

COMMISSION GUIDE

HRC



CCBMUNXVII

Human Rights Council

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1. Presidents' Letter

Dear delegates,

It is an enormous pleasure to have you all in the Human Rights Council Commission at CCBMUN XVII. We are Camila Guevara and Mariantonia Botero, and we are currently studying in 11th grade at Colegio Colombo Británico. It is a big honour to be leading this Commission, as we have both been part of the Model United Nations for a long time now, and we can surely say that it has been by far one of the best experiences we have lived in our high school years.

We believe that this Commission is very important because the topics discussed are based on Human Rights that are being violated all around the world. By ensuring the correct development of the Commission, we are taking care of today's world and we are creating a better future.

As this is a middle school commission, it is clear to us that many of the delegates participating will be rookies. Being a delegate for the first time is not easy. Don't worry! It may be overwhelming at first, but don't be afraid to speak out, we want to encourage you in order for you to do your best. Nevertheless, we have really high expectations of every single one of you. If you have any doubts please feel free to contact us at any moment, we will be willing to help everyone who wants to find more information about the topics of the Model.

Believe us when we say that the Model United Nations is a unique and an incredible programme, which will help you to develop many skills, such as communication and critical thinking. Also, it will help you to be informed about national and international issues that are affecting our society nowadays.

In order for you to be an outstanding delegate, it is very important that you establish a solid position about your country's point of view, leaving your personal opinions aside. One of our recommendations is for you to come ready for the debate, research and raise your placards to participate as much as you can. Remember that adopting the right attitude can convert anything into a positive situation. We look forward to meeting you all soon, and we wish you the best of luck during the CCBMUN Model!

Last but not least, welcome to our Committee; we hope you will enjoy this experience as much as we have done so far.

Yours sincerely,

Mariantonia and Camila

HRC presidents

2. Commission Information

i. History

The Human Rights Council is part of the commissions which conform the United Nations; each commission is in charge of addressing different international issues affecting our society today. The purpose of the Council is to encourage the protection and preservation of human rights around the globe. As well as examining and discussing situations regarding civil rights violations, the Council acts upon them by seeking solutions. The Council meets in Geneva, Switzerland, in the official UN office, where all issues regarding human rights which need attention are addressed by 47 United Members States, appointed by the United Nations General Assembly.



Saudi Arabia, China, among 14 nations under UN human rights spotlight: What you need to know UN news. (n.d). Retrieved from: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/11/1024852>

It is important to clarify that before it was named the Human Rights Council, this organization was known as the Commission on Human Rights. This organization had been previously discredited, which means it had lost respect and credibility, since it had been exceedingly criticized for the composition of its membership, as many members had doubtful human

rights records and it did not engage in constructive discussions. Due to this, and to Resolution 60/251 on the 15th of March 2006, the Human Rights Council was created as a replacement by the General Assembly. This first assembly was carried out from the 19th to the 30th of June during the same year.

In 2007, the Council drafted its “Institutional-building package” which included procedures and baselines in order to guide its work and set up efficient mechanisms. Because of previous failures, the new component of the UN was under trial for the first five years, meaning that the General Assembly determined that the Council’s operation and functioning was to be reviewed constantly, in order to assess its productivity. Since then, the Council serves as the main United Nations forum for intergovernmental cooperation and dialogue regarding human rights issues. The Council also makes suggestions to the General Assembly for further development of international law in this field.

ii. Structure

This Council is made up of 47 member states; the majority of the General Assembly members elect these. In order to have a fair selection, the Assembly takes into account the Candidate State's contribution towards the protection and preservation of the human rights as well as devotion towards these issues. Geographical placement is also crucial, since it must be equitable. In 2019, the seats are distributed as follows: African States have 13 seats; Latin America and Caribbean States have 8 seats; Western European and other states have 7 seats; and lastly, Eastern European states have 6 seats.



This is a map that represents the HRC membership across the globe. It is important to note that as of the first of January 2019, 114 UN member states will have served as Human Rights Council members.

Membership of the Human Rights Council. (n.d). Retrieved from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/hrc/pages/membership.aspx>

The Human Rights Council is

commanded to perform a meeting/discussion at least three times for a total of at least ten weeks per year. When necessary, special sessions can also be carried out, upon the request of one third of its members.

This Committee is the body of independent experts, which is in charge of monitoring the implementation of the “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights” by its state parties.

