

# Montessori Model United Nations

## MMUN 2012



### *The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission*

#### UNPBC

Dear Delegates,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2012 Montessori Model UN and specifically to the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, commonly referred to as the UNPBC. The following pages intend to guide you in the research of the topics that will be debated at MMUN 2012 in committee sessions. Please note - this guide only provides the basis for your investigation. It is your responsibility to find as much information necessary on both the topics - how they relate to the country you represent. Such information should help you write your Position Paper, where you need to cite the references in the text and finally list all references in the MLA format.

The MLA format may or may not be strictly adhered to in this Background Guide because the primary purpose is to provide you the initial launching pad to pursue your research on the two topics. The more information and understanding you acquire on the two topics, the more you will be able to influence the Resolution writing process – through debates [formal and informal caucuses], and the MMUN experience as a whole. Please feel free to contact me if and when you face challenges in your research or formatting your Position Papers.

We encourage you to learn all you can about your country first with regard to the two selected topics and both committee members need to be well versed in each topic.

Enjoy researching and writing your Position Papers. We look forward to seeing you in New York!

Greg Dahlin  
President  
UNPBC  
Montessori Model UN  
UNPBC@montessori-mun.org

## MONTESSORI MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2012



### **History:**

The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was established in December 2005 by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council in their respective resolutions A/60/180 and SC 1645(2005). It is an inter-governmental advisory body mandated to help countries emerging from conflict make the transition from violent war to peace, through a continuum of peacebuilding, which includes recovery and relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction, institution building, and sustainable development, to ensure lasting peace.

The transition from war to peace is not smooth, however. More often than not “emergency relief, rehabilitation work and development assistance co-exist...and interact.” When peace agreements hold and military violence subsides, the focus of aid shifts from emergency relief, including humanitarian assistance, relief and other forms of post-emergency assistance, to long-term social and economic development. Inevitably, in many cases, however, finding a balance between the short and long-term issues and developing an effective transition process is a challenge. In most cases short term aid is provided that helps address acute humanitarian issues such as lack of food; but international attention is typically too short according to Paul Collier, professor at Oxford University and leading expert on African economies, and international attention fades or shifts so pledges made for longer-term aid are often not realized. Moreover, studies indicate that in the first few years after war, states have little capacity to absorb funds, but this changes radically in the medium term. This creates a gap in the relief-to-development continuum. The Peacebuilding Commission was established and mandated to fill this gap. It will remain engaged with the country until such time that the risk of a relapse into conflict is considered minimal.

### **Purpose and mission statement:**

- To bring together all relevant actors (international donors, the international financial institutions, national governments) and propose integrated strategies for post conflict peacebuilding and recovery and where necessary, highlight any gaps which threaten to undermine the peacebuilding process;
- To extend the period of international attention on post-conflict countries;
- To help ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities and sustained financial investment over the medium to long-term;

- To develop best practices on issues in collaboration with political, security, humanitarian and development actors.

**Membership and Authority:**

The Chairperson, who is elected annually, is currently Ambassador Eugene-Richard Gasana of Rwanda. The PBC currently operates in three principal configurations to marshal resources at the disposal of the international community and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding in countries emerging from conflict:

- Organizational Committee
- Country-Specific Configurations (CSC)
- Working Group on Lessons Learned

With assistance from the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), the configurations bring together the United Nations broad capacities and experiences in conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, reconstruction, the promotion of human rights and the rule of law, and long-term sustainable development assistance.

The *Peacebuilding Commission's Organizational Committee* is comprised of 31 members to establish the work agenda for the PBC and develop Integrated Peacebuilding Strategies (IPBS). Members of the Organizational Committee serve for renewable terms of two years. The current composition of the Peacebuilding Commission's Organizational Committee:

- 7 members of the Security Council, including all 5 permanent members:
  1. China
  2. France
  3. the Russian Federation
  4. Mexico
  5. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
  6. United States of America
  7. Burkina Faso
- 7 members elected by the General Assembly:
  1. Benin
  2. Chile
  3. Georgia
  4. Jamaica
  5. South Africa
  6. Thailand
  7. Uruguay

- 5 members chosen as top providers of military personnel and civilian police to United Nations missions:
  1. Bangladesh
  2. Nigeria
  3. India
  4. Nepal
  5. Pakistan
  
- 7 members elected by the United Nations Economic and Social Council:
  1. Algeria
  2. El Salvador
  3. Guinea-Bissau
  4. Luxembourg
  5. Morocco
  6. Poland
  7. Republic of Korea
  
- 5 members chosen as top providers of contributions to United Nations budgets, funds programs and agencies:
  1. Canada
  2. Germany
  3. Japan
  4. the Netherlands
  5. Sweden

*Country-Specific Configurations* work with specific countries on the agenda of the commission, and include, in addition to Peacebuilding Commission Organizational Committee members, other participants such as neighboring countries, regional organizations, multilateral organizations, financial institutions and representatives of civil society. Each CSC is led by a Chairperson.

