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**LISBON INTERNATIONAL
MODEL UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE**

2019





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I. LISBOMUN INTRODUCTION

Dear delegates, this is the Study Guide for the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on the topic of “Religious Persecution” which will be simulated during the first edition of Lisbon International Model United Nations Conference, in the Faculty of Law of the University of Lisbon, from the 29th to the 31st of March 2019.

As you probably know, MUN is a simulation of the United Nations (UN) that is done at a high school and university level. MUN aims to educate participants about civics, effective communication, globalization and multilateral diplomacy. In MUN, students participate as “delegates” from the UN Member States and simulate UN committees. From this experience, you will not only get involved and debate today’s pressing current issues, but also be given a chance to broaden your world view and knowledge of international relations and the UN, allowing you and all delegates to develop critical thinking and soft skills whilst discussing the most amazing topics that are on our International Agenda nowadays (and hopefully make new friends from all across the world!).

Before the Conference it is very important to investigate the position of the country you will represent on the topic that will be discussed. For that, we advise you to not only look for multiple media sources that refer to your countries position, but also to look for official documents of the government, past declarations (either at the UN or official statements) and the International Alliances/Opposition the country will face in the Committee (remember that lobbying with other Member States is also part of the MUN experience).

Furthermore, do not forget to pay attention to the relation of the country’s official position/diplomatic speech and the real interests it has behind that position (States and their representatives are not always crystal clear with their interests, try to read in between the lines of the diplomatic speeches!). In order to have a great performance (which we are sure you all will) it is imperative to understand the relation between the speeches you will give as a representative of that State and the interest you will pursue in the final Resolution. If you understand the position of your country and its interests, this will be a very easy task.

Moreover, the final goal for the committees during the Conference is to get a majority to vote in favour of a resolution that hopefully creates real, effective and creative solutions for the topic discussed. As a delegate of a Country, your personal goal should be that the Resolution you support and that integrates your State’s goals for that committee should be the one approved. We remind all of you that the solutions presented on the Final Resolution should be applicable in the real world, within the limits to the UN power and innovative (think outside of the box!). It is always a good idea to see what other resolutions the UN has passed on that topic. Additionally, try integrating in specific clauses UN offices/departments/services or International NGO’s that could help reach that specific goal.

We know that probably by now this experience may sound very overwhelming, but **don’t worry!** We assure you that during the committee sessions this will all fell very natural





and remind you that nobody expects that everything is absolute perfect. MUNs are, above all, a learning space for everyone.

Next, we will briefly explain the structure of this Study Guide. It begins with an introduction to the committee and to the topic of the debate. You will have some information about its history and current situation, as well as some guidance towards the different possible approaches. As such, you should read it with close attention, so that you know the directions that the debate might take.

It also addresses some key terms that you need to keep in mind, which will provide all Delegates some definitions that we all agree on, making sure that everyone is on the same level in terms of concepts and interpretations. With this, it is guaranteed that the debate does not end up discussing only the definition of certain expressions and words and the committee can therefore address the core issues of the topic. We advise you to also use these terms in your speeches to make sure it stays clear to other delegates and on topic.

The bloc positions intent to reflect a certain tendency that countries located in certain geographical areas tend to form, influenced by its surrounding neighbours. As such, you should see what position the country you represent adopts, as well as the ones taken by its neighbours, so that you can see which would be more open to cooperation for a possible Draft Resolution.

After that we list the issues the Draft Resolutions should address. These are some of the most important points and issues that your Draft Resolution should try to present solutions to. Lastly, you have the further research chapter, which consists on some suggestions and advice to help you prepare for the Conference, and the further reading and bibliography, where you can find some links to to help you do your own research!

Please note that this is *only* a study guide. This does not include the comprehensive research on the topic, it is not enough by itself to prepare you to debate. You will have to do your own research, not only on the topic, but also on the position that your country takes on the matter.

