

# SH

## Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee

Chair: Vandana Macha

Secretary: Opal Khotsombath



## **BACKGROUND GUIDE**

*Topic 1: Influences on Violence against Women*

*Topic 2: Preventing the Spread of Human Trafficking*

*Topic 3: Evaluating the Human Rights of Refugees  
(Rohingya Refugee  
Crisis)*

## **Committee History**

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Affairs Committee (SH or SOCHUM) is the third of the six main United Nations (UN) General Assembly (GA) committees. Due to this, SOCHUM is often referred to as the Third Committee.

SOCHUM was established in 1948 after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948. The Third Committee focuses largely on questions regarding human rights and human rights violations as well as a number of social and humanitarian issues. More specifically, SOCHUM covers a large expanse of issues, making it a very versatile committee. SH discusses questions relating to the advancement of women, the protection of children, indigenous issues, the treatment of refugees, the promotion of fundamental freedoms through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and the right to self-determination. The Committee also addresses important social development questions such as issues related to youth, family, ageing, persons with disabilities, crime prevention, criminal justice, and international drug control.

The Third Committee works particularly closely with the Human Rights Council, established in 2006. SOCHUM looks at pervasive, international problems and country-specific issues in its attempts to secure human rights worldwide. In SOCHUM's last session, more than half of the 59 resolutions considered were related to its human rights agenda item. One of those resolutions that passed the General Assembly addressed the issues surrounding human rights within the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Although SOCHUM covers a wide range of topics, the committee does not have complete authority over these matters. For example, SOCHUM does not have the power to call for military action in any of its initiatives, nor does it have the ability to enact sanctions or condemn actions carried out by member states. SOCHUM is capable, however, of working with outside entities such as the UN Security Council, allowing SOCHUM to work towards more coercive actions such as international condemnation. The Third Committee interacts closely with other GA committees and the committees under the Economic and Social Councils.

## **Committee Session Format**

This is a guide to the general progression of General Assembly committee structure. Please refer to the delegate handbook for additional explanation and details on resolution-making, motions, and voting procedures. If you have questions at any time, please contact me at [dimpumacha@gmail.com](mailto:dimpumacha@gmail.com) , and I will be happy to assist you.

1. **General Debate:** Delegates will give speeches in the character of their respective member states on the topic currently on table (delegates will vote by simple majority for the topic order).
2. **Thematic Discussions:** As the speakers list nears exhaustion or a disruptive level of redundancy, either a delegate will motion (“the chair would look favorably upon a motion”) for either a moderated or unmoderated caucus on a specified area of the current topic in addition to the appropriate time constraints.
3. **Actions on Drafts:** Any drafts, working papers that apply the subjects of the thematic discussions throughout general debate and any caucus, must be presented to the committee with the appropriate number of sponsors and signatories. The committee may then motion to suspend debate for further discussion of the paper and/or the initiation of voting procedures.

## **Position Paper Guidelines**

Please email all position papers to [dimpumacha@gmail.com](mailto:dimpumacha@gmail.com) before the start of Committee Session I on Wednesday, January 24th. You may also bring a physical copy to Committee Session I. Example position papers can be found under the Delegate Preparations tab on the conference website, [www.limunconference.com](http://www.limunconference.com).

Each delegate seeking consideration for awards at LIMUN must submit a position paper on each of the topics on Wednesday night, January 24th. These papers should consist of brief background information on the topic, a summary of the nation's stance on the issue, and an overview of the delegate's ideas for resolving the issue. The position paper should not be a resolution, but rather a general statement of the nation's stance regarding the topic at hand.

Position papers should include a header with the country name, committee name, and topic. They should be typed in 12 pt font, single spaced, and approximately one-half page long per topic. **DELEGATES MUST SUBMIT A POSITION PAPER TO BE CONSIDERED FOR AWARDS.** Good luck!

An outline of a paper may be as follows:

- A. Background to the Issue
  - a. History of a Conflict
  - b. Previous Attempts at Resolution
- B. Nation's Stance on the Issue
  - a. Prior Action by the Nation
  - b. Country's Current Stance
- C. Ideas for Solution

## **Topic Overviews**

### **Topic 1: Cultural Influences on Domestic Violence**

#### **Summary**

Domestic violence is very prevalent in first and third world countries alike. Though women are primarily affected by this problem, men can also be victims of it. Domestic violence is a cultural issue, as many areas around the world believe that in order to sustain the patriarchal structure of a family, dominance must be asserted, which may take the form of violence. A large amount of the violence stems from deeply-rooted cultural beliefs of what society expects of women. Delegates must discuss the reasons behind domestic violence and evaluate the current situation in order to form solutions that effectively address the problem of domestic violence.

#### **Background**

Domestic violence is a human rights violation that occurs daily in many countries, and it is often due to the deeply-rooted cultural beliefs of a community/country. Research shows that approximately 70% of women have had physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner. Women who experience this are also likely to experience depression and anxiety, have abortions, and/or contract HIV.

Studies also showed that men who grew up in households where their father was abusive towards their mother and other people in the household were more likely to perpetuate the problem of domestic violence in their adult relationships.

The United Nations has worked to address the problem of violence against women, which encompasses the problem of domestic violence. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the General Assembly in 1979. Additionally, the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women was adopted in 1993. This addressed the problem of violence against women and provided structure for action. Though its focus on gender-based violence was quite broad, it tackled issues of physical and sexual violence, which are both forms of domestic violence.

Cultural stigmas/beliefs heavily influence domestic violence. In many countries, the belief that men must assert their dominance over their wife in order to maintain the patriarchal structure of the family gives way to many instances of domestic violence. Additionally, many cultures believe that family matters are private, so the government does not intervene in cases of domestic violence, even if it is a crime. Furthermore,

people are reluctant to report cases of domestic violence, in fear of being ostracized from their family and community.

