LXIV

SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION

Human Rights Council

Berkeley Model United Nations

To the BMUN LXIV Human Rights Council,

Heyyooo! My name is Emily Reece, and I am your head chair for BMUN LXIV! I'm a fourth year Political Science major at Cal and a third year member of BMUN. I love to play soccer and go hiking. You should all know that homemade mac and cheese is my spirit animal. I spent all of last fall studying International Relations at Meiji Gakuin University in Yokohama, Japan. If you're a fan of eating good food, being outside, and traveling, shoot me an email!

Your vice chairs are Sita McGuire, Katie Lee, and Daksh Bhatia. Sita McGuire is a second year Political Science major and Public Policy minor student who enjoys running in the Berkeley hills, eating Thai food, and most of all being a part of the amazing organization called BMUN. She joined UNHRC after working for Teach for India, where she gained firsthand experience working to improve the educational gender gap. She's ecstatic to hear what action steps you might draft in order to forward the cause she cares so much about.

Katie Lee is a second-year pursuing a simultaneous degree in Environmental Science and Political Science. Last year, she joined BMUN to continue her MUN career and to find a community of friends at a big university like Berkeley. Outside of her academics, she loves music and enjoys going to concerts around the Bay Area.

Daksh Bhatia is a first year from New Jersey, majoring in Computer Science and Economics. Apart from finishing up projects at the last minute, he loves playing basketball, watching House of Cards and Suits, and listening to Childish Gambino. He's incredibly interested in both of the UNHRC's topics and hopes that each subject will encourage you to think outside the box. Daksh knows that the UNHRC will help each of you to gain a new perspective on globally relevant issues.

Now a little about our committee and topics. The United Nations Human Rights Council was established to strengthen, promote, and protect human rights around the globe. The council addresses and makes recommendations on human rights violations; it exists to ensure that all humans have the same rights, that they understand those rights, and that they are able to use those rights. At BMUN LXIV, we as the UNHRC will focus on two of these basic human rights, the right to education and the right to free and fair elections. More specifically, we will brainstorm ways to shrink the gender gap in education systems throughout the world, and find solutions that eliminate electoral violence in Sub-Saharan Africa. Check out the topic synopsis for more information regarding these issues.

I probably spent an unhealthy/unnecessary amount of time thinking about how to write this introductory letter to all of you. I could have selected the parliamentary route, maintaining a formal tone to make sure y'all take us chairs seriously by the time conference rolls around, but then I couldn't use words like "y'all." Instead, I decided to aim somewhere between UC personal statement and the kind of email you would send to your best friend back in the fifth grade before every kindergartener and their mother owned a smartphone. I'm telling you this because I want the tone of this letter to parallel

your BMUN experience. The issues we will discuss in the UNHRC are very real and very serious, and BMUN is an incredibly professional conference. Nonetheless, BMUN is also a great opportunity to branch outside of your comfort zone, meet new people, and discover more about yourself. So work hard and prepare diligently, but don't forget to take some Whip/Nae Nae breaks in between those position papers and college applications. See you all in March.

Your friend,

Emily Reece

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Gender Equality in Education

Topic Background

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) defines access to education as a fundamental human right. The article states, "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. [...] It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace." Established in 2006 with the passing of Resolution 60/251, the United Nations Human Rights Council has the responsibility of promoting and protecting human rights around the world, including the right to education (What We Do). The effects of a good education translate into many other aspects of life, including economic, social, cultural and humanitarian spheres. A 2005 report published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) revealed that a quality education can increase individual income, promote national economic growth, strengthen quality and non-cognitive skills and produce behavioral change in individuals and entire communities.

