CPSSMUN XIII



SOCHUM

Simroz Sodhi and Rishik Kapoor

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Content Disclaimer

It is important to note that this background guide is based on the existing United Nations Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM). The imaginative elements that make this narrative possible are solely intended to emphasize the structure and goals of this committee. In consequence of this, this background guide will explore sensitive topics including global poverty, socioeconomic inequality, human rights violations, conflict, cultural preservation, and globalization. These topics serve the purpose of enhancing this committee's direction and engaging with delegates in formal debate. These ideas exist in this background guide for the overall success of this committee, and the actions and doings in this committee should by no means be replicated in real-world conduct.

Equity Concerns

Bullying and discrimination are unwelcome practices at CPSSMUN. All attendees of CPSSMUN XIII will be made safe, welcomed, and appreciated, thanks to the efforts of our teacher supervisor and the Secretariat team. In the event that any CPSSMUN Staff, Secretariat, or Delegate acts inappropriately, or causes discomfort, please contact our Equity Officer at cpssmodelunequity@gmail.com.This can be done at any time leading up to, during, or after the conference.

Directors' Letter

Distinguished Delegates,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to this year's General Assembly at CPSSMUN XIII. The three topics were chosen to promote meaningful debate. The first topic remains prominent on the international scene: eradicating global poverty. On the other hand, we move towards human rights violations in conflict zones. Whether it is modern human rights violations in Ukraine or an underlying civil war crisis in Syria, in both conflicts one group is significantly targeted the most: women. The third and final topic takes the committee to a more policy-guided focus: cultural preservation vs. globalization. What will delegates choose? Arguably, a balance of both could be crucial.

We aim to bridge these topics and create a better world for tomorrow. As delegates, it is your responsibility to implement policies, reforms, and frameworks to eradicate poverty, minimize human rights violations in conflict zones, and find the balance between cultural preservation and globalization.

The dais heavily encourages delegates to put forth their knowledge and expertise in front of this committee to produce amazing debate. All your ideas and conflicting opinions will shape this committee. That being said, we highly anticipate the innovative ideas and cannot wait to see the enthusiasm we hope you bring to this committee.

We, the entire staff, are delighted to welcome you to CPSSMUN's General Assembly!

Sincerely,
Simroz Sodhi (He/Him) & Rishik Kapoor (He/Him)
Directors of the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM)

Background Information

Historical Context

The Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM) is the third committee of the United Nations General Assembly, which has been in existence since 1945 when the United Nations (UN) was established.[1] SOCHUM was established to improve the global community's efforts to protect human rights, carry out humanitarian actions and develop social processes. SOCHUM made a notable contribution to the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which was an important milestone in the creation of modern international human rights law.[2] However, since that time, the mission of the committee has undergone significant changes. Originally established to address post-war humanitarian relief and universal human rights standards, SOCHUM has since expanded its scope to address modern global challenges such as equality of men and women, children's rights, the rights of refugees and those who suffer from intolerance, disability rights, and Indigenous rights. In the modern world, the committee is considered the platform where representatives of the 193 UN member countries present their points of view on different issues and adopt resolutions. These resolutions are not obligatory, but have a great influence on the creation of international law and solving pressing issues related to humanitarian work.[3]

SOCHUM works within the context of sustainable development by addressing global issues that stem from socio-economic disparities and by promoting cultural preservation. At a time when globalization is transforming our world; poverty, war, and cultural change are global issues that require a global response that respects the sovereign rights of the states involved while fulfilling their purpose.[4] SOCHUM can debate global human rights, pass non-binding recommendations, and set international norms, but it cannot enforce laws, authorize military force, or allocate mandatory funding.

Contemporary Context

[1] United Nations. "About the General Assembly." United Nations, https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/. Accessed 1 Apr. 2026.
[2] United Nations. Universal Declaration of Human Rights. United Nations, 1948, https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights. Accessed 5 Apr. 2026.
[3] United Nations. "Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural)." United Nations General Assembly, https://www.un.org/en/ga/third/. Accessed 3 Apr. 2026.
[4] United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. "OHCHR and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." OHCHR, https://www.ohchr.org/en/sdgs. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

Poverty and socioeconomic inequality are among the greatest challenges our world faces today. Despite the technological advancements visible in many nations, there remains an unequal distribution of wealth internationally and domestically. Several countries have positive growth in their economies, but said growth tends to be restricted to the privileged groups in society, while many marginalized groups are sidelined.[5] Rapid industrialization and economic growth in countries like India have brought millions out of poverty, but significant inequalities are still present between urban and rural regions. The increasing urbanization in Mumbai and Delhi offers the best infrastructure and employment, with access to medicine and education systems. Yet in the process, rural populations end up having an imbalanced resource allocation and a lack of public services.[6] Along with this, countries that have access to natural resources still remain heavily impoverished. Looting of national resources has been enabled by corruption and other factors. The wealth of said resources has concurrently been isolated from citizens due to this weakness.[7] Simultaneously, these cases reiterate the necessity of policies which pay attention not solely to economic development, but also to the fair distribution of wealth, access to education and long-term disparities in sustainable development policies.

A major concern that is discussed within SOCHUM is that of the human rights violations that occur within conflict zones around the world.[8] Human costs of such conflicts demonstrate the adverse influence that war can have on the population of countries, their infrastructure, and resources. The widespread human rights abuses that take place in these areas serve to underscore the fact that the international community should intervene to ensure that such abuses are reduced and the civilians within these conflict areas are provided with humanitarian relief and aid.[9] Another major issue that is discussed within the SOCHUM committee is that of the debate between cultural preservation and globalization. While globalization allows for the entire world to become interconnected with one another, many cultures struggle to preserve traditions in the age of globalization. Countries like France

[5] International Monetary Fund. "Inequality." International Monetary Fund, https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/Inequality. Accessed 20 Apr. 2026.
[6] World Bank. "India Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/india. Accessed 14 Apr. 2026.
[7] Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. "Nigeria." EITI, https://eiti.org/countries/nigeria. Accessed 21 Apr. 2026; Transparency International. "Corruption Perceptions Index." Transparency International, https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi. Accessed 18 Apr. 2026.
[8] United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. "Protecting Human Rights during Conflict Situations." OHCHR, https://www.ohchr.org/en/protecting-human-rights-conflict-situations. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[9] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Global Trends: Forced Displacement. UNHCR, https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends. Accessed 10 Apr. 2026.

work hard to preserve their culture and language. This is mainly done through regulations in media, education, and overall governance (see Case Study E for more details).[10] Meanwhile, countries like Japan are able to preserve their culture and traditions even in the age of globalization, regardless of its impact on the culture of even the most developed countries. Japan does this by implementing traditional practices into modernized life.[11]

Overall, SOCHUM enables all these problems to be addressed in detail. It provides an understanding of complex issues present in the world today and those that might arise in the future. All these issues are essential to the discussion of how countries around the world can collaborate to address them, ensuring that everyone can lead a dignified life and enjoy their freedoms equally.

[10] French Ministry of Culture. "Garantir l'emploi du français." Ministère de la Culture, https://www.culture.gouv.fr/thematiques/langue-francaise-et-langues-de-france/agir-pour-les-langues/garantir-l-emploi-du-francais. Accessed 22 Apr. 2026.
[11] Government of Japan. "Policy of Cultural Affairs in Japan." Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan, https://www.bunka.go.jp/english/report/annual/1394357.html. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

Topics of Discussion

Topic #1: Eradicating Global Poverty and Reducing Socioeconomic Inequality

Historical Context

Throughout history, poverty and disparities in socioeconomic status have continually existed without gaining mainstream importance. This includes the periods after the Industrial Revolution, colonialism, and periods characterized by a lack of a feasible economic growth system. Post-World War II was a watershed in the "fight against poverty", as different organizations appeared on an international stage, including the United Nations and the World Bank.[12] Its establishment enhanced collaboration among nations aimed at the eradication of poverty and improvement of economic growth in the countries. The last century was characterized by an active globalization process, which managed to transform the economic situation of many countries. However, the aforementioned improvements do not signify that all the nations worldwide have reached a sustainable economic growth level. Many of them, particularly developing economies, still to this day have not reached a sustainable economic growth level.[13]

Background

The international community faces a significant challenge in eradicating global poverty as well as reducing social and economic inequities. With the daily continuation of globalization and many organizations already working on addressing issues of poverty, the issue still remains. Examples of organizations working towards eradicating poverty include the UN with its Millennium Development Goals, which are an outdated set of goals built upon eradicating poverty; these were later expanded to the Sustainable Development Goals, also known as SDGs.[14] SDG No. 1 of eradicating poverty: "SDG 1 aims to eliminate

[12] United Nations. "About the General Assembly." United Nations, https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/. Accessed 1 Apr. 2026; World Bank. "Poverty Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview. Accessed 12 Apr. 2026.
[13] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Globalisation and Emerging Economies: Brazil, Russia, India, Indonesia, China and South Africa. OECD Publishing, 2009, https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/globalisation-and-emerging-economies_9789264044814-en.html. Accessed 23 Apr. 2026.
[14] United Nations. "The Millennium Development Goals Report." United Nations, 2015, https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/. Accessed 23 Apr. 2026; United Nations. Transforming Our World: The

extreme poverty, cut national poverty rates in half, establish comprehensive social protection systems, and ensure equal rights to economic resources and technology."[15] Since 1990, approximately 1.5 billion people have escaped poverty, but the world is currently off track to eradicate global poverty before 2030.[16]

