



Human Rights Council

Directed By: Alaina Eyler

TSMUN XXV BACKGROUND GUIDE 2021

Topic I: Ending Forced Labor Globally

Topic II: Promoting and Ensuring Education for All

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Dear Delegate,

Hello and welcome to your start to the Tallahassee Southern Model United Nation 2020 Conference (TSMUN)! We hope that this finds you in good health, and everything is going well. It's our honor to serve as this year's Human Rights Council Committee (HRC) staff. I am Alaina Eyer I will be your directing this year's HRC committee. I have had the pleasure of being a part of Model United Nations since high school, participating in conferences such as KinghtMUN, GatorMUN, FMUN, NMUN, and our very own TSMUN. I am excited to be flipping the script and I'm acquiring an AA in Political Science at TCC. As a passionate social justice advocate, human rights are at the forefront of my activism and I hold high expectations for this year's Human Rights Council!

The topics under discussion for the Human Rights Council are:

- I. Ending Forced Labor Globally
- II. Promoting and Ensuring Education for All

The Human Rights Council is an implementation oriented inter-governmental body that provides a forum for advancing and ensuring basic human rights. It has served as this medium for the regulation and monitoring of the international community since 2006. HRC plays a critical role in implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights instruments. Also know, by having interest in the United Nations you're giving time and thought into the framework of what is our worldly society! When in conference, please feel free to ask any questions in terms of procedure or conversation. Feel no pressure! Fun and MUN go hand and hand when given the chance! Make sure that you put in your best effort, it shows in committee! Keep in mind that you are role playing as a delegate in the United Nations, representing your country in the Human Rights Council, take on that problem-solving mindset, and you can resolve a crisis! We hope you find this background guide helpful, and as a head start into these topics, but keep in mind that this background guide does not necessarily encompass the well-rounded research needed to succeed in the United Nations. With this said, personal research is encouraged. Be sure to know your member states outlook on the issue, you are representing them!

Each delegation is required to submit a paper for this committee. This paper is known as a position paper and will be submitted before the start of the first committee session. Papers can be submitted through email to positionpapers@tsmun.org. For position paper guides as well as examples, please visit <http://www.tsmun.org/position-papers.html>. Papers that are not in the correct format will not be eligible for awards. For conference information, resources for preparation, scholarships, and other helpful information visit <http://www.tsmun.org/>. If you have any questions leading up to the conference do not hesitate to email me. Our Secretary-General for this year's TSMUN will be Taylor Mackin and she is available via email at sg@tsmun.org. I look forward to seeing the hard work and preparation in committee.

Sincerely,

Alaina Eyer
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Committee Overview

Introduction

The Human Rights Council (HRC), a subordinate committee to the United Nations General Assembly, is implementation-oriented council that provides a forum for member states to gather and work to pass legislation to ensure basic human rights.¹ This council serves as a pathway of progression, focusing on the betterment and protection of civilian lives.² The HRC is tasked with ensuring and protecting human rights globally and works to promote universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.³

Committee Mandate

As an intergovernmental body, the HRC is tasked with addressing human rights violations, including gross and systematic violations, and making recommendations thereon.⁴ The Human Rights Committee was created by the United Nations General Assembly on March 15th, 2006.⁵ The council celebrated its 10th anniversary in June of 2016.⁶ Most notable, the HRC is known for coining the Universal Periodic Review, formation of the Advisory Committee, and Complaint Procedure to bring the attention of the council.⁷

Governance, Structure, and Membership

The HRC meets at the UN Office at Geneva.⁸ The Council consists of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly.⁹ The Human Rights Council replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights.¹⁰ The structure and procedures for the Human Rights Council can be found in the Institution-building package, a document produced by the HRC.¹¹

Conclusion

Overall the Human Rights Council works towards the protection, promotion, and insurance of human rights at an international level and strives for policy implementation that upholds that.¹² As a fourteen-year-old committee the HRC continues to address situations of which violate human rights and make recommendations on them for the betterment of the global community.¹³ Most recently in June of 2020, the HRC has passed global resolutions such as birth registration and the right of everyone to recognition everywhere as a person before the law, freedom of opinion and

¹ HRC, *About HRC*.

² Ibid.

³ UN, *Human Rights*.

