LIMUN 2012 STUDY GUIDE

The Economic and Social Council

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Introduction:

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Economic and Social Council at London International Model United Nations 2012. Whether this is your first time doing MUN or if you have been to so many conferences that you have lost count, I am confident that you will both enjoy your time at LIMUN and learn something from it. My co-chair and I have picked two exciting topics for you to debate; I hope that you find this guide to be a useful starting point in your research and for writing your position papers.

The LIMUN website provides lots of information for preparing to go to the conference. I strongly recommend that you look through it ahead of the conference so that you can get ready, not only for the committee sessions, but also for the social events. Should you wish to ask either of us for advice relating to LIMUN, you can contact us on benjamin.dive@trinity.ox.ac.uk or jcs206@exeter.ac.uk. Please note that while we will do our best to help you, anything to do with the logistics of the conference should be addressed to the secretariat instead.

Best Wishes,

Ben Dive and Jack Stanley

The chairs:

Benjamin Dive (Director)

I am a third year Masters Physics student at Oxford, was born in France, and have done MUN for many years. I have been involved in over 15 conferences as either a delegate, a chair or as part of the organising team. I started doing MUN at school with my first conference being RRS, and last year I was Secretary-General of OxIMUN and am now an advisor for the Oxford University UN association. As well as going to conferences in 4 different countries I have also been lucky enough to meet Ban Ki-Moon last year which further motivated me to carry on with my MUN career. This is the 3rd LIMUN which I have attended, and used to live in London before going to university. As such, I hope that I will be able to provide you with any help or advice that you want, both inside the committee and about London as a whole. As well as doing MUN and other forms of debating I am involved in a wide range of different activities: from playing Ultimate Frisbee and Croquet to travelling around the world as much as I can. Other interests include quantum computing, classical Greek and Roman history and skiing.

Jack Stanley (Assistant Director)

I'm a third year BA English Literature student studying at the University of Exeter where I currently hold the position of Vice-President/Head of Teaching on the ExMUN committee. I've been doing MUN for over six years now and have continually enjoyed it as an opportunity to sustain my interest in international politics. I started at school where I attended over 25 conferences, which varied from small-scale, one-day conferences at schools around London to major international conferences such as THIMUN. Our own school, Royal Russell, is internationally known for its own conference and I was fortunate enough to be selected as President of the Security Council for this event in 2007 and as Secretary General in 2008. Since coming to university, I've attended a number of conferences including LIMUN, OxIMUN and CUIMUN. Aside from MUN, my other keen passion is writing, directing and performing within theatre. I'm on the committee for one of the University drama societies and I recently directed my first show for them. This interest may well explain why I enjoy the public speaking element of MUN so much! I look forward to meeting you all in February.

The Economic and Social Council:

The United Nations Economic and Social Council is one of the six principal organs of the UN, on par with the Security Council and the General Assembly. It consists of 54 members elected on a rotating three year basis by regional groups and is responsible for coordinating the economic, social and related work of 14 UN specialized agencies, their functional commissions and five regional commissions. It regularly meets with the finance ministers of member states, the World Bank and other high level international organisations.

As a delegate from your nation to ECOSOC you have two aims. Firstly, and most importantly, is to defend your nation's interest and the policies decided by your government. Secondly, you should attempt to improve the economic, social and environment situation for all countries involved. Fulfilling both aims will require days of patient lobbying, negotiating and drafting. The final aim is for one resolution, per topic, to be passed by the committee. In the first committee session it will be up to you to decide which topic to debate first; if a resolution passes on it in time, we will then move on to the second topic.

Topic 1: THE QUESTION OF ENERGY INTERDEPENDENCY

Introduction:

It is a truism that 21st century humanity consumes vast amounts of energy, of many different types, and requires the supply to be regular and ever increasing. A study of what form this energy takes, where it comes from, how it is traded between states and the effect it has on relations between them is crucial is we wish global prosperity to increase without compromising security. It is convenient to divide the sources of energy into two: fuels are those concrete objects that can be transported and easily converted into energy at the end, and electricity which is a form of energy produced in a fixed location and then transported by cable to an end user some distance away.