Income inequality continues to be a significant problem at both the micro and macro level. It affects the socioeconomic status of individual citizens within countries, and at the national level, where countries may experience rapid economic growth while many of their citizens struggle to meet even their basic needs.[17] This creates a continuing gap between wealth and poverty. Another major driver of poverty is systemic conflict. Systemic conflicts lead to loss of land, destruction of homes, and loss of jobs, which forces countless populations to be trapped in extreme poverty.[18] A social aspect which leads to poverty is a lack of education. Currently, in Mali and Burkina Faso, over half of the population is illiterate and without education; poverty becomes a greater risk for these populations.[19] Countries such as Mozambique, which was previously colonized by Portugal, have seen the lasting effects of colonialism, as shown in the 81.4% of the population that lives in extreme poverty.[20] In other countries, a challenge that makes it extremely difficult to eradicate poverty is governance issues and corruption. Systemic corruption in developing nations such as Pakistan drives poverty by emptying public welfare funds and inflating living costs, while limiting resources available for poverty reduction.[21] From the front, it seems simple, but all of these challenges make eradicating poverty one of the most difficult tasks on planet Earth.

Efforts to reduce poverty within the global community have been made through

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2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. United Nations, 2015, https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda. Accessed 7 Apr. 2026.

[15] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Goal 1: No Poverty." United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal1. Accessed 9 Apr. 2026.

[16] United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Report 2023/2024: Breaking the Gridlock: Reimagining Cooperation in a Polarized World. UNDP, 2024, https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2023-24. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; World Bank. "Poverty Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview. Accessed 12 Apr. 2026.

[17] International Monetary Fund. "Inequality." International Monetary Fund, https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/Inequality. Accessed 20 Apr. 2026.

[18] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Global Trends: Forced Displacement. UNHCR, https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends. Accessed 10 Apr. 2026.

[19] United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Report 2023/2024: Breaking the Gridlock: Reimagining Cooperation in a Polarized World. UNDP, 2024, https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2023-24. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

[20] World Bank. "Poverty Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview. Accessed 12 Apr. 2026.

[21] Transparency International. "Corruption Perceptions Index." Transparency International, https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2025. Accessed 18 Apr. 2026.

organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank.[22] However, the efforts have been inconsistent due to disagreements among nations over each nation's responsibilities to reduce poverty worldwide. Many nations with high levels of economic development advocate for various forms of aid to be provided to other nations to help reduce the wealth gap between developed and developing nations, although their actual contributions vary widely. In 2025, only four countries (Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway, and Sweden) met the UN target of giving 0.7% of their national income as aid, while the average across OECD donor countries was just 0.26%.[23] However, some of those developing nations argue for the reduction of aid and instead for the implementation of economic reforms within their own countries to address their issues with poverty.[24] Furthermore, another debated issue regarding poverty is the role that the financial world and multinational corporations play in the continued poverty within developing nations. Some believe that the world of finance helps develop countries, while others believe that it undermines them.

Role of Multinational Corporations

Multinational Corporations (MNCs) play an important role in bringing capital, work and resources to developing countries. But what is still an open question is whether MNCs help to diminish poverty, given that they can bring both profits and problems.[25]

Table 1: The Potential Benefits Against the Potential Criticisms of Multinational Corporations (MNCs)

Potential Benefits	Potential Criticism
• Creates jobs and brings foreign investment into countries that lack	• Profits often leave the country instead of being reinvested locally

[22] United Nations. "About the General Assembly." United Nations, https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/. Accessed 1 Apr. 2026; World Bank. "Poverty Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview. Accessed 12 Apr. 2026.
[23] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. "International Aid Fell Sharply in 2025, Says OECD." OECD, 2026, https://www.oecd.org/en/about/news/press-releases/2026/04/international-aid-fell-sharply-in-2025-says-oecd.html. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[24] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Globalisation and Emerging Economies: Brazil, Russia, India, Indonesia, China and South Africa. OECD Publishing, 2009, https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/globalisation-and-emerging-economies_9789264044814-en.html. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[25] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Globalisation and Emerging Economies: Brazil, Russia, India, Indonesia, China and South Africa. OECD Publishing, 2009, https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/globalisation-and-emerging-economies_9789264044814-en.html. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

capital	
• Transfers technology and skills to local workers	• Tax avoidance reduces the revenue host governments collect
• Builds infrastructure like ports and roads to support operations	• Poor working conditions and environmental damage, such as Shell's oil spills in the Niger Delta

These different perspectives show that MNCs can support poverty reduction through growth and development, but effective regulation is needed to ensure benefits are shared fairly.[26]

Colonialism, debt traps, climate inequities, and trade impediments play a role in increasing global poverty and socioeconomic inequalities by impairing economic autonomy, heightening the need for extended funding, leaving poorer nations more exposed to environmental and resource destruction that they did little to cause, and hindering equal access to trade and international markets.[27] If global poverty is neither eradicated nor controlled, it may lead to several infractions on the international stage and will lead to severe humanitarian concerns. It is in the *world's* best interest to implement a framework and instill policies to combat this standing issue.

[26] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Globalisation and Emerging Economies: Brazil, Russia, India, Indonesia, China and South Africa. OECD Publishing, 2009, https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/globalisation-and-emerging-economies_9789264044814-en.html. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. "Nigeria." EITI, https://eiti.org/countries/nigeria. Accessed 21 Apr. 2026.
[27] United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. The State of Commodity Dependence 2023. United Nations, 2023, https://unctad.org/publication/state-commodity-dependence-2023. Accessed 21 Apr. 2026.

Case Study A: India - Rapid Growth, Unequal Distribution



Figure 1: High-rise residential development bordering an informal settlement, illustrating urban wealth disparity in India.[28]



Figure 2: Children in a Residential Community in India.[29]

[28] World Bank. "India Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/india. Accessed 14 Apr. 2026.
[29] United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Report 2023/2024: Breaking the Gridlock: Reimagining Cooperation in a Polarized World. UNDP, 2024, https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2023-24. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.



Figure 3: Residential Housing Alongside High-Rise Development in India.[30]

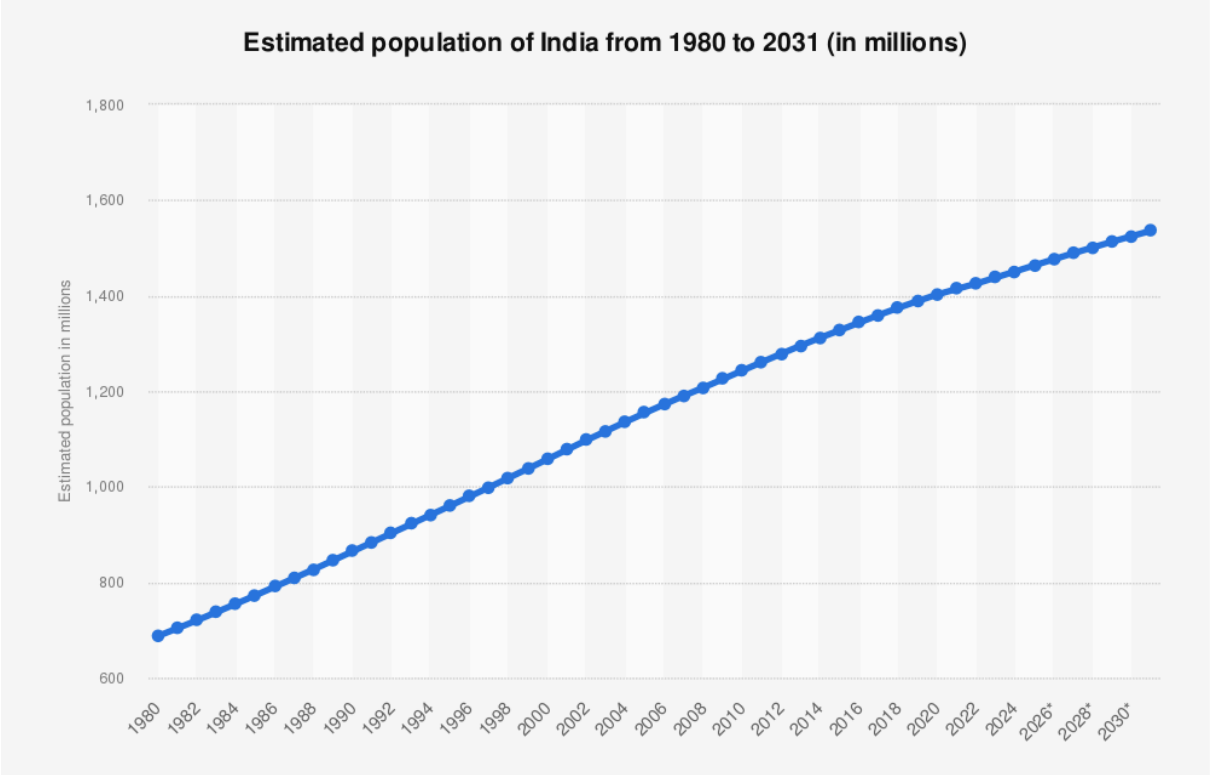


Figure 4: Estimated population of India, 1980 to 2031, in millions.[30]

[30] World Bank. "India Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/india. Accessed 14 Apr. 2026.

