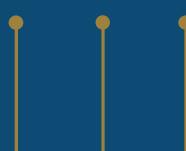




SOCHUM

Topic A:
**Exoneration of the Rights of
Women Refugees.**

Topic B:
**Elimination of Racial
Discrimination in Government**



COMMITTEE OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Affairs Committee (SOCHUM) is one of the six specialized subcommittees of the United Nations General Assembly and generally referred to as the Third Committee. It was established after the development of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Over the years, SOCHUM discusses questions relating to the advancement of women, the protection of children, indigenous issues, the treatment of refugees, the promotion of fundamental freedoms through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and the right to self-determination. The Committee also addresses important social development questions such as issues related to youth, family, ageing, persons with disabilities, crime prevention, criminal justice, and international drug control.

At the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, the Third Committee considered over 60 draft resolutions, more than half of which were submitted under the human rights agenda item alone. These included three so called country-specific resolutions on human rights agenda item alone. These included three so-called country specific resolutions on human rights situations

TOPIC AREA B: ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

PREFACE

Racial discrimination is a high-profile issue in the world and is a very real problem that still exists—and in some cases is getting worse. While great strides have been made to improve race relations in some areas, there is statistical evidence to show that racial discrimination is still disturbingly commonplace because there are more minorities than ever before as a result of large scale movement along the globe as people flee from oppression from countries in the Middle East and Africa towards countries in the West and thus become subject to discrimination on basis of skin color and ethnic background that encompasses from fields as minor as getting a seat in a public transport to major issues such as employment opportunities.

The third committee has addressed the issue in its human rights debates previously and the General Assembly has adopted resolutions based on the Committee's reports however there are still many areas where racism is rife. Within the communities, we see the telltale signs of modern racism. Families of a certain color or racial group living in poverty and poor conditions, unable to rise out of their disadvantaged state through the prejudice of employers which keeps them in low-paid positions. We see large numbers of certain ethnic groups being unfairly pursued by the justice system and given harsher sentences for their crimes, or even convictions for crimes that have not been committed. We even see discrimination in the education system, with those from certain backgrounds being unable to gain access to the best schools and therefore unable to gain the right qualifications that they need to advance and progress into high level jobs means that the issue needs to be addressed on a broader level.

INTRODUCTION:

In human social affairs, discrimination is treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against, a person based on the group, class, or category to which the person is perceived to belong.

Racial Discrimination generally refers to the systemic oppression of a racial group due to the idea that some groups are inherently inferior to others that largely targets members of minority groups—from Muslim Americans to Hispanics to blacks and more. Distinctions between and negative evaluations of phenotypic differences in skin color, in hair color, in the color and shape of eyes, in the shape of the skull and so on are the central element of the ideology of racism but it is argued that ethnic backgrounds and traditional practices also play a role.

Therefore any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life[1] will be defined as racial discrimination.

Racial Discrimination can be direct in which case a person is treated unfairly or harassed on basis of their race and it can also be indirect discrimination in which case a requirement or rule that seems to be the same for everyone, but in fact disadvantages people because of their race e.g. a hairdresser refuses to employ stylists that cover their own hair, this would put any Muslim women or Sikh men who cover their hair at a disadvantage when applying for a position as a stylist. The discussion can also be extended further towards Racial Vilification that involves saying or doing something publicly that could incite others to hatred, serious contempt or severe ridicule against a person because of their race.

THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Internalized Racism refers to the feelings of self-hatred experienced by individuals from oppressed groups. Victims of internalized racism may loathe their skin color, facial features, and other physical characteristics because the traits of minority groups have historically been devalued in Western society. For further knowledge, delegates can look into the concept with relation to colourism.

Subtle racism refers to the seemingly minor ways minorities experience discrimination. Racism doesn't always involve extreme acts of bigotry such as

hate crimes but more often than not involves everyday slights such as being ignored, ridiculed or treated differently because of one's racial background.

Reverse racism is the most controversial form of racism that pursues the idea that whites, who've been historically privileged in the Western world, now experience racial discrimination because of affirmative action and other programs that aim to level the playing field for minorities. Delegates should come up with a clear idea that whether they are in favor of this argument or not and if such a manifestation of racism does exist then how can it be eradicated.

[1] Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, Article 1

SITUATIONS WHERE RACIAL DISCRIMINATION OCCURS:

Individuals that are subject to racial discrimination face unequal treatment in several fields and situations but the ones that need to be addressed more promptly are:

- Civil Rights
- Access to citizenship
- Education
- Religious facilities
- Employment
- Housing
- Participation in Elections
- Protection against violence
- Justice
- Access to public health and recreational facilities

However discussion of racial discrimination being practiced in any other situation, brought up by the delegates would be recognized.

