



**GENERAL ASSEMBLY FIRST COMMITTEE
DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**

DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMITTEE

The General Assembly (GA) is the main decision-making body of the United Nations. It includes all 192 member states; each member state has one vote. The GA addresses issues involving all aspects of the UN's work, including humanitarian, peace and security, and human rights matters, and it can refer threats to peace to the Security Council for deliberation. Resolutions produced by the GA are not binding—the GA cannot force countries to take action on any issue—but because they are supported by a majority of countries in the world, they are important international documents.

The GA is divided into six committees. The GA First Committee deals disarmament and international security issues, and discusses issues related to protecting the peace. Like the other committees, the First Committee includes all 192 UN member states. It has the power to pass draft resolutions, which then go to the main General Assembly session, called the Plenary, for a final vote.

TOPIC: MULTINATIONAL TERRORIST GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

On September 11, 2001, terrorists attacked the World Trade Center in the United States. After that event, UN member states focused on ending terrorism worldwide. In early October 2001, more UN members met to address the problem of terrorism than for any other item on the organization's agenda ever.¹

But countries still argue over what groups or individuals should be labeled “terrorists.” In many parts of the world, groups wage war with their countries, either to separate from the government or to overthrow it entirely. Sometimes these people are treated unfairly by their government, and their struggles are justified. Other times, these groups use violence against both military and



civilian targets, terrorizing innocent bystanders to get what they want—these groups are terrorists. Often, though, it is difficult to tell the difference.

Today, several major countries—notably the United States and United Kingdom—are involved in the “**war on terrorism**,” a campaign to end global terrorist organizations. Other countries, such as Indonesia, Russia and the Philippines, are struggling to put down terrorist groups within their borders. Terrorism is increasingly an international problem: large terrorist groups can stage attacks in several countries, or several groups can serve act as allies in a world-wide terrorist network. To fight global terrorism, the international community must address many complicated problems, such as state-sponsored terrorism and cooperation between states.

Today, the UN is working to stop terrorism, and to ensure that member states act fairly when doing so. But many counties are afraid that these efforts will pose problems for national **sovereignty**—the right of a nation to control what happens within its borders. Also, the UN must find out how it can get more money for the war on terrorism and encourage countries to share their information on terrorists worldwide.

CRITICAL THINKING

When is it justifiable for a country to violate another country’s sovereignty?

BACKGROUND

Throughout history, governments have opposed groups that commit violence in support of extreme ideas. Sometimes these ideas are political and other times they are religious. Today, terrorist groups can attack targets around the world, or support one another in underground networks that span the globe. Every country in the world risks being affected by terrorism—even global terrorism—in one way or another.

Terrorist organizations take advantage of developmental problems. In places where people suffer from the effects of poverty, these groups attract followers by promising education, employment and the opportunity to serve a powerful political or religious cause. Essentially, these organizations claim to offer people a better life.

People remain members of terrorist groups due to **indoctrination**—the persuasive teaching of extreme beliefs and **ideologies**. These teachings are so powerful that followers believe committing violence against innocent people is, under certain circumstances, morally acceptable. These teachings even persuade followers to risk their lives for the group’s cause.

The tactics used by terrorist groups are often very simple. Unlike modern war, which is conducted with expensive equipment, armies and high-tech weapons, terrorism relies on very few resources. Terrorists are known to produce homemade bombs, steal guns and even perform “suicide missions”—setting off explosions to kill themselves and the people around them. Terrorist acts are not only difficult to prevent, but also very difficult to predict.



Some terrorist groups have even tried to acquire weapons of mass destruction (WMD) such as biological, chemical and nuclear devices. Biological weapons include diseases, which can be grown in makeshift laboratories and then released to infect civilians. Other weapons, such as nuclear warheads, cannot easily be produced, but may be stolen from governments around the world.

CRITICAL THINKING

How might economic development and improvement of living conditions help to fight terrorism?