Having all of that said, we sincerely hope that this will be a memorable experience and that you have an amazing time learning about international issues that affect our society. Above all else, this event is an opportunity to meet people with the same interests (they are all curious and passionate about MUN and they all have creative and empowering ideas to make the world a better place!). Last but not least, don't forget to have **FUN and enjoy the Conference!**

Sincerely,
Lisbon International MUN Team



I. Meet your chairs

(1) ARI KARP



Born and raised in the USA, Ari is a country boy at heart, but cannot get enough of the travel life. Ari is in his final year at the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) in Herzliya, where he studies Government, Strategy, and Diplomacy; specializing in Counter-Terrorism & Homeland Security, and European Studies. Pursuing a career in International Security, Strategy, and/or Counter-Terrorism, Ari believes that Model UN is an incredible outlet through which one can experience first-hand, and gain knowledge in, a multitude of fields and skills. He can be bribed with chocolate and country music. Ari is very excited to Chair the UNSC at LisboMUN 2019 with Sandra and Ardian, and is looking forward to witnessing the debates on Religious Persecution (and chocolate..... Sandra.....).

(2) SANDRA NICOLE BUCHA



Sandra is a first and final year student at the Kenya School of Law. Born and raised in Kenya, Sandra has lived most of her life within a 15 km radius in Nairobi, but she enjoys travelling both within the country and out of it. Her MUN experience spans 5 years, wherein she has been a delegate and a chair. She is keen on napping, trying out new recipes, reading and online shopping. Sandra is pretty excited to co-chair the Security Council at this year's LisboMUN. She looks forward to meeting the delegates and to have interesting debate and discourse on the topic at hand, and more importantly debate on chocolate.

(3) ARDIAN AMENTI



Ardian is a BA student in Business Informatics at Ljubljana School of Business. He has experience of several MUNs, mostly as a delegate. Ardian loves to meet new people, having fun and hates to cook. He is very excited to chair the Security Council with Sandra and Ari at this year's edition of LisboMUN, and looks forward to meeting all the delegates. Ardian is very excited to see how the delegates debate and deliberate the topic and potential solution. But most of all Ardian is look forward to seeing who wins: chocolate or Sandra....

(4) DELEGATE ADDRESS





Distinguished delegates,

We, the chairs of the United Nations Security Council at LisboMUN 2019, would like to congratulate you on your acceptance to this fine council. We look forward to the unique, diverse, and spectacular speeches, debates, and decisions you will bring throughout the conference's sessions, helping to tackle the issues and ensure a more peaceful and safer future for all.

Additionally, we remind you the importance of respect. There will be no toleration for disrespect in any form or fashion, whether inside the committee room or beyond. We, the chairing staff, expect every delegate to maintain a level of respect throughout the conference, for themselves, for the conference and effort put into to its planning and realization, and towards your fellow delegates. Lastly, as delegates, you will be expected to submit a position paper by a given deadline. We kindly request that this deadline be respected and obeyed.

However, most importantly, we remind and encourage you to have a phenomenal time, meet incredible people, enjoy the socials and take advantage of all that Lisbon has to offer. Model UN is an incredible outlet of discourse, negotiation, debate, international relations, and much much more, but it is above all an outlet where we can all have incredible experiences in amazing places around the world, and we encourage you to do just that!

Having said that, we welcome you to the greatest United Nations Security Council ever, at the Lisbon Model UN International Conference of 2019. Each of the chairs is extremely excited to meet you and take full advantage of the after-session socials.

We hope to see you all there.

Best of Luck!!

The UNSC Chairing Staff.

Bonus: Ari loves trivia questions. The delegate with the most intriguing trivia question, relating to the UNSC or MUN, will get... TBD.



II. THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC)

The United Nations Security Council {hereafter the “UNSC”} is the foremost body in the United Nations {hereafter the “UN”}. As a fundamental organ of the UN, it is widely recognized and acknowledged as the greatest success of the UN and international arena. Stressing the need for “prompt and effective action”, the UNSC is charged with the responsibility to maintenance of international peace and security outlined in Article 24 of the UN Charter. This along with the requirement imposed upon al UN member-states via Article 25 of the UN Charter to “accept and carry out the decisions” of the Council - regardless of their current council membership, or lack thereof – emblaze the Council as the principle authority leading the international arena in identifying and determining the existence of a threat to international peace and security.¹

As a forefront body of dispute mechanisms, the UNSC calls upon disputing parties to settle any and all disputes via peaceful means, even acting as needed as a regulating body to oversee settlement documents or the establishment of more active methods such as economic or diplomatic sanctions, or even the use of force as needed to ensure or maintain international peace and security. Delving further into the functions of the UNSC, chapters six and seven of the UN Charter go into further courses of action that the Council may employ in its pursuit to the realization of peaceful dispute settlement, or in its response to actors which threaten international peace and security. Moreover, any decision taken by the UNSC, when acting under the authority of Chapter seven of the UN Charter, are legally binding upon the specific parties, per the decision of the Council, no matter whether that include the entirety of the international arena, a select country, or anywhere in between.²

Boasting a 15 member constituency, the UNSC is comprised of 5 permanent members {the P5} – The French Republic, Russian Federation, United States of America, People’s Republic of China, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland –, and a rotating 10 non-permanent members, which in 2019 will consist of the: Kingdom of Belgium;

¹ United Nations Security Council site: <http://www.un.org/en/sc/>

Chapter V. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-v/index.html>

² United Nations Security Council site: <http://www.un.org/en/sc/>

Chapter VI. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-vi/index.html>

Chapter VII. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-vii/index.html>





Republic of Côte d'Ivoire; Dominican Republic; Republic of Equatorial Guinea; Federal Republic of Germany; Republic of Indonesia; State of Kuwait; Republic of Peru; Republic of Poland; and the Republic of South Africa. As the victors of the Second World War {hereafter the "WWIP"} and leaders of the world leaders in its aftermath, during the creation of the UN, the P5, maintain not only a permanent seat in the UNSC but also, wield the power of a veto. This veto power enables the P5 to prevent the adoption of any document, resolution, or the like, by the UNSC which are categorized as 'substantive' in nature. The P5 countries can exercise this veto power as they see fit by providing a negative vote in the substantive voting procedure.³

In our March 2019 session in Lisbon, Portugal – under the authority of the LisboMUN 2019 International Conference – we will be discussing the issue of religious persecution. This issue has plagued our world since the dawn of religion and today, as we seek to establish the realization of equality and human rights for all mankind, it is important to recognize the need to effectively tackle this issue in the hopes of ensuring a more peaceful and secure world. Despite the long history which this topic brings to bear, we encourage all council members to review this study guide and use it as a platform from which to delve deeper into your national policy and position on the issue.

³ United Nations Security Council site: <http://www.un.org/en/sc/>

United Nations Security Council membership: <http://www.un.org/en/sc/members/elected>



III. RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

1. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

A. Persecution

Persecution is the systematic mistreatment of an individual or group by another individual or group.⁴

B. Religious persecution

Religious persecution is the systematic mistreatment of an individual or group due to their religious affiliation.⁵

C. Islamophobia

An outlook or world-view involving an unfounded dread and dislike for Muslims, which results in practices of exclusion and discrimination.⁶

D. Christianophobia

The state of being hateful or spiteful to Christians.⁷

E. Anti-Semitism

Prejudice or hatred of Jews.⁸

F. Discrimination

Unfair or unequal treatment of an individual (or group) based on certain characteristics, including: Age; Disability; Ethnicity; Gender; Marital status; National

⁴ Rempell, S. (2011, October 09). Defining Persecution. Retrieved from <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1941006>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Islamic Networks Group. (2018). Where does Islamophobia come from? How can we push back against it? Retrieved February, from <https://ing.org/islamophobia-and-its-impact/>

⁷ GotQuestions.org. (2015, October 14). What is Christianophobia? Retrieved from <https://www.gotquestions.org/Christianophobia.html>

⁸ Antisemitism. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/antisemitism>





origin; Race; and Sexual orientation.⁹

G. Religious Persecuted Victim

Victims who are targeted because of their own religious identity or the religiously related motivations of those who perpetuate the violence. Victims are typically targeted because they are the “wrong” religion, but they can also be targeted because they lack religion.

