



**FORUM:** First Committee of the General Assembly

**QUESTION OF:** Debating measures in order to secure supply chains for basic goods in times of war

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### **INTRODUCTION**

In times of war, ensuring a continuous supply of basic goods is of paramount importance to the well-being of a country's population. Interruptions in supply chains can lead to humanitarian crises and exacerbate the already dire consequences of armed conflict. International cooperation is needed and humanitarian issues must be at the foreground.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Wars often disrupt the production, transportation and distribution of essential supplies such as food, medicine and clean water. This disruption can lead to a range of humanitarian crises, including food shortages, disease outbreaks and inadequate medical care. Addressing these challenges requires a coordinated international effort and a commitment to upholding humanitarian principles.

### **DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

**UNICEF** (United Nations Children's Fund): UNICEF focuses on supporting children and mothers, including access to clean water, nutrition, education, and health services in times of war.

**UNHCR** (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees): UNHCR is the UN agency responsible for the protection and assistance of refugees and internally displaced persons. It often coordinates the delivery of basic supplies to displaced populations in conflict areas.

**WFP** (World Food Program): The WFP is a specialized agency of the United Nations that works to eliminate hunger and malnutrition. It plays a critical role in providing food assistance to populations in conflict zones.

**Ceasefire:** a temporary suspension of hostilities during which humanitarian actors can safely deliver aid to conflict-affected populations.

**Cluster Approach:** the cluster approach is a UN-led system for organizing and coordinating humanitarian assistance in specific sectors (e.g., food, health, shelter) to ensure a more effective and coordinated response in crisis situations.

**Contingency planning:** developing and implementing strategies to address potential supply chain disruptions or challenges due to the dynamic nature of conflict zones.

## **Critical Infrastructure Protection**

**Cross-border operations:** Humanitarian operations that involve transporting goods and personnel across international borders to reach affected populations in neighboring countries.

**Distribution:** the delivery of goods to intended destinations within a supply chain, which often involves the transportation, storage, and handling of products.

**Donor coordination:** donor coordination is the cooperation and communication between countries and organizations providing humanitarian assistance funds to ensure a coherent and effective response.

**Humanitarian aid:** Assistance in the form of essential goods and services, such as food, water, shelter, medical care, and clothing, to alleviate the suffering and meet the needs of people affected by war.

**Humanitarian corridors:** humanitarian corridors are safe routes established in conflict areas to allow humanitarian aid and personnel to reach affected populations unimpeded.

**Humanitarian logistics:** the specialized area of logistics that focuses on the unique challenges and requirements of delivering aid in crisis situations, including war zones.

**Interagency coordination:** collaboration and communication among various organizations, including governmental, nongovernmental, and international organizations, to ensure a coordinated response in humanitarian supply chain management.

**Inventory management:** the systematic control and tracking of goods within a supply chain, including monitoring stock levels, replenishing inventory, and minimizing waste.

**Transportation:** The movement of goods from one location to another, which can include various modes of transport such as road, air, sea, and rail.

**Last mile delivery:** The final stage of the supply chain, i.e., the delivery of goods from a distribution center to the end user or recipient, which is often challenging in conflict zones due to security concerns.

**Local sourcing:** the procurement of goods and services from local suppliers in the affected region to support the local economy and reduce logistical challenges.

**Logistics:** logistics related to supply chains involves planning, implementing, and coordinating the movement and delivery of goods and services to those in need. The UN manages logistics operations to ensure the efficient distribution of basic goods in times of war.

**Pre-positioning:** The practice of placing relief supplies near potential disaster or conflict areas in advance to reduce response times.

**Procurement:** the process of acquiring goods and services, often involving purchasing, sourcing, and negotiating with suppliers to secure critical items for humanitarian operations.

**Quality control:** the process of ensuring that goods meet certain standards and are safe for consumption or use, especially important in humanitarian operations.

**Protection of civilians:** this principle emphasizes the importance of protecting the lives and well-being of civilians in armed conflict, including their access to basic goods and services.

**Resilience building:** efforts to strengthen the capacity of communities to withstand and recover from the effects of conflict by improving access to basic goods, services, and livelihood opportunities.

**Safe access:** safe access means creating safe routes for humanitarian workers and aid convoys to reach the affected population without jeopardizing their safety.

**Security escorts:** Armed protection for aid convoys and personnel to ensure safe passage through conflict areas.

**Strategic stockpiling:** This involves keeping essential humanitarian supplies in storage or in locations near potential conflict areas to ensure a rapid response to emergencies.

**Supply chain:** the interconnected network of organizations, activities, information, and resources involved in the production, transportation, and distribution of goods from suppliers to consumers, especially in conflict areas.

**Supply chain visibility:** the ability to track and monitor the movement of goods and information throughout the supply chain, often facilitated by technology and data analytics.

**Supply chain resilience:** the ability of a supply chain to adapt, recover, and continue to function in the face of disruptions such as war-related challenges or disasters.

**Warehousing:** the storage of goods in a designated facility or warehouse prior to distribution to ensure they are readily available when needed.

## **POTENTIAL ISSUES**

### **Establish safe corridors**

International coordination: encourage states to cooperate in establishing safe corridors for the transport of basic goods. This can be facilitated through agreements such as the Geneva Conventions that emphasize the protection of civilians during armed conflict.

Humanitarian access: Urge all parties to the conflict to provide safe and unimpeded access for humanitarian organizations to deliver aid to affected populations.

### **Stockpile basic goods**

Encourage nations to build strategic stockpiles of essential supplies to prepare for potential conflict. This may include stockpiles of food, medicine, and clean water.

