



SOCHUM
STUDY GUIDE

TEDMUN

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ANKARA
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FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL
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SOCHUM STUDY GUIDE

AGENDA ITEM: Seeking Solutions for human rights violations derived from ethnic divides.



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1. Welcome Letters

a. Letter From Secretary General

Dear participants of TEDMUN 2024,

My words could not start without a quote that enlightens and motivates the whole spirit of this conference: “Peace in home, peace in world.” Although Mustafa Kemal Atatürk is known to be a great military commander and a brilliant government man, he was unique. At that time, while most of the leaders had rather aggressive views regarding the importance of International Diplomacy and Foreign Affairs, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk knew that the future of the modern world and a future modern Türkiye must be tenant to diplomacy. It must be reminded that, our hearths and opinions lie within his words, and this conference is assembled through his enlightenment.

TED Ankara College Policy Diplomacy Club has assembled 9 conferences since 2014, and this year we are proud to be the part of the 10th TEDMUN Conference. Becoming a part of the PDC, being an MUN’er and organizing TEDMUN at the end of the 11th grade has turned into a long-lasting tradition of every TED Ankara College member. We are proud to be a part of this long-lasting tradition and glorifying our club. The TED Ankara College Policy Diplomacy Club has a rich history of fostering such principles, organizing conferences that serve as platforms for meaningful discourse and collaboration. As we continue this tradition with the 10th TEDMUN Conference, we stand as proud torchbearers of our club's legacy, committed to upholding the values of diplomacy, mutual respect, and cooperation.

For each of us, participating in Model United Nations represents more than just a simulation; it is an opportunity to engage with diverse perspectives, to forge connections, and to contribute to the collective pursuit of peace and prosperity. As Secretary-General, I am deeply inspired by the dedication and passion that each of you brings to this conference. I hope the best for your contributions to the Model United Nations, and I wish you to enlighten yourselves by recovering the embedded solutions

in each conflict. In my opinion, your youth and perspectives will make this conference shine like the North Star in the Arctic.

As we embark on this journey together, let us remember the words of Atatürk and the legacy of TED Ankara College Policy Diplomacy Club. Let us approach our deliberations with open minds, empathy, and a shared commitment to building a better world. I am confident that through our collective efforts, we will not only honour our advisors but also reaffirm our belief in the power of diplomacy to transcend borders and unite humanity.

With warm regards,

Buğra Ermihan
Secretary-General of TEDMUN 2024



b. Letter From President Chair

Esteemed Participants,

I am Elif Öktem, a 11th grader at Çankaya High School. I will be serving you as the president chair of the General Assembly's Third Committee, SOCHUM, in TEDMUN 2024. Before anything else, I would like to thank the dearest secretary general, Buğra Ermihan, for leading this prestigious conference. Secondly, I want to thank my dearest MUN role model Zeynep Beril karartı, who is acting as the president of the general assembly this year at TEDMUN, for offering me this incredible opportunity to serve SOCHUM as the president chair.

The committee topic, seeking solutions for human rights violations derived from ethnic divides, is a broad but without a doubt enjoyable one to research and debate upon. The world has seen and continues to see many conflicts derived from ethnic divides. As SOCHUM we aim always to preserve human rights and find solutions to any actions taken against them. Since numerous examples can be discussed about this topic, I chose 2 important conflicts for you to debate, gather ideas then come up with solutions to prevent human rights violations that occur during conflict; that are the conflict in the conflict in Congo and the conflict in Myanmar.

Please read this chair report, which I have prepared thoroughly; as these conflicts are very detailed. I highly encourage you to do your research further and have an understanding of what your country's stances are.

I would further like to remind you that position papers are mandatory for this committee and are one of the key criteria for receiving an award. I expect all of you to write a comprehensive position paper that follows the position paper format.

Every delegate is advised to prepare a couple of clauses to add to the resolution before the conference to work more effectively and productively.

If you end up with some questions about the committee and position papers or any other related topic please feel free to contact me via my email: elos.oktem@gmail.com.