H. League of Nations

An international diplomatic group established after First World War as a way to solve disputes between countries before they erupted into open warfare. League of Nations served as a symbol of hope for millions of bereaved families, displaced individuals, etc.

I. Chargé d'affaires

The lowest rank of diplomatic representative usually accredited to the foreign minister of the country in which he operates, rather than to the head of state, and acts in the absence of the head of his mission—usually an ambassador.

⁹ What is Discrimination? (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://civilrights.findlaw.com/civil-rights-overview/what-is-discrimination.html>



2. DISCUSSION OF THE TOPIC

No dictator has ever been able to escape this logic: the historical fact is that the sword has never ruled and will never rule men's hearts. If the human body can be subdued by force, then the soul cannot. Belief is a thing of the heart.

(Atif, 2010)

----<https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20100619/opinion/the-history-of-religious-persecution.313381>----

Religious persecution appears to be one of the oldest and most cherished inclinations which has left no era, location, or faith group immune from its effects. It may seem that everywhere and at every time in history someone was being persecuted for their convictions. They were alternately taxed, imprisoned, treated as second-class citizens, prevented from observing their faith, banished, tortured, and/or killed. Civilizations have varied in determining who are the most despised: idolaters, pagans or heretics; and so, all have been persecuted.¹⁰

The eighteenth century was a pivotal period for the emergence of modern conceptions of religious freedom. Conflicting developments reflected the very different experiences of the 1776 American and 1789 French Revolutions. These emergences of modern religious freedoms, as the pattern of time has proven throughout history, experienced their own trials and tribulations. Even progressing through the nineteenth century, the United States of America {henceforth the “USA”}, Europe, and many other parts of the world experienced challenges to their respective emerging concepts of religious freedom. Depicted in the First Amendment of its Constitution, the USA protects of the right to freedom of religion and freedom of expression from government interference. This means that the USA, under the guarantees of the First Amendment, prohibits any laws that establish a national religion, impede the free exercise of religion, abridge the freedom of speech, infringe upon the freedom of the press, interfere with the right to peaceably assemble, or prohibit citizens from petitioning for a governmental redress

¹⁰ Engh, M. J. (2007). *In the name of heaven: 3000 years of religious persecution*. Amherst, N.Y: Prometheus Books.

Reid, M. (2010, March/April). In the Name of Heaven: 3,000 Years of Religious Persecution. Retrieved from <http://libertymagazine.org/article/in-the-name-of-heaven-3000-years-of-religious-persecution>





of grievances.¹¹ Despite these guarantees, the USA tolerates an informal establishment of religious identities. In state after state, Jews, Catholics, Mormons, and non-mainline Protestants were excluded from public office or subject to hostile legislation. European countries in this period, for example, France, Belgium, and Germany, were consumed with imperialist campaigns that, more often than not rewarded religions and offered blessings and encouragement to those campaigns while disadvantaging religious groups that dared to challenge or resist them.¹²

A. ITS EVOLUTION THROUGHOUT THE PAST CENTURY (1908 – 2005) AND ITS CHALLENGES;

The twentieth century was plagued by significant amounts of violent persecution, especially regarding Christians. From the violence and cleansing of Armenian Christians during the 1909 Adana massacre; the mass persecution of European Jewry in the Second World War {also known as the Holocaust}; the systematic and ethnic cleansing of the Tutsis in the Rwandan genocide; to the violent civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo {henceforth the “DRC”}, religious persecution has not strayed from the trends of its historical past. It is estimated that more than four million people were killed in the DRC civil war between 2000 and 2010. To better understand the severity of this conflict, according to statistics in this period there were 100,000 Christians who met their early demise due to their faith per year. The vast majority, an odd 90,000 or so, were killed in DRC’s violent war. This targeted violence and execution is not unlike the one present in the 1990’s Rwandan genocide. The systematic killing of the Tutsi ethnic group occurred in an attempt to completely wipe them out in the hopes of creating a solely Hutu-ruled and populated Rwanda.¹³

