

Hilton 2022 Chair Letter

UNHRC - United Nations Human Rights Council

Committee Overview

Worsening Treatment of People with Psychosocial Disabilities During COVID-19

Eviction of the Maasai Indigenous People from Ancestral Lands in Tanzania

Exploitation of Impoverished People in Haiti

Housing Inequality in Chad

Committee Description:

UNHRC will be run Harvard Style, meaning delegates are not permitted to draft resolutions until the day of the conference. Additionally, it is strongly recommended that each delegate writes at least one position paper on a topic, as doing so is required to be considered for an award. Position papers should be emailed to the chairs prior to the start of the conference.

Delegates are expected to arrive at the conference well-researched and ready to discuss all topics, as well as being knowledgeable about the policies and beliefs of the countries that they represent. Keep in mind that the purpose of the UN Human Rights Council is to protect human rights for all people and assist those responsible with upholding such rights.

ABOUT US:

Izzy Roth

Hello, delegates! My name is Izzy Roth and I am a senior at Penfield High school. I am vice president of my school's Model UN club, and this is my first time chairing. Outside of Model UN, I play tennis and participate in several clubs including Science Olympiad and Student Council. Feel free to reach out with any questions!

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Shivika Gupta

Hi everyone! My name is Shivika Gupta and I will be your other chair for Hilton 2022. I am a senior at Sutherland High School and this will be my second time chairing. At school, I am president of my school's Model UN and Pre-Law clubs. I'm looking forward to meeting you all at the conference, please reach out to me or Izzy with any questions!

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Topic #1: Worsening Treatment of People with Psychosocial Disabilities During COVID-19

According to the World Health Organization, one in every eight people around the world live with a mental disorder. Yet, stigmatization of mental health issues is known to be extremely prevalent. This stigma means that many people with psychosocial disabilities do not have access to adequate treatment, and the resulting conditions are tragic. In the most severe cases, people are subjected to a practice called shackling. Men, women, and children are chained in confined spaces under horrific conditions including filthy and overcrowded rooms, limited access to food, and unsanitary water.

Human Rights Watch has found evidence of shackling in 60 countries across Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas making this a vast issue. Despite being such a common practice, the problem is largely untouched as perpetrators often conceal their actions in shame. Many will recognize that their practices are dishonorable, but know no other way to handle such behaviors.

Additionally, religion plays an impactful role in the concept of stigmatization. There are widespread beliefs in various cultures that mental health conditions are a result of possession by evil spirits or due to sin. Thus, religious leaders or healers are often consulted rather than medical professionals, and many severe psychiatric cases never receive the medical aid they require.

The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated this issue further. What little government or community-based funding and assistance was previously dedicated to mental health services, was largely redirected to battling the raging pandemic. Without access to these services due to lockdown protocols, families felt that they had run out of options and resorted to the practice of shackling their own relatives. Furthermore, many of those shackled within overcrowded institutions have no access to sanitation or basic healthcare. While shackling is one of the greatest threats to those with psychosocial disabilities, people worldwide suffered inadequate treatment as a result of the pandemic.

The United Nations recognizes that mental health is connected to and just as important as physical health. As a result, mental healthcare has been declared a human right under the UN. In one area of the world where shackling is prevalent, Indonesia, the UN's expert on health urged the government to increase a campaign against this practice following a visit in 2017. This included training a variety of mental health workers and providing alternate practices to mental hospitals. Beyond this, the issue of shackling has remained a largely unsolved issue that requires attention as its prevalence has surged.

Shackling is a frightfully overused practice and must be addressed in order to protect the rights of those with psychosocial disabilities. As the world transitions to a sense of normalcy emerging from the pandemic, the UN should find solutions that will uphold their rights to safe living conditions and compassionate treatment.

How can we reduce the prevalence of shackling while it is such a widespread practice? Does the stigma around this topic prevent us from addressing the full scope of the problem? Should the UN directly support mental health services?

Human Rights Watch: Living in Chains

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/10/06/living-chains/shackling-people-psychosocial-disabilities-worldwide>

ABC News: Hundreds of Thousands Shackled for Mental Health Issues Globally

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-10-07/people-with-poor-mental-health-shackled-higher-risk-coronavirus/12736904>

Al Jazeera: Kept in Chains

<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2020/10/10/rights-group-mentally-ill-shackled-and-chained-worldwide>



Topic #2: Eviction of the Maasai Indigenous People from Ancestral Lands in Tanzania

The Maasai, a semi-nomadic herding group, have resided in northern Tanzania in the Ngorongoro Crater since 1959. Their population and the size of their livestock herds have grown exponentially since then, leading the Tanzanian government to plan relocation to maintain the habitats. However, the Maasai are accusing the government of forced eviction to enact their plan for a 1,500 square kilometer area for safaris, trophy hunting, and conservation. While the government and authorities call it a voluntary relocation effort, tensions continue to escalate with the Maasai. If this relocation fully commences, at least 150,000 Maasai people are at risk of displacement.

When police marked the disputed land and preemptively arrested eleven Maasai representatives, many in the community resisted, subsequently causing an armed engagement between police and the residents. Security forces employed tear gas and fired live ammunition towards those defending their land, and between both sides thirty people were wounded and two died. Amnesty International has described the actions of the government as “unlawful forced eviction...shocking both in its scale and brutality.”

Additionally, the government froze funding for public services in Maasai villages, particularly in health and education, as another coercion tactic to force the Maasai from their homes. This is not the first attempt to seize this historic land either. One wealthy Emirati company has been evicting people for over a decade to organize private hunting trips. This company is also supported by the highest levels of the Tanzanian government, as one main shareholder is the secretary general of the country’s largest political party.

