

# UNICEF: Child Labor

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## BunnyMUN II

L.B. POLY - December 2nd, 2023

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# HEAD CHAIR LETTER

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Dear Delegates,

Hello! My name is Corina Frank, and I am delighted to be your Co-Head Chair for the UNICEF: Child Labor committee. I am a Poly Pace Junior and manage our MUN social media(s). Besides MUN I am an avid member of our Poly Girls Soccer team (though I am hurt... for now). I, alongside a few others, founded our first Poly Vita Tax Club. I'm involved in about 3 book clubs at Poly (I love to read) as well as being Vice President of Persian club. On the other hand I enjoy baking and cooking. I LOVE chocolate chip cookies and I have a crippling Crumbl addiction (Nordstroms E-bar cookies are just as lethal), and my sweet tooth is not a force to be reckoned with.

If you have any questions regarding our conference, Model UN, or just being a High School Student in general feel free to email me. I would love to converse with you, and share chocolate chip cookie recipes.

Sincerely,

Corina Frank

UNICEF | Co-Head Chair | [corinafranko7@gmail.com](mailto:corinafranko7@gmail.com)

# HEAD CHAIR LETTER

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Hello everyone!

My name is Jackson Trunnelle, and I am very excited to be your Co-Head Chair for the UNICEF committee on child labor. I am currently a junior and Webmaster for our Model UN program at Long Beach Poly. MUN is a very exciting place where I have been able to explore global policy, consider new ideas, and make great connections with wonderful people who I have had the pleasure of delegating with. Outside of MUN, I play club volleyball and varsity for my high school team, as well as playing pickleball and card games in my free time. At school, I am also involved in VITA Tax Club, Poly Global Fund, and Poly Pickleball Club. Like Corina, I love cookies too (especially Christmas ones).

I am very excited to hear all of the wonderful ideas and creative solutions that will be brought forth, and how through patience, cooperation, and civility, we can strive to make the world a better place. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at my email below!

Sincerely,

Jackson Trunnelle

UNICEF | Co-Head Chair | [jctrunnelle@gmail.com](mailto:jctrunnelle@gmail.com)

# VICE CHAIR LETTER

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Dear Delegates,

Hello everyone! My name is Josephine, and I am thrilled to be vice chairing this UNICEF committee. I'm currently a senior, and this is my second year as co-President of Poly MUN. MUN has allowed me to explore my interest in International Relations, and I love how every committee brings new ideas and new opportunities to learn.

Some of my hobbies include playing piano, playing viola in Poly's chamber orchestra, playing volleyball, and being involved in clubs including Speech and Debate, French Club, and Female Leadership Academy.

I have attended several UNICEF committees, and each one brings forth many creative solutions that are reflected within the actual United Nations Resolutions. I can't wait to hear all of your wonderful ideas, and if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to send me an email!

Sincerely,

Josephine Gore

UNICEF | Co-Head Chair | [josephineamabelgore@gmail.com](mailto:josephineamabelgore@gmail.com)

# RAPPORTEUR LETTER

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HEY YOU!

My name is Jack Park, and I will be your rapporteur (rap) for your UNICEF committee. I am currently a junior at Long Beach Poly High School, and this is my first year in MUN. Model UN has been such a great experience for me personally, and I have had so much fun interacting with fellow delegates, and I couldn't be more excited to rap for the first time for everyone here. I hope you guys will grow and learn from this room, and also have fun while you're at it!

Some things that I enjoy are cooking (though I'm not the best at it!), playing board games, practicing tennis (Novak Djokovic > everyone), playing piano (Frédéric François Chopin > everyone), and going to the gym. I also enjoy camping and enjoy the wilderness by hiking, swimming, and rock climbing. My favorite spots are Big Bear, Joshua Tree, Sequoia, and Yellowstone!