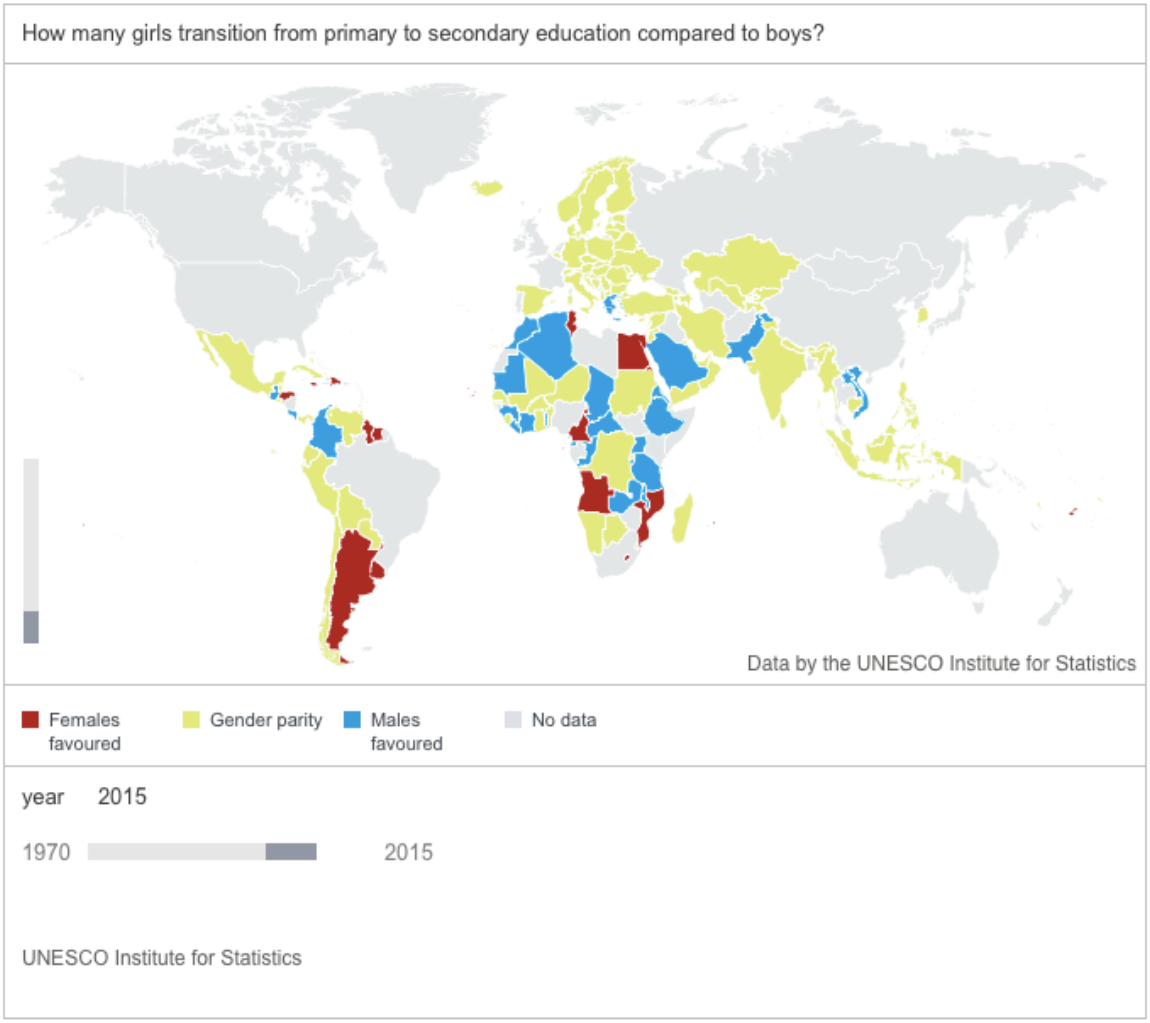
Thus, by protecting the right to education, the UNHRC can indirectly fulfill one of the four fundamental purposes and principles of the United Nations: "Achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and promote and encourage respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion" (Charter). Nevertheless, the UNHRC faces a great challenge in achieving the latter half of this fundamental goal, to promote human rights "without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion." This struggle is highlighted in the council's attempt to achieve gender equality in education.

Gender equality in education is twofold; it calls for both gender *parity* and gender *equality*. Ramya Subrahmanian, a collaborating researcher for the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), defined both of these terms in her paper titled "Gender Equality in Education: Definitions and Measurements." According

to Subrahmanian, gender parity includes "achieving equal participation of girls and boys in all forms of education based on their proportion in the relevant age-groups in the population" whereas gender equality ensures an equal educational experience and quality for both girls and boys (2). Therefore, to ensure gender equality in education, the UNHRC must encourage nations to educate proportionally equal amounts of boys and girls, as well as provide the same, quality education to both genders. These aims are included in the third United Nations Millennium Development Goal, which strives to "eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015." UNESCO's "Education for All" movement reaches to achieve the same goal, "with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality" (United Nations Millennium). The United Nations has made great strides towards achieving gender equality in education through these initiatives, however, more work is required to reach gender equality on a global scale.

