

GLENGAZE MUN

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

*Combatting Racism, Racial Discrimination,
Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance.*

Letter from Executive Board

It is an honor to preside over the United Nations Human Rights Council at Glengaze MUN. This letter shall serve as a concept note for the committee and our expectations from it, which is simply, to function. An MUN as a concept is designed to be a simulation, more than a conference. This difference is inherent and more obvious in each party's representation through their leader or candidate. The delegate or diplomat belong to any country who is firstly representing the country and its goals. They are hence tasked with the responsibility of indulging other delegates into their own goals and using diplomacy effectively into use to achieve the aforementioned goals. The end of the simulation then is different for each delegate and it is the means to that end that shall define the quality of the simulation. Apart from the simulation part, it is important to remember the inherent limitations of every student in terms of using or applying international or national laws or such. Hence, this implies that it is not necessary to indulge in highly technical discussions that ensure no learning to the delegate; rather it is imperative that all discussions be integrated with logic that has been graciously been gifted to mankind through our collective wisdom. It is thus expected that this concept note shall also serve as a very important starting point to the simulation and the delegates are able to infer a lot more than what is shown as face value.

The agenda has multiple facets and can take a national or international viewpoint. For the benefit of the delegates and the quality of the simulation, the background guide shall give small introductions and an important start-point to your research. It is important to always remember, as has been thoroughly emphasized throughout your respective MUN careers, that this background guide is just the starting point to your research while the end awaits you all.

All the Best Everyone!

Regards

Krishna Thakur | President

Reva Ghosh | Vice President

Human Rights Council

Mandate

The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and make recommendations on them. It has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year. It meets at the UN Office at Geneva. The Council is made up of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly. The Human Rights Council replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Human Rights

Human rights are standards that allow all people to live with dignity, freedom, equality, justice, and peace. Every person has these rights simply because they are human beings. They are guaranteed to everyone without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status. Human rights are essential to the full development of individuals and communities. Many people view human rights as a set of moral principles that apply to everyone. Human rights are also part of international law, contained in treaties and declarations that spell out specific rights that countries are required to uphold. Countries often incorporate human rights in their own national, state, and local laws.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a historic document which outlined the rights and freedoms everyone is entitled to. It was the first international agreement on the basic principles of human rights. Nearly every state in the world

has accepted the Declaration. It has inspired more than 80 international conventions and treaties, as well as numerous regional conventions and domestic laws. It has been the catalyst for improving human rights protections for groups such as disabled people, indigenous peoples and women.

Valid Evidence in a Committee

Evidence or proof is from the following sources will be accepted as credible in the UNHRC:

1. State-operated News Agencies – These reports can be used in the support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any country as such but in that situation, they can be denied by any other country in the council. Some examples are,

- I. RIA Novosti (Russia)
- II. IRNA (Iran)
- III. BBC (United Kingdom)
- IV. Al Jazeera (Qatar)
- V. Xinhua News Agency (PR China)

2. Government Reports - These reports can be used in a similar way as the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country. However, a nuance is that a report that is being denied by a certain country can still be accepted by the Executive Board as credible information. Some examples are,

i.) Government Websites like the State Department of the United States of America or the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation

- ii.) Ministry of Foreign Affairs of various nations like India or People's Republic of China
- iii.) Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Reports
- iv.) Multilateral Organizations like the NATO

3. United Nations Reports- All UN Reports are considered are credible information or evidence for the Executive Board of the UNHRC:

- i.) UN Bodies like the UNSC or UNGA
- ii.) UN Affiliated Bodies like the International Atomic Energy Agency World Bank International Monetary Fund, International Committee of the Red Cross, etc.
- iii.) Treaty Based Bodies like the Antarctic Treaty System, the International Criminal Court

Rules of Procedures

UNA USA Rules of Procedure will be followed in this committee with some little bends as per the convenience of the delegates.

Start of Committee:

- Dias (Chairs) begins with roll call
- Delegates may respond "present" or "present and voting"
- Next, the Dias asks to hear any points or motions
- If there are no points or motions on the floor, the Dias will recognize the next speaker on the Speakers' List from the previous session
- In the first committee session, a delegate must move to open the Speakers' List

- During the first committee session, the agenda must also be set (choose topic 1 or 2)

Speakers' List:

