

Background Guide

*United Nations
Human Rights
Council*



GatorMUN XVII

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to GatorMUN XVII, and welcome to the United Nations Human Rights Council! My name is Lavanya Durai, and I'm a second year majoring in Political Science and Microbiology here at UF. This past summer, I became First Responder certified and started working in a research lab about pain management. Outside of MUN and school, I'm a photographer for Sparks Magazine, I love talking about the environment, cooking, and watching films. I'm grateful to be directing a committee for GatorMUN this year and cannot wait to see what you do with these topics!

The first topic is Methods of Early Action for Refugees, where I will be presenting case studies of human rights violations that were either covered up or not given enough importance to on the international stage. This committee is very personal to me because one of the case studies has affected my family and is an important part of my heritage history. For this topic, I want you to use the UNHCR's resources and your relationships with fellow nations to collaborate/discuss how you would have reacted to each of the case studies and helped refugees more quickly and efficiently. I encourage you to consider all aspects of refugee crises, and think about the various ways the international stage could have or can respond to these case studies. Additionally, I would like you to think about how countries and the UNHRC have responded or are responding to these situations now to gauge motives of all actors involved.

The second topic is Preventative Measures for Eliminating Human Rights Abuses. As previously mentioned, you should utilize the UNHCR's resources and collaborate with other nations to discuss strategies to stop potential human rights abuses before they begin. For this topic, I also expect you to think about what strategies work best for your own country, how they can be applied internationally, and how to adopt suggested methods in your country. I highly encourage you to think about the resources human rights abusers have access to in the modern world and what their motives are. As always, remember the breadth of resources and the limitations of the UNHRC.

Delegates are required to submit position papers to gatormun@gmail.com on methods to respond to case studies and the state of human rights in their member state or community. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at the same email above. I'm very excited to see what the committee accomplishes in each session!

Sincerely,

Lavanya Durai

Director of UNHRC Committee

Quorum

A majority of voting members answering to the roll at each session shall constitute a quorum for that session. This means that half plus one of all voting members are present. Quorum will be assumed consistent unless questioned through a Point of Order. Delegates may request to be noted as "Present" or "Present and Voting."

Motion to Open Debate

This opens the floor for debate, allowing other points or motions.

Motion to Set the Agenda

This motion determines the order in which the topics of a committee will be debated. Permission to speak will be accorded to one speaker for and one speaker against, and a two-thirds majority is required for the motion to pass.

Motion to Open the Speaker's List

Opening the Speaker's List requires a simple majority to pass. A delegate may only be present on the Speaker's List once, but may re-enter after he/she has spoken. If the Speaker's List expires, debate then closes.

Motion to Set Speaking Time

Speaking Time must be indicated by this motion from the floor before any members of the body may speak on the Speaker's List. This motion must also accompany any motion for a Moderated Caucus. In a Motion to Set Speaking Time for the formal Speaker's List, a delegate may also specify a number of questions or comments to automatically affix to the Speaking Time. These designated questions or comments may also have Speaking Time or Response Time (in the case of a question) limits, but these are not required. The Director may rule any Motion to Set Speaking Time dilatory. This motion requires a simple majority. Any delegate may make this motion between formal speakers in an effort to change the Speaking Time.

Motion to Close the Speaker's List

The Speaker's List may be closed upon a motion from the floor. Permission to speak will be accorded to one speaker for and one speaker against, and a two-thirds majority is required for the motion to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of a Moderated Caucus

This motion must include three specifications:

- a. Length of the Caucus
- b. Speaking time, and
- c. Reason for the Caucus.

During a moderated caucus, delegates will be called on to speak by the Committee Director. Delegates will raise their placards to be recognized. Delegates must maintain the same degree of decorum throughout a Moderated Caucus as in formal debate. This motion requires a simple majority to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of an Unmoderated Caucus

This motion must include the length of the Caucus. During an unmoderated caucus, delegates may get up from their seats and talk amongst themselves. This motion requires a simple majority to pass. The length of an unmoderated caucus should never exceed twenty minutes.

Motion to Suspend the Meeting

This motion is in order if there is a scheduled break in debate to be observed. (ie. Lunch!) This motion requires a simple majority vote. The Committee Director may refuse to entertain this motion at their discretion.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

This motion is in order at the end of the last committee session. It signifies the closing of the committee until next year's conference.

Motion to Table the Topic

If a delegate believes that the flow of debate has become stagnant, he/she may make this motion. To Table the Topic is to halt debate on the present Topic, save the speakers' list and all draft resolutions, and move on to the next Topic on the Agenda. The delegate making this motion may also choose to specify a previously tabled Topic. This motion requires a two-thirds vote to pass. The Topic may be returned to at any time by tabling the present Topic and adding the phrase "for the purpose of returning to Tabled Topic _____," to this motion. If no Topics have been previously tabled, debate must follow the established Agenda. This motion is to be used sparingly.

Points of Order

Points of Order will only be recognized for the following items:

- a) To recognize errors in voting, tabulation, or procedure,
- b) To question relevance of debate to the current Topic or
- c) To question a quorum.

A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker if necessary and it is to be used sparingly.

