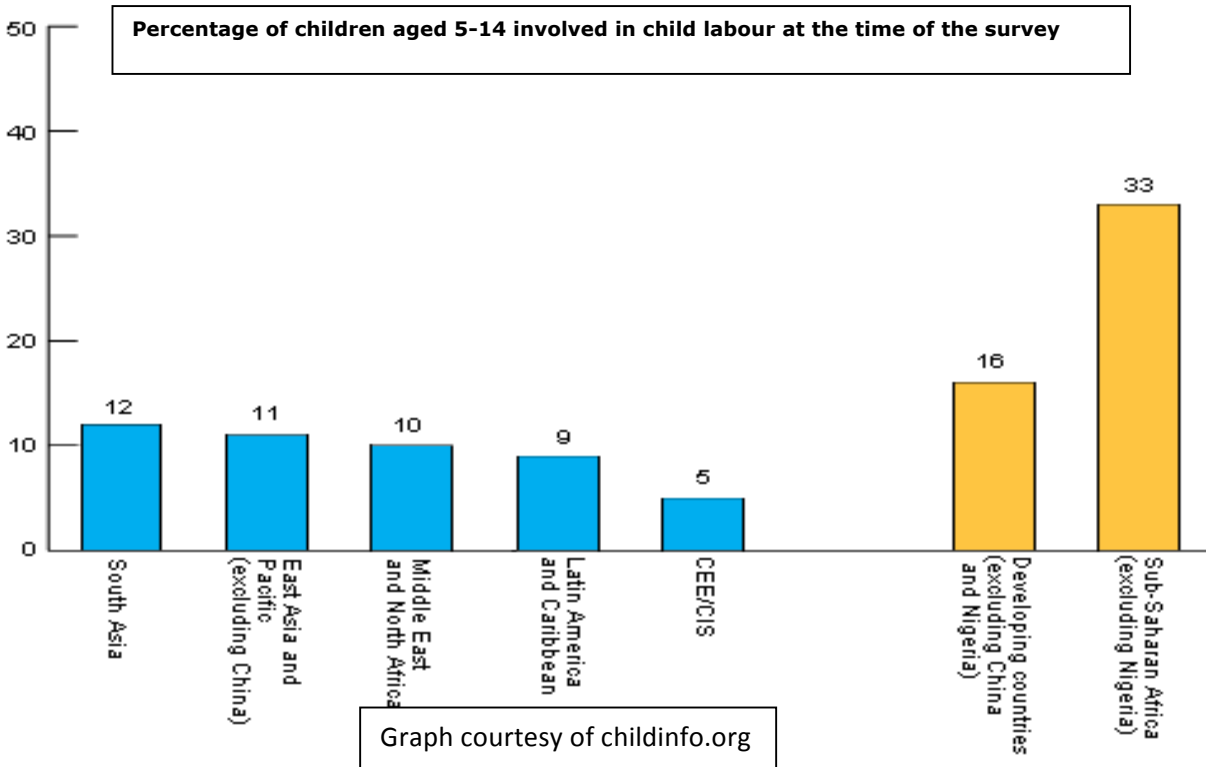


UNHRC- Child Labor

Child labor is one of the grossest global violations of human rights. Not only are children forced to be soldiers, but kids are put to work in fields, sweatshops, and child-prostitution rings. Legislation on child labor passed and a Committee on the Rights of the Child formed in the United Nations, yet child labor remains prevalent: 1 in 6 children (from the ages 5-14) in developing countries are exploited as laborers.



A Brief History of Child Labor

Since our beginnings on Earth, humans exploited the work of others. The Industrial Revolution was the time that children were first introduced to the factory setting, although they were forced to work in other forms before that. While they created goods for many, the factories were unsafe environments that treated all laborers unjustly. In 1802, the United Kingdom Parliament passed the Factory Acts, one of the first pieces of legislature to relieve children of some of the hardship; however, lack of reinforcement and supervision resulted in the legislature failing. Thus began a pattern of helping hands that were too far out of reach.

The United Nations' International Labor Organization, UNICEF, and Convention on the Rights of Children (which all countries except the United States and Somalia are signatories of) all help combat child labor. Because child labor as a pillar of the world economy is so large, there is no easy way to stop it without causing problems. Less kids working in underdeveloped country would cause wage and employment issues that may result in poverty, which in turn may lead to more children working.

Boycotting goods that are produced by child laborers may result in worse conditions for the kids. It seems that there is no easy answer.