Figure 1, provided by United Nations Women, the United Nations entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women, reveals which countries have achieved gender parity in education, and which countries continue to favor boys over girls within their education system. Data collected by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), revealed that as of today, Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest proportion of countries with gender parity: only two out of 35 countries. South and West Asia has the widest gender gap in its out-of-school population; 80% of its out-of-school girls are unlikely to ever start school compared to 16% of its out-of-school boys. Furthermore, current trends project that only 69% of countries will have achieved parity in primary education, and 48% of countries will have achieved parity in lower secondary education by the 2015 deadline. Therefore, despite significant progress over the past decade, the UNHRC still has far to go in achieving global gender equality in education. Fortunately, the UN and other international organizations can create new, innovative action steps by learning from a plethora of past education initiatives. This process, spearheaded by the UNHRC, will help countries take the necessary steps towards both gender parity and gender equality in education.

Figure 1



Past UN/Regional Organization & International Action

The UN has the ability to take action in guaranteeing education for all children under Article 28 in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, established in 1989. The State Parties recognize that all children, regardless of their race or gender, shall be given "this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity." This leads to the affirmation that differences in gender should not affect a child's education quality. Furthermore, in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), specifically in Article 10, there is a large emphasis on the importance of ensuring women the same educational opportunities as their male

counterparts. The articles calls for "all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education." This is to include same treatment of both women and men in all levels of education from pre-school to professional and technical school. This convention was substantial for the UN to enact policies and laws that would eliminate discrimination against women regarding curricula, examinations, scholarships, and special programs. The convention aims at reducing premature drop-out rates amongst women, rates that are historically higher than that of men.

The first UN document to address education and lay the foundation and basis for this committee is the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, specifically Articles 13 and 14. Article 13 discusses the numerous benefits education offers towards the lives of children, such as "development of the human personality," "sense of dignity," and strengthened "respect for human rights and fundamental freedom." Article 13 also states that "education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace." However, it is important to note that under Article 13, State Parties must respect the parents' and legal guardians' right to choose "for their children schools, other than those established by the public authorities." While this may be beneficial to the children whose parents choose to send them to schools with higher educational standards, there is also a concern that the parents' power to dictate where, and even if, their child goes to school could have negative repercussions. By decreeing that there can be no interference with the "liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions," this article emphasizes that the State Parties must respect the parents' choice to not have their child attend any form of educational schooling. Article 14 demands that parties who have yet to establish a system of free compulsory primary education swiftly adopt a detailed plan of action for introduction within a "reasonable" number of years. The fatal flaw of this article, however, is the timeline's vagueness and lack of accountability.

In early October of 2007, key government representatives from all regions, senior officials from bilateral and multilateral agencies, NGOs, charitable foundations, and

academic institutions attended a global symposium hosted by the Human Development Network and the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management of the World Bank. The symposium allowed for the exchange of creative ideas and strategies that have worked effectively in the past to improve gender equality. By collectively sharing policies already used in their home counties, those attending the symposium obtained a general knowledge about what sort of programs were the most, and least, effective in encouraging educational practices for girls. One of the methods highlighted in the conference was Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT). CCT programs aim to provide welfare money for specific groups under certain conditions. For instance, some CCT programs provide aid to women under the condition that the recipients of the funds attend school. These initiatives have proven to boost girls' school enrollment and retention in many different instances (The World Bank).

Much like the World Bank symposium, the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China in 1995, aimed toward accelerating women's equality in "all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making" (UN News Center). This included a commitment toward developing long-term, in-depth strategies that would overcome the gender inequality in education such as ensuring equal access to education, eradicating illiteracy among women, improving women's access to vocational training, science and technology, developing non-discriminatory education and training, allocating sufficient resources to monitor the implementation of educational reforms, and promoting life-long education and training for girls and women (UN News Center).

The main outcome from this conference was the creation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Beijing Platform concentrated on twelve "critical areas of concern" that demand attention in order to attain gender equality and women's empowerment. The policy required all national governments to create policies and strategies of action to implement the Platform locally in their country. Some of the strategic objectives listed in the Beijing Platform that pertained specifically to education and required action be taken were: (1) ensuring equal access to education; (2) eradicating illiteracy among women; (3) improving women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education; (4) developing non- discriminatory education

and training; (5) allocating sufficient resources for and monitoring the implementation of education reforms and; (6) promoting lifelong education and training for girls and women.