Points of Inquiry

When there is no discussion on the floor, a delegate may direct a question to the Committee Director. Any question directed to another delegate may only be asked immediately after the delegate has finished speaking on a substantive matter. A delegate that declines to respond to a question after a formal speech forfeits any further questioning time. The question must conform to the following format:

Delegate from Country A raises placard to be recognized by the Committee Director.

Committee Director: "To what point do you rise?"

Country A: "Point of Inquiry."

Committee Director: "State your Point."

Country A: "Will the delegate from Country B (who must have just concluded a substantive speech) yield to a question?"

Committee Director: "Will the Delegate Yield?"

Country B: "I will" or "I will not" (if not, return to the next business item)

Country A asks their question (it must not be a rhetorical question.)

Country B may choose to respond or to decline. If the Delegate from Country B does not yield to or chooses not to answer a question from Country A, then he/she yields all remaining questioning time to the Committee Director.

Points of Personal Privilege

Points of personal privilege are used to request information or clarification and conduct all other business of the body except Motions or Points specifically mentioned in the Rules of Procedure.

Please note: The Director may refuse to recognize Points of Order, Points of Inquiry or Points of Personal Privilege if the Committee Director believes the decorum and restraint inherent in the exercise has been violated, or if the point is deemed dilatory in nature.

Rights of Reply

At the Committee Director's discretion, any member nation or observer may be granted a Right of Reply to answer serious insults directed at the dignity of the delegate present. The Director has the ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY to accept or reject Rights of Reply, and the decision IS NOT SUBJECT TO APPEAL. Delegates who feel they are being treated unfairly may take their complaint to any member of the Secretariat.

Working Papers and Draft Resolutions

Once a Working Paper has been submitted, approved, distributed, and formally introduced to the body, it can and will be referred to as a "Draft Resolution." In order for a Working Paper to be submitted to the Committee Director, it must be in correct format and bear the names of a combination of a number of Sponsors and Signatories necessary to introduce, as determined by the Committee Director.

Sponsors are the writers of the Working Paper, and agree with it in its entirety. They should be able to vote 'yes' for the paper during voting procedure. Signatories are those delegates interested in bringing the Working Paper to the floor for debate, but do not necessarily agree with its contents.

A delegate can motion to discuss the working paper during a moderated caucus or unmoderated caucus. A delegate can also motion for an author's panel, which is essentially a moderated caucus moderated by the authors. It is the chair's discretion on the maximum amount of authors allowed on the author's panel.

Friendly Amendments

Friendly Amendments are any changes to a formally introduced Directive that *all* Sponsors agree to in writing. The Committee Director must approve the Friendly Amendment and confirm each Sponsor's agreement both verbally and in writing.

Unfriendly Amendments

Unfriendly Amendments are any substantive changes to a formally introduced Directive that are not agreed to by all of the Sponsors of the Directive. In order to introduce an Unfriendly Amendment, the Unfriendly Amendment must have the number equivalent to 1/3 of Quorum confirmed signatories. The Committee Director has the authority to discern between substantive and nonsubstantive Unfriendly amendment proposals.

Plagiarism

GatorMUN maintains a zero-tolerance policy in regards to plagiarism. Delegates found to have used the ideas of others without properly citing those individuals, organizations, or documents will have their credentials revoked for the duration of the GatorMUN conference. This is a very serious offense.

Motion to Close Debate and Voting Procedures

A motion to close debate may only pass with a two-thirds majority. Once this motion passes, and the committee enters Voting Procedure, no occupants of the committee room may exit the Committee Room, and no individual may enter the Committee Room from the outside. A member of the Dias will secure all doors.

Once moving into voting procedures chair can only accept these motions:

- A point of order to correct an error in procedure
- An appeal of the decision of the chair
- A motion for division
- A motion for roll call vote
- A motion for adoption by acclamation
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No talking, passing notes, or communicating of any kind will be tolerated during voting procedures.

Each Draft Resolution will be read to the body and voted upon in the order which they were introduced. Any Proposed Unfriendly Amendments to each Draft Resolution will be read to the body and voted upon before the main body of the Draft Resolution as a whole is put to a vote. The Committee will adopt Directives and Unfriendly Amendments to Directives if these documents pass with a simple majority. Specialized committees should refer to their background guides or Committee Directors for information concerning specific voting procedures. Unless otherwise specified by the Secretariat, each Committee may pass as many resolutions as it agrees are necessary to efficiently address the Topic

Delegates who requested to be noted as "Present and Voting" are unable to abstain during voting procedure. Abstentions will not be counted in the tallying of a majority. For example, 5 yes votes, 4 no votes, and 7 abstentions means that the Directive passes.

Roll Call Voting

A counted placard vote will be considered sufficient unless any delegate to the committee motions for a Roll Call Vote. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the committee must comply. All delegates must vote: "For," "Against," "Abstain," or "Pass."

During a Roll Call vote, any delegate who answers, "Pass," reserves his/her vote until the Committee Director has exhausted the Roll. However, once the Committee Director returns to "Passing" Delegates, they must vote: "For" or "Against."

Voting with Rights

During a Roll Call vote delegates may vote "For with Rights" or "Against with Rights." Delegates will be granted 30 seconds to explain their reasons for voting for or against a draft resolution.

This time will come after the tabulation of votes.

Delegates should use this option sparingly. It is meant for delegates who feel that their vote may seem off policy, despite it being correct. The acceptance of rights is up to the director's discretion. If a speaker goes off topic during their allotted time the director will rule their speech dilatory and move to the next motion in order.

