



THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

SHSMUN'20





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Introduction to Committee:

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is an inter-governmental council within the United Nations system that has a role of protecting human rights and dealing with situations of human rights violations internationally. It is a body that consists of 47 UN Member States working closely with the organization to make global decisions in order to achieve all their goals. This council aims at exploring major human rights conditions that require its constant attention. The UNHRC ensures that all people understand their rights, have the same ones, and can use them. Also, this council checks if governments are giving their people their rights and are doing what they agreed on at the UN. Some of the goodwill ambassadors of the UNHRC, such as Adel Imam, Ben Stiller, and Cate Blanchett highlight this organization globally through their influence and hard work. Many powers of the HRC are mentioned in section 10 of the Human Rights Commission Act Chapter 48, which include 5 vital parts:

- (1) *“The Commission shall have powers to investigate any human rights abuses*
 - a. On its own initiative; or*
 - b. On receipt of a complaint or allegation under this Act by-*
 - i. An aggrieved person acting in such person’s own interest;*
 - ii. An association acting in the interest of its members;*
 - iii. A person acting on behalf of an aggrieved person; or*
 - iv. A person acting on behalf of and in the interest of a group or class of persons.”*

Introduction to Topic 1: Stateless Individuals

A person who does not hold the nationality of any country and is not considered a national by any state under its laws is a stateless person. More than 10 million people around the world are considered stateless, whether they were born this way or have lost their nationality. In all cases, these stateless individuals legally do not exist, and are stripped of their rights to education, medication, work, and many more vital human rights. There are many reasons why a child might not be registered at birth, and an individual may become stateless later on. For example, cost, discriminatory laws, such as single mothers not being allowed to register their babies, ethnicity are some factors that may disrupt registration. If individuals live outside their home country for a long period of time, they may be stripped of their nationality, as a result of the emergence of new states and change of borders during their absence. The UNHCR, which is supported by the UNHRC, is determined to end statelessness by the year of 2024 by working hand in hand with all nations to find many adequate solutions.

- a) *Refugees:*

With many refugees scattered around the globe, millions of them suffer from statelessness because of their displacement. At a certain time, there will still be a considerable number of refugees, which is constantly on the rise, many of whom will not be capable of being rapidly absorbed into the national communities of the countries where they are living, and that this number may possibly be increased by other refugees in a similar position. This usually happens in countries that restrict citizens to only one nationality, who need these refugees to get official



documentation from their home country proving they are no longer citizens there. This should be done prior to immigration, so in the case of them fleeing without the documentation, they would thereby be considered stateless. In the Middle East, Syrian or Palestinian refugees aren't granted a nationality, and if they get a child within the Lebanese territory, the child is unable to be registered. Needless to say that many people running away from their homes sometimes are washing up on the shores of some countries, such as Australia, with a number of 57 stateless individuals who were living ashore for more than three years. Not only are they losing their right to their own identity, but they are also dying of hunger, illnesses, and dehydration, seeing as they lack the means to survive.

b) **Unregistered Babies:**

The reason why some babies are unregistered goes far beyond the lack of money and ignorance. It is a known fact that domestically abused mothers do not register their babies for their safety, in fear of the father tracking them down. Although these people may feel like this is keeping them safe, it is actually doing the opposite, as it strips the children from many basic rights. Also, not being registered means the absence of a birth date, meaning that these children can be taken into society as adults and there is no law forcing them not to work or go to trial and jail. Almost 100 countries worldwide do not currently have "functioning systems" to meet their registration needs; there are a couple of places that don't have the right technology or capacity, or it can be difficult for mothers to understand the benefit of a birth certificate. High costs can be incurred through travel or accommodation and loss of earnings when registering, although, some countries have tried to tackle these barriers head on. Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda and Kenya have all launched initiatives to register babies via SMS; while New Delhi, in India, has achieved universal cover by combining the online registration of births and deaths and linking them to immunization. Other places, such as Bangladesh and Tanzania, have implemented ID cards.