Regional Terrorism

In the past, terrorist groups have mainly been focused in specific regions. In the United Kingdom, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) carried out bombings and attacks throughout the second half of the 20th century. This violence was meant to help Northern Ireland gain independence from Britain. It was also because of a religious conflict between Protestants and Catholics in the region. Similarly, an extremist group from the Russian region of Chechnya has pursued independence from Russia by committing violent acts against civilians. In 2004, this group took over a thousand students and teachers hostage, resulting in over two hundred deaths.²

In Latin America, groups such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) commit kidnappings and murder to draw attention to their radical ideas.³ And the Aum Shinrikyo, or “Supreme Truth,” once recognized as an official religious group by the Japanese government, began to carry out violent attacks on civilians. On March 20, 1995, the group released a deadly gas into the subways of Japan, killing 12 people and injuring thousands.⁴

Terrorism affects all regions and nations. The US National Counterterrorism Center recognizes over 30 major terrorist groups throughout the world, and smaller terrorist organizations continue to appear.⁵

Al Qaeda and Global Terrorism

Probably the most well-known terrorist group today is Al Qaeda. Al Qaeda was formed to fight Soviet troops occupying Afghanistan in the 1980s. During the Gulf War, under the leadership of Osama bin Laden, the group began to protest the presence of US troops in the Middle East.

In 1998, Osama bin Laden issued a formal declaration instructing all Muslims to begin killing Americans.⁶ Even though these efforts contradict the peaceful teachings of Islam, the group claims it fights for all Muslims in the region.



The reach of multinational terrorist groups is very large. Al Qaeda was once believed to run active “cells,” or small groups, in over 60 countries (the current number is unknown).

In several regions, members in “sleeper cells” wait quietly, living normal lives for years at a time before they receive a call from the organization to commit a terrorist act.

Source: Kevin Whitelaw and Mark Mazzetti, “One Year After 9/11 – A Nation Changed,” *US News and World Report*, November 11, 2002,
www.usnews.com/usnews/news/articles/021111/archive_022282.htm

Today, travel and communication have become much easier, which helps terrorist groups work internationally. In areas such as Eastern Europe, countries often do not have enough resources to maintain strict border controls. As a result, extremists and criminals can move between nations easily without being detected by governments.

Terrorists can inflict vast damage with few resources by using cheap technology and simple tactics. On September 11, 2001, the United States suffered losses of between \$100 billion and \$300 billion. However, the total cost of the attack to Al Qaeda appears to have been somewhere around \$500,000—a mere two to five percent of the financial damage to the US.⁷

The Self-Defense Argument

Terrorist attacks injure and kill many people—for example, well over two thousand people died as a result of the September 11 attacks. It is a government’s responsibility to protect its citizens; if a government believes that a terrorist group threatens its people, it may take police or military action to stop the terrorists from acting. Some believe that this force should only be used within a nation’s own borders.

CRITICAL THINKING

How might military action help to stop terrorism? How might it actually aid terrorists in some cases?

Others now look to root out terrorist organizations in foreign countries as well, arguing that terrorists must be stopped regardless of their location. But it can become difficult to distinguish between battling terrorists and battling the nations that terrorists seek refuge in. In these cases, nations that harbor terrorists may have a secret alliance with the terrorist group, or they may not know how to locate and arrest terrorist within their borders. The right of one country to use military force against terrorists in another country continues to be a controversial issue.

Complications in the War on Terror

Critics argue that some governments use the war on terror as an excuse to suppress political opposition. For example, people who are being oppressed by their country might begin to battle the government for increased rights or independence. Without a conventional army or a lot of



money, these groups would be forced to use cheap technology and simple tactics. These groups would be called “freedom fighters” by their supporters, but “terrorists” by the government.

Human rights organizations warn that countries such as Russia, Uzbekistan and Egypt have been labeling opponents as “terrorists” or “terrorist supporters” in order to discredit them. The accusation of terrorism can even be used to attack or imprison people unfairly. Using the war on terrorism as an excuse to persecute innocent people may even make real terrorist groups more appealing to people victimized by their government.⁸

Other critics disagree with the concept of a “war on terrorism” as a whole. Terrorism arises in states that are underdeveloped and politically unstable, where people are vulnerable to extreme ideas. But because extreme ideas emerge all over the world, and because they are unique to every situation, there is no way to properly **eradicate**—or to totally get rid of—them.

In order to effectively combat terrorism, experts say, governments must be fair and cautious in their counter-terrorism efforts. Member states must look carefully at accusations of “terrorism,” and must address the violent acts in a just and reasonable way.

