Six years ago, the UN General Assembly stated that one of its primary goals for the new millennium would be: “To halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the world’s people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.”

With the Millennium Declaration, the United Nations courageously set a bar for economic and social development around the world.

The task of implementing such an admirable agenda has been given to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and it will be part of ECOSOC’s job for this session to review the progress of the first of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The fifty-four member states represented on the council will have to assess the ways in which the United Nations has been successful in combating poverty and hunger thus far.

ECOSOC may consider that, in 1990, more than 1.2 billion people - constituting twenty-eight percent of the developing world’s population - lived in severe poverty; in 2002, this percentage had fallen to nineteen. The area of primary concern for ECOSOC will be sub-Saharan Africa, which remains the world’s most poverty-stricken region, with only slightly improving living conditions since the passage of the Millennium Declaration. Although there have been signs of development that could improve the current situation, ECOSOC will need to hammer out strategies for accelerating this development in order to bring people out of destitution.

The Economic and Social Council will also be asked to tackle the issue of continual global hunger, which
SOCHUM responds to natural disaster

By F. John Rickert
Staff Reporter

Just over a month after the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction, the Social and Humanitarian Committee (SOCHUM) will discuss ways in which the UN can respond to natural disasters.

This year the theme of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) is “Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School.” The main goal of this theme is to not only educate children about how to handle a natural disaster, but to also ensure that the places the are most frequently when disasters happen, schools, are reinforced to ensure better protection.

Education is key. All children should be trained for natural disasters as part of a nation’s educational curriculum. This education includes not just where to go or how to tell if there is a warning, but how actually to stay safe in an event like a tsunami or mudslide. The ISDR wants to get people at all levels of government involved. This means informing parents, teachers, government officials of all levels, and non-governmental leaders of the program. SOCHUM must decide how it can use its influence to aid the ISDR in this mission.

Along with just the know-how, the ISDR wants to help ensure that the actual school buildings are reinforced in order to withstand a natural disaster. This is because more often than not children are located in the school during major natural disasters. This comes after the recent mudslide in the Philippines that killed over 200 schoolchildren, and the 2005 earthquake that killed over 16000 schoolchildren who were in schools that clasped. There have been several other cases very similar to these.

Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System will also likely be discussed. In the wake of the 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake that caused a tsunami that killed 200,000 people and destroyed the homes and livelihoods of millions of others this was an idea presented. The Pacific Ocean has such a system in place that can detect seismic activity and warn anyone that might be adversely effected by the event. This means that it can be done, but there are many problems to overcome. One of the biggest of these problems is warning residents of many islands.

Earthquakes are also likely to be discussed. Over the last several years there have been numerous earthquakes that have caused several thousand deaths throughout the world. While detection and warning are important, preventing damage before the quake with proper architecture and aiding the victims after the event are both critical issues before SOCHUM.

Organization of American States to discuss imperative topics

By Elizabeth Philpott
Co-Editor

There is a growing concern with agricultural subsidies, free trade in the western hemisphere, poverty, education, job creation and regional integration in the western hemisphere.

The Organization of American States will be discussing these pressing topics at the 41st annual Arkansas Model United Nations conference, held at the University of Central Arkansas.

It will be the Organization of American States’ responsibility at the AMUN conference to discuss, debate and finally decide what, if anything, should be done regarding these issues. They must achieve this while remaining consistent with their western hemisphere values and beliefs.

The Organization of American States is composed of 35 Western hemisphere member states. Combined, they discuss imperative issues regarding the western hemisphere.

The presiding council of officers of the Organization of American States will be University of Arkansas students, Melissa Tuttle, chair; and Laura Stump, co-chair. The special representative of the UN Secretary General will be University of Central Arkansas student Ryan McCormack.
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can be “measured by the proportion of people lacking the food to meet their daily needs.” The United Nations estimated that “824 million people in the developing world were affected by chronic hunger in 2003.” Again, sub-Saharan Africa is the region most affected by this plight.

In weighing strategies to accomplish the MDG, the ECOSOC Council might look to the suggestions of a 2005 report by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which explains that developing country governments should implement bolder national policies to meet the MDG marks for 2015 and that highly developed countries have to increase the aid they give relative to their GNP.

At the session, ECOSOC will need to discuss these and other practical approaches to eliminating global poverty and hunger. The presiding officers on the Economic and Social Council will be UCA students Chanley Painter, chair; Malika Ikramova, co-chair; Dung Phuong Ha, legal counsel; and Karen Tapia Hernandez, legal counsel.

Caption: From the Millennium Development Goals Report - showing the levels of poverty in 1990 and 2002.