The *Working Group on Lessons Learned* collaborates with the PBC Chairperson and CSC Chairs to identify topics for discussion that directly relevant to the work of the Commission in the countries on its agenda.

In addition, the concurrent General Assembly and Security Council resolutions that established the Peacebuilding Commission also provided for the establishment of a Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO).

The United Nations Peacebuilding Fund is a global fund established by the Secretary-General to address immediate peacebuilding needs in countries emerging from conflict at a time when no other funding sources have been set up or are yet unavailable, as well as support various measures to strengthen the peacebuilding process if and when gaps in funding arise. The goal of the PBF is ultimately to encourage and inspire long-term investment by development agencies to support countries on the agenda of the PBC, as well as countries in similar circumstances as designated by the Secretary-General. The Peacebuilding Fund is currently supporting more than a hundred projects in 15 countries by delivering fast, flexible and relevant funding. The PBF is managed, on behalf of the United Nations Secretary-General, by

the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, currently Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, who is also head of the Peacebuilding Support Office. The UNDP Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office (MDTF Office) is the PBF fund administrator. The PBF relies upon voluntary contributions from Member States, organizations and individuals.

The Peace Building Commission is likely to deal only with countries emerging from conflict, once a peace accord has been concluded and a minimum degree of security exists. The resolutions that established the PBC specified that a nation could be considered for placement on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda through requests for advice from the UN Security Council, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), UN Member States, or the Secretary-General. Countries being considered for placement on the PBC agenda are expected to express an interest in appearing before the PBC. At the same time, the PBC is expected to make referrals that coincide with the wishes of the government. A referral against the wish of the government is unlikely.

## Topic I: The Situation of Palestinian Refugees



### Introduction:

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), an organ of the United Nations created to help refugees and their descendants displaced by the Arab-Israeli conflict, defines a Palestinian refugee as any person whose “normal place of residence was Palestine during the period June 1, 1946 to May 15, 1948 and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict.” There are currently about 4.7 million Palestinian refugees living in UNRWA refugee camps in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Gaza and the West Bank.

The problem of Palestinian refugees has grown increasingly more complicated with the passage of time, and is compounded by the manner in which Palestinian refugees lost their homes and properties: some have stated that they sold their property legally, and left of their own will, while others left to avoid violence, feeling unsafe, or were physically forced out of their home land. These different reasons for leaving require a case by case approach for financial reparations. Resolution of this issue has been and continues to prove difficult at best, as it will affect not only the ultimate outcome of the Arab-Israeli conflict, but also the rest of the Middle East region and the countries who have taken in a significant amount of Palestinian refugees.

### Background:

Since the British conquered Palestine in 1917, its people have been struggling to regain sovereignty and the right to self-determination. While under British control, the British Mandate for Palestine, or British Mandate, as Palestine was called then, was divided by Britain for administrative purposes into two parts: “Palestine” and “Transjordan.” Throughout the early part of the twentieth century, there was a great influx of Jewish immigrants into the area of “Palestine”, and tensions escalated, often leading to violent acts of terror aimed at the areas inhabitants, even as the League of Nations failed and the world engaged in its Second World War. Following WWII, Britain asked the UN General Assembly to decide how to terminate the British Mandate

awarded by the League of Nations.

After months of deliberation, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 181, on 29 November 1947. The resolution noted Britain's planned termination of the British Mandate for Palestine and recommended the partition of Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab, with the Jerusalem-Bethlehem area being under special international protection, administered by the United Nations.

One of the two States envisaged in the partition plan proclaimed its independence as Israel and in the consequent 1948 Arab-Israeli war expanded to occupy 77 per cent of the territory of Palestine. Israel also occupied the larger part of Jerusalem. Over half of the indigenous Palestinian population fled or were expelled. Jordan and Egypt occupied the rest of the territory assigned by the partition resolution to the Palestinian Arab State, which did not come into being.

