how do aid workers treat it?*. [online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2017/feb/12/famine-threat-humanity-world-food-organisation> [Accessed 21 Nov. 2018].

4.7. Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is the notion of “*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability and capacity of future generations to meet their own needs*”, according to the 1987 publication of “*Our Common Future*”, a Report from the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission)⁵⁷. It does so via guaranteeing the balance between economic growth, care for the environment and social and political well-being; thus, sustainable development’s core is the harmonisation of three core elements that represent three overlapping cycles, namely economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection, as it is seen in the picture⁵⁸. Sustainable development is, therefore, understood as a process infiltrated by principles and values with the aim to achieving a resilient, inclusive and sustainable future both for humanity and the planet itself⁵⁹.

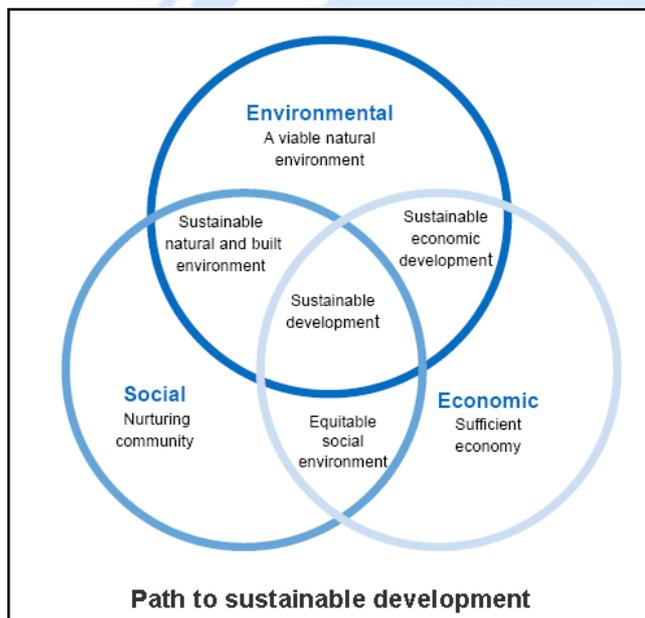


Figure 1

The concept of sustainable development

Within this concept, in 2017, the international community adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development^{60 61}, while all the aforementioned, are inextricably linked with the right to development, a right recognised by the international community, including via the UN Declaration on the Right to Development of 1986⁶². More specifically, Article 1 of the Declaration provides a to-the-point definition of the right; “*The right to*

⁵⁷ FSDS. (2018). What is sustainable development? - FSDS. [online] Available at: <http://www.fdsd.org/the-challenge/what-is-sustainable-development/> [Accessed 18 Nov. 2018].

⁵⁸ Computing for Sustainability. (2018). *Visualising sustainability*. [online] Available at: <https://computingforsustainability.com/2009/03/15/visualising-sustainability/> [Accessed 26 Nov. 2018].

⁵⁹ Acciona.com. (2018). What is Sustainable Development and what are the Global Goals? | ACCIONA. [online] Available at: <https://www.acciona.com/sustainable-development/> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

⁶⁰ United Nations Sustainable Development. (2018). The Sustainable Development Agenda - United Nations Sustainable Development. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

⁶¹ More detailed information regarding some Goals that are directly connected to the matter under discussion will be provided in the “*Legal Framework*” section of this Guide.

⁶² Un.org. (2018). [online] Available at: http://www.un.org/en/events/righttodevelopment/pdf/rtd_at_a_glance.pdf [Accessed 24 Nov. 2018].

development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized. The human right to development also implies the full realization of the right of peoples to self-determination, which includes, subject to the relevant provisions of both International Covenants on Human Rights, the exercise of their inalienable right to full sovereignty over all their natural wealth and resources.”⁶³.

As a last remark, it is vital to mention that this right creates obligations and responsibilities for States to not only act individually, but also collectively either on a global or on a regional basis, with a view to establishing the prerequisites for the implementation of the right to development ⁶⁴. All in all, the right to development gave birth to the notion of sustainable development and both, together, led to the SDGs, setting the so-needed foundations for the progress of today’s world.

4.8. Sustainable/Sustaining Peace

The concept of sustainable or sustaining peace has been endorsed both by the United Nations’ General Assembly (UNGA) and the United Nations’ Security Council (UNSC). It refers to and places great emphasis upon the need of adopting long-term, resilient, well-structured responses to violent conflicts, in order to avoid the lapsing and relapsing into conflict⁶⁵, while ensuring the thriving of progress and development.

Therefore, the notion of sustainable/sustaining peace clearly refers to the whole planning *process* when dealing with the reconstruction, long-term progress and “revival” of a worn-torn state or when dealing merely with prevention measures as regards conflict.

More accurately according to UNGA’s A/RES/70/262, “*sustaining peace, as drawn from the Advisory Group of Experts report* ⁶⁶, *should be broadly understood as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account, which encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation, and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development, and emphasizing that sustaining peace is*

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ This concept is commonly referred to as the “vicious circle” of conflict.

⁶⁶ The challenge of Sustaining Peace. (2015). [ebook] United Nations. Available at: <https://www.un.org/pga/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/07/300615-The-Challenge-of-Sustaining-Peace.pdf> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

a shared task and responsibility that needs to be fulfilled by the Government and all other national stakeholders, and should flow through all three pillars of the United Nations engagement at all stages of conflict, and in all its dimensions, and needs sustained international attention and assistance”⁶⁷.

