

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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**Thomas A. Edison Career & Technical Education H.S.**

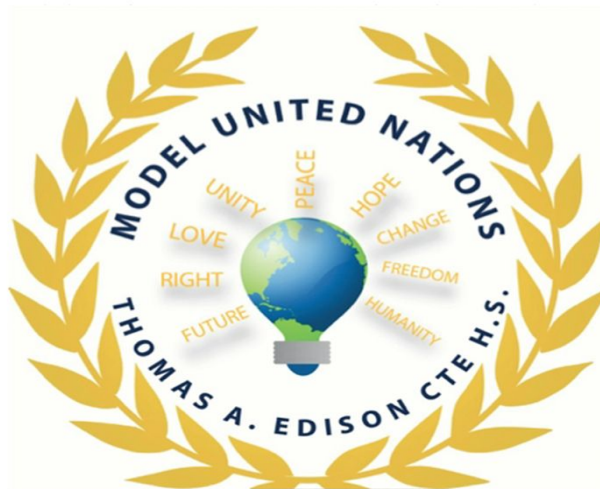
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# EMUN II

## ILO

### Child Labor



# November 18, 2017

## Letter from Dais:

*Eliza Kamal (Director):*

Hello delegates, I would like to extend a warm welcome to you to our second annual Edison Model United Nations Conference. It is my honor to serve as your Director for this committee. Currently, I am a freshman undergraduate at Hunter College and I am studying to become a social worker. As with my fellow dais members, I have also attended several conferences throughout various locations. My first official conference was the Edison Library Conference in my Junior year. I hope to continue participating in the Model United Nations program both through my college and through Edison's Model UN initiative. As extended to you by the other dais members, please contact me with any questions or concerns you have regarding the conference or topic guide.

Sincerely,  
**Eliza Kamal**

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*Aliyah Baksh (Chair):*

Hello delegates and welcome to the second session of Edison's Model United Nations Conference. I will have the distinct honor of being your Chair for this committee. I am currently a freshman at Queens College and I am an Elementary Education/Psychology Major. I have been a part of Thomas Edison's Model United Nations class since my junior year by participating in our library conferences and have had the pleasure to be a student in the class in my senior year at Edison. I have attended many conferences both in state and out of state. I am thrilled to be your Chair and am excited to be bringing this topic to you. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the conference, you will be able to contact me with the contact information posted on the website.

Sincerely,  
**Aliyah Baksh**

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*Mehrab Hossain (Rapporteur):*

Hello delegates and welcome to the second session of Thomas A. Edison's Model United Nations Conference. I am gleeful and honored to be your Rapporteur for this committee. I am currently a freshman at York College and I am taking Physician Assistant Major. It was my pleasure of being part of the Model U.N. 5.0 during my senior year. I have attended many conferences both in state and out of state such as Philadelphia. I am excited to be your Rapporteur for the second session of Edison's Model United Nations Conference. If you have any questions or concerns about the conference, feel free to contact me with the contact information posted on the website.

Sincerely,  
**Mehrab Hossain**

## History of the Committee:

The International Labor Organization (ILO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that is devoted to creating more advanced opportunities for men and women to receive decent and productive work under the conditions that everyone has the right to freedom, security, and the protection of human rights.



The ILO was created by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, alongside the League of Nations. Through war and peace, depression and economic boom, decolonizations and globalization, the ILO has brought together workers from around the world to create solutions to the most critical problems that face the world's workers.

Many of the resources that the ILO receives are allocated from voluntary funding from donors. This voluntary funding has accounted on average for 43% of overall ILO resources. The ILO has created and maintained many partnerships such with the European Commission. ILO also partners with other nations to support livelihood opportunities to conflict affected communities. ILO and the World Bank has also committed to improving collaboration in efforts to achieve sustainable development.

## The Issue:

There has been constant arguing about what the definition of child labor is. The term itself is defined by the International Labor Organization as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. The classification of "child labor" depends on the age of the child, the type and hours of work being performed, and the conditions under which it is performed.

