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## Introductions from your SOCHUM Dais

Dear Delegates,

Greetings and welcome to MiniMUNC 2021! My name is Naya Mukul and I am delighted to serve as your chair for the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Affairs Committee this year. I'm a senior at Stuyvesant and I've been a part of our delegation for four years, currently on the Mentoring Team on the Lower Secretariat of Personnel. I also serve as President of Spanish Meets You, a community-based Spanish tutoring service, and am a co-founder of the Stuyvesant chapter of Coalition Z, a national youth-led organization creating concrete political change by bridging the gap between Generation Z and our government. This will be my third time chairing a committee, and I'm looking forward to hearing your creative and elaborate ideas in collaboration with others. SOCHUM really is a special committee to be a part of, especially during current times as geopolitical tensions heighten in various regions across the world. I hope to see lots of creativity and collaboration in committee, and that the topic at hand gives you some more context on the social, political, and economic implications of the role that governments play in moderating and mitigating conflict, and how it fits into the broader scope of today's ever-changing world.

It is in your best interest to pursue further research beyond the background guide and truly delve into the many aspects of the topic at hand, while upholding the key standards that make committee what it is, such as diplomacy, sticking to policy, and collaboration. MiniMUNC has never failed to give me the chance to witness the many aspects that make MUN so great, from the warm, supportive environment both in and out of committee, to the enlightening, innovative ideas brought to discussion. It is in my best hopes that you experience the same this year. We are so thrilled to meet all of you and see what everyone brings to the table! If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact either me or Cameron. Best of luck!

Many thanks,

Naya Mukul

[nmukul20@stuy.edu](mailto:nmukul20@stuy.edu)

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Hello delegates!

My name is Cameron Kluger and I will be your director for the Government Right to Moderate Conflict (SOCHUM) committee in MiniMUNC 2021! I am currently a rising senior and have been a member of the Stuyvesant Model UN team since the beginning of sophomore year. Having attended many conferences, I can speak from experience as to how rewarding Model UN can be. Personally, I had trouble with all of the procedures and motions when I first started out, but I soon got the hang of it and was able to feel comfortable. I feel as if my speaking and conversational skills have expanded greatly, and I'm sure that with experience all of yours will too! Outside of MUN, I'm very much into politics and environmental issues, which is why I enjoy StuyMUN so much.

This committee will be based around the question of human rights in conjunction with the prevention of war/conflict. Our committee will deal in large part with morality and the cost of protecting it. I stress that each delegate considers the specific standpoint of their nations as well as their morals and standing on moderating conflict. If you can't find too much information on your nation's standpoint, feel free to realistically infer the position based on the nation's prior actions.

Though almost all of you are new or relatively new to Model UN, please try your best to speak whenever possible! We would love to hear everyone participate and create a strong discussion, so even if you feel as if your ideas are not the most concrete, don't be afraid to share them. Speaking from experience, the other delegates will be just as nervous or unfamiliar as you, so keep that in mind during the committee. Also, we would love to see lots of conversation between delegates so make sure to send a few notes around. Please feel free to contact me or Naya with any questions or concerns, and I hope to hear from you all soon!

Best wishes,

Cameron Kluger

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## Committee Information

Founded in 1945, the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee is classified as the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly with the main focus of encouraging and enforcing the maintenance of human rights, freedoms, and ideals in the international community by promoting international peace and cooperation in order to preserve human rights around the world. Headquarters are located in New York, United States and the committee is made up of 193 member states.

Our committee will function as a GA committee, meaning standard parliamentary procedure should be utilized and delegates will represent countries, debate, and create resolutions as a bloc in order to vote on these resolutions at the end of committee.

Each of you has the power and resources of your nation. Being a representative of your nation, you are expected to represent the interests of your people and demonstrate an understanding of the situation at hand. You may create alliances, provide abstract solutions, or advance an alternate agenda. There is an emphasis on socioeconomic status in this committee and you can pay attention to

how your respective countries handled associated conflicts.

Below we have outlined some of the committee procedures.

