

I. Letter From the Secretary-General

Highly Esteemed Delegates,

First of all, I would like to thank all of you for your enthusiasm and interest in our conference. My name is Yaren Keçili and I would like to express my gratitude to be able to welcome you to the seventh annual session of Troy Model United Nations Conference 2024 as your Secretary-General. This year, as always, we feel great joy to present to you our hard work. Both the academic and operations teams have been working very hard to serve you to the best of their abilities and give you an unforgettable experience.

This year the delegates of SOCHUM will be focusing on Freedom of Speech. Freedom of speech is a principle that supports the freedom of an individual or a community to articulate their opinions and ideas without fear of retaliation, censorship, or legal sanction. The United Nations have recognized the right to freedom of speech as a basic human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Hence why it is in our agenda to make fruitful debate on this matter. As the Academic Team we are delighted to hear delegates take on this significant matter. I also want to thank Zeynep Kayaliçin who is going to serve as your Under-Secretary-General and the board of SOCHUM for their great effort.

Once again I would like to welcome you all to both the conference and the committee. Buckle up and get ready because we have prepared an incredible ride for you. Let's have three days full of fun, diplomacy, and memories not to be forgotten.

Yours Sincerely,

Yaren Keçili
Secretary-General of TroyMUN

Letters From The USG

Greetings, I am the main chair of Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Committee in TROYMUN'24 conference, Zeynep Kayalaçin. I think with my experiences and your enthusiasm we can experience academic enriching and fun three days.

Me and my lovely co-chairs Ilgın, Duru and Ege have prepared the most easily understood and helpful study guide that we could create. At any time you can find us to ask conference related questions, we will be ready to help you.

If you have any prior questions about this guide or committee, you can email me and I will response as quickly as possible.

Eat an apple, revise hard and prepare yourself for the conference.

Welcome to the SOCHUM!

Zeynep Kayalaçın

Under Secretary General

zeynepkayalacin@gmail.com

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What is SOCHUM?

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Comimittee (SOCHUM), also known as the Third Comittee of the United Nations General Assembly, focuses on a range of issues related to social, humanitarian, and cultural matters. SOCHUM was founded in 1945 reaction to the establishment of the Universal Declaration on Human rights. SOCHUM basically deals with problems about refugees, human trafficking , protection of childrens rights, advencement of the women, protection of public resources and so forth .The comittee has the right to suggest recommendations concering issues of peace Council and other bodies and agencies.

What's Freedom of Speech?

This committee has contained many main topics. This committee agenda item is freedom of speech. Freedom of speech has been suppressed in every possible way for centuries. Women's freedom of speech, freedom of speech of people with different religions, freedom of speech of people with different cultures. In many countries the freedom of thought of people who are different in every sense of society has been prevented from past to present. This problem is decreasing over the years, but it is not over enough so a solution must be found. That's why this committee was established.

Freedom of Press

This right ensures that the media can operate independently and without undue interference, allowing for the dissemination of information and diverse viewpoints. Freedom of the press is essential for an informed public and acts as a check on government power.

Freedom of Assembly

This right allows individuals to gather peacefully for demonstrations, protests, and public meetings. Freedom of speech and freedom of assembly often work together to enable collective expression and advocacy for social and political change.

Freedom of Association

This right allows individuals to form and join groups, organizations, and political parties. It is essential for collective action and the pursuit of common interests, often amplifying the voices of individuals through organized efforts.

Freedom of Thought and Conscience

This right protects an individual's inner beliefs and opinions. Freedom of speech allows these beliefs and opinions to be expressed openly, contributing to personal development and societal progress.

Right to Privacy

This right protects individuals from unwarranted intrusion into their personal and private lives. While freedom of speech promotes open expression, the right to privacy ensures that individuals can choose when and how to share their thoughts and opinions.

Right to Information

This right enables access to information held by public authorities. It complements freedom of speech by ensuring that citizens can obtain the information necessary to make informed decisions and participate meaningfully in public life.

Equality and Non-Discrimination

Freedom of speech supports the right to equality by enabling marginalized groups to voice their concerns and advocate for their rights. However, balancing free speech with protection against hate speech and discrimination is a complex and ongoing challenge.

Hate Speech

Many jurisdictions prohibit speech that promotes hatred, violence, or discrimination against individuals or groups based on attributes such as race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

Incitement to Violence

Speech that incites imminent violence or unlawful actions can be restricted to prevent harm to individuals and public safety.