The fuels that are most used can be further divided into two. Wood and charcoal are used extensively in the developing world, but always on a local scale and are rarely traded far, so are of limited relevance to the question. The fossil fuels (coal, petroleum and natural gas), on the other hand, are worth about three trillion dollars in international trade[1]. Their importance to the economy, and the strategic defence, of both the exporting and importing countries can hardly be over stated.

Increasingly, electricity is also traded across borders. Cross-border grids are being set up in several areas around the world, notably Western Europe[2] and South-East Asia[3]. This is often used by countries that produce more electricity than they need which can then be sold to other places where demand is higher. It also opens up the possibility of harnessing the solar or wind power of countries with low population densities and transferring the energy to countries less suited for renewables.

Fossil Fuels

This dichotomy between the source (the Middle East, Russia and the Arctic) and the user (Europe, North America and East Asia) causes the sale of oil to be hugely important. Its primary role as a fuel for transport means that developed countries absolutely need a steady supply in order to keep going, the crash in the 70's and the protests every time oil prices increase is clear evidence of this. On the converse, the revenue it provides to Middle Eastern states props up their economy which would in all likelihood collapse without oil revenue.

[1] Figures for 2009, estimated from: http://www.eia.gov/cfapps/ipdbproject/IEDIndex3.cfm?tid=5&pid=53&aid=1
[2] http://www.geni.org/globalenergy/library/national_energy_grid/europe/europeannationalelectricitygrid.shtml
[3] http://www.geni.org/globalenergy/library/national_energy_grid/asean/aseanelectricitygrid.shtml

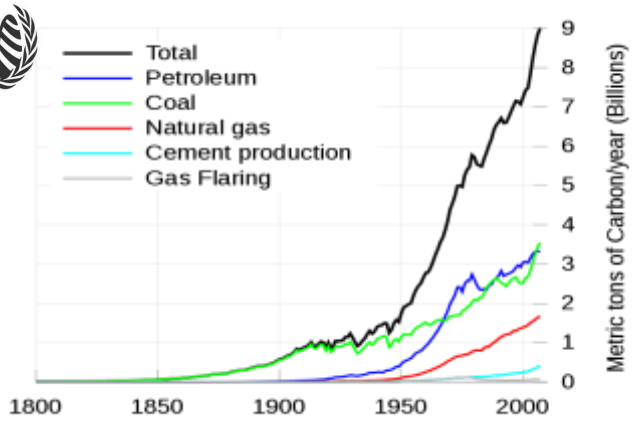
This state of affairs has lead to an uneasy balance of power. The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) effectively sets the price of crude oil in the world, and has at time been accused of abusing its power, leading to a cooling of relations between member countries and its consumers. Similarly, much of Eastern Europe relies on Russian gas for heating and its industry. When the supply to Ukraine was halted in winter 2005-2006[4], many in the West saw it as a move to punish them for seeking to distant themselves from the Kremlin. Conversely, some have seen the American and European involvement in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya as motivated by oil and the desire to acquire more of it. This has lead to much hostility in Middle Eastern countries which see themselves as potential targets, and by citizens of Western states who feel such action to be morally disdainful.

This highlights the security implications of oil. Firstly, it is a highly desirable resource which is occasionally fought over for its economic benefits, as in the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Secondly, it is of capital strategic importance. It powers the tanks, ships and planes that defend nations' borders, and is taken for granted by virtually all developed economies. Cutting off a nation's supply of oil would, in all probability, plunge it into a deep depression and cripple its armed forces to the point of uselessness. Anything which the international community might do to limit the risk of happening would be of great potential benefit.

Many in the west[5] would like OPEC and the oil trading mechanisms to be changed into a more open market which would allow those who efficiently use their oil reserves to benefit as well providing more security to them and the end users. Exporter nations, on the hand like, enjoy the political and international clout that controlling oil prices give them as it provides them with a bargaining chip on the negotiating table. The unity of OPEC, though, can hardly be understated[6]. Saudi Arabia and Iran are both members and have widely diverging interests in the region as well as in their preferred price of oil.