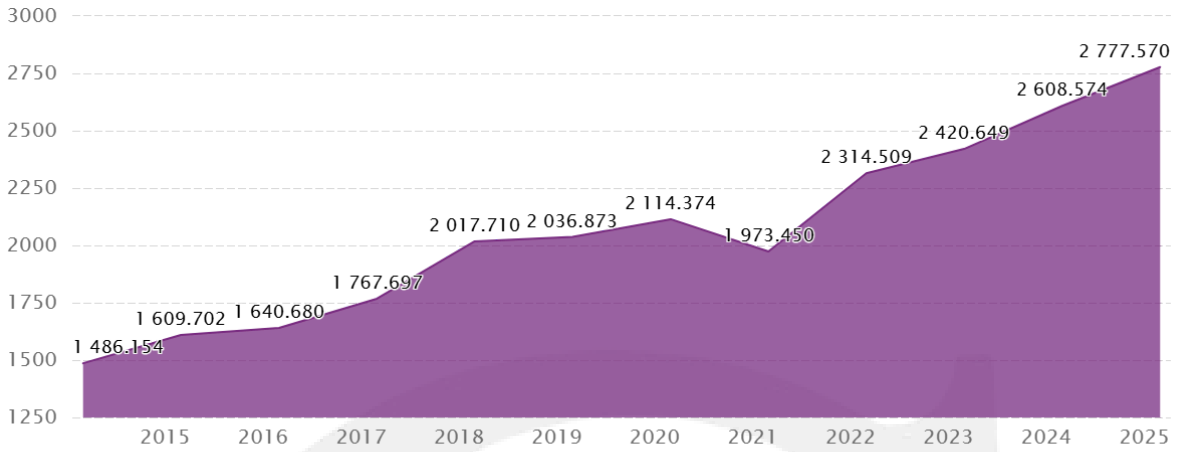


Figure 5: GDP per capita of India in USD, 2015 to 2025, rising from 1,486 to 2,778.31

India is a major economy that is rapidly growing worldwide. As the technology, manufacturing, and service sectors have grown by a large margin, the country's GDP has also grown, as has the number of large business hubs it is home to.[31] Although the country's economy is expanding, there is a socioeconomic disparity between those who live in cities and those in rural regions. Indian cities are the recipients of foreign investments, modern infrastructure and job opportunities. However, on the other hand, poverty remains a problem in the rural regions of the country. Many of these villages have less reliable access to health, water, education, and jobs than cities do.

The disparity between the two groups of citizens in accessing education and employment opportunities is a major factor contributing to the inequality between these two categories of citizens. According to India's 2023-24 Periodic Labour Force Survey, the literacy rate for people aged 7 and above was 77.5 percent in rural areas, compared with 88.9 percent in urban areas.[32] Cities are also equipped with good educational institutions to enable graduates to access jobs. The rural regions lack the educational facilities that can enable their people to access well-paying jobs. According to the World Bank, extreme poverty in India fell from 16.2 percent in 2011-2012 to 2.3 percent in 2022-2023, but the International Labour Organization reports that around 90 percent of workers are still in jobs

[31] World Bank. "India Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/india. Accessed 14 Apr. 2026.

[32] Sakshi Post. "Literacy Rate: AP, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh Lowest; Mizoram, Lakshadweep, and Nagaland Highest." Sakshi Post, 2025, https://www.sakshipost.com/news/education/india-s-literacy-rate-809-urban-rural-and-gender-gaps-remain-414982. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; Akashvani News. "Slight Increase in Rural Literacy Rate in Last Fiscal, Informs Education Minister to RS." Akashvani, 2024, https://newsonair.gov.in/slight-increase-in-rural-literacy-rate-in-last-fiscal-informs-education-minister-to-rs/. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

without formal employment protections.[33] Besides being unable to access education, India also faces the problem of lacking any formal means of employment. India has numerous people working in the informal sectors of the economy. These jobs without formal employment protections often lack worker protections such as written contracts, paid leave, and social security, which leaves employees without job security or a reliable income source.

All in all, even as India's economy is growing at a very fast pace, inequality between its urban and rural regions is driven by factors such as education, informal employment, and infrastructure. All these show that even with the positive aspects of globalization and industrialization, there will still be a rise in inequalities among the populace in certain nations unless specific policies are implemented to address these problems.

Case Study B: Nigeria - Resource Wealth, but High Poverty

[33] World Bank. "India Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/india. Accessed 14 Apr. 2026; International Labour Organization. "India Employment Report 2024: Youth Employment, Education and Skills." ILO, 2024, https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/2024-08/India%20Employment%20-%20web_8%20April.pdf. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.



Figure 6: Children near waste-accumulated residential housing in Nigeria.[34]



Figure 7: Offshore Oil Production Platform, Nigeria.[35]

[34] World Bank. "Nigeria Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria. Accessed 16 Apr. 2026.
[35] World Bank. "Nigeria Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria. Accessed 16 Apr. 2026.



Figure 8: A rural Nigerian community in the Niger Delta region.[34]

In Nigeria, one noticeable display of the resource paradox, also known as the "Resource Curse," is Nigeria's abundance of natural resources; however, it is home to widespread poverty and income inequality.[36] Nigeria is the largest producer of oil in Africa; therefore, the export of crude oil contributes a great deal to the national economy.[37] Despite this wealth, Nigeria has a high number of individuals who are classified as being below the poverty line. The World Bank estimates that over 60% of Nigerians lived below the national poverty line in 2025, and about 123 million people lived in extreme poverty.[38] One of the main issues contributing to income inequality in Nigeria is corruption and mismanagement of the funds that the country generates from its oil fields.[39] The revenue generated from oil belongs to the country and is supposed to be used to fund essential public services. However, the money is mostly controlled by political and economic elites and is not used to

[36] World Bank. "Nigeria Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria. Accessed 16 Apr. 2026; International Monetary Fund. "Nigeria: Country Information." International Monetary Fund, https://www.imf.org/en/Countries/NGA. Accessed 18 Apr. 2026.
[37] International Monetary Fund. "Nigeria: Country Information." International Monetary Fund, https://www.imf.org/en/Countries/NGA. Accessed 18 Apr. 2026.
[38] World Bank. "Nigeria Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria/overview. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[39] Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. "Nigeria." EITI, https://eiti.org/countries/nigeria. Accessed 21 Apr. 2026.

enrich the population of the nation.[40]

Furthermore, income inequality is also enabled by the regional inequality that exists within the country. The oil wealth is produced in the Niger Delta region in the southern part of the country. Other parts of the nation, especially the north, remain underdeveloped, and many people there lack education and access to basic infrastructure.[41] This leads to social unrest and tension among the citizens of the country. For instance, in the oil-producing Niger Delta, armed groups demanding a greater share of oil revenue have attacked oil facilities, and a government amnesty program launched in 2009 was set up to cover about 30,000 former militants from the region.[42] As for income inequality, an issue with many contributors, a major one being in Nigeria due to the country's dependence on oil exports for its economy; oil and gas make up over 85% of Nigeria's total exports and about 65% of government revenue.[43] The country's economy relies on oil exports. Therefore, a drop in oil prices has a significant impact on the Nigerian economy and the standard of living of its citizens.[44] Although the country may reduce dependency on the oil sector, it still poses serious economic, political, and social challenges for countries that rely only on oil exports for their economy.[45] The process of reducing oil dependency usually includes complex initial investments in new businesses, infrastructure, technology, and education. Moreover, the transition may be temporary, bringing negative effects such as rising unemployment and lower government income. Furthermore, many oil-producing countries face opposition from businesses and communities almost completely dependent on oil-related jobs. Finally, global energy market oscillations, existing competitive industries, and the need to attract private investments hamper diversification attempts.[46] Thus, reducing dependence on oil will

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[40] Transparency International. "Corruption Perceptions Index." Transparency International, https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi. Accessed 18 Apr. 2026.
[41] World Bank. "Deep Structural Reforms Guided by Evidence Are Urgently Needed to Lift Millions of Nigerians Out of Poverty, Says New World Bank Report." World Bank, 2022, https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/03/21/afw-deep-structural-reforms-guided-by-evidence-are-urgently-needed-to-lift-millions-of-nigerians-out-of-poverty. Accessed 12 Oct. 2026.
[42] Al Jazeera. "Nigeria Unrest Costs Shell Dear." Al Jazeera, 2008, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2008/5/11/nigeria-unrest-costs-shell-dear. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; The New Humanitarian. "Anger over Amnesty Programme." The New Humanitarian, 2012, https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/node/252566. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[43] Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. "Nigeria." EITI, https://eiti.org/countries/nigeria. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[44] International Monetary Fund. "Nigeria: Country Information." International Monetary Fund, https://www.imf.org/en/Countries/NGA. Accessed 18 Apr. 2026.
[45] International Monetary Fund. "Economic Diversification in Oil-Exporting Arab Countries." International Monetary Fund, 2016, https://www.imf.org/external/np/pp/eng/2016/042916.pdf. Accessed 11 Oct. 2026.
[46] United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. The State of Commodity Dependence 2023. United Nations, 2023, https://unctad.org/publication/state-commodity-dependence-2023. Accessed 21 Apr. 2026.

require effective governance and well-thought-out long-term strategies.