c) **Kurds:**

A Kurd is a member of an ethnic and linguistic group living in areas of Iran, Iraq, and Turkey—a somewhat defined geographic region referred to as Kurdistan or "Land of the Kurds". That land, however, is not a "legal" state according to the international law. There is no ethnic census on the Kurds by country, but estimates indicate that they form a population of between 20 and 40 million, that also being the amount of people without a state. Kurdish identity isn't based on religion. It is highly based on language and culture. The closest thing Kurds have to an independent state is the KRG, which administers semi-autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan. The president of the KRG, Massoud Barzani, is the commander-in-chief of the Peshmerga armed forces, which numbers some 190,000 fighters. Iraqi Kurdistan serves as a model for the Syrian Kurds, who hope to establish a similar autonomous province of "Rojava" that would include the Kurdish enclaves of Afrin, Kobane and Qamishi. The traditional Kurdish way of life revolves around sheep and goat herding throughout the Mesopotamian plains and the highlands of Turkey and Iran. The enforcement of national boundaries beginning after World War I (1914–18) impeded the seasonal migrations of the flocks, forcing most of the Kurds to abandon their traditional ways for village life and settled farming; others entered nontraditional employment.



d) *Gypsies*:

“Known popularly as Gypsies, the Roma are the largest group of stateless people in the world and Europe’s largest and fastest growing minority group.”

Gypsies are believed to have arrived in Europe from Northern India in the 1400s. They were called Gypsies because Europeans thought they came from Egypt. This ethnic minority is made up of distinct groups called “tribes” or “nations.” Most of the Gypsies in German-occupied Europe belonged to the Sinti and Roma tribes. The Sinti generally predominated in Germany and Western Europe, and the Roma in Austria, Eastern Europe, and the Balkans. The Sinti and Roma spoke dialects of a common language called Romani, based in Sanskrit, the classical language of India. The Gypsies are a “stateless” people that do not receive citizenship or rights in the country they live in. Only 42 percent of Gypsy children complete primary school and this number drops to 10 percent those who go to complete secondary school. Creating a Gypsy nation-state would require better coordination between Roma communities in order to form an adequate and representative governing body. The creation of a Roma nation-state would need to be initiated by the Roma rather than a foreign organization. Such a task may not be possible when the complexity of Gypsy identity and interest is taken into consideration. Perhaps, the best solution is to take a bottom-up approach and determine the interests of the Roma before moving forward with any action.

1. International Relation Issues:

As we dig through history, situations of statelessness are associated with periods of change in international relations. The turbulence in international relations can be attributed to the aftermath of the first and second world wars. The First World War led to the establishment of new states such as Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and to the restoration of Poland. Also, it made many new adjustments in international borders. This resulted in large population movements that left many stateless. Similarly, the Second World War also created expulsions and population movements, many of which lost their nationalities. As the European borders have been redrawn, instances of population movements have raised questions about the citizenship rights and nationalities of many. An example of that is when 15 million Germans were forced to move back to Austria and Germany. By the end of the 1940s, events in all parts of the world left many stateless. These many events included, for example, the decolonization and partition of India in 1947 and the subsequent movement of Hindus and Muslims between India and Pakistan, the conflict over Palestine and the creation of Israel in 1948, creating a Palestinian diaspora in the Middle East and beyond, and the Chinese revolution of 1949. All of these many instances in the past created many forms of stateless individuals who had neither an identity nor clear citizenship rights.



II. International Actions:

Firstly, The Global Action Plan aims to end statelessness by 2024 through the #IBelong campaign launched by the UNHCR. On the other hand, the UN General Assembly has assigned the UNHCR with a mandate relating to the identification, prevention and reduction of statelessness, and protection of stateless persons. The “Towards Zero Statelessness” is an evaluation mechanism of the “Eradicating Statelessness” program of the Brazil Plan of Action, which helps states to identify how much progress happens in the elimination of the stateless at the national level. Last but not least, the IPU and UNHCR are hosting an event to address and raise awareness about the role of parliaments in contributing to ending statelessness by 2024. The Russian government made a declaration that should now be implemented through concrete steps, such as the adoption and implementation of relevant amendments to migration legislation to legalize the status of a large number of former Soviet citizens living in Russia and documentation of stateless people. However, in the United States, Donald Trump suggested that the country should revise this rule of birthright nationality, and once in office, he surrounded himself with trusted advisors who have publically advocated for such a revision. However, recent news reports suggest that the US state department may be operationalizing this restrictive view of US citizenship by denying passports to Americans born near the US-Mexico border.

