

COMMITTEE GUIDE

HRC



HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

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Contents:

1. Presidents' Letter

2. Committee Information

- I. History
- II. Structure
- III. Bibliography

3. **Simulation:** *Violent Forced Evictions in Palestine*

- I. History/Context
- II. Current Situation
- III. Key Points of the Debate
- IV. Participating Organisms
- V. Guiding Questions
- VI. Bibliography

4. **Topic 1:** *Human rights violations toward the LGBTQ+ community in the Middle East*

- I. History/Context
- II. Current Situation
- III. Key Points of the Debate
- IV. Participating Organisms
- V. Guiding Questions
- VI. Bibliography

5. **Topic 2:** *Regulation of police forces as a way to ensure the human rights of peaceful protesters*

- I. History/Context
- II. Current Situation
- III. Key Points of the Debate
- IV. Participating Organisms
- V. Guiding Questions
- VI. Bibliography

1. Presidents' Letter

Dear Delegates,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the nineteenth version of CCBMUN, and to the Human Rights Council. We are Natalia Malagón and Catalina Borrero, 11th-grade students from Colegio Colombo Británico. As your presidents, it is an honour to guide you through the topics that are going to be addressed in our committee, and we are excited to have the possibility of seeing you develop as delegates during the model, since we believe that you are all capable of doing anything you set yourselves to do. We've been part of the UN model for some time now as delegates, and this will be our first time as presidents, so we hope to live up to your expectations.

When thinking of the topics for this committee, we made sure they would make the delegates feel passionate about their position, therefore creating an interesting debate. You can appreciate this by looking at our topics as in all of them you will have the opportunity to represent your country's position strongly and find outstanding solutions. We hope that when reading this guide you feel encouraged to learn and explore the topics further. It is important to do so, we believe that it has a great impact on the development and performance of the delegates.

We would like to share with you all our feelings towards the MUN, especially the CCBMUN since it was the first model we attended. We were both really scared and nervous but did our best while having fun and learning new skills. As delegates, we had the opportunity to gain great memories and to improve in various aspects. As rookie presidents, we are excited and a little nervous, and anxious to make this a thrilling experience for you. This is why we encourage you to remember that this committee is an opportunity for that - after all, the UN model brings joy and satisfaction, whether you're a delegate or president, and whether you win a prize or not, and that's why we love it! Finally, the relationship we want to achieve with our delegates is not only one of respect and admiration, but of trust and friendship.

Since the Human Rights Council is a middle school committee, we want to state that it doesn't matter whether you are a rookie or if it's your 5th model - a good delegate is defined by the same things, which are having good research skills and having a solid base for your interventions. It's completely normal to feel scared when speaking at first, but we strongly motivate you not to feel intimidated and to bring out your best argumentative skills. We are truly happy to meet you, so remember, as presidents, we are here to help you and make your experience in this model amazing. If you need any help, don't hesitate to contact us via the committee email.

Yours sincerely,

Catalina Borrero & Natalia Malagón
HRC Presidents

2. Committee Information

I. History

The United Nation Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is the main inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights in the world, and for tackling situations of human rights violations by establishing viable solutions. It receives reports from independent mechanisms, for example, from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

On 10th December 1948, the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Subsequently, there has been notable growth in the strength of the international human rights movement and the United Nations' human rights activities. The Declaration was crucial because it was the first official document in history to set standards for humans to live fairly and peacefully by setting economic, political, social, and cultural rights for everyone equally. Over the years, governments around the world have widely accepted human rights and implemented them, accepting the fact that it is fundamental for everyone to have these rights. Nowadays, December 10th is claimed as International Human Rights Day.

The Council was created by the United Nations General Assembly on 15th March, 2006 by resolution 60/251, and its first session was from June 19th to 30th, 2006. It served to replace the UN Commission on Human Rights (CHR), which had been strongly condemned for allowing countries with poor human rights records to be part of the commission. In 2007, the Council wrote its "institutional-building package" with procedures and baselines to guide its work and to create efficient mechanisms. Due to the past failure by the original Commission, the Council was reviewed 5 years later by the General Assembly.

II. Structure

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC or HRC for short), is an inter-governmental body whose task is to protect and promote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in all countries. It has 47 members, elected by the General Assembly, with three-year contracts. The resolution establishing the UNHRC states that "when electing members of the Council, Member States shall take into account the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights and their voluntary pledges and commitments made thereto", and

that "members elected to the Council shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights"¹.

No member may occupy a seat for more than two continuous terms, and they're distributed among the UN's regional groups: 13 for Africa, 13 for Asia, six for Eastern Europe, eight for Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC), and seven for the Western European and Others Group (WEOG)². They discuss topics about freedom of association and assembly, of expression, of belief and religion, freedom of women, LGBT, and racial and ethnic minorities rights.

The General Assembly can interfere with the rights and privileges of any member of the Council that considers has persistently committed terrible and systemically violations of human rights during their membership; this suspension process requires a two-thirds majority vote by the General Assembly. The HRC holds regular meetings three times a year in March, June and September, but it can also decide to hold a special session to handle particular human rights violations, meeting the petition of one-third of Member States. As of May 2020, there have been 28 of these special sessions.

