



SOCIAL
HUMANITARIAN
AND CULTURAL
COMMITTEE

TOPIC GUIDE

Matthew Lerman, Jonathan Plavnik,

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JUNIOR ACADEMY MODEL UNITED NATIONS

- Eighth Annual Conference -

JAMUN VIII SECRETARIAT

Luigi Aiello
Director of Internal

Krystal Jiang
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Clara Barsoum
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Greetings delegates!

I'm very happy to welcome you to JAMUN VIII. I am eager to start chairing for this committee. I'm a current sophomore in ATCS at BCA. I've been participating in MUN since the summer of seventh grade, but I didn't compete in an official conference till my freshman year. I highly encourage you to keep up with MUN and try different types of committees (crisis, specialized, etc.) I hope you all enjoy your time in this committee and learn something along the way.

Matthew Lerman

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Hello delegates,

Thank you for choosing to be a part of SOCHUM! It would be my pleasure to be your chair for this conference. My name is Jonathan Plavnik, and I am a current freshman in the Academy of Business and Finance. This is my first year participating in Model UN, and it was also my first time going to conferences, as part of the BCA team. MUN is an incredible activity, as it offers people the chance to experience many types of public speaking. Whether it be lengthy discussions on proposing solutions (General Assembly) or quick thinking (crisis), and even more. I hope you all enjoy your time in SOCHUM, and let this either be the first step or for experienced delegates, another one on your Model UN journey.

Jonathan Plavnik

INTRODUCTION

SOCHUM will focus on the impacts the Afghanistan Taliban crisis has on its community, specifically women.

Death and poverty became rampant during this crisis, and women's freedoms were further restricted. With U.S.'s withdrawal and the Taliban's newly gained control, these conditions further worsened. Women are faced with new losses of freedom and societal restrictions such as restrictions on education and requiring male escorts everywhere.

Delegates in this committee should cooperate to create a cohesive solution that not only provides adequate aid, but also combats the fierce inequality that is deteriorating Afghanistan.



TOPIC:
Afghanistan gender
humanitarian crisis after
Taliban Control



HISTORY OF THE ISSUE

The Taliban was formed in the early 1990s by Afghan mujahideen, or Islamic guerilla fighters, who had resisted the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (1979–89) with the covert backing of the CIA and its Pakistani counterpart, the Inter-Services Intelligence directorate (ISI). They were primarily joined by younger Pashtun, who are the majority in Afghanistan. The Pashtun are also a major ethnic group in Pakistan.

The movement attracted popular support in the initial post-Soviet era by promising to impose stability and rule of law after four years of conflict (1992–96) among rival mujahideen groups. The Taliban entered Kandahar in November 1994 to pacify the crime-ridden southern city, and by September 1996 seized the capital, Kabul, from President Burhanuddin Rabbani. That year, the Taliban declared

Afghanistan an Islamic emirate, with Mullah Mohammed Omar as the ruler. The Taliban had controlled around 90 percent of Afghanistan prior to America's invasion of 2001.

The Taliban imposed harsh conditions, especially on women. Women were required to wear the head-to-toe burqa or chadri and were banned from listening to music and watching television. In addition, on September 30, 1996, the Taliban decreed that all women were to be banned from employment. This had many consequences, such as almost stopping elementary education for both girls and boys, since almost all primary-school teachers were female. Another impact was the widespread increase in poverty. The amount offered to women was \$5 USD monthly, and even this was a short-term program. After Afghanistan had experienced the conflict brought by the Soviet Union

and the takeover by the Taliban, many families were poor and struggling to support themselves. With the unemployment of all women, the number of families in poverty exploded.

Education for girls above the age of eight was banned, which was said to be a temporary measure.

The Taliban was strict on preventing cross-gender contact, and this can clearly be seen in the decree just mentioned, which was in place until the Taliban's defeat in 2001 and will likely be reinstated under new Taliban leadership.

Women were not allowed to go to work nor get an education, and were confined to their houses.

This isolation deteriorated them mentally and physically. A 1998 survey showed that of 160 residents and former residents of Kabul, 97 percent showed signs of serious depression and 71 percent reported a decline in their physical well-being.