Accepting by Acclamation

This motion may be stated when the Committee Director asks for points or motions. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the motion to Accept by Acclamation is voided. If a delegate believes a Directive will pass without opposition, he or she may move to accept the Directive by acclamation. The motion passes unless a single delegate shows opposition. An abstention is not considered opposition. Should the motion fail, the committee will move directly into a Roll Call Vote.

Committee History

The United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNHCR) was replaced in March of 2006 by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). The transition included stricter rules and a movement towards a new public perception that no longer allowed the adoption of member states with known human rights violations. This movement made it so that resolutions could now be implemented by all members of the commission. As part of the resolution to create the current 47-member UNHRC, it was decided that every UN member state would be eligible to join, in three-year terms, on the contingency that they were voted in by UN member states via secret ballots and that they maintain systematic human rights within their country or else face suspension.

The UNHCR's mission statement is to "strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe, addressing situations of human rights violations and making recommendations on them." So far, the Council has passed more than 1700 resolutions and discussed more than 120 topics. The Council meets three times per year at the UN office in Geneva where they work to solve human rights emergencies, prevent abuses before they occur, and decide the best way to approach human rights violators in terms of judgement and action. The 47 member nations are elected yearly by the rest of the UN for staggered three-year terms.

The Council also looks to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), signed in 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly. The UDHR itself took almost three years to write and now holds the Guinness Record title for most translated document in the world, in approximately 500 languages/dialects. It has 30 articles, all listing certain rights that every single human being is worthy of, regardless of any cultural differences.

Within the Council, there are multiple subsidiary bodies available for the 47 elected member states to use in making decisions. The Universal Periodic Review Working Group accumulates the human rights records of each country in the UN, regardless of whether they are part of the Council. The Council also has an independent human rights experts (Special Procedures and Special Rapporteurs) that monitor human rights conditions across the globe and generate reports for the UN in regards to historical human rights violation patterns and current country situations. There are also 28 emergency sessions addressing human rights violations in different countries/regions and approximately 29 inquiry commissions that work to find facts and evidence, globally.

Topic 1: Methods of Early Action of Refugees

Introduction

The main problem this topic addresses is the inefficiency and delayed response to human rights themes that result in multiple refugees struggling to find shelter and assimilate elsewhere. The Council works to identify effective methods to help refugees, move them away from danger, and facilitate a smooth transition to a sustainable future.

There are certain obstacles in helping refugees that are known to prolong response times and hinder the overall process of bringing victims to safety. For example, transporting refugees from the area of emergency to other locations requires countries to volunteer protection and vow to help them assimilate to the environment, regardless of age, sex, religion, etc. For many of the case studies that are going to be discussed later, the underlying reason refugees are created in the first place involves religious conflict, socioeconomic comparisons, political gridlock/instability, etc. While these factors cannot entirely be eliminated, it is important to move refugees to a place where their safety and overall well-being can be ensured.

While the UN encourages all countries to assist in this process and shelter refugees, some states may not want to or be incapable of providing help. As mentioned above, money and economic power is a major cause of human rights violations that ultimately result in emergency situations that lead to refugees. Additionally, the cost of taking in refugees, along with their assimilation into society, needs to be consideration when thinking about future jobs, welfare, etc. Moreover, this topic raises the question of the best ways to go about transporting and taking care of refugees, while also minimizing environmental impacts that may ultimately cause even more refugees.

History

Throughout the existence of the UN, refugees have been provided aid and given shelter in times of crisis. An area of progress for the UNHRC is that they publicly go through the human rights record of every member of the UN, regardless of whether they are part of the Council via Universal Periodic Review. This review allows for systematic follow-up and implementation of any and all recommendations made by the Council regarding working with other governments and becoming involved in global human rights diplomacy.

The Council also works with other bodies of the UN, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, also known as the UN Refugee Agency) to conduct many rescue missions in the field or where emergency crises identified by the Council take place. The status of these refugees and any reforms countries undertake to make the situation better are continuously monitored by the Council. They do this through several committees and inquiry groups dedicated to specific human rights themes within different countries.

However, with the population exponentially growing and more countries having different human rights themes and emergency situations, it's difficult to help them in a timely manner when the crisis occurs. The case studies mentioned later will reference how the UN has historically responded and how it is currently responding to the more recent situations.

Key Issues

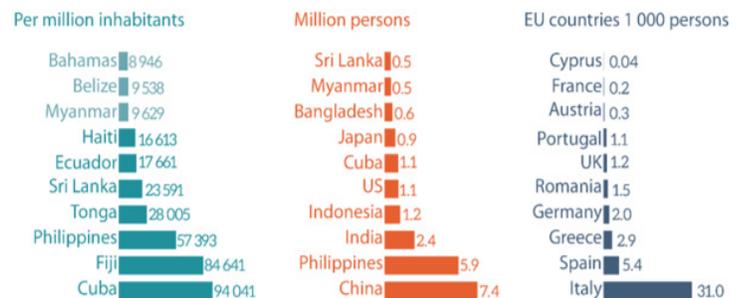
Due to the onset of exponential population growth and propagation of new human rights situations arising every day, it's logistically difficult for the UN to respond to all these issues in a timely manner. With the recent influx of migrants and refugees into regions like Europe and North America, the future for refugees globally is constantly evolving. Although it is the UNHCR's responsibility to advocate for refugees and provide as much assistance as possible, one of the main underlying issues involves the debate between investing time and money in helping those who are already refugees get to safety compared to preventing the issue causing the overall crises.

