



# **GECMUN IX**

## **BACKGROUND GUIDE**

### Fair Food For Free

*Ensuring Universal Food Security*

SDG: 3. Good Health and Well-being, 16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions,

17. Partnerships to achieve the Goal

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## Committee Introduction

A crisis committee is a body of decision-makers with more authority than a regular committee. Crisis committees provide action while general assemblies make recommendations and foster consensus, concentrating on developing and improving frameworks for the nation's party to align its actions. Each delegate has equal influence as crisis committees are more dynamic and quick-paced than general assembly committees. Your overall goal should be to help create change in the world, aligned with the goals created within your committee or organization.

Though general, most updates in this committee are going to be based on solving forms of food security around the world that may or may not be specific to each delegation. Some examples of global food insecurity issues are food prices, the lack of change for conflict zones, and failed states. For example, the number of countries imposing trade-related policies has increased since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine. The increased number of food trade restrictions implemented by nations in an effort to boost domestic production and lower costs has contributed to the global food crisis' deterioration.

It is crucial for delegates to be prepared for arbitrary updates that arise during the committee session and have an open minded attitude to actively participate in each discussion. Some helpful resources to base your research off of are the World Bank and the World Food Programme websites. These sources include the latest updates regarding food security around the world, so delegates should take the statistics from these sources and further develop individual stances to follow throughout debate.

## Agenda Introduction

According to the Committee on World Food Security of the United Nations, food security means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life. The goals should be closely aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2, Based on ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture.

When everyone, at all times, has physical, social, and economic access to enough, safe, and nutritious food that satisfies their dietary needs and food choices for an active and healthy life, then there is food security. The extension of this idea to the family level is called household food security, and it places the emphasis of attention on the members of the families. When people lack sufficient physical, social, or economic access to food as described above, there is a problem with food security.

The COVID-19 epidemic, climate change shocks, and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine are all contributing to a growing global food crisis that is being exacerbated by rising food, fuel, and fertilizer prices. Unless immediate action is taken to respond jointly and broadly, millions of people worldwide face the threat of famine.

Organizations such as the World Food Programme (WFP) is the leading humanitarian organization saving lives and changing lives, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience. As one in nine people globally still go hungry, despite the international community's commitment to eradicate hunger, achieve food security, and enhance nutrition by 2030. The fight to end the cycle of hunger and poverty is centered on providing food and food-related aid especially in conflict zones.

Within the UN system, the WFP along with global food security is a very important and action-oriented body. The work of WFP has a direct and substantial impact, helping 80 million people annually in about 80 countries. The WFP is the foremost humanitarian agency battling hunger on a global scale.

Additionally, global crises brought on by high food prices are pushing millions more people into extreme poverty and amplifying hunger and malnutrition. Especially with the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a World Bank analysis, significantly hampered efforts to reduce worldwide poverty. The recovery has now been stopped by rising food and energy prices brought on by climatic shocks and conflict.

Delegates should focus their efforts on special operations, relief and rehabilitation, development assistance, and emergency assistance. Including work done in conflict-affected nations, where the likelihood of undernourishment is three times higher than in non-conflict nations. Additionally delegates should keep in mind the different factors of food insecurity such as the high prices in food, to increasing conflicts around the world like failed states to war zones such as Ukraine.

## Letter from the Chairs

Dear delegates,

Our names are Jay Choi, Emily Song, and Audrey Young. We are beyond excited to be chairing this crisis committee with you all. We attend Yongsan International School of Seoul, with Jay as a senior, Emily as a junior, and Audrey as a junior. We've all had the privilege of experiencing MUN as our integral aspect of our high school careers.

Our experience with MUN throughout the years have taught us valuable lessons that we want to learn from and incorporate into our own crisis committee. For example, we've experienced certain crisis committees which may be more slow paced or boring than others, whereas other committees were too fast-paced or high-stress for delegates to be able to pose plausible solutions in response to the issues. As we walk into this conference with the privilege of being able to chair this committee, we want to strive to make this committee the greatest experience it can be for you all.

Our agenda this year may appear misleading—with a GA-like topic, you may walk in with the assumption that your experience will mimic that of ones you have had in the past in the General Assembly. However, the structure of our crisis committee will be vastly different from a GA-style committee you may have experienced in the past. With live updates, surprises, and advancements occurring constantly throughout the committee, delegates will be faced with the challenge of needing to be versatile in response to crisis updates. Utilizing a relatively common MUN topic—a food crisis—delegates will experience a committee that is unlike any other MUN committee they've ever been to.