In 1967, war again erupted in the region, and Israel occupied the remaining territory of Palestine (the West Bank and Gaza Strip). This included the remaining part of Jerusalem, which was subsequently annexed by Israel. The war brought about a second exodus of Palestinians, estimated at half a million. The Security Council in resolution 242 (1967) formulated the principles of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, which should include an Israeli withdrawal from territories it had occupied in the conflict.

In 1974, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty, and to return. The following year, the General Assembly, by its Resolution 3376, established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP). The General Assembly conferred on the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) the status of observer in the Assembly and in other international conferences held under United Nations auspices.

Conflicts between Israel and Palestine and within the Palestinian Authority have yet to cease. In the January 2006 Palestinian parliamentary elections Hamas won a decisive majority in the Palestinian Parliament, defeating the Fatah party. Following the elections, the United States and the EU halted financial assistance to the Hamas-led administration. Tensions over control of Palestinian security forces soon erupted into the 2007 Battle of Gaza, which resulted in Hamas retaining control of Gaza while its officials were ousted from government positions in the West Bank. Both Israel and Egypt imposed an economic blockade on Gaza, on the grounds that Fatah forces were no longer providing security there. In December 2008, Israel attacked Gaza, removing its forces from the territory in January 2009. Hamas continued to govern the Gaza strip and Israel maintained its economic blockade. On May 4, 2011, Hamas and Fatah announced a reconciliation agreement that provides for "*creation of a joint caretaker Palestinian government*" prior to the 2012 national elections.

### **Possible Solutions:**

Though past solutions have not been as successful as many would have liked them to be, future solutions must look at what positive outcomes have been achieved through past solutions so as not to repeat mistakes and make what worked even better.

Member nations of the UNPBC must take into account all factors affecting the ability for Palestinian refugees to return home and live peacefully. Members must look at the political tension surrounding Israel and the land of the Palestinian Authority, take into account the tension between the people of Palestine and Israel and find solutions that also address the violence affecting people of both sides as well. A goal must be set when looking toward the return of Palestinian refugees to their homes and the goal should include both positive short and long-term actions to be taken by all parties involved.

Several solutions have been proposed and rejected when it comes to resolving the refugee status of the Palestinians. The Palestinian Authority (PA) supports the right of return as mandated by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194, which was adopted by the General Assembly on December 11, 1948, and was the first major UN resolution that referred to Palestinian refugees. This resolution established a Conciliation Commission for Palestine and instructed it to "take steps to assist the Governments and authorities concerned to achieve a final settlement of all questions outstanding between them." Paragraph 11 deals with the refugees:

*"The General Assembly...resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible..."*

Though the Arab states originally rejected the resolution, they later relied on it heavily and have considered it as recognition of a wholesale right of repatriation.

The PA believes that the many Palestinians forced out of their homes, by direct force or threat of danger, should ideally be allowed to return. At the very least, they feel that they should be compensated for their many losses. Palestinian refugees need a safe way to be able to return to their homeland and resettle. In conjunction with the refugee resettlement, Palestine also wants to develop fair and mutually beneficial economic ties with Israel, as outlined in the Paris Protocol.

The Israelis unequivocally reject a full right of return for Palestinian refugees, mostly because the sheer number had grown to almost 4.7 million in 2002, according to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), but also because Israel argues that the "live in peace" condition has not been met and has therefore prevented the return of any refugees. The UNRWA, an organ of the United Nations, defines a Palestinian refugee as a person "whose normal place of residence was Palestine between June 1946 and May 1948, who lost both their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict". Such a huge influx of people would create a demographic and economic crisis for the state of Israel, and the process of selection is very difficult.

The most recent peace talks between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Leader Mahmoud Abbas have failed to get past discussions of settlements and border disputes - let alone tackle the issue of refugee status and right of

return. Many have cited the Clinton Parameters as a legitimate starting point from which to tackle the problem. These parameters give “no specific right of return to Israel itself but that does not negate the aspiration of the Palestinian people to return to the area.”

Delegates should familiarize themselves with the Oslo Accords and the Clinton Parameters, as well as the 2000 Camp David Summit, the Taba talks, and the 2010 direct negotiations in order to understand what a viable solution, one that both states may accept, could look like. Be sure to have a basic understanding of the conflict, because the Peace building Commission is unable to directly implement any resolutions, and its ideas must be approved by the countries to which they apply.