An example that can be used to illustrate this is climate change creating environmental refugees and migrants. While climate change affects everyone, there are certain countries and regions that are particularly affected by rising sea levels, such as Micronesia and several island nations in the Pacific Ocean. Some are affected by mass flooding which has only been exacerbated due to climate change, such as in Southeast Asia with monsoon season and parts of Africa, while others are being affected by rising temperatures and increased droughts and fires. These climate conditions displaced people globally, leading to climate refugees, but also create unstable environments that are a breeding ground for further human rights abuses.

Rising sea levels, in particular, has already displaced thousands and will continue to do so as the effects of climate change become more apparent. In island nations such as Kiribati, Nauru, and Tuvalu, at least 15% of inhabitants have already made the choice to evacuate/migrate. Oceanographer Curt Storlazzi speaks on behalf of the environmental activist community in saying this problem is not just about rising seas, and going further than that to state: "If the islands aren't going to drown, they're going to die of thirst [and other basic public health issues]." Thousands of people in Bangladesh lose their homes to river-bank erosion due to rising sea levels and increasingly severe natural disasters. In 2016 alone, more than 24 million people became internally displaced persons, which are individuals who are forced to leave their places of residence to avoid or as an effect of natural disasters and life-threatening climate conditions. For many of these climate migrants, a considerable amount of their belongings have been destroyed and returning to their land and homes is not a foreseeable option.

Across the world, natural disasters are exacerbated by climate change and have become more life threatening. For example, in North America, wildfires in the United States and Canada have displaced thousands of people and killed several, with increasing temperatures, deforestation, and drought all contributing to the rapid spread of wildfires and its severity. In Central America, people have taken note that hurricanes are more drastic and cause more damage in terms of human life, infrastructure, and the time it takes to recover. In particular, monsoons in the Southeast Asia region that cause massive flooding and rising temperatures are also causing droughts that are worse than those that have occurred in the past.

Countries with the highest number of new displacements



Internally displaced persons (IDPs): persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of natural disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border. Natural disasters refers for instance to earthquake, hurricane, typhoon, flood, volcanic eruption, tsunami, tornado, landslide, extreme temperature, etc.

These natural disasters displace many people and also create unstable political and social environments that lead to further human rights abuses (no access/funding for food, water, shelter, school, etc.). Displaced persons fear that losing the connection to their land will eventually cause them to lose their connection to their culture and heritage. Climate change is something that affects all of us, but disproportionately affects impoverished countries that aren't as capable to continue welfare in times of dangerous natural disasters and rising temperatures and sea levels. In the wake of infrastructure damage and limited access to essential survival resources like food and water, insurgency groups have been rising and increasing recruitment; multiple studies have found a correlation between natural disasters and increased public sector corruption. Disasters also highlight the need for sustainable development and better planning in urban areas such as cities in India, where only two hours of rain causes knee-deep flooding that forces schools to shut down. However, the possibility for any improvements to be implemented requires stability in governments and physical situation of states, as well as the ability for other actors like the UN and non-governmental organizations to come in and assist.

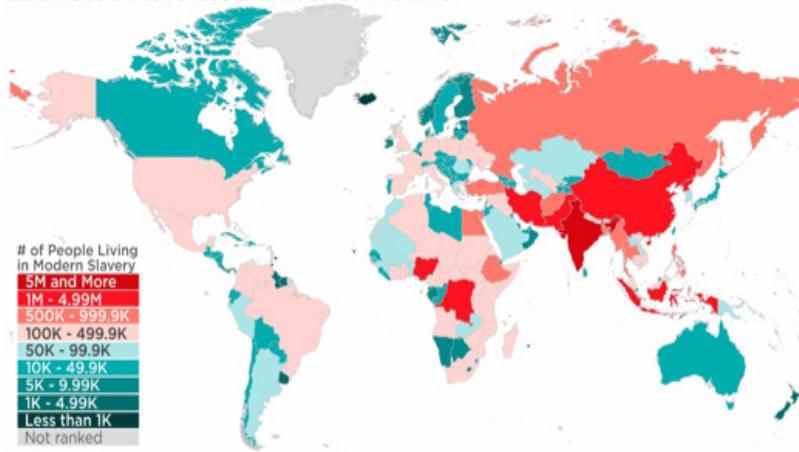
Another main issue in helping refugees quickly involves pushing past political gridlock and bureaucratic restraints once an incident of human rights abuse is found, all while still operating within the scope and power of the UN. For instance, the Uighurs are a group of Chinese Muslims in the Xinjiang province of China that have been neglected by the government and are being abused in internment camps for labor. The Xinjiang region is rich in natural resources and has a lot of potential for economic development through a trading path. China wants to have a firm sense of control over this geographical area, and it began by making the Uighurs a minority population ethnically and religiously in comparison to the rest of China. They were able to do this because many Uighurs are ethnically more related to Turkic groups and other ethnicities along the western Chinese border compared to the Han Chinese, with a different language and cultural traditions. Protests by the Uighur population in regards to socioeconomic mistreatment and jobs resulted in more than 200 deaths. After this violent incident, China implemented de-extremification policies aimed at Muslims, particularly the Uighurs, which included invasions of privacy and religious freedom that ultimately led to imprisonment in "de-extremification reeducation centers." These centers were known for being hidden internment camps where victims have told stories of manipulation and torture.