Have an opinion?

All AMUN participants are invited to submit letters to the editor or articles of their own for publication.

Please send all materials to:
modeltimes2006@yahoo.com
UN Assembly changes Secretary-General

By Chris Lassiter
Co-Editor

On October 13, 2006, the United Nations General Assembly appointed the next Secretary-General, to replace Kofi Annan at the end of the year. Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon of the Republic of Korea will take head of the 192 member international organization for the next five years, beginning his service on January 1, 2007. Foreign Minister Ki-moon will be the United Nation’s eighth chief diplomat, and the second to come from Asia.

Ban Ki-Moon has served as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade for the Republic of Korea since January 2004. 35 years of government service on the state and global level have preceded his appointment to Secretary-General, and his service has seen the rise of democracy and market economy in his war-torn home. Mr. Ki-moon has served as the Chef-de-Cabinet to the President of the General Assembly for the 56th session, 2001, and was instrumental in the passage of the United Nation’s landmark revolutionary terrorism legislation. More recently, Mr. Ki-moon played a leading role in the adoption of the September, 2005, Joint Statement of the Six Party Talks dealing with the North Korean nuclear issue.

Kofi Annan, who steps down on December 31, has served as Secretary-General since January of 1997, completing two terms of office. His service will perhaps be best remembered by his comprehensive program of reform and the restructuring of the UN. Mr. Annan has been part of the UN organization since 1962, working as an administrative officer for a host of UN programs and agencies, and finally the UN Headquarters in New York. In December of 2001 Mr. Annan received the Nobel Peace Price along with the UN as a world body.

In his address to the delegates of the UN General Assembly, Minister Ki-moon promised, “My tenure will be marked by ceaseless efforts to build bridges and close divides. Leadership of harmony not division, by division not instruction, has served me well so far. I intend to stay the course as Secretary-General.” And, in addition, “As Secretary-General, I will make the most of the authority invested in my office by the Charter and the mandate you give me. I will work diligently to materialize our responsibility to protect the most vulnerable members of humanity and for the peaceful resolution of threats to international security and regional stability.”

MICJ to review Senkaku Islands case

By Jeffery Thomas
Staff Reporter

At the 2006 AMUN Convention, one of the cases the will be brougt before the MICJ will involve the Senkaku Islands. They are a group of disputed, uninhabited islands currently administered by Japan, but also claimed by the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of China (Taiwan). The islands are currently administrated by Japan as a part of Ishigaki City. In China, it is a part of Taiwan province (Daxi Village, Toucheng Township, Yilan County, Taiwan Province). China claims that the islands were first mentioned in literature in 1372 and were first documented by royal visitors traveling from China to the Ryukyu Kingdom, located in what is now Japan’s Okinawa prefecture. China also asserted that in 1944, the Tokyo court ruled that the islands were part of Taipei Prefecture, following a dispute between Okinawa Prefecture and Taipei Prefecture. However, the assertion was solely based on a “claim” by the president of the fishermen’s association of Keelung city in August 1971.

From 1624 until 1662, Taiwan and its surrounding islands were controlled by the Dutch as a base for commerce. But, in 1683, the Qing Dynasty...
Security Council determines agenda

By Chris Lassiter
Co-Editor

Delegates representing member-states in the Security Council this November will construct an agenda of their own during the two-day session. However, some of the likely topics to appear will be the Hezbollah-Israel situation, the conflict in Darfur, Iraq sectarian violence, conflict in Afghanistan, Iran’s nuclear program, North Korea’s nuclear weapon program, and the global war on terror (particularly al-Qaeda). Whatever the topics, they will constitute determined threats to international peace and security. In addition, delegates might choose from a host of topics being considered by the UN Security Council at the UN Headquarters for this month. In addition to the concerns outlined by participating delegates, one “emergency” topic will be presented to the Security Council some time during the AMUN conference.

For the month of November, the UN Security Council will be focusing on a number of issues outlined in its Tentative Forecast of the Programme of Work of the Security Council for the Month of November 2006. Some of the topics to be debated and discussed are elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, transitional government in Côte d’Ivoire, the situation in Darfur, the Palestinian question, the situation in Lebanon, non-proliferation and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, children and armed conflict, and a Security Council Mission to Afghanistan.

In dealing with Afghanistan, the Security Council will be sending a high-level mission to the country to assess conflict and genocide. The mission will be leaving on November 10 and will return November 17. Ambassador Jorge Voto-Barnales of Peru, the body’s president for November, announced, “The Security Council will be sending a special mission to Afghanistan to consider the situation on the ground. The participants are nine of the members of the Security Council.”