The Council works with the UN Special Procedures created by the Commission on Human Rights. "Special Procedures" is the name given to the mechanisms set up by the HRC to collect professional observations and recommendations on human rights problems worldwide. They are differentiated as thematic mandates, which emphasize major phenomena of human rights violations worldwide, or country mandates, which report human rights conditions in specific countries or territories. In August 2017, there were 44 thematic and 12 country mandates.

On June 10th, 2007 the United Nations Human Rights Commission established a strategy to report repeated and consistent behaviours of human rights violations in any part of the world. There is a course of action for each complaint. For approval, the complaint must be written and cannot be sent anonymously. It must show patterns, so cannot be made by one victim or for a single violation, no matter where in the world the victims are. Finally, each complaint is confidential between the UNHRC and the people who made it, the only exception is when the Council decides that the issue will be addressed in a public way.

¹ Gandhi, S., & Gandhi, P. R. (2012). Blackstone's International Human Rights Documents. Retrieved July 8, 2020, from <https://books.google.com.co/books?id=RcicAQAAQBAJ&lpg=PA238&dq=%22when+electing+members+of+the+Council,+Member+States+shall+take%22&pg=PA238&redir>

² Suncity School. (n.d.). Human Rights Council (HRC). Retrieved July 19, 2020, from <http://suncitymun.weebly.com/human-rights-council-hrc.html>

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3. Simulation: Violent Forced Evictions in Palestine

I. History/Context

Palestine is a small region of land that has played a prominent role in the ancient and modern history of the Middle East. The history of Palestine has been marked by frequent political conflicts and violent land seizures due to its importance to several major world religions, and because Palestine sits at a valuable geographic crossroads between Africa and Asia, specifically located between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River.



Israel becomes a state: (Figure 1)

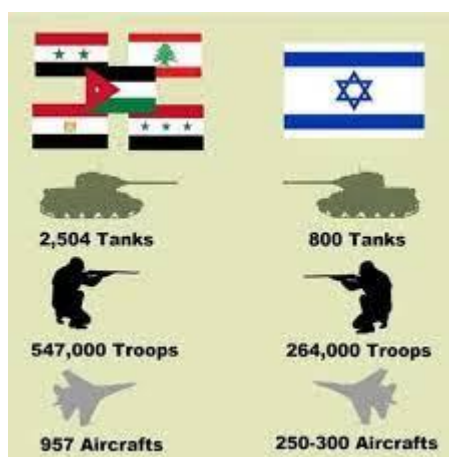
A big part of the former Palestine is now considered to be present-day Israel which, along with the current Violent Forced Evictions in Palestine, is a secondary effect of the persisting Israeli–Palestinian conflict that officially started in 1948 after the establishment of the State

of Israel. Problems in this region started the year before, in November 1947, when the United Nations (UN) voted to partition the British mandate of Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state (United Nations Resolution 181).

Misunderstandings occurred almost immediately between Jews and Arabs in Palestine and, as British troops prepared to withdraw from Palestine, the conflict between these 2 groups escalated. Both Arabs and Jews were committing belligerent acts, the most notorious event being the attack on the Arab village of Dayr Yāsīn on April 9, 1948. The brutal massacre by Irgun Zvai LeumiBy happened on May 15, 1948 less than a year after the Partition Plan for Palestine was introduced. Britain withdrew from Palestine, and Israel declared itself an independent state, implying a willingness to implement the Partition Plan.

Within a matter of days, Arab forces from Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon occupied the areas in southern and eastern Palestine not apportioned to the Jews by the UN partition of Palestine and then captured East Jerusalem, including the small Jewish quarter of the Old City. The stated purpose of the invasion was to restore law and order in light of British withdrawal, citing incidents such as Dayr Yāsīn, and a growing refugee crisis in neighbouring Arab countries. The Israelis, meanwhile, won control of the main road to Jerusalem through the Yehuda Mountains (“Hills of Judaea”) and successfully repulsed repeated Arab attacks. By early 1949 the Israelis had managed to occupy all of the Negev region up to the former Egypt-Palestine frontier, except for the Gaza Strip.

Between Israel and each of the Arab states, a temporary frontier was fixed. In Israel, the war is remembered as its War of Independence. In the Arab world, it came to be known as the Nakbah (or Nakba; “Catastrophe”) because of the large number of refugees and displaced persons resulting from the war.



The Six-Day War: (Figure 2)

The Six-Day War was a violent period between Israel and its neighbours. During April 1967, the clashes worsened after Israel and Syria fought, in which Syrian fighter jets were destroyed. On June 5th, 1967 Arab and Israeli forces clashed for the third time. Syria intensified the bombardment of the Israeli villages in early 1967 and Israeli Air Forces shot down six Syrian MiG fighter jets. As a result, Israel’s President Nasser mobilized his forces near the Sinai border and sought to blockade the port city, Elat. In 1967, Israel and Syria signed a mutual pact with Jordan, but Israel answered the previous attempts with an air assault destroying Egypt’s air forces. As expected, Israel’s victory was overwhelming since units drove back Syrian forces from the Golan Heights, they took over the Gaza

Strip and the Sinai Peninsula. Most importantly, the Israelis were left with complete control of Jerusalem.