All types of work that is done by children should not be classified as child labor. Work that does not interfere or affect the health, personal development, and schooling of children is considered as being a positive aspects of a child's life. Activities that should not be labelled as child labor include helping parents, assisting

in family business, and/or earning money outside of school hours. Such activities help to facilitate the development and welfare of the children and their family. These activities also help them develop skills and experience to prepare them to become productive members in their community as they grow older.

However, not all children receive the opportunity to be involved in work that facilitates their minds and personal development. In the most dangerous forms, child labor can extend to enslavement, and the separation from families. Children often fall victim to serious illness and become subjects to hazardous jobs and they are often left to fend for themselves in large urban areas at a young age.

The ILO's most recent estimate of the amount of children stuck in child labor is approximately 265 million. This statistic points to a major human rights challenge which will require each nation to put forth their renewed focus and actions.

Child labor deprives children of their right to go to school, exposes them to violence, and reinforces intergenerational cycles of poverty. The direction of this conference is not only to strive to eliminate child labor, but to ensure that the rights of the child worker is protected and that the conditions in which they work are comfortable, safe and will contribute to the positive development of the child.

## Poverty:

In developing nations there is a direct correlation between poverty and child labor. When families are in poverty, they must utilize every available person to earn an income and sadly this causes damaging effects on children in poverty as parents decide to take them out of school and place them in jobs.

In regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, the dependence on child labor is high due to the low standards of living and the increasing cost of living. Child labor in the agriculture sector is an especially big issue within this regions. According to a study done by the United States Labor Department, child labor is prevalent on cocoa plantations and the use of children in cocoa industry is still increasing. A study by Tulane University found that the children working in the cocoa industry in 2013 and 2015 was 51% higher than five years earlier.<sup>[1]</sup>

Eliminating poverty is a long term goal that will require many short term solutions to reach that point. To effectively decrease the amount of child laborers in developing nations, delegates must understand that one potential solution is to decrease the poverty rate. This is where delegates must create unique and innovative solutions that will help to decrease the poverty rate, especially among children.

## Education:

The Asia-Pacific region has the highest number of working children and an other region in the world. There is an estimated 122 million children aged 5-14 years that are being compelled to work. Millions of these children are not even enrolled in school.<sup>[2]</sup>

One of the ILO's national survey from around the world had documented the connection between child labor and educations. Some of the key finding include:<sup>[3]</sup>

1. There is a strong negative effect of child labor on school attendance. In some nations, school attendance rate of working children are approximately half of non-working children;
2. The length of a child's work day is negatively associated with their ability to attend school. Long hours of work increase the school attendance gap. High levels of child labor are associated with low literacy rates;
3. For children combining work and education performance at school suffers. There higher prevalence of children's work, the more likely they are to repeat grades or drop out entirely.

Education is therefore one of the keys to help decreasing the damaging effects of child labor. By educating and training children both socially and economically, they will be able to alleviate themselves from poverty and begin to further develop their societies through positive participation.

Delegates should focus on how to keep children in school. Offering programs and other types of education can also be one possible solution as it will help prepare children for careers later on in their lifetime.

## Child Labor and Trafficking:

One of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (WFCL) is the trafficking of children. Trafficking is classified as “forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery.”<sup>[4]</sup> The trafficking of children is undoubtedly linked with the demand for cheap and submissive labor in sectors that often violate the human rights of children and exploit their vulnerability. Globally, 59% of trafficked people are women, 14% are men, 17% are girls and 10% are boys.<sup>[5]</sup>

The working conditions of children forced into trafficking are dangerous to the health and development of the child. Many forms of such labor includes bonded labor, camel jockeying, commercial sexual exploitation and prostitution, drug couriering, and child soldiering.