All states that participate in the Council, are obligated to submit regular reports to the Committee, in which they explain how human rights are being implemented. Initially, these states must report one year after acceding to the Covenant; after that, they are supposed to send the reports when the Committee requests them, which is usually every four years. At this time, the Committee examines every report and then addresses the concerns they have in the form of concluding observations.



The United Nations has a regular budget, which is approved by the General Assembly every two years, and it is funded by what is known as “assessed contributions”, that come from each member state; they are determined according to a formula which takes into account the strength and size of their respective national economies.

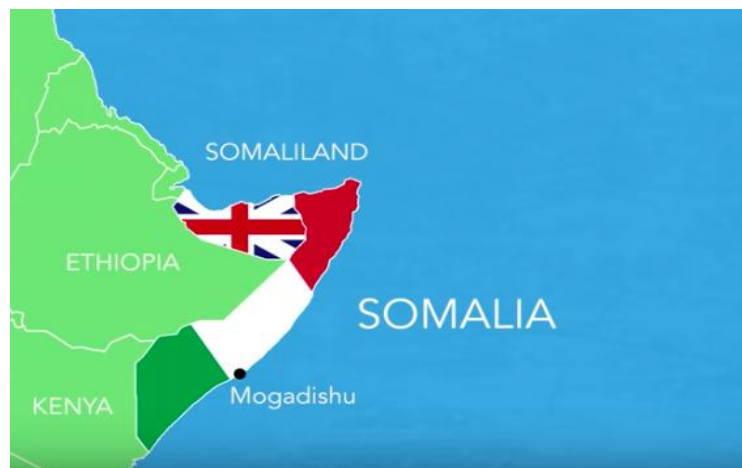
This UN regular budget is in charge of financing all the activities that are mandated by the GA (General Assembly) and its subsidiary organs, including the HRC (Human Rights Council). Human Rights has been recognized as one of the three pillars of the UN system, the remaining two are development and peace and security. The HR programme underscores the importance of human rights to the work of all of the UN Secretariat. However, the RB (Regular Budget) only allocates a very small percentage of the resources they have to the HR that are shared with the other two pillars. The Human Rights Council receives less than 8% of the resources.

3. Simulation: *Human Right violations of Somalian Child Soldiers*

i. History/Context

Over the past few years, even decades, Somalia, situated on the east coast of Africa, sharing its borders with Ethiopia and Kenya, has become to be regarded as an equivalent to a failed state. It is now recognized as a refuge for warlords, jihadists, pirates, and many other groups that constantly endanger the safety of the country and its citizens. The Federal Republic of Somalia is fairly young state, being established in 1960, however it has suffered unbelievable humanitarian and political conflicts.

During the Middle Ages, various Somali states dominated the region, but this changed during the 19th century when European powers colonized the region. As a result, British and Italian colonies were established in the territories that were populated by ethnic Somalis. This is why, after many adjustments and continuous overthrowing of power and battles for land, the current borders of the horn of Africa are a combination of two areas stuck together. Until their independence from Britain in 1960, the country belonged partly to the British and the Italians as follows:



Newsy. (2018, January 10). Retrieved May 24, 2019, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9NynKwPrUU>

In 1969 a coup changed the Government and installed a dictator known as Mohamed Siad Barre, who was the Somali Democratic Republic President from 1969 to 1991, when a second takeover threw him out of power, sparking a civil war.

Because of this civil war, an estimated 350,000 Somalis died of disease and starvation. In 1992, the United States of America and the United Nations began providing military and humanitarian aid. In the following years, Somali rebels shot down and destroyed a US helicopter, leaving one American dead and triggering the President of the United

States, Bill Clinton, to become further involved in the conflict. However, during the year 1994, the United States formally ended its mission to assist Somalia, since the monetary and human costs were too high - the mission had left 43 US soldiers dead and 153 wounded. But even though the United States was backing away, the internal conflict was far from over, in fact, it was only just the beginning. Constant assassinations and attacks had become part of the routine of the country. These events happened weekly, sometimes even daily, amongst rival groups and warlords.

Somalia's neighbours, Ethiopia and Kenya, have repeatedly intervened, seeking to create peace there and helping the transitional government, which was democratically elected in 2003, to gain permanent control. However, violence still predominates, and this is why the deadly group, al-Shabab, sprang into existence. Al-Shabab, is a militant Islamic group allied to Al-Qaeda, which was also linked to African jihadists. They want to create a strict Islamic state in Somalia, which is why they constantly participate in attacks. Al-Shabab is thought to have up to 9000 fighters, including children and foreign jihadists. It has targeted Kenya numerous times and created many disasters, which is why the African American Union pushed the group out of key Somali towns in 2011-2012. However, al-Shabab still dominates in many rural areas.

