*Delegates,*

It is our pleasure to welcome you all to the 2024 Kennesaw State University High School Model United Nations Conference. My name is Milo Wilson and I have the honor of serving as your Director of the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee. This will be my second year doing High School Model United Nations, the first year I was an assistant director in the United Nations Environmental Program. I am currently studying at Kennesaw State University (KSU) to get my master's degree in computer science. I currently also work as a graduate teaching assistant at KSU helping teach the introductory programming classes.

Our committee’s Assistant Director is Julian Jahde (He/Him). This is Julian’s first year at KSU Model UN as well as KSU High School Model UN. He is looking forward to the experience and opportunity to work with fellow delegates interested in finding solutions to complex problems. Anna majors in Civil Engineering with an emphasis on transportation at KSU. His favorite animal is a meerkat.

**The topics under discussion for the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee:**

1. **Addressing Public Sector Discrimination of Marginalized Groups**
2. **Providing Aid to Refugees Fleeing Global Conflict**

Each Member State’s delegation within this committee is expected to submit a position paper presenting their ideas for both agenda topics. A position paper is a short essay describing your Member State’s history and position on the issues at hand. There are three key parts to any successful position paper: history, current status of the issue, and possible solutions for the future. Information for properly formatting the position papers, as well as valuable advice for writing a quality paper, can be found in the Delegate Preparation section of the HSMUN webpage (http://conference.kennesaw.edu/hsmun/). Delegates are reminded that papers should be no longer than two pages in length with titles in size 12 and text in size 10-12 Times New Roman. Citations should be footnoted in Chicago-style formatting, such as those used inside this guide. Furthermore, plagiarism in an academic setting is unacceptable and will nullify any score for the paper in question. During the grading process, we will be utilizing the university’s plagiarism checker. Wikipedia is a wonderful place to begin researching, but we highly encourage the use of peer-reviewed academic articles or trusted media sources. The objective of a position paper is to present the diplomatic position of your Member State on both agenda topics as accurately as possible. ***All position papers MUST be sent to ksuhsmun2024@gmail.com by February 24th, 2024. Late papers will be accepted until February 28th, 2024 with points penalized.***

**History of the General Assembly Third Committee**

The United Nations (UN) was founded on October 24th, 1945, in San Francisco, California with an original member count of 51 Member-States. Post World War II, as nations sought to create a new world order that could prevent the recurrence of such catastrophic conflicts, human rights and social issues took on a heightened significance. The international organization’s main purpose is to maintain international peace, and uphold human rights for every human being in each Member State.The United Nations further works to establish a setting in which obligations from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained. Over the years, the UN has worked tirelessly to promote social progress and the development of each person’s standard of living. The United Nations Charter established the six principal organs of the UN. These organs are named as follows: General Assembly (GA), Security Council,Economic and Security Council (ECOSOC), Trusteeship Council, International Court of Justice, and the UN Secretariat.

Since the inception of the United Nations, the General Assembly is the only organ in which all 193 Member States have equal representation and voting power. The GA Plenary currently consists of six main committees; the first committee on Disarmament andInternational Security, Economic and Financial Committee, the Social Humanitarian and Cultural Committee, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, the Administrative and Budgetary Committee, and the Legal Committee. Each main committee of the GA is headed by a Bureau consisting of a Chair, three Vice-Chairs, and a Rapporteur. GA Third is led by His Excellency Alexander Marschik of Austria.

All 193 Member States are given equal voting power in the general assembly. There is the opportunity for non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UN entities, and other observers to join for debate in the general assembly although they are not able to vote. Most resolutions are passed through a simple majority. In the 78th session of the GA Third 18 out of the 23 draft resolutions that were voted on were passed with a simple majority.

The GA Third Committee’s primary responsibility is, the promotion and protection of human rights. Together the committee has produced legislation to improve access to food, protections of the cultural effects of COVID-19, and condemnation of torture and other inhumane treatment of prisoners. In its early years, the Third Committee was instrumental in drafting foundational human rights documents. The most notable among these is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948. This seminal document laid down a set of standards that for the first time in history, sought to establish a universal baseline for human dignity and rights. The declaration has since influenced a multitude of binding treaties and laws internationally. The Third Committee expanded its focus to include women's rights, children's rights, and the rights of disabled persons, among other issues. It played a crucial role in the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). These conventions have become key international instruments in their respective fields. The end of the Cold War and the onset of globalization introduced new challenges and opportunities, leading the Third Committee to address issues such as the implications of globalization on human rights, the rights of migrants, and the intersection of development and human rights.

The GA currently does not possess the power to enforce laws or policies. However, The General Assembly as the main policy-making and representative organ is empowered to make recommendations to Member States on global issues. As the world continues to change, the Third Committee remains a vital forum within the United Nations for promoting and protecting human rights and addressing the pressing social, humanitarian, and cultural issues of the day. Its history is a testament to the ongoing global commitment to dignity, equality, and justice for all.

