

Sri Lanka Model United Nations



United Nations Human Rights Council

Study Guide

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UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The General Assembly established the UNHRC by adopting a resolution (A/RES/60/251) on 15 March 2006, in order to replace the previous CHR, which had been heavily criticized for allowing countries with poor human rights records to be members.

The UNHRC addresses human rights-related situations in all UN member states. The UNHRC also addresses important thematic human rights issues such as freedom of association and assembly, freedom of expression, freedom of belief and religion, women's rights, LGBT rights, and the rights of racial and ethnic minorities. The UN General Assembly elects the members who occupy the UNHRC's 47 seats. The General Assembly takes into account the candidate States' contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as their voluntary pledges and commitments in this regard. The term of each seat is three years, and no member may occupy a seat for more than two consecutive terms. The seats are distributed among the UN's regional groups as follows: 13 for Africa, 13 for Asia, six for Eastern Europe, eight for Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC), and seven for the Western European and Others Group (WEOG). The General Assembly, via a two-thirds majority, can suspend the rights and privileges of any Council member that it decides has persistently committed gross and systematic violations of human rights during its term of membership. The resolution establishing the UNHRC states that "members elected to the Council shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights"

SPECIAL PROCEDURES

The Human Rights Council has responsibility for the special procedures, including those originally established by the Commission on Human Rights. Special procedures under HRC also applies to the Office of High Commissioner where certain specific issues/ institutions/ states are reviewed based on special needs after which a report will be submitted to the OHCHR or the UNCR. UNIQUE provides information about reports of both past and current special procedures. Furthermore, a resolution passed by the UNHCR in March 2014 requested the OHCHR to conduct such a review in the nation of Sri Lanka on the alleged war crimes and mass scale HR violations. Since 1994 (Under the UN Commission on Human Rights), the special procedures have met annually as a group. Report of this meeting is transmitted by a note of the High Commissioner.

FUNCTIONS

Powers and shortcomings

The powers have been detailed. These include efficient operation with counterpart authorities, iterative planning, building access, local planning and responsibility and general sensitivity to delegate. Quite simply there is little to compare to the quality of UNHCR's local resource management system and its capacity to gather information and plan for community basic need provision. At the core of this strength is the individual commitment and professional capacity of its field staff. This simultaneously is its weakness for it

has built that capacity on individual local relationships - a necessary emphasis on people not institutional capacity. It is unlikely that any other multilateral organization could effectively imitate or continue such an operation. UNHCR has proved to be an excellent quick response unit - an international fire brigade of personal and professional courage and integrity - which makes things safe but cannot generate a development process, only establish preconditions for development. Its weakness reflects its mission which must remain integral for effective international intervention.

THE AGENDA

Conference Topic: Discussing the right to education for young refugees.

Practice Debate Topic: Evaluating potential human rights infringements by technological developments.

CONFERENCE TOPIC: DISCUSSING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION FOR YOUNG REFUGEES.

BACKGROUND

A refugee is someone who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality membership of the country of his nationality and is unable to or owing to such fear is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of the country- the 1951 refugee convention

The refugee crisis grows day by day across the world. The population of refugees increases as a result, the youngsters will have questions in their future. Education plays a vital role in a person's life.

. According to the UN reports only 61% of refugee attend primary school. Just 23% of adolescents are enrolled in secondary education. Due to these less percentages, education of young refugees must be given a higher consideration. Furthermore, sustainable development goal 4 aims to deliver inclusive and quality education for all and to promote lifelong learning.

Refugees, adult and children are provided with places of safety by the host countries where camps have no access for their country's school system which they had fled from. Some countries with refugee population make provisions for the education of refugee children while others do not. Due to this education of refugees must be considered as a vital subject to be considered.

CASE STUDY

For millions of children, they are privileged to spend time in the classroom, learning to read, write and also to develop their interacting and debating skills too. But this privilege is one not enjoyed by many. Education gives the refugee children an opportunity to invest in their future. And it also helps to achieve sustainable development in the nations which had welcomed them and also future prosperity of their country of origin.