The Nigerian economy illustrates how wealth from natural resources is not enough to eliminate income poverty in the nation. The government must develop strong economic and civic institutions to govern the country effectively and ensure that the country's natural resources benefit the people.[47] Depending on the management of the natural resources by the country, the outcome of income inequality can be reduced or worsened. For example, Norway saves its oil revenue in a national fund and only spends the fund's expected real return, about 3% per year, so that both current and future generations benefit from its oil wealth; the fund was worth about 22.7 trillion Norwegian kroner by mid-2026.[48] In Nigeria, by contrast, the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative found in 2017 that over USD 20 billion in revenue from the national oil company had not been remitted to the government.[49] Within Nigeria, there exists a plethora of humanitarian issues along with these socioeconomic problems. Education inequality is an issue that has persisted in Nigeria for generations. Nigeria's literacy rate is about 61%, ranging from around 90% in the South-East to about 25% in the North-West; primary school enrollment is roughly 68%; children from the poorest households, especially girls, may receive as little as one year of schooling, and significant inequalities exist based on region, gender, and income.[50] Another common issue that comes up in daily life for Nigerians is healthcare inaccessibility. There is a lack of access to decent healthcare for 43% of the general populace in Nigeria, with fewer than four doctors per 10,000 people; and over the last year of data collection, there have been approximately 512 deaths for every 100,000 births.[51]

Child labour is one of the many other nations experiencing extreme levels of

[47] World Bank. "Nigeria Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria. Accessed 16 Apr. 2026.
[48] Norges Bank Investment Management. "About the Fund." NBIM, https://www.nbim.no/en/the-fund/about-the-fund/. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; Norges Bank Investment Management. "Government Pension Fund Global: Half-Year Report 2026." NBIM, 2026, https://www.nbim.no/contentassets/19340cfcd72640fcab45ebd2a95325eb/gpfg_half-year-report-2026_web.pdf. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[49] Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. "Nigeria." EITI, https://eiti.org/countries/nigeria. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[50] World Bank. "Nigeria Overview." World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria. Accessed 16 Apr. 2026.
[51] World Health Organization. "Nigeria Country Profile." World Health Organization, https://www.who.int/countries/nga/. Accessed 14 Apr. 2026.

socioeconomic disparity. 43% of children aged 5–11 are engaged in child labour.[52] Many children are engaged in agricultural work, and less often as street vendors and domestic workers among lower-class households rather than in richer homes and areas of rurality throughout Nigeria. At present, over 1.3 million persons are attempting to migrate from Nigeria as a result of very high unemployment rates.[53] This statistic remains relevant to global standards as most individuals emigrating from these countries have strong skills and professional training, with many working in fields such as healthcare. These workers would start contributing to foreign economies because they cannot sustain a job in Nigeria, and that puts them in financial harm. For example, 2,363 nurses and midwives educated in Nigeria joined the United Kingdom's professional register between April 2024 and March 2025, making Nigeria one of the top three sources of internationally educated nursing staff in the UK.[54] When this many workers emigrate, it causes a shift in Nigeria's workforce; instead of a surplus of workers, a shortage may occur. This would lead to Nigeria reaching out for foreign labour, which is usually more expensive and would in turn hurt the Nigerian economy.

Guiding Questions

1. Should developed nations be under an obligation to help the developing nations?
2. Should these nations be tasked with the challenge of fighting this inequality on their own?
3. What have the main organizations like the IMF, UN, and World Bank done to help mitigate the effects of poverty?
4. Do foreign aid and development programs reduce poverty long-term, or can they create dependency in developing nations?
5. What are some ethical concerns that emerged regarding multinational corporations, and how were they resolved? How can they be prevented from arising in the first place?

[52] International Labour Organization. "Child Labour." ILO, https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/child-labour/lang--en/index.htm. Accessed 3 Apr. 2026; United Nations Children's Fund. "Child Labour." UNICEF, https://www.unicef.org/protection/child-labour. Accessed 7 Apr. 2026.
[53] International Monetary Fund. "Nigeria: Country Information." International Monetary Fund, https://www.imf.org/en/Countries/NGA. Accessed 18 Apr. 2026.
[54] Nursing and Midwifery Council. "Annual Data Report: March 2025." NMC, 2025, https://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/sitedocuments/data-reports/march-2025/annual-data-report-march-2025.pdf. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

Topic #2: Human Rights Violations in Conflict Zones

Historical Context

The problem of human rights violations during wartime and in conflict zones has long been the focus of the international community, especially considering the fact that wars now affect more and more civilians each time. It has become necessary for the world to respond to this problem after the end of WWII, and such measures were already taken, which eventually led to the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the Geneva Conventions (1949).[55] The agreements introduced norms which were aimed at the protection of civilians and combatants, etc. However, even with the adoption of these documents, numerous human rights violations still took place in the ongoing wars.[56] With civil wars, political crises, and the involvement of non-state actors in various conflicts, it has become complicated to apply international law in practice. Nations argue whether the protection of people's rights can be presented as a reason for interference with the sovereignty of nations, since some countries support humanitarian intervention in the countries where others are against it.[57]

Background

War is one of the most threatening issues for human rights globally, as it causes much suffering for civilians and destroys civilian life within these conflict zones. Civilians are the most affected by war, as there are numerous ways in which their rights are violated within these conflict zones. Despite the existence of international agreements such as the Geneva Conventions, there is a lack of enforcement of these agreements, particularly in the

[55] United Nations. Universal Declaration of Human Rights. United Nations, 1948, https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights. Accessed 5 Apr. 2026; International Committee of the Red Cross. "The Geneva Conventions and Their Commentaries." ICRC, https://www.icrc.org/en/law-and-policy/geneva-conventions-and-their-commentaries. Accessed 4 Apr. 2026.
[56] International Committee of the Red Cross. "The Geneva Conventions and Their Commentaries." ICRC, https://www.icrc.org/en/law-and-policy/geneva-conventions-and-their-commentaries. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[57] United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. "Protecting Human Rights during Conflict Situations." OHCHR, https://www.ohchr.org/en/protecting-human-rights-conflict-situations. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

face of the power that some of these countries have.[58]

Within these conflict zones, media is often restricted and government-influenced. This can lead to many forms of human rights violations. Across these zones, there is a breach of Freedom of the Press, Freedom of Speech and Expression, the Right to Information and Democratic Participation, and Freedom from Discriminatory Treatment.[59] This situation persists in many active conflict zones. A prime example of this is Iran. As there is ongoing tension within the state of Iran, the media is heavily influenced by the Iranian government and generally reflects the government's positions, including its opposition to Western Powers of North America and European Nations. For example, Reporters Without Borders ranks Iran 177th out of 180 countries in its 2026 World Press Freedom Index, states that the country's media is largely controlled by the government, and reports that more than a hundred journalists have been arrested since 2022.[60]

Within these conflicts, countless reports suggesting sexual violence against females within the countries involved have been observed. For example, in 2012, early in the Syrian uprising, Ruham Hawash was arrested by Syrian state security forces. She was taken to the al-Khatib Branch, a detention facility of Syria's General Intelligence Service in Damascus, where she was tortured with beatings, kicks, and electric shocks.[61] In 2022, a German court convicted a former officer of the al-Khatib Branch of crimes against humanity, including torture, 27 murders, and cases of sexual violence, and sentenced him to life in prison.[62] Sexual violence is a widespread issue in many of the conflicts occurring in the modern world today. The United Nations has recognized that sexual violence against civilians in conflicts is a violation of human rights and a potential war crime.[63] In Sudan, as a result of the conflict

[58] International Committee of the Red Cross. "The Geneva Conventions and Their Commentaries." ICRC, https://www.icrc.org/en/law-and-policy/geneva-conventions-and-their-commentaries. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[59] United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. "Protecting Human Rights during Conflict Situations." OHCHR, https://www.ohchr.org/en/protecting-human-rights-conflict-situations. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[60] Reporters Without Borders. "Iran." RSF, 2026, https://rsf.org/en/country/iran. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[61] Orde, Sabine am. "Ex-Gefangene aus Folterknast: 'Syrien ist nicht sicher.'" taz, 2025, https://taz.de/Ex-Gefangene-aus-Folterknast/!6060232/. Accessed 12 Oct. 2026; European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights. "Syria Trial in Koblenz: Life Sentence for Anwar R for Crimes against Humanity." ECCHR, 2022, https://www.ecchr.eu/en/press-release/syria-verdict-anwar-r/. Accessed 12 Oct. 2026.
[62] European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights. "Syria Trial in Koblenz: Life Sentence for Anwar R for Crimes against Humanity." ECCHR, 2022, https://www.ecchr.eu/en/press-release/syria-verdict-anwar-r/. Accessed 12 Oct. 2026.
[63] International Criminal Court. "The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court." ICC, https://www.icc-cpi.int/resource-library/documents/rs-eng.pdf. Accessed 8 Apr. 2026; United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. "Protecting Human Rights during Conflict Situations." OHCHR, https://www.ohchr.org/en/protecting-human-rights-conflict-situations. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), many civilians have endured sexual violence. The SAF and RSF have both been documented to commit acts of rape, gang rape, sexual assault, abduction, and forced marriage in regions like Darfur, Khartoum, and Al Jazirah.[64]

- 368 cases of sexual violence have been documented.[65]
- 521 individuals have been recorded as victims of these sexual violence acts.
- The majority of these cases occurred in the regions of Darfur, Khartoum, and Al Jazirah.
- Sexual violence within these conflicts includes the acts of rape, gang rape, sexual assault, abduction, and forced marriage.
- The RSF has been primarily held responsible for these sexual violence acts against civilians.