An important fact to mention is that al-Shabab has recruited 1,915 children since 2016 to be used as soldiers in the Somali Civil War. The number of child soldiers in Somalia has almost doubled since 2015 because of an increase in the number of children being seized by this group. These child soldiers are not always used to fight in war, some also serve as messengers, spies, and cooks, whilst young girls are forced to marry al-Shabab militants or are used as sexual slaves. This group recruits them since children are easier to manipulate and influence; this is why currently, over 50% of al-Shabab members are believed to be children, according to the UN. This is said to be because of the poverty that overwhelms Somalis, and the fact that living in a combat zone increases the probability of a child becoming a soldier; so while many children are abducted and recruited by force, others join out of desperation.



Borgen, C. (2018, June 17). 10 important facts about child soldiers in Somalia. Retrived from <https://borgenproject.org/10-important-facts-about-child-soldiers-in-somalia/>

ii. Current Situation

Nowadays, the recruiting of child soldiers around the world has been brought to people's awareness, especially in Somalia. For many few years, this country has been facing fighting, insecurity, lack of state protection, and recurring humanitarian crises, which have had a great impact on Somali citizens. The number of internally displaced people, many without assistance, is approximately 2.7 million. While the federal and regional authorities have made advances in clarifying responsibilities and roles in the justice and security sectors, political infighting has diverted politicians' attention from greatly needed reforms.

In Somalia, the security situation has remained difficult; there have been continuous attacks by Al-Shabab on the security forces of the country, on government officials and on the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The International Army of Somalia, AMISOM, and military forces that come from countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya, have made military operations against the group Al-Shabab. The United States of America has also made airstrikes against this group.

The group Al-Shabab has committed many human rights abuses, which include: forcibly recruiting children and adults; arbitrary executions, notably for those who are accused of spying or working in the government and foreign forces; and extortion by threats. This group attacks the civilian infrastructure and civilians themselves using different armaments such as improvised explosive devices and suicide bombing, which has resulted in thousands of civilian deaths and injuries. Also, Al-Shabab continues to prohibit the majority of non-governmental organizations and all of the UN agencies from doing their job in areas under their control. In addition, the group has continued to block the government-controlled towns and has attacked civilians who tried to or broke through the blockades, destroying vehicles and goods.



Childsoldiersin. (2018, September 03). Monthly news round-up: 5000 children freed in 2017; Somalia's child detention exposed; and more... Retrieved from <https://www.child-soldiers.org/news/monthly-news-round-up-311-children-freed-in-south-sudan-somalias-child-detention-exposed-and-more>

Amongst all these difficult issues in the country, one of the most important aspects of the conflict is that the rights of children are being violated. In 2018, a total of 2,228 boys and 72 girls were recruited and used. Recruitment of children by Al-Shabab significantly increased (1,865) compared to 2017. Additionally, 1,609 children were abducted, 97% of them by Al-Shabab (1,590) mainly for the purpose of recruitment and use. Additionally, there have been verified incidents of sexual violence affecting 328 girls and 3 boys.

All Somali parties to the conflict have made serious abuses against children, which include, recruiting, killing, maiming and use in military operations. The group Al-Shabab has pursued an intense child recruitment programme with retaliation against communities that are refusing to hand over their children, particularly in Galmudug. Due to the fact that many families have refused to hand over their children, many of them decide to run away from home without their parents in order to escape the harsh reality that they are living in. According to the United Nations, in July 2019, citizens from Zaeedheere, a locality that has been pressured many times to provide children to this group, decided to fight back, which resulted in deaths and a huge civilian displacement.

On January 2018, Somali and US military forces, assisting the country once again, had the opportunity of rescuing 36 children from an Al-Shabab-run camp in the Middle of Shabelle. These children were given to the United Nations in order for them to start a rehabilitation process one week later. Some authorities, but especially the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA), unlawfully detained children who had alleged ties to the armed group.

Not only are children's rights being violated, but human rights in general are also being neglected for the people of Somalia. They are being deprived of their basic needs such as: humanitarian resources; sanitation resources; humanitarian assistance; and lack of freedom of expression. Some of the children's rights that are being violated are: freedom from exploitation (article 36); protection from conflict (article 38); freedom from torture (article 37); freedom from sexual exploitation (article 34); right to an education (article 28); right to a dignified standard of living (article 27); and freedom from kidnapping (article 11).