Elif Öktem,
President Chair of SOCHUM



2. Introduction To the Committee

a. General Assembly Third Committee

The Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly is The Social, Humanitarian, and Culture Issues Committee (SOCHUM) was established in 1947. It consists of all 173 member countries of the UN.

The Third Committee meets every year in early October and aims to finish its work by the end of November. In every session of the Third Committee, the majority of the work done mainly focuses on the examination of human rights questions, including reports of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council which was established in 2006.

b. Scope

The committee has agenda items relating to a range of social, humanitarian affairs and human rights issues that affect people all over the world. The Committee 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, aging, persons with disabilities, crime prevention, criminal justice, and international drug control.

After each session of The General Assembly Third Committee, a resolution is voted and by the majority decision it either passes or fails. The General Assembly, which includes SOCHUM, can only advise states and organizations to take action regarding matters of international concern that fall under its jurisdiction.



3. Introduction To the Topic

a. Ethnicity and Ethnic Groups

The dictionary meaning of ethnicity is a large group of people with a shared culture, religion, language, history, set of traditions, characteristics, etc., or the fact of belonging to one of these groups.

Ethnic groups mostly share the idea that their special traits set them apart from the rest of the society who they believe do not carry them. These groups can have a designated style of life, and political stances that they try to preserve at all costs. Members of ethnic groups feel the urge to protect their beliefs, traditions, and characteristics from rivals.

b. Ethnic Conflict

Ethnic groups can compete for reasons such as social inequality, scarcity of resources, gaining political power, blood feuds, and differences in religious beliefs that lead to ethnic conflicts.

Ethnic conflict can occur when a nation's political and social structure turns a blind eye to the inequality ethnic groups face and shows no effort to oversee peaceful communications between conflicting groups. As no peacemaking actions are taken or the peacemaking efforts play out to be unsuccessful the tension between two conflicting groups continues to increase and the ethnic conflict can result in two groups getting violent with each other.

Violent ethnic group engagements can end up causing massive human rights violations and overall a recession in a nation's welfare, economy, and social/political structure. We can sum up the root causes behind these conflicts as:



i. Territorial

A piece of land can claim to be owned or desired to be conquered by multiple ethnic groups. This can raise tension and eventually lead to conflict using violence to decide which group will have control of the territory and the resources that come with it.

ii. Political

When ethnic groups lack recognition and representation from political authorities, and when they don't have a say in a nation's decision-making processes they tend to become more likely to rebel against the government and cause a violent conflict.

If a country has a declining economy and is in a politically unstable, unreliable state ethnic groups within the nation, especially those that carry ideologies such as nationalism, can cause disturbances to the whole nation and its society. This can even further develop into violent driven conflicts that can have devastating outcomes such as genocide, crimes against humanity and even the collapse of the state.

iii. Economic and Social

The scarcity of resources and the unequal distribution of those scarce resources can drive ethnic conflicts. The need for resources makes resource-rich areas a must-attain for various ethnic groups.

In some situations, economic systems can play for favors, discriminating ethnic groups from one another by unequal economic opportunities, standards of living and access to resources. Situations like these build up the tension between rival groups and most likely end up with violent ethnic conflict.

The unfilled promise of a change in the economic system or the lack of change in the economic system, in general, can cause dissatisfaction and lead to ethnic conflict. Underdeveloped countries in which there is low income, high level of unemployment and ext... can create the perfect ground for tension between ethnic groups.



iv. Cultural

Typical reasons such as blood feuds, limitations of religious and cultural activities, restrictions in languages, and unfair opportunities for education and employment cause ethnic conflict to rise.

4. Conflict In Myanmar

a. Background and History

Since the independence from the British rule of Myanmar in 1948, the state has been struggling to create a national identity that reflects its rich ethnic diversity and fulfills the wants of its citizens from multiple ethnic identities living inside its borders. After a

coup in 1962, Myanmar's military (the Tatmadaw) mostly held control of the country. They frequently engaged in conflict with ethnic minorities within the country.