PAST INTERNATIONAL ACTION

There are a number of international declarations that focus on terrorism. In 1963, the *Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft* addressed possible terrorist acts onboard airplanes.⁹ In 1979, the *International Convention against the Taking of Hostages* was written in New York, at a time when almost 70 Americans were being held hostage at the US Embassy in Iran.¹⁰

The 1980s saw documents on even more airline precautions, protection for ships at sea and, for the first time, the protection of nuclear materials against terrorists. However, none of these measures dealt with specific multinational terrorist groups and how to stop them.

UN Action before September 11, 2001

In 1994, countries created the *Declaration of Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism*. First, the document encouraged countries to share information about global terrorist groups, giving every nation an opportunity to defend itself and to take action against terrorists within its borders. Second, it condemned countries that support terrorists. Finally, it established a basic definition of terrorism by outlawing “criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes.”¹¹

Resolution 1373

In late September 2001, the Security Council created a more specific response to multinational terrorism in the form of **Resolution 1373**.

First, Resolution 1373 called upon member states to stop funding terrorist organizations. It also called for the monitoring of bank accounts to determine which accounts were held by terrorist



groups. Those accounts were to be “frozen” so that terrorists would not have access to their funds.¹²

All over the world, terrorist groups acquire money through criminal businesses (such as the sale of drugs or weapons) and donations from supporters. By freezing their funds, nations will limit the ability of multinational terrorist groups to act. However, many developing nations do not have the capacity to monitor all of their banks. Similarly, in many countries, it is illegal to interfere with bank accounts.

Resolution 1373 also established guidelines for dealing with the threat of terrorism. These required countries to stop supporting terrorist groups and encouraged them to strengthen laws regarding terrorism. The resolution also pushed member states make sure terrorists do not enter their borders.¹³

These goals, however, are difficult to achieve. Many countries already have problems associated with loosely controlled borders. Many nations also have little experience with creating laws that deal with the terrorist threat. And countries are often reluctant to share information, even information about dangerous multinational terrorist groups. Sharing knowledge of this kind might reveal secrets about national security or information-gathering practices.

Finally, Resolution 1373 called for the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which would focus on issues that affect the growth of terrorist groups.¹⁴ Specifically, the committee helps governments find terrorists, improve border control and share information.¹⁵

Currently, the member states are negotiating a 14th international treaty, which would complement the existing framework of anti-terrorism instruments, and also build on the main principles present in recent anti-terrorism conventions. On September 8, 2006, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which stressed the importance of the existing international counter-terrorism instruments. Member states pledged to consider becoming parties to them and implementing their provisions¹⁶.

The four major aspects of UN Security Council Resolution 1373 are:

1. Preventing terrorist groups from getting money;
2. Helping countries stop terrorism within their borders;
3. Promoting the exchange of information about terrorist groups worldwide; and
4. Establishing the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FORMULATING A RESOLUTION

Delegates should address the following when creating draft resolutions:

- Recommending ways that countries can fight terrorism within their borders;
- Suggesting ways for countries to work together to make laws and ensure that terrorist do not cross borders;
- Setting up a secure and private system so that countries can share important information about terrorists; and
- Ensuring that countries do not use the “war on terrorism” as an excuse to stifle opposition.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Has your country ever been attacked by terrorists?
2. Has your country been accused of supporting terrorism? If so, what measures has your government taken in response?
3. What anti-terror conventions and treaties has your country signed and ratified?
4. How does your country answer the self-defense argument? Should nations be allowed to act on their own to eliminate terrorist groups? Should nations be allowed to attack terrorist groups in other countries? What should the UN’s role be?
5. What could the UN do to help individual nations, particularly developing nations, write laws and create programs to combat terrorism within their borders?

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

Terrorism Research Center www.terrorism.com

International Policy Group for Counter-Terrorism www.ict.org.il

UN Action Against Terrorism www.un.org/terrorism

Counter-Terrorism Committee www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1373



TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Terrorism: Terrorism can be described as the use of violence against regular people to cause fear, in order to achieve a political or religious goal. However, there is not yet a definition of terrorism that all UN member states agree upon. The definition of terrorism is controversial because an act considered by one country to be terrorism might be seen by another country as a fight for freedom. Some member states believe that countries can also commit terrorism, while others believe that only non-state actors can commit terrorism.