On November 6 the UN Special Adviser on Children and Armed Conflict presented a report on the situation in Afghanistan. The Security Council decided to send a mission to the country to assess the situation.

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China gained effective control over Taiwan and its surrounding islands, including the islands in dispute today.

The Japanese government conducted surveys of the islands beginning in 1885 confirming no evidence that the uninhabited islands had been under Chinese control. At the time of this survey, Japan did not formally declare a claim to the islands. Instead, it waited until January 14, 1895, during the middle of the First Sino-Japanese War, to do this. Just three months prior to its military victory in the war and the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, Japan erected a marker on the islands to formally incorporate them as its territory. This decision was not made public until 1950, however.

A survey in 1968 found potential oil fields in the East China Sea, drawing attention to the islands. The People’s Republic of China and Republic Of China governments subsequently pressed their claims of sovereignty over them. The ROC officially claimed the islands for the first time on June 11, 1971, followed by the PRC on December 30. Japan responded by counter-claiming the islands.

This is an interesting case of two nations claiming the rights to a disputed territory. From the records, it seems that China would have the rightful claim to the territory because her claim dates back to 1372, while Japan doesn’t make a claim until 1885. However, claims are one thing and the ownership of the islands is another. It will be up to MICJ to decide the rightful owner.
SPECPOL to consider peacekeeping reform

By Seth Thomas
Staff Reporter

The Special Political Committee will discuss reforming UN peacekeeping operations in lieu of mounting allegations of abuse and scandal. UN procurement officials have been charged with mismanaging contributions, prompting concerns from donor states.

In a report addressed to the House Appropriations Committee in April of 2006, US Ambassador John Bolton reiterated the need for restructuring: “Corruption and mismanagement can greatly hinder [the] ability of a particular mission to effectively carry out its mandate. Put differently, we are talking about saving lives, not only of the civilians we are trying to protect, but also the personnel of the contributing nations participating in peacekeeping operations.”

Bolton also argued that the US had a greater stake in insuring funds were not wasted since the US finances 27 percent of the UN peacekeeping budget.

Japan’s Kenzo Oshima also issued similar remarks stating that domestic support for peacekeeping efforts would suffer if steps to monitor and prevent fraud were not taken. Together, Japan and the United States cover nearly half of the costs of all peacekeeping operations.

UN officials also face escalating charges of sexual misconduct perpetrated by UN peacekeeping ground troops. In a report for 2004, Secretary-General Kofi Annan cited that allegations accusing peacekeepers of sexual abuse had doubled since the previous year, a “deeply troubling” increase. Last year, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Marie Guehenno argued that sexual abuses threatened the UN’s ability to operate in volatile areas, stating that “It is precisely the image and reputation of the United Nations that gives us the credibility to work so effectively in war-torn countries and bring peace and stability to millions across the world.”

Reports of sexual misconduct by UN troops gained international attention in 2003 when numerous allegations were brought against the Democratic Republic of Congo peacekeeping mission. Victims, some as young as thirteen, were required to give sex in return for food or money. Gang rape charges were also brought forward.

In 2005, the Secretary-General banned DR Congo peacekeepers from having sex with locals. Accusations such as these prompted Kofi Annan to commission Prince Zeid Ra’ad Zeid al-Hussein of Jordan to investigate scandals linked to UN troops in 2004. His report outlined a framework for long-term reform and much needed disciplinary action for violators. Since then, other member-states have expressed opinions regarding peacekeeping reform.

The Special Political Committee will also address the role of the newly-formed UN Human Rights Council in promoting and enforcing human rights worldwide as well as discussing the UN’s role in promoting democracy in developing countries.
year’s program. This year will be the first to have four different colleges working together to administer the conference, each contributing unique and talented students and staff. The institutions involved, besides the University of Central Arkansas, are Hendrix College, University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, and University of Arkansas-Little Rock. Furthermore, the record number of delegates has risen considerably from years past, having more than doubled since 2001. Secretary-General for 2006 AMUN is Jose Guzzardi of UCA. Also acting as members of the secretariat, all from UCA, are: Elizabeth Philpott, Undersecretary-General for Conference Planning and Scheduling; Chanley Painter, Undersecretary-General for Public Relations, Communications, and Technology; Manuel Rapalo, Undersecretary-General for Parliamentary Procedures; and Brock Baker, Undersecretary-General for Committees and Committee Topics. A comprehensive outline of committee and council meetings can be found online at uca.edu/org/amun. Also available are a guide to parliamentary procedures, a list of committee topics, delegation country assignments, a list of the Secretariat and AMUN staff, conference rules and information, and a complete schedule of events.