The Rohingya, a Muslim ethnic group with a population of over a million, face severe discrimination from other groups within Myanmar and the nation itself, even not being considered Myanmar citizens by the state government. The MaBaTha and the anti-Muslim 969 movement, Buddhist and nationalist groups, suggested the expulsion of Muslims from the country, regularly sabotaged and boycotted Muslim-owned shops and businesses, and attacked the Muslim population.



Economist.com

In the Buddhist-dominated country, the conflict between the Buddhists and Muslims intensified resulting in the internal displacement of more than 100 thousand Muslim Rohingyas and many being killed.

After winning the election in March 2016, the National League for The Democracy Party (led by State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi unofficially) failed to acknowledge the Rohingya people (who were not allowed to vote in the election) and their horrible social, economic and political circumstances. A national peace conference was held in August



2016 which had a purpose to end the continuous fighting but the representatives of Rohingyans were not invited to attend the meeting.



In August 2017 the tension between the Buddhist and Muslim ethnic groups in the state of Rakhine, Myanmar escalated dramatically. Several raids by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), formed by a group of Rohingya militants, on the military and the police force, resulted in the death of approximately a hundred people. In response to these attacks, the military force of Myanmar struck Rohingya villages. Causing over seven hundred thousand people to flee the country and cross the border to Bangladesh since 2017. The undeserved and unstopped slaying and burning of Rohingya villages escalated to the point that the UN Human Rights Commissioner called the situation ‘a textbook example of ethnic cleansing.’

b. 2021 Myanmar Coup D'état

On February 1, 2021, the military of Myanmar took over the power. The members of the National League for Democracy Party, including Aung San Suu Kyi, were captured and Myint Swe, a former military person, took over Myanmar. Myint Swe immediately declared a one-year state of emergency. He also made a promise to hold elections after the state of emergency and that he would hand over the power to the elected person.

On August 1 a military-led caretaker government was established making Senior General Min the prime minister. Also, the state of Emergency was extended by 6 months, to August of 2023.

In April, the National Unity government was formed in opposition to the military rule organizing armed resistance in the following months. Myanmar citizens held protests and engaged in acts of rebelliousness in



opposition to the military coup. The military rule responded harshly to the demonstrations and armed resistance. Even a short time after the coup Myanmar faced horrific humanitarian crises and a terrible economy/ economic system.

c. Effects Of The Crisis and Human Rights Violations

Since the coup of the military, human rights and the violation of human rights have been escalating severely in Myanmar. Facing multiple opposition the junta has been struggling to maintain order and control over the country. Myanmar's junta has ramped up attacks on civilians, including airstrikes, and increasingly blocked humanitarian aid and over 300 attacks on medical facilities have been reported.

Millions fled from the country, to Bangladesh, China, India, and Thailand, seeking safety. Thousands of Rohingyas took deadly risks to cross the borders from Myanmar to neighbouring countries as soldiers burned down entire villages, and carried out killings and acts of sexual violence.

In the process of this crisis, the junta has been abusing the population and violating their fundamental human rights. In the continuing and intensifying crisis, civilians bear a heavy price, sometimes costing them their lives. Sources announce that since the 2021 coup over 4700 civilians, including women and children, have been brutally and unrightfully killed by the military. More than 350 were burned to death in village destruction by fire and air strikes.



Mostly in Shan, Rakhine, and Kachin States, the military has been provoking cross-ethnic group fighting. In early February the military recognized a new military service law which targeted men (aged 18-35) and women (aged 18-27) citizens if picked to contribute to the military with or without their consent. In many places, the military forcibly seized people and threatened them with the burning of their villages unless their young people agreed to join the military.

These actions by the military have further developed into bribing Rohingya children leave their ethnic groups and join the ones whom their ethnic group opposes. If the kids do not cooperate they are threatened and punished.

The citizens of Myanmar live with the fear of getting arrested for any reason at any time in the absence of the rule of law. More than 200,000 citizens who oppose the military are in detention, including youngsters and women who have been robbed of their right to freedom. Many towns and villages within the nation experience total and partial shutdowns of the internet thus limiting communications to the outside world.