Thus, it is visible how sustainable development is key to sustaining peace and vice versa – SDG 16 clearly proves that. According to the UN itself, sustaining peace and sustainable development are two sides of the same coin, and this is the fundamental principle that the United Nations of the 21st century must now stand for⁶⁸.

5. Discussion of the Topic

In the following lines, the most crucial aspects of the topic under discussion will be presented and explained in detail. This year’s topic includes several notions, all of which should be carefully examined and understood for the best preparation. Food, Conflict, Food Security and Insecurity and Sustainable Peace constitute the five main aspects of the topic and, thus, one can find them bellow.

5.1. *The Importance of Nutrition: The Right to [Adequate] Food*

The international community, aware of the importance of food for survival and human dignity⁶⁹, recognised the human right to adequate food, a right vital for the exercise of other fundamental human rights, such as the right to life. This right is enshrined in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)⁷⁰, in Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR – 1966)⁷¹, as well as in other human rights treaties and in humanitarian law.

⁶⁷ Un.org. (2018). United Nations Official Document. [online] Available at: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/262 [Accessed 18 Nov. 2018].

⁶⁸ coin, S., Magdy Martínez-Solimán, U. and Oscar Fernández-Taranco, U. (2018). *Sustainable development and sustaining peace: Two sides of the same coin*. [online] UNDP. Available at: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/blog/2017/7/20/Sustainable-development-and-sustaining-peace-Two-sides-of-the-same-coin.html> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

⁶⁹ Ibid, 30.

⁷⁰ Un.org. (1948). [online] Available at: http://www.un.org/en/udhrbook/pdf/udhr_booklet_en_web.pdf [Accessed 24 Nov. 2018].

⁷¹ Ohchr.org. (1966). *OHCHR | International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx> [Accessed 24 Nov. 2018].

What is more, in 2000, the UN Commission on Human Rights established the position of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food⁷², a move that has been and is constantly being enlightening both as regards the exact content of the right, its implementation and violations, as well as regards modern problems and obstacles to its implementation that arise from day to day⁷³.

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in its General Comment 12 of 1999 has defined the right under discussion as follows; “*The right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, have physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement.*”⁷⁴. Pursuant to this definition, as well as to the Special Rapporteur’s definition, it is clearly visible that the right has three main elements; availability, accessibility, adequacy – elements that have already been addressed above as defining constituents of food security⁷⁵.

However, it is vital to underline that the right to food and food security differ; the former is a totally legally binding human right that creates entitlements to individuals and imposes obligations on States and International Organisations to respect, protect and fulfil the right to food, while the latter is not a legal concept per se that creates any obligations⁷⁶.

There is, though, a connection between the progressive realisation of the right to food – as it is enshrined in Article 2 of the ICESCR – and food security, since this realisation aims at ensuring the exact constituents and foundations of food security. For this purpose, the FAO adopted, in 2004, a set of Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, something that has surely constituted a useful tool⁷⁷.

Furthermore, given the general topic of this Guide, it is crucial to point out that in its General Comment 12, the CESCR noted that “*States must always and by all means refrain from food embargoes or relevant measures that endanger food production and food access in*

⁷² Righttofood.org. (2018). *What is the Right to Food? | Right to food.* [online] Available at: <http://www.righttofood.org/work-of-jean-ziegler-at-the-un/what-is-the-right-to-food/> [Accessed 24 Nov. 2018].

⁷³ Marks, S. and Clapham, A. (2013). *International human rights lexicon.* Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, pp.163-178.

⁷⁴ Refugees, U. (1999). *Refworld | General Comment No. 12: The Right to Adequate Food (Art. 11 of the Covenant).* [online] Refworld. Available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4538838c11.html> [Accessed 24 Nov. 2018].

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ The Right to Adequate Food - Fact Sheet No. 34. (2010). [ebook] Geneva: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FactSheet34en.pdf> [Accessed 21 Nov. 2018].

⁷⁷ Digitallibrary.un.org. (2018). [online] Available at: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/542830/files/E_CN.4_2005_131-EN.pdf [Accessed 24 Nov. 2018].

other countries.”⁷⁸. Forcible or corrupt seizure of natural resources, destruction of foodstuffs, blocking humanitarian assistance, and displacement from land, homes, fishing grounds and livestock grazing areas as well as other resources essential for livelihoods are deliberate tactics of war, always in violation of international law. In other words, food must never be used as an instrument of political and economic pressure⁷⁹. Such an aspect of the right to food is undeniably related to numerous ongoing food crises – or at least it should be.

5.2. The Nexus Between Conflict and Food (In)security

5.2.1 The changing nature of conflicts

While it was in decline in the late 1990s and early 2000s and reached an all-time-low in 2005, the number of conflicts globally has and is increasing markedly from 2008 onwards, now reaching an all-time-high⁸⁰. It is alarming to hear that global “peacefulness” has deteriorated by 2.38 % since 2008, according to the *Global Peace Index* (2018)⁸¹.

Furthermore, it is undisputable that the nature and complexity of conflicts nowadays is changing, constantly. The number of civil wars has almost tripled in the past decade compared to the prior period; the conflict between states/interstate conflict is becoming the “exception”, while intrastate conflicts, meaning conflicts within nations – even though the interference of forces of third countries exists sometimes – have become the “rule”, the predominant form of conflicts today⁸².

What is more, technology has extended the deadly consequences of warfare, while conflict repercussions can be felt across borders or even continents (e.g. refugee crisis, diseases, economic crisis, disruption of trade). It is important to also mention that conflicts do have a say in the stability and general situation of a region even after their end (the post-conflict period); long-term consequences also exist and can become as catastrophic as the ones during conflict.