These acts have been used as a means of creating fear within the civilian populations of the affected countries, punishing those civilians for the actions of others, removing civilians from their homes, and maintaining control over the areas that are experiencing conflicts between the RSF and SAF.

The United Nations and other entities within the international community have attempted to regulate and control conflicts globally. However, there are significant political disagreements between the different nations within the Security Council of the United Nations.[66] While some of the world's greatest powers advocate international intervention to assist civilians in these conflicts, others feel that the intervention of other nations within their territory violates their sovereignty. The resulting disagreements within the Security Council lead the international community to fail to respond appropriately to these humanitarian crises.

Furthermore, accountability remains limited for rights violations in most of these

[64] United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. "Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War in Sudan's Three-Year Conflict." OHCHR, 2026, https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2026/06/sexual-violence-weapon-war-sudans-three-year-conflict. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

[65] United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. "Statement by Radhouane Nouicer, the Designated Expert on Sudan of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, on the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict." United Nations Sudan, 2025, https://sudan.un.org/en/296603-statement-radhouane-nouicer-designated-expert-sudan-un-high-commissioner-human-rights. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026acts of sexual violence.

[66] United Nations. "About the General Assembly." United Nations, https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/. Accessed 1 Apr. 2026.

conflict zones. Many of these rights violations can go unpunished, and there are concerns regarding whether the existing international laws are sufficient to prevent these rights violations.[67] International courts have shown that accountability is possible; the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia indicted 161 individuals and sentenced 93 of them.[68] However, these courts depend on countries to make arrests. In 2024, Mongolia did not arrest Russian President Vladimir Putin during his visit despite an International Criminal Court arrest warrant, and the Court later ruled that Mongolia had violated its obligations under the Rome Statute.[69] Additionally, humanitarian aid for these conflict zones is often restricted or weaponized to increase the suffering of the civilians in these areas.

If these issues are not resolved, the international community will continue to allow human rights to be violated in the course of war, further weakening the existing international laws and further creating instability within the regions of the world experiencing these conflicts.

[67] International Criminal Court. "The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court." ICC, https://www.icc-cpi.int/resource-library/documents/rs-eng.pdf. Accessed 8 Apr. 2026.
[68] International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. "Key Figures of the Cases." ICTY, https://www.icty.org/en/cases/key-figures-cases. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[69] Chan, Derren. "ICC Finds Mongolia Violated Rome Statute by Failing to Arrest Putin." JURIST, 2024, https://www.jurist.org/news/2024/10/icc-finds-mongolia-failed-to-comply-with-request-to-arrest-putin. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

Case Study C: Syria - Civil War Crisis



Figure 9: Destruction of urban infrastructure in Aleppo, Syria during the Syrian Civil War.[70]

[70] Itaky, Monther. "Aleppo's Destruction from Above." SyriaUntold, 2021, https://syriauntold.com/2021/03/10/aleppos-destruction-from-above/. Accessed 15 Apr. 2026.

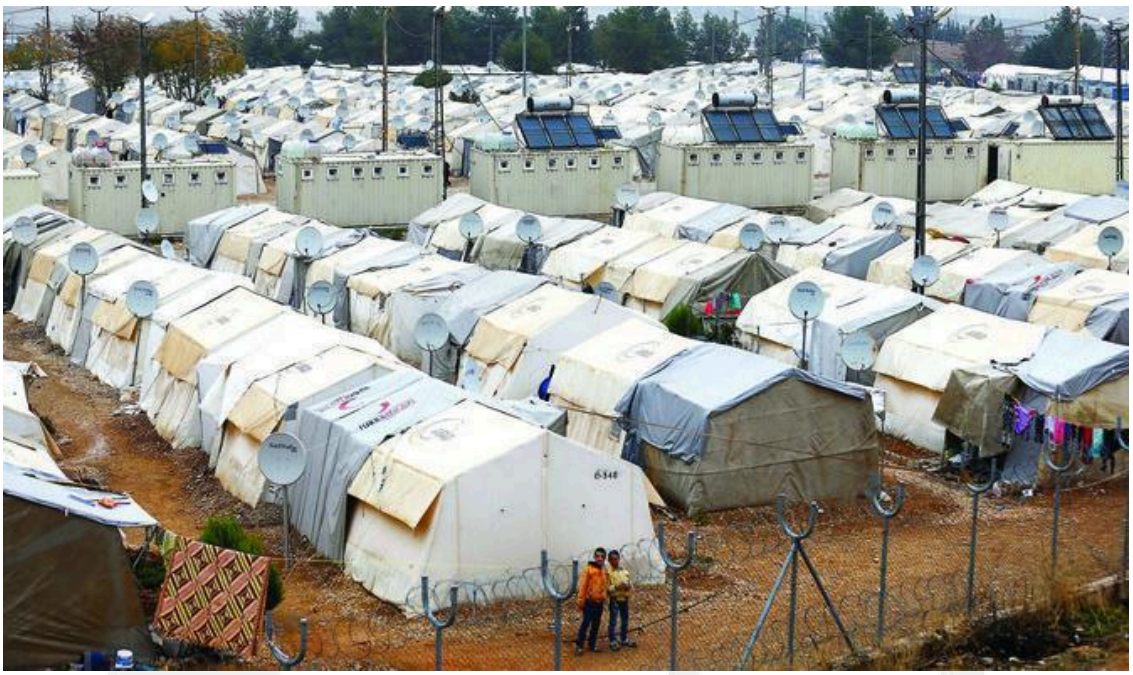


Figure 10: A refugee camp housing Syrians displaced by the conflict.[71]

The Syrian Civil War started in 2011 as part of the process of the Arab Spring, which was a series of democratic movements that occurred in the Middle East and North Africa.[72] The citizens of Syria protested against their government under President Bashar al-Assad, who did not fulfill people's needs for reform, freedom, and the elimination of corruption and repression. The government's violence against peaceful protesters initiated the start of the crisis. In March 2011, protests broke out in the city of Daraa after 15 schoolchildren were arrested for anti-government graffiti, and security forces responded by firing on protesters, killing at least five people.[73] Instead of ending the protests, the crackdown was followed by more than a decade of war, and the UN estimates that 306,887 civilians were killed between March 2011 and March 2021.[74] The other causes of protests include economic inequality, unemployment, environmental factors, and sectarian divisions. With the destabilization of events, the present conflict became even more complicated as it started to include rebels,

[71] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Syria Emergency." UNHCR, https://www.unhcr.org/emergencies/syria-emergency. Accessed 13 Apr. 2026.
[72] Council on Foreign Relations. "Instability in Syria." Global Conflict Tracker, https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-syria. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[73] Human Rights Watch. "Syria: Government Crackdown Leads to Protester Deaths." Human Rights Watch, 2011, https://www.hrw.org/news/2011/03/21/syria-government-crackdown-leads-protester-deaths. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[74] United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. "UN Human Rights Office Estimates More Than 306,000 Civilians Were Killed Over 10 Years in Syria Conflict." OHCHR, 2022, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/06/un-human-rights-office-estimates-more-306000-civilians-were-killed-over-10. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

terrorists, and foreign players.[75] This has caused the country of Syria to lose its vital infrastructure, and several of its cities have taken severe damage.

As a result of this conflict, over half of Syria's population has been forced to leave the nation because of the outcomes.[76] While some have stayed in the country, in areas impacted by the crisis, many of those who have departed have fled to neighbouring countries as refugees. The humanitarian systems of nearby nations have been burdened by these refugees.[77] Numerous reports on the crisis in Syria have documented the human rights violations that have occurred within the country, such as attacks on civilians, attacks on healthcare facilities, and the use of prohibited weapons by various parties to the conflict.[78] Furthermore, the involvement of various external powers has made negotiations between those parties extremely difficult. Disagreements within the UN Security Council have blocked any attempts to intervene in the crisis. For example, Russia and China vetoed a 2012 Security Council draft resolution that endorsed an Arab League plan for a political transition in Syria, and Russia and Iran backed the Assad government while Turkey supported rebel forces.[79] Along with this, it is very difficult to reach these affected areas, making it very difficult to provide aid and humanitarian relief to those most affected by the crisis. Hence, some of the difficulties in guaranteeing that human rights are upheld in the nation are brought about by the Syrian issue.