The over reliance of oil is slowly changing due to the use of Liquefied Natural Gas, but this may lead to a similar situation in the future as it is with coal at the moment. A more common resource then petroleum, and less convenient to use to power transportation, coal is the number one fuel used for the production of electricity. While it has been slowly declining in the west for some time for environmental reason, it is growing at a very rapid rate in the developing world, especially

[4] http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4573572.stm
[5] http://www.ensec.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=267:50-years-later-opecs-continuing-threat-to-american-security&catid=110:energysecuritycontent&Itemid=366
[6] http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/11/business/worldbusiness/11oil.html



China. It is increasing its appetite for coal beyond what it is capable of producing within its own borders. Hence, it seems all but certain that the international trade in coal will continue to grow and that new nations will have a strategic interest in ensuring a steady supply.

Most states take an active role in maintaining a source of oil, gas and coal (some of the actions they have taken have already been described), but it is also a realm where partially or completely private companies have a huge influence. British Petroleum, Chevron, Petrobraz and others are giants[7], with their revenues being comparable to that of entire nations. It is not always clear how much influence states have over these companies and whether they act for commercial or strategic reasons. One thing is clear; it is very difficult for the UN and ECOSOC to affect them directly.

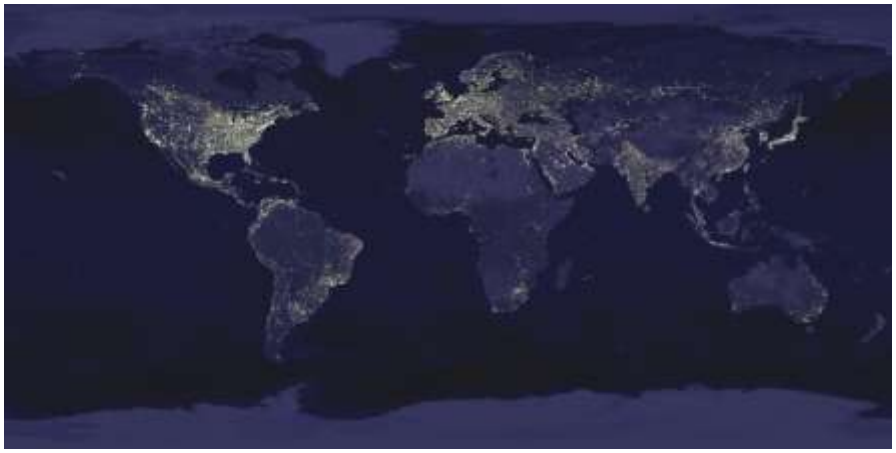
However, ECOSOC has done some work on this already, notably resolution 2004/233[8]. Amongst other things, it invited the Member States of the United Nations, international organizations, and the United Nations Regional Commissions to take appropriate measures to insure worldwide application of UNFC (United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Minerals) to petroleum. In a wider context, it has also done a lot to promote the development of other energy sources and methods[9].

Electricity

The second form of energy which is of interest is the electricity provided by renewables. Renewable sources of energy are tied to the geography. Dams need to be built in mountainous regions with rives, solar plants in sunny areas and wind mills in windy (usually coastal) areas. However, these places are not always those where the energy is either needed or wanted. Hence, a way for neighbouring nations to trade electricity in a fair and regulated way could be a major boost for the world economy, and contribute a vast amount towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions. There are however many problems preventing this. Firstly transporting electricity long distances leads to large losses, secondly those places most suited to producing renewable electricity may not

[7] http://bakerinstitute.org/publications/NOC_IOCs_Jaffe-Soligo.pdf (page 11 amongst others)
[8] http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/documents/2004/decisions/edec2004-233.pdf
[9] http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd15/documents/csd_15IPM_chair_draft.pdf

have the initial investment required to build the infrastructure and thirdly (and most importantly) nations do not want to be dependent on others for electricity for reasons of national security.



The first point is a matter of technology which is at present being worked on and, given political impetuous, could be improved relatively easily. The others, however, require collaboration between states, but are also surmountable. For example, France due to its nuclear energy produces too much electricity during the night, sell power to the Swiss who use it to pump water upstream of dams. During the day, they open the dam turbines and sell the electricity to the Italians when demand is at its highest[10]. This co-operation shows that the disadvantages of different renewable sources of energy can be made to work in a complementary manner. This, however, requires trust between nations and a framework in which electricity can be bought and sold like other commodities.

