Committee: UNICEF

Country: Indonesia

Agenda Items: Elimination of Child Labor, Regulation and Reintegration of Child Labor Survivors

The Republic of Indonesia is a South Asian country located in an archipelago between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. With more than 17 000 islands, it is the largest island country in the world. In 1799, the Netherlands colonized Indonesia directly. After World War I, Indonesia's movements for independence gained traction. The nation had occupied by Japan from 1942 to 1945. The country ultimately declared independence after Japan surrendered in 1945. Indonesia operates under a presidential system of government. The country joined the United Nations (UN) in 1946. Today, Joko Widodo is the seventh and current president of Indonesia. It became one of the G20 countries in 2022. It also boasts Southeast Asia's largest economy. The currency of the country is the Indonesian rupee. Indonesia's population is estimated to be around 273 million people. Muslims make up 90% of the population. Indonesian is the official language of the country.

The existence of child labor dates back to the 19th and early 20th centuries. It was crucial during the Industrial Revolution. Children as young as four were employed in production factories and mines waged long hours in dangerous working conditions. Today, with the onset of universal schooling, fewer children are working. According to UNICEF, between 2000 and 2016, there was an 80 million decline in child labor. However, it was stated that this number increased to 160 million worldwide by 8.4 million due to the COVID-19. Many more children are starting to work for many different reasons such as educational problems, informality, and debt bondage. With the increasingly expensive living conditions, many children have to start to work to gain more money. 59% of the child workers are working in the area of agriculture. Some children also work in other sectors such as service and industry. The work fulfilled can harm children in physical and mental ways.

The Indonesian government is still trying to decrease the number of child workers. Minister of Manpower of Indonesia, Ida Fauziyah, said that child labor would be eliminated, especially for those who work in the worst forms of child labor. In eliminating the worst forms of child labor, Fauziyah has put forward five attempts. First, growing awareness of the worst types of child labor through socialization in the business sector and the general public. Second, make efforts to prevent and eliminate child labor from WFCL through various programs, including the Child Labor Free Zone Program and the Campaign Against Child Labor. Third, the Ministry of Manpower executed the Child Labor Reduction Program from 2008 to 2020, which resulted in the removal of 143,456 youngsters from the workforce. According to Fauziyah, the purpose of this program is to reduce the number of child workers from low-income families who drop out of school and are subsequently pulled from the workforce by providing support at a shelter to motivate and prepare children to return to school.