In 1987, the first intifada (Palestine rebellion) happened. This is when Palestinian retaliated over Israel's occupation of Gaza and the West Bank. After this, Palestine military groups revolted and thousands of people died.

The Oslo Peace Accords:

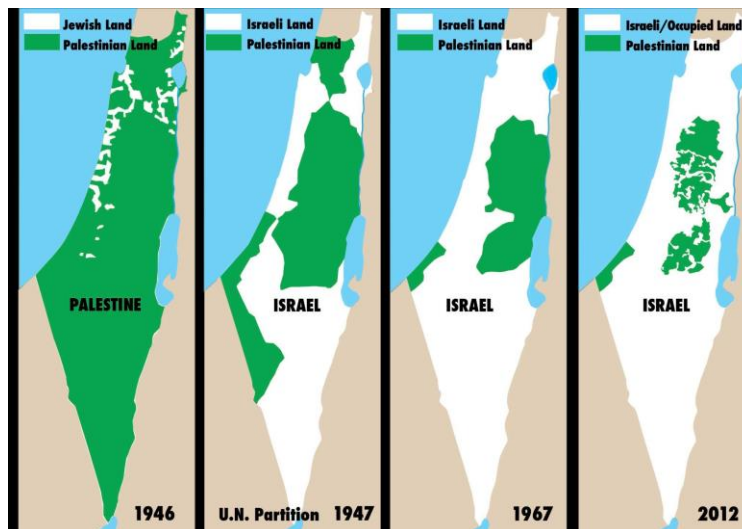
Finally, in 1979, after a long series of cease-fires and failed peace negotiations, representatives of Egypt and Israel signed the Camp David Accords. This was a treaty that brought peace to both these countries, by ending the thirty-year conflict between Egypt and Israel. A subsequent peace process, known as the Oslo Peace Accords, was talked about during the 1990s in an attempt to end the violence. The first Oslo Accord (Oslo I) talked about peace for the Middle East with a process plan, in which the Palestinian government would have a provisional part of Gaza and the West Bank. As witnesses, it was signed in 1993 with the Israeli prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, and Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat.

Even though peace had been signed, Arafat returned to Gaza in 1994 after being exiled for 27 years, and destroyed the newly formed Palestinian Authority. After this event, in 1995, a second Oslo treaty was talked about. Oslo II laid the foundation for a complete withdrawal of the Israeli troops from 6 cities and 450 towns in the West Bank. It also set a date for legislative council elections in Palestine. Sadly, both of the treaties failed to bring Israel and Palestine to agree on a fully-fledged peace plan.

Second Intifada:

In early 2000, uprisings happened in a part of Palestine as a result of the grievances over Israel's control in the West Bank, and also because in September of that same year former Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, had visited the al-Aqsa mosque (the third holiest site in Islam). As a consequence, the second Palestine intifada began since many Palestinians felt this to be offensive. Riots, suicide bombings, and other attacks subsequently broke out, putting an end to the promising peace process. This period lasted around 5 years and a year after Arafat's death, in November 2004, the Israeli army withdrew from Gaza.

During that period (2002), Israel approved the construction of a barrier wall around the West Bank, although the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court opposed it.



The 2010s: (Figure 3)

8 years ago, in 2013, the USA tried to restore the peace process between the Israeli authorities and the Palestinian Authority within the West Bank. However, peace talks were disrupted when Fatah, the Palestinian Authority's ruling party, created cohesion authorities with its rival faction, Hamas, in 2014. Hamas, created in 1987 following the primary intifada, is considered one of the two essential Palestinian political parties that were named as terrorist organizations by the USA in 1997.

During June and July, 2014, Palestinian military forces caused a confrontation between the Israeli military and Hamas, in which Hamas fired around three thousand rockets at Israel, and to which Israel responded with an act of major revenge in Gaza. This conflict ended in late August of that same year with a cease-fire arranged by Egypt, but not before 73 Israelis and 2,251 Palestinians had died. Finally, in 2015 the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, announced that Palestinians would no longer be bound by the territorial divisions created by the Oslo Accords.

II. Current Situation

During March and May, 2018, Palestinians conducted a series of protests at the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel. The last protest was the seventieth anniversary of the Nakba (Palestinian exodus that accompanied Israeli independence). Even though most of the protests were peaceful, some stormed the perimeter fence and were violent, throwing rocks and other objects. According to the United Nations (UN), 183 protesters were killed and more than 6,000 were wounded. Also, in May 2018, Hamas fought Israel, and it became the worst period of that year in which the military in Gaza fired over one hundred rockets into Israel, who responded with strikes on more than fifty targets in Gaza during the twenty-four-hour flare-up.

During the Donald J. Trump administration, funding for the UN Relief and Works Agency was cancelled. The funding administration provides aid to Palestinian refugees. During this period the U.S. embassy was moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, which the Israeli government applauded, but which was criticized by the Palestinians, since they claim East Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state.