The UN is already aware of this issue and is working to get the Chinese government to admit to their participation in the incident or at least allow the UN to send help for the refugees. However, this political gridlock is continuing for this ongoing crisis, meaning more refugees are stuck without help for longer periods of time. Although this "gridlock" may continue for several months or even years, the UNHCR's priority is to help the refugees trapped in these internment camps as quickly as possible. Even after receiving asylum status, Uighur refugees are still being threatened via cyberspace. Refugees located in Washington D.C., United States, talk about being contacted and threatened by Chinese authorities, and there is an overall hesitation within the community associated with speaking to the media for fear of repercussions on family members still in internment camps and punishments from the Chinese government. That raises the question: How can the Uighurs, and refugees in general, be helped with the limits on power and authority the UN has in investigating and holding China and other human rights abusers accountable?

Another key issue in aiding refugees and victims of human rights violations is offering perpetrators impunity or exemption from punishment in exchange for information. Globally, human trafficking is the third most profitable crime with perpetrators given impunity in exchange for victims and information about the trade. Victims, regardless of gender or age, that are trafficked

World Map of Modern Slavery 2018

Estimated Absolute Number of Victims



instead of the perpetrators. There have been multiple reports of local authorities arresting the rescued victims on charges of prostitution and related offenses. Victims are also not provided the resources to mentally recover from human trafficking, which hinders their reassimilation. Multiple countries in these regions are on the Trafficking in Persons Report, generally with a ranking of Tier 2 or Tier 3 (the higher the number, the worse the rate of modern slavery). This ranking system, along with the Global Slavery Index's ranking system, are based on the government's lack of willingness to respond or comply with regulations set in place by the UN

Within human trafficking, another issue being applied to human rights involves crimes and human rights violations being disguised as ordinary by countries and international corporations. For instance, Qatar's preparations to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup come at the cost of migrant workers. FIFA has notoriously turned its back on human rights violations and reports of trafficking in host countries like Russia and Qatar because of the massive profits generated by the event.

According to the International Trade Union Confederation, more than 1200 foreign workers have died since the location announcement of the World Cup tournament in 2010. Qatar, among other countries in the Gulf region, has a kafala system, or a "sponsorship" system, for foreign workers, which is easily abused by employers. An investigation by an Amnesty International journalist in Qatar during 2015 uncovered that workers' passports were taken from them and they were forced to live in unsafe and unsanitary conditions.

usually fall into two main categories: sexual exploitation and forced labor. In a human rights-based approach, the victims must have the highest priority, and offering impunity can be an incentive for the trade to continue. Should perpetrators be offered immunity in exchange for releasing victims? What is more important, releasing victims or detaining perpetrators?

While human trafficking is a devastating problem worldwide, countries in certain regions like Southeast Asia and Africa often target the trafficked victims

II. WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

The links between human rights and the fight against trafficking are well established. From its earliest days to the present, human rights law has unequivocally proclaimed the fundamental immorality and unlawfulness of one person appropriating the legal personality, labour or humanity of another. Human rights law has prohibited discrimination on the basis of race and sex; it has demanded equal or at least certain key rights for non-citizens; it has decried and outlawed arbitrary detention, forced labour, debt bondage, forced marriage, and the sexual exploitation of children and women; and it has championed freedom of movement and the right to leave and return to one's own country.

Human rights most relevant to trafficking

- The prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status
- The right to life
- The right to liberty and security
- The right not to be submitted to slavery, servitude, forced labour or bonded labour
- The right not to be subjected to torture and/or cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment
- The right to be free from gendered violence
- The right to freedom of association
- The right to freedom of movement
- The right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health
- The right to just and favourable conditions of work
- The right to an adequate standard of living
- The right to social security
- The right of children to special protection

² *Legislative Guides for the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.V.2), p. 270.

The UN knew about this incident and dropped the case against Qatar in 2017 after they promised to reform working conditions for migrant workers, who make up almost 90% of the country's population. Since then, Qatar and the International Labor Organization have worked together to improve working conditions, and they've made it illegal for employers to withhold exit visas, allowing workers to escape the kafala system. However, these reforms are still in the process of being implemented and migrant workers in Qatar are forced to live in cramped quarters and work without compensation until their contracts end, some of which last more than five years. This, again, ties into the issue of holding countries and businesses accountable for their human rights violations while trying to provide immediate relief for victims currently trapped in these systems.

Although human rights themes are broad and violations can be specific to different countries with each situation requiring a unique response, we can potentially create a generalized system to respond to situations by studying case studies that leave room for experts to meld the system into an ideal response for each violation or emergency situation that occurs.

Regional Context

Members elected to the UNHRC are distributed into five regional groups: African (13 seats), Asia-Pacific (13 seats), Eastern European (6 seats), Latin America and Caribbean (8 seats), and Western European and Others (7 seats, which includes United States, Canada, and Australia). By looking at these regions with context, one can get a better understanding of some of the underlying themes surrounding the issue at hand.

