

**M A S M U N**

Urgency for Justice



# Human Rights Council Guide

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## Committee Description

The Human Rights Council is one of many primary international governmental bodies inside the United Nations that focuses chiefly on addressing and tackling topics of human rights violations. The council receives numerous reports from a series of real-life events taking place in our world and works to establish uncommon yet impactful strategies to solve the issues at hand. Moreover, this council is involved in enforcing its capacity to secure human rights around the world, for the primary goal here is to re-establish an agenda of rules that secure the rights of nations and their victims. In this committee, delegates will cooperate and work hand in hand to create

resolutions and regulations that work to secure the rights and liberties of those wrongfully treated.



## Topic Description

### Persecution of Journalists and Independent Media

- “Every journalist killed or neutralized by terror is an observer less of the human condition. Every attack distorts reality by creating a climate of fear and self-censorship”- UN Plan of Action on Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity
- There has been troubling evidence in recent years of the scale and number of attacks on the physical safety of journalists and media workers, as well as incidents affecting their ability to exercise freedom of expression through threats of prosecution, arrest, imprisonment, denial of journalistic access, and failures to investigate and prosecute crimes against them.

Furthermore, according to IFEX, the perpetrators of these crimes are never punished in nine out of 10 cases.

- Freedom of expression is an individual right for which no one should be murdered; nevertheless, it is also a social right that empowers populations by promoting conversation, participation, and democracy, and therefore enables independent and sustainable growth. An educated, engaged citizen cannot exist in the absence of freedom of expression, notably freedom of the press.

### **Attempted solutions that have Failed**

1. Two shield laws are being considered in Congress; however, imilar legislation passed the

House in 2007 and 2009. Furthermore, it was considered by the Senate in 2009 but never passed the full Senate.

- A media shield law is supposed to protect journalists from being forced to identify confidential sources to law enforcement. It would also protect the confidentiality of journalists' communications by restricting the government's ability to obtain records from telecommunications providers.

2. The Espionage Act of 1917 prohibited the act of obtaining information, recording pictures, or copying descriptions of any information relating to the national defense with intent or reason to believe that the information may be used for the

injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation

- However, attempting to revise the Espionage Act is extremely risky, for individuals can never be sure of the outcomes in such a different time and age.

While some members of Congress are sympathetic to press freedom, others are extremely hostile toward leakers.

### **Proposed Solutions**

- Condemn governments, non-state actors and laws that attack or undermine journalists.
- Give journalists the tools they need to protect themselves in conflict zones and repressive societies.



- Investigate and prosecute those who attack journalists to ensure they are held accountable.
- Create programs to protect journalists in conflict zones, such as providing them with safety, security and means of communications.

## Questions to Answer

- What laws can be implemented to solve the problem?
- What can the citizens do to protect journalists and the independent media?
- How can the laws be implemented in a way that doesn't put the journalists' safety in jeopardy?
- What is the government's role in solving the issue?

- Are there any efforts being put in place to solve the problem at hand?
- Why did previous solutions fail?
- What is the primary reason behind the paramount increase of the conflict?

## Useful Resources

- <https://cpj.org/reports/2020/12/murders-journalists-more-than-doubled-killed/>
- <https://en.unesco.org/unesco-condemns-killing-of-journalists>
- <https://ptmurderofjournalists.org/>
- <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/11/1104622>
- <https://human-rights-channel.coe.int/end-impunity-for-crimes-against-journalists-en.html>

## Topic Description

### The Taliban Takeover

"Afghans are caught between Taliban oppression and the spectra of starvation," said Patricia Gossman.

Only days after the US forces left Afghanistan, the Taliban gained control of key towns and established themselves in Kabul's presidential palace.

Uncertainty reigns supreme, with many Afghans yearning to flee their homeland.

Following the US- led invasion, the Taliban regrouped over the border in Pakistan and started taking domain less than ten years after their ouster.

Furthermore, by year of 2021, the Taliban had seized most major cities, counting the capital of

Kabul. Moreover, the Taliban are most likely to force cruel run on the show, in spite of their vows to regard rights of women and minor individuals, they face many obstacles in providing Afghans with security, health services, and economic opportunities.

### **An Attempted solution that has Failed**

1. A peace agreement signed in Doha between the United States and the Taliban in 2020 has had no effect; nor have subsequent negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban, brought about under former US President Donald Trump's administration.
  - The agreement, signed on Feb. 29, 2020, asks for the withdrawal of all U.S. forces by

May 2021, but only if the Taliban keep their promises of cutting ties with terrorist groups and participating in intra-Afghan talks for a permanent cease-fire and a political roadmap for Afghanistan. However a year into the U.S.-Taliban agreement, Afghan leaders say they are frustrated with the continued rise of violence by the militant group that has taken a toll on civilians.

### **Proposed solutions**

- Present means for open and transparent dialogue to take place between the people of Afghanistan, their leaders and the Taliban.

- The commission proposed by the National Consultative Peace Jirga must be established urgently and should be given real authority in order to implement its mandate.
- Support for dialogue will need to come from the international coalition and notably, but not exclusively, the U.S. and Pakistan. Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Japan, the United Arab Emirates or other individual Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference
- People-to-people contacts should focus on addressing the serious issue of public misperceptions about either country. They

should target in particular media, universities, and parliamentarians.

## Questions to answer

- What laws can be implemented to solve the problem to avoid escalating the conflict into an extreme civil war?
- Do international media and news outlets have a role in the escalation of the conflict?
- How can new laws be implemented in a way that proceeds to gain the acceptance of both parties?
- What effect does the takeover have on the economic, social and political systems of Afghanistan?

- What is the government's role in solving the issue?
- Are there any efforts being put in place to solve the problem, if so what parties are leading them and is there prominent improvement in the conflict at hand?
- Why did previous solutions fail?
- What is the primary reason behind the paramount increase of the conflict?

## Useful Resources

- <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/01/1110052>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/taliban-afghanistan>



- <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/01/13/afghanistan-taliban-takeover-worsens-rights-crisis>
- <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Taliban>
- <https://news.sky.com/story/afghanistan-everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-taliban-takeover-12385099>

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