

Message from the Director of the General Assembly

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to DAYMUNC XIX! My name is Nicole Wise and I will be the Director of the General Assembly (GA) for this year's conference.

The General Assembly Plenary is one of the main committees of the United Nations (UN), and the only one in which all Member States are represented. Our goal is to create and pass resolutions on pertinent international issues in all topic areas which serve as recommendations for action by all UN Member States. We are not necessarily a consensus-building body, but achieving as much support for a document as possible before it is voted on is recommended. Delegates in the General Assembly Plenary are encouraged to come up with innovative and realistic responses to topics on the agenda while keeping in mind that General Assembly resolutions are non-binding documents.

The topics for the General Assembly this year are:

1. Human Rights in Nonviolent Protests and Demonstrations
2. Combating Human Trafficking

This Background Guide is meant to provide you with an introduction to each of these topics and help steer you in the right direction for your research. While I try to describe each of the topics in detail, this Background Guide should only be the beginning of your research and you should consult multiple other sources for more information as well as your State's specific policy on the issues. Also, keep in mind that these issues are changing day to day, so I would recommend staying current on any news or developments pertaining to these topics up until the day of the conference.

Writing a position paper describing your State's policy on these issues is encouraged as a way to compile your research and prepare you for the conference. For those of you wishing to compete for the paper awards, remember that the deadline is midnight, January 25th.

I look forward to seeing all of you in February for what I'm sure will be a fantastic conference!

Sincerely,

Nicole Wise

Director of GA, DAYMUNC XIX

About the Director

Nicole Wise graduated from Wright State University in November 2011 with a Bachelor's of Arts in International Studies and minors in French and Chinese Studies. This is her fifth year participating in Model UN and DAYMUNC. She has served as a delegate at DAYMUNC and NMUN-NY three times, and was also invited as a delegate to the first Global MUN Conference held at the UN building in Geneva, Switzerland in 2009. She served as Head Delegate of Wright State's delegation to the first NMUN-Latin America conference in Quito, Ecuador in 2010 and as Head Delegate of WSU's National Model UN Team for the 2010-2011 academic year. This is her second year volunteering as DAYMUNC staff, having served as Chair of the Security Council in 2010. She has recently been offered a full-time position at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, and intends to continue her education by pursuing a Master's degree in Fall of 2012.

Topic 1: Human Rights in Nonviolent Protests and Demonstrations

Introduction and Definitions

A nonviolent protest, as defined by the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (ICNC), is a “civilian-based resistance used to challenge the legitimacy of an oppressor” and aimed at undermining the political or military power of an oppressive government or regime¹. Nonviolent movements can take the form of demonstrations, civil disobedience, strikes, boycotts, or petitions, among others, avoid violent or destructive tactics.

History

One famous nonviolent movement in history was the anti-apartheid protest in South Africa that persisted from the early 1900s to 1992 and during which black South Africans, led by Nelson Mandela, disputed institutionalized racism in the State and eventually were able to topple apartheid in 1992. Another widely known nonviolent protest occurred in Beijing, China in 1989 where first hundreds, then thousands of pro-democracy demonstrators, many of them academics, gathered in Tiananmen Square to protest government corruption and socio-political inequality. After several weeks, their nonviolent demonstration ended when military forces fired on the crowd, killing many of the protestors and putting an end to the pro-democracy movement².

The Tiananmen Square incident highlights the importance of acknowledging and protecting the human rights of individuals involved in nonviolent protests and demonstrations. Article 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights protects the freedom of individuals to peacefully assemble³, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights elaborates by asserting

“No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.”⁴

The Human Rights Council has passed numerous resolutions calling for the protection of human rights during demonstration and the promotion of the right to assembly, the most recent of which, 2010’s A/HRC/RES/15/21, called for the creation of a Special Rapporteur to monitor the

¹ (ICNC)

² (Kurtz)

³ (United Nations)

⁴ (United Nations)

protection of these rights over the following three years⁵. The General Assembly has also tackled the issue of freedom of assembly by passing many more specific resolutions describing the status of this right in developing States and States in conflict.

