

Hilton 2020

United Nations Economic and Social Council

Committee Overview

This committee will be run Harvard style. This means that resolution papers are not to be written until the committee is in session. Any resolutions written beforehand will not be accepted and the delegate will not be considered for awards. We strongly suggest that each delegate writes at least one position paper on one of the topics below to be considered for an award. **Position papers must be emailed to the chairs two days prior to the conference.** All delegates are expected to come to the first day of committee with a working knowledge of all or most of the topics, as well as the policies of the countries that they represent.

The Economic and Social Council is a principal organ of the United Nations that is tasked with advancing sustainable development. Keep in mind that this council has a leading role in creating innovative solutions that promote economic, social and environmental progress. Respect, creativity, and peaceful communication are essential to operating efficiently. Furthermore, keep in mind that Model UN is not a competition, so go research and have fun!

Committee Description

Abuse against Asylum Seekers in Greece

Controversy over Foreign Aid

Persecution Against Disabled People in Mexico

Human Rights Issues with Militias and Paramilitary Groups

Chairs

Anushka Mandava | anushkamandava@gmail.com

Hi delegates! My name is Anushka Mandava and I am a senior at Pittsford Sutherland. This is my third time chairing but my fourth year in Model UN. I'm a member of the Class Student Council, part of Roc Kids Connect, and also part of Sources of Strength. In my free time, I love to volunteer at the hospital and paint. I'm looking forward to a fun and memorable conference!

Oren Poleshuck Kinel | opkinel@gmail.com

Hello delegates! My name is Oren Poleshuck Kinel, and this is my first time chairing but my third year in Model UN. I'm a junior at Brighton High School, and I participate in Science Olympiad, my school's newspaper, and play soccer. Please don't hesitate to email either of us if you have any questions. I'm looking forward to a great conference!

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Abuse against Asylum Seekers in Greece



At the Greece-Turkey border, Greek security officers are forcing asylum seekers back to Turkey. Instead of allowing them to enter Greece, groups of unidentified armed men and security forces are stripping, robbing, assaulting, and detaining the migrants.

Thousands of migrants have traveled to the border between Turkey and Greece at the Pazarkule border gate and the Evros river. Currently, Turkey is the home to 3.6 million Syrian refugees and migrants are seeking refuge in Greece. Turkey couldn't provide adequate protection to the refugees and its resources

were strained. So when Turkey reopened its border to Europe in February 2020, asylum seekers migrated to Greece. Out of those interviewed, many said that the Turkish police showed asylum seekers how to cross into Greece by taking them to the border villages. In response to the Turkish action, the Greek government tightened security and deployed forces along its border. Furthermore, many of the asylum seekers who were interviewed said that armed men forced them to cross the Evros river back to Turkey. However, people who do cross the border end up getting stopped and picked up by armed men in Greece to be deported back to Turkey.

Additionally, the European Union is in support of Greece's decision to close its borders. The European Union even provided support through FRONTEX, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency as they stationed forces all along the Greece-Turkey border during March 2020. This is of particular concern because article 14 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights states that, "Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution." Greece might have some legal right to deport asylum seekers; however, the European Union and Turkey reached a deal in 2016 in which the EU would pay Greece to care for asylum seekers and allow Greece to deport them back to Turkey if they arrived without official permission. Still, the deal has been criticized by human rights activists as inhumane. Considering the large human rights implications of this issue, the UN should aim to address it in a timely manner.

What measures can the UN take to help these asylum seekers? How can the UN pressure Greece and the European Union to improve their treatment of migrants? Should Greece be required to accept asylum seekers from Turkey?

Sources:

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/03/17/greece-violence-against-asylum-seekers-border#>

<https://www.voanews.com/europe/un-alarmed-reports-greece-forces-out-asylum-seekers>

<https://observatoryihr.org/news/remember-refugees-greece-update/>

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Controversy over Foreign Aid



The United States' modern concept of foreign aid was conceived with the Marshall Plan, where the U.S. gave \$15 billion in aid to rebuild Western Europe after World War 2. Ever since, aid has been hailed as a solution for problems ranging from poverty to global peace and security. That does not mean aid is without its issues.

For instance, the practice of tying aid, or where aid must be used to buy goods from the donor country, has been criticized to be of more harm than good. Tied aid is used because it benefits the donor's imports and exports, but since goods bought with it are heavily subsidized, it can undercut

local farmers and local businesses, causing harm to developing economies. In recent years, states have made progress in untying aid, but almost 20% of aid remains tied.

In addition, many nations give aid based on political goals. For instance, China's belt and road aid program has been criticized as a form of neocolonialism because it holds recipients hostage with large loans. China isn't alone in doing this; most major aid donors use their aid for political purposes in some way. Even the Marshall Plan had political goals in mind; one of its main objectives was to thwart the spread of Communism in Europe.