African:

The violence and general instability in this region make it difficult for UN workers and volunteers to come rescue refugees in this area. Much of the immediate relief that is currently being provided in this region involves basic necessities like food, water, medical assistance, etc. For example, one of the world's biggest refugee camp in Dadaab, Kenya, has been run by the UNHCR since 1991. The refugee camp has become a city of sorts to the Somalian refugees registered there, with some families spanning more than three generations in Dadaab.

An important aspect of caring for refugees includes keeping the camps open to refugees who are already registered and any new asylum seekers. In 2016, Kenya's government declared that it would close the camp in Dadaab, despite protests from the international community. In the following years, Kenya's High Court ruled that it would be unconstitutional and unethical for the government to close the refugee camp and overturned the previous order to force refugees to return. In the period of uncertainty, the UNHCR worked with the Kenyan government about options regarding the refugees' future such as voluntary repatriation, assimilation into Kenya, and relocation to other camps in Kenya.

Asia-Pacific:

Socioeconomic development in this region is improving but that may be partially at the cost of some human rights themes like human trafficking, child labor, etc. For example, Bangladesh has one of the highest growing gross domestic product (GDP) rates but more than 1.2 million children are still working to provide for their families. Overall, workers in Asia are not fairly paid and are forced to work in unsanitary and unsafe conditions. Due to the process of economic development and industrialization, the environment is a big casualty in this region, which exacerbates

conditions for refugees. There are several human rights abuses occurring as a result of these processes including child marriages, sexual assault, lack of freedom of assembly, lack of access to a fair trial, and more due to the sheer population and number of countries/governments involved.

Many countries in the Middle East and Gulf region also fall under this regional category, where either rights to freedom of speech and protest are limited or civil society is restricted. According to Amnesty International, the main human rights themes that cause refugees to relocate include repression of dissent, media, women's rights, LGBTQ rights, armed conflict and war, labor and migration, counterterrorism, etc.

Eastern European:

Similar to the Asia-Pacific region, economic development in Eastern Europe may come at the cost of human rights. Additionally, human trafficking is a major topic of concern for this region as Eastern Europe is a big part of the global trafficking trade. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), almost 800,000 citizens of Belarus are "missing," presumed to be trafficked, or working voluntarily in poor conditions in neighboring countries such as Russia. Organizations like the Belarus Red Cross and IOM have a victim-centered approach that works with trafficked persons to give them resources, psychological support, health checkups, etc. These approaches help victims regain control of their lives and work with organizations to prevent people from becoming victims of human trafficking by offering them professional assistance and access to personal resources.

Another human rights concern in this region involves discrimination against minority ethnic groups. For example, the Roma population in Hungary have been mistreated by local authorities for years, with perpetrators facing no legal consequences. The Roma "experience multiple forms of daily discrimination, impacting schooling and employment" and local authorities treat hate crimes as a normal occurrence, according to a section in a recent ruling by the European Court for Human Rights (ECHR). When minority groups face discrimination like the one described above, it can create potential for political instability that can lead to insurgency groups and further violence and stigmatism.

Latin America and Caribbean:

This area has governments vulnerable to attacks from groups within states and political refugees who are often the result of corruption in bureaucratic positions across the region. This instability can make it difficult to efficiently work with the state to help get refugees to a safer location and plan their future. The right to a fair and public trial is often not provided in this region, which has led to a diverse array of effects, and can be seen through statistics as Latin America is home to only 8% of the world's population but sees 38% of global homicides. The combination of government inaction, gender inequality, human and drug trafficking, insurgency groups, and access to weapons creates pockets of violence throughout the region. For example, the "Northern Triangle" in Central America is one of the world's deadliest places.

With the government's focus on law enforcement and combating violence due to drug and gang wars, citizens' rights and sustainable development are neglected. Changes in policy revolve around big businesses and corporations instead of the people. For example, a woman in El Salvador named Teodora has been in prison for more than eight years for having a miscarriage due to strict and outdated abortion laws, and lack of the government's focus. Another example

involves people in Rio de Janeiro being forced out of their homes as Brazil was preparing for the 2016 Olympics. The areas and towns near the Olympics center were temporarily redesigned or completely rebuilt to create a better international public image, but these actions caused Rio's citizens to be neglected.

Western European and Others:

Refugees from across the world come to these regions to seek asylum from their home countries. Therefore, assimilating and ensuring the care of refugees after immediate relief/assistance, all while still providing care for citizens in each individual country, is very important in these areas. This is usually done with the help of NGOs like Oxfam International, Save the Children, etc. Additionally, government programs for refugee integration like the French Prime Minister Macron's Volunteer program that pairs refugees with local citizens to help ease their immersion into life in a country with different culture, politics, customs, etc..

This topic revolves around the idea that once human rights violations occur and people in a crisis become refugees, the UNHRC must do their best to help refugees as early as possible. The prevention of these human rights abuses is important as well, but ultimately, when emergency crises happen, the most immediate responsibility is helping the people affected most by it.

Topic 2: Preventative Measures for Eliminating Human Rights Abuses

Introduction

While the previous topic focused more on helping refugees and those affected by human rights violations as efficiently as possible, this topic involves understanding the causes of these emergency situations and ways to prevent human rights abuses before they occur. The Council must work to form a system to prevent emergency situations or at the very least, mitigate the crisis in a timely manner.

