

Forum: *General Assembly 4th Committee (GA4)*

Issue: *Preventing further instability and promoting the social, economic and political development in failed states*

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Introduction

Since the 20th Century, the world has been experiencing the negative consequences of political, economical, and social destabilization in a number of states. Although many countries suffer from the lack of stability, there are a selective few whose political and economic systems have become so glaringly weak that the government is no longer in control, making them failed states. Apart from external influences, one of the main reason why states fail is because they are convulsed by internal violence, prohibiting them from delivering political goods to their denizens. With the constant political and economic turmoils, these governments lose their legitimacy, and the very nature of the state itself becomes illegitimate in the eyes of a growing plurality of citizens. With the international community becoming increasingly interconnected, the palpable frailty and persistent disintegration of a few African, Asian, and Latin American states hamper the United Nations efforts in instilling peace and order. As a result, the stabilization and development of failed states are imperative to the success of the international community in the long run.

Throughout much of the 21st century, the United Nations (UN) have adopted a multitude of methods in hopes of bringing stability to failed and fragile states. This includes employing peacekeeping troops, providing humanitarian aid, drafting comprehensive resolutions, and working with governments and stakeholders in order to meet these countries socio-economic goals. The UN has also sought for assistance from More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) to promote economic developments in these failed and fragile states. Although these MEDCs have benefited these states for the most part, their excessive involvement in these countries politics and economy has led to further instability. As a result, it is crucial for the UN and the international community to prevent the excessive foreign involvement in failed and fragile states.

As the number of failed states continue to increase, big powers and international organizations find themselves sucked disconcertingly into a maelstrom of incessant conflicts and costly humanitarian relief. If these issues are not tackled with force and precision, the international community may possibly never achieve its goal of stability and prosperity. Therefore, it is vital that countries face these issues today, ensuring social, political, and economic stability for centuries to come.

Definition of Key Terms

Failed States

Although “failed states” is a term that people often use to label states that have been rendered ineffective and incapable of enforcing its law or provide basic goods and services to their citizens, there is no real consensus on the actual definition due to the subjective nature of the indicators that are used to measure state failure. For this particular issue, the conference will be adopting Jeffrey Goldstone’s definition, which he stated in his *Pathways to State Failure*. He defines a failed state as one who has lost both its legitimacy and effectiveness. In order for it to be a failed state, it cannot retain any of these two aspects.

Effectiveness is defined as “how well the state carries out state functions such as providing security, promoting economic growth, making law and policy, and delivering social services” (Goldstone 1). On the other hand, legitimacy reflects “whether state actions are perceived by elites and the population as “just” or “reasonable” in terms of prevailing social norms” (Goldstone 1). In his paper, he identifies five pathways that can possibly lead to state failure: escalation of communal group, state predation (corrupt or crony corralling of resources at the expense of other groups), regional or guerrilla rebellion, democratic collapse (leading to civil war or coup d’etat), or succession or reform crisis in authoritarian states.

Although Goldstone takes a qualitative approach in defining failed states, he does take into account key factors that lead to state failure. By using Goldstone’s definition, people’s identification of failed states may be completely subjective, making their list completely ambiguous. As a result, it is imperative that people take into consideration of other quantitative measurements of failed states, minimizing the differences of opinion.

Fragile States Index

The Fragile States Index (FSI) takes a quantitative approach in measuring and defining failed states. The Fund of Peace first introduced this measurement in the *Foreign Policy Magazine*, examining 178 countries and ranking the based on the analytical research of the Conflict Assessment System Tool

(CAST). The index categorizes states into eleven distinct groups: very sustainable, sustainable, very stable, more stable, stable, warning, elevated warning, high warning, alert, high alert, and very high alert.

The FSI has a total score of 120, and each country's score is based off of its social, political, and economic indicators. The social indicators include demographic pressures, refugees or internally displaced persons, group grievance, and human flight and brain drain. The economic indicators include uneven economic development, poverty, and economic decline. Lastly, the political indicators include state legitimacy, public services, human rights and rule of law, security apparatus, factionalized elites, and external intervention.

As for the 2018 annual report, thirteen countries have scored a hundred points or above. Of the thirteen, Guinea, Haiti, Iraq, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, Chad, and Sudan are in the list of high alert, while the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, and South Sudan are in state of very high alert. Although the FSI does have some flaws in regards to its lack of consideration of the Human Development Index and the parallelism that it draws between fragility and underdevelopment, it is still a highly technical and overall comprehensive index that people should consider when defining failed states.