- The Speakers' List is the default format of committee, if there are no points or motions
- A country may only appear on the list once at any given time
- A delegate can be added by raising their placard when the Dias asks or by sending a note to the Dias
- The speaking time will be set by the delegate who moves to open the Speakers' List, but a delegate may move to change the speaking time
- If the Speakers' List is exhausted and no other delegates wish to be added, committee moves immediately into voting procedure on any draft resolutions that have been introduced
- If there is still time remaining when a delegate concludes his or her speech, he or she must yield his or her time (to the Dias, to another delegate, or to questions, by saying either "I yield my time to ...")
- Yielding to Dias ends the speech, yielding to another delegate allocates the remainder of the time to that delegate (the second delegate may not yield to a third delegate), and yielding to questions allows for feedback from other delegates

Moderated Caucus:

- When the Speakers' List is open, a delegate may introduce a motion for a moderated caucus, which is a less formal debate format to debate a specific subset of the topic
- No set speaking order; each new speaker is chosen after the previous speaker concludes

- A delegate may not yield her or his time; if delegate finishes early, move to next speaker
- Must have a set topic, duration, and speaking time (which will be voted on)

Unmoderated Caucus:

- When the Speakers' List is open, a delegate may introduce a motion for an unmoderated caucus,
the least formal debate format
- Delegates may move around the room and speak freely to one another to draft resolutions
- Delegate may not leave the room without permission from the committee director

Points and Motions:

- Points and motions are tools for delegates to ask questions about committee and its proceedings, rather than the content of debate
 - Motions change what the committee is doing and generally require a vote
 - Points do not require a vote
- Delegates may only introduce motions while the Speakers' List is open and between speakers
 - When motions require a vote, the vote may be either substantive or procedural
 - Some votes require a two-thirds majority to pass, while other require a simple majority.
- Points may be raised during caucuses, and some points may be used to interrupt a speaker
- There are four common points, as follow:
 - 1) Point of Inquiry - used to ask a question about parliamentary procedure

- 2) Point of Order - used when a delegate believes the Dias has made a procedural error
 - 3) Point of Personal Privilege - used to express concerns about comfort such as the ability to hear a speaker
 - 4) Point of Information - used to ask a clarifying question about the content of a speech or statement (only during the speakers list)
- Only a point of order and a point of personal privilege may be used to interrupt a speaker

Defining Important Terms

Racism- The marginalization and/or oppression of people of color based on a socially constructed racial hierarchy that privileges white people.

Race- It refers to the categories into which society places individuals on the basis of physical characteristics (such as skin color, hair type, facial form and eye shape).

Discrimination- Discrimination means unequal or different treatment or harassment that causes harm. People have the right to equal treatment and opportunities, without discrimination or harassment

Anti-discrimination- An approach that is taken which challenges unfair treatment of individuals or groups based on a specific characteristic of that group.

Anti- Racist- Specific policy, activity, event or organization that fights all types of Racism.

Bigotry- Intolerant prejudice which glorifies one's own group and denigrates members of other groups.

Black Minority Ethnic (BME)- A term used to describe people from minority groups, particularly those who are viewed as having suffered racism or are in the minority because of their skin color and/or ethnicity.

Collusion- When people act to perpetuate oppression or prevent others from working to eliminate oppression.

Cultural Appropriation- Theft of cultural elements for one's own use, commodification, or profit, often without understanding, acknowledgement, or respect for its value in the original culture.

Cultural Pluralism- Recognition of the contribution of each group to a common civilization, resulting in a versatile and multidisciplinary cultural development.

Cultural Racism- Representations, messages and stories conveying the idea that behaviors and values associated with a Dominant Group are automatically "better" or more "normal" than those associated with other racially defined groups.

Culture- Mix of conceptions, habits, values, behaviors and ideas shared by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival.

Direct Discrimination vs Indirect Discrimination- Direct Discrimination appears when someone treats a person less favorably only because he/she has specific characteristics, so the attack is directed to that particular person. On the other hand, Indirect Discrimination occurs when an organization's practices, policies or procedures have the effect of disadvantaging people who share certain characteristics, and therefore it is addressed to a group as a whole.

Individual Racism- Actions, beliefs and attitudes of people that support and perpetuate racism. That behavior can be deliberated or unconscious.

Institutional Racism- Represents the way that Institutional Policies and practices origin different consequences for different racial groups.

Internalized Racism- Represents the paradoxical behavior that oppressed groups, victims of Racism, adopt in order to accept and support the supremacy and dominance of the dominating group in a racist society by maintaining or accepting attitudes, social structures and ideologies cemented by the Dominant Group.

Oppression- The attitude that a person or a group adopt in order to devaluing, undermining, marginalizing, and disadvantaging of certain social identities in contrast to the privileged norm.

Prejudice- A pre-judgment or unjustifiable- and usually negative- attitude based on stereotypes or generalizations that a person or a group adopts towards other group and its members.