I hope that you have enjoyed reading a little bit about me, and I hope to get to know you better as well. I cannot wait to meet you all, and I am so excited to rap for you all. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at [jackbenjaminpark@gmail.com](mailto:jackbenjaminpark@gmail.com).

Best Wishes,

Jack Park

UNICEF | Rapporteur | [jackbenjaminpark@gmail.com](mailto:jackbenjaminpark@gmail.com)

# HOW TO MUN

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So, you're probably wondering: How do I prepare for debate? Well, here are some starting points to begin your country research!

1. Read through this background guide
  - a. find your country in Bloc Positions (pg. 15) and read that paragraph
2. Look for information on your country in the CIA World Factbook and BBC Country Profiles, linked here:
  - a. <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/>
  - b. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country\\_profiles/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country_profiles/default.stm)
3. Look at the Questions to Consider (pg. 16) and try to answer them (do some research on the internet!)
4. Do more research on the internet for:
  - a. previous country actions
  - b. previous United Nations actions
  - c. possible solutions

During the committee, all delegates will present an “opening statement.” This is a short introductory speech and will only last about 30 seconds to 1 minute—nothing too bad! You can practice and time your speech using a timer.

These opening statements are written beforehand. They don't have to be memorized, either. You can print or write your speech, then read off the paper.

Your opening statement should include:

1. Your country's position on the issue at hand
2. What your country has done in the past
3. Possible solutions that align with your country's position
  - a. This is what you will discuss in the main part of the committee! Including this in your opening statement is a great way to let other delegates know where you stand.

# COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION

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UNICEF works in the world's toughest places to reach the most disadvantaged children and adolescents – and to protect the rights of every child, everywhere. Across more than 190 countries and territories, UNICEF does whatever it takes to help children survive, thrive, and fulfill their potential, from early childhood through adolescence.

The world's largest provider of vaccines, we support child health and nutrition, safe water and sanitation, quality education and skill building, HIV prevention and treatment for mothers and babies, and the protection of children and adolescents from violence and exploitation.

Before, during and after humanitarian emergencies, UNICEF is on the ground, bringing life saving help and hope to children and families. Non-political and impartial, UNICEF is never neutral when it comes to defending children's rights and safeguarding their lives and futures.





# TOPIC SYNOPSIS

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Although some may believe this is a problem of the past, about 1 in 10 of children worldwide are involved in child labor today. Conditions and circumstances vary significantly, but all impacted children face time away from education, bonding with family and friends, and significant life milestones. Often, children begin their work as a result of familial financial insecurity or forced migration, but almost all children ultimately face harsh consequences. From abuse to dangerous working conditions and hours, children are ill-equipped to work, much less in unregulated industries. Girls face the added stress of managing homemaking while balancing employment and education, but no child should have to endure the physical and emotional pain caused by child labor. Some families require additional income from children to survive. Some businesses rely on child labor to stay afloat, and some children have no way of escaping



their current labor status. UNICEF specifically addresses this issue, and continues to work diligently around the world to put an end to child labor. Delegates in this committee will come to a consensus on how to safely and effectively end child labor while considering how manufacturing and factory industries can have safer work practices in the future. How will families find new sources of income other than child labor? How will your delegation ensure that every child gets an opportunity to succeed without being forced to work?

# BACKGROUND

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## What is child labor and why is it harmful?

According to the UN, child labor is work that is “mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children.” These practices can interfere with or deprive them of the chance to attend school and involve high rates of abuse and violence in the workplace. The often unsafe working environments jeopardize children’s mental and physical health and can stunt moral and social development.

## Mining

Child labor in mining refers to the practice of children being involved in various stages of mining activities, often under hazardous and exploitative conditions. This form of child labor is massively damaging to the physical and psychological well-being of



children and violates their basic human rights. UNICEF has made great efforts to combat child labor in mining and works closely with NGOs (Non-Governmental Organization) and other UN agencies to strengthen the global effort to eradicate poor conditions in child labor. According to a report of the International Labor Organization (ILO), in the combined Sahel regions of Burkina Faso and Niger, up to 30-50% of the gold mine workforce is comprised of child labor workers, most are under the age of 15 and work under forced labor conditions. Other minerals involved with child labor mining include Cobalt, Diamonds, Mica, Tin, Coal and Quartz. Efforts are being made

by UNICEF to improve working conditions and to ensure that mining activities are being monitored in a responsible and ethical manner.