**Roll Call:** At the beginning of each committee session, the chairs will take attendance. Delegates must respond with either, "Present" or, "Present and voting." If the delegation wishes to respond, "Present," they are able to abstain from voting for that committee session. If the delegation responds with, "Present and voting," the delegation must vote at every turn. If a delegation arrives late, the delegate must send a note up to the dais to inform them of their presence.

**Motions:** Motions are used for opening and closing debate, proposing a speaker's list, moderated, or unmoderated caucus, and deciding to move to voting procedure. To propose a motion, lift your placard.

**Speaker's List:** List of delegates which is often used to start committees. The speaker's list is usually used to outline a country's agenda on the topic and jumpstart the networking process. If at any point during committee there are no new motions, the chair will revert back to the speaker's list.

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Moderated Caucus: a form of debate used to allow delegations to explain and debate their country's positions on a specific topic in front of the entire committee. For a moderated caucus to be considered, the motion must include the overall speaking time, time per speaker, and the topic which will be discussed. Subsequently, the chairs will call on countries wishing to speak until the allotted time for the moderated caucus is over.

Unmoderated Caucus: an informal style of debate used for delegates to have time to form blocs and work on draft resolutions. Formal debate rules are suspended, and delegates are allowed to leave their seats. In order to move into an unmoderated caucus, the motion must only outline the overall caucus time.

**MiniMUNC does not require position papers, but they are**

**recommended and encouraged.** Position papers can be extremely beneficial to delegates, as they may provide a basis or summary of research, and help to solidify and establish any specific plans or ideas to present during committee. Position papers will be accepted until 10/16/21, and the heading should consist of your full name, school, committee, the nation you will be representing in committee, and the topic (our topic) to be addressed in the paper. If you would like to receive feedback, please email papers to [nmukul20@stuy.edu](mailto:nmukul20@stuy.edu) no later than 10/14/21, and be sure to include your full name, school, committee, and position in both the subject line and heading of your paper.

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## Committee Background

The issue of ethnic conflict has been apparent since different groups of humans began to separate themselves from each other. Ever since, many wars - both interstate and civil - have been waged over the same topic. Apartheid in South Africa, the Rwandan Genocide, the Yugoslav Wars, and both world wars are just some relatively recent examples. In many cases, nations have cracked down on human freedoms in the name of prevention. Rights to assembly, free speech, fair trial, and equality have been refused for this cause. More extreme examples have even seen mass killings and torture. In the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee (SOCHUM), delegates will discuss the contrast of ethnic war and human rights violations in the current political atmosphere.

While the western world and much of Europe have established human rights, many nations have not. In many areas facing rising tensions, human rights are muddled or are not clearly outlined. Thus, the committee must come to a conclusion as to which rights are guaranteed and what the cost of protecting those should be. Depending on the location, nearby nations are likely to exhibit differing religions and morals. Alliances and historical precedents will also factor into tensions and the likelihood of ethnic war.

### *Ethiopia Amid Ethnic Tensions*

Containing over 110 million inhabitants, Ethiopia is currently facing a moral dilemma in the face of ethnic nationalism. The government has been tightening their grip in the Tigray region. Ethnic Tigrayans are being targeted and killed in the name of capturing fugitive militants from the region. Meanwhile, the Ethiopian government asserts that the Tigrayans are killing the ethnic Amhara. The tensions have quickly escalated into war and accusations of humanitarian violations and massacres have been spread amongst both sides. However, Allied Amhara, Eritrean, and Ethiopian forces have been attributed with far more killings, rapes, and tortures than their Tigrayan enemies.

As the Ethiopian government designated the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) as a terrorist organization, the possibility of peace seems evermore unlikely. However, it is possible that the Amhara are carrying out ethnic cleansing and thousands of Tigrayan refugees are escaping and searching for asylum.

Delegates should use this situation as an example of rising ethnic tensions and should forge their own opinions on the matter at hand. Should Ethiopia create a new federation? Do

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restrictions need to be put to stop the violence? Which side is to blame?