Certain obstacles in preventing or mitigating human rights violations involves communicating with member states and following each state or region's bureaucratic processes. The United Nations, as an intergovernmental organization, can suggest and reprimand states for their actions but cannot by itself force a state to follow any directives or resolutions. In the case studies discussed for this topic, the underlying causes involve political instability, religious conflicts, gender inequality, refugee labeling, etc. These causes will never be completely eliminated across the globe, but with tools, such as negotiations and allocating resources to affected citizens, they are less likely to create mass human rights violations in emergency situations.

Additionally, with human rights violators having access to the vast network of cyberspace, the Council must discuss the role of technological advancements on human rights. Another factor that should be considered is how the United Nations would react to human rights abuses in each state or region across the globe. For this topic, the Council must discuss methods of monitoring potential causes of human rights themes and their impact on people without infringing on other states' autonomy or the privacy of individual citizens.

History

The UNHRC works closely with other bodies of the UN that are involved in human rights, such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The Council and the Office have laid out management plans in preventing abuses through a victim-centered approach, with the main goals including:

- i. Support prevention of conflict, violence and insecurity.
- ii. Protect and expand civic space.
- iii. Support and further develop the global constituency for human rights.
- iv. Deliver human rights in the context of emerging global concerns ('frontier issues')."

The Council and its various subsidiary bodies operate with the purpose of achieving the goals listed above in the context of prevention. For example, the Council has a confidential complaint procedure and it "addresses patterns of gross and reliably attested violations of all human rights and fundamental freedoms occurring in any part of the world and under any circumstances." A complaint can be placed against a state by any individual, group of individuals, or non-governmental organization in dire cases where local and state resources have been exhausted. These complaints are passed on from working groups to the Council where the situation is discussed in closed meetings to figure out how to best work with and benefit the affected victims.

Another important asset of the Council in the context of prevention is the Universal Periodic Review Working Group, which has been mentioned previously. Since the purpose of the review is to continually assess the condition of human rights in each member state, it functions as a way to monitor human rights in every member state of the United Nations. Additionally, there are “special procedures” or special rapporteurs who visit countries and facilitate communications between the Council and affected victims to discuss ways to help states improve their human rights records with the goal of a more independent and sustainable future.

Key Issues

One of the most important issues globally involves gender inequality and its impact on the fabric of civil society in each state across the world. While gender inequality in itself is a human rights theme, empowering all genders is the key to sustainable development and building inclusive economies. For example, while child marriages has declined from 50% to almost 30% globally, more than 15 million children are still married before the age of 18 annually.

Child marriages generally happen as a result of poverty, insecurity, and tradition in some communities. In several communities in developing countries, a dowry or a price for the bride is paid prior to the marriage. This dowry is a source of income for the child brides’ families that also allows them to lower household costs with one less person to feed, educate, and raise. Girls are culturally not seen as financially valuable to the family compared to boys due to generational astigmatism in some developing countries. Additionally, regarding tradition, several families in developing countries across Africa, Asia, and even Eastern Europe choose to have their daughters undergo female genital mutilation (FGM), which has generational thought of as a right of passage into womanhood. However, preventing child marriages and practices like FGM would allow both the young bride and groom to go to school and graduate, with the ability to go to work and become financially independent.



Child marriages and FGM are only an aspect of global gender inequality but there are some steps that can be taken by both developing and developed countries to address the issue. For example, providing women support in developing countries by allocating resources for education and family planning, and advocating for income equality and diversity amongst leadership positions has been statistically proven to create increasingly sustainable economies with inclusive growth. However, certain obstacles come into play when implementing these changes. The process of allocating resources and communicating with large groups and communities simultaneously has been seen to be continuously difficult. While technology might seem like an easy way to do this, even that approach will be difficult initially since more than 65% of the 4.4 billion people globally that do not have access to the Internet are women, specifically women of color in developing countries.

Moreover, gender inequality is especially highlighted in rural and agricultural communities. In ru-

Although there are statistics from the United Nations now about the civil war and genocide, the question that ultimately remains is, what difference could the United Nations have made in that time period? If this situation occurred today, how much of a difference would there have been? Another factor to consider in working with states despite a victim-centered approach involves foreign affairs. In this case study with Sri Lanka, India was heavily involved, with the Prime Minister of India at the time, Rajiv Gandhi, being assassinated because of the conflict surrounding Sri Lanka. One of the main reasons India was so involved includes the ethnically-related Tamil population of the South Indian state, Tamil Nadu, reaching out to India's federal government about the crisis in the neighboring country. As the UNHRC, it is the job of the member states to think about what could have been done to prevent this situation and others like it from happening.

Regional Context

African:

This region is affected strongly by the issue of nationalism in the sense that several states are simply areas defined by geographically drawn borders as opposed to factors that usually form a state such as a group of people trying to be a sovereign entity. As a result, a region with less than 20% of the world's population experiences more than half the world's conflict incidents such as civil war and internal conflict due to ethnic, religious, and cultural differences. These conflicts already create human rights issues but the overall instability from constant internal conflict allow other actors such as insurgency groups and the potential for proxy wars to further instability, creating even more human rights issues.