The problem of infrastructure is also solvable. Providing that a guarantee can be made to states that they will be able to buy electricity at a reasonable price from other nations whose infrastructure they have invested in. It is not beyond the imagination for large solar powered plants to be built in the North African Sahara, to be transported across the Mediterranean to Continental Europe[11]. This would bring massive economic advantages to both regions (as well as huge environmental benefits), similar schemes could also be envisioned in other parts of the world. For example, dams in the Himalayas or Andes could provide massive amounts of electricity to power the entire region.

Even taking into consideration all of the problems mentioned above, the biggest stumbling block remains security issues. The complete dependence of the modern world on electricity makes

10 http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=electricity%20trade%20france%20switzerland%20italy&source=web&cd=4&ved=0CDcQFjAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.eurelectric.org%2FDownload%2FDownload.aspx%3FDocumentID%3D14087&ei=igD-TtyJJ8ew8QPpuPDPDQ&usg=AFQjCNHI9nbkrrSFn-91ITbTjZR_HSMBAw&sig2=EbJlWwYiBh2ahlLNeDG78A

11 http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301421511002151

any states anxious about having such an important resource in the hands of another state that could, potentially, turn of the lights. Even the threat of doing so would be enough to bring most countries to their knees on the negotiating table.

The United Nations has taken limited previous action towards this aspect of the question. The United Nations Science and Technology for Development Network (a sub-commission of ECOSOC) has done some work towards integrating energy grids in Africa[12]. Some headway was made towards guaranteeing importers of energy a minimum of security by A/RES/57/5 of 2002[13], but it did not go very far.

Conclusion

Both of the aspects of the topic mentioned above have many similarities, and the question at hand can be addressed in comparable ways for both parts. Any resolution on this topic would have to attend to the following points:

1. *Building trust between nations.* This overarching principle is common to much of what the UN does, but building trust in the energy markets is both difficult and important.

2. *Provide benefits to both exporters and importers*. Whether it is fuels or pure electricity that is being traded, it is important that it profits both parties. A completely one-sided trade mechanism is not one that can survive for long.

3. *Is sustainable economically and environmentally*. The current international mechanisms for energy interdependency is coming under attack because it has utterly failed the latter and, due to rising oil prices, not doing very well in the former. Any partial replacement must do better at both simultaneously.

4. *Provides enough power*. The global population is growing, and each person (on average) is using more energy than before. Any solution to energy interdependency will have to provide a large net increase to the total energy production of the world.

[12] http://www.unctad.info/en/
[13] http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N02/538/19/PDF/N0253819.pdf?OpenElement

Further Reading

- http://www.esmap.org/esmap/sites/esmap.org/files/BN004-10_REISP-CD_South%20East%20Europe-Transmission%20%26%20Trading.pdf A proposal for further energy integration in Europe

- http://www.esmap.org/esmap/sites/esmap.org/files/REISP-Lessons_BN004-10.pdf Case studies and suggestions for increasing cross-border electricity trade

- http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2011/may/africa-stronger-cross-border-ties-key-to-social-and-economic-progress-.enA report calling for increased investment in multinational infrastructure

- http://www.opec.org/opec_web/en/about_us/24.htm A brief history of OPEC

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- www.geni.org The Global Energy Network Institution

- www.ensec.org The Journal of Energy Security

- www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/docs.shtml ECOSOC publications and documents

TOPIC 2: THE QUESTION OF POPULATION GROWTH

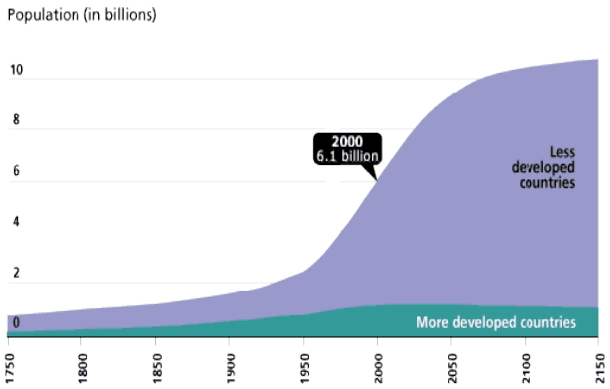
Introduction

On 31st October 2011, Officials at a UN headquarters press event announced that the worldwide population had officially reached 7 billion (UN News Centre). UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon went on to make a speech outlining the responsibilities this entails for the international community:

> " Today, we welcome baby 7 billion. In doing so we must recognize our moral and pragmatic obligation to do the right thing for him, or her" (2011)

The Secretary general here talks about greater responsibility by nations to their people correlating with an ever increasing population. So what does this increase in population mean? And although the rate of growth may be slowing, what problems does this issue pose? In this section of the study guide, we'll be outlining a basic understanding of population growth, its key factors, its subsequent issues and the influence the ECOSOC can have over this topic at LIMUN 2012.

It's important to first recall the simple definition on which statistics are collated. Based on the definition provided by the CIA World Factbook, Population Growth refers to the "average annual…change in the population, resulting from a surplus (or deficit) of births over deaths and the balance of migrants entering or leaving a country" (2011) If applied on a global rather than a national scale, the worldwide population has been forecast to reach nine billion by 2050 (BBC, 2009). The CIA's World Factbook has similarly supported this statistic in recording a global rate of 220, 980 additional people each day in 2009. Although this marks a minor increase on the mid-2000s, when the figure averaged at 203,800, it reflects an overall decline in growth rate since the 1960s when it was 2.19% increase per annum.



The percentage of growth is therefore not the critical issue. It is instead the total population this growth will produce. Recent statistics published in the UN World Population Prospects report, last updated 28th June 2011, placed the world population at 9 billion by 2050, although they acknowledged that the maximum figure could even be just above 10 Billion. Significantly, with the exception of the United States, this increase will be primarily attributed to lesser-developed nations whose growth rate will see an increase from 5.3 to 7.8 billion (US Census Bureau, 2008)

Causation

This rate of growth has thus been attributed to the following four key factors:

1. *Developments in Medicine and greater efficiency in their distribution:*
   Wider access to treatments has allowed for increased life expectancy and lower mortality rates worldwide, with project figures by the WPP report charting a global average increase of 10 years in life expectancy from 65 in 2005 to 75 in 2050.

2. *Improvements in Agricultural productivity*
   The 'Green Revolution', a term coined by USAID [14]director William Gaud, is commonly thought to have taken place between the 1940s and 70s whereby the spread and sharing of new agricultural technologies allowed for greater food production, allowing for many countries to protect a high proportion of their citizens from starvation.

3. *Lack of general access to Education and Contraception*
   In many areas of lesser-developed nations, family planning and birth control methods are not introduced to communities. Egypt implemented an education programme in 2008 to combat the lack of knowledge regarding pregnancy in its more inaccessible regions.

4. *Increase in Immigration*

[14] United States Agency for International Development

Between 2005 and 2050, immigration to more developed regions is forecast at a net number of 98 million. This will provide a migrant increase to regions that are projected to otherwise plateau in terms of their population growth, as deaths begin to overtake births.

Effect

It is important to note here that although the diasporic nature of global communities has allowed for a great distribution of the population, this does not mean that an approximate worldwide 'plateau' of 9 million is sustainable for the international community.

In 1798, Thomas Malthus published an article entitled 'An Essay on the Principle of Population' which first introduced the concept of population growth as a potentially detrimental issue for the international community. Although confined within the context of the Industrial Revolution, his idea of growth ultimately resulting in a 'Malthusian Catastrophe' is still used by political theorists today- that mankind will eventually outstrip its resources and lead to a compromise in the security of worldwide food resources and, in turn, mass starvation. Placed in a modern perspective, the WWF's 2008 Living Planet report noted that the overall human population was consuming 40% more than what the planet could renew.

This unsustainable rate of growth can thus be seen to entail the following problems:

1. Access to adequate food and water becomes increasing limited, particularly within lesser-developed regions, leading to mass starvation and famine. This is currently being seen in The Horn of Africa; specifically six regions of Somalia where the UN has declared famine and forecast that up to 4 million people will require humanitarian assistance (UN News Centre).

