

GS-MUN2023

Bringing people together

Study Guide



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL



AGENDA

Protecting the Rights of
Indigenous People With Special
Emphasis on Land Rights and
Cultural Preservation

Message from Executive Board

Dear Delegates,

It is with great pleasure that we invite you to be a part of GS-MUN 2023.

The agenda, "Protecting human rights in conflict zones and protecting rights of indigenous people", is an extremely important issue that is in direct need of international cooperation. It is essential that delegates research about their respective country's stance, as well as the committee's mandate and please do not feel that you are degraded if you are given countries which are not that famous. The countries given are of utmost importance to the given agenda and keep in mind that no country is less to another.

The Executive Board will be hoping to see high levels of debate and viable solutions being formulated. Deviation from Foreign policy or the mandate of the UNHRC will be resented upon.

It is the Executive Boards' humble request to all delegates, that they should go through the Study Guide thoroughly and come well researched to committee.

We hope that GS MUN 2023 becomes, not just a competition, but a platform that educates, instructs and inspires everyone. One important point that needs to be noted is that a chairperson or in fact any member of the EB (Executive Board) are not the leaders of the committee, but are the moderators who will ensure that the committee goes on with a smooth flow.

Good luck for your preparation and we hope to see you in March for a super exciting weekend filled with intense debate. Just remember to not be afraid and make sure to voice out your opinion in committee as one idea can make a major difference. If you ever have any doubt, please feel free to contact us whenever you wish.

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Introduction

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination.

The United Nations has defined a broad range of internationally accepted rights, including civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. It has also established mechanisms to promote and protect these rights and to assist states in carrying out their responsibilities.

The foundations of this body of law are the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly in 1945 and 1948, respectively. Since then, the United Nations has gradually expanded human rights law to encompass specific standards for women, children, persons with disabilities, minorities and other vulnerable groups, who now possess rights that protect them from discrimination that had long been common in many societies.

Indigenous peoples have frequently faced detention due to the criminalization of social protest activities. One of the most serious shortcomings in human rights protection in recent years is the trend towards the use of legislation and the justice system to penalize and criminalize social protest activities and legitimate demands made by indigenous organizations and movements in defense of their rights.

Although some countries have taken constitutional and legislative measures to recognize their rights and identities, exclusion, marginalization and violence continue to be widespread.

The evolution of the work of the UNHRC has matched the growth in interest in human rights from the United Nations since the General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 1948. This codification of “a common standard of

achievement for all peoples and nations” was the first time in history that human rights, those civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights considered fundamental to member states, had been agreed upon and enumerated.

Today, the “International Bill of Human Rights” includes the Universal Declaration, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (and its two Optional Protocols), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. The council mainly focuses on human rights including the freedoms of association, assembly, expression, belief and religion, community- specific rights including those of women or the LGBT caucus, and the rights of racial and ethnic minorities.

Defining Key Terms

- UN Charter:
 - The United Nations Charter is a treaty that was signed on June 26, 1945, in San Francisco, California, USA, and entered into force on October 24, 1945. It is the foundational document of the United Nations, which is an intergovernmental organization created to promote international cooperation and maintain international peace and security.
 - The UN Charter consists of a preamble and 19 chapters, which establish the purposes and principles of the United Nations, the structure and functions of it.

- UDHR:
 - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a milestone document in the history of human rights. It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948, in Paris, France, and is the first international statement of universal human rights.
 - The UDHR is a non-binding document, meaning that it does not have the force of law, but it has been widely recognized as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.

- ICCPR:
 - The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) - Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1966, the ICCPR is a legally binding treaty that sets out a range of civil and political rights that are essential to the protection of human

dignity, including freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the right to a fair trial.