The National Plans of Action for each country outlined specific actions that governments will undertake in order to advance the situation of women. Following the conference, the UN General Assembly integrated a follow-up process by mandating the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The CSW regularly reviews the critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action and strives to mainstream a gender perspective in general United Nations activities. A review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has been reviewed five, ten, and fifteen years after the adoption of it in 1995. Each review works to expand the Platform's goals to more areas on the national level. The reviews also identify challenges and gaps that have prohibited implementation of the Platform since its creation (UN News Center). All the goals of the World Conference on Women have yet to be reached. Nonetheless, Hopefully, integrating the specific policies such as those created at the Conference on Women in Beijing into more general United Nations actions will further the cause.

Case Study: Pakistan

Pakistan has one of the largest gender gaps in education, rising over 30% in the past ten years alone. In many ways, this educational disparity reflects the rising gender inequality in Pakistan's labor force. Many women are unemployed, while those with jobs are disproportionately underpaid compared to men in the same positions. In turn, pay inequality perpetuates the lack of incentive to invest in girls' education at a young age (Tembon 68). Only 17% of the labor force is female, and similarly, only 10% of the nation's women have ten or more years of education (69). Despite these statistics however, the economic return per year of education is much greater for females than males in the Pakistani workforce.

In the late 1990s, the Pakistani Federal Bureau of Statistics collected the Pakistan conducted and produces the Pakistan Integrated Household Survey (PIHS) from 16,000

households. The survey collected data across a wide spectrum of responses in attempts to measure the relationship between education and economics. The findings included some of the following data:

> The mean annual earnings for men were $21,000 higher than the annual earnings of women. In regard to literacy, men were more than twice as literate as women and receive an average of 4.81 years of education, compared to the female average of 1.87 years (Tembon 71).
>
> To get a more comprehensive understanding of the economy, the surveyors grouped employment into five different categories: self-employment, agriculture, wage employment, unemployment, and unemployment/outside the labor force. Positions and wages showed sharp gendered differences across every category. Agriculture, the category requiring the least amount of literacy and numeracy skills, had the highest proportion of female laborers.
>
> Figure 5.2 in the report shows that only after 10 years of education does the probability of female wage employment rise to 50%. The probability of male occupation in the wage employment sector is approximately 50% regardless of his education level (Tembon 74). One of the PIHS researchers' primary conclusions revealed that the relationship between education and work reflects certain cultural gender biases. In Pakistan, it is widely believed that wage employment is the only "acceptable" paid occupation for women. Beliefs like these deter women's access to education and their ability to enter the workforce.

How does this compare with other countries? Several African nations contrast the gender biases that exist within the Pakistani education system. In Ghana, for example, education is also a conduit for high wage occupations (Tembon 76). Nevertheless, education is more equally accessible for both men and women. In 2005, the Ministry of

Education eliminated fees for primary schooling, making education more readily available for the general populous. From 2005 to 2006, enrollment increased by 67%. Additionally, the increase in enrollment was higher in females than in males, which stimulated the decrease in the gender education gap. These changes stem from the foundation of the Girl's Education Unit, founded in 1997 under the Ministry of Education (UNGEI). As a result, special emphasis on increasing access to education for women has influenced policy making in the two decades since.

However, on a global scale, the average economic benefits in wage employment are three to four times higher for women than for men. This reflects the further economic benefits of gender equality in education. Additionally, many cultural norms prevent a woman from having the power of occupational choice until she passes the threshold of ten years of education. Overall, there are a variety of obstacles to closing the gender gap in education, with multiple neglected incentives.

Case Study: Afghanistan

Afghanistan has a difficult history of drought, foreign invasion and war. This has left poor conditions, both fiscally and socially, for the population in general. Further, these circumstances have made women a highly vulnerable group, since they lack access to education as well as basic necessities (Tembon 163).

The rate of Afghani women's literacy has consistently been lower than that of Afghani men. In 1998, when the country was under the Taliban rule, women's literacy rates were at a low of 5% due to the strict rules and forbiddance of the regime. During the Taliban rule, many individual rights of women were neglected, including access to education and basic health care. This was a result of a combination of strict interpretation of Islamic law, poverty and lack of basic infrastructure (185). Though Afghanistan has made great progress, the continued distortion of rhetoric surrounding Islamic law contributes to the modern suppression of women in the emergence of the twenty-first century. There is strict segregation of genders in modern society, and many women are placed under the care of their male next of kin. Since many men died in the civil wars of the 1990s and the US War in Afghanistan, a large proportion of the female population is

reliant on refugee camps for basic provisions (188). Today, much of the modern female access to education is provided by foreign humanitarian agencies.