Case Study: Freedom of Assembly and the Arab Spring

The Arab Spring is a wave of civilian-lead pro-democracy protests and nonviolent demonstrations that have spread throughout the Middle East and North Africa over the past year and have resulted in the overthrow of non-democratic or corrupt regimes in several Member States and government reform in others. The recent civil war in Libya that has resulted in the death of former leader Muammar Gaddafi and toppled his regime can cite the Arab Spring as the force that set it into action, showing how, in some cases, nonviolent movements can become violent if necessary. However, in the case of protests and demonstrations that are strictly nonviolent expressions of individuals' right to peacefully assemble, the Arab Spring has raised concerns over the protection of the rights of those involved.

The Arab Spring movement began in Tunisia in December of 2010 when a fruit vendor in a city market, after being harassed by corrupt law enforcement, set himself on fire to express his frustration with injustice and inequality in his country⁶. News of this was spread quickly across Tunisia using social networking sites and it wasn't long before many others who shared the fruit vendor's sentiments took to the streets to protest government corruption and call for reform. Less than a month later, Tunisia's former leader Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and his family fled the State and an interim government was put in place. Soon after that, the Arab Spring spread to Egypt, where President Hosni Mubarak's 30-year term was ended after months of protests.

However, the nonviolent protests of the Arab Spring in Tunisia and Egypt, and later, Syria, Yemen, and other States were anything but peaceful. In all cases, demonstrators were killed in attempts by government security forces and law enforcement to quell protests, an act which violates the freedom of peaceful assembly protected under many UN treaties and resolutions. In Syria, where protestors are calling for President Bashar al-Assad to step down, military forces have opened fire on demonstrators multiple times, even using tanks in a move eerily reminiscent of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre in China⁷. Rough estimates of the death toll in Syria range from 3,000 to 10,000, but a solid statistic is hard to determine. The situation is similar in Yemen, though the death toll is much lower, and many fear that a violent civil war could erupt at any time if security forces continue to fire on groups of nonviolent, civilian protestors.

⁵ (Human Rights Council)

⁶ (The Telegraph)

⁷ (The New York Times)

Overall, the Arab Spring phenomenon and the violent clashes that resulted in many North African and Middle Eastern States have called attention to the issue of human rights during protests and demonstrations. The international community is divided over how to approach this problem, which the Security Council consistently failing to win the approval of all Permanent Five Member States for any relevant resolution. Many see the protestors as pro-democracy freedom-fighters, exercising their right to self-determination and freedom of assembly, while others view the demonstrations as anti-government rebellions by separatist groups aiming to undermine the sovereignty of State authority. In order to find a balance that will protect the human rights of all involved, the international community must remain open to compromise and be willing to cooperate and take action before more lives are lost.

Questions to Consider:

Does your State have a history of nonviolent movements? How did those movements turn out?

What is your State's policy on freedom of assembly and freedom of expression? Do you believe individual freedoms like these or the stability of the State and government are more important?

What can Member States in transition, like several mentioned here, do to ensure the protection of human rights during government reform?

What action, if any, should the UN or the international community take on this issue?

Topic 2: Combating Human Trafficking

Introduction and Definitions

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) defines human trafficking as “the acquisition of people by improper means such as force, fraud or deception, with the aim of exploiting them”⁸. The exploitation referred to by this definition includes, but is not limited to, forced labour, sexual exploitation and/or forced prostitution, organ thieving, and forced military participation such as that seen with child soldiers. The UN Global Initiative to Fight Trafficking (UN.GIFT) reports that global profits from human trafficking add up to over \$31 billion annually, making trafficking in persons a lucrative aspect of transnational organized crime⁹.