Additionally, gender inequality rates are very high in this area and supporting women could potentially grow economies and independent industry/entrepreneurship (instead of third-party investments from other countries) in this area, generating income that can take care of and educate future generations. For example, microcredit loans are often used in developing regions in Africa and Asia to encourage women to start businesses to support their families, which empowers women and promotes the economy via increased GDP and employment opportunities.

Asia-Pacific:

This area is quickly developing and industrializing, which can cause political and economic instability in governments. This instability makes it difficult for the United Nations to effectively work with local governments to prevent human rights abuses. Several human rights themes violations such as child labor and lack of access or opportunity to education have already been seen and more may come as one of the costs of rapid economic development. As mentioned previously, political instability due to power politics, land disputes, and religious differences in the past has created devastating human rights emergencies. With the rise of nationalism and instability in democracies across the world, developing strategies for preventative action against human rights is necessary.

Additionally, this region also has some of the highest rates of gender and income inequality between populations. It has been statistically proven that an increasing divide between the rich and poor has a direct influence on the state of human rights due to conflicts in financial flow, tax abuse, etc. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), an estimated 7.5% of global GDP is lost due to gender based discrimination, with Asian countries such as South Korea and Japan having the highest differences in median earnings between men

and women for similar job titles. The OECD also noted that women have less representation in the lawmaking bodies of countries with high gender inequality rates.

Eastern Europe:

Like all other regions, nationalism also affects this region and causes political instability in various forms due to all the different kinds of political sentiments in the area. Gender inequality is especially high in this region, which is one of the main reasons Eastern Europe is a hub in the global human trafficking trade. In Moldova, one of the poorest nations in the region, approximately 45% of the country's citizens are working abroad (most are illegal due to trafficking) to pay off debt and support their families. When large numbers of the population work abroad or emigrate, as seen in many nations in the region, human trafficking is a common concern.

Another issue that is particularly highlighted in this region is the oppression of people's right to express their sentiments without being reprimanded. This can be seen with the increase in limitations of freedom of press. These rights to speak out are explicitly stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and are necessary in some form for a higher quality of life.

Latin American and Caribbean:

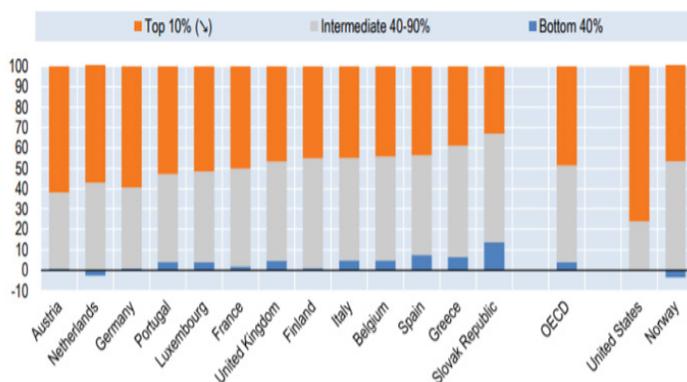
As mentioned previously for other regional areas, political instability is a main cause of human rights violations in this area and has led to the increase in opportunities for insurgency groups associated with drug trafficking to come in and cause more instability. For example, in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, a drug trafficking gang called the Red Command several favelas, neighborhoods of the city neglected by the government. These favela communities account for approximately 25% of the city's population and the lack of urban planning and government attention has led to both proactive, creative communities and neighborhoods that are negatively affected by the Red Command's violence due to drug and arms trafficking.

Improving human rights conditions like gender and income inequality in the region could encourage a sustainable, independent economic model. Moreover, working with governments to reduce corruption could improve living conditions in this area, in general, which would allow people to stay connected to their cultures instead of being forced to seek political asylum elsewhere, which is the current dilemma.

Western Europe and Others:

Figure 2.3. Winner takes all: a minority of people own a disproportionate amount of wealth in many countries

Wealth shares of top, middle and bottom of the net wealth distribution, 2010 or latest year



Although many countries in this region/category are developed, human rights violations still occur, especially due to the especially large gap between rich and poor, creating inequality in income, gender, race, etc.

Additionally, nationalism affects Western Europe or members of the European Union particularly, as nationalism focuses more on one government rather than a supranational organization like the EU. A dismantling of the EU would certainly cause political and social instability across member states, at least initially, due to a monetary crisis from

the euro's value, countries working together less, increased nationalism and populism, etc. All these factors combined would potentially lead to more domestic human rights violations. In the context of working with the UN to help other countries improve their human rights conditions, preventing human rights violations globally is not only good for global welfare but also better for the overall economy because of the global economy's interconnectedness.

Questions to Consider

- What methods can the United Nations, as an international institution, use to look into countries without harming the state or its citizens' privacy? How would this impact the economy?
- How does globalization impact human rights abuses and the way we report/investigate these issues?
- With the rise of nationalism in the world, maintaining religious diversity (a human right) is at stake. Is it even possible, logistically, for the United Nations to oversee and try to ensure freedom of religion (and other rights) globally?
- With the limitations of the United Nations regarding authority and the sovereignty of member states, what is the best way to go about implementing resolutions effectively?
- What resources do human rights abusers have access to in terms of technology and cyberspace? How does this complicate implementing or executing resolutions made to prevent abuses and crimes?
- Should the UNHRC go about reprimanding member states that violate basic human rights and how would this be done without infringing on the nation's sovereignty?

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