In 2020 the "Peace to Prosperity" plan was created by the U.S. government, but it was rejected by Palestine due to its support for future Israeli annexation of settlements in the West Bank and control over an "undivided" Jerusalem. In 2020, the Abraham Accords took place in the U.S., and Israel and several Arab states were invited for ministerial talks to discuss peace in the Middle East. Palestine rejected the accords along with Hamas.

Pro-Israeli corporations tried for several years to change the predominantly Arab demographics of East Jerusalem, following the example of successive Israeli governments that emphasized Israel's right to build in its capital. Israeli law allows Jews to demand privileges that they or their families had in Jerusalem before the separation of the city after the founding of Israel in 1948. For their part, the Palestinians have no way of claiming property rights that they once had in Jerusalem or in any other part of Israel.

Israeli human rights groups estimate that over 1,000 Palestinian families are at risk of eviction from East Jerusalem and as of May 2021, 970 Palestinians have been evicted from East Jerusalem. A lot of these families were already refugees, and are now being forced into another wave of migration. Due to the protests in Sheikh Jarrah (a neighbourhood in Jerusalem), Israeli stability forces clashed with Palestinian civilians on May 6, which was Laylat al-Qadr, the most important night of Ramadan, which commemorates the revelation of the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad. About three hundred Palestinians and two dozen Israeli police officers were injured in street fighting that ended in clashes at the Noble Shrine, known to Jews and Israel supporters as Temple Hill and the holiest site in Judaism.

Typically, the head of Israeli courts authorize the eviction of Palestinians from their homes based on Jewish property claims before Israel's construction. In the Sheikh Jarrah situation, the evictions are based on confirmation that residents did not pay rent to the owner of the property, now a non-Israeli government organization called Nahalat Shimon. Since the Israeli courts have defined evictions as compatible with Israeli law, the regime confirms that Jewish residents have the right to move Palestinians who have not paid their rent and consequently have lost their "sheltered tenant" status. However, most nations do not recognize Israel's autonomy in East Jerusalem; they and the Palestinians claim that the evictions are against universal law.

It is clear that as a result of the conflict and how badly it has affected Palestine, many citizens have been forcibly moved from their countries, either to look for a better quality of life or because they were being threatened (Figure 5). Not only that, but as Israel gets power over more territory, more Palestinians have to forcibly migrate to another country. Since Palestinians have been unable to reclaim the land they abandoned, or were forced to leave during the war, the opportunity of going back to their country is now impossible.

As forced evictions became a bigger problem, different entities and nations have given their opinions towards it, for example, The United Nations Commission for Human Rights has called the forced removal of Palestinian families a potential war crime, whereas Israeli officials have called it a "real-estate dispute between private parties." According to the Commissioner General of UNRWA, forced evictions violate international law and Israel's obligation as an occupying power. Most current U.S. leaders have been reluctant to address the issue of Israeli settlements directly, preferring to name them complications that are unhelpful to peace. Exceptions are President George H.W. Bush, who tried to stop loan guarantees to Israel if it continued to build settlements, and President Barack Obama, who pressured Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, to stop the settlement work. Despite these efforts, neither Donal J. Trump nor President Joe Biden has prepared to take punitive action against the Israeli regime to end the settlement plan and the gradual annexation of Israel.



(Figure 4)

Currently, it is evident that violent forced evictions in Palestine are a problem that affects a lot of nations, but most importantly the progress on the Arab Israeli détente. As expected, Israel's neighbours have condemned these occupations and the fighting between police and Palestinians at a holy site in Jerusalem. Bureaucrats from Egypt, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates issued formal statements of concern or condemnation. However, all these nations have ties with Israel, although, in the cases of Saudi Arabia and Qatar, these collaborations do not remain formalized. To varying degrees, all Arab nations have an interest in seeking diplomatic, trade, and stable cooperation with Israel.

III. Key Points of the Debate

- The global negative effects of forced evictions in Palestine
- The importance of respecting the right to asylum
- Different human rights violation that Palestinians suffer as a result of forced evictions
- Impact of interventions by other nations on the situation of forced evictions in Palestine
- Strategies to overcome the problem of forced evictions

IV. Participating Organisms

- UNHCR
- UN SECURITY COUNCIL
- NATO
- ARAB LEAGUE
- UNDISEC
- UNICEF
- ECOSOC
- UNRWA

V. Guiding Questions

1. How is your country involved in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
2. Has or is the government of your country evicting people forcefully from their homes?
3. What is your nation's position towards the forced evictions happening in Palestine?
Has it intervened in any way?
4. According to your country, should Palestinians be guaranteed the right to asylum in any country?
5. How have forced evictions in Palestine affected your country's overall well-being, if at all?

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4. **Topic 1:** *Human rights violations toward the LGBTQ+ community in the Middle East*

I. **History/Context**

Throughout the late nineteenth century, the British and French governments began imposing inherited strict laws into their colonial systems of justice against same-sex relationships in most Arab states. The first penal code established dates back to around 1885, when Great Britain implanted the Indian Penal Code. The law would punish “carnal knowledge against the order of nature.” Penalties involved deportation for twenty years or imprisonment for ten years. These charges applied in the region of what is today’s Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates. Former French colonies also forced legislation that punished homosexuality between the 1800s and 1900s. One example is the Lebanese Penal Code 534, which granted the power to punish “unnatural” sexual acts. Vague statutes were used to let the states apply the law under their own judgment in the territories of today’s Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria.