⁴ HRC, *About HRC*.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.



expression: the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and most notably the promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Africans and of people of African descent against excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers.¹⁴ Councils like the HRC and United Nations play a detrimental role in laying the ground rules for the international community, conflicts form when member states do not abide by this legislation¹⁵

Ending Forced Labor Globally

Introduction

The late 20th century introduced a new integration of global economies that has never been seen before, this achievement of progress of humankind has provided a lot of grand opportunities of economic growth for workers, companies, and member states. The increased globalization of the economy has also unfortunately increased the number of peoples subjected to forced labor in order to exploit the new economic opportunities. According to the International Labor Organization, forced labor is defined as all work or service which is exacted from any person under the threat of a penalty and for which the person has not offered themselves voluntarily.¹⁶ Forced labor continues to be a major issue for many parts of the world and it is often due to several different types of coercion from debt bondage that causes the exploited to not leave a situation to threats of violence or removal of wages.¹⁷ Currently, 24.9 million people are subjected to some kind of forced labor across the world with 16 million people being exploited for economic activities (ex: agriculture, construction and manufacturing) and 4.8 million were victims of sexual exploitation, of which women account for 71% of the forced labor and 99% of the sexual exploitation.¹⁸ ¹⁹ Additionally, 4.3 million of the 24.9 million forced laborers are children below the age of 18. Forced labor generates \$150 Billion in the private economy every year: two thirds come from the commercial sex exploitation (\$99 Billion) and the rest (\$51 Billion) comes from forced economic exploitation.²⁰ Of course, these findings should be taken conservatively as there as there are limitations of measurements and data, and there is potential for the actual size of the exploited to be far greater than the current listings provided. Despite the alarming projections, much progress has been achieved since the initial *Convention Concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour* of 1930 and its update, the *Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work* in 1998; many member states have taken steps to impose legal provisions, ensuring freedom from labor

¹⁴ HRC, *Report of the Human Rights Council 2020*.

¹⁵ HRC, *About HRC*.

¹⁶ ILO. "What is forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking," *ILO*, 2020.

¹⁷ ILO. "Ending Forced Labour by 2030: a review of policies and programmes," *ILO*, 2018.

¹⁸ ILO. "Forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking," *ILO*, 2020.

¹⁹ ILO. "Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage," *ILO*, 2017.

²⁰ ILO. "International Labour Standards on Forced Labour," *ILO*, 2020.



exploitation. Nonetheless, forced labor continues to exist in the vast global economy and to tackle this global issue and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, member states need to address this alarming issue and curb the flow of people into it by recognizing the social, economic, legal, and political forces that lead to forced labor and its persistence in the global economy.²¹

International Framework

The international movement against forced labor stems from the League of Nations 1921 Constitution where in Article 23 it declared that the League would “endeavor to secure and maintain fair and humane conditions of labour for men, women, and children, both in their own countries and in all countries...”²² *The Convention Concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour of 1930*, was the first international action to help define what forced labor is and provided an ideal standard of eradicating all forms of labor with minor exceptions regarding military service and ‘adult able-bodied males’ with limitations.²³ The contemporary international framework comes from the *Abolition of Forced Labour Convention of 1957*, which supplemented the previous convention’s protocol and canceled prior forced labor gaps; it additionally advocated for all member states to begin creating adequate legal standards to suppress the use of forced labor.²⁴ In 1959, there were 11 member states who ratified the Convention, by the year 2000 the total number of member state who ratified the Convention jumped to 139 and by the year 2020 the total number jumped to 176.²⁵ *The Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930*, reinforced the need for abolition of forced labor by member states and advocated for member states to take action against forced labor in the private economy by taking the necessary actions and “addressing the root causes and factors that heighten the risks of forced [labour].”²⁶ *Recommendation 203* was also developed in 2014 by the ILO and was adopted along with the 2014 Protocol and updated the 20th century labor standards to 21st century definitions.²⁷ *Recommendation 203* encouraged member states to strengthen consultations with private sector employers and workers ‘organizations to develop methods of measuring the number of people in forced labor and develop plans of action.’²⁸ In 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted and within Goal 8 was Target 8.7 which sought Member States to take immediate actions to eradicate forced labor by 2030 and forced labor of children by 2025.²⁹

Case Study: Forced Labor and Women

Contemporary forced labor affects men and women differently across the world, currently for every 1000 women in the world there is an average of 2.5 women in forced labor exploitation when compared to 1.8 men per 1000.³⁰ Seeing this disparity between the sexes brings the question, why are women continuously disproportioned to forced exploitation when compared to men? It can be

²¹ ILO. “Ending Forced Labour by 2030: A review of policies and programmes,” *ILO*, 2018.

²² Yale Law School. “The Covenant of the League of Nations: Article 23,” *League of Nations*, 1924.

²³ ILO. “Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29),” *OHCHR*, 2020.

²⁴ ILO. “Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957,” *OHCHR*, 2020.

²⁵ ILO. “Ratifications of C105- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957,” *ILO*, 2020.

²⁶ ILO. “P029 - Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930,” *OHCHR*, 2020.

²⁷ ILO. “R203 - Ending Forced Labour by 2030: a review of policies and programmes,” *ILO*, 2018.