We are so excited to meet you all in person and see what you all will bring to the debate. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the chairs:

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## Key Terms

### World Food Programme

The World Food Programme is the leading humanitarian organization saving lives and changing lives, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience.

### Famine

Famine is a situation in which a substantial proportion of the population of a country or region are unable to access adequate food, resulting in widespread acute malnutrition and loss of life by starvation and disease.

### Food stability

Food stability indicates the ability for one to access food—to be food secure means that a population, household, or individual has access to sufficient food at all times, regardless of their geographical location.

### Food access

Food access refers to the accessibility by individuals to adequate resources for acquiring appropriate foods for a nutritious diet.

### The Russo-Ukrainian War

The Russo-Ukrainian War is an ongoing conflict that has been occurring with the Russian Federation and Ukraine since the year 2014. Initiated by Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea and support of the separatist fighters of the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk's People's republic, the tension intensified into the war that we have today.

### COVID-19

COVID-19, also known as the coronavirus disease, is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-COV-2 virus. Although most symptoms are mild to moderate, many patients experience severe illness from their infection. COVID-19 has fundamentally altered many aspects of our society after its occurrence, including our work-rest balance, 'long covid', and medical disparities.

### Malnutrition

Malnutrition refers to deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person's intake of energy and/or nutrients. The term malnutrition covers 2 broad groups of conditions. One is 'undernutrition'—which includes stunting (low height for age), wasting (low weight for height), underweight (low weight for age) and micronutrient deficiencies or insufficiencies (a lack of important vitamins and minerals). The other is overweight, obesity and diet-related noncommunicable diseases (such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer).

## Historical Background

The concept of food insecurity first began in the 1970s, where the primary focus was on issues with the global and national food supply, including ensuring the accessibility and price stability of fundamental food supplies. Following the events of the mid-1970s, the topics of famine, hunger, and food crises were also being thoroughly addressed. The result was a new definition of food security that acknowledged that behavior of those who might be affected and vulnerable was a crucial factor. These international, and institutional concerns were a reflection of how the world's food market was evolving and how that was what had sparked the crisis. This series of international negotiations that included information, tools for increasing food security, and platforms for policy discussion led to the 1974 World Food Conference and a new set of institutional arrangements.

A deeper understanding of the complexity of the technical and policy issues about food insecurity was mirrored in the ongoing evolution of food security as an operational term in public policy. Policies such as The World Food Summit (WFS) in November 1996 saw the most thoughtful redefinings of food security, which was achieved throughout the course of international debate. With each significant change in definition highlighted, are the opposing definitions of food security adopted in 1974 and 1996, along with those in official FAO and World Bank documents from the middle of the 1980s. The substantial reconstruction of government thinking on food security that has taken place over the past 25 years is highlighted by the contrasting definitions of food security.

Food security was just one of main component characteristics of human security that were highlighted in the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report. The human rights approach to development, which has in turn informed discussions about food security, is closely related to this idea. Food security was not specifically included as an organizational framework for action in the WIDER inquiry into the role of public action in battling hunger and deprivation. Instead, it concentrated on a more comprehensive definition of social security, which comprises a variety of separate elements (including, of course, nutrition and health).

More recently, from mid-2020, food prices have risen significantly. The Food Price Index of the Food and Agriculture Organization reached an all-time high in February 2022, and jumped again in March 2022 (nearly 30% above its value in the same month last year), and has only barely decreased since. In 40 countries during the previous year, domestic food costs increased by 15% or more, making many people unable to buy basic necessities. Acute malnutrition rates are also rising, sometimes reaching all-time highs. As of 2022, 60 million children worldwide suffer from acute malnutrition, up from 47 million in 2019 prior to COVID-19.

## Current State of Affairs

Due to the knock-on effects of the war in Ukraine driving up the price of food, fuel, and fertilizer, a worldwide food crisis exacerbated by conflict, climatic shocks, and the COVID-19 pandemic is intensifying. Unless immediate action is taken to respond jointly, millions of people worldwide face the threat of famine. The number of people who are severely food insecure or at high risk has increased to a record high of 345 million people in 2022 in 82 countries, driven by the knock-on effects of the conflict in Ukraine. Compared to pre-pandemic levels, there are now over 200 million more people in the world.