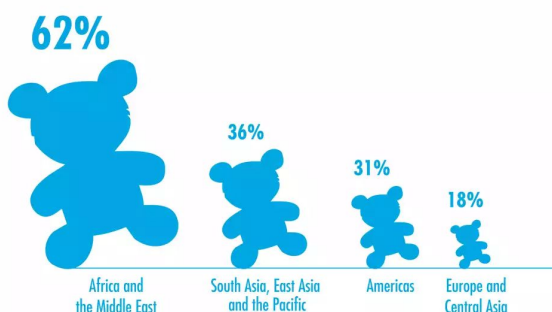


Although, children are vulnerable to kidnappers, many of lured into trafficking with the promise of education or work to send money back to their families. Often, some children are sold to traffickers by their families, who need the money and have little to no understanding of what will happen to the child.

While child trafficking does not discriminate heavily by gender, trafficking is predominantly affecting girls. In 2012, the UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) reports that the percentage of child victims had risen in a three year span from 20% to 27%. For every three child victims, two are girls and one is a boy.<sup>[6]</sup>

### CHILDREN ARE 1/3 OF KNOWN VICTIMS

One in three known victims of human trafficking is a child - a **5 per cent increase** compared to the 2007-2010 period. Girls make up 2 out of every 3 child victims.



Source: UNODC elaboration on national data.

Trafficking also occurs across international borders every year, and the most prominent forms are either forced labor or commercial sex. Every year, approximately 600,000 to 800,000 women, children and men become victims to trafficking. However, when victims that were internally trafficked are added to the estimates, the annual range increases to two to four million and 50% of those victims are estimated to be children. Two million

children are subjected to prostitution in the global commercial sex trade according to UNICEF (United Nations Children's Emergency Fund).<sup>[7]</sup>

The average lifespan of a victim is reported to be 7 years. Either they are found dead from attack, abuse, HIV and other STD's malnutritions, overdose or suicide.<sup>[8]</sup> Children are often targeted by traffickers due to the fact that they are easier to manipulate than adults. More money is also made by using younger girls and boys in sexual exploitation. Girls that have not even reached puberty are more at risk due to the fact that they are injected with hormones to bring on puberty.

Trafficked children face many significant problems concerning their physical and mental health. Those physically and sexually abused, they have distinctive medical and psychological needs that need to be address before advancing to adulthood however in many nations, they do not get the proper treatment and often outcasted from their community because of the stigmas attached to what they had gone through. There are also many long-term health problems that cannot be cured such as STDs, rectal trauma, drug addiction, depression, and anxiety. They also suffer greatly with posttraumatic Stress Disorder and some even from traumatic bonding with their trafficker. This can be seen with many trafficked adolescents. Often when they are removed from the trafficked world, the return because it is the only lifestyle familiar to them.

Human trafficking has surpassed the illegal sale of arms and in the coming future, trafficking will surpass the illegal sale of drugs. Victims of child trafficking can be used and abused for many year whereas drugs may be used once.

Delegates should exam different efforts that have been made within their nation to combat child trafficking and rehabilitation for the victims.

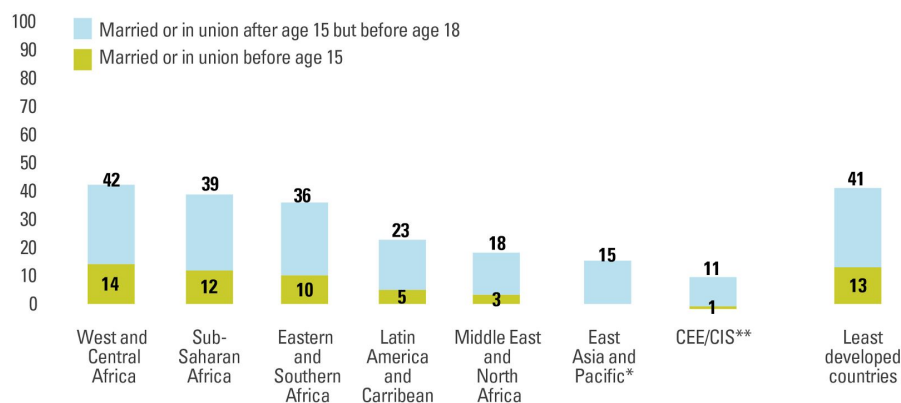
### Culture:

While in many nations we have to understand the economic factors that are determinants of child labor, there are many key cultural determinants that affect whether a child goes to work or not such as gender and age differences, and the cultural importance of not being idle or "lazy."

