



SOCHUM

Letters from your SOCHUM Dais

Welcome! My name is Megan Waters and I'll be your chair for this conference! First off, I would just like to say that I am so excited to meet all of you in April. It may seem like a while away but trust me, the day will be here before you know it. I am very excited to be chairing this committee and I hope that you will share that excitement with me. Alex and I picked these topics because they are extremely important to us. We hope that you will enjoy participating in substantive debate.

I am a senior here at Stuyvesant and I have had the pleasure of being a part of the Model UN team for three years now. I am currently the Director of Logistics for the club and have been involved in StuyMUNC for three years. In my free time, I enjoy running, hiking, watching Netflix and spending time with my friends.

I hope that you will find this committee to have great debate and that you will bring excitement and enthusiasm to our conference in April! Don't forget to research! If you have any questions, feel free to email me at mwaters@stuy.edu. I'll be happy to help.

Megan Waters
Chair, SOCHUM
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Greetings delegates! My name is Alex Gattegno and I'll be your director for this conference. I'd like to start off by expressing my excitement for this conference, and by reiterating Megan's hope that this conference will be as fun for y'all to be a part of as it is for us.

I'm a junior at Stuyvesant and while this is my first year being involved with StuyMUNC, I've been involved with Model UN for the last 5 years. I did two years of middle school MUN, and then joined the Stuyvesant MUN team as a freshmen. Outside of MUN I enjoy video games and swimming, as well as spending copious amounts of time on Facebook and Twitter.

I hope very much that come conference day you will have a great time and I look forward to seeing the spirited and engaged debate that is sure to occur. Finally, I do encourage you to research as much as you can, for I promise it will make committee better for everyone. If you have any questions feel free to email me at agattegnooo@stuy.edu

Alex Gattegno
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Committee Information

What is SOCHUM?

SOCHUM is the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee of the 3rd Assembly of the United Nations. This committee strives to debate and make decisions about human right issues globally and promote peace through communication between countries. Important sectors of SOCHUM include advancement of women, protection of children, elimination of racism and crime prevention. The committee hopes to deal with issues that affect all and aims to solve them by implementing rules by the UN. A lot of the issues affect many people and, as a result, are wide on a human scale and necessary to debate.

Topic A: Preventing Domestic Violence

Definition

Domestic violence is defined as “all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence” committed by a partner or family member. It can include physical violence, such as hitting, beating, restraining, or strangling. It can also include psychological violence such as, but not limited to, verbal abuse, neglect, stalking, and other forms of intimidation. Furthermore, it can also include sexual violence, such as rape, sexual assault, and genital mutilation. Lastly, this definition includes economic violence, which includes limiting the victims access to economic resources (i.e. controlling the victim's bank account / credit card), as well as limiting the victim's ability to support themselves financially, making the victim dependent on the abuser for sustenance. This is the definition we will be using in committee, however it is by no means the only one out there. The 1993 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women defined domestic violence as: “Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital

“mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation”. Various nations also have their own legal definitions of domestic violence that delegates may wish to bring with them into committee.

History of the Issue

Domestic violence as an issue worthy of discussion emerged in the early 19th century with the rise of 1st wave feminism. Prior to this time period, it was generally accepted that men could beat their wives, as they were either socially or legally considered their property, giving men the right to abuse their wives in any way they saw necessary. This notion of men being in control of a relationship is deeply entwined with domestic violence, since one of the most common reasons given as to why people commit acts of domestic violence is that the victim in some way disobeyed the abuser. In the aftermath of the Enlightenment women across the western world began to advocate for their rights, and chief among them was their autonomy and independence from male domination. This call for an end to domestic violence was mostly ignored by the male dominated West, but by 1900 a few nations had laws at least theoretically barring beating one’s wife. These laws were rarely enforced however, and while popular opinion shifted on the issue over the next 100 years, the first real legislative push to address domestic violence occurred in the 1990s. Since in general domestic violence was seen as an issue with someone’s home, a private issue rather than one legislation could or should fix, the UN Strategies for Confronting Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual was one of the first real set of international guidelines on how to legislate the prevention of domestic violence.