1. **Addressing Public Sector Discrimination of Marginalized Groups**

***Introduction***

The public sector is the segment of the economy owned, operated, and controlled by government agencies. Discrimination in the public sector is understated as a problem when compared to that in the private. Although most Member States Would condemn legislative discrimination, implicit biases still play a role in hiring processes. These biases, embedded in the social structure of many Member States affect who is hired, and how frequently. The United Nations has stood against all forms of racism and discrimination. In 2008, the Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon,[[1]](#footnote-0) released a bulletin prohibiting discrimination within the United Nations.

***History***

As the United States has been a prominent Member States in the last century, surveying their history as an example of how to move forward may be beneficial. After the Emancipation Proclamation that effectively freed enslaved peoples across the United States, Black Americans faced extensive discrimination when seeking employment. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC),[[2]](#footnote-1) introduced as part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, enforces laws that make discrimination illegal in the workplace. This commission arose after centuries of discrimination and subsequently racial activism in the United States, as institutions such as Jim Crow were immensely impactful at keeping minorities out of Public Sector occupations. In the post-emancipation south, even though many states were now majority African American citizens, Public Sector employment opportunities were few and far between.

South Africa, a Member State with possibly the most prevalent and widely-known case of apartheid, undoubtedly dealt with this issue as well. With the journey of Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC), the progress of South Africa can be seen coming to a head with the election of Nelson Mandela as the first Post-Apartheid President. Mandela was instrumental in repairing cultural relations by uniting the nation around the 1995 Rugby World Cup, held in South Africa. He also restored confidence in the political system by establishing a new constitution that promised equal rights to all citizens no matter their race or sex.[[3]](#footnote-2) This election was a great leap forward toward bringing peace to a racially divided Member State and continuing the fight for human rights around the globe.

A similar but less extreme case is the election of United States (US) President Barack Obama in 2008, after centuries of captivity and inhumane treatment this marked a great step towards addressing public sector exclusion in the US. The US has also moved toward having more non-white members in their House of Representatives.[[4]](#footnote-3) While there is much progress yet to be made by this member state, the US is already making strides towards addressing the disparity of marginalized groups in their government.

***Current Situation***

A Member State with a storied past as it relates to its indigenous population is Australia, which also faces issues of discrimination in the Public Sector. As of 2018, only 49%[[5]](#footnote-4) of Aboriginal Australians were employed, which contrasts with the percentage of non-indigenous Australians that are employed at 76%, this contrast is known as the Indigenous Employment Gap and has only lessened by 1.3% by 2018. Aboriginal Australians are disproportionately left without employment. While this is not in the public sector, Australia recently had the opportunity to give indigenous people a voice in parliament to represent them on minority issues. While it was unclear what the voice was and what they would do the parliament struck down. This is only one of many suggested amendments that have fallen short of passing to give indigenous Australians better representation in their member state.[[6]](#footnote-5)

Japan is struggling to address its private and public sector discrimination within its Member State. In the private sector, women have faced issues such as wage gaps, employment discrimination, and tokenism which has kept women in a lower societal position. Japan is also a Member State with one of the lowest amount of elected women representatives. While the issue is not solved Japan has tried many initiatives to address this gender inequality including increased parental leave. These solutions have had some positive outcomes but have not significantly addressed the core problem.[[7]](#footnote-6)

***Actions Taken by the United Nations***

The United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) was adopted in 1965 and entered into force in 1969. The Convention is the primary international human rights instrument defining and prohibiting racial discrimination in public sectors of life.[[8]](#footnote-7) All Member States who have signed agree not to support or defend racial discrimination in their government. ICERD also has policies around hate speech and indirectly addressing private sector discrimination. 182 Member States have signed to be a part of the ICERD, it has been a great step forward in the struggle for fair treatment for all people.[[9]](#footnote-8)

***Conclusion***

Discrimination comes in many forms and remains prevalent despite the many attempts at addressing it. Governments should represent the citizens that are governed by them. There are many ways to work toward equal representation although there is no one solution to each Member State’s issues. Working towards a better future has best been addressed through the cooperation and council of other Member States like with ICERD.

***Committee Directive***

Stamping out discrimination is a long and arduous road, though the issue of discrimination is heightened by a lack of access to information. Education on how discrimination flourishes, and recognizing discrimination is imperative. Delegates should remain mindful of UN principles pertaining to equality and discrimination, as well as the importance of a diverse public sector. Delegates may also find it helpful to look into addressing either racial or non-racial discrimination. Lastly, delegates whose Member States have historically prevented minorities from assuming government positions should aim to provide frameworks for addressing those disparities.

