

TOPIC SYNOPSIS

Novice General Assembly



The Blood Diamond Trade

POSITION PAPERS

Position papers are due by midnight, January 12th. Please send to the email address below. Identify your committee and assignment on the subject line and in the text of the message. Include your position paper as an attachment in .PDF format. If you choose, you can also include it as a Google Doc, but remember go give access to the Secretariat.

The position paper format can be found [HERE](#).

Email your position paper and any questions you might have to:

Novice General Assembly 1: whsmunnovicega119@gmail.com

Novice General Assembly 2: whsmunnovicega219@gmail.com

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IMPORTANT COMMITTEE POLICIES TO BE AWARE OF

- Speaking time for speeches will not be lowered to anything shorter than a minute-thirty seconds. Lowering a speaking time below this does nothing to facilitate debate;
- Comments on speeches cannot be lowered below 30-seconds;
- Moderated caucuses have a set time of 20-minutes. They can be extended for two extra 10-minutes sessions afterward;
- Unmoderated causes can be set for 10, 15, and 20 minutes with one 10-minute extension permitted;
- There is no yielding of speaking time to other delegates;
- No pre-written resolutions will be accepted;
- The use of national flags, pins, or any other national emblem in committee is discouraged, as the United Nations does not allow them either in committee;
- Handouts or briefing sheets are not allowed to be distributed in committee as gives an unfair advantage to delegates who don't have them and is in conflict with the spirit of no pre-written resolutions;
- Computers and phones are not permitted for non-committee related activities such as chatting, gaming, non-conference related web browsing, etc.
- All committee rooms are open to adult advisors including during voting blocs. Student advisors can be kept out during voting blocs;
- Recently, we have discovered that some delegations have been relying on chat groups with adult and student advisors writing speeches and comments for delegates in order to help them with committee awards that they could not on their own. The use of using chat to, in essence, cheat, is prohibited. This does not mean that advisors cannot send general advise to their delegates such as "get yourself on the speaker's list" or "raise your placard more." This is just to keep delegates being fed speeches or comments on information they did not research themselves.

Delegates found to be in violation of these restrictions will lose diplomacy points and may be excluded from any recognition. In addition, they will be reported to their advisors.

Background of Committee:

The United Nations General Assembly is one of the six main bodies of the United Nations. One representative from each nation is used to represent their country, creating equal opportunity for all the nations (big or small). This assembly is the only assembly where the representation is equal. Voting on an important international matter such as peace and security, admission of new members and budgetary matters require a majority two-thirds vote. Otherwise, the vote would just be a simple majority.

In a General Assembly committee, speaking lists do exist; every delegate speaks for generally around 1 minute 30 seconds at a time until all delegates have had an opportunity to speak and delegates are allowed to pass when their turn comes. Unmoderated and moderated caucuses will be able to be motioned for inappropriate manners.

Goals of this committee:

The purpose of this General Assembly committee is to discuss the issues of Blood Diamond Trade in many underdeveloped countries and how these issues affect developed countries as a whole. This committee will discuss solution based discussions to eliminate or reduce much of this practice in many of the world using short and long-term solutions. The goal of this committee is to alleviate the practices of the blood diamond trading and their consequences.

Topic Background:

Diamonds are known to be symbols of happiness, wealth, love, and prosperity; but in many African countries, diamonds have been used for the wrong reasons. The first diamonds were found in India and Borneo, they were found in the rich riverbed deposits. A few centuries later they were found in Brazil in similar deposits as the diamond deposits in India and Borneo. Soon after, people in Angola, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of Congo were using diamonds as currency to purchase weapons. In the 18th century, the production of diamonds skyrocketed, they passed India and Brazil. Brazil had to shut down their diamond production because Africa had become the main supplier. Diamonds are not only the currency for Warcraft but it is also difficult to obtain at times. About 20% of diamonds are retrieved using a pipe, the other 80% is retrieved from river banks and deposits. Now, not only are diamonds discovered but they are also produced using chemistry. Today, over 65% of diamonds come from South Africa. Major companies such as De Beers take advantage of the diamond filled lands. As time went on, diamond smuggling was occurring from places such as Sierra Leone. These diamonds were used to satisfy warlords, trade for Warcraft, provide financial support for rebellions against certain parts of the government and companies. Many of these illegal smugglings are happening in Africa (the continent as a whole). Experts claim that the illegal sale of blood diamonds has produced billions of dollars to fund civil wars and other conflicts in various African nations. Blood diamonds are also called conflict diamonds because 95% of these diamonds are used to erupt conflict or keep the conflict consistent. Because of the constant desire for these diamonds, illegal diamond production and mining is happening every day in Africa. This illegal activity has been tried by the United Nations yet, the smuggling and conflict seem to get worse exponentially. Not only are these illegal mines a source of worry for the United Nations, but

