



# BSBMUN VIII Economic and Social Council

## Study Guide

*Carolina Barroso and Mariana Heringer*



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## Letter from the Chairs

Welcome delegates to the eighth edition of BSBMUN! We're extremely excited to be participating in this year's conference and chairing for ECOSOC. Both of us hope all of you have a fruitful experience and take a lot out of this moment! We put a lot of thought into how to make the topic of debate and the study guide as interesting as possible and, this year, we decided to focus on the CFA franc monetary union's impact on African development and protection of human trafficking victims in Europe. For this conference to work at its best, we need you to be prepared - the expectations are quite high. To contribute a little to your research and reduce your workload, we put together this study guide and hope to give you a head start! We are very excited to see what you all will come up with. We hope you all have a great experience and we'll see you soon!

Good luck,

Head Chair Carolina Barroso and Vice-Chair Mariana Heringer.

If you need to contact us, you can send an email to [carolinaltmb@gmail.com](mailto:carolinaltmb@gmail.com) or [eab202520248@eabdf.br](mailto:eab202520248@eabdf.br) and we will happily answer!



# Topic A: Discussing the impact of the CFA franc monetary union on Central and West African states' development





# History of the CFA Franc Monetary Union and Development

France is known amongst international powers for being a remarkable colonizer (especially when regarding Africa). They were responsible for overseeing and actively participating in the politics of 17 West and Central African countries. Considering so, the creation of the CFA franc monetary union was far from unexpected.

The union is composed of 15 sub-Saharan African countries and France, promoting a fixed exchange rate for the countries' currencies. While the union is monetary, the foreign exchange reserves are centralized by African countries in their central banks, which must deposit at least half of their assets in the French treasury. It is composed of three distinct currencies and divided into three corresponding subsections: the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), the Central African Economic and Monetary Union (CEMAC), and the Comorian franc. Monetary policy decisions are the responsibility of three central banks that stand independent of governments (WAEMU's in Senegal, CEMAC's in Cameroon, and the last one in Comoros). Countries are allowed to leave the union when they wish.

The union was created on December 26th of 1945, after World War II. At the time, several decolonial movements were gaining strength in Africa and Asia. In an attempt to sustain the crumbling empire after being defeated and invaded by Germany, France vehemently fought these movements by sending troops to the countries. Eventually, the strength of such movements grew to an extent so great that French authorities were unable to resist granting independence.

Whilst some claim that the main purpose of the union was to promote economic growth, low inflation rates, resistance to macroeconomic shocks, and financial stability, others claim France was not ready to give up its control over the African continent yet. Considering the calls for independence, the government created a conditional grant, which



involved a so-called “cooperation agreement”. In it, France guaranteed foreign aid to such countries but demanded power over the colony’s resources, maintenance of troops on African territory, and pegging of the local currency to the franc. This is how the CFA franc was created - CFA stands for Financial Community of Africa, created for this specific reason.

The question of to what extent this union impacts the development of involved countries has always been alarming but rarely discussed. Monetary unions are known in economics for bringing a certain level of economic stability, a characteristic that is inexistent for the vast majority of West and Central African countries. On the other hand, the pegged currency causes a spiral of issues in the old colonies. Whenever the franc appreciates (which it usually does), domestic goods become too expensive in relation to foreign goods, therefore becoming less competitive. Because of this, there is an exponential increase in imported goods and a drop in exports. Since imports mean that money leaves the economy, African countries find themselves unable to escape scenarios of extreme poverty. In fact, some economies have followed a pattern opposite to that expected from the CFA franc monetary union and shrunk rather than grew. The little money that these countries withhold is concentrated in the hands of corrupt politicians. As the Gravel Institute mentioned, “these African countries are not underdeveloped, they are overexploited.” To some experts, the concept of neocolonialism seems to fit the situation increasingly well; while colonialism is not evident, it is underlying and allows France to have more control over the countries than it did before their independence.

Here follows the statement made by Luigi Di Maio, Italy’s minister of foreign affairs:

*“France is one of those countries that by printing money for 14 African states prevents their economic development and contributes to the fact that the refugees leave and then die in the sea or arrive on our coasts.”*

The most recent events regarding the monetary union involve protests that occurred in Dakar during 2021 that used the slogan “*France, dégage!*” (France, disappear) to demonstrate revolt against France’s intervention in Senegal.