**Research Questions:**

1. Is this issue a problem in your country?
2. Does this issue affect your country? If so, how?
3. Is your country in need of aid? If so, what kind?
4. Is your country able to assist those in need of aid? If so, how? What actions have already been taken to move toward a resolution of this issue?
5. What strategies/solutions have been attempted?
6. What have worked? Why?
7. What have not worked? Why?
8. What changes could be made to make said solutions work, or work more effectively?
9. How does the idea of the right of return for Palestinian refugees impact the state of Israel as the Jewish homeland? How can this be reconciled with border disputes and other topics of contention within the conflict? Are there limits to family reunification?
10. What steps can be taken to at least improve the situation, if not solve it outright? How can we as a committee move to alleviate some of the tension?
11. What are some facts, figures, statistics regarding the issue – national, regional, international?

**Summary:**

The Palestinian people have faced many challenges over the years during British conquest and subsequently since Israel was established. As a people, Palestinians have lost infrastructure, homes, property, and thousands of lives as the result of not only British occupation, but also due to civil war and the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict that followed. After decades of constant conflict and turmoil in the Palestinian and Israeli regions, the number of Palestinian refugees has grown to over 4 million displaced

peoples. The growing tension continues not only to hinder the progress of returning the refugees back to the land they once lived on, but also to remind us of the question of Palestine itself. Conflicts between Israel and the Palestinian Authority and their causes must be acknowledged to further the progress of returning refugees home and bringing lasting peace and stability to the region.

The joint efforts toward peace that have taken place in the last two decades are to be commended in many ways. Even coming to the table was a sign of progress, and the willingness of both Palestine and Israel to hear new solutions is impressive. Indeed, the peace processes from Oslo to Taba have seen signs of progress and change, but certainly nothing approaching a lasting peace. Despite sincere attempts on the part of both parties to come together and resolve the problems we face, there are several factors that have prohibited success. The interim nature of the agreements, the ease with which they are disrupted, and the lack of accountability have all contributed to the failure of the peace talks.

**Reading/ Research References:**

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<http://www.jcpa.org/jl/vp485.htm>

<http://domino.un.org/unispal.nsf/home.htm>

<http://domino.un.org/unispal.nsf/com.htm>

## Topic II: *The Situation in Sierra Leone*



### **Introduction:**

Imagine Manhattan, a population of roughly one and a half million in a small area living and meeting their fundamental needs together. A unique and diverse population of many different ethnic groups and languages packed into almost 24 square miles. Each ethnic group has a particular territory that they call home. Just as New York City is a mosaic of ethnic groups, so too is Sierra Leone. As in Manhattan, this combination of ethnicities has given rise to conflicts, which unfortunately in the case of Sierra Leone, have been violent and prolonged. The various ethnic groups and tribes clash because each has its own opinions of how the nation should be run, which inhibits the successful running of a state, whose responsibility is to the well-being of all people within its borders.

### **Background:**

Sierra Leone, as with many African nations, must include within its cultural expression colonization by European powers. In 1495, the Portuguese first colonized the area giving forth its current name, which is derived from the Portuguese for "Lion Mountain". It became a crucial port for the Trans-Atlantic slave trade between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries due to its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean. In 1787, the British started a colony there as a home for free Africans and their descendents who sided with the Royalists during the American Revolution. This introduced many New World ideas to the nation.

With this influx of New World immigrants there emerged a new ethnicity into the country called Krio. They brought a different religion, culture and language to the continent. To this day, 97% of the inhabitants of Sierra Leone speak the Krio language.

The country was taken over by a variety of economic interests, which Great Britain did nothing to prevent. De Beers, the diamond and jewelry company, operated mines there for nearly a hundred years, without any legal controls or accountability.

In 1961, Sierra Leone obtained independence from the British Empire. As with many African states, the absence of colonial power caused a regression in quality of life for the vast majority of Sierra Leoneans and created a leadership vacuum. The economically inclined parties had maintained a police force, infrastructure, and

governing bodies that were necessary for order and civilization. When they withdrew, the state was left without these for the first time in hundreds of years, and Sierra Leone's evolving culture unraveled.