²⁸ ILO. “Forced Labour (Supplementary Measures) Recommendation, 2014 (No. 203)” *ILO*, 2020.

²⁹ UNODC. “Sustainable Development Goal’s”, *UN*, 2020.

³⁰ ILO. “Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage,” *ILO*, 2017.



better understood by looking to current emigrational and work patterns.³¹ One of the main factors that continues to place women at risk of forced labour is the continued lack of access to education, economic and social opportunities.³² In response to the low job opportunities due to lack of education access, women are often funneled into risky industries where forced labor is relatively common such as domestic work.³³ The Domestic work sector currently accounts for 24% of forced labor, of which the majority of exploited are migrants, about 11.5 million, and of the migrant population, 75% of which are made women.³⁴ Internationally, there are limited laws and continued legal gaps that prevent those that work within the domestic work area and the common exploited practices endured are the lack of paid wages, long hours, poor living conditions and other grievances.³⁵ The ILO enacted the *Domestic Worker's Convention in 2011*, to address the legal gaps regarding those within the domestic work sector, but it has yet to be ratified by several nations.³⁶ The hidden nature of domestic work makes the creation of legal protections rather difficult and continued lack of opportunities causes this cycle to continue; of course there are several industries that continue exploitation of women and this is simple one case among several.

Conclusion

Ending forced labor has been a common goal since the foundation of the United Nations and significant progress has been made, but there is work needed to be done to bring about the goal of eliminating forced labor internationally and achieving SDG 8. There is a need to address the wide range of factors that contribute to people getting caught in a cycle of forced labor. The legal protections will not be enough if the tackling the sources of forced labor is not recognized. Vulnerability of populations during crisis and during state instability also should be mentioned when attempt to curb the forced labor population. Gender disparities should be recognized in addition as women and children are of high risk of exploitation when compared to other populations. Member states should take in consideration the complex, global and multi-dimensional nature of forced labor and the necessities needed to be tackled. What can be done to decrease the forced labor population? How can the international community tackle the gendered exploitations? What other cooperative measures can be taken? How can the international community obtain better information regarding the forced labor population? How can the Human Rights Council address this within the scope their jurisdiction?

³¹ Ibid.

³² STAW. "Labor Trafficking and Forced Labor Exploitation," *The Advocates for Human Rights*, 2020.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ ILO. "Ending Forced Labour by 2030: A review of policies and programmes," *ILO*, 2018.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ ILO. "Ratifications of C189- Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189)," *ILO*, 2017.



Promoting and Ensuring Education for All

Introduction

Education enables upward socioeconomic mobility and is imperative to eradicating poverty and yet education opportunities continue to be limited across several regions.³⁷ In 2017, 262 million or 18% of all children between the ages of 6 to 17 were not enrolled in school and current trends expect that the number of children who will enroll of the exposed population will drop slightly to 225 million, which is not on track to achieving SDG 4.³⁸ Putting children in school is only a step towards ensuring education for all, in 2018, primary school completion was 84% globally, which is up from 70% in 2000.³⁹ Regarding lower and upper secondary school completion, in 2018, the completion rate was 72% for lower secondary school and 48% for upper secondary school.⁴⁰ There continues to be large disparities among Member States who are expanding their secondary education access when compared to the lower secondary school, it is predicted, by 2030, that lower secondary school completion will reach 81% and upper secondary school completion will reach 58% by 2030.⁴¹ This is still away from the 2030 goal. Developing member states still have challenges meeting the core principles of the 2030 Agenda and SDG 4, making sure that all children meet educational standard and not getting left behind.⁴² In recent years, early childhood education has been on the rise (starting by the age of 3) and provides a great investment in the development of a child's foundations but participation remains sparse across income brackets.⁴³ At the global level, the participation rate in early childhood education was 69% in 2017, an increase from 63% in 2010; in some developing areas that rate can decrease to a low of 7% to an average of 43% in most developing areas.⁴⁴ Regarding teachers, only 85% of global primary teachers were trained in 2017, which is a decline from 86.5% in 2013, only half of Member States have data estimations about teacher attrition rates (meaning they exit the industry).⁴⁵ Teacher retainment and reduction of attrition along with training is needed to provide learning and increased access, if Member States continue to lack measure this could continue to impact students education quality.⁴⁶ Gender disparity contributes to a lack of accessible education, currently 118 girls per 100 boys continue to be out of school, 132 million girls are out of school with 34.3 million of primary school age, 67.4 million of upper secondary school age and continued barriers and legal gaps protecting girls' education continues create a gendered disparity and prevents the completion of universal

³⁷ UN, "Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all," *UN*, 2020.