Relevant International Actions

Below is a list of relevant international actions taken in years past that may aid your research or give you a clearer idea of what potential resolutions might look like.

- 2011 Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)

- 2003 The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
- 2004 Resolution 58/147 Elimination of domestic violence against women
- 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. Chapter IV. D. Violence against women

Aims of the Committee

This committee is rather open-ended in terms of its goals. Overall, this committee will aim to address how to prevent domestic violence through international action and legislation, but will have to balance any action the committee wishes to take with the reality that in many nations, domestic violence is seen as either not an issue, or a private one unworthy of government involvement. Additionally, any resolutions passed in committee should address not only domestic violence against women, but also domestic violence committed against men and children, who are oft ignored in discussions of domestic violence.

Questions to Consider

1. What constitutes domestic violence?
2. How can the committee create resolutions that include protections for men, children, and the LGBT community?
3. What, if any, power does this committee have to force change and how can we accomplish this?
4. How much focus should be given to empowering victims vs punishing abusers?
5. How can we account for the fact that many people around the world believe that domestic violence is not a problem when writing resolutions?

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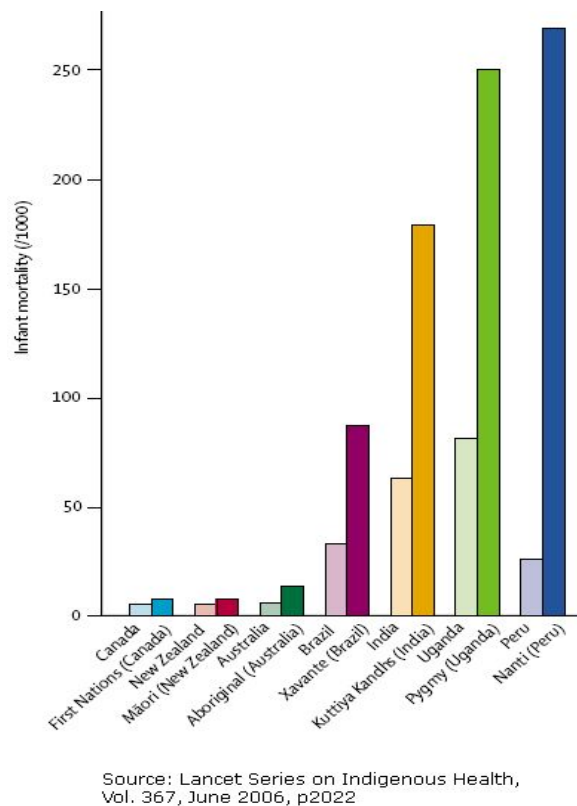
Topic B: Protecting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

It is no misnomer that the rights of indigenous people have been violated for centuries. From the beginning of exploration, we have seen settlers take advantage of the natives through their destroying villages, health and customs. To this day, many countries have never admitted the injustices that they have partaken in. The issues of incorporating indigenous rights into a country's legislature is due to racial discrimination and equality. SOCHUM aims to ensure that every group of person is treated fairly and that no one's rights are being violated by the law and the people.

An "indigenous person" is defined by the UN as a member of a self-identified group with pre-colonial history that strives to maintain an ancestral way of life and has strong ties to their land and cultures. Throughout the world, there are many indigenous peoples that have been affected by colonialism as well as some that have not. However, the topic of protecting the rights of indigenous peoples should not just be for natives that have been displaced, but to protect other groups that have the unfortunate possibility of being affected by future explorations. An example of this would be tribes in the Amazon that are being affected right now due to cutting down of the rainforest. Indigenous tribes that we are generally all familiar with are ones that are closer to home: Native Americans, First Nations and the Aborigines. However, these are only a few and we want you to bring substantive debate about the lesser known tribes and detail their struggles throughout history.