### ***Government Methods of Peacekeeping***

Though the United Nations has its own principles of peacekeeping that all member states are expected to abide by, which mainly emphasize consent of the parties (ensuring the main groups affected have consented to deployment of peacekeeping officers and troops), impartiality (not to the extent where it can be confused with neutrality), and non-use of force except in self-defense or defense of the mandate, many governments around the world have taken up their own methods of maintaining peace within the nation, and can often be regarded as unethical.

For example, common occurrences of the use of state sponsored militias have become increasingly problematic due to the disastrous casualties and damage done to both infrastructure and governmental stability as a result of frequent insurgency and rebellion. One such instance in the South American nation of Colombia has resulted in controversy due to the government's response to various street mobilizations in major

cities such as Bogotá and Cartagena. This in turn led to increasing deaths and disappearances of civilians and protesters due to violent repression efforts led in part by the Colombian government and President Ivan Duque.

#### ***Questions to Consider:***

1. To what extent does a national government have the power to moderate conflict in a country?
2. To what extent should there be a limit on the amount of power or influence governments can have in response to national crises or ethnic conflicts?
3. To what extent are state sponsored militias unethical?
4. What alternatives can be implemented in place of state sponsored or third party militias to combat rebellion or insurgency?

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## Committee Positions

### **Africa**

Great political tensions in nations such as Rwanda, Kenya, and Nigeria have led to extreme restrictions on freedom of assembly, movement, speech, and gatherings. Accelerated by the panic waves of COVID-19, government action has moved swiftly and enforcing restrictions has led to killings, tortures, and unjustifiable arrests. However, most African nations will take the position that they are being challenged by dangerous ethnic tensions. In areas such as South Africa, racial tensions have been stirred by a long history of division. Delegates should take into account current conflict and the possibility of ethnic war and reason with the need for government intervention at any cost.

### **North America**

The North American Bloc should take into account both their own interests as well as the position of their moral ground. Seeing as the US and Canada have established undeniable human rights, the nations should emphasize the need for peace against oppressive governmental practices in areas such as Africa and Chechnya in Russia. Furthermore, these nations should see to the protection of their

commercial and domestic interests within unstable nations that could obstruct their resources.

### **Europe**

The European Bloc has a diverse range of interests in the question of human rights and government. In Spain, Catalan Pro-Independence leaders have faced violence and imprisonment for their assemblies and demonstrations. In other regions along areas such as the Russian border, national and ethnic tensions have caused policing and imprisonments to occur without trial. Most European governments have established laws and signed treaties protecting human rights, however new circumstances have broken those promises. Delegates representing these nations should decide if these actions should be punished and what preventative steps should be taken.

### **South America**

As a result of the Cold War and the Cuban Revolution, many countries in Latin/South America faced numerous human rights atrocities committed by their respective governments as well as military regimes before transitioning to more democratic forms of government



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by prioritizing human rights and freedoms in reformed constitutions. However, censorship and restriction of specific freedoms and rights by government and officials are still rampant in countries such as Venezuela, Honduras, Bolivia, and El Salvador.

## **Asia**

Due to conflicting cultural and value differences between the West and specific regions of Asia, human rights and freedoms have not always been interpreted in the same ways. In Southeast Asia, nations such as Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines, human rights infractions and violations such as heavily regulated gatherings and influence of free press and media. Central Asian countries like Afghanistan specifically have been in a constant state of conflict due to tensions with Western powers as well as militant forces. Most recently, the United States has pulled its forces out of Afghanistan, ending the 20 year war, nevertheless putting civilians' lives in danger. In South Asian countries such as Pakistan and India, religious violence has become a prevalent issue and at times can be motivated in part as a result of propaganda and governmental reluctance to get involved, as well as from the aspect of women's and children's rights. In East Asia, as a result of stigmatization and censorship around

gender discrimination and feminism, there is minimal discourse around the objectification and subjection of Chinese women to unjust standards, and state response can be extreme in some radical situations, though these movements persist to raise awareness and create social change as well as those advocating against the persecution of religious minorities in various Chinese regions. Further, in North Korea most civil rights and liberties are under heavy restriction and limitation and these human rights violations continue to be the subject of criticism from the international community as well.