

GECMUN 8

Background Guide

Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee

Global Human Trafficking

SDG: 16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

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Committee Introduction

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee, also known as SOCHUM, is the Third Committee of the General Assembly and was established in 1947. This committee is tasked with agenda items mainly pertaining to social and humanitarian affairs along with human rights issues presented around the world. The Third Committee works to promote and ensure basic rights and freedoms that are meant to be an integral part of the entire international community.

One of the first major projects of the Third Committee was to draft the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In order to successfully complete this task, SOCHUM worked through multiple subcommittees, in particular being The Commission on Human Rights, and led debates to create a common standard of rights for all peoples and nations. After relentless efforts, the draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was completed after two years, showcasing the value of unity and dignity within the community of SOCHUM.

Throughout its history, SOCHUM has considered women's rights, protection of children, treatment of refugees, elimination of discrimination of all forms, and increased human rights. The Third Committee also looks over areas regarding social development such as youth, international drug trade, crime prevention and justice, and international drug trade.

Today, SOCHUM continues to lead the world while aiming to establish peaceful solutions of issues within the social, humanitarian, and cultural scale. The committee has great power in providing a voice in the international scene that highly encourages proposals which promote fundamental freedoms and global cooperation.

Agenda Introduction

In the late 2000s, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. This convention's main goal was to manage transnational organized crimes through cooperative international efforts. Although many nations implemented legislative guidelines in accordance with the standards set by this convention, such guidelines have not been successful nor thoroughly integrated in the nations. As such, in the past decades, both rates and concerns with human trafficking have grown.

Despite the continuous actions against it, human trafficking is a crime that pervades all nations. Human trafficking can be defined as the process of exploiting people for financial or personal gain through the use of violence, deception or coercion. Yet as most victims are trafficked within their own nations, there are limited overarching actions that could be taken on an international level.

With all of this in mind, how can the United Nations address human trafficking without infringing on the national sovereignty of any nation involved?

Letter from the Chairs

Dear Delegates,

We welcome you to the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee, or also known as the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee, or just SOCHUM. My name is Yudon Shin, and I will be your head chair for GECMUN 8. I am a senior attending Yongsan International School of Seoul, and am extremely excited to be chairing for this conference! I have had 3 years of MUN experience before this as both a delegate and chair, and while I have never been a chair for GECMUN, I am still nonetheless looking forward to the experience.

This year, we will be attacking the issue of Human Trafficking. This coincides with the history of SOCHUM in which it has sought to address issues varying from the abuse of human rights, crime prevention/justice, and treatment of immigrants abroad. While the topic is broader than the usual topic, I am still eager to see how each and every one of you influences the committee.

Below, you will find useful information outlining the topic we will be debating on. As the name "Background Guide" suggests, this is only to guide you through your research, not dictate it. I highly encourage each delegate to do more outside and extensive research in order to be properly prepared when the day of the conference arrives. Please keep in mind that each individual nation that is being represented may not adhere to the same views presented below. So, make sure to thoroughly understand not only the topic, but also your country's stance and policy on the issue at hand. I am excited to see you all on the conference day and cannot wait to see what you all come up with! If you want to reach out to me, whether it be for a question on any aspect of this committee, or just to introduce yourself, then please do not hesitate to email me at: 22.yudon.shin@yisseoul.org.

Sincerely,

Yudon Shin

Key Terms

Transnational Organized Crime: organized crime coordinated across national borders, involving groups or markets of individuals working in more than one country to plan and execute illegal business ventures

United Nations Convention: legally-binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities

Human trafficking: involves the use of force or fraud to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act

Forcible Pandering: compelling another person to engage in an act of prostitution with any person

Exploitation: the action or fact of treating someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work

National Sovereignty: the intentional independence of a state, combined with the right and power of regulating its internal affairs without foreign interference.

Labor Trafficking: form of human trafficking where victims are made to perform a task through force, fraud or coercion

“3P” Paradigm: prosecution, protection, and prevention—continues to serve as the fundamental framework used around the world to combat human trafficking

Persecution: the confiscation or destruction of property, incitement of hatred, arrests, imprisonment, beatings, torture, murder, and executions

Domestic Slavery: practice of exploiting and exercising undue control over another to coerce them into performing services of a domestic nature in unacceptable conditions

Accountability: an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility for one's actions

Coercion: Threats of serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to or physical restraint against any person.