A lack of political representation makes it extremely difficult for tribes to have a voice themselves. The UN wrote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and every country with native tribes had violated this document. Land and cultural rights have been taken away, as well as an infringement on privacy and education. The UN wants to make sure that all indigenous rights issues are solved globally and understand and respect all voices equally. SOCHUM also urges that countries allocate

resources and effective ways to let native tribes coexist with a developing technological age.

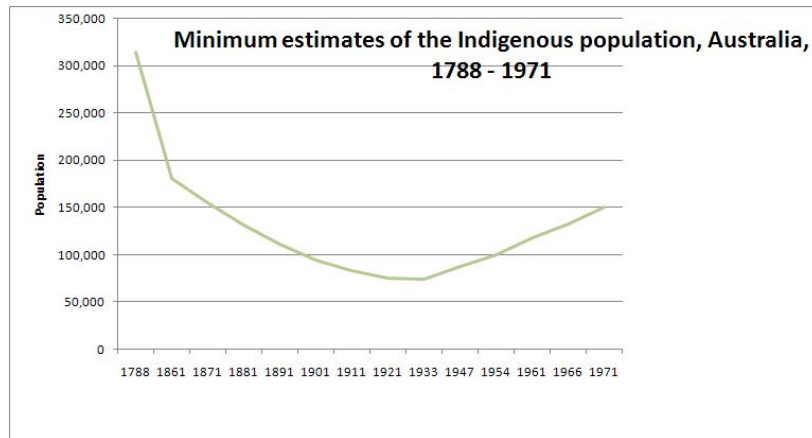


The graph to the left shows the infant mortality rates among some indigenous people in the world. Due to a lack of health infrastructure and areas being destroyed, indigenous people struggle to survive and take care of children. The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples was first established in 1985 and was the first major act to try and help curb the indecency that many countries were partaking in. The fund made it possible for representatives of indigenous people to attend UN meetings and voice their concerns on native rights. It started to give a voice to natives but does not extend to the natives having any political voice in their own country.

Since the problems surrounding indigenous groups have created public support, many countries have become more active in helping groups. However, many countries still struggle to admit that natives live within their borders. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous people (UNDRIP) was written and presented in 2007. However, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand all voted no, saying that it would open up disputes that were best left alone. Many modern countries have reversed this decision but controversy about how governments deal with native issues arose. The declaration reassured that the rights of indigenous people are human rights and that reparations need to be made in order to fully take responsibility for past actions.

SOCHUM notes that there have been many resolutions (UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Second International

Decade of World's Indigenous People, UNDRIP, and many more) but none deal with the reparations and accountability that governments need to take in order to take full responsibility to all injustices among native groups.



The loss of life due to colonization is represented in populations today. Over the course of history, we have seen native tribes been taken advantage of and had to deal with conditions that they did not choose to interact with.

Israel (being the first modern Indigenous state), US and Australia are all countries that we can use as a model to understand how native groups have been treated. By using these countries and understanding not only the historical effects but also modern effects, SOCHUM can come up with resolutions that will not only deal with reparations but also accountability and the global scale solution. Every indigenous tribe is different and has different needs, so all resolutions need to take into account a respect of privacy when creating solutions. Human rights extend to indigenous people and throughout history many people have forgotten that.

Solutions must take into account the resources that a country has and allocate them to help indigenous peoples in many ways. Solutions also need to take into account the fact that there are many civilians who oppose reparations, and need to help raise awareness and support and incentivize countries to help protect indigenous rights.

All humans deserve the same fundamental rights, and every citizen needs to be respected within their own borders.

Questions to Consider

1. How can countries preserve the cultural traditions of indigenous peoples while also advancing in the modern age?
2. How can a political voice be given to native tribes?
3. How to define “indigenous people” on a global scale?
4. What reparations (and how) should be made to indigenous peoples?
5. How can all land that natives own be protected?

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