As new countries gained independence in the Middle East during the twentieth century, many of these newly independent states passed new criminal codes by modifying sentences, such as Jordan (1951) and Bahrain (1976), while others maintained the colonial era prohibitions. In 1980, Islamic fundamentalism gained popularity and influence in the region, and Sharia, also known as the Islamic Law, became the principal source of legislation in most of the Middle Eastern countries, such as Saudi Arabia. As the Islamic Law appeared in more places, numerous penalties and violations towards the LGBTQ+ community arose with it. For instance, after the Islamic Revolution in Iran (1979), Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini started systematically oppressing homosexuality by making it a capital offence, even publicly executing those who formed part of the LGBTQ+ group.

Not only has homosexuality been disapproved of in the Middle East, but traditional ideas about gender roles have also caused a lot of controversy, especially for transgender people. LGBTQ+ rights violations used to occur in places where segregation of the sexes was strictly enforced, and cross-dressing was and continues to be criminalized by the law. In May 2007, at least fourteen transgender women were sentenced to prison as numerous Islamist parliament members amended a penal code in Kuwait’s National Assembly, affirming that anyone “imitating the opposite sex in any way” would face up to a year in jail and a fine of 1,000 dinars (\$3,500). Furthermore, not only were these women convicted, but they also consistently reported beatings, sleep deprivation, solitary confinement, humiliation and degrading treatment, sexual assault, and harassment by the Kuwaiti police.

After the Arab Spring in 2011, it was expected that there would be positive outcomes for the LGBTQ+ community, as new governments and reforms were ushered into the Middle East. However, this was not the case. For example, when Muammar Qaddafi was dethroned in Libya, the local militias gained significant power, leading to targeting and arbitrary arrests of men on suspicion of homosexuality, transgender women, and gender non-conforming people. Furthermore, with the rise of the organization known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS), at least 23 gay men were killed in Iraq, 16 in Syria, and two on the border between Iraq and Syria in June, 2016. Violent occurrences often happened in regions outside the reach of the state or when weak governments depend on armed groups to provide them with security. Libya and Iraq have allowed local armed groups, who often target LGBTQ+, to reign freely as a "police " in various areas.

There have been countless demands from the rising LGBTQ+ movement for governments to respect the rights the community deserves. However, these requests have been ignored and disregarded by previous leaders. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which involves all Middle Eastern countries, is opposed to the international recognition of LGBTQ+ rights. In 2017, OIC members from a UN Human Rights Council panel discussion blocked voting against UN resolutions to combat violence and discrimination regarding sexual orientation and gender identity; the OIC exhibited unwillingness to cooperate with the recently established UN Independent Expert on the given issue. In addition, non-governmental organizations that have focused their efforts on the recognition of LGBTQ+ rights have faced government restrictions and social stigma. These organizations have been able to make little to no progress, as they are forced to approach their goals more obliquely, such as focusing on campaigning for sexual health, HIV prevention, or personal rights, given that there is a vast rejection towards this community in the Middle East.

II. Current Situation

Currently, one of the most alarming and concerning situations that the LGBTQ+ faces today in the region is the conduction of forced anal examinations. In 2017, the Egyptian and Syrian governments formally accepted the recommendation of conducting forced anal examinations on gay men and transgender women to obtain evidence of same-sex conduct. These procedures often involve doctors or any medical personnel, who vigorously insert their fingers, and sometimes objects, into the anus of the accused in order to analyse the shape and to conclude if the suspect was in a same-sex relationship. The medical and scientific verdict states that it is impracticable to use this exam to determine if a person has engaged in same-sex conduct. They violate the Convention against Torture, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and has emphasized, they "have no medical justification and cannot be consented to fully."

Suppression and censorship have become a threat for the LGBTQ+, as Middle Eastern governments are infringing upon their rights by silencing and gradually decaying freedom of speech. In August 2021, the Turkish government blocked Hornet, a gay dating application. This wasn't the first time the country has done this. In 2013, Turkey also blocked the dating app Grindr and every website that had the word “gay” in it. In June 2021, riot police disrupted Istanbul’s annual pride parade, violently employing tear gas and rubber bullets and, according to local media, detaining at least 20 people, some of whom were journalists. “There is no such thing as LGBT. This country is national, spiritual, and walking toward the future with these values,” President Erdogan said during a speech to members of his party that month. Ultimately, the banning of the annual parade since 2003 has been used as another approach to silence the growing LGBTQ+ movement.

Over the last few years, world leaders have gathered their efforts on strengthening the acceptance of LGBTQ+ rights in the Middle East and expressed their opposition through strong statements on discriminatory acts towards the community by Middle Eastern governments. President Joe Biden affirmed a United States involvement in the matter at hand through a multilateral foreign policy that focuses on human rights in the Middle East. Biden’s administration initiative was witnessed in June, when the American embassy in the United Arab Emirates raised the rainbow pride flag, honouring LGBTQ+ communities, along with their national flags to celebrate Pride Month. “As we celebrate Pride Month this June, let us not only observe how far we have come in the struggle for the human rights of LGBTQ+ persons but also acknowledge the challenges that remain,” said U.S. Secretary of State, Antony Blinken. This is the first time that any diplomatic mission has flown a gay pride flag in the Arab Gulf.