During the last decade, there has been an increase in levels of food security worldwide, something that has been associated with the rising number of conflicts, as

⁷⁸ Ibid, 74.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 47.

⁸⁰ Visionofhumanity.org. (2018). [online] Available at: <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2018/06/Global-Peace-Index-2018-2.pdf> [Accessed 28 Nov. 2018].

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² I.unu.edu. (2017). [online] Available at: https://i.unu.edu/media/cpr.unu.edu/attachment/2534/OC_10-CivilWarTrendsandChangingNatureofArmedConflict-05-2017.pdf [Accessed 28 Nov. 2018].

mentioned above⁸³. Thus, experts have been constantly urging the international community to address the nexus between conflict and insecurity. This can surely be justified if one considers that this nexus is a two-folded; conflict has a detrimental impact on food security, while deteriorations of food security conditions, in combination with other socioeconomic grievances, create fertile ground or exacerbate conflict⁸⁴.

5.2.2 *Conflict as a cause of food insecurity*

Concerning the first part of the aforementioned nexus, accurate reports have pointed out that the vast majority of food insecure people live in countries affected by conflict and, more broadly, by protracted crises and increased fragility: 489 million out of a total of 815 million chronically undernourished in 2016 were in such countries⁸⁵. These numbers prove the endemic correlation among conflict and food insecurity; what they do not indicate, though, is that the impact of conflict on food security levels cannot be determined “in abstracto”⁸⁶ or “a priori”⁸⁷. This impact is strictly context-specific and dependent on the exact socioeconomic situation of the country, on the vulnerability of livelihoods, as well as on the nature, duration and intensity of conflicts. Therefore, it should always be measured and examined “in concreto”, meaning with reference to actual, verifiable facts, rather than theoretically, and on a case-by-case basis.

However, there is common ground in terms of how different conflicts affect food security. Generally, conflicts tend to have multiple compounding detrimental impacts – either direct or indirect – on more than one sections of a country’s well-being, some of them being economy, trade (imports, exports), public finances and services, food production, food systems, environment, and rural livelihoods⁸⁸. Deep economic recessions, embargoes and sanctions, blocking of humanitarian aid, increased inflation, unemployment, poor social protection, deteriorating health conditions and diseases, physical destruction of land, water, biological and social resources for production, plundering of crops and livestock, harvests and food reserves, lack of agriculture and fishing-related tools constitute, among others, consequences of conflict, but also drivers of food insecurity⁸⁹.

⁸³ See “Introduction to the Topic” section of this Guide.

⁸⁴ Fao.org. (n.d.). *Food, Security, Justice and Peace*. [online] Available at: http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsummit/msd/Y6808e.htm#P28_7876 [Accessed 15 Nov. 2018].

⁸⁵ Ibid, 10.

⁸⁶ In or from an abstract point of view.

⁸⁷ In a way based on theoretical deduction rather than empirical observation.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 10.

⁸⁹ Asvis.it. (2018). [online] Available at: <http://asvis.it/public/asvis/files/a-i5521e%281%29.pdf> [Accessed 28 Nov. 2018].

All aspects mentioned above share a common characteristic; they refer to the period during conflict. The “legacy” of conflict, though, often lasts long after the violence has subsided, namely during the post-conflict period⁹⁰. This also constitutes one of the main reasons conflict is seen as a major impediment to development. Regarding food insecurity, its post-conflict existence can be attributed, among others, to the destruction of assets and resources, the lack of human capital (killed, severely injured, displaced, refugees), the damage and/or pollution of the environment, the shattering of health, education and social services, as well as the lack of necessary know-how⁹¹.

5.2.3 Conflict as a consequence of food insecurity

Moving on to the second part of the conflict-food security relation, it should be noted the drivers of conflicts are nonlinear and include a wide variety of factors, such as political, economic, social and environmental issues, all of which are interrelated and cannot be examined without them being understood as a complex whole⁹².

Within this pool of drivers, experts have and are placing food insecurity; food insecurity can and is fuelling, triggering or sustaining conflicts – particularly in contexts suffering by increased inequalities and weak institutions – but it does not constitute the sole source, nor does it always and necessarily lead to conflict; the precise contribution of hunger and food insecurity to conflict is difficult to assess, but it surely exists.

This remark can be practically detected in the events of the Arab Spring (2011), following the global rise of food prices in 2008; the protests in Tunisia were initially demonstrations against high bread prices, but public outrage over high food prices was not the only cause of the 2011 uprisings, it was simply one of the crucial ones⁹³. Once again, the post-conflict period is also crucial; post-conflict countries with important levels of food insecurity are 40 % more likely to relapse into conflict within a ten-year time span than those with low levels⁹⁴. Therefore, it can be argued that food insecurity is a threat multiplier⁹⁵.

⁹⁰ Resurge2018.com. (2018). [online] Available at: https://resurge2018.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/breaking_the_cycle.pdf [Accessed 24 Nov. 2018].

⁹¹ Ibid, 10.

⁹² Documents.wfp.org. (2011). [online] Available at: https://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/newsroom/wfp238358.pdf?_ga=2.99548246.911260291.1543257484-576187511.1535746617 [Accessed 29 Nov. 2018].

⁹³ Ibid, 63.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 10.

⁹⁵ Hendrix, C. and Brinkman, H.-J., 2013. Food Insecurity and Conflict Dynamics: Causal Linkages and Complex Feedbacks. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 2(2), p.Art. 26. DOI. Available at: <http://doi.org/10.5334/sta.bm> [Accessed 1 Dec. 2018].