- **NGO's:**

- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are private, voluntary organizations that operate independently of governments and are usually driven by a social or political purpose. NGOs can be organized at the local, national, or international level and can vary in size, scope, and focus. They may work on a wide range of issues, such as human rights, health, education, environment, poverty, or development.
- NGOs play an important role in promoting and protecting human rights and in advocating for social and political change. They can provide services, information, and support to communities and individuals affected by human rights violations or social injustice. NGOs can also monitor and report on human rights abuses, raise public awareness, lobby governments and international organizations, and participate in legal proceedings.

- **HCHR:**

- HCHR stands for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The High Commissioner for Human Rights is the principal human rights official of the United Nations and serves as the head of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- The High Commissioner for Human Rights is appointed by the United Nations General Assembly and serves a four-year term.

The current High Commissioner is Michelle Bachelet, who assumed the position in September 2018.

- **Gender Equality:**

- The United Nations has recognized gender equality as a fundamental human right and has established a number of international agreements and frameworks to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- **Racial Discrimination:**

- Racial discrimination can take many forms, including denial of access to education, employment, housing, and healthcare, racial profiling by law enforcement, hate speech, and hate crimes. It can also manifest in more subtle ways, such as unconscious bias or microaggressions that perpetuate stereotypes and reinforce negative attitudes towards certain racial or ethnic groups.
- Racial discrimination is a violation of human rights and is recognized as such by international human rights law. The United Nations has established a number of agreements and frameworks to address racial discrimination and promote equality and non-discrimination, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD).

General Overview

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is composed of 47 member states, elected by the United Nations General Assembly. The member states serve for a term of three years and are eligible for re-election for a second term. In addition to the member states, the UNHRC also includes observer states, which are countries that are not members of the Council but are invited to participate in its meetings and deliberations. The observer states include countries such as the Holy See, Palestine, and the State of Eritrea. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also play an important role in the UNHRC. They can participate in the Council's meetings and provide information and expertise on human rights issues.

- **The Rohingya Crisis:**

The Rohingya Crisis refers to the ongoing persecution of the Rohingya Muslim minority in Myanmar (formerly known as Burma). The Rohingya are an ethnic and religious minority who have lived in Myanmar for generations, but they have faced discrimination and persecution from the majority Buddhist population for many years.

In 2017, a military crackdown in Rakhine State, where most of the Rohingya live, resulted in a mass exodus of Rohingya refugees to neighboring Bangladesh. The military crackdown, which was characterized by widespread human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, rape, and arson, was condemned by the international community as ethnic cleansing and even genocide.

As of early 2023, more than 1 million Rohingya refugees remain in Bangladesh, where they face poor living conditions, limited access to healthcare and education, and uncertain futures. The Myanmar government has been accused of refusing to recognize the Rohingya as citizens and has denied them access to basic rights and services.

ROHINGYA REFUGEE SITES IN BANGLADESH



BANGLADESH
Cox's Bazar

596,344
Kutupalong Expansion

102,002
Hakimpara, Jamtoli,
and Moynarghona

10,879
Shamlapur

19,007
Kutupalong RC

12,281
Chakmarkul

22,321
Unchiprang

MAYANMAR
Rakhine State

9,700
Ali Khali

33,714
Leda

27,032
Nayapara RC

13,005
Jadimura

42,824
Nayapara Expansion

- Registered camp
- Other camps/sites

As of September 15, 2018.
Sources: UNHCR, ISCG, RRRC

The Rohingya Crisis has been the subject of extensive international attention and criticism, with many countries and international organizations calling for an end to the persecution of the Rohingya and for the Myanmar government to allow them to return to their homes and communities with full citizenship rights and protections. However, progress towards a resolution of the crisis has been slow, and the Rohingya continue to face significant challenges and obstacles in their quest for justice and dignity.

The Rohingya, as a minority group in Myanmar, have faced discrimination, persecution, and violence for decades. The recent military crackdown in 2017 led to widespread human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, rape, torture, and forced displacement. The human rights violations in the Rohingya Crisis are numerous and include violations of the right to life, liberty, and security of the person, the right to freedom of movement, the right to education, the right to health, and the right to a nationality. Additionally, the Rohingya have been subjected to arbitrary detention, forced labor, and other forms of exploitation.