On December 8, 2024, a rebel offensive that included Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) captured Damascus and ended Bashar al-Assad's rule, and an interim administration led by HTS leader Ahmed al-Sharaa has since begun a five-year transitional period.[80] The process of

[75] Council on Foreign Relations. "Instability in Syria." Global Conflict Tracker, https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-syria. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[76] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Global Trends: Forced Displacement. UNHCR, https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends. Accessed 10 Apr. 2026.
[77] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Syria Emergency." UNHCR, https://www.unhcr.org/emergencies/syria-emergency. Accessed 13 Apr. 2026.
[78] Human Rights Watch. "Syria." Human Rights Watch, https://www.hrw.org/middle-east/n-africa/syria. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; Amnesty International. "Human Rights in Syria." Amnesty International, https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/middle-east/syria/. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; United Nations Human Rights Council. Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic. United Nations, https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/iici-syria. Accessed 19 Apr. 2026.
[79] Council on Foreign Relations. "Instability in Syria." Global Conflict Tracker, https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-syria. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; United Nations. "Syria: Ban Voices Deep Regret after Security Council Fails to Agree on Resolution." UN News, 2012, https://news.un.org/en/story/2012/02/402402. Accessed 11 Oct. 2026.
[80] Council on Foreign Relations. "Instability in Syria." Global Conflict Tracker, https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-syria. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

recovery in Syria depends on achieving political stability and restoring essential infrastructure that has been damaged as a result of several years of conflict in the country. Important areas of focus include building back destroyed homes, repairing schools and hospitals, creating transportation systems and reviving the economy by attracting investments and creating jobs. Additionally, an essential aspect of Syria's recovery is assisting refugees to return home safely while also ensuring they have access to housing, basic services, and jobs.

Case Study D: Ukraine - Modern War & Human Rights



Figure 11: Displacement of Civilians Amid the Russia-Ukraine War.[81]

[81] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Ukraine Emergency." UNHCR, https://www.unhcr.org/emergencies/ukraine-emergency. Accessed 25 Apr. 2026.



Figure 12: Civilians sheltering in a metro station during air raids.[82]



Figure 13: Destruction of Civilian Infrastructure Near a Historic Church in Kharkiv, Ukraine.[83]

[82] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. "Ukraine Humanitarian Response." OCHA, https://www.unocha.org/ukraine. Accessed 24 Apr. 2026.
[83] World Health Organization. "Ukraine Emergency." World Health Organization, https://www.who.int/emergencies/situations/ukraine-emergency. Accessed 26 Apr. 2026.

The conflict in Ukraine is the modern interpretation of how widespread war continues to pose a threat to human rights and international security. Infrastructure, including houses, transportation networks and energy plants, has been devastated, leaving citizens unable to get essential electricity, water, medical aid, and heating, even more so as winter is approaching.[84]

Mass displacement has also had a major impact. As a result of the war in Ukraine, millions of people have been forced to leave their homes in Eastern Europe. As of December 2025, approximately six million Ukrainian refugees have fled the country into European countries such as Poland, Romania and Germany.[85] In addition, there are millions of people still in the country who have been internally displaced and need international support for accommodation, food, and education.[86] The war is still ongoing, and there have been many allegations against the Russian army for committing war crimes by violating international human rights law and destroying civilian infrastructure, including hospitals and the general deterioration of human rights.[87] In March 2023, the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin for the unlawful deportation of children from occupied areas of Ukraine, and in 2025 a UN Commission of Inquiry concluded that enforced disappearances committed by Russian authorities amount to crimes against humanity.[88] The UN has also recorded at least 16,431 civilians killed and 48,613 injured in Ukraine since February 2022.[89]

Most conflicts over the previous decade have been met with limited global responses; however, the situation in Ukraine has received substantial global criticism over the actions of

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[84] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. "Ukraine Humanitarian Response." OCHA, https://www.unocha.org/ukraine. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[85] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Ukraine Emergency." UNHCR, https://www.unhcr.org/emergencies/ukraine-emergency. Accessed 25 Apr. 2026.
[86] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. "Ukraine Humanitarian Response." OCHA, https://www.unocha.org/ukraine. Accessed 24 Apr. 2026.
[87] World Health Organization. "Ukraine Emergency." World Health Organization, https://www.who.int/emergencies/situations/ukraine-emergency. Accessed 26 Apr. 2026; International Criminal Court. "The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court." ICC, https://www.icc-cpi.int/resource-library/documents/rs-eng.pdf. Accessed 8 Apr. 2026.
[88] International Criminal Court. "Situation in Ukraine." ICC, https://www.icc-cpi.int/situations/ukraine. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; United Nations Human Rights Council. "Enforced Disappearances Committed by Russian Authorities Amount to Crimes Against Humanity, Says UN Commission of Inquiry." United Nations Ukraine, 2025, https://ukraine.un.org/en/291203-enforced-disappearances-committed-russian-authorities-amount-crimes-against-humanity-says-un. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[89] United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. "Civilian Casualties Soar in Ukraine in the First Half of 2026 Amid Escalating Attacks and Intensifying Use of Deadly Weapons, UN Human Rights Monitors Say." OHCHR, 2026, https://ukraine.ohchr.org/en/Civilian-Casualties-Soar-in-Ukraine-in-the-First-Half-of-2026-Amid-Escalating-Attacks-and-Intensifying-Use-of-Deadly-Weapons-UN-Human-Rights-Monitors-Say. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

the Russian army and also has received military, humanitarian and financial assistance from other nations.[90] However, world leaders remain largely divided over whether increased support will escalate the conflict. For example, U.S. President Donald Trump stated in October 2025 that sending Tomahawk long-range missiles to Ukraine "could mean bigger escalation," the German government has ruled out providing its own long-range Taurus missiles, and Hungary, Slovakia, and Czechia have opted out of both a NATO aid commitment and the European Union's support loan for Ukraine.[91] The conflict in Ukraine clearly demonstrates how modern warfare is directly linked with political and economic issues and asks critical questions regarding intervention and human rights protection in prolonged conflicts.

Guiding Questions

1. Has the UN led any action that has significantly mitigated the effects of civil war or all-out war?
2. How have war crimes usually been punished, and should more punishment be implemented in terms of legality?
3. What makes the Ukraine and Syria conflict so different, and how are they both treated on the global scale?
4. Why is it important to identify specific human rights violations and address them in conflict zones as individual cases rather than treat them as a singular entity?
5. In retrospect to past policies and even within the broader perspective of ceasefire agreements, how have these policies evolved over time and how can they be improved on to come up with a solution for many Human Rights Violations still occurring to this day?

[90] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. "Ukraine Humanitarian Response." OCHA, https://www.unocha.org/ukraine. Accessed 24 Apr. 2026.
[91] Mills, Claire. "Military Assistance to Ukraine: What Has Changed since January 2025?" House of Commons Library, 2026, https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-10308/CBP-10308.pdf. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

Topic #3: Cultural Preservation vs. Globalization

Historical Context

Globalization and cultural preservation are among the pressing issues in the present-day society. Cultural preservation has to do with conserving the cultures and traditions that have formed over many years independently in the different parts of the world, while globalization has to do with the interactions between different people due to modernization and other developments that have happened in recent years. While globalization has enabled societies to interact with one another in ways that were not possible before, such interactions have also led to concerns regarding the loss of some of these individual cultures.[92] Many smaller and Indigenous cultures are struggling to maintain their identities in the face of larger and more globalized cultures around the world. Language shows this clearly: Indigenous peoples speak more than 4,000 of the world's roughly 6,700 languages, and the UN has warned that more than half of all languages could become extinct by 2100.[93] Many governments have started to protect and preserve their cultures through a variety of different initiatives and programs. For example, Canada passed the Indigenous Languages Act in 2019 to support efforts to reclaim and revitalize Indigenous languages, and Wales aims to reach one million Welsh speakers by 2050. At the international level, UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage lists now include 849 cultural practices and traditions from 157 countries.[94] Globalization has created opportunities for interactions between cultures across the world, as well as enabled the growth of economies and the increase in tourism to regions with unique cultures, such as Japan, which received

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[92] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. "UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity." UNESCO, 2001, https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/unesco-universal-declaration-cultural-diversity. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[93] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Backgrounder: Indigenous Languages." United Nations, https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/04/Indigenous-Languages.pdf. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[94] Government of Canada. "Indigenous Languages Act." Justice Laws Website, https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/i-7.85/page-1.html. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; Welsh Government. "Ambitious Plans to Almost Double Number of Welsh Speakers Launched." Welsh Government, 2017, https://www.gov.wales/ambitious-plans-almost-double-number-welsh-speakers-launched. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. "Browse the Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices." UNESCO, https://ich.unesco.org/en/lists. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

about 42.7 million international visitors in 2025.[95] Key benefits of globalization are seen in the humanitarian aspect, as cultures come together to solve problems, and can be seen on a technological scale within the time of Artificial Intelligence, and Data Security and Sharing. For example, through the COVAX initiative, countries worked together to deliver nearly 2 billion COVID-19 vaccine doses to 146 economies, and about 6 billion people, roughly three-quarters of the world's population, were using the Internet in 2025.[96] Among these benefits lie several challenges. One of the challenges facing the remainder of the international community is to find a balance between preserving the cultures that exist within the world's societies and allowing those societies to benefit from the growth of globalization and the resulting economic developments.

