



**Committee:** High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)

**Topic:** The question of peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)

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## I. Committee Background

The United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) is a specialized subsidiary committee of the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It was established on July 9th, 2013 and is responsible for the United Nations (UN) policy on sustainable development. Furthermore, it is directly linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, also known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which are a set of targets established to “end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere” (Sustainable Development Agenda, UN, 2020). The committee meets annually under the guidance of ECOSOC, and every four years with the General Assembly. The HLPF primarily evaluates the progress of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopts intergovernmental political declarations and serves as a platform for partnerships between governments and non-governmental organizations (Sustainable Development, UN, 2019).

## II. Topic Information

### A) History of the Topic

Sustainable Development Goal number 16, “Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions” strives for “peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice for all, and

accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.” Through this, it is clear that its targets are significant and extensive. For instance, reducing all forms of violence, promoting the rule of law, providing legal identity for all, strengthening relevant national institutions, combating organized crime, promoting non-discriminatory laws and policies, and developing effective institutions at all levels, are some of the goals this SDG aims to achieve by 2030 (SDG 16, Global Goals, 2020). Notwithstanding, over the years some progress has been made. To illustrate, 125 countries have ratified binding laws and policies which give people the right to access information held by public authorities. Not to mention that many regions have attained universal or near-universal birth registration, with a worldwide average of 73% (SDG 16, UN, 2020).

However, the progress on these targets continues to be difficult to achieve, making progress for goal 16 slower than expected. Currently, various forms of violence still carry take place regularly in 83 countries, most of them actually being child abuse at home and sexual violence. Moreover, the number of intentional homicides has largely increased since 2015, from 6.0 victims per 100,000 to 6.1 victims worldwide. Actually, killings of human rights activists, journalists, and political activists are on the rise. Between 2017 and 2018, the UN recorded 431 killings of activists and journalists across 41 countries (SDG 16, UN, 2020). The UN has attributed the lack of progress on goal number 16 to developing nations having fewer resources and smaller budgets for addressing the SDGs. Therefore, governments must make difficult decisions and usually prioritize goals related to issues such as poverty and public health. Additionally, the organization has stated that developed nations are also beginning to reverse progress made earlier due to the rise of nationalism and populist governments which openly promote messages of hate and discrimination (UN Docs, 2019).

## B) Current Issues

**Kenya:** In a 2019 survey, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) found that 54% of all Kenyans polled stated that SDG number 16 and its targets were a main priority for the country. The report found that Kenya's government was not transparent and that accusations of corruption were common (Special Report, UNDP, 2019). In fact, the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index ranked the country 137th out of 176 countries for corruption (Transparency International, 2020). Since 2015, the Kenyan government has begun to disclose information about its practices through yearly voluntary reports for the United Nations. Moreover, the nation has invited external non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to analyze its practices and provide feedback for further improvement (Is Africa, UNDP, 2019).

**Turkey:** In its 2019 progress report for the United Nations, Turkey stated that it is focusing on achieving three areas related to goal number 16. These areas are the prevention of crime and violence; equal access to justice; and effective governance. Moreover, steps have been taken by the country to address the increasing number of violent incidents targeting women. Recently, Turkey established the Monitoring Committee on Violence Against Women which works with relevant public institutions and organizations, universities and NGOs to evaluate laws, actions and policies in order to offer recommendations and make improvements. So far, the committee has influenced changes such as the increase of protections for women and children under the nation's Law on Family Protection and Preventing Violence Against Women, the Turkish Criminal Code and the Turkish Civil Code (Turkey, UN, 2019).

**United Kingdom:** The United Kingdom (UK) was one of the countries that pushed for the inclusion of goal number 16 in the SDGs. Since 2016, the country's Department for International Development has dedicated 50% of its annual budget to helping

developing nations end modern slavery and protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation. While much of the UK's positive contributions have been made abroad, internally the country has still much to do. In a report by World Vision, it was found that the UK has fallen behind in achieving goal number 16 due to internally conflicting policies. For example, "the continual supply of arms and ammunition to conflict parties, while simultaneously investing in development programs and humanitarian aid for those affected by the conflict" (Bond, 2020).

### **C) UN Action**

Sustainable Development Goal number 16 was reviewed by the UN's High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2019. During the session conference, 47 countries volunteered to present their national reviews on their progress related to goal number 16. The countries that presented included Algeria, Cambodia, Ghana, Iceland and the United Kingdom. Following the HLPF, the UN released a report which stated that progress on goal number 16 has been slow, especially in developing countries that have focused more on other goals such as those targeting poverty, employment and health. Therefore, the UN suggested that more needs to be done to help countries finance initiatives to achieve goal number 16. This could be done through "national resource mobilization by enabling environments for private investment, strengthening tax administrations and addressing illicit financial flows." The UN further stated that "integrated national financing frameworks can support countries in addressing financing challenges. Significant resources can also be mobilized at the regional level" (UN Docs, 2019).

### III. Essential Questions

1. What are the Sustainable Development Goals?
2. Which targets for SDG number 16 are your nation focusing on?
3. What is your country doing to achieve SDG number 16?
4. Will your delegation meet the targets set for SDG number 16 by 2030? Why or why not?
5. What challenges does your delegation face in achieving SDG number 16? What is it doing to overcome them?
6. Which organizations are working on addressing this goal? Does your nation work with any of them? If so, which ones?

### IV. Quorum

- Afghanistan
- Brazil
- Canada
- China
- France
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Mexico
- Pakistan
- Russia
- Saudi Arabia

- South Africa
- Syria
- Turkey
- United Kingdom
- United States

## V. Resources

“Goal 16.” Global Goals. The New Division, 2020. Web. 15 Jun. 2020. <<https://www.globalgoals.org/16-peace-justice-and-strong-institutions>>.

“IS AFRICA MEASURING UP TO ITS GOAL 16 COMMITMENTS? The Road to HLPF 2019 and Beyond.” United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). United Nations, 2019). Web. 15 Jun. 2020. <[https://media.africaportal.org/documents/Special-Report\\_SDG16\\_FINAL.pdf](https://media.africaportal.org/documents/Special-Report_SDG16_FINAL.pdf)>.

“Kenya.” Transparency International. Transparency International, 2020. Web. 15 Jun. 2020. <<https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/kenya>>.

“Report of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council at its 2019 session.” UN Docs. United Nations, 2019. Web. 15 Jun. 2020. <<https://undocs.org/E/HLPF/2019/7>>.

“SDG 16: Progress, gaps and recommendations for the UK.” Bond. Bond, 2020. Web. 15 Jun. 2020. <[https://www.bond.org.uk/sites/default/files/sdg16\\_progress\\_gaps\\_and\\_recommendations\\_for\\_the\\_uk.pdf](https://www.bond.org.uk/sites/default/files/sdg16_progress_gaps_and_recommendations_for_the_uk.pdf)>.

"SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 16." United Nations (UN). United Nations, 2020. Web. 15 Jun. 2020. <<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg16>>.

"The Sustainable Development Agenda - United Nations Sustainable Development." United Nations. United Nations, 2020. Web. 14 Apr. 2020. <<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>>.

"TURKEY's 2nd VNR 2019 - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS". United Nations (UN). United Nations, 2019. Web. 15 Jun. 2020. <[https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23862Turkey\\_VNR\\_110719.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23862Turkey_VNR_110719.pdf)>.

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