Ceasefire: an agreement between groups in conflict to stop the violence.

Eradicate: to get rid of or destroy completely.

Sovereignty: the right of a country to govern itself and its territory without external control or interference from other countries.

Ideology: a set of ideas or beliefs.

Indoctrination: teaching someone to accept extreme ideologies without questioning them.

“War on terrorism”: the name for the controversial campaign led by the United States and the United Kingdom in response to September 11, 2001.

Resolution 1373: the UN Security Council resolution passed in response to the events of September 11, 2001.

TOPIC: ROLE OF DIAMONDS IN FUELING CONFLICT

INTRODUCTION

In many cultures, diamonds are signs of wealth and prosperity. But in some nations, diamonds have become symbols of violence and unrest. Over the past several decades, armed rebel groups, particularly in western Africa, have used diamonds to purchase weapons and fund ruthless campaigns against the government and civilians. These groups mine or steal rough diamonds (unpolished diamond stones) and then sell them illegally all over the world.

The international community has mounted several responses to the growing problem of “**conflict diamonds**”—diamonds used to fund violence. In fact, diamond-producing and diamond-importing nations have already agreed to a process for identifying conflict diamonds, known as the Kimberley Process. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have also gotten involved by conducting campaigns against the illegal diamond trade.

The UN imposed **sanctions** on countries that export and import conflict diamonds. And the General Assembly passed a resolution in support of the Kimberley Process, requesting all member states to adhere to its diamond production, trade and sales regulations. But despite these developments, rebel groups continue to fund their violent activities through the diamond trade, and conflict diamonds continue to enter the global marketplace.

BACKGROUND

Diamonds are formed within volcanoes when the element carbon is placed under tremendous temperature and pressure. Mostly, they are found deeply embedded in the earth’s surface where miners must dig them out. As the weather naturally wears down volcanoes, some diamonds rise to the surface and appear on exposed rocky areas, such as nearby beaches.

In Africa, along what is known as the “diamond coast,” millions of dollars worth of diamonds can be picked up without mining or excavation. Diamonds can also be sifted out of streams and rivers. The stones collected either through mining or sifting are “rough diamonds,” which look like glass or rocks. Rough diamonds are usually mined by—or are sold to—large companies. These companies clean, cut and polish the diamonds, and then distribute them to stores around the world.





Conflict Diamonds

In the early 1990s, rebel groups began taking over diamond mines in nations such as Sierra Leone, Angola, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Rebel groups forced locals to dig up rough diamonds. Then, they sold the diamonds to **distributors** who were unaware of how they were mined. With the money made by selling these diamonds, armed groups are able to purchase weapons, increase their militias and offer bribes to government officials.

But the problems of illegal diamond trading are not restricted to African countries. Rebel groups need weapons and supplies. As a result, a complex **arms trade** was created, involving groups inside and outside of Africa. **Arms suppliers** from locations all over the world—like Russia, China, Belarus, Brazil, Bulgaria, North Korea, Romania and Slovakia—sell weapons to African rebels in exchange for the wealth acquired by diamond mining.¹⁶ As a result, local civil wars and rebel conflicts have gained worldwide significance. Armed forces sell diamonds in order to overthrow African governments, with the help of arms suppliers in other countries and the worldwide diamond market. It is an international security problem.

The illegal trade in diamonds creates widespread humanitarian problems. Rebel groups often torture civilians to force them to mine diamonds. Militias terrorize local populations, even cutting off people’s limbs, lips or ears, to maintain control of diamond fields and rivers. And as groups acquire more diamonds, they become more difficult to control or suppress. In many areas, rebels have overthrown the government and now control local villages through intimidation and violence. Because of the violence now associated with these diamonds, they are often called “blood diamonds.”

Problems with the Diamond Trade

Several countries, such as those in southern Africa, depend on diamonds to maintain their economy. But the growing concern over conflict diamonds has negatively impacted the legal diamond trade. International sanctions meant to stop illegal exports also adversely affect nations that buy or sell diamonds legally. In addition, the international diamond industry has suffered from media attention on “blood diamonds.”

