



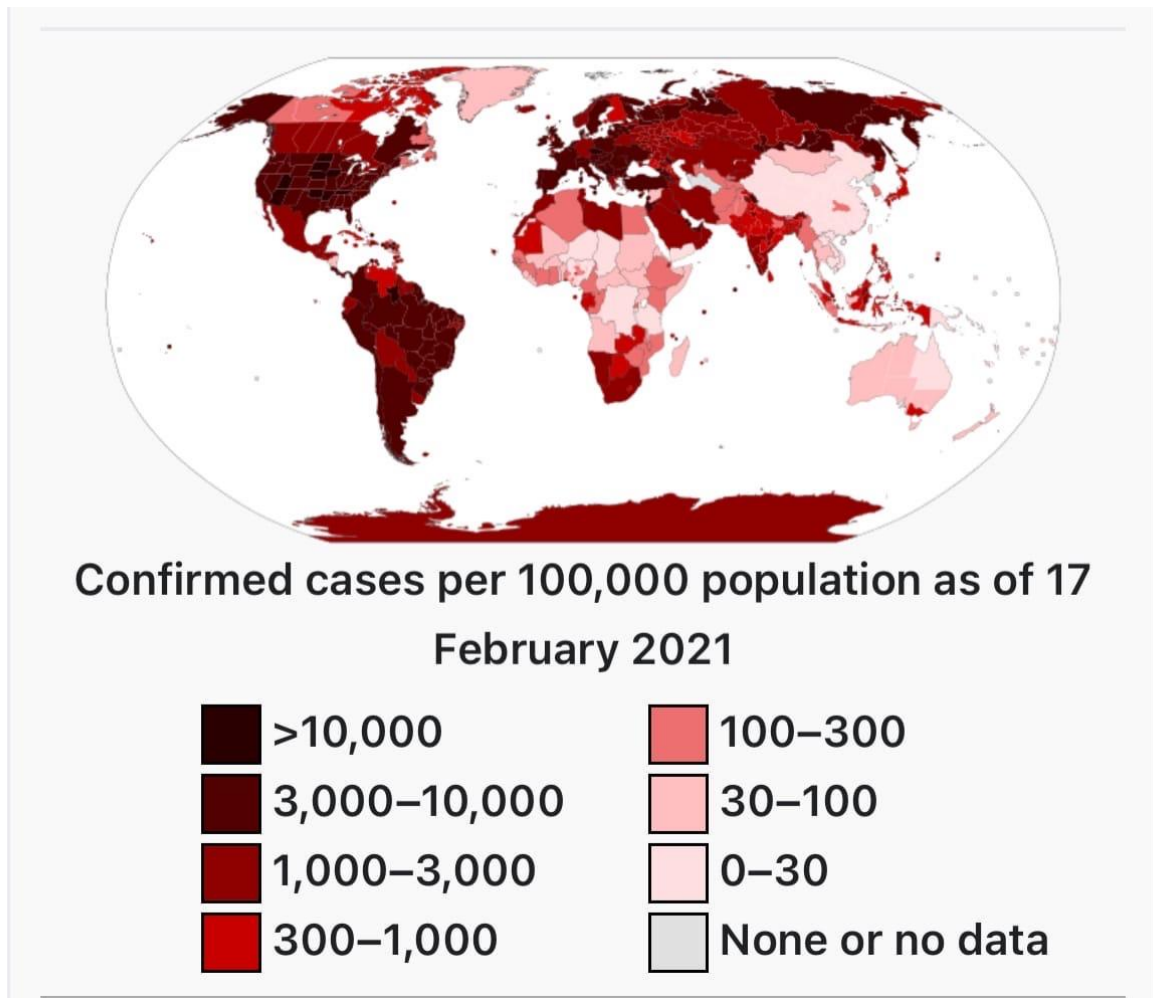
Forum: 4th Committee (Political)

Issue: Promoting ceasefire and easing of sanctions as a means of combating coronavirus pandemic

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Introduction

Covid-19 has taken lives of over 2 million people all around the world. It caused economic, political, and social crisis in many countries, even in those where economic situation before pandemic was more than stable. But the situation in countries, which had already been suffering from crisis, war or emerging from it, can be called nothing but critical. Protests, conflicts and demonstrations only aggravate the situation, and that is the reason why the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, issued a call for a global ceasefire. In March 2020 Security Council was assembled to discuss measures of preventing the spread of Covid-19 and ceasefire in Syria, Yemeni and Libya. “The risks are diverse. Tensions are rising as a result of the severe socioeconomic fallout from the crisis. Trust in public institutions is being eroded further in places where people perceive that the authorities have not addressed the pandemic effectively or have not been transparent about its impact. As pre-existing grievances and vulnerabilities become more accentuated and entrenched, the potential for instability and violence only grows...In other places, conflict actors — including terrorist and violent extremist groups — see the uncertainty created by the pandemic as a tactical advantage. In Somalia, Al-Shabaab continues to launch frequent attacks, with COVID-19 having no noticeable impact on its operational tempo. Rather, there is a risk that Al-Shabaab could increase such violence while the security forces focus, by necessity, on the pandemic.” However, UN mission did not succeed at all. People suffer every day because of lack of food, vaccines, and medical service. That is the reason why the problem needs to be addressed and solved as soon as possible.