Israel and Palestine Conflict:

The conflict between Israel and Palestine is a long-standing and complex issue that has been characterized by a range of human rights violations on both sides. The conflict has its roots in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when Jewish immigrants began to settle in Palestine, then under Ottoman rule, and later under British mandate.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, there have been numerous conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians over land, resources, and political control. The conflict has involved violence, military action, and human rights violations, including the violation of the right to life, the right to freedom of movement, the right to education, and the right to health.

Israel's boundaries today

■ Palestinian civil control

■ Built-up Palestinian area



The Israeli government has been accused of human rights violations against Palestinians, including the use of excessive force against peaceful protesters, unlawful killings, arbitrary detention, and the demolition of homes and other properties. The ongoing Israeli settlement construction in the West Bank and East Jerusalem has also been criticized by the international community as a violation of international law and the human rights of Palestinians.

Palestinian authorities, on the other hand, have been accused of human rights violations against their own people, including restrictions on freedom of expression and the press, political imprisonment, and extrajudicial killings.

The situation in Israel and Palestine remains a complex and challenging human rights issue, with ongoing efforts by the international community to address the human rights violations on both sides and promote a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The United Nations has established a number of resolutions and frameworks aimed at addressing the conflict and promoting respect for human rights, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. However, a comprehensive and sustainable solution to the conflict remains elusive.

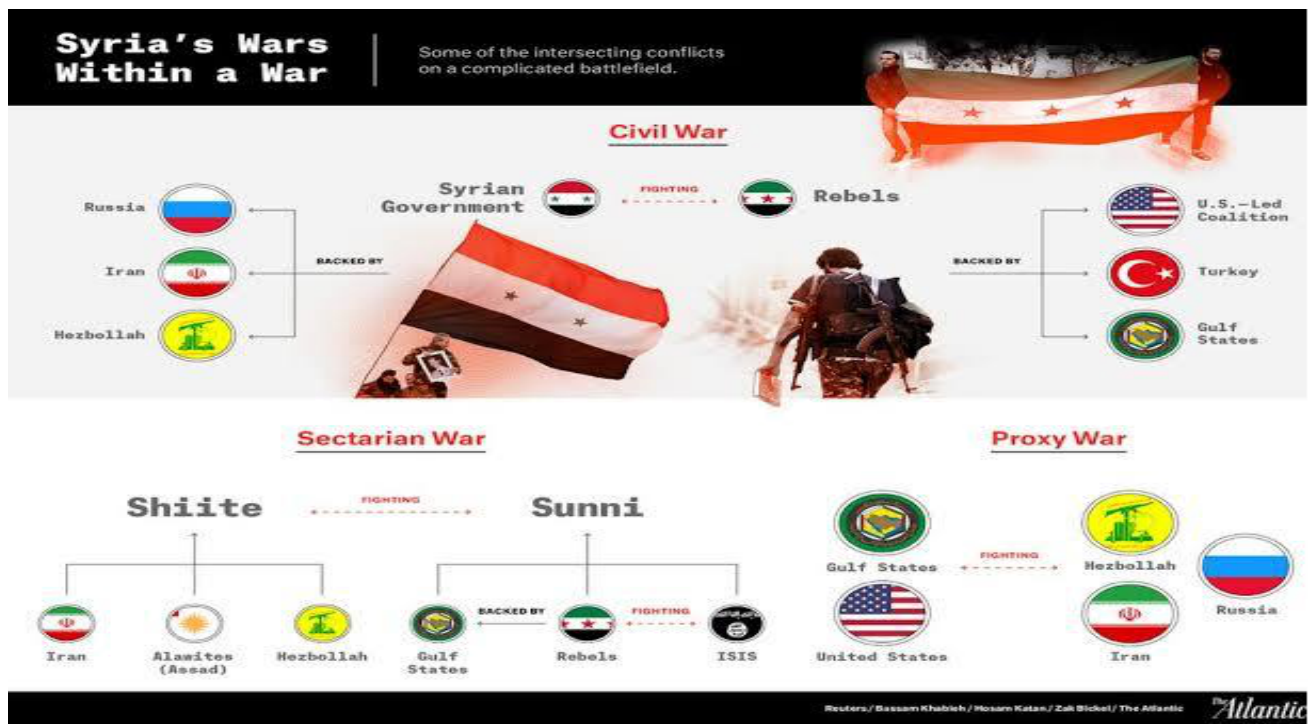
Conflicts in Syria:

The human rights situation in Syria has been a matter of great concern for many years, with widespread violations reported by various international organizations and governments.

Some of the most pressing human rights issues in Syria include:

- The ongoing conflict: The Syrian conflict, which began in 2011, has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people and has caused immense suffering for millions more. Civilians have been targeted by both government and opposition forces, with reports of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by all sides.

- Arbitrary detention and torture: The Syrian government has been accused of arbitrarily detaining tens of thousands of people, many of whom have been subjected to torture, ill-treatment, and extrajudicial killings. Detention centers are reportedly overcrowded and unsanitary, with detainees denied access to medical care and legal representation.

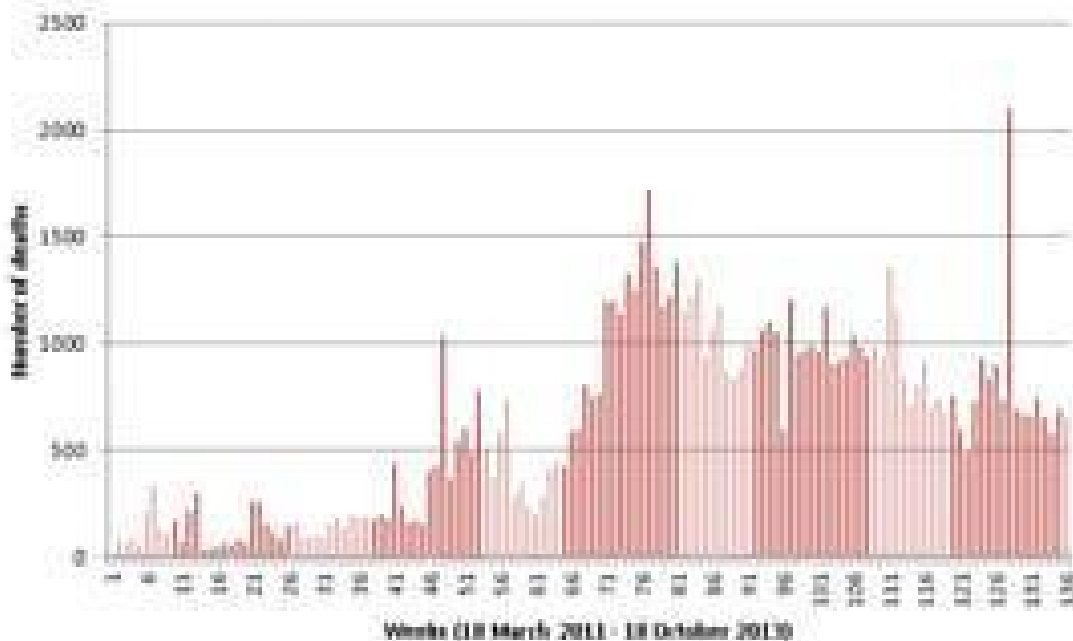


- Restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly: The Syrian government has severely curtailed freedom of expression and assembly, with journalists, human rights activists, and peaceful protesters routinely targeted and harassed. Social media and other online platforms are heavily monitored and censored, and many people have been arrested for their online activities.

