

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

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Letter from the Executive Board

Dear Delegates,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the United Nations Human Rights Council for the upcoming JPHS MUN conference. As members of the Executive Board, we are excited to witness your contributions to meaningful discussions and resolutions regarding pressing human rights issues.

The UNHRC is a vital platform within the United Nations system dedicated to promoting and protecting human rights around the world. With a focus on addressing human rights violations, providing humanitarian aid, and fostering dialogue on critical issues, our committee plays a crucial role in advancing the global human rights agenda.

In this year's conference, the UNHRC will delve into the complex and challenging topic of "Humanitarian Aid and Human Rights Violations of Civilians in Conflict-Affected Zones, with Special Emphasis on the Israel-Palestine Conflict." This theme requires thoughtful analysis, diplomatic negotiations, and innovative solutions to address the urgent needs of affected populations while upholding fundamental human rights principles.

As delegates of the UNHRC, you will have the opportunity to engage in rigorous debates, collaborate with fellow delegates, and craft resolutions that reflect the diverse perspectives and priorities of the international community. Your dedication, creativity, and diplomacy will be crucial in shaping the outcomes of our committee's discussions and decisions.

We encourage you to familiarize yourselves with the background guide provided, conduct thorough research, and prepare insightful policy statements and proposals. Remember that effective communication, cooperation, and respect for differing viewpoints are essential for productive and meaningful debates.

Our Executive Board is here to support and guide you throughout the conference. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us with any questions, concerns, or clarifications you may have. Together,

we can work towards meaningful solutions that uphold human rights, promote humanitarian assistance, and contribute to a more just and peaceful world.

We look forward to meeting you all and witnessing the impactful contributions you will make in the UNHRC committee.

Regards,

Zainah Chaudhary

(Co- Chairperson)

Khushboo Meerchandani

(Co- Chairperson)

Khushboo Saharan

(Rapporteur)

Introduction to the Human Rights Council

Established in 2006 to succeed the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is the United Nations (UN) intergovernmental body responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of Human Rights (HR) globally bringing together 47 member states.

Founding this mandate is the UN charter's Article 1.3 stating that "The purposes of the United Nations include promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion." – As well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted by the UN in 1948. Prior to the Human Rights Council (HRC), the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) – established in 1946 – had lost credibility after being led and included some of the world's most repressive regimes (In 2003 for instance, Libya and Cuba chaired the Commission while Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Zimbabwe were members) – leading some gross situations of HR violations being ignored.

As a result, the commission was criticized for being infected by politicization and selectivity. In 2006, after long negotiations with some states supporting that the future HRC candidates for membership be states with "a solid record of commitment to the highest HR standards" and be

elected by a 2/3rds majority of the UN General Assembly (GA), a much ‘watered down’ reform was adopted, including the lighter requirement that candidates for membership receive the votes of an absolute majority of the GA.

Members of the HRC are elected for a period of 3 years and distributed into regional groups including:

- 13 from Africa
- 13 from Asia
- 6 from Eastern Europe
- 8 from Latin America and
- 7 from the ‘Western Europe and Other group’

The HRC functions by a mechanism of ‘Universal Periodic Review’ consisting in the organization of three annual sessions – held in March, June and September – which submit an annual report to the GA. These regular sessions – presided over by an elected president and vice presidents – can be extended by requesting special sessions.

Additionally, the HRC also includes an ‘Advisory Committee’ containing a panel of experts and advisors, and functions through the participation of individuals and organizations which through the ‘Complaint Procedure’ can bring forward specific HR issues. Finally, ‘Special Procedures’ led by ‘Special Rapporteurs’ exist within the HRC to research and counsel on country specific and thematic issues and report on these annually to the GA.

UN Member States also expressed the need for global protection and promotion of healthcare by the world community in the Declaration of Alma-Ata in 1978. It was adopted as the first international declaration addressing the importance of primary healthcare at the International Conference on Primary Health Care. A complete physical, mental and social health is reaffirmed by the declaration as a fundamental right and it is stressed that governments are responsible to protect the health of individuals through proper primary healthcare.

Today, the HRC's work is also guided by the documents of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and its two Optional Protocols – commonly referred together as the International Bill of Human Rights – as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015) and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Flow of The committee

Nature of Proof and Evidence

Documents from the following sources will be considered credible proof for any allegations made in committee or statements that require verification:

Reuters: Appropriate Documents and articles from the Reuters News agency will be used to corroborate or refute controversial statements made in committee.