In order to stop millions from starving to death and to support the development and stabilization of national food systems and associated supply chains, the World Food Programme (WFP) is currently prioritizing emergency intervention. WFP is also taking steps to lessen suffering, diversifying its supply base, encouraging local food purchase, and arguing for and getting exceptions for exports and humanitarian access.

A storm of unimaginable dimensions is threatening global food security. The disastrous economic effects of the COVID-19 epidemic have been compounded by rising climate variability and shocks, including back-to-back droughts and floods. Massive income losses, record inflation, falling currencies, and an increase in global debt are all results of this. Moreover, since about 2020, food prices have been increasing. The Food Price Index of the Food and Agriculture Organization hit a brand-new record high in February 2022, then increased by a significant amount in March 2022 and has only barely decreased thereafter. In 40 countries, domestic food costs increased by 15% or more in the last year, making many people unable to buy basic necessities.

The crisis in Ukraine is escalating what was already a terrible year of hunger. As one of the world's largest breadbaskets, together, Ukraine and Russia provide 30% of the wheat, 20% of the maize, and 70% of the sunflower supplies that are traded internationally. Prices are rising due to a shortage of export supply, leaving import-dependent nations with greater food import costs or less food to consume. Since March 2022, protests over rising food prices have broken out in a number of nations, underscoring the speed and gravity of the effects of the crisis in Ukraine. Conflict may be exacerbated by increased food insecurity in terms of both availability and access to food as a result of price rises occurring simultaneously with political unrest, violent crime, and severe weather.

The primary reason why food insecurity is a challenging problem to resolve is because of conflict between nations that have a global impact. Families are evicted from their homes due to conflict, which also wrecks infrastructure, disrupts economies, and makes it practically impossible to buy or find food. Shock waves are propagated throughout the area when violence breaks out. Roads are shut off, jobs are lost,

infrastructure is damaged, imports are stopped, inflation rates go up, and the value of the currency drops. Finding enough food becomes incredibly difficult as a result of all of this. Where there is hunger, there is conflict, and where there is conflict, there is hunger.

## Stances of Parties

### United States of America

As a major country, the United States of America has been a key donor of humanitarian, democracy, and human rights assistance in matters regarding refugee camps. The United States Agency of International Development (USAID), an independent agency of the U.S. federal government, has provided almost \$108 million in food assistance to help Rohingya refugees, one million food vouchers for Syrian refugees, \$45 million in food aid to Syrian refugees, to name a few. More recently, on March 24, 2022, the Biden Administration announced that they have prepared \$1 billion to provide for Ukrainian refugees fleeing from the war, a large part of the funding going towards food.

### China

In the past, China has shown a split approach to helping resolve this issue. On the one hand, China has shown that they are willing to help the refugee food crisis, as can be seen with its donation of \$1 Million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for Food Assistance to Palestine Refugees in Gaza. On the other hand, China's Foreign Minister Zhao Lijian has accused the U.S. and other powerful countries of playing up the food security issue and exaggerating supply shortage to "pocket enormous profits." Could China look past these accusations and effectively work with multiple countries to solve the refugee food crisis?

### South Korea

South Korea has always openly accepted a wide range and number of refugees, and its willingness to assist is only growing. For instance, in 2021, it accommodated 3,559 refugees, a 3.37% increase from 2020. South Korea has continued to aid the WFP in particular, contributing a total of \$1.5 million to help provide food assistance for conflict-affected Syrians in Jordan and Turkey in 2021. Even this year, in 2022, South Korea donated \$1.5 million in March and \$2 million in June to the WFP for food and cash support for Ukrainian refugees amidst the Russia-Ukraine War.

### Japan

Japan is yet another country that has continued to support the refugee food insecurity crisis. One of the most recent statements by Japanese officials regarding the crisis by Kimura Hajime, an ambassador for the country, stated, "The Government of Japan is extremely concerned about the food security situation in Mozambique... We stand side by side with our Mozambican friends." Japan has since then donated two grants totaling almost 4 million USD to vulnerable families and refugees in Mozambique, showing that they view relations as just as important as monetary support.

## **Russian Federation**

Russia is one of the few countries that refrain from following the status quo as they have created a larger demand for refugee food security by waging war on Ukraine. In fact, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Ramin Toloui stated in a government briefing that “Putin’s unjustified and unprovoked war against Ukraine has put millions around the globe at risk of food insecurity.” Ukraine, being one of the biggest exporters of agricultural products, has been forced to push farmers to fight in the war rather than planting fields to provide for the rest of the globe. Additionally, as a consequence of the war, around 12 million people have fled their homes, adding more heat to the already strained refugee food security crisis.

