



UNITED
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HUMAN RIGHTS
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- THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE -

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Hello delegates,

It is an honor for me to welcome you all to the Academy Model United Nations conference and the United Nations Human Rights Council. My name is Seoyeon (Lucy) Choi and I will be head chair for this conference. The first time I ever got to experience Model UN was through AMUN. Through it, I developed an interest in international affairs, negotiating, public speaking and debating and I hope that you guys will be able to experience the full realm of Model UN through this conference.

Outside of Model UN, I am the vice president of Spanish National Honor Society, secretary of Club MEDS, and the secretary of class council. I'm an avid fan of Harry Potter and I usually spend my time binge watching movies on Netflix. One of my favorite things about Model UN is meeting new people and I hope that all of you will not only be able to passionately discuss crucial topics regarding human rights but also become closer with each other throughout the two days. Please feel free to email me with any questions or concerns

Sincerely,
Seoyeon (Lucy) Choi, Chair , UNHRC
seoycho@bergen.org

Hi delegates!

My name is Franchesca Inay, and I would like to warmly welcome you to this year's AMUN conference. I am currently a junior in the Academy for Medical Science and Technology, and it is with great pleasure that I will serve as one of your chairs for UNHRC. I have been an avid participant in Model UN since my first conference freshman year, and have developed a deep passion for the activity through the friendships I have forged and the fun I have had along the way. Outside of Model UN, I am involved in various science related clubs including Science Olympiad and Club Meds, where I serve as the Vice President and President, respectively. Additionally, I am part of BCA's HOSA chapter, and conduct research with endometrial cancer cells. Outside of school, I enjoy playing video games and running. I look forward to meeting with you all in February and hearing your proposals on how to tackle the complex issues that my co-chairs and I have selected for you. Do not hesitate to email me if you have any questions, and I hope you all enjoy the conference!

Sincerely,
Franchesca Inay, Vice Chair, UNHRC
fraina@bergen.org



Introduction:

The usage of capital punishment (i.e. the legally authorized killing of an individual for a crime) has been instituted in many areas across the globe, its origins dating back several hundred years in the past. However, the morality of this practice has long been a controversial issue throughout the international community, and continues to be hotly debated in the present day. Some argue that the death penalty is necessary in maintaining justice and perpetuating lawful behavior, while others believe that it strips people of their rights as human beings and is simply unjust. This complex issue is one that requires attention from the UNHRC in order to be alleviated.

Topic History:

Ever since the beginning of civilization, the death penalty has been used as a penalty for capital crimes, and became a common method of punishment as well as

preventing political disobedience. The earliest traces of this practice date back to ancient times among primitive tribes. Their justice system revolved around communal punishment, and execution was considered a way of compensating for a grave offense. The perpetrator of the crime could be executed in a variety of fashions that range from stoning and impalement to boiling to death and decapitation. Other early societies known for implementing the death penalty in their legal systems include that of the Athenians in Ancient Greece, the Romans, the Tang dynasty, and medieval Europe (namely during the reign of Henry VII of England). The death penalty has been known to be a popular tool in authoritarian states for political condemnation. Though the offenses that sanction the death penalty vary from one country to another, they often include treason, espionage, murder, sexual crimes (which include but are not limited to incest, sodomy, and rape), trafficking of humans and/or drugs, and crimes related to religion. Similarly, the methods of execution for those sentenced to the death penalty differ depending on the nation and the crime



committed, but popular ones that are used in present day states include a firing squad, hanging, and lethal injection. Society has, over time, realized the negative and immoral implications that of the death penalty, thus having taken steps towards using non-painful executions for those sentenced to capital punishment.

The abolition of the death penalty in law and/or in practice first started to become a trend in the years following World War II, and has also been known to occur in nations that adopt democracy as a new form of a government.

Current Situation and Possible Solutions:

Amnesty International stated that as of July 2015, 101 countries have abolished the practice of the death penalty for all crimes in law, and 140 countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice. Additionally, the amount of executions carried out worldwide has been decreasing every year

since 2013, with the number of executions in 2014 having decreased from the prior year by almost 22%. This decrease in the practice of capital punishment is telling of the global trend of abandoning the death penalty and abolishing its practice in sovereign countries. The nations that have outlawed the practice of capital punishment are spread all across the globe, and include nations such as Argentina, Belgium, Albania, Mexico, Canada, Sweden, Switzerland, France, Turkey, and Romania, among others.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that almost all Pacific and European nations fall under this aforementioned category. While most states in Latin America have abolished the death penalty as well, nations such as Brazil allow for the practice of capital punishment in extreme circumstances (like treason during a time of war).

Needless to say, there remain some countries that continue to practice the death penalty, and the nation that is most infamous for its' heavy usage of capital punishment is the People's Republic of China. It is regarded by the international community as the world's top



executioner, carrying out thousands of legally authorized executions a year and killing more criminals than the entire world put together. Though the number of executed persons from the death penalty in China is hard to estimate due to the immediate action of the death sentences, the press reports an approximate 2,400 executions from capital punishment in 2015. Additionally, the United States, another global superpower, also practices the death penalty in some areas. Similarly, most Asian democracies (i.e. India and Japan) and Africa continue to practice capital punishment in their borders.