the treatments of workers are also violating the basic human rights. Take what's happening right now in the Marange diamond fields, eastern Zimbabwe. Residents living near the diamond fields have suffered forced labor, torture, and other abuses. Just two weeks ago, protests by villagers against the alleged looting of diamond revenue by state-owned companies turned violent. Residents say that security force personnel beat women with batons, fired live ammunition into the air, and fired tear gas canisters—resulting in three children being hospitalized. With all these numbers and statistics, we also need to realize the social aspect of the situation. For example, in Sierra Leone, a group known as the Revolutionary United Front killed, threatened, and even cut off the arms of people living and working in diamond villages until they were able to take control of the mines in the area. Then the group moved on to the next village to do more of the same, effectively terrorizing the entirety of Sierra Leone, to the point that many people fled their homes in fear. All in all, roughly 20,000 innocent people suffered bodily mutilation, 75,000 were killed and 2 million fled Sierra Leone altogether. The craze for control over these diamonds leads people to do the unthinkable. In fact, studies show that after the production of these diamonds skyrocketed, so did the occurrence of violence in many African countries. Due to the increasingly worrying status of this situation, many organizations have taken steps to avoid and decrease the production of blood diamonds. For example, the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) was created in 2002 to regulate diamond trading and keep blood diamonds from entering the legitimate diamond market. The Kimberley Process was envisioned by the diamond industry and put into practice by the United Nations. According to De Beers, more than 70 countries participate in the Kimberley Process, which requires the governments in these countries to ensure that all diamond shipments are exported in secure containers. In addition, each shipment must also have a specifically numbered and government-validated certificate that

promises the shipment does not contain conflict diamonds. The countries must also agree to refuse any diamond shipments not containing an authentic Kimberley Process Certificate. Even with these precautions, we cannot say that the problem has been resolved. The United Nations and the United States government released reports as recently as 2006 stating that roughly \$23 million worth of Ivory Coast diamonds were smuggled into trade and distributed as legitimate. Unfortunately, these numbers show no hint of ceasing and may only continue to rise.

UN Involvement:

Near the end of 2010, the United Nation fifty-sixth general assembly announced the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme was acknowledged for how it increased enforcement and how they strengthen the implementation of the United Nations in areas where they believed they never could reach before. The assembly was especially satisfied with how the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme was able to detect fraudulent certificates rebelling to buy blood diamonds or conflict diamonds. The General Assembly was extremely satisfied with how much the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme was able to prevent and decrease the amount s of conflict diamonds being retarded but, the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme still has many frivolous issues that affect how much of it a country can use, especially Zimbabwe.

The first sanctions put against this practice was in 1998 in Angola, Resolution 1173. After failed sanction, there were a few other sanctions that were put onto some other countries in similar regions as Angola (where productivity of blood or conflict diamonds are high). The other sanctions were never able to fully penetrate the source of the issue and the practice still remains today.

Possible Solutions:

The blood diamond trade poses numerous problems for nations and common people. The action taken against this can be at different levels and targeted at different people. For common people who buy diamonds, there needs to be a rise of awareness of this issue. People need to know where the diamonds are coming from and what poor adults and children, who are forced to mine these diamonds, go through. The large amount of money that people pay to buy diamonds for their spouse, family, or for an event, go into funding the blood diamond trade. When people know what their money is being used for, they will be more cautious when buying their diamonds and make sure the seller is not involved in these activities. Another way to combat this issue is by coming up with an internationally recognized and accepted process which can track the path of the diamonds from where they are mined to the diamond showroom. This way nations can work together to address their issue of the blood diamond trade. An example of this process is the Kimberley Process (KP). It imposes requirements on the members to ensure that the diamonds are “conflict-free” and the shipment and process of obtaining the diamonds are completely legal. It also helps defeat the militia and rebel groups who are trying to dismantle the legitimate government in African countries. Since this process has been in place for more than 10 years, it gives enough amount of data to really evaluate the effectiveness of this process. This data can then be studied in detail to come up with metrics for evaluating the effectiveness. However, this alone cannot solve the current issue because after this process came into action some of the blood diamond trade went underground. Since it went underground, the process was not that effective in ensuring that the diamonds were coming from a “conflict-free” zone. Other solutions can include getting the governments of African countries to use their police force and military force to fight against militia and rebel groups from taking control of the mines. This is

necessary because once these groups take control of the mines they need cheap labor to mine those diamonds. For cheap labor, they use poor people and young children from nearby villages. Even after these poor people and young children may be rescued, they need some sort of rehabilitation thus solutions should include medical and psychological help for the laborers to get back to their normal lives in society. This is because the laborers face extremely harsh conditions in the mines and need medical and psychological help. Furthermore, the use of current technology can be implemented within nations to track the diamonds from the beginning. However, since people are dealing with technology it is highly important to make sure that the information and the system are fully protected. In doing this, there needs to be some sort of encryption to ensure that no one can tamper with the system. Solutions need to address the major problems that the blood diamond trade is causing within nations and also as a whole.