Possible catalysts of conflict are sudden spikes in food prices/price volatility (such as the ones in 2007-2008), competition over control of natural resources, such as land and water, required for food production, rising global population and rising global nutrition needs, climate change and its effects on food production capacity and migration patterns ⁹⁶. Regarding the latter one should proceed with a more detailed examination as follows.

All these cases referring to conflict as a result of food insecurity indicate that people will resort to violence when their human security, including food security, is threatened, especially when there is a lack of formal and informal, state or not, institutions that are able and willing to mediate such risks and alleviate insecurity.

5.3. Climate Change, Natural Hazards, Conflict and The Further Degradation of Food Security

Climate change and related extreme weather events are expected to *exacerbate* the driving factors of conflict via increased pressures on populations to move and requisite needs for humanitarian action. Whilst climate change *per se* is not necessarily associated with violence, the combination of vulnerability to climate change and broader institutional and socio-economic fragility, as mentioned above, can increase the potential for conflict.

This “climate-conflict nexus” is characterized by interconnection between two key elements within the concept of climate change vulnerability: weak institutions and pre-existing social fragility ⁹⁷. Significantly, these factors are mainly detected in economies that are extensively dependent on subsistence agriculture ⁹⁸. In other words, one can see a chain of events being formed; climate change creates fertile ground for (extreme) food insecurity, something that multiplies the possibility of conflict eruption, thus forming the climate-conflict nexus.

On the other hand, problems of acute food insecurity and malnutrition are or tend to be magnified where natural hazards, such as droughts or floods⁹⁹, not necessarily attributed to climate change, compound the consequences of conflicts. The agricultural sector is extremely sensitive to natural hazards and disasters. That was the case in Syria, when a severe drought

⁹⁶ Web.worldbank.org. (2011). [online] Available at: http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01306/web/pdf/wdr%20background%20paper_bora%20et%20a1.pdf [Accessed 1 Dec. 2018].

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ More: geophysical (earthquakes, tsunamis and mass movements); droughts; floods; storms (including tropical, extra-tropical and convective); wildfires; extreme temperatures; biological disasters (epidemics, infestations).

across the Syrian Arab Republic in 2006-2007 led to the collapse of the country's agricultural system, adding fuel to the fire of the ongoing war¹⁰⁰.

In other words, natural hazards can either affect an ongoing conflict by facilitating the degradation of its food security levels and, thus, by exacerbating conflict (indirect impact), or it can lead to the initial eruption of a conflict, if they hold a certain amount of significance and catastrophic consequences (direct impact)¹⁰¹.

5.4. Sustainable Peace; Conflict-sensitive Food Policies & Food Security-sensitive Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Policies

If food insecurity is a threat multiplier for conflict, then improving food security could potentially reduce tensions, contribute to stability and, eventually to peace and development. Food security should, thus, be considered as an indispensable link in the process of achieving peace, within the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals and, more importantly, within the context of sustaining peace. After all, *prosperous societies consist of well-fed people, safe and secure lives, the fulfilment of rights and freedoms, economic growth, and stable environments.*"¹⁰².

Food security improvement can be achieved via two channels, via the two sides of the same coin; namely, conflict-sensitive food policies, on the one hand, and food security-sensitive conflict prevention and post-conflict policies, on the other¹⁰³. The former refers to building upon the resilience of the whole food chain (food production, food markets/distribution, food consumption), while the latter refers to the measures and frameworks to-be-adopted that have to do with the addressing and confronting of the root causes of conflict¹⁰⁴. If both types of policies are endorsed, then both scales of the two-fold nexus of conflict-food security will be dealt with.

For example, food policies include, among others, the shielding consumers and producers from food price shocks, reduction of price volatility, while conflict prevention and post-conflict policies include, among others, the creation of early warning systems on food security levels, the driving of recovery through agriculture, the bringing of new life to

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 10.

¹⁰¹ FAO, (2017). *The impact of disasters and crises on agriculture and food security*. [online] Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/I8656EN/i8656en.pdf> [Accessed 1 Dec. 2018].

¹⁰² ReliefWeb. (2018). *There Can Be No Sustainable Peace Without Food Security - World*. [online] Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/there-can-be-no-sustainable-peace-without-food-security> [Accessed 1 Dec. 2018].

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 25.

shattered homes and communities, the motivation of people to come together after a conflict, the relevant shaping of peacebuilding operations and reconstruction measures^{105 106}. Special attention should be given to the building of resilience to natural hazards and climate change.

6. Case Studies

In order for the even further examination of the topic under discussion, it is considered quite useful to examine case studies referring to this topic. Therefore, two case studies, namely that of Yemen and South Sudan, will be presented and, thus, should be addressed during your preparation, as well as during the debate within the Committee.

6.1. *The World's Worst Human-Made Humanitarian Crisis*

Yemen – starting from 2015 – is currently facing “the world’s worst human-made humanitarian crisis”, according to UN reports that are describing the unprecedented disaster in the country as such. 22.2 million Yemenis remain in need of humanitarian assistance (approximately 75% of the total population), 8.4 million are on the brink of famine¹⁰⁷, 16 million lack access to safe and clean water and sanitation, 16.4 million lack access to adequate healthcare, diphtheria has affected a sizeable number of the population, while a cholera outbreak has affected over one million people and still threatening the country¹⁰⁸. Overall, the Yemenis are being slowly strangled to death.