³⁸ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, "Meeting Commitments: Are Countries on Track to Achieve SDG 4," 2019.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ UN, "Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all," *UN*, 2020.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Global Education Monitoring Report Team, "*Global Education Monitoring Report, 2019: Migration, displacement and education: building bridges, not walls*," 2018.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*



education.⁴⁷ The continued gaps of education attainment continues to prevent several students the necessary preparations to participate fully in the global economy and continue the lifting of poverty; the international community has plenty of challenges ahead before the 2030 deadline.

International Framework

The initiative to provide Education for all can be stem from the *1990 World Conference on Education For All (EFA): Meeting Basic Learning Needs*, where it outlined that every child, youth and adult shall benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs.⁴⁸ The conference provided a demonstration of the international community's desire to not only provide access to basic education, but also provide the quality education and meet learning outcomes to eradicate poverty.⁴⁹ In 1995, the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* recognized the gendered disparities that still took place despite adopted of the EFA in 1990; it advocated for increased enrolment and retention of girls via support of families, communities and campaigns.⁵⁰ In 1996, the *Mid-Decade Meeting of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All*, took place and further outlined expectations regarding the quality of education with advocations of recognition of diverse societies, gendered gaps, vital public-private partnerships and the reaffirmation of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which outlined the rights of a child to access to education.⁵¹ The *Dakar Framework for Action* was implemented in 2000 by the World Education Forum where the reaffirmation of the EFA was utilized and declared that universal education access is core of sustainable development; commitments were made to decrease gender discrimination, improve the quality of learning and affirm the urgency to get the EFA plan implemented.⁵² The *Millennium Summit* of the United Nations took place in 2000 and put in place the Millennium Development Goals, of which goal 2 was to ensure that by 2015 there would be universal primary education.⁵³ In 2015, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* was adopted replacing the former MDG goals; of which Goal 4 was replaced the MDG Goal 2 and added in addition to the EFA, an ensuring of an inclusive and equitable quality education.⁵⁴

Case Study: The COVID-19 Pandemic and Education Access

As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, several governments across the world shutdown their educational institutions to contain it. An estimated 1.6 billion students in more than 190 countries, 94% of the world student population and 99% of developing countries have been affected.⁵⁵ This crisis is expected to increase the pre-existing disparities among access to education, specially to developing Member States. It is predicted that by 2030, over 200 million children will still be out of school and learning losses threaten to extend beyond this generation and erase decades of

⁴⁷ UNICEF, "Girls' Education," *UN*, 2020.

⁴⁸ UN, "Outcomes on Education: World Conference on Education for All," 1990.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*.

⁵⁰ UN Women, "*Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*," *UN*, 2001.

⁵¹ UNESCO, "*Education for All Achieving the Goal*," *UNESCO*, 1996.

⁵² UNESCO, "*Dakar Framework for Action*," *UNESCO*, 2000.

⁵³ UN, "United Nations Millennium Development Goals," *UN*, 2005.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*.

⁵⁵ UN, "*Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond*," *UN*, 2020.



progress, specifically among the girl's and education access.⁵⁶ ⁵⁷ UNESCO currently estimates that 23.8 million additional children may dropout from school all together next year as a result of the pandemic; women and girls are at threat to fall into child marriage, violence and early pregnancy, all of which can reduce the attainment of Goal 4.⁵⁸ With the migration to remote/online classes, of the 1.6 billion students affected, 500 million students are unable to utilize technological tools due to lack of access.⁵⁹ Students with disability needs also continue to lack necessary equipment to follow their education remotely, though this has seen a new birth of innovation to meet needs with an example of 700 children with disabilities who were enrolled in refugee camps in Jordan utilizing transparent masks so deaf children can read.⁶⁰ There are numerous challenges to be faced with the current COVID-19 pandemic and if new and innovative methods to overcome the education disparities during this situation, the 4th goal of the SDG can be met.

Conclusion

The progress achieved since the adoption of the 1990 Education for All conference is worth noting, but the current trends show, along with the effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic, that there is a large potential for not only progress to be stalled, but even reversed if action is not taken. There is a need of collective responsibility to ensure the youth of today obtain education, especially those who are the most vulnerable. Delegates should take note of the current challenges faced by the international community regarding access to education, the gender disparities currently faced, lack of teacher training in specific areas and retention, overall completion rates and the problems faced by COVID-19 Pandemic. What ways can the UNHCR assist in meeting of the SDG Goal 4? How can the UNHCR protection mandates be implemented, within jurisdiction, to meet EFA goal? What should the UNHCR do to engage in SDG 4 Planning broadly? What education plans and mechanisms can be used to meet SDG 4? What messages can the UNHCR sponsor?

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ UN Statistics Division, "Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all," *UN*, 2020.

⁵⁸ UN, "Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond," *UN*, 2020.

⁵⁹ UN Statistics Division, "Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all," *UN*, 2020.

⁶⁰ UN, "Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond," *UN*, 2020.



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