The work of the United Nations, in engagement with the National Intelligence and Security Agency, resulted in the handover of 36 boys to child protection actors. In the month of August 2018, the Chief of Defence Forces issued a general command order to protect children from all types of armed conflict. Months later, in November, the Somali Government launched the drafting process of the Child Rights Bill. The Children's Bill provides a holistic approach to the rights of all children strengthening

them. This happening two years after Somalia ratified the Convention on the Rights of Children.

Despite progress, boys and girls continue to be recruited, kidnapped, forced to fight or work for military groups or armed forces. Sixty-one parties to conflict out of 63 are listed for this grave violation in the 2016 Annual Report of the Secretary-General on the issue, making it by far the most widely-spread violation.



Understanding the Recruitment of Child Soldiers in Africa – ACCORD. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/understanding-recruitment-child-soldiers-africa/>

iii. Key points of the debate

- The rights of children, who are being seized when they are recruited to work as child soldiers.
- The hard labour and jobs that children are obligated to fulfil when being child soldiers.
- The treatment of al-Shabab towards children and their rights.
- The effects that participation in armed conflicts causes to the moral values of child soldiers.
- The basic human needs that are not being provided to child soldiers; to live with water, proper nourishment, sanitation, healthcare, among other basic human needs.
- The difficulty of reintegrating child soldiers into society because their rights, such as education, have been forbidden.

iv. Participating Organisms

- Child Soldiers International
- UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Fund)
- UNHRC (United Nations Human Rights Council)
- Amnesty International
- Human Rights Watch
- Somali National Army

v. Guiding Questions

1. What does/could your country do in order to stop the recruitment of child soldiers?
2. Is your country going through any similar situations to Somalia? If so, what is it doing to protect children's rights? If not, what does it do to support other countries in this situation?
3. Has your country been affected in any way by the conflict in Somalia and, if so, what has it done to try to solve the problem?
4. Does your country have any sort of penalties for those who violate children's rights?
5. What can be done to help Somalia stop the recruitment of child soldiers?
6. What can be done to reintegrate Somalia's child soldiers into the community? Has your country ever been involved in a reintegration scheme of child soldiers?

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4. Topic 1: *Illegal Imprisonment of Muslim People in China*

i. History/Context

More than one million Muslims are being held in detention centres in the Chinese province known as Xinjiang. It is being called “The Worst Neglected Human Crisis” by some organizations. Representatives introduced the religion into China from the Middle East, when they travelled to meet Emperor Gaozong of the Tang Dynasty during the 7th Century. After constant visits, the first mosque was constructed in the southern trading port (Guangzhou) for Arabs and Persians. Over time, the Muslims established themselves in various Chinese ports and trading posts. Nevertheless, they lived excluded and separated from the native Chinese, who were the majority for almost five centuries.

This situation began to change during the 13th Century, when China was under the rule of the Mongol Yuan Dynasty; during this period, Muslims came to China in vast numbers to serve as administrators for the new rulers (Genghis Khan, founder of the Mongol Empire). The new rulers had little experience in terms of running the Chinese empire, and therefore they turned to Muslims for help. They recruited and relocated thousands of central Asians and Persians to give their spots to the Muslims who were helping the Government. After Khan conquered much of Eurasia, his successors ruled different parts of the continent, leading to a period of peace and prosperity, which allowed cultures to flourish. Chinese and Muslims worked together very peacefully during this period of time, and Muslims continued to be influential in the Government for around 300 years.

However, from the 18th Century, the relationship between Muslims and Chinese began to change in a negative way. During this time period, there were many violent riots between them, since the state tried to exert direct control over territories where many Muslims lived. Between 1644 and 1911, when the Qing Dynasty was in control, there was an unprecedented population growth along with territorial expansion, which caused revolts on numerous occasions. These clashes were violently repressed by the state, ending a long period of “accommodation” for Muslims in China.

In 1949, when the People’s Republic of China was founded, its citizens were divided into 56 ethnic groups, based on coherent criteria (language, history, traditions, among others). Of these groups, 10 of them were recognized as Muslims minorities: the Hui, Uighur, Kazakh, Dongxiang, Kyrgyz, Salar, Tajik, Uzbek, Bonan and finally Tatar, who currently number around 5,000. In the first years of the founding of the new Republic, Muslims enjoyed relative religious freedom. However, during the Cultural Revolution, Muslims were prohibited from going on their religious pilgrimages, and any expression of religious belief was completely banned.