Since declaring its independence, Sierra Leone has dealt with one of the most salient problems in Africa: political corruption. Despite the creation and signing of several agreements to promote transparency in governing, every election has been contested. Often, an individual ethnic group will feel marginalized and the ethnic group in power is accused of altering votes in order to maintain power. This often leads to physical violence, in the way of rioting and protesting, in addition to a deadlock in political debates, since each side is attempting to hold or gain power rather than address the nation's problems.

The Sierra Leone Civil War began in 1991 after the RUF was formed and attempted to overthrow the unpopular government. These uprisings arose after Joseph Momoh, a military leader, was named president by parliament in August 1985. At this time, Sierra Leone's constitution declared it a one-party state, which had been dominated by the APC for quite some time. Momoh, as well as the APC, had been accused of abuses of power and ineffective governance which had caused internal unrest.

As claims of corruption mounted, the RUF grew in strength and number. The group, led by Foday Sankoh, initially consisted primarily of students, but quickly began the recruitment of unemployed young adults and diamond miners. Later, the RUF would be accused of the forceful recruitment of children to its campaign. The majority of RUF members were forced out of the country by the APC-led government, many of whom fled to Liberia, where they continued their resistance efforts and planning. The first of many violent RUF-led attacks occurred in March 1991, in small towns near the country's border with Liberia. The attacks continued for several months and resulted in an around half a million refugees fleeing to neighboring countries, specifically Guinea and Liberia. Estimates suggest that over half of the entire population was displaced during the civil war.

The neighboring Liberian War undoubtedly played a role in the Sierra Leone Civil War. Charles Taylor, Liberia's president, was said to have supported the RUF, specifically by providing the group with weapons and training. Taylor allegedly agreed to provide support to the RUF in exchange for resources. These resources, "blood diamonds" in particular, were claimed to have helped fund the war in Liberia.

Nearly a year later, in 1992, a group of military officers launched a successful coup attempt which overthrew President Momoh and forced him into exile. They then founded the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) as Sierra Leone's governing party, which initially proved to be just as unsuccessful at suppressing the hostility perpetrated by the RUF. By 1995, the RUF controlled a large portion of the country. Their control continued to expand over an ever-widening swath of territory, including several diamond mines, which were said to be the source of the "blood diamonds" used to finance its rebellion efforts. The NPRC responded by employing mercenaries from a private firm in an attempt to suppress the rebellion. The mercenaries were successful and, within a month, had driven the RUF fighters back to the villages near the country's

border.

After increasing internal and external pressure, the NPRC claimed they would allow democratic elections to take place in 1996. The RUF requested that the government postpone the elections until a peace agreement could be reached, but their request was denied. They responded by launching more violent attacks. Elections were still held and Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of the Sierra Leone People's Party won the elections and assumed office in March 1996. Later that year, the new president and the RUF leader were able to reach a peace agreement, the Abidjan Agreement, but its execution failed. In May 1997, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) overthrew Kabbah and allowed the RUF to join the government. After only 10 months, AFRC was ousted and the democratically elected government was reinstated.

The RUF made further unsuccessful attempts at overthrowing the government, which resulted in thousands of injuries and deaths. Another peace agreement, the Lomé Peace Agreement, was signed in July 1999 by President Kabbah and RUF leader Sankoh. This agreement allowed Sankoh to assume the role of vice president and placed other RUF members in governmental positions. It also led to the creation of an international peacekeeping force in the country by the United Nations Security Council, named the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). However, the next year, the RUF began to violate the agreement, and many senior members were arrested and removed from their governmental positions.

After several attempts at a ceasefire, a peace agreement was finally reached that led to a large reduction in violence and disarmament of troops. In January 2002, President Kabbah officially declared that the civil war was over. Although the conflict has officially ended, the country is still recovering from the war's devastation. The international community has supported efforts to rebuild the country, but problems still remain.

### **Possible Solutions:**

The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) has caused widespread mayhem and chaos, especially in the less developed sections of the country. Unlike many African countries, Sierra Leone's conflict was not targeted at a single ethnic group. Instead, the Revolutionary United Front eradicated anyone who stood in its way, regardless of ethnicity. The RUF was well supplied in firearms, reportedly by Charles Taylor, former president of Liberia and head of Liberia's National Patriotic Party. He is currently being held at the Special Court for Sierra Leone in The Hague, Netherlands, to await the deliberation and final judgment on charges of eleven counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international law. The conflict in neighboring Liberia had resulted in nearly nine thousand refugees fleeing over the border. To this day, there are 8,700 Liberian refugees still located in Sierra Leone.