1. **Providing Aid to Refugees Fleeing Global Conflict**

***Introduction***

Refugees are people who leave their home Member States due to international conflict and or persecution. Refugees are defined in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (CRSR) as “someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their Member State of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.”[[10]](#footnote-9) Refugees are one of the most vulnerable groups, unable to return to their home Member State they rely on support from the host Member State for survival.

***History***

In 1951 the CRSR was held on July 28th in Geneva, Switzerland. This was to establish the basic rights of a refugee after World War II.[[11]](#footnote-10) Many citizens from European Member States were displaced and forced to leave their homes. This Convention guaranteed such rights as not being discriminated against, decent work, housing, freedom of religion, the right not to be punished for irregular entry into the Member State, and much more. The designation of refugee was given to citizens of Member States fleeing events in Europe before January 1st, 1951.

The CRSR was amended once in October 1967, when the time and place restrictions were removed. This allowed anyone fleeing conflict or persecution to be deemed a refugee, protecting them under international law. Since then many people have been allowed to seek safety in host Member States until they are hopefully able to return to their Member State of origin.[[12]](#footnote-11)

Refugees tend to be used as political pawns to garner support within their host Member State. Refugees and migrants are accused of being the root cause of issues like unemployment and crime by politicians.[[13]](#footnote-12) Meanwhile Member States Such as Uganda have been taking an integrative approach to refugees, leading to a safer and more productive environment for these refugees and better economic conditions for their Member State. These initiatives have led Uganda to have the largest refugee settlements in Africa and the fourth largest in the world.[[14]](#footnote-13)

***Current Situation***

Article 31 of CRSR deems that the member states that sign, “shall not impose penalties, on account of their illegal entry or presence, on refugees who, coming directly from a territory where their life or freedom was threatened in the sense of Article 1, enter or are present in their territory without authorization, provided they present themselves without delay to the authorities and show good cause for their illegal entry or presence.”[[15]](#footnote-14) This protects Refugees who travel to Member States that have signed the CRSR.

Despite Europe being the birthplace of refugees in the present day, many European Member States are struggling with the ability to maintain the current refugee crisis. Many citizens have been displaced all throughout the world from Member States like Syria to Ukraine. Member States are finding themselves unable to handle the over 30 million refugees in circulation but are also unable to support the refugees they have taken in.[[16]](#footnote-15) Many refugees are not treated with the human dignity they deserve and are at times sent away from the international borders that they travel to seek asylum. This has led to international cooperation due to this influx of refugees. However, the reception of these refugees is not as warm as the 1951 convention idealized.

***Actions Taken by the United Nations***

In 1949, the General Assembly passed a resolution to create The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) an organization committed to the assistance of refugees and other displaced peoples.[[17]](#footnote-16) The UNHCR works to assist with emergency relief efforts, provide education for displaced peoples, and more. The General Assembly Third Committee and the Economic and Social Council receive a report from the UNHCR every summer on their effectiveness and budget.[[18]](#footnote-17) The UNHCR is one of the world leaders when it comes to addressing the concerns of refugees.

***Case Study***

*Denmark’s Treatment of Refugees*

In 2021 Denmark became the first European Member State to deem parts of Syria safe for refugees to return to. This happened in the 10th year of the 12th year of conflict. Denmark deemed Damascus, a territory that lacks water, electricity, and political stability as a safe part of Syria. This treatment of Syrian refugees was criticized by the international community as Syria is still in the middle of a brutal civil war.[[19]](#footnote-18)

The following year when conflict erupted in Ukraine, Denmark was one of many Member States that welcomed Ukrainian refugees. While this is a positive outcome for the Ukrainian Refugees, it is a stark difference from Denmark’s treatment of Syrian refugees.[[20]](#footnote-19) This is one of the most extreme examples of a common trend for black and brown refugees, who are often non-Christian being treated differently from recent European refugees. While the acceptance of refugees is different in each Member State the prevalent unequal treatment of people who come from Member States that are considered undesirable should not be the response from the international community.

***Conclusion***

Refugees will always be a part of a world with conflict. They must be protected because we all deserve to live our lives in a safe environment, especially when our homes are not safe.[[21]](#footnote-20) While refugees tend to be the result of greater issues, the international response of shifting the responsibility of these displaced people does not promote international cooperation.

***Committee Directive***

Refugees currently live in a world uncertain about where they fit in. While it is ultimately up to each individual Member State to legislate its response to refugees, the overall response and treatment of refugees is lacking internationally. Delegates should consider how to change the perception of refugees internationally. Additionally, delegates might also consider providing frameworks for Member States to use when addressing refugee crises. Lastly, delegates may wish to collaborate in providing in-depth measures that other committees such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), be taken into consideration whilst in committee.

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