Israel has recently taken a big step that partly fulfils the rights this community needs. On August 19th, 2021, Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz announced that all the restrictions that were once established on blood donation from gay men would be lifted. Horowitz stated, “When I became minister, I ordered the removal of the degrading and irrelevant questions from the blood donation questionnaire — remnants of a stereotype that belongs to history.” Restrictions were removed on October 1st. Now, instead of asking about same-sex physical relations, the questionnaire will inform all blood donors to wait three months “after high-risk sex with a new partner or multiple partners.” Israel's decision on the issues was due to the leadership from the U.S. and U.K. who allow gay and bisexual men to donate life-saving blood. This announcement means a tremendous step regarding the rights of freedom and accessing healthcare for Israeli gay men.

The 2015-2019 Action Plan designed by the European Union emphasized the promotion and protection of LGBTQ+ rights in the Middle East through the collaboration with Civil Society Organizations. The EU has taken an approach with targeted countries for best practices, knowledge transfer, funding, and dialogue. Germany and the Netherlands provide aid

through their embassies by issuing calls for funds. Dialogue with the Middle Eastern governments has not been easy, so the EU has taken a smoother approach when talking by giving the context of human rights, and then moving forward to linking the LGBTQ+ case to freedom of speech and organization. Although the EU is fully committed to improving the region's situation, it hasn't been that successful as diplomatic approaches must be done carefully due to the challenges it brings when dialoguing with Middle Eastern leaders.

III. Key Points of the Debate

- Ensuring human rights are respected for everyone regarding their sexuality and gender.
- Different types of human rights violations LGBTQ+ citizens suffer in the Middle East
- Censorship as a medium that worsen the conditions of the LGBTQ+ community in the Middle East
- The role and impact of foreign nations on the situation of LGBTQ+ rights in the Middle East.
- The involvement and importance of non-governmental organizations that focus on helping and promoting LGBTQ+ rights and support in the region
- Strategies and possible solutions to overcome the harassment and violations of the community

IV. Participating Organisms

- UNHCR
- ECOSOC
- SCHUM
- UNCSW
- ARAB LEAGUE

V. Guiding Questions

1. What is your country's legislation towards the LGBTQ+ community, and what are these laws based on?
2. Does your country provide the same medical attention to members of the LGBTQ+?
3. What are your country's policies on marriage between or the adoption of children by same-sex couples?
4. Has your country legislated any anti-discriminatory policies or protection for the members of the LGBTQ+?
5. Has your country provided any sort of aid to LGBTQ+ communities in the Middle East?
6. Should members of the LGBTQ+ community be guaranteed the right to asylum in any country?

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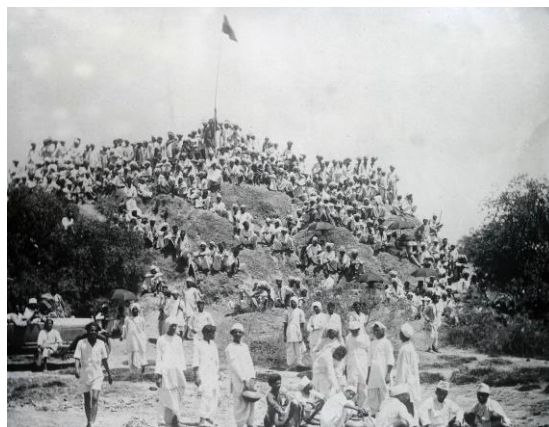
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5. Topic 2: Regulation of police forces as a way to ensure the human rights of peaceful protesters

I. History/Context

Throughout history, exercising the right to protest has been a meaningful tool in most cases to ensure human rights. According to the Human Rights Act, *“Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.”* (Human Rights, 1999) Protesting peacefully is a human right itself and one of the most valuable ones, given that it strengthens the right of freedom of speech and expression. Peaceful protesters are often associated with the term Non-Violent Resistance. NVR is defined as the practice of achieving a protesters' goals through symbolic protests, economic and political non-cooperation, civil disobedience, and others. The most successful protests throughout history have used NVR, and it has been evident that these types of protests have been twice as effective as an armed struggle when pursuing political reforms and goals.

One of the most remarkable figures who brilliantly employed non-violent resistance to free his country and politically change it was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. One of his most recognized acts was the non-cooperation movement. Between 1920 and 1922, Gandhi led numerous acts of civil disobedience with the Indian National Congress, seeking India's independence from Great Britain. This NVR not only gained popularity and recognition, but improved the condition of the Untouchables, India's lowest social class. Furthermore, ten years later, Gandhi led another NVR, which this time would focus on rejecting the taxes that were imposed by the British, boycotting British manufactured products, and conducting mass protests in India. Although these actions would later make a meaningful difference, the tax protests incentivized the British to use police brutality against the Indian protesters, some of whom were arrested whilst others were brutally beaten up.