In 2010, the Ngorongoro Conservation area was designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. United Nations bodies and agencies must uphold human rights; thus, UN experts have recommended the Tanzanian government respect human rights standards in this area. Yet, tensions still continue to escalate.

This is a matter of not only seizing historic lands, but also government limitations of access to basic necessities like health care, and abusive corruption at the highest levels of government. We must protect the Maasai people’s right to remain in their homeland.

How can we protect Maasai land while also acknowledging the growing population’s effect on the environment? How does the Tanzanian government’s corruption in the matter create an obstacle to creating peace? What effect would limiting safaris and private hunting expeditions have on the nation’s economy and how can we combat that?

LeMonde: In Tanzania, the Maasai are evicted from their land in the name of wildlife protection and tourism
https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2022/06/23/in-tanzania-the-maasai-are-evicted-from-their-land-in-the-name-of-wildlife-protection-and-tourism_5987719_4.html

The Guardian: Tanzania’s Maasai appeal to stop eviction for conservation plans
<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/apr/22/tanzania-maasai-appeal-to-west-stop-evictions-due-to-conservation-plans>

UN News: Tanzania: More violence feared over bid to evict Maasai from ancestral lands
<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/06/1120442>



Topic #3: Exploitation of Impoverished People in Haiti

In Haiti, millions of people suffer daily from extreme poverty. Over the centuries, the once successful nation's infrastructure has collapsed leaving behind the Haiti of today. Haiti has become a magnet for exploitation for the wealthy and the businesses leaving the majority of the population to live under two dollars a day. Haiti's former power has only depleted with massive social and economical regression due to the poverty line worsening day by day.

In 2022, Haiti remains the poorest country in the Latin America and Caribbean region and among the poorest in the entire world. People all over the nation are suffering due to the exacerbated political and social instability, increasing violence and fragility of their very lives. These people are put into impossible situations with very little means to get out of their poverty. The wealth disparity is also an issue with the majority of the population, around 85 percent living in poverty while the others are controlling the country. It is shown further that in 2020, the United Nations Human Development Index ranked Haiti 170 out of 189 countries.

Haiti is trying to redeem itself and recover from the poverty that they are facing but with difficulties constantly arising. Firstly, with the Covid-19 pandemic emerging in 2020, the country's fiscal policies are constantly changing to accommodate the huge burden that this puts on the country. Next, Haiti's location is wracked with natural disasters and nature phenomena. In August of 2021, Hurricane Grace and an earthquake hit the country, causing another hit to their economy and destroying thousands of dollars worth of infrastructure.



Therefore, this is an issue that has been perpetuated for decades with no solutions in sight. People are living with absolutely no means to get out of poverty while the wealth gap becomes larger with the crises that Haiti is facing. As the world approaches a new age, the United Nations must come forth and protect the human rights of Haitian citizens.

How can the United Nations implement government assistance for Haitian citizens without infringing upon their sovereignty? How can the Human Rights Council effectively help human rights, if individuals are still remaining under the poverty line? What solutions can be collectivized to both widespread and individualize ending poverty all over Haiti?

The World Bank of Haiti

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/haiti/overview>

The New York Times: A Magnet for Exploitation

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/world/americas/haiti-poverty-history.html>

Relief Web and OCHA

<https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/ifrc-country-acceleration-plan-2019-haiti>

Topic #4: Housing Inequality in Chad

Having a place to sleep and eat that is safe is a requirement for survival, but most of the population in Chad is not guaranteed this. Housing Inequality is a massive issue that has swept Chad for the past two decades. Chad is one of the most poverty ridden countries in the world and this issue has only brought that fact to light. Millions of their citizens on the daily are struggling in poverty, the numbers only increasing. In 2011, the approximate number of those in poverty was 4.7 million and in 2019, that number increased majorly to around 6.8 million.



Chad's population has increased everyday over the last few years with around 450,000 refugees flooding into the country from Sudan, Nigeria and the Central African Republic. The additional population directly relates to the massive spike in poverty numbers. These refugees are fleeing from sites of war, terrorism, and havoc coming to Chad with no monetary means, creating a deeper deficit. Chad also is suffering from extreme political instability. In 2021, it was tumultuous for the citizens as the year was marked with fraudulent elections, boycotts, riots and armed attacks. The government or the lack of a controlled one, had to focus their attention towards these issues letting housing inequality and with it, human rights fall to the wayside. New infrastructure was not being built to accommodate the hundreds of thousands of refugees leaving them and the rest of the population to struggle on their own.

Additionally, the World Bank's Human Rights Index for Chad is a startlingly small 0.3. This means that babies born in Chad will be 70% less likely to be successful or even survive in comparison to babies who are given the resources they need. Many of these babies do not have the proper housing or community to live in. Chad's maternal mortality rate is one of the highest in Africa because they are not able to give birth and raise a child in a safe and sanitary environment.

Thus, housing inequality is an issue that is prevalent to Chad's growing population. Refugees, unborn babies and citizens all need the United Nations resources and assistance in helping them out of the crisis that they are currently in. As Chad is struggling to regain itself and push forward new agendas, their human rights are in danger.

How can idol contracts be negotiated to ensure idols' privacy rights? Should South Korea invest in industries less taxing to youth mental health? Does the Kpop industry create a model of abuse and exploitation for other East Asian countries?

World Bank

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/chad/overview>

Poverty, Inequality and Growth in Chad

https://www.pep-net.org/sites/pep-net.org/files/typo3doc/pdf/files_events/2016_Manila_conference/final_report/PM-MA-12880-Conference_version.pdf

Housing Finance in Chad

<https://housingfinanceafrica.org/countries/chad/>