Background Information

Political and economic factors that contribute to the formation of a failed state

Throughout much of the 21st century, the international community has been witnessing the formation of failed states, which can be largely attributed to poor political and economic policies. Ineffective political and economic policies can often alter the people's perception of the government, causing the state to lose its legitimacy and effectiveness. In most cases, economic and political factors both play a significant role in the formation of failed states.

Political factors

Although instances of ethnic cleansing have largely decreased after World War II, the escalation of ethnic or religious conflicts continue to persist in many states, causing these major communal groups to lose incentives to comply with government authorities. This pathway has two distinct modes: a discriminatory regime that finds itself no longer able to prevent rebellions and a nondiscriminatory regime that begins to tilt towards its interests.

Prior to 1980, Liberian politics was dominated by Americo-Liberians, African Americans that moved to Liberia in search of better opportunities in the 19th century. Native Africans were often subjected to political and economic discrimination. As a result, in 1980, President William Tolbert was assassinated by an army rebellion led by Samuel Doe. After gaining control of Liberia, Doe began to seize control of Liberia's resources, allocating it to his tribal group (Krahn). He was also particularly repressive, banning political activities and shutting down newspapers. In the midst of severe economic troubles in 1989, Charles Taylor, with the support of other African states, invaded Liberia, initiating a civil war that would devastate the country for decades to come. Liberia has consistently been categorized as a failed state or a fragile state that is on the brink of becoming a failed state. Doe's government is a prime example of the first mode: a discriminatory regime that finds itself no longer able to prevent rebellions.

After being ruled by the Nepalese monarchy for an extended period of time, the government decided to instill a series of democratic reforms in 1990. This was seen as a major breakthrough for the control as the reforms sought to create a multiparty parliamentary regime, diminishing the power of the monarch. Although the intentions behind these reforms were great, corruption among the party leaders prohibited the government from experiencing success. As the rural people began to grow increasingly frustrated at the lack of land reforms, the Maoist party, who withdrew from the government and moved to the countryside, united the people and rebelled against the government. With the government being too weak to defeat the insurgency, the country was suck into a civil war that lasted for a decade. The Nepalese monarchy is a perfect example of how a nondiscriminatory regime that begins to tilt towards its interest may escalate toward conflicts between communal groups, making the country more fragile.

Apart from the escalation of religious or ethnic conflicts, corruption also serves as a gateway to political disaster. The Somozas family ruled Nicaragua for an extended period of time, established with U.S. support in the 1930s. In the early years of the dictatorship, the Somozas family shared the country's wealth with business elites, exploiting the peasants who carried the Nicaragua's economy. Although periodic peasant rebellions were prevalent, they were generally suppressed. However, in the 1970s, the youngest member of the Somozas family took power, and he abused his power to enrich himself. As he used government revenues to purchase vast amount of lands for his family, the peasants and business elites began to despise him. With U.S. support dwindling, the Somozas family ultimately lost its control, ending this decades long family dictatorship. Through this example, it is evident that government corruption can have adverse effects on a country's stability, increasing the fragility of a state.

Ethnic conflicts and regional or guerrilla rebellions are extremely similar in nature. However, regional or guerrilla rebellions involve the discrimination of regional group or economic class instead of an ethnic group. In these instances, state failures arise when a specific group does not believe in the legitimacy of its government. When the government fails to deal with this specific group, other groups will be encouraged to join the rebellion as they render the government to be vulnerable and susceptible to conflicts. A prime example of this is the regional rebellion in Colombia led by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). This guerrilla movement began when the Colombian peasants grew increasingly frustrated at the unequal distribution of wealth. Although peasants were supposedly the only proponents of this movement, the government's inability to end the rebellion drew people from other backgrounds into the conflict. The FARC greatly destabilized Colombia, stunting the country's growth and generating more instability. During the 1990s, Colombia had by far the highest homicide rate in the world, exemplifying the detrimental effects that regional rebellions have on a country's stability.

Economic Factors

Apart from political factors, economic factors also play an essential role in determining the success of a country. In a few cases, ineffective and detrimental economic policies were what caused state failure. This is especially prevalent in emerging democracies as they often fail to provide economic and physical security, losing the trust of the public. A typical example of this occurred in Nigeria in 1983. During this period of time, the revenues generated from the oil boom petered out, lowering the people's propensity to consumer. As a result, the government decided to implement a risky economic policy which saw a rise in spending and government debt. In the end, the Nigerian government was overthrown by the army. This greatly stunted the growth rate and GDP per capita of the country, further drawing the country into deeper economic and political turmoils.