Background

The subject of globalization and cultural conservation has gained great significance in the current globalized world. Globalization has made it possible for people to rapidly transfer their concepts, ideas, technological advances, different languages and cultural values across national borders in the modern world as a means of allowing nations to come together to cooperate on multiple fronts such as economic development, trade and innovation. In 2024, there were about 304 million international migrants worldwide, or 3.7% of the global population, many of whom carry their languages and cultural values across borders.[97] Trade, migration, and especially digital media have provided increased access to cultures while also posing risks in terms of cultural loss and destruction, particularly to smaller and weaker cultures.[98] This is because the same global media that opens access to other cultures is dominated by only a few of them; for example, English is used on 49.5% of all websites whose language is known, while the next most common language, Spanish, is used on only

[95] Japan National Tourism Organization. "Number of Visitor Arrivals to Japan in December 2025." JNTO, 2026, https://asset.japan.travel/image/upload/v1769050010/pdf/Number_of_visitor_arrivals_to_Japan_in_December_2025.pdf. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[96] World Health Organization. "COVID-19 Vaccinations Shift to Regular Immunization as COVAX Draws to a Close." WHO, 2023, https://www.who.int/news/item/19-12-2023-covid-19-vaccinations-shift-to-regular-immunization-as-covax-draws-to-a-close. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; International Telecommunication Union. "Global Number of Internet Users Increases, but Disparities Deepen Key Digital Divides." ITU, 2025, https://www.itu.int/en/mediacentre/Pages/PR-2025-11-17-Facts-and-Figures.aspx. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[97] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "International Migrant Stock 2024." UN DESA Population Division, 2024, https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/international-migrant-stock. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[98] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. "UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity." UNESCO, 2001, https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/unesco-universal-declaration-cultural-diversity. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

6.0%.[99] As a result, there are serious concerns as traditions and cultures get affected by the growing influence of global media, MNCs and world languages, which, in the long run, will erode identity and legacies. The measures of identity erosion are becoming drastic, as the UN estimates that one language dies every two weeks.[100] Countries are struggling to define their stances regarding cultural management.

Nations such as France believe there is a need to enforce cultural heritage through measures such as language rules, control over the media, and the promotion of traditional cultures to prevent cultural homogenization of the world due to globalization. France was behind the "cultural exception" principle, which treats cultural goods differently from other products in free-trade agreements, and was one of the leading countries behind UNESCO's 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which was adopted by a vote of 148 to 2.[101] On the contrary, others, such as Canada and the UK, are convinced that this process may benefit nations and cultures in creating more dynamic, innovative cultures rather than harming traditions and cultures.[102] Both countries have large immigrant populations: in 2021, 23.0% of Canada's population were immigrants, and 10.0 million people (16.8%) living in England and Wales were born outside the UK.[103] The impact of globalization is a concern for the new generations as well; their identities, culture and lifestyle have been immensely influenced due to global brands and media, resulting in deviation from traditions and cultures.

The process of globalization allows young people to promote and globalize their own cultures through the global development of understanding. For example, the number of

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[99] W3Techs. "Usage Statistics of Content Languages for Websites." W3Techs, 2026, https://w3techs.com/technologies/overview/content_language. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[100] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Protecting Languages, Preserving Cultures." United Nations, https://www.un.org/en/desa/protecting-languages-preserving-cultures-0. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
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[103] Statistics Canada. "Immigrants Make Up the Largest Share of the Population in over 150 Years and Continue to Shape Who We Are as Canadians." The Daily, 2022, https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/221026/dq221026a-eng.htm. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; Office for National Statistics. "International Migration, England and Wales: Census 2021." ONS, 2022, https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/internationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

global fans of Hallyu, the Korean Wave of South Korean music, film, and television, reached about 225 million in 2023.[104] One of the other main factors is the economy; to create jobs and to generate income and revenue through trade and tourism, countries adopt global cultures. As a result, this creates economic growth. This also results in increased dependence on global markets, which pressures nations to disregard the importance of maintaining their cultural identity while continuing to expand their economies. The risks of this dependence became clear in 2020, when international tourist arrivals fell by 74% during the COVID-19 pandemic, causing an estimated loss of USD 1.3 trillion in export revenue and putting 100 to 120 million direct tourism jobs at risk.[105] If the issue is not handled well, the world will lose its cultural diversity; however, if overly strict cultural heritage policies are implemented, the world will lose the opportunity to innovate and create, which means that there would be no progress or cooperation. Because of this, organizations are in place to help humanity find a balance. UNESCO has enabled collaboration on globalization and cultural preservation. It works to build peace across cultures, education, and the sciences.[106] Under its 1972 World Heritage Convention, UNESCO identifies and helps protect places of outstanding cultural and natural value, and its World Heritage List now includes 1,273 properties in 173 countries.[107] UNESCO also helps communities rebuild their heritage after conflict; after armed groups destroyed 14 mausoleums in Timbuktu, Mali, in 2012, local masons rebuilt them with UNESCO's support, and they were re-consecrated in 2016.[108] The urgent issue is to develop optimal solutions that lead to a better society and a better world for future generations.

Case Study E: France - Protecting Language & Culture

[104] The Korea Herald. "Korean Content Industry Reaches Record-High Exports at $13.2 Billion." The Korea Herald, 2024, https://www.koreaherald.com/article/10011173. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
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France is a country that works very hard to preserve its cultural identity. This is to respond to the growing threat of globalization in France. The French government has implemented several policies aimed at one sole purpose: protecting the French language. They do this to protect France from falling victim to the growing dominance of the English language,[109] particularly in business, education and media. For example, the Toubon Law introduced in 1994 makes it compulsory to use French in commercials and in legal documents, alongside regulations in broadcasting that require 40% of radio songs and a large percentage of content on TV to be in French.[110]

The projects mentioned above demonstrate the commitment of France to how its language is perceived to protect its cultural heritage and identity. With the help of preserving the national language, France aims to preserve its history, ideals, and traditions that are threatened by globalization processes.[111] Besides preserving the language, France allocates a lot of funds to cultural areas like cinema, fashion, and cooking to safeguard their cultural heritage. In 2024, France's National Centre for Cinema and the Moving Image (CNC) provided €758.7 million in support, including €314.5 million for cinema, and the government's 2026 draft budget requested about €3.7 billion for its main culture programs.[112]

This protectionist culture has, however, been debated. On one hand, some feel that overly restrictive policies will inhibit free speech, hinder the development of competition and global competitiveness, and limit exposure to outside influences and ideas. On the other hand, some feel it is important for the maintenance of French identity in the world today.

Case Study F: Japan - Blending Tradition and Globalization

[109] French Ministry of Culture. "Garantir l'emploi du français." Ministère de la Culture, https://www.culture.gouv.fr/thematiques/langue-francaise-et-langues-de-france/agir-pour-les-langues/garantir-l-emploi-du-francais. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[110] French Ministry of Culture. "Garantir l'emploi du français." Ministère de la Culture, https://www.culture.gouv.fr/thematiques/langue-francaise-et-langues-de-france/agir-pour-les-langues/garantir-l-emploi-du-francais. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026; Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie. "La langue française dans le monde." OIF, https://www.francophonie.org/la-langue-francaise-dans-le-monde-305. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[111] Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie. "La langue française dans le monde." OIF, https://www.francophonie.org/la-langue-francaise-dans-le-monde-305. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
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Figure 14: A traditional temple standing directly beneath a modern office tower in Tokyo, an example of Japan's blending of heritage and development.[113]

[113] Government of Japan. "Policy of Cultural Affairs in Japan." Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan, https://www.bunka.go.jp/english/report/annual/1394357.html. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.