This situation is directly caused and fuelled by the ongoing conflict in Yemen among the Houthi Rebels and the Yemeni Forces & the Arab Coalition. Such tremendous percentages of food insecurity, though, were not formed only due to the existence of “simple” hostilities. The “de facto” Saudi-led land, naval and air blockade on rebel-held territories, that was imposed

¹⁰⁵ Fao.org. (2018). *FAO - News Article: Helping farmers helps peace*. [online] Available at: <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1146356/icode/> [Accessed 1 Dec. 2018].

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 25, 64, 66, 70.

¹⁰⁷ Generally, 18 million Yemenis are food insecure, but 8.4 million of them are severely food insecure, meaning they are on the brink of famine, according to World Food Programme (WFP). For more: Wwf1.wfp.org. (2018). *Yemen emergency | World Food Programme*. [online] Available at: <http://www1.wfp.org/emergencies/yemen-emergency> [Accessed 3 Dec. 2018].

¹⁰⁸ Cfr.org. (2018). *Global Conflict Tracker*. [online] Available at: https://www.cfr.org/interactives/global-conflict-tracker?cid=ppc-Google-grant-conflict-tracker-031116&gclid=CjwKEAIAj7TCBRcp2Z22ue-zrj4SjACG7SBEH9uE_raTezclufDr28x3vGe1FFlO2Y7kt4ui1PzWKxoCO5Tw_wcB#!/conflict/war-in-yemen [Accessed 3 Dec. 2018].

with a view to cutting off the flow of weapons to Houthis, as well as the deliberate destruction of major roads, have proven to be detrimental for the population¹⁰⁹.

For a country that imports 90% of its staple food, 70% of its fuel and 100% of its medical supplies, such an act is undeniably disastrous¹¹⁰. Lack of food, led to extreme food insecurity and extremely elevated risk of famine, lack of fuel led to non-safe and unclean water further facilitating the rise of cholera, while lack of medical supplies led to preventable deaths¹¹¹.

Overall, it should be noted that, at the moment, Yemen is at level 4 (humanitarian crisis) of the IPC scale, but it is on a steady orbit to level 5, meaning a declaration of famine¹¹².

6.2. *Famine in the World's Newest Country*

South Sudan gained independence in 2011 and it, thus, became the world's newest country¹¹³. It was not long until a civil war broke out in 2013 and is still ongoing; South Sudan's food insecurity status never left the spotlight since¹¹⁴.

Food insecurity levels were not "healthy" even before the conflict, but what really caused their tremendous rise was persistent conflict, disruption of livelihoods, blocking of main supply routes, poor economic conditions, the depreciation of the South Sudanese pound, challenges faced in the delivery of humanitarian assistance, 1.7 million internally displaced people and another 2.5 million refugees in neighbouring countries¹¹⁵. The devastating consequences of a conflict are, once again, the driving force of food insecurity¹¹⁶.

The situation was so extreme that, in 2017, famine (level 5 IPC) was declared in two counties of South Sudan¹¹⁷. One can only comprehend the severity of the situation via a simple comparison; even in the case of Yemen, in the world's worst humanitarian crisis, even in such a case, famine has not been declared yet. The declaration led to a scale up in

¹⁰⁹ Fink, M. (2017). Naval Blockade and the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen. [online] Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40802-017-0092-3> [Accessed 3 Dec. 2018].

¹¹⁰ The Independent. (2018). Yemen facing the 'world's worst famine in 100 years', warns UN. [online] Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/yemen-famine-civil-war-conflict-food-shortage-civilians-starvation-un-deaths-a8585006.html> [Accessed 2 Dec. 2018].

¹¹¹ GLOBAL REPORT ON FOOD CRISES 2018. (2018). [ebook] Food Security Information Network. Available at: http://vam.wfp.org/sites/data/GRFC_2018_Full_Report_EN.pdf [Accessed 2 Dec. 2018].

¹¹² Ibid, 107.

¹¹³ BBC News. (2018). South Sudan profile. [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14069082> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].

¹¹⁴ Wwf.org. (2018). *South Sudan | World Food Programme*. [online] Available at: <http://www1.wfp.org/countries/south-sudan> [Accessed 2 Dec. 2018].

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 81.

¹¹⁷ Fao.org. (2018). *South Sudan: FAO in Emergencies*. [online] Available at: <http://www.fao.org/emergencies/countries/detail/en/c/147627> [Accessed 2 Dec. 2018].

humanitarian response and, thus, further deterioration was contained¹¹⁸. The numbers, though, are still at historic elevated levels, with 6.1 million people – more than half the population – to be facing severe food insecurity (levels 3-5 IPC), as of September 2018¹¹⁹.

7. Legal Framework

Despite the fact that the term “Legal Framework” is most commonly used to describe legal documents that are of strict mandatory nature, “soft law” documents can also be placed under the general legal framework umbrella.

The term “soft law” covers a wide range of instruments of different nature and functions, since it refers to rules that have neither a strictly binding nature nor a complete lack of legal significance. To be more specific, the term encompasses “soft” rules that are included in resolutions, recommendations, declarations etc.¹²⁰. Therefore, all relevant documents – “hard” or “soft” law related – will be briefly presented.

7.1. *International Human Rights Law (IHRL); On the right to [adequate] food:*

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)¹²¹: Article 25, as mentioned above.
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR – 1966)¹²²: Article 11, as mentioned above as well.
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)¹²³: Article 6 protects the right to life, through which the right to food is recognised implicitly, since the protection of the right to life requires States to adopt positive measures, including measures to eliminate malnutrition¹²⁴.
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW – 1979)¹²⁵: Article 12 & 14.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Reliefweb.int. (2018). [online] Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP-0000100885.pdf> [Accessed 2 Dec. 2018].