With the creation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), economic disasters have been reduced, prevented, and halted. Although this is the case, Zimbabwe found itself in a state of hyperinflation during the 2000s. At the peak of this economic catastrophe, Zimbabwe found its inflation rate increasing by more than 70 billion percent. During the midst of this economic crisis, the people suffered as no one wanted to hold cash, which saw its value diminish with every minute that passes. Instead of seeking economic reforms, the Zimbabwe government continued to print money in order to compensate for the lack of demand for money from the public. In the end, Zimbabwe found its growth rate and GDP per capita plummet year-by-year. In addition, its

ranking on the fragile state index also dropped greatly in response to this crisis. As of now, Zimbabwe is a failed state according to the index. Through the example of Zimbabwe, it is evident that poor economic policies do lead to state failures even in the 21st century.

Key Issues

Years of violence prevents unity and undermines prior developments

As of today, almost all of the failed states have endured years of violence, ranging from guerrilla rebellions to full-scale civil wars. Although efforts have been made to promote stability, the aftermath of the years of violence often serves as an hindrance, which undermines these efforts. By delving into the consequences of years of violence, the international community may truly promote development and stability in failed states. The following paragraphs include a broad overview of the hatred and destruction that are engendered with prolonged violence.

Religious, linguistic, ethnic, or other intercommunal enmity

Throughout much of the 21st century, state failures have often stemmed from religious, linguistic, ethnic, and other intercommunal conflicts. As state failures are often preceded by years of internal violence, the hatred and animosity between these groups slowly build up. In addition, avarice further complicates these issues by exacerbating the growing antagonism between these groups, especially when rapacity is magnified by the discovery of natural resources including minerals, petroleum, timber, and many more. Years of violence ultimately makes irreversible distortion of the perception of minority or majority groups. As a result, this makes it increasingly difficult to stabilize these failed states as conflicts between different intercommunal groups constantly occur. Therefore, it is pivotal that the international community tackles the root of the issue, uniting the heterogeneous array of religious, linguistic, ethnic, and other intercommunal groups.

Flawed institutions

Another key issue that the international community faces when eradicating instability in failed states is the existence of flawed institutions in these countries. After being in the state of very high alert for multiple years, preexisting, sophisticated political and social institutions typically breakdown, preventing the government from providing a sense of security to the citizens. For example, the judiciary, which is supposedly objective and impartial, is often swayed by the executive rather than being independent. This, in return, gradually reduces the citizens' trust of the court system, leaving citizens hapless when they are victimized during illicit activities. There

are many more flawed institutions in failed states, prohibiting them from finding stability. As most denizens are prideful of the army, the military is typically the only institution with any remaining integrity when states fail. However, the army is often politicized, stripping away any integrity that once existed. Therefore, it is imperative for the international community to discover a method to combat these flawed institutions.

Deteriorating or destroyed infrastructure

Apart from the flawed institutions, deteriorating or destroyed infrastructure also poses a serious issue when promoting political and economic developments in failed states. As years civil wars or regional rebellions destroy the basic infrastructure in failed states, developing the countries' economy becomes an increasingly difficult task. Moreover, many of these failed states do not even have adequate public infrastructure to begin with. In addition, most failed states have trouble even stabilizing their government; as a result, this leads to the lack of funds for basic infrastructure, distancing distant districts from the state capital. One of the quintessential features of a country is the possession of a well-function telephone system; this enhances the communication between citizens, increasing efficiency and productivity. Another important feature is the existence of different methods of transportation, including established railroads and rudimentary highway systems. However, failed states like Somalia lacks these basic infrastructure, preventing it from achieving stability in a short period.

Privatized and rudimentary educational and health systems

In failed states, much of the state funds are allocated to war efforts, combatting opposition groups and terrorist organizations. Therefore, the health and educational systems usually lack the financial backings that are needed to succeed. As a result, educational and health systems are often privatized, resulting in a hodgepodge of dubious schools and questionable medical clinics. With the inadequate educational and health systems, facilities are often subjected to negligence and decrepity. State-employed workers begin to dwindle, and basic equipments become scarce. Literacy rate declines, life expectancies plummet, infant mortality rate rises, the number of epidemics increase, and citizens become even poorer and miserable. As a result, citizens begins to realize that the state has completely abandoned them, increasing the hostility between the two. Therefore, it is pivotal that the international community strengthen the educational and health systems both financially and structurally.