(Figure 1)

To police is the practice that focuses on maintaining law and order. The word police derives from *polis*—the Greek for “city” or “polity”. From ancient times, the police have been seen as a civil force to deter crime. In the 19th Century, a new ideology emerged in England, which was the idea of a public civil police force. The idea was to protect the nation’s industrial centres when threatened by riots, disorder and crime. The implementation of a police force was a resource to avoid using military personnel. Before the 1930s, in the United States, police officers would usually receive orders from their local politicians, who also appointed them. The presence of the police is crucial, as their job encourages the protection of protesters and property by keeping public order and deterring crime. However, in some places the police have used their power as a way of political repression, suppressing NVRs such as civil disobedience.

Even though non-violent resistance is considered a peaceful and legal way of protesting, using the right of freedom of speech and expression, the police force has often been used as a resource by governments to repress democracy and the rights of people. Over the past two centuries, the use of police force to disrupt NVRs and the lack of law enforcement regulation has been due to the orders of those powerful and influential politicians who use public force as a means to protect and assure their own goals. This has become a worldwide issue in multiple societies, taking into account the amount of corruption that occurs between heads of state and the police in some countries. The following examples date back to the oldest and most meaningful peaceful protests where misuse of the police force to protesters was evident:

- **Roman Occupation in Israel:** Back in Judea, the Jewish population went to Caesarea to persuade and convince Pontius Pilate not to set up Roman standards that included a visual representation of the Roman emperor and the Eagle of Jupiter in Jerusalem, given that it was seen as an offensive and heathen to their religion. Not willing to hear the Jewish population's pledges and requests, Pilate decided to surround them with his soldiers and threatened their lives. Nevertheless, the Jews replied that they would rather die than witness the Torah being violated.
- **Bloody Sunday:** In 1905, a labour union of workers was led by the priest Georgy Apollonovich Gapon. They marched to the tsar’s winter palace in St. Petersburg, Russia, to share their discomfort and make various demands about their working conditions, hunger situation, and overall discomfort with the ruling of the aristocrats. As the group arrived at the palace along with peaceful religious figures, pictures of the tsar, and petitions for reform, they were shot, killed, and wounded. The Imperial guard killed about 100 peaceful protesters.

- **Civil Rights Movement:** This was one of the most important historical events in human rights. During the U.S. civil rights movement, numerous NVRs were used, such as bus boycotts, marches, sit-ins, freedom rides, and others. As you may know, the civil rights movement successfully brought a legislative change in the U.S. by ending segregation and racial discrimination, as well as granting the right to vote for African American citizens. Martin Luther King Jr was the head of this movement and was inspired by Gandhi's NVR. Although the outcome was fortunate, there were several incidents with police brutality in the Birmingham campaign (1963) and Selma to Montgomery marches (1965).

II. Current Situation

Up to now, the right to protest peacefully has been kept the same, and is an important tool for citizens when they feel the need to protest and ask for reforms. Governments around the globe have used the help of police forces as a way to regulate the protests, but to what extent? There is considerable evidence from around the world that police can turn brutal and disrupt peaceful protests as a way to demonstrate their power over civilians, making it contradictory that they are being used to uphold human rights. However, it is important to mention that a lot of nations have been able to correctly use the power of police forces to manage peaceful protests and to promote the rights of the protesters whilst still maintaining control.

Currently, there is mistreatment towards non-violent protesters as a result of excessive or erroneous use of police forces. The USA has experienced different protests where it is said that police forces were intervening with the peaceful protests, therefore violating the freedom of speech of many. The most recent protest was Black Lives Matter following the death of George Floyd, a man illegally suffocated by the police in an act of police brutality. After that, people from all over the U.S. began to protest and denounce racism, citing the names of victims like Breonna Taylor, and trying to change society. Protesters reported a great amount of police brutality, they claimed that there was an excessive use of force and the police intervention was not a positive one. It also proved that an excessive use of armed police makes peaceful protesters uncomfortable, and provokes these protesters into unwanted, rebellion-type behaviour. This is why some nations have developed appropriate protocols to determine when violence and special police forces should be used.

In 2020, Amnesty World USA (AIUSA) released a report called The Planet is Watching. The main topic consisted of exposing and explaining the unnecessary use of police force, proving that police agents often use chemical irritants such as tear gas and pepper spray, and kinetic impact projectiles, against peaceful protesters. The study includes well over 50 interviews carried out by AIUSA, which present the experiences of individuals during the demonstrations.

The overriding issue is the unnecessary use of force, which causes police officers to repeatedly use physical violence against peaceful protesters as the first line of action.

“The Trump administration is now doubling down on military-style crackdowns against protesters, with Attorney General William Barr’s egregious defence of the use of federal troops in Portland and threats to deploy more agents to other cities. President Trump’s actions represent a slippery slope toward authoritarianism and must immediately stop. We need the country’s approach to the policing of protests to be changed from the ground up at the local, state, and federal levels,” said Justin Mazzola, a researcher at AIUSA.