¹²⁰ Χατζηκωνσταντίνου, Κ., Αποστολίδης, Χ. and Σαρηγιαννίδης, Μ. (2014). *Θεμελιώδεις Έννοιες στο Διεθνές Δημόσιο Δίκαιο*. 2nd ed. Αθήνα-Θεσσαλονίκη: Εκδόσεις Σάκκουλα, pp.424-429.

¹²¹ Ibid, 50.

¹²² Ibid, 51.

¹²³ Ohchr.org. (2018). *OHCHR | International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx> [Accessed 26 Nov. 2018].

¹²⁴ Ibid, 55.

¹²⁵ Ohchr.org. (2018). *OHCHR | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx> [Accessed 26 Nov. 2018].

- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC – 1989)¹²⁶: Article 24.
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD – 2006)¹²⁷: Article 25.
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984)¹²⁸: According to the Committee that monitors this Convention, lack of adequate food in prisons may be tantamount to inhuman and degrading treatment, thus, to something prohibited¹²⁹.

7.2. *On the right and concept of [sustainable] development and sustainable peace:*

- UN Declaration on the Right to Development (1986)¹³⁰: As mentioned above, this Declaration conceptualises and protects the right to development via the establishment of relevant obligations for States¹³¹.
- UNSC's Resolution 2282 (2016)¹³² & UNGA's A/RES/70/262: As mentioned above, they define the concept of sustaining peace as a unifying framework to address the root causes of conflicts, encompassing activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict¹³³. Peace is a universal responsibility; preventing crises and sustaining peace are shared UN Charter-based responsibilities across the entire UN system.
- The UN Secretary-General encourages via A/72/707 and S/2018/43 all UN entities to integrate the approach to sustaining peace in their strategic planning¹³⁴.
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: On 1 January 2016, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – adopted by world leaders in September

¹²⁶ Ohchr.org. (2018). *OHCHR | Convention on the Rights of the Child*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx> [Accessed 26 Nov. 2018].

¹²⁷ Ohchr.org. (2018). *OHCHR | Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/ConventionRightsPersonsWithDisabilities.aspx> [Accessed 26 Nov. 2018].

¹²⁸ Ohchr.org. (2018). *OHCHR | Convention against Torture*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CAT.aspx> [Accessed 26 Nov. 2018].

¹²⁹ Ibid, 55.

¹³⁰ Un.org. (2018). *A/RES/41/128. Declaration on the right to development*. [online] Available at: <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/41/a41r128.htm> [Accessed 26 Nov. 2018].

¹³¹ See above, “Key Terms’ Definitions” section of this Guide.

¹³² Un.org. (2016). *Security Council Unanimously Adopts Resolution 2282 (2016) on Review of United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sc12340.doc.htm> [Accessed 27 Nov. 2018].

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Undocs.org. (2018). *A/72/707 - E*. [online] Available at: <https://undocs.org/en/A/72/707-S/2018/43> [Accessed 27 Nov. 2018].

2015 at an historic UN Summit – officially came into force¹³⁵. With these new Goals, that universally apply to all, the international community created a blueprint to express its strongest will to, by all means, among others, end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities, end conflicts, tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. While the SDGs are not legally binding, governments are expected to take ownership and establish necessary national framework for the achievement of the 17 Goals¹³⁶.

The topic of this Guide is inextricably linked with the SDGs. At a first glance, the ones that directly concern food insecurity are Goals 2, 3 & 6. But, as experts have already pointed out, food insecurity is, in fact, attached to the implementation of each SDG – something that can be proven by the following table that examines the bidirectional relations between SDGs and food insecurity (FI in brief)¹³⁷;

- Goals 1 & 2; Poverty is a major determinant and consequence of FI, while FI is a major driving force of poverty. Goal 2 directly calls for ending FI and for ensuring access to adequate, nutritious and safe food all year round.
- Goals 3 & 6; FI has been associated with poor physical and mental health throughout the life course. On the other hand, improved hygiene and sanitation decreases FI levels, while FI itself creates fertile ground for infectious diseases.
- Goals 4 & 5; FI affects the ability of children to learn in school, while lower educational levels increase the risk of FI. FI among women and girls improves their health and ability to learn, something that empowers them to provide better food security to their future families.
- Goals 7 & 11; Access to electricity improves food safety, food availability and access to food at home, whilst lack of housing security is a strong determinant of FI, since it reduces easy – physical and economic – access to food.
- Goals 8, 9 & 10; Socioeconomic grievances constitute a driving factor of FI. Unemployment is a major social determinant of FI, while the latter reduces productivity and hence prevents sustainable economic development.
- Goals 12, 13 & 14; Environmental sustainability reduces the risk of widespread FI, while environmental issues and climate change can cause the rise of FI levels. What

¹³⁵ Ibid, 41.

¹³⁶ Ibid, 41.

¹³⁷ Rafael Pérez-Escamilla; Food Security and the 2015–2030 Sustainable Development Goals: From Human to Planetary Health: Perspectives and Opinions, *Current Developments in Nutrition*, Volume 1, Issue 7, 1 July 2017, e000513, Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3945/cdn.117.000513> [Accessed 18 Nov. 2018].

is more, FI itself is associated with unsustainable consumption and non-environmentally friendly agricultural practices, thus, with environmental degradation.