Lack of assistance from foreign countries

Lack of foreign investments

With instability continuing to plague the government and economy of failed states, foreign countries are often disincentivized to make any investments. As a result, these failed states are often unable to expand their economy as they lack the funds to instill basic infrastructure and kickstart their economy. For example, throughout the late 1900s and early 2000s, the lack of a central government and civil strife have discouraged any type of foreign investments in Somalia. The annual foreign direct investment hovered around 100,000 dollars. At one point, the FDI in Somalia was -4.79 million dollars, demonstrating the disinvestments that were occurring during that time. However, in the past decade or so, foreign investments have greatly increased, promoting steady economic developments. In recent years, Turkey have begun to launch large-scale projects in Somalia. Although this may be a risky investment for most other countries, Turkey believes that garnering Somalia's trust will allow them to take advantage of this strategic location in the future. However, in recent months, other Middle Eastern countries have also begun to invest in Somalia, leading to increasing competition. Moreover, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) construction of a military base in Somaliland have further intensified the issue. With the rivalry between Turkey and the UAE, disputes over Somalia may lead to further instability in the region. Through this example, it is evident that foreign investments do lead to economic growth. However, increasing number of foreign interests may also raise tensions, further destabilizing the country.

Brain drain

Apart from the limited amount of foreign investments, brain drain is also a serious issue when promoting stability and development in failed states. Brain drain is "the departure of educated or professional people from one country, economic sector, or field for another usually for better pay or living conditions." (Merriam-Webster) As state failures are often the product of social strife and economic disasters, educated or professional people often leave these countries, greatly reducing the countries' economic outputs. Although this issue may not be immediately impactful, brain drain does have a detrimental effect on a countries political, economic, and social state. As a result, it is pivotal that failed states find a way to bring these people back, whether through political or economic incentives.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

United States of America

As the United States of America continue to exert its political and economic dominance, it has helped the economic, political, and social developments in many failed states. However, with the inauguration of Donald Trump, foreign investments have gradually declined, leading to a significant decrease in foreign investments in several failed states. Based on data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, net FDI has dropped to 53.1 million dollars in the first quarter (Q1) of 2018, a 65 percent decline as compared to Q1 in 2016. More specifically, the U.S. has ended its 230 million yearly development in Syria. These funds served as stabilization funds, providing economic support for projects like irrigation and demining. In addition, the U.S. is also not planning on allocating funds to reconstruction efforts in Syria. All in all, the U.S. economic policies have changed as Donald Trump has took on a more conservative stance in tackling global issues.

People's Republic of China

Unlike the United States of America, China has been aggressively searching for investment opportunities in the past few years. For China, Africa and Asia have been popular destinations for foreign investments. Although these investments may help these countries reach a high rate of growth in the short-run, the risks that come with accepting loans from China may lead to further instability, as demonstrated by Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Apart from raising debt, these countries often expose themselves to excessive Chinese involvements. For instance, China made a \$306 millions dollars loan to Sri Lanka to construct the Magampura Mahinda Rajapaksa Port. Although most people knew that this was a terrible investment for both China and Sri Lanka, both countries still agreed on the deal. After the completion of the port, the Sri Lankan government realized that it was not pumping out enough revenue to repay the EXIM Bank of the People's Republic of China. As a result, Sri Lanka leased the port to China, which solidified China's presence in that area. This is now beginning to worry the international community, especially India and China. In addition, China has also recently offered the Arab region 23 billion in loans and aid on top of the 2 billion that Beijing has already pledged to the reconstruction efforts in Syria; this is more than Iran and Russia could provide. All in all, China has been aggressively investing in fragile and failed states. However, only time will tell whether these investments are beneficial for these countries.

Russian Federation

Throughout the Syrian Civil War, Russia has provided economic and political assistance to the Assad regime, securing his power in the country. As the war is slowly coming to an end, the Syrian

government has begun to discuss reconstruction efforts. According to Sergey Katyrin, the president of the Russian Chamber of Commerce, "\$200bn to \$500bn will be needed for the reconstruction of the Syrian economy, and the first priority will, as President Bashar al-Assad has said, be given to Russian businesses." As plans to reconstruct Syria is beginning to transpire, Russia will most likely dedicate the majority of its investments in Syria.

Somalia

Since the Somali Civil War, the country has constantly faced internal and external conflicts. Although the country is no longer recognized by many organizations as a failed state, it still remains one of the most fragile countries in the world. With the lack of foreign investments, it was extremely difficult for Somalia to reach a level of stability. However, in recent years, Somalia's strategic location have begun to attract Middle Eastern Countries. One of these countries is Turkey, which recently opened its military base in Somalia. However, terrorist organizations and the lack of basic infrastructure continue to hinder the country from reaching political, economic, and social stability. All in all, Somalia will be able to promote stability and development if the foreign investments continue to increase and internal conflicts slowly decrease.

