

**Houston Area  
Model United Nations  
Specialized Committee**



**UNICEF**

**Chairs | Deborah Jacob, Omama Ahmed  
Topic A Background Guide  
Houston Area Model United Nations 48  
February 2-3, 2023**

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# Note to Delegates

## Delegates,

Welcome to the 48<sup>th</sup> Houston Area Model United Nations Conference! The goal of the specialized committee of United Nations Children's Fund is to provide emergency resources concerning food and healthcare to children and their mothers in devastated countries. This committee will take place during the modern era of 2023 and will be during and increased spread of school closures as a safety mechanism against the spread of coronavirus. The focus will be in deciding which programs can be directed and instilled by the committee to decrease the effect of the pipeline from school closures to increased child marriages.

The UNICEF Specialized Committee is Co-Chaired by,

Deborah Jacob, who is a current Junior at University of Houston Main Campus. She is studying Psychology and Creative Writing and has been a delegate in her high school Model UN since her freshman year. She is currently on a pre-medicine track but has special interests in service and global health, and she's been chairing at HAMUN for three years now.

As a former delegate and current chair to the current HAMUN conference, she is pumped to participate in your Model UN experience and help facilitate what will, hopefully, be a formative experience.

It would be smiled upon if all delegates make sure to thoroughly research the how the Russo-Ukrainian conflict has played into the increase in child trafficking in this region.

### **Deborah Jacob**

Chair of UNICEF

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UNICEF

Co-Chair | Deborah Jacob

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# Background Information

## Brief History

UNICEF, also known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, was established under its parent committee, the United Nations General Assembly on December 11, 1946, as a committee dedicated to ensuring protections for children, especially those particularly disadvantaged, including those who are victims of natural disasters, violence, exploitation, and extreme poverty, among other things. This committee has focused on assisting vulnerable children and their mothers.

The purpose is to unite countries and their resources in the support of the humanitarian rights of the children and their mothers. Their current brand strategy includes a logo known as for every child which echoes its universal mandate that gives priority to the most disadvantaged children worldwide. Their goal is to give every child hope, opportunity, and dignity. The basic function of the committee is to give children equal opportunity and access to education, health care, and support.

## Executive Summary

UNICEF, also known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, was established under its parent committee, the United Nations General Assembly, as a committee dedicated to ensuring protections for children, especially those particularly disadvantaged, including those who are victims of natural disasters, violence, exploitation, and extreme poverty, among other things.



After the COVID-19 pandemic's height had ravaged international economies, many schools experienced budget cuts and eventual closure, which led to child marriage experiencing a steep increase, especially in less developed nations.

This violates basic expectations for development for children, as well as the basic rights of children to both pursue education and not be forced into marriage before, they've reached peak development, so it warrants immediate address by the UNICEF subset of the United Nations General Assembly. In addition to this, children in the Belarus/Russian regions are at risk with child trafficking on the rise as well. Children are being forcibly taken, moved across borders, and made to partake in age-inappropriate activities, which goes against the very tenets of what UNICEF and the United Nations stands on.

### **Committee Best Practices**

During the beginning of the conference delegates will discuss amongst themselves the primary focus of the discussion that will take place during the conference. As the conference undergoes delegates will have the opportunity to go to their respective committees to discuss and proposed solutions that can receive beneficial support from various organizations in the differing committees. Delegates will then report periodically to the chair their progress, and evidently all UNICEF partnered countries will work together using the resources they were able to capture from various entities to create a compounding resolution that will benefit the international workspace amidst the coronavirus pandemic.

### **Topic Concept**

Russia has been seen to already have a consistent issue with human trafficking, but in light of the war in Ukraine, the trafficking issue has only been exacerbated. The war in Ukraine began as a "special military operation", as was announced by Russia, but the aggression was heavily motivated by the politics surrounding NATO and Ukraine's connection to the multinational organization. It has also repeatedly been claimed that there is rampant Nazism and genocide in Ukraine, which also seems to be unsubstantiated, but because of this, Russia has taken the liberty of entering Ukraine unprovoked. Since then, with so many people, especially women and children, fleeing the country, many have fallen prey to exploitation.

Now Russia has employed sexual exploitation as a weapon of war, employing the use of “horrific acts of sexual violence, reports of gang rape, rape in front of family members, and sexual assault at gunpoint”, seizing the opportunity to abuse the most vulnerable populations, especially children. However, Russia themselves denounce the claims, saying that their ranks are not responsible for such crimes, but because of a lack of accountability, these crimes continue to go on underreported and unaddressed.

That being said, it's clear that raw sexual violence is just the tip of the iceberg as Russian troops, among others, continue to prey on these vulnerable populations and further trap them through human trafficking. In fact, Russia has been deemed Tier 3 on the international Trafficking In Persons report, with the verdict being that Russia doesn't even meet the minimum requirements for the elimination of trafficking and isn't making significant efforts to do so. In fact, Russia has an established practice of detaining and prosecuting victims of exploitation and prostitution without further investigation into circumstances.

All of these issues have combined into a perfect storm of conflict, and it begs a resolution at the hands of the UNICEF committee, who's responsible for advocating for the care and rights of children.



## Questions to Consider

Attached are some research leading questions to help guide you during the preparation for the conference. They do not need to necessarily be addressed directly in your paper. They shall be opening points to keep in mind during debate, and to guide each respective organization personal plan and agenda.

1. What would accountability look like when Russia is currently involved in a war?
2. How can we protect the population of Ukraine, especially the children, when much of their infrastructure is under fire?
3. How can human trafficking feasibly be mitigated?

## References and Further Reading

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3. "Russia - United States Department of State." *U.S. Department of State*, U.S. Department of State, 5 Aug. 2021, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-trafficking-in-persons-report/russia/>.
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