



General Assembly

Distr.: General
28 August 2024

English only

Human Rights Council

Fifty-seventh session

9 September–9 October 2024

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Society for Protection of Street & Working Children, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[17 August 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



The Impacts of Unilateral Coercive Measures on Child Labour in a Country

Economic problems, such as recessions, inflation, unemployment, and sanctions, have far-reaching consequences that extend beyond the immediate financial strain on households. One of the most severe and often overlooked impacts is the increase in child labour. We believe economic difficulties and especially unilateral coercive measures exacerbate child labour in a targeted country.

Economic downturns lead to significant reductions in household income, pushing families into poverty. When parents lose their jobs or face reduced wages, they may be forced to rely on their children to contribute to the family income. This situation is particularly dire in countries which their economy has been affected by illegal unilateral coercive measures that among other things, thwart the natural flow of imports and exports, cause scarcity and limit social safety nets. As a result, children are often pulled out of school and sent to work in various sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing, and informal services. The need for immediate financial support outweighs the long-term benefits of education, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and child labour.

Also sanctions and related economic problems often lead to inflation, which increases the cost of essential goods such as food, medicine, and other basic necessities. Families struggling to afford these essentials may resort to child labour as a means of survival. Children working in hazardous conditions are exposed to health risks, malnutrition, and poor living conditions. The lack of access to nutritious food and healthcare can have long-term detrimental effects on their physical and cognitive development, further entrenching them in a cycle of poverty and exploitation.

As its been reaffirmed in fourth goal of sustainable development goals, education is a critical tool for breaking the cycle of poverty and exploitation. However, economic wars like sanctions severely hinder access to education for children. Financial constraints force families to prioritize immediate survival over education, leading to higher dropout rates and reduced access to educational resources. Schools may also struggle to operate due to a lack of funding and resources, further limiting educational opportunities. Without education, these children have little hope of improving their future prospects and escaping the cycle of poverty and exploitation.

As a non-governmental organization which is active for years in the field of preventing child labour, we believe charitable organizations play a crucial role in providing support and services to children affected by poverty and child labour. However, economic problems can severely hinder the operations of these organizations. Illegal unilateral sanctions which tend to financial restrictions and reduced donations, make it difficult for charities to receive and distribute funds. Additionally, logistical challenges, such as restrictions on the import of goods, can impede the delivery of aid. These obstacles can significantly reduce the effectiveness of charitable activities, leaving many children without the support they desperately need.

Alongside with above mentioned mal-effects of sanctions on children, the social and psychological impacts of unilateral coercive measures on child labour are profound. Economic hardship and the resulting increase in poverty can lead to social unrest and instability. Children working in hazardous conditions are often exposed to violence, abuse, and exploitation. The stress and trauma caused by these experiences can have severe psychological effects, including increased rates of depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues. These social and psychological impacts can further entrench poverty and hinder efforts to improve living conditions for these vulnerable children.

Conclusion

Illegal sanctions have far-reaching and severe impacts on child labour in a country. They exacerbate poverty, hinder access to basic needs and education, and disrupt the operations of charitable organizations. The resulting economic, social, and psychological effects can have long-lasting consequences for the most vulnerable children.

Recommendation:

We call on sanctioning States to consider these impacts and seek preventive approaches to protect people's human rights, specially the most vulnerable groups. By doing so, we can work towards a more just and equitable world where all children have the opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential.