To counter the spread of conflict diamonds, diamond associations and the international community have sought ways to distinguish between legitimate diamonds and those obtained through conflict or intimidation. Several countries have designed certification systems to verify where a diamond originated. These systems establish a set of standards that diamond distributors must meet in order to claim that their stones are authentic. For example, the “Voluntary Code of Conduct for Authenticating Canadian Diamond Claims” contains a comprehensive set of rules on acceptable mining operations, shipping procedures and selling requirements.¹⁷

“‘Diamonds are forever’ it is often said. But lives are not. We must spare people the ordeal of war, mutilations and death for the sake of conflict diamonds.” -- Chungong Ayafor, Chairman of the Sierra Leone Panel of Experts

Source: “Conflict Diamonds: Sanctions and War”
www.un.org/peace/africa/Diamond.html

But these standards are not universal. And even if they were, documents can still be forged and certifications can be faked. The actual percentage of conflict diamonds in the world marketplace is debated. Global Witness, a non-governmental organization (NGO), argues that as much as 15 percent of the worldwide diamond trade comes from conflict areas.¹⁸ The diamond industry itself, including buyers and sellers, argues instead that conflict diamonds are only three percent of the total diamond production.

Because it is difficult to determine a diamond’s origin, it is impossible to know for certain how many conflict diamonds are on the market. While a diamond may have been mined in a conflict-ridden country, it can easily be trafficked through a non-conflict area with a forged certificate claiming the diamond was mined legally. The diamond can then be delivered to yet another country for cleaning. When it is finally sold, retailers have no way of knowing the diamond’s true origin.

CRITICAL THINKING

Preventing conflict diamonds from entering the consumer market is a concern to diamond-selling countries. It is also a major concern to the international community. Why?

Two rebel groups in particular have relied on rough diamonds to fund terror campaigns. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF), based in Sierra Leone, and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), based in Angola, have both been involved in the trading of conflict diamonds for over a decade.



Sierra Leone

In 1991, the Revolutionary United Front began a civil war in Sierra Leone. To fund their rebellion, the group took over Sierra Leone's diamond mines. With the money gained from selling rough diamonds, the RUF purchased sophisticated weapons and hired many troops. RUF quickly became a threat to Sierra Leone and neighboring countries.

The rebel group left thousands dead (by some counts, between 50,000 and 75,000 people), and the violent conflict left the nation in poverty. By the end of 1999, the UN declared Sierra Leone the poorest country in the world, in spite of the country's many valuable diamond mines. If these diamonds been mined and sold legally, more money could have gone into Sierra Leone's social improvement and sustainable development programs, saving the country and its people from poverty.

In October of 1999, the UN stepped in to help resolve the conflict. The UN Security Council established the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), a collection of peacekeeping troops who would disarm the rebel forces and help the government of Sierra Leone return to power. Even with the help of 17,500 UNAMSIL troops, the conflict continued for six years. It was not until December, 2005 that peace was established in Sierra Leone.¹⁹ It is slowly recovering from the violence fueled by conflict diamonds.

The speed with which the RUF asserted control in Sierra Leone would not have been possible without the money raised through conflict diamonds. Speaking on the subject before the United States Congress, US Representative Tony Hall stated:
“[The RUF once had] a group of maybe 500 soldiers, but because they seized the diamond mines, they quickly increased their 500-man army to 20,000, with some of the best weapons on the market.”

Source: CNN

www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/africa/01/12/africa.diamonds/index.html#2

Angola

Even before Angola gained its independence from Portugal in 1975, two factions had been fighting for control over its resources and power: the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). UNITA was supported by South Africa and the MPLA received help from Cuba.

Since its independence, Angola has been torn apart by civil war. UNITA captured Angolan diamond rivers, and MPLA supported itself through oil supplies—making both factions wealthy enough to arm themselves with high-tech weapons and large armies. Between 1992 and 1999, the war killed 500,000 people.²⁰

In 1991, democratic elections held in Angola failed. The UN Security Council imposed an **arms embargo** and **sanctions** against UNITA in 1993. By then, UNITA received \$600 million in diamond revenues each year, and it controlled of more than three-quarters of the country and its natural resources.