UN Document: Documents by all UN agencies will be considered sufficient proof. Reports from all UN bodies, including treaty-based bodies, will also be accepted.

Government Reports: Government Reports of a given country used to corroborate an allegation on the same the aforementioned country will be accepted as proof. Under no circumstances will sources like Wikipedia, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch or newspapers like the Guardian, Times of India, etc. be accepted as credible proof, but may be used for better understanding of any issue and even be brought up in debate, if the information given in such sources is in line with the beliefs of a government or a delegate.

BEST PRACTICES FOR RESEARCH BEFORE A MUN

1. Read the Background Guide before the conference and make a note of everything that needs to be understood.
2. In case of a crisis, always read and look for the analysis and plausible rationale for the updates that may be issued a week before the MUN.
3. Google/Search everything and find related documents (UN, News articles, Scholarly articles) For whatever was not understood.
4. After fully understanding (subject to how in-depth you wish to go for the research), try understanding your allotted country's perspective on the agenda.
5. Make the stance in accordance with the country's perspective on the agenda, which shall also define your foreign policy (history, past actions etc.)
6. Understand the cues and hints that are given minutely in the Background Guide that may come in handy during the presentation of the contentions committee.
7. Take a good look at the mandate of the council as to what you can discuss and what you can do in this council. This point is placed here just because your knowledge base shouldn't be limited to the mandate of the council. Know everything, and speak whatever the mandate allows.
8. Follow the links given alongside and understand why they were given. Read the footnotes and the links and hyperlinks text.
9. Predict the kind of discussions and on what sub-topics they can take place, thereby analyzing the subtopic research you have done and preparing yourself accordingly.
10. Make a Word/Pages document and put your arguments there for better presentation in the council.

CHITS

Chits are a written medium for communication with any diplomat inside the council, be it Delegate or an executive Board Member. Various uses of chits are:

- To inform the Executive Board of any points you might want to raise in council or ask them a question (via ExecutiveBoard);

- To ask or answer questions from other Delegates;
- To gather support from another delegate(s) for any objective of your country's interest.

GENERAL FLOW OF DEBATE IN AN MUN (ROPs)

1. Roll Call (responding either in Present or Present in voting)
2. Establishment of Quorum Motion to/for Setting the Agenda
3. Opening the General Speakers 'List (A non-exhaustive list of speakers)
4. GSL Speeches (default individual speaker's time: 90 seconds)-includes yield(s).
5. Points (Based on the order of disruption (disturbance):
 - a. Personal Privilege
 - b. Order
 - c. Information
 - d. Enquiry
6. Moderated Caucuses (A moderated discussion inside the council), the motion raised must include:-
 - a. Suspend the Formal Debate
 - b. Total Time
 - c. Individual Speaker's Time
 - d. Topic
7. Unmoderated Caucuses (Informal session), the motion raised must include:-
 - a. Suspend the Formal Debate
 - b. Total Time

NOTE: An Extension may be raised to extend the Moderated or Unmoderated Caucus (Limit: Half the total time of the original motion)

8. Drafting of a Draft Resolution or other formally acceptable document- their discussion, possible mergers.
9. Amendment Procedure (Deletion, Modification, Addition) after Closure of Debate

10. Voting Procedure on the Draft Resolution(s) and the Outcome

11. Adjournment of the Session

About the agenda

“Humanitarian Aid and Human Rights Violations of civilians in Conflict- Affected Zones with special emphasis on the Israel- Palestine Conflict”

Introduction

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) plays a crucial role in addressing human rights violations and promoting humanitarian aid in conflict-affected regions worldwide. Among the many regions marred by conflict, the Israel-Palestine conflict stands as one of the most protracted and complex situations, where civilians endure significant hardships and rights abuses.

Historical Context

The Israel-Palestine conflict dates back to the mid-20th century and centers on competing national aspirations and territorial claims. Key events include the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, subsequent Arab-Israeli wars, the occupation of Palestinian territories by Israel following the Six-Day War in 1967, and the ongoing struggle for Palestinian statehood.

Humanitarian Situation

The conflict has led to profound humanitarian challenges for civilians on both sides. Palestinians in the occupied territories, particularly in Gaza and the West Bank, face severe restrictions on movement, access to basic services, and economic opportunities due to Israeli military control and blockade measures. Gaza, in particular, has experienced multiple conflicts, resulting in widespread destruction of infrastructure, loss of life, and displacement.