- Goal 16; Conflict and lack of peace are a major risk factor for FI and are also driven by FI, as indicated above. Proper local-to-global governance is needed to prevent both conflict and FI. The SDGs call for more collaborative approaches to conflict prevention, mitigation, resolution and recovery. The 2030 Agenda characterises peace as a vital threshold condition for development, as well as a development outcome of its own, while it highlights that conflict impacts negatively and can inhibit sustainable development.
- Goal 17; Sustainable global partnerships are needed to reduce FI worldwide, while increased levels of food security are likely to strengthen global partnerships via the expected progress of society.

This brief presentation, along with the presented findings of The Sustainable Development Goals Report of 2018¹³⁸, underline that conflict and climate change are major contributing factors leading to growing numbers of people facing hunger and forced displacement, as well as curtailing progress towards universal access to basic water and sanitation services. In fact, according to the report, conflict is now one of the main drivers of food insecurity in 18 countries¹³⁹. Another interesting document from this aspect is the Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2017 session of the Economic and Social Council on the annual theme “Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions through promoting sustainable development, expanding opportunities and addressing related challenges” that clearly highlights the aforementioned¹⁴⁰. All these, hence, lead to the conclusion that the nexus between conflict, food insecurity and sustainable peace and development are and must constantly be part of day-to-day international, regional, national debates and actions¹⁴¹.

- FAO’s Corporate Framework to Support Sustainable Peace in the Context of Agenda 2030¹⁴²: This Framework is addressed to FAO and concerns its role in achieving and

¹³⁸ Un.org, (2018). *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018*. [online] Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2018/TheSustainableDevelopmentGoalsReport2018-EN.pdf> [Accessed 24 Nov. 2018].

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Un.org. (2018). *United Nations Official Document*. [online] Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/HLS/2017/1&Lang=E [Accessed 24 Nov. 2018].

¹⁴¹ See above, “Sustainable Development and Peace and Conflict-sensitive Food Policies” section of this Guide.

¹⁴² Fao.org. (2018). [online] Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/I9311EN/i9311en.pdf> [Accessed 27 Nov. 2018].

maintaining sustainable peace in the world. It, therefore, addresses how FAO could contribute to food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture, while in the meantime achieving a more deliberate and transformative impact on sustaining peace¹⁴³. Within this concept, great emphasis is being given upon the two-fold relation between conflict and food security, as well as upon the ways this relation could prove itself useful.

7.3. *Food Assistance Convention:*

The above is a multilateral instrument – the first legally binding international treaty on food aid – which came into force on the 1st January 2013 and currently has sixteen Parties¹⁴⁴. It was preceded by the Food Aid Convention, while its purpose and scope, as described in Article 1, stand as follows: “*The objectives of this Convention are to save lives, reduce hunger, improve food security, and improve the nutritional status of the most vulnerable populations by: (a) addressing the food and nutritional needs of the most vulnerable populations through commitments made by the Parties to provide food assistance that improves access to, and consumption of, adequate, safe and nutritious food; (b) ensuring that food assistance provided to the most vulnerable populations is appropriate, timely, effective, efficient, and based on needs and shared principles; and (c) facilitating information-sharing, cooperation, and coordination, and providing a forum for discussion in order to improve the effective, efficient, and coherent use of the Parties’ resources to respond to needs.*”¹⁴⁵. It is, thus, a Convention aimed at regulating the provision of food assistance from its Parties towards people and countries in need, as well as at facilitating information-sharing between all food security-relevant stakeholders¹⁴⁶.

¹⁴³ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2018). *resources detail*. [online] Available at: <http://www.fao.org/resilience/resources/resources-detail/en/c/1107447/> [Accessed 27 Nov. 2018].

¹⁴⁴ Foodassistanceconvention.org. (2018). *Food Assistance Convention*. [online] Available at: <https://www.foodassistanceconvention.org/en/about.aspx> [Accessed 25 Nov. 2018].

¹⁴⁵ Foodassistanceconvention.org. (2018). [online] Available at: <https://www.foodassistanceconvention.org/convention/FoodAssistance.pdf> [Accessed 27 Nov. 2018].

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 135.

7.4. International Humanitarian Law (IHL); Geneva Conventions (1949) and Additional Protocols ¹⁴⁷:

The Conventions provide the definitions of “conflict” and “armed conflict”, as well as the rules specifically applicable during such situations. While international humanitarian law does not contain any explicit mention to the right to food, several of its norms are aimed at preserving a person’s life, dignity and survival by prescribing certain behaviour to-be-followed and prohibiting certain conduct and actions, in order to prevent lack of food or denial of access to food in situations of armed conflict.

Furthermore, it is vital to mention that, according to Article 54 (1) and Article 14 (1) of the First and Second Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions, starvation of civilians as a method of warfare/ combat is expressly prohibited in both international and non-international armed conflict¹⁴⁸.

At this moment, one should underline that under Article 8 (b) (xxv) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), “*intentionally using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare by depriving them of objects indispensable to their survival, including wilfully impeding relief supplies as provided for under the Geneva Conventions*”, is a war crime when committed (only) in international armed conflict¹⁴⁹.

It is, thus, evident that the international community attaches immense importance to the prohibition of starvation as a means of warfare. Generally, international humanitarian law aligns itself with the purpose of human rights law regarding the matter under question; to ensure in all cases and by all means the access to adequate food for people ¹⁵⁰.

7.5. World Humanitarian Summit & Agenda for Humanity ¹⁵¹:

In 2016, the first ever World Humanitarian Summit – proposed by the former UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon – took place in Istanbul, Turkey. Leaders from all over the world, as well as other stakeholders, debated upon today’s humanitarian issues and questions; this was how the Agenda for Humanity was created. It includes several core commitments,

¹⁴⁷ Ihl-databases.icrc.org. (2018). *Treaties, States parties, and Commentaries - Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocols, and their Commentaries*. [online] Available at: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/vwTreaties1949.xsp> [Accessed 26 Nov. 2018].