Child Soldiering: The term “child soldier” means any person under 18 years of age who takes a direct part in hostilities as a member of governmental armed forces;

Historical Background

The earliest records of human trafficking goes as far back as the early 1200s, but the first major slave trade established came in the 15th century when Europeans, along with several other nations, began to trade slaves in and from Africa. This was the time period in which human trafficking in all forms was part of the social norm. However, since then, much has changed: human trafficking has become long banned and universally condemned, yet it still stands prevalent in many corners of the world.

Some examples of locations where such human trafficking takes place includes North Korea, Iraq, Syria, and parts of Eastern Europe. But what must be noted is that these trafficking systems, mostly consisting of the process of harbouring/transporting humans, have evolved to take place across multiple borders; the trafficking network consists of illegal transactions in which the enslaved are oppressed.

These trades often enslave the trafficked in forms of domestic servitude, forced labor, sexual exploitation, and other horrendous acts that the committees of the United Nations, especially the committee of Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee, have tried to address by attempting to put more attention on preemptively stopping suspected trafficking.

One of the most notable actions is the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Adopted into the General Assembly Resolution on 15 November 2000, and entered into force on 29 September 2003, this resolution was established as part of the fight against transnational organized crime. This Convention and its signed nations symbolized the willingness to internationally cooperate to tackle the problems with human trafficking. The action was effective as a whole in beginning the fight against human trafficking, in a time when human trafficking had not fully come into the spotlight yet.

Current State of Affairs

Asia

Asian victims caught up in human trafficking are found globally across the world. Reports from the UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) show that South-East Asians in particular have been seen to be detected in the most geographically diverse set of destination countries. The Southern region of Asia has also been specifically characterized for transregional trafficking, while Central Asia is primarily characterized for domestic and intraregional trafficking.

North and South America

Human trafficking in both American continents is mostly contributed to the great amount of forced labor. Basic statistics throughout the two continents show that around 17% of traffickers are from foreign countries and also present a higher than average percentage of female traffickers, ranging to around 40%. Of the victims caught by trafficking in the region, approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ are children. Overall however, child trafficking mainly occurs within Central and South America while the trafficking of adults however dominates North America and southern South America.

Europe

Trafficking in Europe mainly occurs throughout its eastern region. Reports of forced labor victims are comparatively higher than reports from Central or Western regions of Europe due to the lax of eastern-nations' laws on trafficking. More specifically, the trafficking in Eastern Europe greatly involves the use of women. This means that the regions of Eastern Europe and Central Asia contain the highest percentage of female victims to human trafficking. Overall, the trafficking in Europe is mainly limited and contained within the region, having only a small percentage of victims coming from foreign nations.

Middle East

Human trafficking in the Middle East stands out due to the fact that it holds the highest percentage of trafficking victims received from foreign nations. This marks the region as the biggest transnational trafficking hub. Overall, the region holds a higher percentage of male victims with over 70% in the past few years. Due to the significant amount of victims displaced from foreign nations, the governments need to work cooperatively with other nations in order to sufficiently decrease the percentage of human trafficking that occurs.

Stances of Parties

Afghanistan: In contrast to its history of controversies involving human trafficking, Afghanistan has recently claimed its plans to renew commitment to address human trafficking by implementing new practices that stand as deterrents, as well as involving the nation into treaties that focus on human trafficking. Considering Afghanistan's vulnerability to human trafficking because of its lack of security for its civilians, the nation must focus on enforcing the plans to fight against modern slavery.

Australia: Australia, being one of the primary destinations for human trafficking networks involved with Asian countries, has become increasingly involved in modern slavery. Though difficult to quantify, it has been recognized that Australia has grown as a nation popular for trafficking routes. Therefore, the nation of Australia should be prepared to attempt to justify its actions and clarify ways that this issue will be addressed.

Belgium: Though the nation itself is small, Belgium is highly involved in the human trafficking realm. The nation is a source, destination, and transit country for men, women, and children subjected to trafficking due to its largely unregulated and unenforced human trafficking policies. As such, the nation of Belgium should expect to be questioned by members of the committee in its lack of attention to addressing the growing rates of trafficking within the country.