III. Recommendations:

Delegates must keep in mind that stateless individuals should have the various human rights. The reasons for how individuals become stateless or are born stateless should be taken into consideration. Also, delegates must be very well-informed about their country’s capabilities and weaknesses, both economically and culturally. It is important to consider and respect diverse opinions and actions towards the stateless. Furthermore, innovative and creative solutions towards the issue are highly recommended.

IV. Questions to Consider:

- Identify the reason your country has stateless individuals?
- What actions has your country taken towards this topic in the past?
- What are your country’s current actions towards this issue?
- How can your country help in decreasing the amount of stateless individuals in the country?
- Does your country witness a high number of stateless individuals?
- How does your country deal with stateless individuals and does it protect them?
- Does your country ensure that no child is born stateless?
- Are there organizations that tackle this issue in your country?



V. Resources:

Handbooks for Parliamentarians, archive.ipu.org/English/handbks.htm.

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Introduction to Topic 2: Starvation

“To A Starving Man, God can only appear in the form of bread” - Mahatma Gandhi

Starvation is a raging biological phenomenon of malnutrition that has festered across all nations of the world resulting in millions of deaths. The United Nations has approached starvation, in all its forms, as a violation of the very basic human rights of man. Despite the many global attempts to minimize levels of starvation, the world has only seen it increase tragically over time and has borne witness to even more deaths and calamity. This is why we, the chairs, of the UNHRC, are eager to see delegates work cooperatively on finding innovative, multilateral, and comprehensive approaches and solutions to the topic at hand.

I. History of the Topic

Starvation has prevailed throughout the entire course of human history, and it has followed man since the beginning of time during his hunting days. Humanity has seen starvation in its many shapes, such as a mechanism for human persecution such as the starvation in the Nazi’s Jewish concentration camps and the Ukrainian famine inflicted by Joseph Stalin, a repercussion of wars and migration such as the Iraqi migrants deprived of all basic needs throughout their vigorous journey to a greener land as well as the Yemeni and Rohingya migrants who starve as they flee to neighboring countries to evade violence and ill mercy but only meet worse conditions in the form of hunger, and the result of poverty and hunger as we see it in Africa today.

In 2017, 37 countries, including 28 in Africa, depended on food aid, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). These countries are: Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Djibouti, DR Congo [or Democratic Republic of the Congo], Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Haiti, Iraq, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Syria, Uganda, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

However, the United Nations lacks the money to provide much-needed aid to millions of hungry people: donations promised by the international community have not yet been made.

1. Starvation in Africa due to Poverty

Africa is the second most populated continent in the world today holding 1.2 billion citizens, and, yet, one of four people are hungry. This dilemma has hit crises areas such as Nigeria, Somalia, and South Sudan which have been announced emergency cases by the United Nations as they see over 20 million people starve. The many causes behind starvation in Africa have emerged in the following cases:

- Population growth: In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of people grows rapidly, but food production is insufficient.



- Unfair trading structures: EU and US subsidize domestic agriculture; African farmers are not competitive with cheap food imports.
- Debt trap and mismanagement: The high level of indebtedness of many African countries as well as poor governance and corruption is blocking economic development. Mass poverty and hunger are the consequences.
- Diseases: The AIDS epidemic, as well as diseases like malaria, inhibits agricultural production in Africa and takes breadwinners from their families. The “Doctors without Borders” medical humanitarian organization has given much assistance attempting to fight these diseases in the midst of Africa’s life risking conditions.
- Armed conflicts: Africa has more than its share of trouble spots such as tribal conflicts. Most wars in the world rage south of the Sahara. Refugee misery and hunger are the companions.
- Drought and Climate Conditions: Due to the extreme conditions of the African landscape, water becomes scarce leading to loss of farm animals and the inability to farm leading to agriculture collapse and the lack of food. In this case, there will be large demands with no supply.