In 2002, UNITA leaders and MPLA officials signed a peace accord calling for an end to the violence. But since then, UN has accused UNITA of stockpiling illegal weapons and diamonds. While it seems that recent agreements and other measures may one day bring lasting peace to Angola, damage from the long civil war continues to prevent successful elections.²¹ Concerns about conflict diamonds in Angola persist.

CRITICAL THINKING

How did conflict diamonds play a role in these conflicts? How did the international community try to end the violence?

PAST INTERNATIONAL ACTION

The Kimberley Process

In 2000, several southern African countries met to establish guidelines that would prevent the illegal diamond trade and protect the legal diamonds trade. This series of meetings led to the adoption of the **Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)** in November 2002.²² Since then, the initiative has grown to include 45 countries that are involved in the production, export and import of rough diamonds.

The KPCS was implemented on January 1, 2003. Through the certification process, countries are required to check and verify every shipment of diamonds crossing their borders. They must track not only the diamonds' origins, but also their characteristics (such as shape and size), value and the importers/exporters who have handled them. In addition, the Kimberly Process asks that all nations work together to improve their internal verification processes and coordinate their law enforcement operations. Participants meet annually in a plenary session to review their progress. But to date, they have not agreed on a uniform way to determine how well a nation abides by the KPCS, and no nation is required to participate.

The Diamond Industry

Two major diamond trading groups—the International Diamond Manufacturers Association and the World Federation of Diamond Bourses—hold a meeting called the World Diamond Congress (WDC). In 2002, the trading groups signed a joint resolution agreeing to comply with the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. It is important to note that the diamond industry is committed to ending the trade of conflict diamonds.

Some nations and critics argue that groups such as DeBeers, the world's largest diamond trader, aid rebel groups by purchasing diamonds without confirming their origin. For its part, DeBeers (which controls 70 percent of the world trade in uncut diamonds) includes statements in all shipments stipulating that their diamonds are not bought from conflict zones.²³

There is currently no way to determine if countries that participate in KPCS actually follow its guidelines. There is no way to ensure that members of the diamond industry that agree to use KPCS will actually adhere to its verification procedures. And even though DeBeers insists its



diamonds are not purchased from conflict zones, there is no way to determine where their diamonds come from.

CRITICAL THINKING

Why might countries not want to participate in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme? Why might members of the diamond industry not want to join? What are the benefits of joining KPCS?

Regional Action

In 2003, the United States passed a law requiring all US importers to abide by the KPCS. The legislation was especially important because the United States consumes at least half of the world's diamond supply.²⁴ The European Union's Commission, the most powerful policy-making body within the European Union, also found ways to implement the ban on conflict diamonds. Currently, however, these controls are not universally enforced.

Since July of 2000, there has been greater compliance with the arms embargo against UNITA guerillas in Angola. But gaps in the air traffic control and customs systems make it very difficult to monitor sanctions. If the movement of goods between countries cannot be controlled, then it is difficult to find out which diamonds are legal and which are conflict diamonds. Monitoring customs and keeping border controls is a difficult task, especially in regions where rebel groups have taken over authority.

UN Action

On January 29, 2001, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution (A/RES/55/56) acknowledging the role of diamonds in fueling armed conflict. The resolution "urges all States to support efforts of the diamond producing, processing, exporting and importing countries and the diamond industry to find ways to break the link between conflict diamonds and armed conflict, and encourages other appropriate initiatives to this end, including improved international cooperation on law enforcement."²⁵ This resolution does not include specific proposals on how to eliminate the illicit trade of diamonds, but it does indicate the UN's awareness of the issue.

A similar resolution adopted on April 15, 2003 expressed the GA's support for the Kimberly Process. The GA recognized that, in order for the KPCS to be successful, "the widest possible participation [...] is essential and should be encouraged and facilitated."²⁶



The World Diamond Congress, when supporting the Kimberly Process, agreed to place the following message on all diamond shipments:

“The diamonds herein invoiced have been purchased from legitimate sources not involved in funding conflict and in compliance with United Nations resolutions. The seller hereby guarantees that these diamonds are conflict free, based on personal knowledge and/or written guarantees provided by the supplier of these diamonds.”