Cambodia: Human trafficking is a part of an organized crime syndicate in the nation of Cambodia. Cambodian men form the largest source of demand for children exploited in sex trafficking. The nation has consistently been on the Human Rights Watch for its concerning rates involving the trafficking of its people. Cambodia should consider further actions that could attempt to resolve this issue within their nation.

Canada: Canada is a nation that has thoroughly implemented enough actions to somewhat stop most forms of human trafficking within its nation. Though no plan can be perfect, this nation has made several actions to prevent as many slavery syndicates as possible. Thus, this nation leads in its implementations that have allowed for decreases in trafficking rates, and stands as a nation that could serve as an example for other nations.

China: Human trafficking impacts approximately 236 million people in China. Within this nation especially, human trafficking stands as a problem of great magnitude. Though many of its cases are buried, the fact that such a network is in place and is connected with many nations around the world has been of great concern; the hypocrisy that surrounds China when it comes to this issue can not be ignored, and must be addressed.

Egypt: As reported over the past five years, human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in Egypt, and traffickers exploit victims from Egypt abroad. Because of this, Egypt has grown as a spot for human trafficking within the past few decades. The nation of Egypt should focus on creating necessary plans to reduce the growing rates of human trafficking that the country is involved with.

France: Every year, an estimated 2.5 million people worldwide, mostly women and children, are recruited and exploited by traffickers in the nation of France. Though it has made several attempts to deter and manage the human trafficking the nation is involved with, France has yet to produce satisfactory results due to the trouble of covering such large ground. As such, the nations of France should be prepared to address the lack of measures taken in international measures to address the human trafficking.

Germany: Germany is a major European hub for immigration, and because of that, human trafficking is particularly problematic within this country. Though the nation itself prohibits any and all forms of human trafficking, the underground syndicate for human trafficking remains strong as the nation itself is home to many forms of trade. Germany should thus focus on management in regards to its immigration policies to ensure that human trafficking does not grow along with its immigrations.

India: India is a nation that has one of the highest records for human trafficking in the world. This nation sets records for its rising human trafficking cases, and concerns have consistently grown. India's weak law enforcement, lack of a strong education system, and growing rates of poverty have only contributed to increased human trafficking. As such, India should be placing its values on how to change the instabilities of the nation that fuel modern slavery within the nation.

Iran: In Iran, human trafficking is an endemic that has spread throughout the country. Iran has grown as a state for human trafficking systems connected to many different nations globally, and thus has brought several concerns for the nation's government and the United Nations overall. Currently, the nation of Iran must focus on enforcing these attempts.

Iraq: Throughout the past and into the present, Iraq has been and is both a source and destination for human trafficking. Particularly, females are trafficked within the nation for the purpose of sexual exploitation which has, unfortunately, grown in the past couple of decades. Iraq must address how its lack of preparation for these issues have contributed to the growth of them, and should consider international cooperation to ensure that human trafficking does not grow within the nation.

Italy: Italy, being a nation that has an estimated 3.7 million workers who are at risk for labor trafficking, has been a target for human trafficking syndicates. Though the nation has preparations for those who fell victim for human trafficking, Italy still lacks preventative measures for trafficking. Therefore, Italy should focus on not only providing aid for victims, but also actions to prevent the growth of modern slavery.

Japan: Though its human trafficking levels are low compared to other nations, Japan, unfortunately, does not have a comprehensive anti-trafficking statute that complies with international laws, meaning that international slave systems are not thoroughly regulated. However, the nation criminalized sex trafficking and labor trafficking; with these in mind, Japan stands as a nation that has made efforts but must continue to make more in order to eradicate signs of growing human trafficking with the nation.

Libya: As reported over the past five years, human trafficking rates have exponentially grown, as the number of victims in Libya grow. The instability, conflict, and lack of government oversight within the nation only fuels human trafficking crimes and allows them to grow. As such, the nation of Libya must figure out the basis of their own nation in order to alleviate and prevent the damages of the growing trafficking industry.