In Afghanistan, there are current strategies that have been successful in improving the access and quality of education. Some of the organizations studied by the World Bank have found it beneficial to begin at a local level. By speaking with people at the local level, specific needs of the community can be properly identified, rather than utilizing a one-size fits all solution. The refugee areas studied within the Northwest Frontier Province revealed societal support as a key factor to improve female education (Tembon 191). These communities were receptive to increasing educational opportunities for women, encouraging women to go to school without expressing stigmas against female education. This case study also demonstrated that female teachers need to become more educated in order to decrease the education gender gap within Afghanistan. Establishing strong female educators illustrates the value of female education and works against existing cultural stigmas.

In countries with historically conservative views, it is especially important to begin promoting female education in areas that are more open to change. Keeping this in mind, community workers in Afghanistan began their work in the most liberal areas of the country. Additionally, workers found it detrimental to try to directly impose services or programs onto a community. When volunteers framed these programs as a foreign intervention, communities felt as if their sovereignty was jeopardized and were thus, less likely to accept the education services (Tembon 192). In one case study, workers began with local, volunteer-based teacher training. This yielded a successful reception because it was presented as providing opportunities rather than enforcing Western values.

Furthermore, the programs need to be high-quality, and receptive to community feedback. Health and education clinics hired prominent community members onto their staffs, creating an interactive relationship with its members in order to respectfully observe cultural and political practices. When it came to expanding the projects, the researchers acted at the requests of the community. They were careful to include input from both the male and female members of the community in order to foster mutual respect and refrain from violating the community's sovereignty (Tembon 193).

Lastly, workers found it centrally important to structure their programs and practices around an understanding of Afghani culture. Classes need to be structured around Islamic traditions, an element that was treated as a cultural foundation rather than a logistical hassle. Unlike other programs, women were not give monetary stipends that male relatives could take. Instead, they focused on presenting female education as a fundamental equal right. All of the aforementioned strategies show that resources and accessibility are not the only factors to be considered when attempting to decrease the gender gap in education. One must also keep in mind political climate, community feedback, and a nation's tradition and culture.

Questions to Consider

1. Do you think there can ever be a one-size-fits-all strategy towards achieving gender equality in education? What fundamental principles or ideas might we be able to apply to multiple countries? What strategies are more country-specific? Give examples of both.
2. How is equal access to education related to other human rights? How might one argue that education access is *not* a human right? How would you counter this argument?
3. Some believe that genders do not need to share the same opportunities in order to be equal (separate but equal spheres). How would you counter this argument, using the sphere of education as your prime example?
4. International support can only go so far in creating gender equality in education. A nation's people must also support the cause; they need incentives to continue programs after outside organizations have left. How might you motivate community members to join and continue gender equality programs started by the international community?

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Electoral Violence in Africa

Topic Background

The United Nations has an obligation to ensure free and fair elections, as made apparent in both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Resolution 66/163. The UDHR specifically defines access to democratic elections as a human right in Article 21, stating the following:

> Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

The latter resolution passed in April of 2012 recalls and expands on Article 21. The resolution mentions that "Member States are responsible for ensuring free and fair elections, free of intimidation, coercion and tampering of vote counts, and that all such acts are sanctioned accordingly." Protecting the human right to periodic and genuine elections requires the elimination of electoral violence in areas experiencing political instability. In order to prevent such violence, however, one must have a firm understanding of what electoral violence is. We must fully comprehend the problem, its causes and consequences, before we can find a solution to that problem.

Kristine Hoglund, an Associate Professor of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University in Sweden, provides a clear definition of electoral violence, distinguishing it from the more general concept of political violence. Within her work, Hoglund conceptualizes electoral violence by characterizing its motives, timing, actors, activities and targets. The overall objective of electoral violence, according to Hoglund, is to influence the electoral process. Such instances can take place in three phases: (1) the pre-election phase; (2) the day or days of the election and; (3) the post-election phase.

Actors, or instigators, might include state actors (military and police), political parties, guerilla/rebel groups, and militia and paramilitary groups. Activities of electoral violence often include harassing, assault, and intimidation of candidates, election workers and voters; rioting; destruction of property; and political assassination. Finally, four different groups are targeted by electoral violence: (1) electoral stakeholders (voters, candidates, election workers, media and monitors); (2) electoral information (registration data, vote results, ballots, campaign materials); (3) electoral facilities (polling and counting stations) and; (4) electoral events (campaign rallies, traveling to polling stations (415). Thus, part of protecting the human right to free and fair elections involves recognizing motives behind violent activities, predicting the timing of such violence, and identifying the actors and targets involved.