Source: Joint WFDB and IDMA resolution supporting the Kimberley Process, www.conflictdiamonds.com

The UN Security Council has also gotten involved. On June 4, 2003, it acknowledged Sierra Leone’s efforts to legally mine and export diamonds. Sierra Leone was commended for beginning to enforce the KPCS.

But problems with conflict diamonds continue. The UN has successfully curbed illicit diamond trading in some nations. But the UN continues to impose sanctions on diamond exports on other countries. These sanctions remain a necessary part of the effort to end human rights violations and resolve conflict.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CREATING A RESOLUTION

The issue of blood diamonds is multifaceted and to solve it demands a multifaceted approach. Blood diamonds don’t only result in harm those in direct involvement with their mining and smuggling, but the local economies of developing countries where these diamonds are mined from. Businesses do not flourish in violent environments where blood diamonds are frequently mined, which makes the community even more dependant on blood diamonds and their profits to feed their families. Governments of developing countries struggle to develop effective strategies of reining in unregulated diamond mining and smuggling of blood diamonds because more often than not, the smugglers are better equipped with weapons than a country’s security forces may be.

Often, it is demand by wholesalers from developing countries that drives the market for blood diamonds, which means that developed countries have a responsibility to ensuring that all imported diamonds are certified conflict-free and to regulate their diamond industries accordingly. It will take both developing and developed countries working together to create a resolution that addresses the demand and supply side of the blood diamond market and mitigates the continued trade in conflict diamonds. Delegates should consider addressing the following:

- Should additional guidelines be adopted aside from the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme?
- How can increased regulation of diamonds be encouraged, particularly in the area of customs control and national police forces?
- How can safer and economically stable conditions be created in diamond conflict areas?
- What can more developed countries do to assist developing countries, where most of the diamonds are mined, in improving regional security?



- How can the media be used to address the issue of the demand for diamonds without regard to their origin?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Does your nation sell, import or export diamonds?
2. Does your nation ensure that diamonds bought or sold within your borders are not conflict diamonds?
3. Does your country experience humanitarian problems relating to the illegal trade of diamonds?
4. Is your country a party to the Kimberly Process? If so, what role has it played in the process? If not, why has it not joined? What criticisms, if any, does your nation have about the Kimberly Process?
5. In your nation's view, what else must be done to finally eliminate the sale of conflict diamonds and their effects?

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Arms embargo: a ban on the sale of weapons to a country or a group. By preventing that country from gaining access from weapons or military supplies, an embargo helps end conflict. Placing an arms embargo on a country also demonstrates opposition to the country's role in a conflict, or to the country's policies.

Arms suppliers: the companies and organizations that sell weapons.

Arms trade: the exchange of goods or money for sophisticated weapons. This can be legal, when companies or governments sell weapons and military supplies to other countries, or illegal, when groups sell these items to rebels, terrorists or criminal organizations. The arms trade is international, and is very difficult to regulate.

Conflict diamonds: diamonds that are used to fund militias or rebel groups. They are often mined by local residents who are forced to work under harsh and inhumane conditions. In turn, these diamonds are sold, and the money gained is used to take military action against a government.

Distributors: large companies that purchase goods, and then sell them to independent stores. In the context of diamonds, a distributor is a large diamond-trading company that purchases rough or polished diamonds, makes them presentable, and then sells them to jewelry stores.

Kimberly Process Certification Scheme (KPCS): a process of certifying where a diamond is from, which is meant to ensure that diamonds from conflict regions are not sold or purchased. KPCS-participating countries must verify that diamonds are not conflict diamonds, and they may only import from, or export to, other KPCS-participating countries.

Sanctions: a ban on diplomatic relations or trade. The UN-issued diamond sanctions against Angola and Sierra Leone prohibited UN member states from purchasing diamonds from those countries.



SOURCES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Conflict Diamonds: Sanctions and War www.un.org/peace/africa/Diamond.html

Conflict Diamonds, World Diamond Council <http://www.conflictdiamonds.com>

The Kimberley Process: Promoting Prosperity Diamonds www.kimberleyprocess.com

“The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict: breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict as a contribution to prevention and settlement of conflicts,” A/RES/55/56, www.globalpolicy.org/security/natres/diamonds/2001/ga55-56.pdf



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