Regional cooperation: Encourage regional stockpile-sharing agreements to ensure equitable access to basic goods between neighboring nations.

### **Critical infrastructure protection**

International Protective Measures: Advocate for stronger international laws to protect critical infrastructure such as power plants, water treatment facilities, and transportation networks from direct attack during conflicts.

Humanitarian Zones: Support the establishment of humanitarian zones to protect critical infrastructure and supply chain facilities from military attack.

### **Dissemination of information**

Raising public awareness: encouraging governments and humanitarian organizations to inform civilians about the availability and distribution of basic goods.

Safe Routes: providing information on safe routes for civilians to access basic goods, especially in conflict areas.

## **International cooperation**

Diplomacy: Promote dialogue and negotiations between parties to the conflict to achieve a ceasefire or truce that will allow for the safe delivery of basic goods.

## **MAIN COUNTRIES INVOLVED**

**Ukraine:** Since February 2022, Russia has been waging a large-scale war of aggression against Ukraine. War has been raging in the east of the country since 2014, which was also started by Russia. Since then, Moscow has controlled the areas in the Donbass.

**Syria:** Syria is engaged in a long-running civil war involving various factions, including government forces, rebel groups, and Kurdish militias. International actors, including Russia, the United States, Turkey, and Iran, are also involved in the conflict.

**Yemen:** Yemen has been in a civil war since 2014, with Houthi rebels fighting government forces and a Saudi Arabia-led coalition supporting the government. The conflict has led to a severe humanitarian crisis.

**Iraq:** Iraq faces ongoing instability and conflict, including fighting against ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria). Various militias and ethnic groups have also contributed to the complex security situation.

**Libya:** Libya was engulfed in civil war after the fall of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. Several factions are involved in the conflict, including the UN-recognized Government of National Accord (GNA), the Libyan National Army (LNA), and various militias.

**Ethiopia:** Ethiopia faced internal conflict in the Tigray region, where government forces fought the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and its allies. The situation escalated in late 2020. The implementation of the peace agreement for the crisis region of Tigray is making progress. The situation has improved somewhat. According to the Red Cross, aid supplies have arrived in the Ethiopian region of Tigray for the first time after two years of war. In March 2023, the Ethiopian parliament removed the dominant party in the Tigray region, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), from the country's terror list.

## **QUESTIONS FOR DELEGATES**

What are the current challenges and vulnerabilities in supply chains for essential goods in times of war?

How can we ensure safe and unimpeded access for humanitarian aid and supplies in conflict zones?

What steps can be taken to strengthen the resilience of supply chains in conflict zones to disruptions?

How can we improve coordination and collaboration among UN agencies, governments, and humanitarian organizations in managing supply chains in times of war?



What measures can be taken to enhance the security of aid convoys and humanitarian personnel in conflict zones?

What role can technology and data analytics play in improving the visibility and efficiency of supply chains for essential commodities in wartime?

How can local procurement and collaboration with local communities be promoted to support supply chain stability and boost local economies?

What strategies should be used to address the logistical challenges of delivering last-mile relief supplies to affected populations in conflict zones?

What steps can be taken to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, including IDPs and refugees?

How can we balance emergency needs with longer-term efforts to build resilience and sustainable supply chains in conflict-affected regions?

What measures can be taken to protect humanitarian workers and infrastructure such as warehouses and distribution centers from attack or looting during conflict?

What role can peacekeeping missions and diplomatic efforts play in facilitating humanitarian access and securing supply chains in conflict zones?

How can the international community promote compliance with international humanitarian law and human rights standards to ensure the protection of civilians and humanitarian operations in times of war?

What financial resources and funding mechanisms can be used to support humanitarian action in supply chains in conflict zones?

What lessons can be learned from past conflicts and humanitarian responses to develop best practices for securing supply chains for basic commodities in times of war?

How can we ensure transparency and accountability in the management and distribution of humanitarian aid and supplies in conflict zones?

What innovative approaches or technologies can be explored to address unique challenges in specific conflict situations such as urban warfare or protracted conflicts?

What diplomatic and peacebuilding efforts can complement humanitarian action to create conditions conducive to supply chain security in conflict zones?

How can we engage non-state actors, armed groups and local authorities to facilitate the safe movement of relief supplies and basic goods in conflict zones?

What role can regional organizations and neighboring countries play in supporting the supply chains of basic commodities in times of war, particularly in cross-border operations?

## **USEFUL SOURCES**

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

<https://www.unhcr.org/dach/de>

OECD

<https://www.oecd.org>

UNICEF

<https://www.unicef.de/informieren/aktuelles/presse/-/kinder-in-krisengebieten/276430>

WFP - World Food Programme

<https://de.wfp.org>

Welthungerhilfe

<https://www.welthungerhilfe.de/informieren/themen/humanitaere-hilfe>

Europäische Kommission

[https://commission.europa.eu/aid-development-cooperation-fundamental-rights/human-rights-non-eu-countries/where-we-work-humanitarian-assistance-and-international-partnerships\\_de](https://commission.europa.eu/aid-development-cooperation-fundamental-rights/human-rights-non-eu-countries/where-we-work-humanitarian-assistance-and-international-partnerships_de)

<https://www.bundesregierung.de/resource/blob/974430/2059152/913f41a5d52c8aa68b1bb0e03176879d/2022-07-01-security-of-supply-for-critical-raw-materials-data.pdf?download=1>

<https://supplychaindigital.com/top10/top-ten-ways-to-protect-supply-chains-from-ukraine-war>