## **Sweatshops**

Sweatshops, or sweat factories, are crowded factories characterized by exploitative working conditions, low wages, and often the violation of basic labor rights. Of particular concern is the rampant use of child labor within these establishments. Children, often from impoverished communities, are forced to work long hours in unsafe environments, depriving them of their rights to education, play, and a nurturing childhood. The violation of their rights not only jeopardizes their physical and emotional wellbeing, but it also reinforces the cycle of poverty and economic

inequality. As a specialized agency, UNICEF plays a pivotal role in combating child labor and safeguarding the rights of these children worldwide. Through various programs and partnerships with governments, NGOs, and the private sector, UNICEF strives to eradicate child labor, promote



education, and ensure the protection of children's rights in sweatshop environments.

## **Working Conditions and Compensation**

Working conditions and compensation in the context of child labor are pressing concerns that demand immediate attention. Child laborers in industries such as manufacturing, agriculture, and domestic work often endure deplorable working conditions, including exposure to hazardous substances, long hours, and lack of access

to proper nutrition and healthcare. These conditions not only jeopardize their physical and mental well-being but also hinder their overall development. Furthermore, child laborers are often subjected to meager wages or even forced to work without any compensation, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and exploitation. UNICEF, as a champion of children's rights, works tirelessly to improve working conditions and ensure fair compensation for child laborers. Through advocacy, capacity-building, and collaboration with governments, civil society, and the private sector, UNICEF strives to create an environment where children are protected from exploitation and have access to quality education and opportunities for a brighter future. Addressing the issue of working conditions and compensation is paramount in breaking the cycle of child labor and fostering a more equitable and just society for all children.

### **Factors that lead to Child Labor**

Child labor persists as a complex issue influenced by a multitude of factors. High child populations and fertility rates exacerbate the prevalence of child labor in many regions, creating a surplus of labor that is often exploited by unethical employers. In poorer nations, economic desperation and limited access to social safety nets contribute to the prevalence of child labor as families face the harsh reality of making ends meet. Cultural practices can also play a significant role, with entrenched norms sometimes perpetuating the acceptance of child labor as a means of skill-building or income generation. In developing nations, limited economic opportunities and weak enforcement of labor laws further perpetuate this harmful practice. Access to education is a critical determinant, as children who lack access to quality schooling are more susceptible to entering the labor force prematurely. UNICEF recognizes these interconnected factors and works diligently to address them through various programs, policy advocacy, and partnerships, striving to create an environment where

children are protected from exploitation and have the opportunity to realize their full potential through education and other essential services.

### **Health Effects of Child Labor**

Child labor can have severe and long-lasting health effects on children. Working at a young age in hazardous or exploitative conditions can negatively impact a child's physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Some of the health effects of child labor include injuries or accidents caused by labor intensive work such as agriculture, mining, and manufacturing. These jobs are at higher risks of injuries like cuts, burns, falls and more serious accidents. Mental-Health Issues caused by physical demands and the pressure to perform are common problems, even limited access to education and future opportunities causes stress. Children who constantly work may be isolated from their peers which can hinder their social/emotional development. Emotional and verbal abuse from employers is also common, which has lasting emotional scars. Malnutrition and lack of access to proper healthcare can result in stunted growth and long-term health problems. In some cases, children working in unsanitary or overcrowded conditions can be at higher risk for infectious diseases, including respiratory infections and waterborne diseases. Consider these conditions in your research.