While electoral violence is a worldwide issue, it's especially problematic within the African continent, particularly Sub-Saharan and West Africa. Figure 2, provided by the 2014 Georgetown University Global Survey of Electoral Violence, shows a visual representation of nations experiencing electoral violence across the globe. Relative to

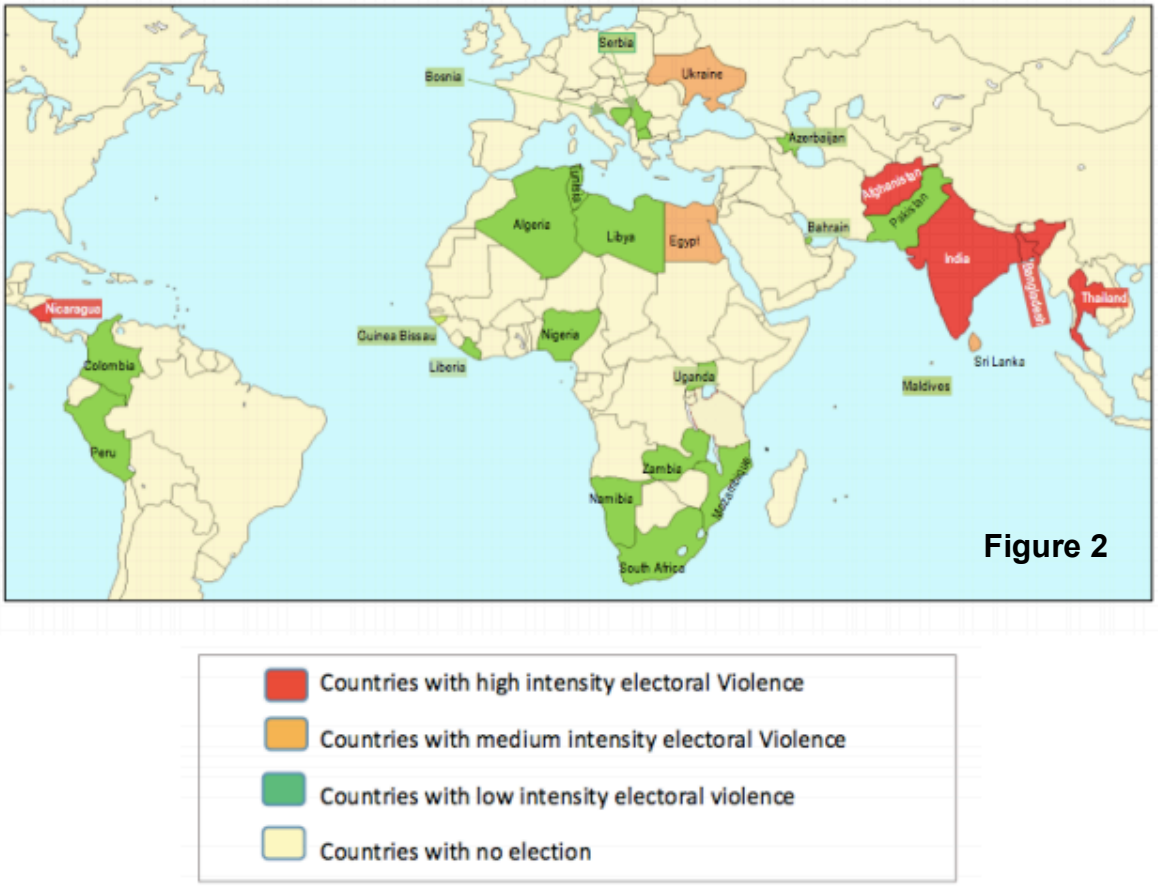

Figure 2

other nations, the intensity of electoral violence in Africa is rather low; nonetheless, the *frequency* of violence across the continent is comparatively high. This region is particularly susceptible to electoral violence for several reasons, as documented in an article published by the Nordic Africa Institute in 2012. The report suggests that both structural factors and certain electoral processes increase the likelihood of electoral violence in African states. Relatively new democracies typically share a long history of one-party and dominant political party states where politics and economics are conflated. Furthermore, the socio-economic and political benefits of democracy have yet to be fully realized within these states. According to the article, "Under such structural circumstances, the stakes at elections become high and the electoral contest tends to be perceived as a zero-sum game," or, in other words, "The structural conditions of elections create high incentives for violence" (Vigil 2). Because this issue is so prominent in the African continent, and due to the UN Human Rights Council's limited time and resources, we choose to narrow our focus on electoral violence in this specific region.