Today, 18.6 million people, roughly 1/3 of the total population, need humanitarian assistance. In a world of growing humanitarian emergencies, Myanmar is fast becoming a forgotten crisis. The UN's 2023 Myanmar Humanitarian Response Plan received only about 1/3 of its required funding, leaving a \$600 million funding gap.

d. International Actions

i. International Court of Justice

A report published by the UN in August 2018 accused the Myanmar military of mass killings and rapes and claimed that these actions had genocide intents. Later this issue was brought up to the ICJ (International Court of Justice) but the 2019 government of Myanmar, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, rejected the accusations of genocide. Even so, the court ordered Myanmar to take action to protect the rights of the Rohingya citizens and prevent their prosecution and killings. Also, the court approved the investigation into the case of the Rohingya citizens in Myanmar. The country also decided to carry out its own investigation and later reported that members of the security forces may have carried out "war crimes, serious human rights violations, and violations of domestic law", but



claimed there was no evidence of genocide. The case is still ongoing and hasn't been concluded yet.

ii. The UN

The European Union is working hard to help the people of Myanmar who are in need, has allocated over €100 million for life-saving assistance in Myanmar over the past 3 years. However, more funding is required as humanitarian needs continue to spiral out of control. In addition to funding for humanitarian aid inside Myanmar, in 2023 the European Union has allocated almost €35 million in response to the regional Rohingya refugee crisis. This reaffirms Europe's commitment to supporting Rohingya refugees and their host communities outside Myanmar.

The Human Rights Council's April 4 resolution calls for restricting the Myanmar military's access to jet fuel. Earlier in the year, Canada, the UK, and the EU had imposed targeted sanctions on specific individuals and entities involved in supplying aviation fuel to the Myanmar military. However, at least five British insurance companies still provide aviation fuel delivery coverage to Myanmar. Russia and China have continued to sell weapons to Myanmar's junta since the 2021 coup, according to the UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar.

In 2018 the government of Bangladesh announced that they wouldn't be accepting any more Rohingya refugees even requested their return to Myanmar but Rohingyans said that they wouldn't leave until a guarantee of citizenship from Myanmar. Today, most Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh live in camps in and around Cox's Bazar, which is just across the Myanmar border and the largest refugee camp in the world. Living in horrible conditions, Rohingya refugees have little access to humanitarian aid, basic human necessities and overcrowding.

5. Ethnic Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo

a. Background and History

Since 1996, conflict in eastern DRC has led to approximately six million deaths. In the Rwanda Genocide, ethnic Hutu extremists killed an estimated one million minority ethnic Tutsis which triggered the First Congo War. (1996-1997) Hutu extremists began organizing militias within



the Congo and the pressure intensified as Tutsi militias organized against the Hutu groups and as foreign powers began taking sides. A short time after violent clashes between the two groups started.

Ethnic tensions in Rwanda forced more than 300,000 people from the Tutsi minority groups fled to neighbouring countries in the 1960s, particularly to the DRC. Some of those refugees regrouped and sought to seize power in Rwanda after gaining independence from Belgium in 1962.

After the neighbouring country Rwanda's genocide, thousands of Rwandans fled to Congo including armed fighters. Uganda, Rwanda and Angola invade the DRC to target Hutu fighters from Rwanda. Competition for resources and influence in DRC also has sharpened long-standing rivalries between Rwanda and Uganda.



Organizing themselves in the fertile grounds of the massive refugee camps in eastern DRC, the perpetrators of the 1994 Rwandan genocide began preying on the local Congolese population and conducting attacks back into Rwanda. In 1996, the still-new Rwandan government responded by invading Zaire, aided by the Ugandan army and rebel Congolese militias under the command of Laurent Kabila.