The Taliban is a predominantly Pashtun Islamic fundamentalist group that returned to power in Afghanistan in 2021 after waging a twenty-year insurgency. The conflict began in 2001 when the United States of America invaded Afghanistan in response to the 9/11 attacks on the Twin Towers. The intent of this invasion was the capture of Osama Bin Laden, the leader of the terrorist group known as al-Qaeda. The Taliban was providing refuge to these terrorists, and the United States of America, under President George Bush, then invaded Afghanistan in response. At first, the USA was successful and managed to install a puppet regime to replace the Taliban, who had been driven to Pakistan. However, this success would not last, as, in fewer than ten years, the Taliban had begun regaining land. This would culminate in America's defeat and retreat from Afghanistan in 2021, under President Biden.

CURRENT SITUATION

Following America's total withdrawal of troops in August 2021, the conditions in Afghanistan under the control of the Taliban have significantly worsened. The Taliban have several beliefs and ideas that they strictly impose on those they rule, and these specifically impact women, causing inhumane conditions for women living under Taliban control. In addition, the war itself between the forces of the United States, those allied with them, and the Taliban have created rampant death and poverty within Afghanistan. Afghanistan's economy is tanking; banks are closed or limiting access to funds; overseas assets are frozen; foreign aid from America, Europe, and others, that kept the country afloat and its hungry fed, has been frozen; salaries are unpaid; and unemployment is through the roof.

These issues are on top of the pandemic and the severe drought the country is facing. The U.N. warns that as many as 97% of the population could be in poverty by next year, which would make it the poorest nation by some metrics.

Another development is that women have been redefined to their previous restrictions. The Taliban have imposed rights-violating policies that have created huge barriers to women's and girls' health and education, curtailed freedom of movement, expression, and association, and deprived many of earned income.

Afghanistan's rapidly escalating humanitarian crisis exacerbates these abuses. Following the Taliban takeover, millions of dollars in lost income, spiking prices, aid cut-offs, a liquidity crisis, and cash shortages triggered by former donor countries, especially the United States, have deprived much of the population of

access to food, water, shelter, and health care.

A core faculty member of SJSU's Human Rights Institute and a scholar on Afghanistan, Halima Kazem-Stojanovic described the situation as, "Afghan women and girls are facing both the collapse of their rights and dreams and risks to their basic survival..."

They are caught between Taliban abuses and actions by the international community that is pushing Afghans further into desperation every day."

Many women had been the sole or primary wage earner for their family, but most lost their employment due to Taliban policies. Only those working in primary education or health care were still able to work, and most were not being paid due to the financial crisis. The price for food, transportation, and schoolbooks, has greatly increased too, coupled with an abrupt and often total income loss for families.

These factors make it impractical for both girls and boys to receive primary education, a basic human right, and thrust family after family into poverty.

The Taliban have banned women and girls from secondary and higher education, and altered curricula to focus more on religious studies. They dictate what women must wear, how they should travel, workplace segregation by sex, and even what kind of cell phones women should have. They enforce these rules through intimidation and inspections.

In summary, under the new Taliban leadership, women's rights are declining while nationwide poverty skyrockets. Keep these details in mind when proposing solutions for the situation in Afghanistan.

COUNTY POLICY

MIDDLE EAST

Countries in the Middle East tend to be allied with Afghanistan. One example is Turkey, a close ally of Afghanistan which has called for recognition of Taliban rule. A notable exception is Israel, which has no diplomatic relations with Afghanistan and no plans to ally with the Taliban. Some countries in this group had acknowledged the Taliban's control at the end of the 20th century, but no countries have acknowledged its control this time. Their ties with the U.S. are crucial to consider, as acknowledging the Taliban would harm the U.S., something many of these countries would like to do. While the U.S. desires more involvement from these countries, some, such as the U.A.E. and Qatar, are treading lightly to avoid stepping over any boundaries.

EUROPE REGION

Many European countries denounced the Taliban and voiced their aid against its control. The EU condemned many of the Taliban's actions, as many of its orders went against its ideals. Delegates should look into specifics into their country's reaction to previous Taliban control, but overall, the EU tends to condemn the Taliban as a whole; some countries may have already given aid to the people of Afghanistan. Contrarily, some countries in the EU have avoided militarization and conflict. While a majority of Western Europe opposes the Taliban, some Eastern European nations have less terse relations with the terrorist organization. For example, Russia has had diplomatic relations with the Taliban in the past, allegedly supplying them with weapons.