This problem affects many people around the world, and it has drastic effects of their health and well-being, which is why we must create solutions that would address this problem.

### **Questions to Consider**

- Has your country passed any legislation regarding domestic violence? If not, why?
- How does culture influence this problem?
- How would one implement solutions that would address the cultural problems of a nation?
- What educational or social steps should the committee take to addressing this problem?

### **References**

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>

<http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>

[http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/85239/9789241564625\\_eng.pdf;jsessionid=182D0D965C68453EC355EFA21ED60C2A?sequence=1](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/85239/9789241564625_eng.pdf;jsessionid=182D0D965C68453EC355EFA21ED60C2A?sequence=1)

<https://www.ecald.com/assets/Resources/Understanding-Role-Culture-Domestic-Violence.pdf>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3866026/>

## Topic 2: Preventing the Spread of Human Trafficking

### **Summary**

Human trafficking is a practice that plagues the world. There are approximately 40.3 million victims of human trafficking worldwide. It is fueled by the economic incentive and it affects many women and children. There are various types of human trafficking that exist. It ranges from sex trafficking to forced labor.

While there are inter-country forms of trafficking, most of the trafficking that occurs happens within the country. It is also known as a form of modern-day slavery, as many people who are trafficked are overworked and heavily controlled.

Delegates must evaluate the topic in its entirety and come up with effective plans and resolutions in order to prevent the spread of human trafficking.

### **Background**

According to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, human trafficking is defined as the “recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force”. This protocol defined human trafficking and was adopted in 2003. Its purpose was to establish a definition that would make establishing criminal offences regarding such cases and having international aid in investigating and prosecuting these cases easier. While many member states have implemented this protocol (125 out of 155), there are still countries that have not joined due to their own legal or political situations. Additionally, human trafficking is still prevalent in the states that implemented this protocol.

The General Assembly adopted The United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons in 2010, which aimed to establish coordinated methods to address the problem of human trafficking. The Plan advised to include various other United Nations programmes in order to help development around the world, which would help reduce human trafficking. Furthermore, a United Nations voluntary trust was created to help people affected by human trafficking, primarily women and children.

Approximately 79% of human trafficking is comprised of sex trafficking. Other forms of human trafficking include forced labor and debt bondage. Additionally, about 20% of trafficking victims are children.

Even though many efforts have been made to combat this pervasive problem, it is still prevalent throughout the world. It is most common among Asian and African countries. Some countries notorious for human trafficking include the Belarus, Central

African Republic, China, Eritrea, and Iran. People are subjugated to this form of modern-day slavery and struggle to escape.

### **Questions to Consider**

- How does human trafficking affect your country?
- Has your country made any efforts to prevent human trafficking in their or other countries? If not, why?
- How can solutions be implemented that would help address the problem and still respect national sovereignty of a nation?
- Would education help address this problem?
- What forms of aid could our committee provide?
- Could non-governmental organizations (NGO) help address this problem?

### **References**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2010/ga10974.doc.htm>

<https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/definition/lang--en/index.htm>

[https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FS36\\_en.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FS36_en.pdf)

<http://humantraffickingsearch.org/impact/>

## Topic 3: Evaluating the the Human Rights of Refugees (Rohingya Refugee Crisis)

### **Summary**

Rohingya muslims fled Myanmar after extreme violence and persecution. One of the largest refugee crisis in the world right now, Bangladesh is now struggling to host many of these refugees. Though the refugee camps they are staying at provide the basic necessities, they are still extremely vulnerable to diseases and other problems. Additionally, staying at a refugee camp permanently would be difficult to sustain. Delegates must evaluate the situation and create solutions that would address both the short-term and long-term problems regarding the Rohingya refugees.

### **Background**

The Rohingya minority were not recognized as citizens by the government of Myanmar under the 1982 Citizenship Law, and they did not have the same rights as many other members of the country, such as access to basic healthcare. Though there have always been tensions between the Rohingyas and the Myanmar government, an attack on Myanmar police caused a drastic increase in the persecution of the Rohingya people. In August 2017, Burmese troops attacked and killed Rohingyas, causing them to flee to Bangladesh. The Rohingya muslims were subjected to many forms of violence, including the burning of their homes and sexual violence committed by the Myanmar police. This situation has been described as “a textbook example of ethnic cleansing”. Over 727,000 Rohingya refugees have fled from Myanmar to Bangladesh.

The state of Rohingya refugees in refugee camps is also dire. Almost 25% of Rohingya children in refugee camps are malnourished. These camps aim to provide basic necessities; however, the mass influx of refugees has limited the supply of clean water and other items. Additionally, these areas with dense populations create breeding grounds for diseases and are unsafe for women and girls.

Even though Myanmar authorities have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), they have not worked towards development and reconciliation in the Rakhine State. The United Nations is working to provide aid to the Rohingya refugees in order to ensure that they are receiving their human rights.

### **Questions to Consider**

- Has your country ever dealt with refugees before? If so, how?

- What rights should refugees be granted, and how can the UN help protect these rights?
- What are the obligations of refugees in their country of asylum?
- Would your country be able to provide any direct sources of help?
- What forms of aid would be most beneficial regarding the Rohingya refugee crisis?
- What solutions would help solve short-term problems?
- What solutions would help solve long-term problems?
- Should refugees be integrated into societies of different countries? If so, how?

## **References**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41566561>

<https://www.unocha.org/rohingya-refugee-crisis>

<https://www.thedailystar.net/rohingya-crisis/news/atrocities-against-rohingya-refugees-un-urges-icc-urgently-open-probe-1631386>

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/08/1017732>