Moreover, some argue that the immense amount of aid given to authoritarian regimes allows them to stay in power. Just the U.S., for example, donates aid to 73% of them. Since aid allows dictators to improve resources available to citizens, it keeps in power regimes that might fail or democratize without any aid.

Still, our current system of aid has contributed to many humanitarian gains. The fight against HIV/AIDs is a good example; annual deaths due to the disease have declined from an estimated 1.7 million in 2004 to just 770,000 in 2018. In addition, the practice of tying aid and using it to support political allies could offer motivation for nations to give aid and provide a justification for taxpayers. Whatever the case, the UN should focus on how to best give foreign aid and how to incentivize states to give aid in that way.

How does your country spend its aid? Is it possible to improve foreign aid without discouraging nations from giving it? Does foreign aid need to be reformed?

Sources:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/foreign-aid>

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2017/05/18/528558417/should-america-keep-giving-billions-of-dollars-to-countries-in-need>

<https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/untied-aid.htm>

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Persecution Against Disabled People in Mexico



In Mexico, people who have physical, sensory, intellectual, and psychological disabilities face severe abuse and neglect by their family members. These abuses range from domestic violence to verbal abuse and confinement. Since there is lack of support from the government, most of these people still live with their families. Currently, in order to support people with disabilities, the Mexican government provides them with financial disability pensions. However, these disability pensions are only provided for people in poverty and only 1 in 7 people receive them. Additionally, when disabled people are granted federal pensions, they do not come close to covering their expenses. To make matters worse, the money is typically given directly to the family rather than the individual, giving disabled people little independence.

Though Mexico ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which states people with disabilities have the right to live independently, not much is being done to help these victims. Mexico's government hasn't implemented the necessary policies to help disabled people live independently. Because many of these people need assistance with simple tasks such as eating and basic hygiene, they are forced to depend on their families for everyday tasks. Not all families are able to provide for disabled people, however, and some are treated so poorly that they're only allowed to shower once a week or have to urinate in bags which are placed next to their bed. Most are not even allowed to leave their house due to family neglect. A majority of disabled people are treated appallingly and there is not enough data collected about the poor treatment, but around 33.9 percent of Mexicans are victims of domestic violence.

Persecution against the disabled is not new to Mexico; in 2010, it was found that the disabled were often detained in unsanitary, overcrowded facilities and received unnecessary and sometimes damaging brain operations. According to international human rights standards, governments are supposed to protect all people from abuse and violence. Though Mexico's state and federal government recognizes family violence, not all laws specifically refer to people with disabilities.

What policies can the Mexican government implement to assist the disabled? How can the UN help disabled people in Mexico? In what ways could Mexican government ensure the disabled people receive justice?

Sources:

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/06/04/better-make-yourself-invisible/family-violence-against-people-disabilities-mexico#>

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/06/04/mexico-families-abuse-neglect-people-disabilities>

<https://reliefweb.int/report/mexico/life-disability-migrant-caravan>

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Human Rights Issues with Militias and Paramilitary Groups



In modern times, governments have turned to militias to help them fight conflicts, particularly those involving terrorists. Many countries, even the United States, have backed militias in some sort of conflict. In fact, government-backed militias have been involved in the majority of conflicts in the past 4 decades.

The usage of government-backed militias is so widespread because they can offer many advantages to traditional militaries. They often have valuable local knowledge, can provide cheap and numerous soldiers, and can provide security to locals when the official military is weak or incapable. They can also be helpful to defeating insurgent groups, exemplified by the use of CIA-backed militias in their fight against the Taliban.

These same militias, however, have potentially devastating effects on the US-Taliban peace talks. The difficulty of incorporating these militias into any peace agreement and their many independent interests drastically increases chances of creating a lasting peace. Other nations, such as Iraq and Libya, have also faced difficulties reintegrating government-backed militias.

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In addition, militia groups tend to commit human rights violations since they have little care for international laws of conflict. For example, the *Interahamwe militia in Rwanda, which was trained by Hutu extremists, saw genocide as a "carnival romp" and thus committed many horrible abuses.*

Similarly, there are 14 known cases in which CIA-backed militias engaged in serious humanitarian abuses in the past 2 years. In other cases, governments will use militias to avoid responsibility for repressive actions, further accentuating human rights issues with militias. The UN should evaluate the role that government backed militias should play in conflict given the advantages and disadvantages regarding them and discuss how to stop human rights concerns regarding their use.

How can human rights abuses by militias be prevented? What role should pro-government militias play in counterinsurgency efforts? Should the UN support national armies rather than militias?

Sources:

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2015/05/07/taming-militias-building-national-guards-in-fractured-arab-states-pub-60005>

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2019/10/31/theyve-shot-many/abusive-night-raids-cia-backed-afghan-strike-forces>

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/militias-the-fight-against-isis-spoilers-or-stabilizers>