# Timeline

## A BRIEF HISTORY

- **1939** Birth of the franc zone in the French overseas territories.
- **1945** Creation of the CFA franc.
- **1954-1962**  
Institutional transformation of the CFA franc zone following the independence of its member countries.
- **1972** Monetary cooperation agreements.
- **1976** Creation of the Comorian franc.
- **1977-1978**  
Transfer of the central bank headquarters in Africa.
- **1984** Integration of Equatorial Guinea.
- **1994** 50% devaluation of the CFA francs and 33% devaluation of the Comorian franc. Launch of the convergence and economic integration programme (see "Further Insight").
- **1997** Guinea Bissau enters the CFA franc zone.
- **1999** The Council of the European Union recognises the monetary cooperation agreements within the CFA franc zone, ensuring that the transition to the euro would not lead to parity changes.



## Major Bloc Positions

### France

As should be assumed at this point, France is completely in favor of the monetary union. While the purpose of the union might have been to maintain control over African countries in the past, there certainly is pressure to use the CFA franc as a form of helping underdeveloped countries to gain stability. France benefits from the cooperation agreements signed during independence and relies heavily on the resources of such countries (such as Gabon for oil and uranium), which contribute to the growth of the French economy by itself.

### Chad

Chad president Idriss Deby, back in 2015, stated that the union is “pulling African economies down,” and that the “time has come to cut the cord that prevent Africa to develop.” He also called for currency restructuring to “enable African countries which are still using it to develop.” Chad clearly opposes the union due to its supposed impediments to economic growth, which the country has sought for a very long time.

### Senegal

The protests that occurred recently in Dakar speak for themselves. Abdou Diouf, a Senegalese presidential candidate in 1993, promised the franc would not devalue. When such expectations were crushed in 1994, Senegal had no other choice than to accept French rule over its own economy. The population is definitely dissatisfied



with how the country has progressed in such a sense. Moreover, Kemi Seba (a Beninese activist) was deported and charged because he burned CFA notes in Senegal.

## Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso is known for housing huge pro-democracy movements, amongst the most important is the Le Balai Citoyen. This movement, alongside the Y'en a Marre in Senegal consider the dissolution of the monetary union of extreme importance to take steps toward governmental reform. While this is what the population desires, the government (who was kept in a regime for over 27 years and was opposed by the democratic movements) may seek a different destiny for the nation.



# Topic B: Discussing the protection of human trafficking victims in Europe





## Background Information

Human trafficking is a crime characterized by coercing human beings to provide labor or engage in commercial sex acts. The official definition of the United Nations is "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harboring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation". It can occur through fraud, deception, or force, but the objective is to exploit individuals for profit. Although the traffickers usually utilize fake promises of education or employment, violence can also be the medium to coerce individuals into the business. Such a crime occurs in every region of the world on different scales.

Despite the fact that people from all genders and regions of the world, that come from every background, could become victims of human trafficking, the UNODC's 2020 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons revealed that females are the primary targets. The UNODC report was compiled using official data from 148 countries. It displayed that, in 2018, 46% of detected victims were women and 19% were girls. In addition, the share of children has tripled in the past 15 years; globally, 1 out of every 3 victims is a child. Women and girls are usually trafficked for sexual exploitation whilst males are used for forced labor. Still, the report found that the share of (detected) male victims rose from 10% to 20% in the last 15 years.

Regarding the traffickers, the UNODC 2020 report showed that about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of people convicted of human trafficking were male. Nonetheless, in Eastern Europe, 80% of people convicted of the crime are women. About 2% of total convictions involved people who were under 18 years old. The differences in the sex profile of the individuals may reflect a wide range of factors, including the operational activity of the trafficking network. Women traffickers may be especially active in the



recruitment phase of human trafficking. Thus, that could explain the significant difference in the sex of convicted individuals in Europe.

In addition, regarding the origin of the victims, more than  $\frac{1}{3}$  originated from the Balkans. About 20% were from former Soviet states, 13% from South America, 7% from Central Europe, 5 percent from Africa, and 3% of victims came from East Asia. Similarly, in 2017, a ranking of the 10 worst countries for human trafficking was made by "The Blog". In the first position, there is Belarus. As seen by the statistics, the majority of victims of trafficking in persons remain there or in former Soviet states (especially Russia).

The report also put countries into three tiers regarding their efforts to stop human trafficking. Being a tier 1 state means the country is fully compliant with the minimum standards to eliminate human trafficking. In tier 2, countries are not completely compliant but are making significant efforts to become compliant with the minimum standards. On the other hand, tier three is when the country is not fully compliant and not making a significant effort to become so. In 2004, the tier 2 watchlist was added. It encompasses countries that are between tiers 2 and 3; that are not in tier 3 yet but require special attention.

Globally, the first steps toward countering human trafficking were taken by the UN in 2000. In that year, it published the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. There were two protocols annexed to the archive; on human trafficking and on human smuggling. The "Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children" set out the first international recognition of human trafficking. The protocol got known as the "Palermo Protocol". After the Palermo Protocol, many countries started



implementing their own laws regarding the rights of victims and the punishment of traffickers involved in human trafficking.