Since that time, tensions have been escalating until, in 2009, they reached their highest peak, when there were ethnic riots between the Uighurs Muslims (one of the biggest

groups of Chinese-Muslims) and the Han Chinese. Since then, the state has slowly increased restrictions on their cultural and religious movements. In the past 18 months, these tensions have caused the illegal imprisonment of Muslims, including not only Uighurs Muslims, but also other Muslim groups.

ii. Current Situation

Recently, during August 2018, a United Nations Human Rights Panel stated that more than one million Muslims had been taken prisoners in their own homeland. They had been illegally held in so called “Concentration re-education centres”. These centres, located in the desert, insist on providing essential vocational training for Muslims who have been influenced by the “three evil forces” of extremism, radicalism, and terrorism in the Xinjiang region.

China’s situation and oppression of Muslims has drawn the attention of foreign governments and international bodies. Countries such as the United States and Turkey have been quick to judge, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights recently demanded answers. The Chinese Government has denied the claims on various occasions, arguing that people are going willingly to attend special “vocational schools” which are only functioning in order to “combat terrorism and religious extremism”. The Muslims being held have committed absolutely no crime, and it is alleged that they are being captive in order to stop them practising their religious beliefs.



Clarke, M. (2019, June 04). Patriotic songs and self-criticism: Why China is ‘re-educating’ Muslims in mass detention camps. Retrieved from <https://theconversation.com/patriotic-songs-and-self-criticism-why-china-is-re-educating-muslims-in-mass-detention-camps-99592>

On July 12, 2015, a satellite, passed over deserts and oasis cities located in the far west of China, revealing a patch of empty, untouched sand. On April 22, 2018, a satellite image of the same location showed something totally different, a massive, secure compound, enclosed with a 2km long wall. Foreign experts have estimated that the

camps hold as many as a million Uighurs, Kazakhs, and other Chinese Muslims without trial, in a program that tries to turn them into loyal, Chinese-speaking supporters of the party.



China's hidden camps. (n.d) Retrieved from https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/China_hidden_camps



Muslims are constantly abused by the Chinese officials in these camps. Many of the prisoners have families or children whom they have had to abandon. The Chinese state has also created an unfounded violent and disparaging campaign against the Muslim religion. This is why it is now considered by many to be the worst matter in terms of human rights in modern times. It has been harshly criticized by many countries which

seek to find justice for the Muslims, who are illegally captive in “concentration camps” in this province of China.

Residents of the camps are being forced to undergo psychological indoctrination programs, such as studying communism propaganda, and giving thanks to Chinese former president Xi Jinping. Authorities have also been accused of using waterboarding and other several torture on this ethnic minority. The Chinese Government states that the camps are “merely vocational” and are training centres, whose purpose is to combat extremism. They allege that they are teaching Muslims valuable and useful skills in the centres.

This discrimination against Muslim Uighurs is part of a policy that is known as De-extremification. This has generated a range of repressive policies, from things such as the banning of certain Muslim names for babies, to reports of torture and political indoctrination in the camps where hundreds of thousands of citizens have been imprisoned. It has been said that Chinese officials introduced the use of these camps in Xinjiang in about the year 2014, about the same period of time that China accused a series of terrorist attacks on the Muslims.

China, has escalated pressure on this minority group, by slowly taking away their rights with the passage of religious regulations and counterterrorism laws. In the year 2016, the Xinjiang province was allocated a new leader: Chen Quanguo, a powerful communist party boss whose previous job had been to restore control and order in the region of Tibet. He has a reputation of being a strongman and a specialist in ethnic crackdowns. With Chen Quanguo came increased surveillance and greater police presence in Xinjiang. Each camp is divided into sections containing about 500 people. Each section has a police station to keep an eye on its inhabitants. There are also security checkpoints on the roads of the province, where residents are obligated to scan their identification cards at train stations and in roads in and out of towns. Also, the police have been using facial recognition technology in order to be able to track what Muslims are doing; they confiscate phones in order to download information, and confiscate passports in order to prevent Uighurs from travelling abroad.

Chinese authorities have justified these actions as necessary and vital in order to counter religious radicalization and extremism, but critics have mentioned that they are put in place in order to curtail Islamic traditions and practices.