Past UN/Regional Organization & International Action

The international community became involved with the fight to end electoral violence after the conclusion of the Second World War and the creation of the United Nations. The UN adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in December 1948 to guarantee the rights of individuals everywhere. Under Article 21, it is stated that "the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures." This declaration gives the UN the ability to take international action in regard to any form of electoral violence, a violation of every human's right to a free and fair election.

The UN has acknowledged that violent actions can take place in the aftermath of elections. Such violence is usually instigated by individuals and/or groups who found the electoral process to be flawed and thus, invalid. Therefore, the UN places a high importance on providing election assistance as a component of peacebuilding to many countries. For instance, after the UN supervision and technical election assistance of

Namibia's 1989 elections, the UN increased its assistance to more than 100 countries worldwide in an effort to improve the overall electoral process by backing the domestic electoral institutions and empowering civil societies (von Borzyskowski).

The UN has already worked towards addressing this issue through resolutions, one adopted in March 2010, Resolution 64/155: Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization. This resolution discussed the responsibilities of both member states and the United Nations in ensuring free and fair elections throughout the world by:

> *Recalling* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted on 10 December 1948, in particular the principle that the will of the people, as expressed through periodic and genuine elections, shall be the basis of government authority, as well as the right freely to choose representatives through periodic and genuine elections, which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures,...

Furthermore, in April 2012, another critical resolution was introduced, Resolution 66/163: Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization. This resolution addresses the responsibility of member states to provide regular free and fair elections by:

> *Recognizing* the importance of fair, periodic and genuine elections, including in new democracies and countries undergoing democratization, in order to empower citizens to express their will and to promote successful transition to long-term sustainable democracies, *Recognizing* also that Member States are responsible for ensuring free and fair elections, free of intimidation, coercion and tampering of vote counts, and that all such acts are sanctioned accordingly, … *Reaffirms* that the electoral assistance provided by the United Nations should continue to be carried out in an objective, impartial, neutral and independent manner.

Additionally, this resolution discusses the role of the United Nations in providing neutral third party advisory assistance in member state elections and is foundation for the UN's involvement and responsibility with electoral violence in Africa.

Various UN projects fighting to end electoral violence have arisen in recent years. For instance, the Secretary General's 2011 report on preventive diplomacy recognized election-related violence as a new area of focus in conflict prevention. From there, the United Nations System Staff College and the Electoral Assistance Division of the UN Department of Political Affairs in 2012 began a training programme on "A Political Approach to Preventing and Responding to Electoral Violence." The program is intended to establish a firm understanding for both the technical and political dimension of elections so that the UN staff can do its best to prevent electoral violence and reduce its effects. The course occurs twice a year in field locations and aims to: (1) develop an understanding of the challenges of elections in transitional, post-conflict, and fragile societies; (2) strengthen capacity in election risk assessment and management, for instance conflict analysis and long-term election risk mapping and; (3) share strategies and examples countries used to combat electoral violence (United Nations Staff College).

Furthermore, in 2015, the National Democratic Institute launched a global campaign to address the violence and hard coercion against women in election. This global initiative, funded by the National Endowment for Democracy, aims to hinder electoral violence by training election observers to identify and report any form of violence against women. NDI's new website will work toward preventing violence prior, during, and after elections by presenting visualizations and analysis to increase awareness about the violence that is perpetrated against women in elections and thus how it affects women from participating a full political and public lifestyle. Overcoming electoral violence can be simplified as data collection grows less gender-blind. NDI has begun this initiative and focus on gender-based hatred during the election season first in Nigeria, but hopes to expand to Cote d'Ivoire, Burma, Guatemala, and numerous other countries (The National Democratic Institute).

Case Study: Burundi

Unfortunately, Burundi has suffered consequences of political violence in the past few decades. In its history, there have been extrajudicial killings, mistreatment of detainees, torture, restrictions on civil liberties, strategic intimidation tactics, harassment, and violence committed by youth groups in political demonstrations. From 1993 to 2005, Burundi endured a violent civil war. Rival tribes, the Tutsis and Hutus, facilitated multiple military coups and assassinations in this violent struggle for power (MENUB). An approximated 300,00 were killed in the turmoil. The Arusha Peace Agreement resolved the armed military conflict in 2005. However, it did not stop the era of political violence that would follow. In the following years, the worst offenders were members of the Burundi National Police, who actively use violence and selective law enforcement to establish themselves as the prevailing political authority. The National Police served as an appendage to the dominant political party, the CNDD-FDD (MENUB). While in power, the party often employed young members of the populations to utilize violence to rally support during election years. This was particularly evident in the 2010 elections.