In many cultures, children are sent to work at an early age to developed "life skills." For girls, this can be range anywhere from learning to sew in sweatshops or selling clothes in low-rate local shops to even prostitution. For boys, this can include anywhere from hazardous construction to walking the hot streets selling bubble gum.

In nations such as Ghana and the Ivory Coast, it is culturally appropriate for children to leave school and help on family farms, especially cocoa plantations. In 2000, the US State Department, Knight Ridder and the BBC reported that some 15,000 children worked in conditions of forced labor picking beans in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.<sup>[9]</sup>

Children are often times seen as assets to their parents because they are considered to be an added source of income for their families. They are thus sent to work at an early age, with no regards as to physical safety. While in America getting a job is sometimes looked to as a rite of passage for many youths, in developing nations, children are sometimes conceived so that they can be sent to work or married of at any early age for a large dowry. In regions such as West and Central Africa, the Middle east this is especially true.



This is especially true in Ethiopia, where in a 2001 survey reported that about 90% of the children working in productive activities replied that they were working to either supplement family income (23.8 per cent) or to improve it (66.0 per cent).<sup>[10]</sup>

Worldwide, about 168 million children aged 5 to 17 are engaged in child labour, accounting for almost 11% of all children. Today, child labor is the most heavily concentrated throughout nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. In fact, in a study done by ILO in 1996, 61% of child workers were found in Asia, 32% were found in Africa, and 7% were found in Latin America. And, although Asia had the highest percentage, Africa had the highest incidence rate, at about 40% of children between the ages of 5 and 14.<sup>[11]</sup>

## Past Actions:

1. There have been many different conventions that were passed concerning child labor such as:
  - a. C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). This convention discussed the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour



- b. C138 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138). This convention discuss the minimum age for admission into the employment sector.
2. ILO created the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) which has aimed to eliminate child labor since worldwide since its beginning in 1922 by establishing country-based programs to promote reform and create concrete measures to end child labor.
3. Many nations created different acts and organizations to help decrease the negative affects and conditions of child labor such as the Fair Labor Standards Act in the United States. Many have not been successful within their respective nations.

### Possible Resolutions:

1. Consider how to incentivize businesses to cooperate with international standards of labor.
2. Consider the impact ending child labor will have on families and find ways to resolve this.
3. Consider incentivizing students to stay in school.
4. Consider implementing safety regulations to allow safe youth employment.
5. Consider utilizing security forces and law enforcement of your nation to protect child workers from abuse and stopping child trafficking.

### Questions to Consider:

1. How will you cooperate with local and international corporations/businesses to end or reduce child labor?
2. How can you ensure a regional and global push towards reducing the Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL)?
3. Should the International Labour Organization work with another organ/agency of the United Nations to compose a more comprehensive solution to the issue at hand?
4. What policies should be implemented to eradicate the abuse of children in the workforce?
5. Should we work to completely phase out child labor or only regulate?
6. How would you address parents forcing their childrens to work or get married at an early age?

## Footnotes:

- [1] Sub-Saharan Africa's Dependence on Child Labor Affects Development- Jeffrey Young  
[2] Child Labour in Asia and the Pacific- ILO  
[3] Child labor Hinders Children's Education- GPE Secretariat  
[4] What is Child Labor- ILO  
[5]-[8] Child trafficking Statistics- Ark of Hope for Children  
[9] Globalization and Child Labor: The Cause Can Also be a Cure- Susan Ariel Aaronson  
[10] and [11] Cross-Cultural Ethics and the Child Labor Problem- Hugh D. Hindman and Charles G. Smith

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