# UN INVOLVEMENT

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The United Nations (UN) is constantly working to eliminate child labor worldwide through various committees and programs. One of the main agencies involved in tackling child labor is the International Labor Organization (ILO), a lead agency of the United Nations. The ILO and other stakeholders have concluded and implemented numerous conventions and protocols to combat child labor.

The most important work is the ILO Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of Child Labour, adopted in 1999. It defines the worst forms of child labor, such as slavery, forced labor, trafficking, and children using them as massive weapons of destruction. It has been ratified by 187 UN member states, with a strong commitment to eliminating child labor.

In addition, the UN General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, which include Goal 8.7 specifically dedicated to eliminating child labor by 2025.

The United Nations also established the Global Initiative to End All Forms



of Child Labour, a partnership between the ILO and UNICEF. This strategy aims to accelerate efforts to achieve Goal 8.7 by increasing communication, collaboration, and integration. This global initiative facilitates government cooperation, and civil organizations in combating child labor, and strengthens the capacity to end child labor once and for all.

# BLOC POSITIONS

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**African Bloc:** About one-fifth of children in Africa are involved in child labor, with one-tenth working in hazardous conditions. All African nations have signed the ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour with goals of ending the practice, yet there is still much work to be done in the enforcement of this resolution.

**Asian Pacific Bloc:** Child labor is fairly common in South Asia, and is often used as necessary additional familial income. There are also varying laws defining child labor, so children can legally work without being considered ‘child laborers’ under international law. The number of child laborers has declined in recent years with the National Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers Education for All initiatives, but it remains a large issue in the region.

**Eastern European Bloc:** Although child labor is not very common in Eastern Europe, nations like Russia have eased child labor laws in recent years to help their national economy. Most child laborers work in agriculture and manufacturing, and this issue is concentrated in Russia, Ukraine, Turkey, with EU laws prohibiting child labor.

**Western Bloc:** The EU has a directive, Young People at Work, that explicitly prohibits child labor for anyone 15 and under or anyone in full-time compulsory education. In the US, minors are not allowed to work in hazardous conditions, yet illegal child labor persists in multiple industries, and children ages 14+ can work in nonagricultural jobs.

**Latin American and Caribbean Bloc:** Child labor is common in this bloc, with some nations even having 67% of children involved in child labor. The pandemic hit this region very hard and forced more children into this practice. This bloc has adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child, but in practice, is not effectively enforcing the anti-child labor laws.

# QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

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1. Is there child labor within your country and if so, is it a large issue?
2. Are there any laws or regulations in your country on child labor?
3. What are the international treaties and resolutions against child labor that your country has ratified?
4. How can families find additional sources of income beyond child labor?
5. What should qualify as child labor and does your delegation (country) believe child labor should be banned?
6. How can nations regulate and enforce child labor laws and bans more successfully?



# REFERENCES

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More on ILO/regional specific policy:

[Child Labour in Asia and the Pacific](#)

[Child labour in South Asia](#)

[Child labour in Asia and the Pacific \(IPEC\)](#)

[Child labour in Africa](#)

[Child Labour in Latin America](#)

[What is child labour \(IPEC\)](#)

[International Labour Standards on Child labour](#)

More on Pandemic Impacts:

[Pandemic is pushing Latin America and the Caribbean more off track in ending child labour](#)

More on UNCRC:

[Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#)

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[World Day Against Child Labour - Background | United Nations](#)

[UNICEF East Asia and Pacific](#)

[International Year for the Elimination of Child Labor 2021 - Human Trafficking Academy](#)

[Protecting Africa's children from child labour | Africa Renewal](#)

[Child Labour | UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children](#)

More on Child Labor Practices/Rules:

[Russia to Ease Child-Labor Rules as War Squeezes Worker Supply - Bloomberg Working Conditions - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission\).](#)

[Child labor - Worker.gov.](#)

[List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor | U.S. Department of Labor.](#)

<https://1997-2001.state.gov/issues/economic>

[Link to Full Works Cited Page](#)