⁸ (UNODC)

⁹ (UN.GIFT)

The International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Statistics on Forced Labour estimates that over 2.4 million people are currently being exploited as victims of trafficking¹⁰. These victims are men, women, and children of all races, nationalities, and socio-economic classes, but women, children, and people of low income levels are the most vulnerable to exploitation, and more incidences of human trafficking occur in the Asia-Pacific region than any other area. Women are not only more likely to be victimized by human trafficking, but are also more likely to be the perpetrators of trafficking crimes, making the majority of those involved in this crime female. Taking this into account along with the fact that the traffickers themselves usually share the same nationality and/or ethnicity of their victims, human trafficking differs from "traditional" slavery in that it is not an expression of race-based or gender-based subjugation and is instead a crime of convenience. Frequently, victims are forced into trafficking by people who belong to the same nationality, ethnicity, and gender who use these commonalities to their advantage to earn the trust of and manipulate their victims.

Human trafficking is said to affect every Member State, making it a truly international crisis. States from which trafficking victims originate are referred to as source countries, while transit countries are the States victims travel through to reach destination countries, the traffickers' target State in which the majority of for-profit exploitation occurs. Source countries are usually less-developed States with populations suffering from poverty, conflict, or other conditions that leave their populations vulnerable to exploitation, while destination countries are frequently developed or more developed States where traffickers are more likely to find higher paying "customers" for their victims. Because of the transnational nature of the human trafficking issue, no solution can be found without the full cooperation of the international community, and any possible solution that is not agreed upon and implemented by every Member State will no doubt fail to bring an end to this international crisis.

Case Study: Sex Tourism and the 2012 London Olympics

Sex tourism is a type of sex trafficking or forced prostitution described by the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) as either the act of tourism for the express purpose of buying sex from a resident of the visited country or the utilization of the sex industry abroad during a visit as a tourist¹¹. ECPAT International, a non-governmental organization that combats the sexual abuse of children, reports that the act of sex tourism often involves the exploitation of a trafficking victim under the age of 18, and that the majority of tourists who participate in the sexual exploitation of either child or adult trafficking victims are "situational sex tourists"¹². According to ECPAT International, a situational sex tourist is someone who is not visiting a

¹⁰ (ILO)

¹¹ (UNWTO)

¹² (ECPAT International)

country for the express purpose of sex tourism, but participates in sex tourism because it is made convenient to him or her by traffickers' marketing their victims to tourists and the belief that the status of "tourist" provides anonymity and impunity for their actions.

A primary concern in the international community is that traffickers often take advantage of major sporting events, such as the Olympic Games or the FIFA World Cup, to profit off of the influx of tourists and spectators by selling them sex with trafficking victims. In the weeks leading up to the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, a multitude of women and girls, some estimates as high as 40,000, were trafficked into the country in order to meet the demands of thousands of potential situational sex tourists among the visiting World Cup spectators¹³. Because of this trend, sex tourism is a serious concern in regards to the upcoming Olympic Games in London, UK in the summer of 2012. British law enforcement has already taken measures to prepare for the potential influx in trafficking victims, but a small increase in the presence of sex workers, many of whom are trafficking victims, in the areas where construction workers are currently preparing for the games has already been observed¹⁴. The 2000 Olympic Games brought approximately 10,000 sex trafficking victims to Sydney, Australia, while during the 2004 Olympic Games, the city of Athens, Greece saw the number of human trafficking victims in the city increase by 95%. These statistics alarm the International Olympic Committee, the Member States that host major sporting events, and the international community as a whole. Preventing a similar influx of trafficking victims and increase in sex tourism during the London games will require international action, as well as cooperation between source, transit, and destination States.

Questions to Consider:

Is your Member State a source, transit, or destination country?

What actions has your State undergone to combat human trafficking, domestically and internationally?

What further actions should the international community take to prevent human trafficking from occurring?

What can individual Member States do to reduce the amount of people trafficked into, out of, and through their borders?

What can Member States do to reduce the amount of sex tourism that occurs at major events such as the Olympic Games?

¹³ (Skinner)

¹⁴ (Laville)

You are encouraged to consider all aspects of this broad, multifaceted issue. This crisis has persisted for decades despite many actions by the UN and the international community, so unique and innovative approaches are encouraged.

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