On a worldwide perspective, there has been a lot of criticism, but very little action towards this issue. The UN panel is the latest international body to criticize China’s imprisonment of Muslims (Uighurs). But the Governments has continued to deny human rights violations, and there is nothing concrete and evident coming from Beijing to show that it intends to make any changes to these harsh policies. Speaking at his daily press briefing on Monday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said claims of concentration camps in Xinjiang were “simply not true” and claimed the mass camps

were set up to "combat terrorism." "We urge the relevant US individual to respect the fact, abandon bias, exercise prudence in words and deeds, stop interfering in China's domestic affairs and earnestly contribute to mutual trust and cooperation between us," he said.



China Uighurs: One million held in political camps, UN told. (2018, August 10). Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-45147972>

iii. Key points of the debate

- The rights of Muslims who are being seized and held captive in the “re-education centres”
- China’s unfair treatment towards Muslims and their “de-extremism” strategies.
- The violence of the Chinese state and their negligence towards their actions.
- The countries encouraging China to do such things, and those providing aid to Muslims.
- The impotence of the Chinese Muslim community towards the situation (not their native country and their presence as a minority)
- The prohibition China is imposing on Muslims by forbidding them to practice their religious belief and nourish their culture
- Agreements that can be settled between the different parties.

iv. Participating Organisms

- Human Rights Watch
- Human Rights Council
- UHRP (Uyghur human rights project)
- Organization of Islamic Cooperation

v. Guiding Questions

1. What is the position of your country regarding cultural and religious freedom?
2. What sort of problematical circumstances do minority groups face in your country, if any, what is the government's reaction to this issue?
3. What has your country done to protect religious minorities and their rights regarding freedom of religious expression?
4. What conflictive situations do Muslims face in China?
5. What can be done to protect Muslims in China?
6. Which possible solutions can your country offer regarding the situation of the Chinese Muslims?

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5. Topic 2: *Human Trafficking in Russia*

i. History/Context

The Russian Federation is the largest country in the world; it stretches from Europe across to the Pacific, a massive landmass for the origin, transit and destination of men, women, and children, who are trafficked into forced labour. But, how did it all begin? In the decade of the 90's, there was a huge spotlight on thousands of minors and women who were trafficked out of Russia into prostitution, mainly to Europe, Israel, the UAE (United Arab Emirates), Scandinavia, Saudi Arabia, North America and China.



Human Trafficking In and Out of Russia. (2014, May 09). Retrieved from <https://www.fairobserver.com/region/europe/human-trafficking-and-out-russia/>

The reason why thousands of citizens, who are looking for higher wages, work opportunities and a better future, end up being trapped into forced labour goes back to the collapse of the Soviet Empire in 1989, and the disintegration of the USSR in the year 1991; the world's largest communist state (Soviet Union) broke up into 15 independent republics after 40 years of the Cold War and the threat of a nuclear holocaust, but how did this all happen? During the late 1980s, there were serious economic issues in the USSR and in a short period of time, their economy suffered drastic changes. With the

words “We are living in a new world” the Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev announced the dissolution of the USSR on Christmas day of 1991.

After these events, economic systems were transformed in the country, resulting in a major increase in unemployment and poverty, mainly for women.

The beginning of what is known as “Wild Capitalism” meant a disruption in the old trade patterns and supply lines. Investment and employment patterns changed drastically and along with it, new opportunities arose to exploit those people in need.

The USSR had always had something known as “the second economy” or “the shadow economy” that had an impact on the “official economy”. People participating in this “second economy” included criminal elements, some of them being labelled “thieves in law”. People who had spent time in Soviet prisons already had their own network, which were very useful for collaborative crime and for running the underworld. This is why after the fall of the Soviet Union, mafia gangs and illegal organizations made very big profits.

Tight restrictions on transport prohibiting Soviet citizens from travelling abroad were now eased. In addition, the demand for sex and the male demand for prostitutes was the starting point for small operators and criminal gangs to start trafficking people. Another aspect that made this possible was the corruption amongst police, border guards and state officials. Once the criminals had obtained a fake passport or travel documents, the only step left was to persuade Russian citizens that lucrative jobs were waiting for them somewhere else. The fact that the “globalized” world was becoming increasingly interconnected through technological advances such as cell phones, internet, and fast travel links, facilitated the global patterns of human trafficking.