## **India**

As of this year, India is still in a shocking state of food insecurity. According to a survey released on February 23, 2022, by the Right to Food Campaign India, almost 80 percent of respondents voted that they were in some state of food insecurity. In a country struggling with most of its population having food shortages, how could they contribute to aid refugees from other countries? There have been no recent donations by India to the food supply for refugees recorded, so it is currently hard to determine how India can become an asset to those trying to solve the crisis.

## **Yemen**

According to the WFP, “Aiming to reach nearly 13 million of the most vulnerable people with emergency food assistance in 2022, WFP’s emergency response in Yemen is our largest anywhere in the world.” Despite continuous humanitarian aid to Yemen, 17 million Yemenis are still food insecure. This is due to the rising food prices and falling incomes, as well as a lack of jobs in the private sector job market because of frequent power outages. Yemen is a clear example of why delegates should broaden their views when resolving this humanitarian crisis. The lack of food may not be the only issue this committee has to look into, there are other factors, including but not limited to power outages and rising food prices, that contribute to global food insecurity.

## **Pakistan**

Pakistan, like Ukraine and Russia, has been a major contributor to the global agricultural market. It has exported wheat, in particular through programs such as the WFP. However, 20.5% of the population is malnourished, and 44% of children under five are stunted. Pakistan is in the most similar situation as Ukraine in this committee as both are/were significant agricultural players in the market, yet have fallen due to different reasons. One country that has helped Pakistan’s situation in the past is Turkey. Turkey sent 700 farmers to harvest their lands in order to create a more extensive food supply to feed a larger population. This shows that monetary donations are not the only form of assistance that food-insecure countries and refugees need.

## **Iraq**

The Covid-19 outbreak hit Iraq's economy hard as the oil price decline due to low demand continued to take a toll on fiscal revenues. This left the government with limited financial resources, causing work wages to decrease significantly for public servants. Consequently, many Iraqis have fallen into poverty, experiencing food insecurity daily. There have been no significant structural changes aimed at putting an end to this issue, so Iraq is still struggling with the issue this year.

## **Australia**

Australia has remained a renowned contributor to donations helping the food-insecure global population. In June 2022, the WFP received 15 million USD from Australia to "help millions of Sri Lankans who are unable to afford food." Additionally, in May and June of 2011, they donated over 5 million USD in total to help the food insecure in Kenya. Along with other major countries in this issue, such as the U.S. and South Korea, Australia has always been willing to send monetary means to aid the food crisis. These countries may be seen as influential players in supporting the resolutions created by this committee.

## Possible Solutions

Delegates are urged to come prepared with solutions to the ongoing refugee food security crisis, as well as any new challenges (crisis updates) that will emerge during committee sessions. The following are possible solutions to consider:

1. Addressing the current humanitarian crisis by meeting the WFP's target of \$22.2 billion as soon as possible to feed refugees in crisis.
2. Supporting and joining global and regional organizations to develop a plan of action regarding the unprecedented crisis, such as the Global Alliance for Food Security (GAFS) and the complementary Food and Agriculture Resilience Mission (FARM).
3. Ensuring trade is open for food, fuel, pesticides, and fertilizers and restrictive trade policies are reformed in order to effectively deliver food to those most in need.
4. Devoting to political solutions to prevent hunger as a weapon of war, as well as ensuring the fast reopening of Black Sea ports to gain access to the most affected and vulnerable populations.

## Questions to Consider

- Why is the global refugee food insecurity crisis so difficult to solve? Is it because of the inability of countries to settle on a plan of action, or is it due to the fact that some countries are unwilling or unable to donate monetary means to the WFP?
- How will a country seemingly adding to the problem, such as Russia, come to a consensus with other countries on how the issue will be resolved?
- Which needs to be resolved first in order to ensure food security to the refugees most at risk: smooth means of transportation/transactions or the cultivation of the foods itself, and why?
- What are the pros and cons of donating solely monetary means to organizations rather than coming up with a unified, multifaceted, and global solution to the issue?
- What are the unique perspectives and status of each country (economic, social, political), and how may they combine to create the most feasible and immediate yet effective solution?
- Which, if at all, is more important and why: immediate food supply for refugees in crisis or the creation of food banks that may take more time?

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