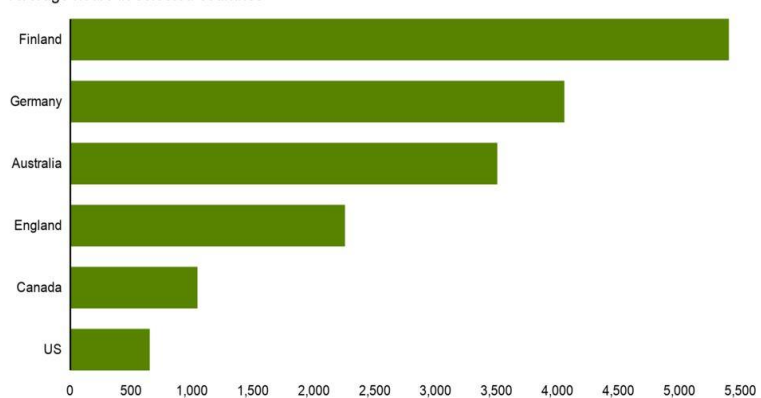
On the other hand, there are countries in which the police force respects the rights of citizens and in which it is only used as a way of control. For example, around 95% of citizens trust the Finnish police according to the annual survey, The Police Barometer, where the population has the opportunity to rate them and give meaningful feedback. This is different to what happens in the U.S., where many of the citizens lack trust in the police force, and where there is no proper way to rate the work of these public workers.

This type of survey system is important, as it could be considered a predominant factor towards the growth and development of police forces, not only in the U.S. but in many other countries that experience high rates of police brutality. These surveys help to gather data that might show a great deal of variance in police trust according to demographics, ethnicity, place of residence, amongst other factors.

Another big difference between the Finnish police system and the U.S. police system is the hours of training required for each. For example, in the U.S. the maximum hours required to be a police officer is 900 hours, the equivalent to 7.5 months, in some states whilst other states in the U.S. only require 360 hours or 2.5 months. By contrast, in Finland police officers

are required to have 180 credits to get their license, the equivalent of 3 to 3.5 years. It is a well-known fact that time doesn't necessarily mean the product is superior, but it is also a well-known fact that people tend to trust a better-prepared professional. It is important to mention that in Finland, police officers only fire a weapon while on duty around 10 times per year, contrary to what

Hours of police training required
Average hours in selected countries



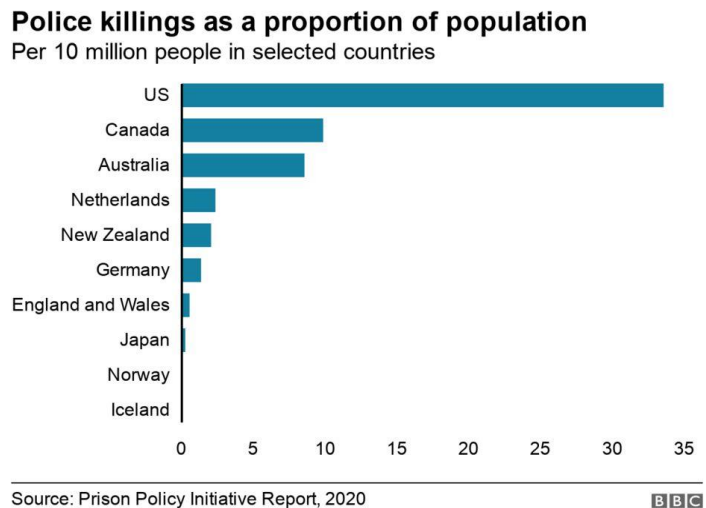
Source: Institute for Criminal Justice Training Reform Report



(Figure 2)

occurs in the U.S. where there is a lack of a standardized or official system, and where police officers fire their weapons much more frequently.

It is possible to say that the U.S. lacks control over police forces compared to Finland due to the difference within the system that prepares the forces. For example, in countries like Finland and Iceland, where police training is high (around 5,500 hours), deaths caused by the force are 0 per 10 million people. Comparatively, in the U.S., where they are only required to do 500 hours of training, the number is much higher at 35 per 10 million.



(Figure 3)

All of these factors demonstrate the importance of police regulation to ensure the rights of peaceful protesters of each nation.

III. Key Points of the Debate

- Different forms of police training and the effect it has on the way police control protests
- The role of police forces during peaceful protests, and the extent to which they should be present to maintain the rights of peaceful protesters
- Police brutality in different nations and the possible reasons why it happens
- Different definitions of unlawful protest in different nations and why it could be a step back when talking about ensuring the right to peaceful protests
- Educating citizens on how to properly protest peacefully and possible effects on the police reactions
- Improving protocols followed by police forces during peaceful protests

IV. Participating Organisms

- DISEC
- SOCHUM
- INTERPOL
- CIVICUS
- Amnesty International

V. Guiding Questions

1. What role do police forces play in your country? What are the protocols taken during a peaceful protest?
2. Has your country's police force been used to break up peaceful protests? If so, when and why?
3. Has your country been accused of police brutality? If so, why?
4. According to your country, what is an unlawful protest?
5. Does your nation believe that police forces are important during a protest? Why?
6. How does police training work in your country? To what extent is it possible to say that training increases or decreases police brutality in your country?
7. Does your country teach citizens how to properly plan a peaceful protest? What does a peaceful protest consist of?

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