ASIAN REGION

Citizens of countries in central Asia have voiced their fears of the possibility of recent refugee intakes destabilizing the region. Furthermore, a high percentage of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan citizens refused to answer the question of “Should our country recognize the Taliban as an official Afghan government?” China may look into further business deals in Afghanistan rather than combatting the Taliban. Ultimately, countries’ views are varying throughout Asia, having differing levels of support based on proximity, government, and foreign relations.

NORTH AMERICAN REGION

The rise in the Taliban’s control is a direct consequence of the U.S.’s withdrawal from the country. Powerhouse countries in the continent, such as the U.S. and Canada, strongly

condemn the Taliban. The North American nations have taken in many thousands of refugees as well. The U.S. is a large player in the conflict and should consider carefully how to move forward as a leading force.

SOUTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

South American countries tend to lead a non-interventionist view as proceeding through conflicts. Many offered little support to the U.S. in the previous fight against the Taliban. However, many stressed that military action should not be the first step taken when fighting against the Taliban, even if it’s challenging to progress without it.

Politicians in the U.S. theorize that countries in the continent avoid denouncing human rights violations in the country to avoid further criticism of their own violations,

like Venezuela. Delegates, please remember that even if your country is more passive about the conflict, you are still encouraged to come up with innovative solutions and clauses to advance the situation.

AFRICAN REGION

African countries have taken an even more passive stance than Latin-American ones, some ignoring it altogether. While they may not have the power or wealth to be a serious force in relief efforts against the Taliban, it is still important to remember that these countries have the capability to contribute if the government deems it beneficial.

On the other hand, some smaller African countries are currently occupied with facing their own conflicts such as destabilized regions or civil wars, with terrorist groups in Africa being emboldened

by the takeover of the Taliban. African countries should make sure to factor in how their response to the Taliban will impact local terrorist groups and their potential actions.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

To create an effective solution that prevents a large-scale catastrophe from ensuing, it's vital to consider the Taliban's previous aggression and current plans for the country. Looking at Afghanistan's current state, it may be illogical to force military action to combat the Taliban's control. Furthermore, risking further civilian casualties counteracts this committee's goal. It's essential to prioritize the prevention of further escalation. Refugees from war are one thing to consider when crafting a solution. Countries wealthy enough and those who steadily accept war refugees should seek to provide aid through asylum.

While this may not be the only relief provided by these countries, it's important to note that many countries are unable to house refugees as effectively as wealthier nations. Countries of lower status may benefit from taking in refugees that enter the workforce, but would most likely be near the crisis to avoid great investment into transportation. Overall, delegations should seek to combat the issue of refugees through asylum.

As mentioned previously, to avoid militarization close to the region, it's important to prevent the Taliban from further gaining power. Delegations could create a task force or specialized committee to focus on military operations.

Furthermore, many other specialized committees can be created to tackle specific issues. For example, a committee that focuses on providing aid to the country and regulates

what countries provide could be created. These specialized committees may be run by members and partners of the UN, along with NGOs and nonprofits, and do not have to be from any specific countries. It is also important to focus on women that are directly affected by the war. The Taliban's views on equality for all citizens are evidently missing. Women are disproportionately affected by their cruel ruling. Thus, delegations should focus on providing aid to female refugees who escaped the country, along with current citizens, and implement educational programs. Women are also at much higher physical risk, as recent rulings from the Taliban target their freedom. However, take note that countries which do not currently exercise gender equality may not be too keen on prioritizing women's safety.

In addition, delegations should educate the public on current matters within the country and justify any major decisions made by the country. By educating the public, funding may be easier to acquire through citizens. However, funding for resolutions is a common problem and should be immediately addressed when proposing solutions. Funding should not be aggressive nor heavy-handed, and must instead be meticulously analyzed to assure no extra funds are required. Funding can take different forms like of percentages of income streams or using money from reserves and related organizations.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How will aid relief be provided through dangerous territories?
- How will communication between countries and the Taliban occur?
- Will military action be taken against the Taliban?
- What precautions should nations take to avoid escalating the situation?
- What is the end goal of nations attempting to aid Afghanistan?
- How will countries cooperate to create a cohesive solution?
- How will countries deliver aid to different parts of the country?
- What will countries prioritize when delivering aid?
- If the Taliban were to fight back, how would nations react?

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