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Economic and Social Council Issue #1: The question of promoting sustainable energy solutions in order to prevent resource-based conflict

Sustainable energy resources are resources which can “maintain current operations without jeopardizing the energy needs or climate of future generations. The most popular sources of sustainable energy, including wind, solar and hydropower, are also renewable.” (*John Hopkins*).

Resource based conflicts are conflicts due to “disagreements and disputes over access to, control over and use of natural resources.” (“An introduction”)

Resource-based conflicts often arise from competition over natural resources, such as oil, minerals, and water. Such control and extraction of these resources has led to much tension and conflict in different regions, specifically those with weakened governments and higher dependency on such resources. Nevertheless, sustainable energy solutions have been presented to not only decrease climate impacts but also help solve such problems. According to the United Nations, renewable energy capacity is set to grow 2.5 times by 2030 however it must reach 3 times (“SUSTAINABLE ENERGY”). Some sustainable resources include solar power, wind energy, and hydropower. Solar power is used by converting sunlight into power using photovoltaic panels or solar thermal systems. Additionally, the cost of solar power has

diminished in the last couple of years, making it a more suitable resource ("Solar PV"). Wind energy is used to “produce electricity by converting the kinetic energy of air in motion into electricity” ("Wind energy"). Moreover, it has been proven that wind helps avoid 351 million metric tons of CO2 emissions annually, which is equivalent to 61 million cars’ worth of emissions ("Clean Power"). Hydropower utilizes the natural flow of water to generate electricity. Currently, hydropower accounts for more than 50% of renewable electricity production globally ("Facts about").

Regarding resource-based conflicts, many have arisen, creating division and unrest in regions. Conflicts have started for example in Nigeria, which arose in 1990 after workers felt exploited by foreign oil corporations ("Conflict in Niger"). Certain lack of revenue for oil workers led to much tension and unrest in the country. Additionally, the Democratic Republic of Congo is facing one of the worst modern slavery issues due to cobalt production. Workers are being enslaved and decisions are made solely by the government, which does not respect the rights of workers and is merely focused on profit ("DRC is the world's"). Moreover, aquatic resources, such as fishing in Lake Chad has resulted in approximately 90% of its water volume being lost ("Exploring resilience"). Such issues are resulting in irreversible damage to climatic conditions in countries and their citizens.

Many regions have adapted and started using sustainable resources. In the Sahel region in West Africa, solar farms were installed to help provide clean electricity ("A transition"). This led to hundreds of citizens having uninterrupted energy supply. Moreover, solar microgrids have been able to provide electricity to hospitals, schools, and homes in areas isolated by war in Yemen ("Solar microgrids"), decreasing the dependence of fuel imports which decrease in war.

Therefore, the transition to sustainable energy is imperative for combating climate change and could help prevent resource-based conflict. However, without careful planning and inclusive practices, it risks escalating conflicts or creating new ones.

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