- Discrimination and violence against minorities: Minority groups in Syria, including Kurds, Christians, and other religious and ethnic minorities, have faced discrimination and violence at the hands of both government and opposition forces.
- Humanitarian crisis: The conflict has created a massive humanitarian crisis, with millions of people displaced from their homes and struggling to access basic necessities like food, water, and medical care.

Overall, the human rights situation in Syria remains dire, with no end in sight to the conflict and little hope for justice or accountability for the many abuses that have been committed.

Deaths per week during the Syrian civil war



Major Parties Involved:

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is composed of 47 member states that are elected by the UN General Assembly for a term of three years. The major parties involved in the UNHRC committee are:

- **Member States:**

The member states of the UNHRC committee are responsible for setting the agenda, proposing and voting on resolutions, and engaging in debates and discussions on human rights issues.

- **Observers:**

Non-member states, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with observer status can participate in the UNHRC committee, but cannot vote on resolutions.

- **High Commissioner for Human Rights:**

The High Commissioner for Human Rights is the principal human rights official of the United Nations and serves as the chief spokesperson for human rights issues in the UN system.

- **Special Procedures:**

The UNHRC committee relies on special procedures to investigate and report on specific human rights issues or country situations. These are independent experts appointed by the UNHRC committee to conduct fact-finding missions, issue reports, and make recommendations.

- **Secretariat:**

The Secretariat provides administrative support to the UNHRC committee, including organizing meetings, preparing reports, and disseminating information.

Overall, the UNHRC committee is a forum for member states, observers, NGOs, and other actors to engage in dialogue and cooperation on human rights issues, with the goal of promoting and protecting human rights around the world.

UN Involvement and Relevant Resolutions

and Reports

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is a United Nations body responsible for promoting and protecting human rights around the world. As such, the UNHRC often takes action on a variety of human rights issues through the adoption of resolutions and reports. Here are some examples of UN involvement and relevant resolutions and reports in the UNHRC committee:

- **Resolution on Human Rights in Myanmar:** In February 2021, the UNHRC adopted a resolution calling for an end to the military coup in Myanmar and for the release of those detained. The resolution also called for an end to human rights violations, including the use of violence against peaceful protestors.
- **Report on Human Rights in Syria:** The UNHRC regularly publishes reports on the human rights situation in Syria, which has been marked by violence, displacement, and humanitarian crises. These reports document the ongoing human rights abuses committed by various parties to the conflict, including the Syrian government and armed opposition groups.
- **Resolution on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:** In September 2021, the UNHRC adopted a resolution calling for the recognition and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples around the world. The resolution also called for the promotion of indigenous peoples' participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives and communities.
- **Report on Human Rights in North Korea:** The UNHRC has published numerous reports on the human rights situation in North Korea, which has been criticized for its systematic and widespread human rights abuses. These reports document instances

of forced labor, torture, and political repression, among other human rights violations.

- **Resolution on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:** In March 2021, the UNHRC adopted a resolution calling for the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities around the world. The resolution emphasized the need for equal access to education, employment, and health care, among other areas.

Possible Solution Approaches

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is responsible for promoting and protecting human rights around the world. As a committee, the UNHRC can take various approaches to address human rights violations and promote human rights. Some possible approaches include:

Investigation and Documentation: The UNHRC can investigate and document human rights violations, especially in countries where these violations are rampant. This can involve gathering evidence, conducting interviews, and documenting abuses. The information gathered can then be used to raise awareness about human rights violations and to pressure governments to take action.

Diplomatic pressure: The UNHRC may use diplomatic channels to pressure governments to respect human rights. This can include issuing statements condemning human rights violations, organizing diplomatic missions to investigate violations, and working with other countries to apply political and economic pressure on governments that violate human rights.

Sanctions: In extreme cases, the UNHRC may recommend sanctions against governments that violate human rights. Sanctions can include trade embargoes, financial restrictions, travel bans, and other measures aimed at isolating the offending government and forcing it to change its policies.