The Human Rights Angle:

From a human rights standpoint, the United Nations believes that child labor is exploitative. The children are not given the choice of a safe and pleasant life, but they are given the opportunity to be hurt and devastated for life. Children are being discriminated against and taken advantage of because of their age. From a moral and just standpoint, no kid should be forced to work in the conditions that the estimated 250 million child laborers are today.

Your task:

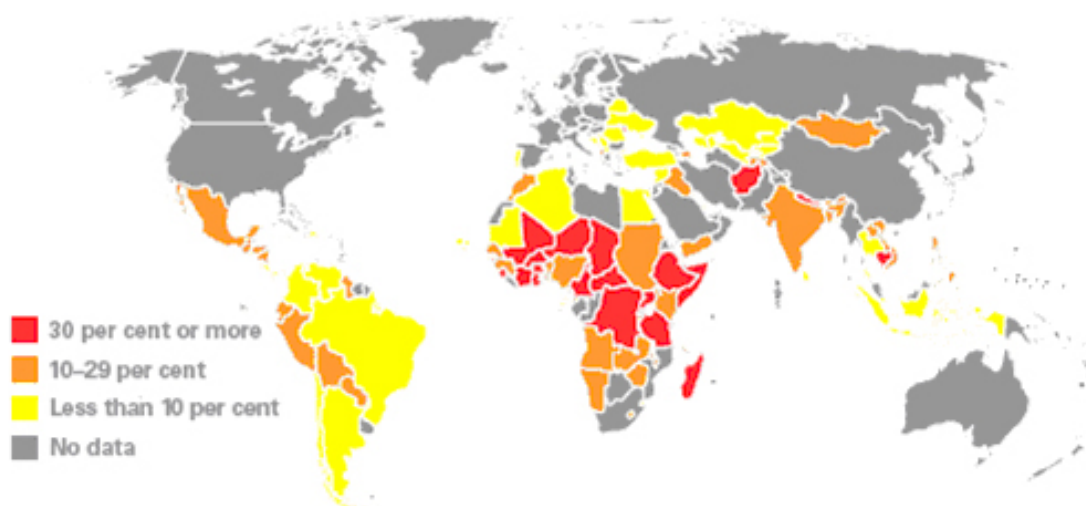
As members of the United Nations Human Rights Council, you have to help find a way to help the children that are forced to work in dangerous and unjust conditions. If you do not find a way to prevent children from working as prostitutes, in mines and quarries, and in sweat-shops, discuss how to make the situation for the children safer.

Goals:

- Decrease the number of child laborers as greatly as possible
- Find a way to prevent child labor before it starts with a sustainable system (must be able to implement in underdeveloped countries)
- Secure relative economic balance that will prevent child labor
- Stop the exploitation of children as a form of age or conditional discrimination

CHILD LABOUR OCCURS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD BUT IS MOST PREVALENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Percentage of children aged 5–14 engaged in labour (1999–2006)



Additional Links:

- <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/>
- <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/subcom/index.htm>
- <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>
- <http://www.ll.georgetown.edu/intl/labor.html#Child Labor>
- http://www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/laborctr/child_labor/about/causes.html
- <http://www.ilo.org/global/lang--en/index.htm>
- **Juliana Snarski UNHRC Child Soldiers**
- The use of children as soldiers is not a new concept, with child warriors dating back to the times of the ancient Greeks. However, with the brutality and lethality of war today, using these children in battle represents a major humanitarian crisis. Today the problem is focused on, but not limited to, the central African region, with countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda. Still tormented by the remaining effects of colonization of the 19th century, countries like these, as well as others in the regions have been ravaged by civil wars for decades. However, as the resources and people of these nations become exhausted by the fighting, the tyrannical leaders of the militias, some officially recognized as terrorists, such as Joseph Kony of the Lord's Rebel Army in Uganda, or Laurent Nkunda of the National Congress for the Defense of the People of the DRC have turned to kidnapping children as young as 6 and forcing them to serve in these armies. These children, tortured and coerced, usually by the threat of death of themselves or their family, are manipulated into a life they didn't choose, having their innocence stolen as they are forced to wage war and kill people at a young age.
- One of the many challenges of dealing with this problem is that it is a many sided war. The child soldiers are merely a symptom of deeply rooted cultural and political tensions. Each area of conflict has its own histories and problems that are extremely difficult to resolve even on their own. When you take into account the tangled web of ethnic and tribal ties that make up African history, it is even more apparent the depth of the underlying issues. Many of the wars that involve the child soldiers have been going on for years and are spurred by deep ethnic tensions. The militia leaders, usually from ethnic groups, such as the Rwandan Hutus and Tutsis, crusade under the name of "justice" for their people and revenge on their enemies, but due to their brutal war methods including the use of child soldiers, become renegades of national and international governments being sought for war crimes. However, these army heads are very successful at evading capture, and international organizations do not have the resources or jurisdiction to successfully wage war on these criminals. Even though many of the militia leaders are classified as war criminals or even terrorists, these issues are brushed aside in the international agenda in favor for some of the more profitable ones.
- As the UN Human Rights Council, it is your obligation to help remedy the situation as well as preventing it in the future. However, this involves many problems not immediately visible. Not only does getting these children out of the militia pose a problem, as these armies are both desperate and not very open to cooperation, but that does not solve the underlying problem, the civil wars that have been going on for decades, and it does not prevent more children being kidnapped or forced into the militia. Steps have to be taken to mediate the situation in central Africa, and international regulations have to be established and enforced in order to relieve the crisis. However, once the child soldiers are rescued, reintegration is also difficult; many of the children have no family to go back to and no education to build off of. Centers exist, built with private money, but they can only hold a couple hundred children at most, and estimates state that there are about 300,000 child