Defamation and Label

False statements that harm an individual's reputation can be subject to legal action. Defamation laws aim to protect individuals from unwarranted damage to their character.

Obscenity and Pornography

Speech or materials deemed obscene, particularly those involving the exploitation of minors, can be restricted to uphold community standards and protect vulnerable individuals.

National Security

Speech that threatens national security, such as revealing classified information or inciting terrorism, can be limited to protect the safety and integrity of the state.

Public Order

Speech that disrupts public order, such as causing panic or riots, can be regulated to maintain peace and safety in society.

False Advertising and Consumer Protection

Misleading or false statements in advertising can be restricted to protect consumers from fraud and deception.

Intellectual Property

Using another's intellectual property without permission can be restricted to protect the rights of creators and innovators.

Harrasment and Threats

Speech that constitutes harassment, stalking, or credible threats of violence against individuals can be limited to protect personal safety and dignity.

Regulation of Time, Place and Manner

Governments can impose reasonable restrictions on the time, place, and manner of speech to ensure that it does not unduly interfere with the rights of others. For example, protests might be limited to certain areas or times to prevent disruptions.

Womens Freedom of Speech

For centuries, women have been seen as inferior to men in every sense. Freedom of speech comes first among these. The understanding of Democracy develops in countries over time. If we look at the data, there are many countries that have granted women freedom of speech in recent years, but countries such as Islamic countries are still not open to this. Some conventions have been enacted around the world to protect womens freedom of speech;

One of these is the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This convention was adopted in 1979. It is a convention to protect all rights of women within the scope of freedom of speech. To give another example, we can give the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which was adopted in 1950 and received the approval of the members of the Council of Europe. This agreement is for freedom of expression.

Countries have also carried out studies on this subject;

Iceland: The Gender Equality Law, which Iceland adopted in 2008, was also updated in 2020. This law defends the equal rights of men and women and aims to protect womens freedom of expression.

Canada: Canada is the one of the most developed countries for women's right in the World. These are some laws passed for women's freedom of expressions. The Canadian Charter of Rights Freedoms, added to the Canadian Constituion in 1982, guarentees freedom of speech for everyone.

Finland: Article 6 of the Finnish Constitution, which came into force in Finland in 2000, argues that women and men are equal in every way, and this protects women's freedom of expression.

Protection of Journalists and Media Workers

Freedom of expression of media workers around the world is prevented for various reasons. Basically, it means that the government or the state administrator opposes the order of the people living in the country and does not revolt. As the freedom of expression of media workers is restricted, civilians in the country cannot be informed about any developing situation in the country.

Some countries have passed laws on this issue;

France: France has a freedom of expression law. France passed this law in 1881. This law protects freedom of the press and freedom of expression.

USA: The USA Constitution was prepared in 1787 and published in 1789. It was issued to safeguard the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens in the country. The first amendment made in this law is freedom of expression. This amendment guarantees the freedom of speech of media workers. At the same time, the law called Freedom of Information which was enacted in America in 1966, is a law aimed at facilitating journalists access to information.

Canada: Canada has supported media workers; access to information. The Access to Information Act passed in 1983 demonstrates media workers easy access to open information.

Kenya: Article 34 of the Kenya constitution protects freedom of the press

Journalism, impacts people's lives in many ways. It is key to promoting human rights and has a fundamental function of holding the powerful accountable. The information that journalists provide us is a public good that needs public support. They play a vital role in informing the public, uncovering corruption, holding governments and providing diverse perspectives on issues. When they are well protected and are sure of their safety they can work more efficiently and without fear of violence against them. Ensuring journalists' rights and their rights to share and speak about issues means upholding principles. By protecting journalists and media workers, we uphold these democratic values and promote a society where truth and accountability prevail.

According to the International Civil Society Organization Article 19, 163 journalists have been murdered in Mexico since 2000, and another 32 are missing. Mexico recorded an attack against journalists or media houses every 13 hour.

Javier Valdez Cardenas who was an icon and a role model to his colleagues with his hard working life style. This valuable journalist was murdered by a drug cartel in Mexico on May 15, 2017

Some countries tries to prevent these deaths and protect their rights.

The role of NGO's:

NGO's such as Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) monitor press freedom violations worldwide. They document attacks, threats and imprisonments of journalists, raising international awareness and pressuring governments to uphold freedom of press.

NGO's also provide direct support to journalists in danger. Like assistance, safety trainings and many more. NGO's play a pivotal role in safeguarding journalists rights by providing direct support unlike the states.