When considering the ethicality of the death penalty, one must also take into account the practice's implications financially, religiously, socially, and morally. Delegates must tackle the challenge of determining how to come to an international consensus on the usage of capital punishment in nations without compromising national sovereignty. While most of the international community seems to be taking steps away from the practice of the death penalty, a number of nations do not agree

with the majority and continue this practice, so other issues that may arise include how to reduce the number of casualties in the nations that continue to implement the death penalty, as well as what methods are most appropriate in these executions.

Questions to Consider:

1. To what extent can capital punishment be criticized and labelled as a violation of human rights in a sovereign territory?
2. In what instances (if any) is the practice of capital punishment just and necessary? In these instances, what methods would be most appropriate to use?
3. What are possible ways to reduce casualties from capital punishment throughout the international community?
4. Is there a way to come to a full consensus on the practice of capital punishment in the international community while taking into account international law, human



- rights, and national sovereignty?
5. If a country is unwilling to abolish the death penalty in their own territory, what can be done to ensure that the sentences they give are based on fair trials and are not unethical?

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5. <https://www.aclu.org/issues/capitalpunishment>



Introduction:

Child labor is one of the most widespread and long lasting out of all dilemmas in international child protection problems. Many children, especially from impecunious families, are forced to work day and night to assist their family financially. Child labor ranges from agricultural labor, mining, domestic service to begging for money on the streets. A majority of the children work in dangerous and hazardous environments, particularly in construction and agriculture, and can be exposed to dangerous and heavy machinery leading to injury and death. An even more extreme type of child labor is forced labor including debt bondage, slavery in armed conflict zones and commercial sexual exploitation.

Topic History:

Machines started to replace hand labour in Europe and United States during the Industrial Revolution in the late 1700s which

led to more children being hired by factory owners because children could be hired at a cheaper rate than adults. By 1810, more than 2 million children worldwide were working over 70 hours per week. In 1819, Great Britain took a step towards combating child labour by passing a series of laws that shortened working hours, improved working conditions and raised the minimum age of working. Other countries started to join Britain's movement of combatting child labour; however, it wasn't until 1938 when the United States Congress passed the Fair Labour Standards Act which requires minimum age of 16 to work. The United Nations have since then adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child which was further ratified by more than 190 countries with the exception of Somalia and the United States. In 1992, the United Nations initiated International Program on the Elimination of Child Labour to eliminate child labour by providing schooling opportunities. Child labor is a serious dilemma for all countries but the conflict and humanitarian crisis in Syria has been resulting in a sharp incline of



children working in is causing a rapid increase of children having to work in risky conditions. According to a joint report released by UNICEF and Save the Children, since the start of Syria's civil war in 2011, children are contributing to the family income more than ever before and children as young as six are working. Not to mention that the number of children being trafficked to the military to fight, brothels to be subject to sexual exploitation and get involved with organized begging.

Current Situation and Possible Solutions:

Currently, despite the various efforts to combat child labour, the number of children being forced into the labour market has only been increasing. In the middle of a humanitarian crisis, Syrian refugees have fled all over the middle eastern area including Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and Iraq. Employers in Lebanon and Jordan have a high demand for Syrian refugees since they are much more

inexpensive to hire especially because refugees lack legal work permits that allows them to legally work in jobs that pay fair wages. Although the Jordanian and Lebanese government has worked tirelessly to extend education to young children, many of them especially Syrian refugees cannot manage to go to school since they have to work day and night in order to pay off their debt or bring food to the family. Not to mention that the books, uniforms and other materials necessary for school is considered wasteful for many of these Syrian refugees.

Another impending issue is that although some of these children voluntarily go into work, there are many who are forced to work in brothels, plantations and the military due to debt bondage or because they have been trafficked and have no home or family to return to.

Multiple countries have been working to fight child labour such as the government of India setting a ban to all forms of child labour in 2012 and setting strict laws such as all forms of employment will be banned for children up to the age of completion of primary education. The NFCCCL (National Framework to Combat Child Labour) has been working tirelessly to not only raise



awareness of the current state of child labour especially Syrian refugees child labour but attempt to set up education opportunities such as vocational trainings and such.

Other groups such as the Ministry of Education along with NGOs have been creating projects to encourage children to return to education and provide education in refugee camps over the Middle Eastern area.

2015 reports on child labour estimates that five million children are working under slavery like conditions. To help solve the issue of child labour especially regarding Syrian refugees, the United Nations has put emphasis on the importance of the government's efforts to combat child labour.

Although the Jordan and Lebanon government has indeed moved forward in fighting against child labour, there are still more than thousands suffering and to help combat this issue, the government should work in increasing fines on employers who employ children, strengthen child labour laws especially regarding child trafficking and sexual exploitation and provide a mean of income for Syrian refugee families so that the children of the families are able to go to school instead of working in hazardous conditions.

Questions to Consider:

1. Many countries have tried to combat child labour including Lebanon and Jordan, however the number of children involved in child labour is still high. What are some of the most immediate and reasonable solutions to help the children in Syria?
2. What are ways to combat human trafficking associated with child labour?
3. In what ways should the government help to aid Syrian refugees and their families?
4. How should the UNHRC aid the children willingly working in contrast to the children that are being forced into labour?
5. How will the situation of being located inside a refugee camp affect the Syrian children?



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