¹⁴⁸ Icr.org. (2018). [online] Available at: <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/irrc-844-pejic.pdf> [Accessed 26 Nov. 2018].

¹⁴⁹ Icc-cpi.int. (2018). [online] Available at: https://www.icc-cpi.int/nr/rdonlyres/ea9aeff7-5752-4f84-be94-0a655eb30e16/0/rome_statute_english.pdf [Accessed 27 Nov. 2018].

¹⁵⁰ Fao.org. (2002). *The right to adequate food in emergencies*. [online] Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-y4430e.pdf> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2018].

¹⁵¹ AGENDA FOR HUMANITY. (2016). *AGENDA FOR HUMANITY*. [online] Available at: <https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/summit> [Accessed 28 Nov. 2018].

one of which is “Political Leadership to Prevent and End Conflict”, whose sub-commitments indicate the nexus between conflict and sustainability, while the need to address the root causes of conflict is also being underlined¹⁵². Another commitment refers to “Changing People’s Lives: From Delivering Aid To Ending Need”.

7.6. *UN Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016–2025* ¹⁵³:

In April 2016, the UNGA proclaimed the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition, 2016-2025, based on the outcomes of the 2nd International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) Framework for Action¹⁵⁴, on the Rome Declaration on Nutrition¹⁵⁵ that followed the conference, as well as on the content of the UN 2030 Agenda. The WHO and the FAO, in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the United Nations Children’s Fund have been chosen as the leading actors of its implementation¹⁵⁶.

The Decade of Action provides for a framework of action of multiple stakeholders, in order to eradicate hunger and prevent and/or avoid all forms of malnutrition worldwide. It endorses and works upon, among others, six action areas, namely; i. Sustainable, resilient food systems for healthy diets, ii. Aligned health systems providing universal coverage of essential nutrition actions, iii. Social protection and nutrition education, iv. Trade and investment for improved nutrition, v. Safe and supportive environments for nutrition at all ages, and vi. Strengthening governance and accountability for nutrition¹⁵⁷.

8. Conclusion

The FAO’s Director-General José Graziano da Silva, at a side event on ways to break the cycle between conflict and hunger during the United Nations General Assembly in 2018, said: *“There will be no sustainable peace if people continue to be left behind. If we do not create*

¹⁵² Agendaforhumanity.org. (2016). [online] Available at: [https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/sites/default/files/resources/2017/Jul/WHS Commitment to Action 8September2016.pdf](https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/sites/default/files/resources/2017/Jul/WHS%20Commitment%20to%20Action%208September2016.pdf) [Accessed 28 Nov. 2018].

¹⁵³ Un.org. (2016). *United Nations Official Document*. [online] Available at: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/259 [Accessed 27 Nov. 2018].

¹⁵⁴ Fao.org. (2018). [online] Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mm215e.pdf> [Accessed 27 Nov. 2018].

¹⁵⁵ Fao.org. (2018). [online] Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ml542e.pdf> [Accessed 27 Nov. 2018].

¹⁵⁶ Unscn.org. (2018). *The Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025 - UNSCN*. [online] Available at: <https://www.unscn.org/en/topics/un-decade-of-action-on-nutrition> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2018].

¹⁵⁷ Apps.who.int. (2018). [online] Available at: <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/274375/WHO-NMH-NHD-17.11-eng.pdf?ua=1> [Accessed 27 Nov. 2018].

*conditions for vulnerable people and communities to thrive and live with dignity, this will trigger conflict, instability and forced migration."*¹⁵⁸.

The analysis above, and, more significantly, the case studies examined, clearly indicated this need via the examination of the nexus between conflict and food (in)security nowadays and the correlation of this nexus with the concept of sustainable development and peace projected by the UN Sustainable Development Goals and relevant UN Resolutions.

The international community – with the 3rd Committee of the General Assembly being one of the main actors regarding the matter under question – needs to take immediate action, since hunger anywhere threatens peace everywhere.

9. Points To Be Addressed

1. In which way does the changing nature of conflicts nowadays affect the state of food security in the world? How could these effects be prevented and/or overcome?
2. Which is the exact character and specific components of the relation is between conflict/armed conflict and food insecurity?
3. How are climate change and natural hazards interconnected with the conflict-food security relation? What would be an efficient way to deal with the consequences of such a correlation?
4. In which way and for which purpose should and could food policies become conflict-sensitive? Should conflict prevention policies, as well as post-conflict policies be food security-sensitive? If so, how could this be achieved?
5. How could such conflict-sensitive food policies and frameworks contribute to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and, more importantly, to the achievement of sustainable/sustaining peace?
6. Do the case studies examined confirm the arguments presented in this Guide? Which actions and whose actions should be reinforced or inaugurated to prevent the lapsing of Yemen into famine? How could the situation in South Sudan be alleviated?
7. Could the existing – soft and hard – legal framework be characterised as adequate by means of ensuring the full exercise of the right to food prior, during, and after situations of conflict/armed conflict? If not, how could it be reinforced?

¹⁵⁸ Fao.org. (2018). *FAO - News Article: FAO focus on breaking the cycle between conflict and hunger*. [online] Available at: <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1154279/icode/> [Accessed 1 Dec. 2018].

8. How can International Organisations and other stakeholders, apart from States themselves, contribute to sustaining peace through the examination of the conflict-food security approach? Which are these exact Organisations and stakeholders that could be proven effective?

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11. Further Resources

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