Bloc Positions:

European Bloc:

The European Union has taken over the chairmanship of the Kimberley process for the year, following Australia. Launched in 2002 to fight against “blood diamonds”, particularly in Africa where two-thirds of the world’s diamond production originates, the Kimberley process’ purpose is to ensure a more responsible diamond trade. The European Union this year announced draft plans for a new system aimed at controlling the import of minerals from conflict zones. But the scheme's remit doesn't include diamonds, possibly because its creators mistakenly believe that there is a reliable, credible system already in place for the gemstone.

Latin American Bloc:

As a Portuguese colony, Brazil drove the international diamond trade, experiencing a diamond rush between 1725 and 1860 until the Portuguese crown declared a royal monopoly on

all diamond mining in the country and levied heavy taxes on mining concessions. With the depletion of shallow alluvial deposits and the rise of South African mining, Brazil became a backwater with only modest production for much of the 20th century. That scenario is now changing as diamond exploration and mining pick up in the interior states of Mato Grosso and Minas Gerais and the coastal state of Bahia.

With its geographical position at the center of the Americas and at the mouth of the Panama Canal, Panama City plans to build a 50-story building to house a tax-free diamond exchange. The exchange will also house a gemological institute, laboratories, cutting and polishing rooms, and a trading hall.

Asian Bloc: The Chinese group was angered over the attendance of a party from Taiwan at the Kimberley Process meeting in Western Australia. The delegation disrupted the opening ceremony in scenes that were described as “regrettable” by Julie Bishop, the Australian foreign minister, who was in attendance. Such is its standing in the international diamond industry, India is expected to be chosen by the United Nations to take over the Kimberley Process - an initiative to stop the trade in African blood diamonds - from the EU. Dumisani Kumalo, South Africa's representative to the UN, introduced the draft resolution, saying that it is important to acknowledge that the road taken had not been an easy one. Many countries supported the Kimberley Process despite reservations, he said. "The thing that united them was the view that the resolution had contributed to peace and security in the countries where people had lost their lives because of conflict diamonds."

Western/North American Bloc:

The North American bloc has readily prohibited the selling of blood diamonds since the beginning of the 21st century. On January 18, 2001, President Bill Clinton issued Executive

Order 13194 which prohibited the importation of rough diamonds from Sierra Leone into the United States in accordance with the UN resolutions. On May 22, 2001, President George W. Bush issued Executive Order 13213 which banned rough diamond importation from Liberia into the United States. The United States has a position in its department who maintains the office of Special Advisor of Conflict Diamonds. The biggest contribution the United States has done is create the US Kimberley Process Representative. Executive branch efforts to end the trade in conflict diamonds began during the Clinton Administration. Its efforts were centered on the creation of a multi-fronted diamond trade regime which would be backed by international sanctions aimed at curtailing the selling of blood diamonds. United States enacted the Clean Diamond Trade Act (CDTA) on April 25, 2003, implemented on July 29, 2003, by Executive Order 13312.

African Bloc:

Much of the blood diamonds originate from the African bloc. Conflict or "blood" diamonds are illegally traded to fund conflict in war-torn areas, particularly in central and western Africa, according to the World Diamond Council, which represents the commercial diamond trade. The Kimberley Process started when Southern African diamond-producing states met in Kimberley, South Africa, in May 2000, to discuss ways to stop the trade in conflict diamonds and ensure that diamond purchases were not funding violence. Africa supplies about 60 percent of the world's diamond supply, there are alternate sources. In just the past two decades, seven African countries have endured brutal civil conflicts fueled by diamonds: Sierra Leone, Liberia, Angola, the Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Questions to Consider:

1. How does the blood diamond trade affect your country?
2. What actions has your country taken against the blood diamond trade?
3. What problems does the blood diamond trade pose in your country?
4. Using what solutions, will you eliminate capillary problems as well as the main issue?
5. How will your solutions affect the function of the government and the people?
6. What possible problems can occur in implementing your solution and how do you plan on fixing them?
7. Is your country directly or indirectly related to the blood diamond trade?
8. Does your solution address the laborers situation and helps the conditions they have to face?
9. Has your solution been implemented before? If so, what was the result?

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