Tutsi militias with Rwandan backing launched an invasion of Zaire, which was ruled at the time by Dictator Mobutu Sese Seko. Rwanda waged the First Congo War against Zaire with the help of other African states. (most significantly Uganda, but also Angola and Burundi)



Shortly after coming to power, the new president, Kabila changed his support away from the Rwandan government and began aiding armed groups associated with the perpetration of the Rwandan genocide. In August 1998, Rwanda and Uganda again invaded the Congo. Other nations quickly joined in and Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia rallied to the Congolese government's defence. A large number of local rebel groups and militias, some ethnically based and many sponsored by foreign militaries, also took part in the conflict. The United Nations (UN) has accused all nations involved of using the war as a cover for looting diamonds, coltan, gold, and other resources from this mineral-rich region.

b. Effects Of The Crisis and Human Rights Violations

Ongoing armed conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo continued to seriously affect civilians. In eastern Congo, an offensive by the Rwanda-backed M23 armed group worsened the dire humanitarian situation in North Kivu, forcing more than half a million people to flee their homes and pushing the number of displaced people across the country to nearly 7 million, the highest number of internally displaced people in Africa, according to the United Nations.

The human rights situation across the Democratic Republic of Congo remains dire, with internal conflicts and poor governance contributing to a severe food crisis and the internal displacement of 5.8 million people, more than anywhere else in Africa. Over 100 armed groups are active in eastern Congo, and the imposition of martial law in North Kivu and Ituri provinces has facilitated abuses by government security forces. Armed groups and often abusive security forces continue to carry out massacres, abductions, rape and sexual violence, recruitment of children, and other attacks on civilians with near total impunity. The rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and the media are frequently under attack.

Serious violations of freedoms of expression, media, and peaceful assembly have been carried out. Repression against journalists, activists, government critics, and peaceful protesters continued. The authorities also targeted leaders of opposition political parties, restricting their fundamental liberties and arresting party officials.

More than 100 armed groups were still active in eastern Congo's Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu, and Tanganyika provinces, including several groups with fighters from neighbouring Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi.



Many of their commanders have been implicated in war crimes, including massacres, sexual violence, recruiting children, and pillaging.

c. International Actions

The UN Joint Human Rights Office reported in August that “the pre-electoral environment in Congo is increasingly characterized by a narrowing of civic space and political and electoral violence, arbitrary arrests and detentions, abductions and threats targeting political opponents, excessive use of force against peaceful demonstrators, and hate speech and incitement to violence.” The office warned that such abuses “risk damaging the credibility of the electoral process” and “increase the risk of violence.”

In July, the EU called for accountability and urged Rwanda to withdraw its troops from eastern Congo. Troops from the East African Community regional force, which deployed in November 2022, started withdrawing from eastern Congo on December 3.

The UN peacekeeping mission MONUSCO is one of the most expensive and extensive UN missions in history, comprising 12,379 troops and about 5,000 additional civilian personnel. Its 2022 budget was about \$1.1bn. But MONUSCO is deeply unpopular in the DRC, seen as having little to no impact later in December 2023, the UN Security Council voted to pull out MONUSCO a year earlier than planned, despite fears the troops’ absence would create security vacuums and more instability.

DRC is home to nearly 7 million people who have been internally displaced due to the threat of violence and atrocities, extreme poverty, and mining expansion. The displaced population urgently needs security support, medical aid, and other humanitarian aid. Approximately one million Congolese nationals are seeking refuge beyond the Congo’s borders.

6. Conclusion

Human rights are the basic rights to which every individual is entitled regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion or any other situation. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 10 December 1948, sets out fundamental human rights to be universally protected. Ethnic Conflicts can lead to devastating outcomes like violations of human rights, such as mass killings, rape, genocide, torture and ethnic cleansing, that cause



unimaginable human suffering. We as SOCHUM have to find solutions for the human rights violations driven by ethnic conflicts.

7. Questions To Be Addressed

- a. What steps can be taken to address the root causes of ethnic conflicts?
- b. What strategies can be implemented to empower ethnic communities and promote cultural diversity to prevent ethnic conflicts in the future?
- c. How can the world be made aware of these ethnic conflicts and issues that people living where there is ethnic conflict face?
- d. What actions have been taken by the international community to support conflict resolution and address the issues faced in these conflicts?
- e. What international actions have been taken by the UN and other parties to prevent human rights violations due to ethnic conflicts?
- f. What further actions can the UN take to prevent human rights violations from occurring and help those whose rights have been violated in ethnic conflicts?
- g. How can the SOCHUM Committee collaborate with other relevant UN bodies and organizations to address the issues effectively?

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