2. Increased population density within regions which lack sanitary conditions and universal availability of healthcare, will expose populations to a greater risk of infectious diseases and even endemics/pandemics.

3. Fossil Fuels become depleted to sustain the needs of an increasing population, with countries lacking the finance, infrastructure or technology to implement renewable energy resources.

4. Loss of Ecosystems and arable land, leading to desertification of regions that could be used for agricultural production and thus limited self-sustainable potential of lesser-developed regions. In an article on the aforementioned Somali famine, The Economist noted that the

crisis was a product of 'rapid population growth' in tandem with 'increased desertification, because the burning of charcoal in the south has led to a lack of tree cover'

ECOSOC Action

So what has the ECOSOC and the UN done to address this issue?

The ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment is an annual forum, in 2011 held from 19-21 July, and in the closing remarks of Ms. Valerie Amos[2], she acknowledged "the shared concerns about the increase in humanitarian needs due to…the effects of global challenges such as population growth" (p.1) and noted that debate on this issue "underlined the need to strengthen national, local and community response systems" (p.2) The resolution they produced directly reflects this, stressing that "the united nations system should continue to enhance existing humanitarian capacities" whilst encouraging "member states to create and strengthen an enabling environment for the capacity-building of their national and local authorities". It also placed a significant emphasis on education as playing a pivotal role; to ensure that humanitarian assistance delivers not only relief but ultimately infrastructural development, in conjunction with the government concerned.

ECOSOC have also established ten functioning commissions whose work has already done much to assist nations in adapting their infrastructure appropriately. These include **the Commission on Science and Technology for Development**, **the Commission for Social Development** and, most significantly, **the Commission on Population and Development**. The latter body offers advice and expertise to regional organization and governments on programmes related to the welfare of their populations. The Commission is elected every 4 years and is comprised of 47 member states, elected so as to ensure the greatest and subsequently fairest geographic distribution. It is assisted by **UN-DESA**[3], which compiles the statistics upon which it bases its findings and subsequent programmes.

In addition, the **UNFPA**[4] provides financial support for population control and family planning programmes, in order to 'reduce poverty and ensure every pregnancy is wanted', in line with the Millennium Development Goals which aims reduce levels of extreme poverty by 2015. Their most recent campaign, '7 Billion Actions', aims to raise awareness of the challenges an increased global population poses as well as the positive differences being made by people around the world in response.

[2] Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs
[3] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
[4] United Nations Population Fund

Country Policies

Many nations have already introduced mandatory population control policies to directly address an increasing population, such as China's well-documented 'One Child-One Family' policy that is currently enforced within rural regions of the country (two children are permitted in cities such as Beijing) whilst India only permits those with two children or fewer to be eligible for local election ('Gram Panchyat'). UNFPA financial support for China relating to the enforcement of their 'One-Child' policy led to the USA cutting all funding to the organisation from 2002-8 although this has since been restored by President Obama.

Preparation For Committee

In response to this study guide, you should therefore aim to research the following four questions:

- What steps can be taken to increase cooperation between regional organizations, NGOs and member state governments, to ensure humanitarian assistance is provided to regions whereby population growth is directly affecting their citizens' welfare?

- How can financial aid by both individual donors and global organizations, such as the World Bank, be most effectively distributed to regions which require the necessary infrastructural developments to cope with their burgeoning populations?

- In light of Egypt's educational programme policy, how can education with regards to birth control and family planning methods be more greatly administered in regions identified by individual nations as lacking in this form of knowledge?

- What is your own national policy on population growth and what methods, if any, have your government already implemented in direct response? Could you feasibly compromise on these if necessary?

Further Research

- Read up on the World Populations Prospects report which provides a UN-endorsed forecast on population statistics until 2100: http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/Excel-Data/population.htm

- The overall website for the United Nations Population Division, who are responsible for accumulating and publishing the above data: http://www.un.org/esa/population/

- Further information about UN-DESA and its work relating to economic, social and environment development: http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/index.html

- Further information about UNFBA and their '7 Billion Actions' Campaign: http://www.unfpa.org/public/home

- All resolutions, reports and other official documents published by the ECOSOC: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/docs.shtml

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