Human Rights Violations

The Israel-Palestine conflict has been characterized by numerous human rights violations, including but not limited to:

1. Violence against Civilians: Both Israeli security forces and Palestinian armed groups have been accused of targeting civilians, resulting in casualties and loss of life.
2. Settlement Expansion: Israel's establishment of settlements in the occupied territories is considered illegal under international law and has led to displacement, land confiscation, and restrictions on Palestinian movement and access to resources.
3. Administrative Detention: Israel's practice of detaining Palestinians without charge or trial, often under administrative detention orders, has drawn criticism from human rights organizations for its lack of due process.
4. Blockade of Gaza: The blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip has severely restricted the movement of people and goods, exacerbating humanitarian suffering and hindering reconstruction efforts.

International Response

The international community, including the United Nations, has repeatedly called for a peaceful resolution to the Israel-Palestine conflict based on the principles of international law, human rights, and relevant UN resolutions. Efforts to provide humanitarian aid and support to affected populations have been ongoing, but challenges persist due to political, security, and logistical obstacles.

Role of the UNHRC

As a principal UN body tasked with promoting and protecting human rights worldwide, the UNHRC plays a critical role in monitoring and addressing human rights violations in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Delegates in the UNHRC are expected to explore ways to enhance humanitarian assistance, ensure accountability for rights abuses, and advance efforts towards a just and lasting resolution to the conflict.

Key Questions for Consideration

1. How can humanitarian aid be effectively delivered to civilians in conflict-affected areas, particularly in Gaza and the West Bank?
2. What steps can be taken to address the root causes of human rights violations in the Israel-Palestine conflict, including the occupation, settlements, and blockade?
3. How can the UNHRC support efforts to promote accountability for human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law committed by all parties to the conflict?
4. What role can diplomatic initiatives, regional actors, and civil society organizations play in advancing peace and human rights in the Israel-Palestine conflict?

Conclusion

The Israel-Palestine conflict remains a persistent challenge to peace, stability, and human rights in the Middle East. Addressing the humanitarian situation and upholding the rights of civilians in conflict-affected zones require concerted efforts by the international community, including the UNHRC, to promote dialogue, accountability, and respect for international law.

This guide should provide a comprehensive overview of the key issues surrounding humanitarian aid and human rights violations in conflict zones, with a specific focus on the Israel-Palestine conflict, to assist delegates in preparing for discussions within the UNHRC committee.

Reference

Researching for a Model United Nations (MUN) committee like the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) with a focus on humanitarian aid and human rights violations in conflict-affected zones, especially concerning the Israel-Palestine conflict, requires thorough and diverse sources of information. Here's where you can start your research:

1. Official UNHRC Documents:

- Look for past resolutions, reports, and statements issued by the UNHRC related to humanitarian aid and human rights violations in conflict zones, including those specific to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

2. United Nations Reports:

- Explore reports from UN agencies such as UNICEF, UNHCR, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). These reports often provide detailed information on the situation in conflict-affected areas and the impact on civilians.

3. NGO Reports and Publications:

- Check reports and publications from reputable NGOs like Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Oxfam, and Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders). They often document human rights violations and humanitarian needs in conflict zones, including the Israel-Palestine conflict.

4. Academic Journals and Books:

- Search for scholarly articles, books, and research papers that focus on humanitarian aid, human rights, and conflict zones. Academic databases like JSTOR, Google Scholar, and university libraries can be valuable resources.

5. Government Statements and Reports:

- Look for official statements and reports from governments involved in or concerned about the Israel-Palestine conflict. These can provide insights into diplomatic efforts, policies, and perspectives.

6. News Outlets and Media Coverage:

- Stay updated with news from reputable international news outlets such as BBC, Al Jazeera, Reuters, and The New York Times. They often cover developments, events, and issues related to humanitarian crises and human rights violations in conflict zones.

7. Think Tank Analyses:

- Explore analyses and reports from think tanks and research organizations specializing in international relations, conflict resolution, and human rights. Examples include the International Crisis Group, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and Chatham House.

8. Expert Interviews and Testimonies:

- If possible, seek out interviews or testimonies from experts, activists, and individuals with firsthand experience in conflict-affected areas, including those related to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

When conducting research, consider the credibility, bias, and timeliness of your sources. Aim to gather diverse perspectives and evidence to develop a comprehensive understanding of the agenda topics for your MUN committee.