Another example of religious persecution is Russia’s 1997 Law on Religion, which acknowledges Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Judaism, among others, as constituting a part of the country’s historical heritage and recognizes the ‘special contribution’ that Orthodoxy

¹¹ LII Staff. (2017, September 21). First Amendment. Retrieved from: https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/first_amendment

¹² Little, D. (n.d.). Christianity and Religious Freedom in the Modern Period (1751 – 2011). Retrieved from <https://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/essays/christianity-and-religious-freedom-in-the-modern-period-1751-2011>

¹³ Hurd, E. S. (2017). *Beyond religious freedom: The new global politics of religion*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press.



has provided to Russia.¹⁴ This special contribution dates back to Russia's early diplomatically created protectorate over the various Orthodox groups in the Ottoman empire in the aftermath of the First Russo-Turkish War of 1768-1774 and the subsequent 1774 Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca.¹⁵

However, through the centuries, many Russians perceived those denominations, including many Christian sects that are not native to the region, as attempting to alter the religious and cultural status quo. As a result, these denominations were often among the most persecuted. Things got even worse for minority Christian groups in 2010, when Russia published a list of "totalitarian sects". This list, which included affiliations such as the Society of Krishna Consciousness, the New Acropolis, the Church of the Last Testament, etc, name groups whose ideology and practice are supposedly dangerous for the individual and society.¹⁶

While some countries displayed signs of opening the door to greater religious freedom in the first half of the twentieth century, the experience of religious people and institutions during World War II and the subsequent creation of the United Nations decidedly hastened this process. The relentless campaign by fascists in Germany and elsewhere to control, suppress, and even sometimes exterminate the Jews, Muslims, and Jehovah's Witnesses as whole religious groups aroused among Christians a new sense of urgency on behalf of the cause of religious freedom.¹⁷

After 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN General Assembly and the subsequent international human rights instruments that it fostered created the universal context in which questions of the justification, interpretation, and application of the right to religious freedom are considered and debated. Yet, Fox News in a 2015 article stated that "Only nine out of one hundred and seventy-seven governments tracked by the Religion and State Project have maintained complete religious freedom since 1990: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Guinea-Bissau, Namibia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Suriname. Among Christian-majority countries, the most tolerant countries are often found

¹⁴ 1997 law restricting religious expression in Russia. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.religioustolerance.org/rt_russi1.htm

¹⁵ Lewis, B. (1982). *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman empire: The functioning of a plural society* (B. Braude, Ed.). New York: Holmes & Meier. Retrieved from <https://www.riener.com/uploads/53e278dea4631.pdf>.

¹⁶ Fox, J. (2017, April 28). Equal Opportunity Oppression. Retrieved from: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2015-08-31/equal-opportunity-oppression>

¹⁷ Little, D. (n.d.). Christianity and Religious Freedom in the Modern Period (1751 – 2011). Retrieved from <https://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/essays/christianity-and-religious-freedom-in-the-modern-period-1751-2011>





[...] within sub-Saharan Africa, and on average, Latin American countries are more tolerant than Western democracies”.¹⁸

Yet even this heightened, albeit slight, respect for religion and restraint from religious persecution, following the trend of history from the early ages, religion remains a main, and instigating, factor of persecution. In many countries Evangelical Protestants, Catholics, as well as Jews, have become especially targeted individuals. This plays true for countries of all levels, first world as well as third, and particularly represented in territories controlled by terror organizations, such as the Taliban in Iraq, Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and the hotbed quarters of terrorist command in South America and the Kashmir region. Furthermore, in many Islamic countries, such as Iran, Afghanistan, Arab Emirates, Sudan and more, militant and xenophobic movements seek to reconnect to their historical backgrounds, and the perspective actions of their religion’s early years. Additionally, regimes with remnants of their communist and fascist heritage, such as China, Cuba, Laos, Vietnam, North Korea, and even Germany, are threatened by religious authority and prowess. They see religion as an authority which seeks to transcend national governments, and they seek to subdue this threat and infringement on their total national sovereignty and power.¹⁹