soldiers being used worldwide. One of the big issues is dealing with the logistics of demobilizing these children and preventing the use of these children.

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- Questions to consider:
- How can we mediate the situation when there are so many different factors to the issue?
- How can these child soldiers be reintroduced to society?
- How do we deal with the militia leaders, cooperation and negotiation or treating as criminals?
- How can we prevent this practice in the future?
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- Sites to check out for more information:
- <http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/content/facts-and-figures-child-soldiers>
- <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5213996.stm>
- <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/congo/5836759/Rebuilding-the-lives-of-Congos-child-soldiers.html>
- Juliana Snarski-UNHRC South Sudan
- The nation of South Sudan came into existence on July 9, 2011, after almost 25 years of civil war between the north part of Sudan and the south. However, the tension is far from over, as this country struggles to establish itself in Africa while raising the standards of living for its people. The north/south Sudanese conflict dates back to the colonial times, when colonial powers tended to divide the areas of land by convenience, paying little heed to the existing ethnic and cultural boundaries. This caused many issues, as the predominantly Arab and Muslim northern population clashed with the Southern ethnic populations who followed traditional religions. Tensions increased when the North tried to impose an Islamic rule on the whole country, sparking a Southern mutiny in 1995, and again in 1983 when the Sudanese government took away the autonomous rights for the South Sudanese people, established in the Addis Ababa peace agreement of 1972. However, after 22 years of civil war, South Sudan declared its independence, as accorded in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and with full recognition from the Sudanese government.
- However, the struggle is just beginning for this new country, as the new government explores its sovereignty, the borders are established, and major work is done to improve the living standards of the people. One of the places that are sure to spark conflict is the north/south border, which is the prime spot for major oil fields. Although these fields are traditionally considered part of the south, the oil is a major source of revenue for the Sudanese. The north has a little pull on the situation, as they control the pipelines and the ports that transport and trade the oil. Figuring out how to divide the lucrative oil available in Sudan will be one of the major kinks to work out in the fate of this new nation. Another major problem is the living standard of the South Sudanese, even compared to their Northern counterparts. As one crosses the border, there is almost an instant drop in standard of living: the infant mortality rate spikes almost 5%, the percentage of people with basic education drops to 5%, and the percent of people with access to sanitation and clean water drops 20% lower. This only proves the difficulty of the oppression that the South Sudanese face, considering that for an area that has such profitable oil fields, living standards are some of the worst in the world.
- Although currently relations between northern Sudan and South Sudan are cordial, these problems, mainly dividing the boundaries, are sure to come up and possibly spark conflict

between the two nations. Not only must these issues be addressed as the countries enter negotiations over the border, but the wellbeing of the new nation of South Sudan must be taken into account. With some of the worst living standards in the whole world, South Sudan is at a huge disadvantage while taking on the difficult task of creating a new government from nothing. South Sudan needs a government that can adapt to the needs of the people, while being stable enough to allow its people to prosper.

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- Questions to consider:
 - The living standard of the people is a humanitarian crisis in it of itself. How will this period of political change affect attempts to aid the people?
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 - How will the demand for the oil fields change the border divisions, and how can the UN help avoid armed conflict?
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 - How can the UN assist in creating a proficient government for the people of South Sudan while taking care to not infringe on national sovereignty?