Figure 15: Traditional dress worn against a backdrop of modern commercial architecture, Japan.[114]

Japan implements a blend of tradition and globalization by adapting to foreign influences while also preserving its rich cultural identity.[115] Examples of their balancing are listed below:

- Architecture blended with interconnected highways. Japan is full of rich history and incredible mastery of skills. Throughout Japan, in areas such as Osaka, Tokyo and Kyoto, there stand historical shrines adjacent to ultra-high-speed highways. This is an architectural and engineering wonder that has blended modernization with

[114] Japan External Trade Organization. "Japan and Globalization." JETRO, https://www.jetro.go.jp/en/. Accessed 27 Apr. 2026.
[115] Government of Japan. "Policy of Cultural Affairs in Japan." Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan, https://www.bunka.go.jp/english/report/annual/1394357.html. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.

tradition to the highest degree.[116]

- Work and living habits: Japanese firms have made use of foreign business policies while also remaining true to their own traditions, such as the principles of lifelong education, proper etiquette, respect for hierarchy, team spirit, discipline, and business etiquette. Other aspects of Japanese culture, like group responsibility or loyalty, allowed Japanese enterprises to be effective in the global market.[117]
- Cultural policies of the government: The Japanese government works on a national level with the help of the Agency for Cultural Affairs that deals with cultural preservation. In particular, this organization is responsible for preserving all types of art, historical sites, and various customs. Japan is also working with UNESCO to preserve important Intangible Cultural Heritage, such as traditional craftsmanship or performing arts, while staying involved in the global and tourism processes.[118]

To conclude, the Japanese approach and the French approach stem from different ideologies conducted by different types of cultures that have lasted centuries.

Guiding Questions

1. How can nations protect their cultural identity while still benefiting from globalization, international trade, and technological advancement?
2. Should governments be allowed to restrict foreign media, languages, and cultural influences in order to protect national traditions?
3. What role should international organizations such as UNESCO play in protecting endangered cultures, languages, and traditions?
4. How can countries prevent cultural homogenization while avoiding excessive nationalism or cultural isolation?
5. How can governments encourage younger generations to preserve traditional cultures while allowing them to participate in a globalized world?

[116] Government of Japan. "Policy of Cultural Affairs in Japan." Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan, https://www.bunka.go.jp/english/report/annual/1394357.html. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
[117] Japan External Trade Organization. "Communicating with Japanese in Business." JETRO, 1999, https://www.jetro.go.jp/ext_images/mexico/mercadeo/communicationwith.pdf. Accessed 8 Oct. 2026.
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Country List

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Afghanistan	Ecuador	Kenya	Serbia
Albania	Egypt	Malaysia	Singapore
Algeria	Estonia	Mexico	Slovakia
Argentina	Ethiopia	Morocco	South Africa
Australia	Finland	Nepal	South Korea
Austria	France	Netherlands	Spain
Bangladesh	Ghana	New Zealand	Sudan
Belgium	Germany	Nigeria	South Sudan
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Greece	North Korea	Sweden
Brazil	Haiti	Norway	Switzerland
Canada	Hungary	Oman	Syria
Cabo Verde	Iceland	Pakistan	Tanzania
Chile	India	Paraguay	Thailand
China	Indonesia	Peru	Türkiye
Colombia	Iran	Philippines	United Arab Emirates
Côte d'Ivoire	Iraq	Poland	Ukraine
Croatia	Ireland	Portugal	United Kingdom
Cuba	Israel	Qatar	United States

Czechia	Italy	Romania	Uruguay
Denmark	Japan	Russia	Vietnam
Dominican Republic	Jordan	Saudi Arabia	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Kazakhstan	Senegal	

Glossary

Term	Definition
Debt Traps	When a country or organization takes on way too much debt and is unable to pay it back, this can lead to high interest payments, which take money away from the government that could be spent on important services, and can increase reliance on foreign lenders.
Resource Paradox (aka The Resource Curse)	The Resource Paradox, or Resource Curse, exists in places that have a large abundance of natural resources, yet external factors prevent these resources from being beneficial to the nations in which they exist. Economies that rely heavily on one natural resource are also vulnerable to price fluctuations in other nations and economies.
Cultural Homogenization	The process of different cultures becoming increasingly similar to one another due to globalization, trade, migration, technology, and mass media. This process can lead to certain cultural elements becoming popular and widespread throughout the world.
Cultural Isolation	The isolation of a culture from others. This allows the culture to remain as it is and preserve its traditions and identity, but limits its knowledge and interaction with other cultures around the world.
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization is known as UNESCO. It is a specialized UN organization with its headquarters in Paris, France. Its primary objective is to collaborate with nations worldwide to advance safety and peace by science, education, and cultural sensitivity.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	After the MDGs came the SDGs in 2015. A set of brand new 17 goals were adopted by the United Nations to achieve Sustainability by 2030. The goal? Similar to before, eradicate poverty, world hunger, and inequality. Also, improve healthcare and education, but with more focus on the environment.
Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	In the year 2000, eight global development goals were established (with an objective to be met by 2015) by the United Nations. These targets were the forerunners of the modern Sustainable Development Goals. Their focus was on eliminating poverty, hunger and disease, as well as promoting education and health. All while increasing gender equality.
Multinational Corporation (MNC)	A company that is present in, operates in, or invests in more than one country. Multinational corporations can contribute to the economic development of these countries, but they can also create concerns regarding labour, the environment, and the influence of large companies.
Conflict Zone	A Conflict Zone is a region in the world that is essentially experiencing conflict. That could be classified as war and/or violence. These regions tend to experience poverty and a lack of resources within the education and healthcare systems. They also experience mass displacement and many human rights violations.
United Nations Security Council	The UN Security Council is the main body in the UN that maintains peace and stability across all regions. It consists of 15 member nations, 5 permanent and 10 elected for a term. The current roster of countries in the UNSC is China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States, Denmark, Greece, Pakistan, Panama, Somalia, Bahrain, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Latvia, and Liberia.

Awards Criteria

Foreign Policy Representation

CPSSMUN requires all delegates to do extensive research on their foreign policy and country/character stance to adequately represent them. They are encouraged to propose solutions that their respective countries would support in reality. Delegates are encouraged to propose creative solutions, but they can not come at the expense of their country's motivations and alignment. Delegates are expected to remain consistent with their country's foreign policy. Significant deviations without clear justification may be viewed unfavourably. There are no limitations on advocacy so long as it remains logical, appropriate and consistent with their country. This directly applies to all delegates who represent countries with what many consider more "extreme" positions or values.

Delegates will have some degree of freedom to negotiate extensions to their foreign policy. However, please be advised to check who represents a nation at the United Nations, as countries like Afghanistan do not have the Taliban representing them, but their government in exile. The chairs will first warn delegates who do not follow national policies, and discrepancies will be noted. If the delegate continues to violate foreign policy after one warning, they are not eligible for awards. In the scenario that a delegate's foreign policy compromises their ability to garner support from the committee and pass a paper, that individual delegate remains eligible to win an award if they perform well in all other categories.

Ideation and Creativity

Ideation and creativity are key metrics to determine the award. CPSSMUN looks favourably upon delegates who demonstrate their critical thinking skills through innovative, comprehensive, and creative solutions that the committees should adopt. This includes

building off of past solutions and adapting/amending past papers with new, distinct aspects. All draft resolutions are expected to be costed. This means that all papers will have a financing mechanism to pay for the ideas they are proposing. Although chairs do not require delegates to present hyper-precise numbers (exactly how much a program would cost in total), delegates must have a general idea of the cost and research feasible funding strategies for their ideas.

Delegates do NOT have the ability to commit their country to paying for projects, as that is beyond the powers of a delegate. Additionally, delegates are advised to avoid using the IMF and the World Bank as funding mechanisms, since, in reality, they are incredibly selective in issuing aid and typically already have all of their funds allocated towards projects. Delegates are also advised to avoid using charities and non-profit organizations as financing sources, as they are not only incredibly limited in the funds that they have, but they are also independent third parties whose involvement in government projects may be contentious and/or volatile. Instead, delegates are advised to create policy solutions to pay for projects (programs that generate revenue), policy solutions that are generally costless, or specific & particular cost-saving measures that can offset new projects. Evident solutions, such as sending peacekeepers and funding (the second is required), are common aspects of a solution, and delegates will not be penalized for using them. But these solutions must elaborate on further specifics, like in the peacekeeping example, where the peacekeepers are going to be located, their strategy and conditions of operation. If a delegate fails to do so, it will reflect negatively when awards are being deliberated.

Furthermore, CPSSMUN encourages students to find more unique/inventive solutions; with similar effects (and detail), the chairs will take that into account when deliberating awards and, on this criterion, weigh it over an easily discoverable solution through the internet. Furthermore, CPSSMUN will not reward delegates who reuse ideas from past solutions without improving or transforming them, as the chairs will consider it dilatory and unproductive for the committee. If a delegate in the General Assembly wishes to create a subcommittee without adequate justification, the chair may view it less favourably. Additionally, delegates who propose similar solutions to past actions already taken must present distinctions and improvements.

Diplomacy and Sportsmanship

This criterion is the cornerstone of Model UN as it requires delegates to remain professional and tactful when discussing political issues. Diplomacy and sportsmanship value delegates who can not only persuade and influence the committee's direction but also inspire other delegates. Diplomacy and sportsmanship are considered factors, as CPSSMUN will not award delegates who are unprofessional and discourteous without cause. Diplomacy includes negotiating and managing relations to be mutually beneficial and ensuring peaceful dialogue and collaboration. Furthermore, good sportsmanship reflects the value of working alongside fellow delegates while pursuing their own goals. If a delegate is being undiplomatic, like refusing to negotiate (without a reason) with another bloc, the chairs will take note of that, and it may negatively impact their chances of winning awards.

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