Additionally, Russian job agencies and newspaper advertisements in the 1990s put out “invitations” to women to become dancers, waitresses, nurses, nannies, office workers or escorts abroad, with the promise of attractive salaries. Once they were convinced that the opportunity was legitimate and that the work was waiting for them, women agreed to travel abroad. Once in a new country, their new host would ask them for their passports in order to register them locally, then take them to a brothel and give them information about their new job, keeping their passports. If any of them refused to do something or if they protested, it could result in threats, rape and violence. They were also told that they had to pay off their debts, which were the cost of their flights and of all the arrangements that were made for them.

Once they were trapped into debt and slavery, thousands of Russian women found themselves servicing up to 30 men every night. In the worst-case scenario they were given narcotics and alcohol to help them with this burden, the cost being added to their initial debt. Bad behaviour from the women resulted in threats of harm to their relatives back in their native country, and if they had any, on their children. Desperation and fear

were feelings that they experienced daily, and some of them even became drug addicts. Estimations were made that between 1992 and 2002, approximately 500,000 girls and women were trafficked from Russia.

ii. Current Situation

“Worst Human traffickers include Russia, Belarus, Iran, among others” (RFE/RL journalists, 2018). In 2016, the Global Slavery Index estimated that about 794,000 people in Russia lived in conditions of modern slavery.

Some of the latest statistics that were provided by UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), based on the statistics that were collected by the Russian Government, show that in the year 2015, there were a total of 285 detected victims of trafficking; 83 of them were confirmed as victims of trafficking in persons and slave labour but, even more alarmingly 202 of them were children, who were often victims of trafficking or any other type of sexual exploitation. Nowadays there are many aspects that could be considered as human trafficking, some of them are the following:

Forced labour:

Forced labour in Russia generally occurs in less regulated industries. Forms of labour exploitation can be found in a wide variety of sectors such as construction, domestic work, agriculture, and trash collection, among others. The aspect of forced labour also includes migrant workers, who are either located in Russia or are foreign citizens who are brought inside Russia for the sole purpose of exploiting them. Forced labour victims who are migrant workers mostly come from Central Asian countries, Ukraine, Vietnam and China.

There were several documented cases of forced labour and exploitation of construction workers working at stadiums for the 2018 FIFA Soccer World Cup. Research that was conducted by Human Rights Watch identified that there was a range of abuses of the construction labourers, including non-payment or delayed payment, as well as lack of employment contracts and important documentation that is necessary for legal employment. These workers also reported that they had to work outside in terrible weather conditions, and were threatened for raising concerns about their “working” conditions. 17 workers reportedly died while working at World Cup stadiums in Russia.

Internal migrants from Russia’s poorest regions and migrants who come from the former Soviet satellite states are reportedly trafficked, involving kidnapping and drugging, and then forced to work against their will. They are intercepted by recruiters, who target migrants at train stations in Russia’s biggest cities. Migrants go to Russia in order to

search for a job, but are tricked into forced labour by people who offer them fraudulent employment opportunities; this often involves being drugged, kidnapped, and taken away from Russian republics. Also, there are some reports that come from workers originating from Myanmar and Ukraine who have experienced forced labour in Russia's fishing sector.

Additionally, children are also being exploited. This type of forced labour principally happens in the largest cities of the country. These children are promised jobs and are taken to cities from Russia's provinces or foreign countries, but actually they are taken to go and beg on streets. If they don't make the amount of money that is being asked, they are punished.

State-imposed forced labour:

Prison labour was "reintroduced" as a criminal punishment in January 2017. Under Russia's current legislation, convicted prisoners can be forced to perform labour at state prisons and/or private companies. Even though prisoners' working conditions are supposedly covered by labour laws, voluntary consent of the prisoners to perform what they are being forced to do is not obtained. This means that there are concerns that prisoners are being forced to work for private companies against their wish. Additionally, laws from Russia allow for compulsory labour to be imposed as a punishment for several activities, one of which is the expression of political views.