B. LEGAL BACKGROUND

Religious persecution is as old as humanity and religion. Prior to the creation of the United Nations, the League of Nations grappled with religious persecution and the protection of minorities. Perhaps the most relevant documents from the pre-United Nations framework on religious persecution are the treaties for the protection of minorities which were signed alongside the Peace Treaties. In addition, the League of Nations framework had the Administrative Commissions and Minorities Section, whose mandate included receiving petitions from religious minorities and prepared the work of the Council which concerned the minorities.²⁰ The League of Nations also issued various Council Documents, which sought to address religious persecution in the world – these ranged from: Christians in Asia Minor;

¹⁸ Ibid.

Fox, J. (2017, April 28). Equal Opportunity Oppression. Retrieved from: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2015-08-31/equal-opportunity-oppression>

¹⁹ Worldwide Religious Persecution. (2018, November 06). Retrieved from <https://www.nae.net/worldwide-religious-persecution/>

²⁰ Administrative Commissions and Minorities Section. (n.d.). Retrieved from: <https://biblio-archive.unog.ch/detail.aspx?ID=402>



Jewish minorities in Hungary; Assyrians in Iraq; and Hungarian-speaking Greek Catholic minorities in Romania.

Religious persecution is a topic that has been centered in United Nations bodies and organs. For starters and more recently, the Human Rights Council {hereafter the “HRC”} in 2007 passed Resolution 6/37 which, aside from recalling the General Assembly Resolution 36/55 of 25 November 1981, recognized the overall rise in instances of intolerance and violence directed against members of many religious and other communities in various parts of the world – including but not limited to cases motivated by Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and Christianophobia – and condemned all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief as well as violations of the freedom of thought, conscience religion or belief.²¹

This Resolution further urged States to ensure that advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence is prohibited by law.²² The Human Rights Council followed up this Resolution with Resolution 16/13 in 2011, expressing deep concern over the instances of religious intolerance, discrimination and violence.²³ In 2012, the Council passed a Resolution condemning all forms of violence, intolerance and discrimination based on or in the name of religion or belief, and violations of the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, as well as any advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, whether it involves the use of print, audio-visual or electronic media or any other means.²⁴ The Council further condemned violence and acts of terrorism, which are increasing in number, targeting persons belonging to religious minorities across the world.²⁵

While the Human Rights Council has pronounced itself in rather general terms on the matter, the Security Council has opted to focus on certain conflicts which feature instances of religious intolerance. Most recently, the Security Council unanimously approved a strongly worded statement grave concern over reports of human rights violations and abuses in Rakhine

²¹ United Nations Human Rights Council. (2007). *Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on religion or Belief*.

(A/HRC/RES/6/37)

²² *Ibid.*

²³ United Nations Human Rights Council. (2011). *Freedom of Religion or Belief*.

(A/HRC/RES/16/13)

²⁴ United Nations Human Rights Council. (2012). *Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism*.