Racial Discrimination- The unfair treatment and systematic behavior (caused by a person or a group) directed to people of other races that express prejudice, hatred or some kind of misconception only because of their skin color, ethnicity, origin and ancestry resulting in unequal opportunities and outcomes for all.

Intolerance- Intolerance is a lack of respect for practices or beliefs other than one's own. It also involves the rejection of people whom we perceive as different, for example members of a social or ethnic group other than ours, or people who are different in political or sexual orientation.

Introduction

Racism and intolerance are huge problems in our world. They stop people from enjoying their human rights. We need to do more to protect people and get rid of discrimination in our world. With your fellow delegates you need to find a way to work towards making the following goals a reality.

In the 19th century, many “scientists” divided humans into different groups because of their skin color or other physical traits. They believed that some groups were better than other groups. This is not true. In fact, there is less than a 0.1% difference between humans around the world. Although different groups of humans might have different skin color, or hair, or other physical attributes, in the end our DNA is the same. We are all one people.

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination states that “any doctrine of superiority based on racial differentiation is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous, and that there is no justification for racial discrimination, in theory or in practice, anywhere”. Although we know that all people are the same there still continues to be discrimination in our world.

Modern day ideas about race and racism began with the European exploration of the world in the 15th century. When Europeans met new groups they often colonized or conquered the areas. To justify their actions, they came up with the idea that the people they were hurting were less than human. Sometimes, they used religion to justify their actions. They said that they needed to teach people all over the world about Christianity. They made it seem like what they were doing was a good thing. It was not good. Colonization and the idea that one group was better than another caused impacts which are still being felt today.

Recent Developments

- Slavery is connected to racism. Slavery is when one group of people with power decides they are not going to treat other humans as people. They treat other people as objects. Slavery is now banned in every country in the world. Today, it is often called “human trafficking”. In December 2007 the UN passed a resolution making 25 March International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.
- From the 16th Century to the 19th Century large numbers of people were forced from many places in Africa and sent to other parts of the world to be slaves. 12 million people were taken from Africa to the Americas and 14% of them died on the boats.
- During slavery the population in Africa went down. The demand for slaves caused war because groups fought each other to capture people to sell.
- When slavery ended in many countries, people thought everybody could now be equal. But, 400 years of treating one group differently does not change things overnight. There is still discrimination against black people around the world. A lot discrimination against black people comes out of stereotypes and prejudices created during slavery times.

- We know black people are not treated the same as other people because there are gaps in wealth, health and education. This means the average black person in the United States has less money, less education and is less healthy than the average white person. These gaps need to be fixed.
- In 2013, the UN declared 2015-2024 the International Decade for People of African Descent.
- In the 1930s a group in Germany called the Nazis came to power. Over the next 15 years Nazi Germany murdered 6 million Jewish people. They did not think of them as human beings. The Nazis blamed every problem on Jewish people. This event is called the Holocaust. It was one of the worst things that has ever happened in our world.
- Some people call themselves Neo-Nazis. They do not like people of other races. They organize groups to promote hate and attack minority groups. In the US there was a rally in Charlottesville called “Unite the Right” in August 2017. Many Neo-Nazis and hate groups came to the rally. They shouted Nazi slogans and waved Nazi flags. The event ended with fighting in the streets and one person died when a Nazi sympathizer drove his car into a group of people
- Europe is seeing a rise in Neo-Nazism. There are many refugees and migrants coming to Europe and Neo-Nazis target them. In 2012, Germany had 6000 Neo-Nazis. In 2016, there were 1835 hate crimes reported to police in France.
- Racism is the belief that one ethnic group of humans is better than another group. There can be overt racism. This means that humans kill or control the lives of others because they think that they are better. This type of racism does not happen much anymore because most people agree it is wrong.
- There is also covert racism. This is racism that is hidden or part of the culture of a society. People are treated badly because they belong to an ethnic group. People might not even know they are being racist! But, the end result is the same. People are abusing the rights of humans. Therefore, it is important to eliminate even covert racism.
- Racism, xenophobia and intolerance is a very complicated issue. It is a topic many people do not like to discuss because they are afraid they are going to say something wrong.

Guiding Questions

- How can countries work together to encourage other states to treat all people fairly and equally?
- How can countries work together to bring closure and healing for many of the racist acts done by countries in the past?
- How can more people learn about their rights under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?
- How can human societies find closure for the horrible things that have been done in the past?
- Why are migrants, refugees and immigrants becoming targets for hate groups? How can these groups be protected?
- How can global culture be changed so that people do not treat others differently because of their ethnicity or race?