Referring to SDG's and the New York Declaration, refugees remain in danger when it comes to education. The international community must take special actions in order to provide education for young refugees. Education helps to meet psychological and social needs of children who had been affected by conflict.

Education is one of the largest priorities of refugee communities yet UN gets insufficient support to develop education for young and children. The lack of high quality and protective education for refugees stand in a way of meeting education for all goals and improve and establish sustainable development and reconstruction of home and host countries.

Education protects youth and children from forced recruitment into armed groups, child labor, sexual exploitation and child marriages. Education must be used as a weapon to prevent the following crimes. Education must be used to help refugees to innovate and empower the young refugees and focus on their future.

Discussing and addressing the importance of education is vital and ways of eliminating exploitation of refugees. Providing them with quality educational infrastructure facilities is too vital.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

1. 1989 Convention on the rights of the child and 1951 refugee convention
2. Recruitment into armed groups, child labor, sexual exploitation and child marriages.
3. Rebuilding themselves and world and developing quality of life.
4. Problems caused due to language barriers in host countries.
5. Creating a curriculum which identical to refugee fled country.
6. Consequences of not providing proper education.
7. Support teachers to help to ensure quality education such as teacher's workshop to improve education.

FURTHER READING

<http://www.unhcr.org/education.html>

<http://www.unhcr.org/missing-out-state-of-education-for-the-worlds-refugees.html>

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002510/251076E.pdf>

<https://www.rescue.org/outcome/education>

PRACTICE DEBATE: EVALUATING POTENTIAL HUMAN RIGHTS INFRINGEMENTS BY TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS.

BACKGROUND

As we move into the twenty-first century, we will see technology plays an increasingly important role in every facet of the international and national lives of the people of that century. We must therefore anticipate some of the grave problems that advances in technology will pose for the disciplines of law and human rights. In fact, while science and technology are racing ahead, law and human rights are looking on helplessly from the sidelines because there is very little that they can do to match the speed of technology. Law moves very slowly, while technology moves with lightning rapidity. The result is that technology is racing out of legal control. In consequence, there can be grave damage to human rights as well. It is possible to look at technology in a kind of panoramic survey and see that almost every aspect of our lives is influenced by technology.

CASE STUDY

In recent years, donors and activists have shown a keen interest in issues at the intersection of human rights and technology. Ongoing work in the area of “HR-Tech” is characterized by optimism and excitement over the potential to harness technological advances to improve the human rights movement’s ability to conduct more comprehensive fact-finding and to enhance the reach of human rights advocacy (Heinzelman and Meier,2012). At the same time, there is great concern over the ways technology enables governments and companies to more easily surveil and censor, thereby threatening fundamental rights and freedoms in the digital realm (Deibert,2013). These issues involve a broad context of diverse actors, agendas, framings and expectations

Understanding the technical, legal and political infrastructure affecting rights in the digital sphere is pivotal to ensure all human rights are upheld in a world where boundaries between the digital and physical space are increasingly blurred. There is a sense of urgency to enhance the capacity of the human rights movement

to monitor and hold to account abusers who violate rights in the physical world and online. This entails use of technology to monitor and build evidence of abuses, as well as promoting policies for technical infrastructure that protects basic rights.

Abuses in the digital realm consist of violations of privacy and freedoms of expression. More cases are constantly emerging, in which violations of digital rights lead to abuses in the physical world, such as arbitrary detention and forced disappearances. Further, while there is disagreement on how much the traditional human rights community needs to engage in the movement to ensure rights are respected in digital space, there is a general call for a deeper appreciation of the vulnerability of all human rights if the movement, standards, policies, and technical infrastructure are not strengthened. A continued division between efforts to defend rights in the physical and the digital spheres could be counter-productive.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

1. Ongoing cases of human rights infringements due to technology.
2. Denial of human rights due to technology.
3. Inadaptation of man to technology.
4. Elimination of jobs by automation.
5. Laws that are related to HR infringements due to technology.
6. Violations of privacy.

FURTHER READING

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/12/how-are-today-s-biggest-tech-trends-affecting-human-rights/>

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/01/06/why-tech-double-edged-sword-human-rights>

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/03/26/will-technology-transform-human-rights-movement>