Zimbabwe

Beginning in the late 1900s, hyperinflation emerged as one of the most serious issues in Zimbabwe. With money losing its value at an exponential rate, Zimbabweans' lives were severely affected, stunting economic growth and increasing tensions with Robert Mugabe's regime. As frustration and disapproval continued to build up, demonstrations became a common theme in Zimbabwe society. On November 6, 2017, Mugabe sacked his vice president, leading to the Zimbabwe National Army putting him on house arrest. After Mugabe was officially impeached, Emmerson Mnangagwa took over, ending this long lasting dictatorship in Zimbabwe. Although Mnangagwa promised to instill stability in the country, his policies have not improved Zimbabwe's issues as of now. As Zimbabwe continues to destabilize, highlighted by the FSI, it is imperative that the international community finds a way to prevent this political and economic disaster from getting out of hand.

World Bank

As failed states continue to face adversities during their recovery process, the World Bank serves as an organization that provides financial support to stabilize these countries. This includes funding and creating projects to develop the basic infrastructure of failed states. Although the World Bank does not provide that great of financial supports as compared to China, it is terrific at assessing the capabilities of these countries to pay back their debt, reducing risky investments. An example of the World Bank

supporting failed states is its collaboration with the Somali government to launch the flagship infrastructure project, which is worth around 9 million dollars. All in all, the World Bank has been active at providing financial assistance for failed states, developing and stabilizing their economy.

Timeline of Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

Date	Description of event
Disputed	<p>Somali Civil War Erupts</p> <p>Rebellions began to spread through all parts of Somalia, forcing the Somali Armed forces to engage in battles against armed rebel groups. This dragged Somalia into a state of anarchy.</p>
2008-2009	<p>Height of they hyperinflation in Zimbabwe</p> <p>As the Zimbabwe government continued to increase its money supply by excessively printing the country's currency, Zimbabwe reached an unprecedented level of inflation, creating further instability in the country.</p>
March 15th, 2011	<p>Syrian Civil War erupts</p> <p>As the Arab Spring protests in Syria began to garner international attention, President Assad made some questionable decisions, escalating into armed conflicts. As of today, Syria is still considered a failed state and still lacks basic infrastructure.</p>
March 19th, 2015	<p>Yemeni Civil War erupts</p> <p>After the Houthis gained control of Yemen's capital, the government has been in a violent conflict with the rebels and other terrorist organizations. As the humanitarian situation continues to worsen in Yemen, it is vital that the country finds stability.</p>

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Coordinated and integrated United Nations system approach to promoting rural development in developing countries, with due consideration to least developed countries, for poverty eradication and sustainable development, 23 July 2004 (**ECOSOC Resolution 2004/48**)
- Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, 20 November 2006 (**A/RES/61/16**)
- Support to the Republic of South Sudan, 29 July 2011 (**ECOSOC Resolution 2011/43**)

- African countries emerging from conflict, 23 August 2012 (**ECOSOC Resolution 2012/250**)
- Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, 1 August 2017, (**A/72/269**)

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Throughout the 21st century, foreign investments have greatly increased in many failed states. For example, Somalia, South Sudan, and Syria have all garnered financial support to reconstruct the country. However, this investment is simply not enough to rebuild these failed states that have been terrorized by years of violence. Moreover, competition between other states to instill their presence in these failed states may further increase tensions, further destabilizing these countries.

Apart from economic developments, many countries have also provided these failed states with military support, ensuring the political, economic, and social developments of these countries. For example, Turkey opened a military base in Somalia last year. Although this move was controversial, it undoubtedly strengthened Somalia's army as the Turkish government provided training for the Somali army; this has helped provide a sense of security for the people, preventing instability in the country.

Possible Solutions

Although foreign investments have significantly increased in failed states over the past decade, it is still not enough to fully rebuild these countries. As a result, **measures should be made to incentivize countries to invest in these failed states**. More specifically, the investments should help fund the reconstruction of basic infrastructure as it is directly related to economic productivity. However, international organizations should warn these failed states in taking on risky investments as it may further destabilize their economy. In addition, the United Nations should prevent tensions from rising between countries that are attempting to win the trust of failed states through investments. It is pivotal that failed states find political stability in order to incentivize other countries to invest in them.

To promote stability in failed states, **the international community will have to assist them in their efforts to combat intercommunal enmity, flawed institutions, and the impotent educational and health systems**. In order to lessen intercommunal enmity, international organizations will have to ensure that the government of these failed states does not lean toward a certain ethnic, linguistic, or religious group. As for issues regarding the educational and health systems, financial and technical supports can significantly improve the current state of these systems, further promoting economic and social developments.

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Appendix or Appendices

1. Pathways to State Failure
 - a. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247762392_Pathways_to_State_Failure
2. Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators
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