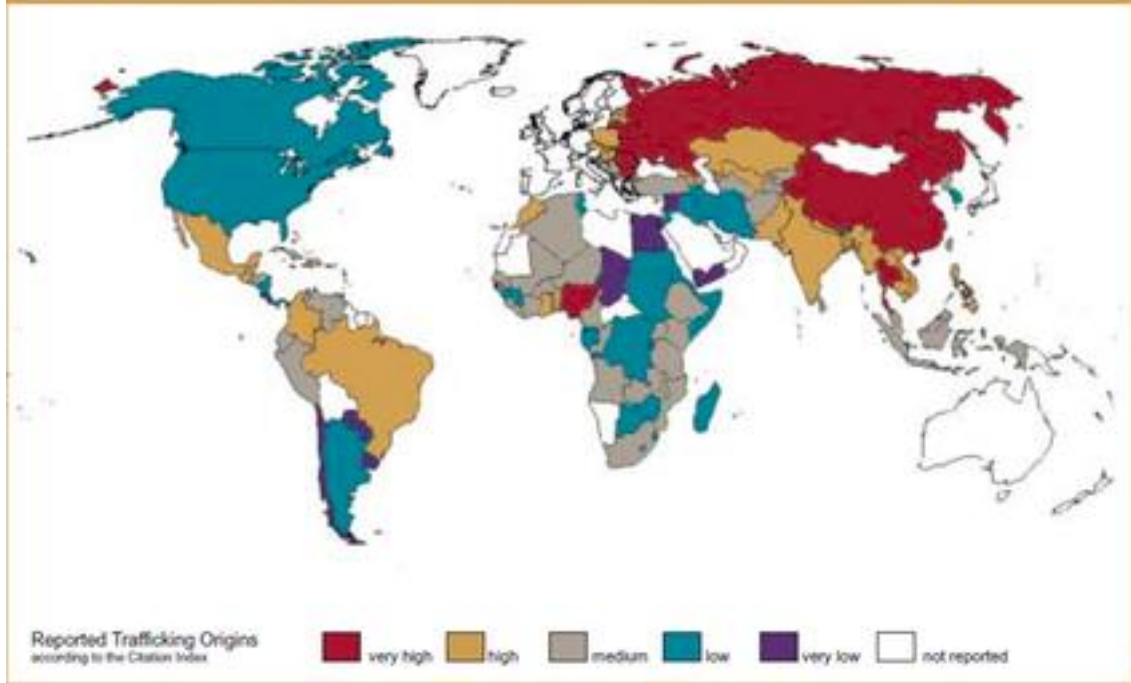
Forced sexual exploitation of adults and children:

Russian children and women are being victims of forced sexual exploitation, both in Russia and abroad. Also, foreign women mostly from Moldova, Ukraine, Vietnam and Nigeria are victims of sex trafficking inside Russia. There are some reports of Nigerian girls and women being trafficked to Russia on student visas; in reality, they are forced into sex work in order to be able to repay their "debts" for visa and travel costs. Victims of this type of trafficking are mostly accepted into universities in Russia, which is how they obtain all the necessary documents to arrive to the country, but they rarely have contact with the university once they arrive in Russia.

Child commercial sexual exploitation is dominant all around Russia, although this crime has decreased due to internet usage, which has created a virtual pathway in order to communicate with victims. Teenage girls are the most sexually exploited in private apartments, brothels and hostels, among others.



Figure 26: Countries of Origin, as measured by the extent of reporting of trafficking



Maps and statistics. (n.d). Retrieved from <https://humantrafficking-modernslavery.weebly.com/maps-and-statistics.html>

About 794,000 people are currently living in modern slavery conditions in Russia. Undocumented migration, displacement due to conflict, and discrimination are some risk factors that contribute to modern slavery in Russia. As trafficking increased in Russia during the 1990s, NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and Western governments put pressure on the Russian Parliament to approve anti-trafficking legislation. In the year 2003, former president Vladimir Putin introduced a law which made human trafficking a crime. Since then, no more anti-trafficking laws have been made. Modern slavery is a violation of several human rights including: the right to work in just and favourable conditions; the right in which no one shall be held in slavery or servitude; and the right to life, liberty and security of person.

iii. Key points of the debate

- The rights of Russians (especially women), which are being violated.
- The negligence of the Russian Government towards the issue.
- Russia's unfair treatment towards forced labour victims.
- Persuasive strategies used against forced labour victims.
- The human rights violations of forced labour victims.
- Tackling the illegal organizations that promote human trafficking.



iv. Participating Organisms

- OSCE (Organization for security and cooperation in Europe)
- Youth Human Rights movement
- Human Rights Watch
- Human Rights Council
- Amnesty International
- UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime)

v. Guiding Questions

1. Has your country faced or is facing any problems related to human trafficking?
2. Does your country have any legislation concerning the penalization of human trafficking?
3. What is your country's position regarding human trafficking? Does it influence this worldwide issue, and if so, how?
4. What can the international community do to make the Russian Government enforce laws and comply with global regulations?
5. What is the conflict Russia is facing regarding the control of human trafficking? And how is the Government managing it?
6. Has your country done anything to provide protection for forced labour/ human trafficking victims? If so, how could this be implemented in Russia?

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