CAUSES OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION:

Racial Profiling is a practice that pursues the concept that certain groups are more likely to commit certain crimes, making it necessary for law enforcement

to target these groups in airports, border checkpoints, on highways, city streets and more thus giving the non minorities a perception that a particular race needs to be treated that way and encouraging them to continue their unequal behavior with the minority group.

Stereotypes help perpetuate racial discrimination in a number of ways. Individuals who buy into sweeping generalizations about racial groups use stereotypes to justify excluding minorities from job prospects, renting apartments and educational opportunities, to name a few. Stereotypes don't view the members of racial groups as individuals, denying them their humanity.

Racial prejudice and racial stereotypes go hand in hand. Racial prejudice is a practice that results from racial stereotypes by writing off entire groups of people based on sweeping generalizations. A prejudiced employer might deny a job to a member of a racial minority group because he believes that group is "lazy," regardless of the actual work ethic of the person in question. Prejudiced people may also make a number of assumptions, assuming that anyone with a non-Western surname couldn't have been born in the United States. Racial prejudice has historically led to institutional racism. During World War II, more than 110,000 Japanese Americans were rounding up and forced into internment camps because government officials presumed that these Americans would side with Japan in the war, ignoring the fact that Japanese Americans viewed themselves as Americans. In fact, no Japanese American was found guilty of espionage during this period.

Self esteem is one of the most common things that lead one person to discriminate against another because of the feelings that they have about their abilities or value. During the 17th and 18th centuries, for example, the colonists believed themselves superior to the Native populations around them, which they used to justify imprisoning the Indians or taking their land away. The colonists operated on a doctrine of white superiority, believing that because they were white and supposedly more 'civilized' than Native peoples, they deserved better treatment and resources.

Past atrocities from conquest, colonialism, the Holocaust, slavery and other forms of forced servitude also play a role in discriminatory practices at the present. The legacy of slavery in particular, is at the heart of situations of profound social and economic inequality which continue to affect people of certain descents. It is important that the delegates should recognize the social

and economic dimensions of the injustices of the past and seek to redress them appropriately in their speeches.

Xenophobia is the fear or contempt of foreign people, places or things. People with this “fear” are known as xenophobes and the attitudes they have as xenophobic. While phobia refers to fear, xenophobes aren’t scared of foreign people in the same way that a person with arachnophobia fears spiders. Instead, their “fear” can best be compared to homophobia, as hatred largely drives their repulsion to foreigners.

Behavior of the government towards minority groups in the country also plays an important role in causing racial discrimination because there are manifestations imposed by certain governments by means of legislative or administrative measures that lead to indirect racial discrimination. The policies of such governments need to be looked into detail and delegates should come up with proper and clear solutions as to how these mechanisms would be altered.

EFFECTS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION:

Practices of Racial Discrimination have far reaching impacts that need to be examined in detail. Not only does it affect the victims by developing marginalization and stigmatization but it also acts as psychosocial stressor implementing severe impacts on the mental health, physical health and social standing of those who are subject to it.

The debate needs to be extended to the adverse effects on those who practice racial discrimination and those who witness such discrimination taking place.

Racial Discrimination does not only have the potential to threaten the internal peace and increase chances of the start of an ethical conflict but it can also impact the peaceful relations of a country with other countries adversely that need to be discussed.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM?

In order to address the problem both national and international efforts need to be made therefore delegates should come up with solutions that introduce national mechanisms or extend the existing mechanisms to include legislative, judicial, educational and social measures that need to be implemented for the eradication

of the problem. Also attention must be paid towards methods through which international cooperation can be achieved in attempts to solve the problem.

Discussions regarding involvement of other stakeholders such as parliaments, civil society, non-governmental organizations and private sector in efforts to address the problem would be highly encouraged.

FURTHER READING:

https://www.google.com.pk/search?rlz=1C1CHBD_enPK731PK731&q=international+convention+on+the+elimination+of+all+forms+of+racial+discrimination+pdf&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiAzP24luLcAhWQCOwKHez1BrkQ1QIIdCgB

https://www.google.com.pk/search?rlz=1C1CHBD_enPK731PK731&q=durban+declaration+and+programme+of+action+pdf&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjU3PKrl-LcAhUS3qQKHWO6Ct0Q1QIIdCgF

<https://unchronicle.un.org/article/eliminating-racial-discrimination-challenges-prevention-and-enforcement-prohibitionhttps://unchronicle.un.org/article/eliminating-racial-discrimination-challenges-prevention-and-enforcement-prohibition>

<http://www.un.org/en/events/racialsdiscriminationday/>

<http://www.globalissues.org/article/165/racism>

<https://www.telesurtv.net/english/analysis/The-Top-12-Most-Racist-Countries-in-the-World-20150320-0019.html>