In response to the prominence of political violence, the United Nations Security Council crafted and approved Resolution 2137 that established the UN Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB) in February of 2014. Cassam Uteem sits at the head of this initiative. Resolution 2137 outlined the necessary involvement of the Burundi government to enforce and protect human rights to facilitate a safe environment for dialogues between political parties. Further, MENUB requests that the government continue vetting the police and national security apparatuses for human rights violations and sexual and gender-based violence. This includes encouraging and empowering civilians to vote without the fear of violence (UN Security Council).

MENUB was primarily established to oversee a series of five polls from May to September to ensure a free and fair election of officials from the local to presidential levels. Operations officially began on 2 January 2015. MENUB drew from the UN Peacebuilding Fund to produce close to 1 million identity cards for the election processes. These identity cards ensured people weren't casting multiple votes, improving

the legitimacy and freedom in the election. Even with MENUB forces present, the government has failed to establish political stability in Burundi. A failed coup on May 13th escalated the turmoil in the already tense election times. An unknown political opposition launched a grenade attack on 22 May that killed eight and injured forty. Zedi Furuzi, the presidential candidate of the UPD-Zigamibanga party, was assassinated the following day. From April to May alone, 10,000 Burundian citizens have fled to neighboring Rwanda, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Case Study: Kenya

The election in the winter 2007 was one of the most violent processes in recent Kenyan politics. 1,300 people were killed in targeted ethnic violence between opposing political constituents, and more than 600,000 were displaced in the violent wake of the election. Political scientists have attempted to determine the reason why violence broke out. Their conclusions are as follows.

Elections without a clear, outright winner and transparent election process can undermine the overall legitimacy of the chosen candidate's right to power. In the 2007 elections, the incumbent president, Mwai Kibaki, of the Party of National Unity ran against Raila Odinga of the Orange Democratic Movement. This election had some of the highest reported turnout, approximately 70% of the voter population came out to polls. Although Odinga was predicted to win by a small margin, Mwai Kibaki was announced the winner (Rice). However, his political opponent Raila Odinga insisted that the ballot boxes were stuffed with false votes and the election was corrupted, spreading his opinion over various public platforms (Khazan). Loyalties were quickly drawn along tribal lines; Kibaki belonged to the Kiyuku group and Odinga's constituents were largely Luo. Many of the 43 tribal associations in Kenya recognized that the Kiyuku had maintained political dominance and a close proximity to political power since Kenya's independence (Rice). When claims like these are made in a country where elections have not been historically reliable, uncertainty over the outcome can undermine legitimacy and cause widespread distrust. Some also believed that the election was a zero-sum game. In politics, a zero-sum mindset suggests that the winner takes all, and the losing side loses

all potential benefits. In Kenya, political candidates are closely tied to long-standing tribal affiliations and personalities, rather than political platforms and opinions (Khazam). Therefore, the chosen candidate has the power to determine economic advantages and development projects for particular regions, resulting in tightly drawn political lines and unrest. Lastly, the elections created precedence that violence is effective. After the crisis of targeted ethnic violence, the UN assisted in the formation of a coalition government, naming Kibaki the President and Odinga the Prime Minister in the power sharing agreement of the National Accord and Reconciliation Act (Khazan). This agreement did more than structural adjustment and temporary peacemaking; it set an example that violence could achieve political goals.

Even though conditions have improved, Kenya still suffers from the effects of political violence. Political violence at any scale affects the legitimacy and fairness of elections and undermines basic democratic processes. Populations are unable to elect the leaders they want, which contests the country's new democratic foundation. Thus, the Republic of Kenya is yet another example of the persistent threat that electoral violence creates against fundamental human rights.

Questions to Consider

1. How might we be able to predict electoral violence? What identifiers/signals should we look for? Once we've recognized a threat, how might the international community prevent this violence from taking place?
2. What are some ways to promote transparent elections? How can we minimize corruption and biases at polling places?
3. How might one argue that free and fair elections are *not* a fundamental human right? How would you counter this argument?
4. Why is it important for the United Nations and international community to become involved/concerned in the elections of other states? What impact might electoral violence in one nation have on its neighboring countries?

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