2. Refugee Starvation (Iraq, Yemen, Myanmar...)

As of the beginning of 2018, 68.5 million people have been displaced by war such that refugees seek safe holding and better opportunities as they flee human treachery and economic downfalls in their homeland and thus lose access to proper food, shelter, and water or any at all. This condition centers in the Middle East in countries such as Iraq, Syria, and Palestine whose inhabitants evaded violence by the Syrian civil war back in 2011, as well as the outbreak of ISIS in 2012. A similar situation is seen in Myanmar with the Rohingya crisis being the world’s most rapidly growing refugee crisis with over one million people fleeing the destruction of their homes and persecution as of 25 August 2017 after Rohingya Arsa militants launched deadly attacks on more than 30 police posts.

The tragedy of these refugees’ situations is their detainment at the borders of countries receiving no help and their degrading fight against racism and social rejection such as the Iraqi refugees at the Hungarian and Bulgarian borders and the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh which stands in their way of finding decent food and shelter. This is acknowledged and recognized by the United Nations as a violation to their human dignity and equality as well as their right to live and eat.

3. Starvation due to Political Regime, Country Conflict, and Corruption (Venezuela, North Korea, Yemen...)

85,000 children died in Yemen due to starvation because of the civil war.

Countries, such as North Korea, who follow certain political systems, such as North Korea’s Juche system, and those whom face sanctions because of political decisions which form an impediment in the trade chain have caused economic collapse resulting in poverty and hunger. On the other hand, African witnesses starvation on the political scale due to corruption which has been nourished by the weak Institutions and leadership and bribery in post-colonial Africa.



II. International Actions

One of the leading titles in the world to fight world hunger and starvation emerges, in fact, from the United Nation's 2nd Sustainable Development Goal labelled "Zero Hunger" which fights hunger and ensures food security across all nations that suffer from this pandemic. The World Food Program is a humanitarian organization that has rebuilt livelihood in emergency cases and delivered food and nutrition security as well. Some other organizations that have partaken in the fight against hunger and starvation are:

1. The Hunger Project, which is an organization that also aims at the sustainable end of world hunger alongside other humanitarian missions including empowerment, equality, sustainability, and decentralization in 22 needing areas such as Africa and Latin America.
2. Action Against Hunger, which is an international humanitarian organization that takes effective and decisive decisions to fight hunger and starvation and targets demolishing the causes of this globally destructive issue. It has successfully begun work in over 45 countries helping more than 20 million families as of 2018.
3. Freedom From Hunger, which is an organization joined with the Grameen Foundation as of 2016 to enable the poor to create a hunger less and less poor world, especially with women, using innovative and self-help programs to implement better health nutrition and business management into daily lives in India, Africa, and South America.

III. Recommendations

Delegates must keep track of their country's ongoing or newly found engagements to fight hunger and must also note that they must focus on areas of starvation which their country is **capable** of targeting rather than only receiving help and funds from UN Organizations and other programs in order to find tangible solutions to the topic. It is highly recommended that delegates have an insight about their country's economic and political status and keep them in mind while searching for possible solutions on the topic.

IV. Questions to Consider

1. Does your country's people suffer from starvation?
2. What could be the leading cause that your country's people suffer from this epidemic?
3. What actions has your country taken to combat and restrict its levels of starvation?
4. Does your country have the capabilities (financial, economic, political...etc.) to tackle its own cases of starvation?
5. Does your country take part in any program or international project to help fight starvation?
6. Are NGOs and non-profit organizations which help fight hunger present in your country?
7. Could your country's political regime be a main factor of starvation in your country?
8. Has your country taken part in fighting starvation in other sectors of the world?
9. What are the starving people's living conditions in your country?



V. References

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