In October of 1999, 6,000 peacekeepers were sent to Sierra Leone to disarm and neutralize the rebels. Resistance was so fierce, that this was soon increased to 13,000 by May of 2000. In June of 2000, several hundred Nepalese and Indian peacekeepers were taken captive by the RUF. The British government had also sent in troops by this point and was able to successfully liberate the captives and negotiate a peace treaty. Originally these troops were meant to rescue foreign nationals, but instead they took

ground and forged the agreement. There is a much popular opinion in favor of more British involvement seeing as they are members of the Commonwealth.

The issue of Sierra Leone came before the Security Council in 2006 for reassessment. It was referred to the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2006. To date, the PBC has worked with the Sierra Leonean government, as well as West African states, bilateral and multilateral partners, and international partners, including the United Nations, to address the country's peacebuilding priorities. The emphasis that the UNPBC has placed on Sierra Leone has been towards building youth-related programs to support youth employment and youth empowerment, justice and security reform, good governance, including the incorporation and inclusion of different ethnic groups into the political process, energy sector development, and capacity-building.

Sierra Leone has a very low literacy rate because education was interrupted during the course of the civil war. The health and education of minors was considered unimportant during a civil war that lasted from 1991-2001 and resulted in the deaths of 50,000 people. As a result the UNPBC aims to educate and empower youth in order to provide a better job in the future and to ensure maternal and prenatal health to the people of Sierra Leone.

The endemic political corruption has caused disillusionment in many of the smaller ethnic groups. This means that they do not feel compelled to actively participate in the governing of their country, as they will not be accurately represented anyway. As a result, ethnic conflict continues. The UNPBC has made it a mission to add transparency here to build trust in democratic elections, and in July of 2008 democratic elections were successfully held.

The UNPBC also seeks to increase justice and security, good governance, and judicial transparency. One of the ways that has been most effective thus far to create peace and stability in the country has been the creation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Also effective has been the provision of trials for those involved in the civil war, which includes the creation of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The Special Court for Sierra Leone was set up jointly by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations. It is mandated to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law committed in the territory of Sierra Leone since 30 November 1996.

Currently, the three cases heard in Freetown have been completed, including appeals. The trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor is nearing completion in The Hague. This has provided closure for those affected by the war. In addition, the current president, Ernest Bai Koroma, is half Limba and Temne, which are two of the smaller ethnic groups in the North. Since he began his presidency, he has made a specific effort to unite the country and minimize the ability of foreign influence to take advantage of the state.

**Research Questions:**

1. Where is Sierra Leone located?
2. What are the main factors of conflict suffered by Sierra Leone?
3. Who were the main actors of the conflict in Sierra Leone?
4. Has your country dealt with corruption, poverty, or civil war and if so what steps were taken to deal with it?
5. Has your country been affected by the unrest in Sierra Leone, such as by receiving refugees?
6. What are the positions of the various stakeholders on this issue?
7. What are some facts, figures, statistics regarding the issue – national, regional, international?
8. Has your country made contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund?
9. Has your country provided experts or technical support to Sierra Leone?
10. What has been the greatest progress of the peacebuilding efforts in Sierra Leone?
11. Which area or areas still needs a lot of work and investment in Sierra Leone?
12. What are the main programs currently developed by the PBC in Sierra Leone?
13. How can your country contribute to the efforts to restore stability and support lasting peace in Sierra Leone?
14. In what ways can the Peacebuilding Commission work together to help Sierra Leone to make progress towards sustainable peace and development after the Sierra Leone Civil War?
15. What are some facts, figures, statistics regarding the issue – national, regional, international?

**Summary:**

The situation in Sierra Leone is one that is experiencing some progress towards creating peace and stability, although the nation is very fragile, recovering from civil war and still experiencing gross political corruption, widespread poverty, displacement, food insecurity, and high unemployment, especially among socially marginalized and poorly educated youth. As with most world problems, education will play a large role in the process, as well as justice and security reform, good governance, and the creation of infrastructure and energy sector development to build capacity. Delegates should keep in mind the capabilities of the UNPBC in order to come up with realistic resolutions.

UNPBC

*Background Guide*

MMUN 2012

**Reading/Research References:**

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<http://www.sc-sl.org/>

<http://mdtf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/SL100>

<http://www.unpbf.org/sierraleone/sierraleone.shtml>

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