Myanmar: The nation of Myanmar has one of the most concerning internal human trafficking systems in the world. Though the nation itself claims to have mitigated the issues to a certain extent, it is clear from the sheer number of human trafficking cases and organizations connected to Myanmar that such actions have fallen far from satisfactory. With rising concerns for lack of attention in correspondence to its also worsening government conditions, Myanmar must be prepared to answer questions for its lack of action, and should figure out plans for the best of its people

Pakistan: Pakistan, though another country that has many ties to global trafficking networks, has established methods that would address the prevention of human trafficking. These include laws that criminalize any form of modern slavery, as well as punishments for those who traffick people within the nation. To further elevate these actions, the nation should focus on an international approach that widens the boundaries of their laws against human trafficking.

Russian Federation: Russia's human trafficking remains one of the biggest trafficking systems in the world. Due to economic crises along with a social stigma that does nothing to aid with taking advantage of weaker civilians and immigrants, human trafficking has only grown in the nation. Though the nation claims to have joined several causes against slavery, and implemented laws that enforced the prevention of slavery, satisfactory results have not been seen. Thus, the country of Russia must be prepared to provide reasons for their lack of action against the human trafficking.

South Korea: South Korea is a nation that has strict laws against human trafficking, but has yet to fully address its underground trafficking network due to the secretive nature of the realm in the nation. Though the small scale of slavery plays a role, in part, to the low trafficking rates, the consistently growing number has proven concerning. The nation of South Korea must focus on creating national and international methods in which illegal trafficking between nations, particularly those that are near the nation, to prevent the growth and continuance of human trafficking.

Sudan: Human trafficking occurs at a concerning frequency in Sudan, and there is also a prevalent underground trafficking system that has raised many issues for the nation. Many human trafficking cases have not been addressed due to the lack of attention given by the government, considering its preoccupation with political issues, towards this issue. As such, the nation of Sudan must address how they will be managing the growing underground system.

United Kingdom: Over the past few years, the United Kingdom has faced growths in both domestic and foreign trafficking. Though the country has actively put up laws and charges that go against those involved in the trafficking, the nation has yet to fully

address the issue in a way that stops the systems that exist within the United Kingdom. Therefore, the United Kingdom should focus on enforcing their system to increase efficiency in battling this issue.

United States: With just the sheer number of people living in and immigrating to the United States, it is inevitable that there is a large number of people trafficked within the nation. The populous areas of the country, as well as the unprotected areas of it, have proven to be spots where many people are kidnapped and forced to become victims of human trafficking. Many of the nations' states have concerning numbers of human trafficking. In consideration of its power, the United States should be establishing more laws and regulations to ensure that this trafficking issue is managed.

Venezuela: While Venezuela has declared human trafficking a crime, the nation has not reinforced anti-trafficking laws within its nation. Venezuela's administration stated their intent to combat the development of human trafficking, which can be seen as a positive sign, but actions to support that claim have been significantly lacking. As such, the nation of Venezuela should focus on following their past claims to ensure human trafficking is addressed.

Possible Solutions

Focus on ways to not only attack the political/social factors that create situations in which result in people becoming vulnerable to human trafficking, but also formulating programs that can tackle educational campaigns for spreading awareness.

Look to work together between governments/agencies in order to creatively think up strategies to fight trafficking and effectively use the partnerships.

An example to look into would be the United Nations General Assembly of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which stands as an international effort to prevent slavery by defining the realm, enforcing harsher laws against nations that do not address trafficking issues, and calling upon nations to report their situations and regulate them as needed.

Trans-national collaborations can be significant in not only deterring illegal trafficking across borders, but also for returning victims. Keep in mind that there are two sides to the equation, stopping human trafficking, but also the victims that are stranded in a foreign nation.

Being part of the General Assembly, one of the best routes to take is to encourage practices that can work against potential traffickers.

Questions to Consider

What are the factors that cause human trafficking to occur in the first place, and what can the committee do to reduce these factors?

How can we ensure signatories of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime actually enforce the legislative measures against human trafficking they agreed to?

What initiatives can be taken to help human trafficking survivors reunite with their families and reintegrate into society?

How can the committee ensure human trafficking victims do not continue to be mistreated by law enforcement after being freed from their traffickers?

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