1. Mexico: Establishes specific crimes and protections for journalists, including mechanisms for their safety
2. China: Limits journalistic freedom by restricting them and their actions on governmental activities
3. Russia: Some laws regulate media activity which can restrict journalists actionn on some political issues.
4. Germany: Guarentees press freedom and the independence of the media with the law called "Grundgesetz"
5. United States: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Censorship and Freedom of Expression

Censorship is used in almost every country. However, the amount of usage is different in each country. Censorship is used in many places and for many reasons; for example, the internet, media, movies. Sometimes censorship occurs due to the use of inappropriate words, sometimes any sentence that negatively affects the administration in the country is censored. Censorship

should be limited as much as necessary. If the amount of censorship is applied in unnecessary places, people are prevented from receiving both the freedom of expression and the information they are entitled to.

In this case, some countries have taken precautions within certain limitations;

USA: USA limits censorship moderately. Any offensive words, images or insults are subject to censorship. Apart from that, media is censored without restricting peoples freedom of expression. This case, known as the Pentagon Papers case, took place in New York in 1971. As much information as citizens needed to know about the Vietnam War at that time was made available without prior censorship.

Sweden: The Freedom of the Press Act of 1949 in Sweden protects the freedom of the press and prevents pre-censorship. Supports peoples freedom of expressions without insults.

Switzerland: Switzerland complies with freedom of expression in international agreements. It carries out censorship without limiting peoples freedom of expression. In order to protect children, it censors harmful content or offensive images and words.

Rights of Indigenous People

There are more than 5.000 different Indigenous ethnics around the World comprising 476 million people. Even though they live far away from each other with different cultures, they are facing with similar problems. The high prevalence of serious problems is also rooted in historical and ongoing colonization, which if not regarded as serious problem, contributes to other serious problems. Previous literature has shown that Indigenous people were more likely to report experiencing one or more serious problems in the 3 years preceding the survey compared to the non-Indigenous population.

They are also restricted access to education, healthcare. Above and beyond all other considerations, they are not safe. They used to be the ones who ruled everything but now they are discriminated and excluded from social life. That's why they are that far away from speaking and defending from their own rights. Indigenous human right defenders are intimidated, attacked and usually killed with the support of the states.

The UN Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples is a comprehensive international human rights document on the rights of indigenous peoples. It covers a broad range of rights and freedoms including the right to self-determination, culture and identity and rights to education, economic development, religious customs, health and language.

Indigenous women are most likely to die when giving a birth because of the mistreatment:

In Panama and Russia, Indigenous women are about six times more likely to die in childbirth,

Indigenous women aged 25 to 44 are five times more likely than other Canadian women of the same age to die as a result of violence^[10] Indigenous women in Canada today are three times more likely than non-Indigenous women to be violently or sexually assaulted

Often, Indigenous people reported experiencing discrimination based on their ethnicity or culture (15%), or their race or skin colour (14%). These proportions were notably higher than among the non-Indigenous, non-visible minority population (2% and 3%, respectively)

1. Brazil: Guarantees rights such as land ownership, cultural practices and social organizations,
2. Bolivia: Recognizes their rights and promotes their political representation and cultural autonomy,
3. United States: With the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, allows Native American tribes to manage their own affairs and services, promoting self-governance
4. Norway: The Sami Parliament in Norway represents the Sami people and responsible to defend their culture, language and rights.

5. New Zealand: The Treaty of Waitangi which signed in 1840, forms the basis of relationships between the government and Māori tribes, ensuring land rights and cultural protections.

Black Lives Matter

Especially in the 1800's, Black people were trying to survive in disgusting conditions without any rights. All their days spent serving the White people and doing the errands. However, black people who were tired of this situation and decided to use their rights to speak and rebelled and got their own rights. But even though the situation of black people improved compared to 1800s, they were still despised in society. They appeared to be inferior in recruitment, in the political arena, and on many social issues. Black adults cite racism as a top issue for Black people living in the U.S. today (82%) and most say racial discrimination (68%) is the main reason why many Black people can't get ahead these days. Yet while the overwhelming majority (79%) of Black adults say they have personally experienced discrimination because of their race or ethnicity, they are also more likely to say racism in U.S.'s laws is a bigger problem than to cite racism by individual people.