Definition of key terms

Covid-19 – A highly contagious respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. SARS-CoV-2 is thought to spread from person to person through droplets released when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. It may also spread when a person touches a surface with the virus on it and then touches one’s mouth, nose, or eyes, but this is less common.

Pandemic - an epidemic occurring worldwide, or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people.

Ceasefire - temporary stoppage of a war in which each side agrees with the other to suspend aggressive actions.

Background information

The novel human coronavirus disease COVID-19 has become the fifth documented pandemic since the 1918 flu pandemic. COVID-19 was first reported in Wuhan, China, and subsequently spread worldwide. The coronavirus was officially named severe acute

respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses based on phylogenetic analysis. SARS-CoV-2 is believed to be a spillover of an animal coronavirus and later adapted the ability of human-to-human transmission. Because the virus is highly contagious, it rapidly spreads and continuously evolves in the human population. 2,503,428 people have died so far from the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak as of February 24, 2021.

Nevertheless, epidemic situation did not prompt people to stay at home. After murder of George Floyd in 25th of May, 2020 people started to protest. Only in USA during first two weeks of BLM movement cases of Covid-19 topped 2 million. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in 24th March called for an easing of sanctions against countries such as Iran, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Venezuela and Zimbabwe to allow their medical systems to fight the disease and limit its global spread. Though this idea was considered as peaceful measure to solve current problem, the only country followed by an easing of sanctions was Zimbabwe. Crisis-affected countries, which are already dealing with unfathomable levels of hunger, economic distress, crippled health systems and infrastructure, are now facing second waves. In places like the Central African Republic and South Sudan, NGOs provide over 70% of health services. In places like Syria, 50% of health facilities have been damaged or closed due to conflict. No response to the pandemic can take hold while bombs are still falling on civilians and hospitals alike. Vaccination also became a problem in these countries, since UN simply cannot arrange supplies of vaccines because of economic and political crisis, while in many countries vaccination from COVID-19 is gaining momentum.

Sanctions against Yemini, Libya and Syria still remain the same, despite the fact that epidemic and humanitarian situation in these countries is only getting worse. Although UN has achieved ceasefire in Libya, irreversible consequences the war brought cannot be eliminated because of lack of supplies to Libyan citizens arisen due to sanctions and termination of trading. At the UN itself, a Russian resolution to back a global ceasefire and an end to trade wars and sanctions was rejected by a western alliance in favor of a more general resolution calling for ceasefires.

On the June 24, 2020 UN announced an agreement on global ceasefire to fight against Covid-19, which was signed by 170 countries. The signatories underscored that diplomatic action and collective efforts are needed in the common fight against COVID-19 and reaffirmed the importance of "global unity and solidarity in confronting this scourge". Still the problem is not solved in many aspects such as healthcare during pandemic in

Third World Countries and countries in military conflicts, ceasefire in Yemeni, Syria and etc., easing of economic sanctions because of Covid-19. This shows that this situation still requires international attention and discussion.

Organizations involved

- WHO (World Health Organization)
- United Nations
- The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance
- Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention
- The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

UN relevant official documents

S/2020/663 – Security Council Report

https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S_2020_663.pdf

COVID-19 OMNIBUS RESOLUTION

https://www.un.org/pga/74/wp-content/uploads/sites/99/2020/09/Omnibus_Final-clean.pdf

Possible solutions

- Ceasefire in Yemeni and Syria
- Easing sanctions of countries suffering from economic and political crisis
- Withdrawal of troops from warring countries in order to sit down at the negotiating table
- Providing humanitarian help to countries emerging from war

Useful links

<https://www.un.org/en/globalceasefire>

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/06/1066982>

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/03/1060092>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/03/coronavirus-threat-prompts-un-to-redouble-efforts-to-end-long-term-wars>

<https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/nationwide-ceasefire-progress-constitution-vital-political-solution>

<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/describing-covid-19-pandemic-wake-call-dress-rehearsal-future-challenges-secretary>