Nonetheless, Europe identified human trafficking as early as 1989. The EU parliament passed the Resolution on Prostitution and Trafficking in Persons. The year 1989 is significant since converges between the recognition of human trafficking as an issue and the unsettling of Europe due to the end of the Cold War. Thus, the initial concerns regarding human trafficking within Europe were related to fears about irregular migration, organized crime, and state sovereignty. Fear of the actual trafficking sparked around 2000 when it was estimated that 500,000 women were being trafficked into the EU from Eastern Europe with the purpose of sexual exploitation per year.

Over the last few decades, transnational political organizations of Europe, such as the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), have made policies around the issue and pressured individual member states to do the same. The outcome of this political pressure is that almost 100% of Western and Central European states (and almost 90% of Eastern European countries) have enacted specific offenses against human trafficking. Such measures include the 2002 Council Framework Decision on "Combating Trafficking in Human Beings" and the 2004 Council Directive on the "Residence Permit Issued to Third Country Nationals who are Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings".

It is estimated that one out of every four victims of human trafficking across Europe is a minor. A few years ago, in October 2020, three European states - United Kingdom, Portugal, and Spain - along with Europol coordinated a Europe-wide action day targeting child trafficking. The operation led to 388 traffickers arrested, 19 additional suspects identified, and 40 new investigations started. In addition, 249



victims were identified, 61 of which were minors. The operation focused on border crossing points and main transport hubs to identify victims and suspects of human trafficking.



# Position of Major Blocs and Countries

## **Belarus**

The Government of Belarus "does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so", so it was recently downgraded to a tier 3 country. Although there was little significant effort, the government took some steps and precautions regarding the issue, including conducting trafficking-related prosecutions and investigations. Still, the Government of Belarus did not report if it convicted any traffickers and did not provide adequate protection to the victims. Media reports show that authorities returned many migrants and asylum seekers to their countries of origin without comprehensively investigating them for trafficking. The country also demonstrates oppression when it comes to civil society organizations and protests against human trafficking. Not only that but it has been accused by other countries (such as Poland) of "turning [human] traffic into a business".

## **Russia**

Russia is considered a tier 3 country, meaning there was a lack of effort and action when it comes to fighting against human trafficking. Similar to Belarus, there was a lack of significant efforts, but the government took some steps to address the issue. Such steps include the facilitation of the return of Russian children from Iraq and Syria, identifying victims, and extending work/residence permits to foreigners in response to the pandemic. Nevertheless, the government was actively complicit in the forced labor of North Korean workers. Despite credible reports in previous years that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) possessed work camps in Russia and exploited thousands of North Koreans in forced labor, the government did not screen workers for trafficking indicators or identify trafficking victims. Although the Russian government took some steps to repatriate North Korean workers following the UN Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs), citizens



from the DPRK continued to arrive in Russia. In addition, the war in Ukraine is creating a human trafficking crisis, where Russian troops are allegedly using sexual violence as a weapon of war in the country.

## **Iran**

The State Department released its annual report on human trafficking, where Iran was cited as one of the 11 countries where the government participates in trafficking. "Official government involvement in trafficking crimes and authorities' abuse of trafficking victims continued unabated." It was claimed that the government recruits and employs child soldiers, that are sent to Syria. The government made no effort to address the crime when it comes to law enforcement. Nevertheless, reporting on official complicity in human trafficking crimes was limited, allegedly due to hesitancy of former victims and the government's restrictions on the media. In previous years, it was reported that the state forced children and adults to fight for militias operating overseas, in Syria, and provided financial support to militias that operated in the region that used child soldiers. Despite these reports, the government showed no effort to disarm child soldiers or officials involved in their recruitment. For the eighth consecutive year, Iran was ranked as a tier 3 country.

## **United States of America**

The USA ranks as a tier 1 country when it comes to human trafficking, meaning it has made significant progress, action, and effort to eliminate human trafficking. Every year, the US Department of State does a report on human trafficking within the country and around the world. The country has many laws that protect human trafficking victims and condemn traffickers. Nevertheless, the number of victims of human trafficking within the country remains high, with 15,000-50,000 victims being trafficked per year.



## Questions to Consider

- 1) What role does international law play in combating human trafficking? How would the UN ensure it is being respected in all countries?
- 2) Should there be consequences for countries that turn human traffic into a business? To what extent?
- 3) Should the consequences of human trafficking be different if the victims showed consent? To what extent?
- 4) Is human trafficking inherently the same as sex trafficking or migrant smuggling?



## Further Research

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- <https://www.europol.europa.eu/crime-areas-and-statistics/crime-areas/trafficking-in-human-beings>
- <https://www.bbc.com/news/stories-58994212>
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