Rosa Park, who was a black woman at the time, objected to the obligation to give seats to White people on the bus and this was the beginning of major protest within the state. Black people went through a great struggle to get all their rights and they achieved this as a result of the law passed in 1964. During this period, there are still attempts to discriminate against black people. Unrealistic statements are used in the media, such as black people have more potential to become criminals. Some police officers subject them to racism and use excessive force on them.

“He didn't want people judged on the colour of their skin, but on the content of their character.” Kevin McCarthy, the speaker of the House of Representatives speech about Martin Luther King. He was a prominent American civil rights leader known for his nonviolent activism during the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s. King struggled to balance his optimistic patriotism self-doubt and later in his life, against his creeping pessimism about America's ability to overcome its demons. He advocated for racial equality and justice through peaceful protests and speeches, including his famous “I Have a Dream”

He opposed racism by starting a major movement of thought. His work and legacy continue to inspire movements for social justice worldwide.

1. United States: With Voting Rights Act of 1965 they aimed overcome legal barriers at the states and local levels that prevented Black Americans from exercising their right to vote
2. South Africa: Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) that based in South Africa, policies aimed at redressing economic inequalities by promoting Black ownership
3. France: Equality law in France prohibits discrimination based on race and ethnicity in various aspects of society
4. United Kingdom: UK has many laws against discrimination and laws against racism. Windrush Compensation Scheme established to compensate individuals affected by the Windrush scandal which primarily impacted Caribbean immigrants who arrived the UK before 1973.

Anonymity on the Internet

Anonymity and identity shielding allow a user to hide or disguise their identifying information online. While this protects their privacy, it can make it difficult to hold them responsible for what they say or do online. Despite its positive uses, anonymity can also spur on harmful behaviours and generate new forms of harm, particularly against at risk individuals and communities. With the existence of the internet it became inevitable for social media to enter people's lives and the rise of social media has brought new importance to the protection of freedom of speech. People can manage to remain anonymous while they expressing and sharing their ideas which it is not a bad thing especially in places criticizing the government could endanger you. But social media allows people to use anonymity to bully, harass or intimidate. The debate around online harassment has long been shaped by the tension between allowing people to speak freely on a wide range of topics while also maintaining a basic level of safety online. Harassment on the internet should be prevented without restricting freedom of expression.

Some countries have implemented various measures like;

1. United States: Laws called “Communications Decency Act” which includes provisions for protecting against harassment on the internet.
2. United Kingdom: Laws such as Malicious Communications Act and Protection from Harassment Act make it illegal to harass communications online
3. Japan: Educational programs in schools to teach students about the risks of online harassment and how to protect themselves are given in Japan
4. France: The NGO’s that work with the government provide counseling and legal assistance
5. South Korea: They have established a Cyber Terror Response Center to handle online threats and harassment.

Children’s Freedom of Speech

“ When it comes to children rights, we should all become one team” Children have the right to have an opinion different from their parents or anyone else. States, communities and parents have the duty to listen to the children and to consider their opinions when the decisions concern them unless they have parents or a state that responsible for them. Some children don’t have anyone to help them make decisions or will help them make their voice heard to World. Especially the right and freedoms of orphaned children particularly concerning freedom of speech are critical issues that require attention at both national and international levels. Orphan children often faces with unique challenges and vulnerabilities that can affect their mental health, ability to exercise their rights including freedom of speech. Orphan children all over the World are deprived of education, healthcare, violence and girls are forced to become women and get married at a young age.

UNICEF is working closely with children and families, they identify and manage risks that children may be exposed to at home and elsewhere, especially those related to violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and poverty. Also social service workers of UNICEF promote children’s physical and psychological well-being by connecting them with critical social services (like health-care, education and social protection) and by challenging harmful norms that violate a child’s rights and their rights to speak. UNICEF also underlines that

they assist government with policy, regulatory frameworks and human resources that strengthen the workforce

-There are an estimated 50 million children orphans on the continent of Africa

-An estimated 35 million children are without parental care in Africa, a report released by the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, part of the African Union, has shown.

Here are some states trying to prevent child marriage and what they do:

1. In countries as diverse as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, we have taken different steps to prevent child marriage, including support for hotlines and referrals to services that offer direct support to girls.
2. India: The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (2006) prohibits child marriages and mandates punitive measures against violators. Initiatives like the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign promote girls education and empowerment.
3. United States: Regulations vary by state, with some states raising the minimum marriage age to 18 without exceptions. For example, Delaware and New Jersey have set the minimum age at 18 with no exceptions.

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