(A/HRC/RES/19/19)

²⁵ *Ibid.*





State, including by the Myanmar security forces, in particular against persons belonging to the Rohingya community.²⁶ The Council's attempts to pass a Resolution on this specific matter were thwarted by China, raising concerns over whether the Security Council would be able to pass a conflict-specific Resolution that centres the religious persecution of a population.²⁷

C. ABIDANCE OF ACTORS TO THOSE DECISIONS

The job of the government and other public authorities is to recognize and empower conciliatory religious actors and institutions, while reforming or marginalizing their sectarian and extremist rivals. International tribunals and organizations are primed to guarantee religious freedom, protect religious rights and incorporate a “religious dimension” into their decisions and programming. Humanitarian interventions and foreign assistance programs, nation building and democratization initiatives, counterterrorism and counterextremism programs, and other public international projects are committed to “strategic implementation of religious knowledge”.²⁸

Unfortunately, even though a religious repression has increased over the past decade, scholars and researchers have devoted little attention to studying religious persecution as a particularly virulent form of human rights abuse. It is crucial to spur more careful research on the problem, in addition to heightened policy attention.²⁹ In addition, also the Declaration on Freedom or Belief calls upon States to make use of the potential of education for the eradication of prejudices against and stereotypes of individuals on the basis of their religion or belief.³⁰

D. CASE STUDY: CHINA AND THE UIGHUR MUSLIMS;

United Nations human rights experts expressed alarm over what they said were many credible reports that China had detained a million or more ethnic Uighurs in the western region of Xinjiang and

²⁶ Deutsche Welle. (n.d.). Rohingya crisis: UN Security Council calls on Myanmar to stop excessive military force | DW | 07.11.2017. Retrieved from <https://www.dw.com/en/rohingya-crisis-un-security-council-calls-on-myanmar-to-stop-excessive-military-force/a-41268648>

²⁷ Ibid.

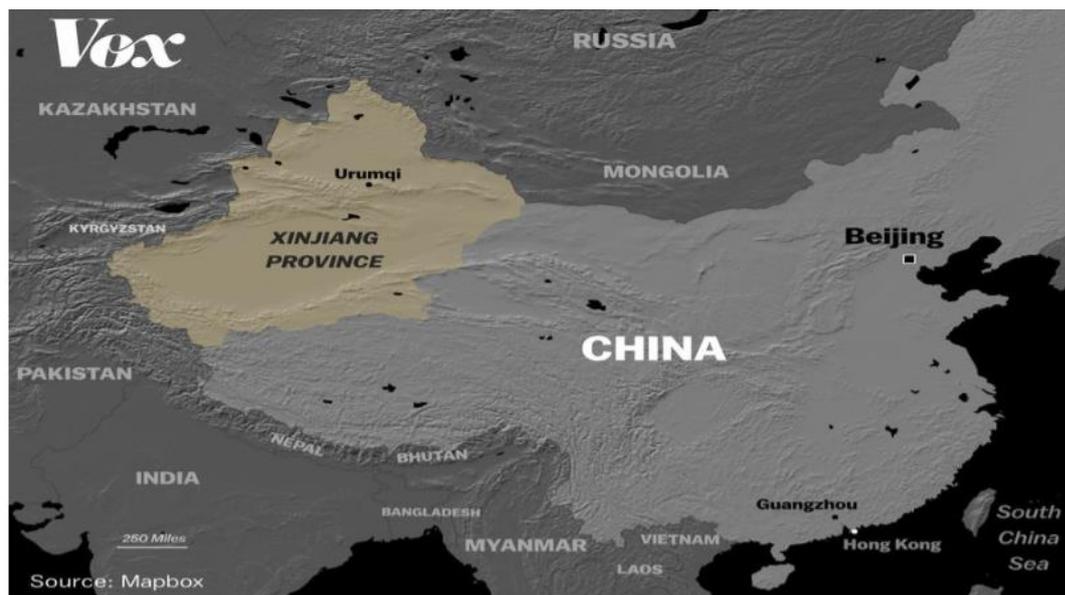
²⁸ Hurd, E. S. (2017). *Beyond religious freedom: The new global politics of religion*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press.

²⁹ Webb, A., & Inboden, W. (2018, July 23). Religious Persecution Is on the Rise. It's Time for Policymakers and Academics to Take Notice. Retrieved from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/07/23/religious-persecution-is-on-the-rise-its-time-for-policymakers-and-academics-to-take-notice/>

³⁰ United Nations Human Rights Council. (2018). *Freedom of Religion or Belief*. (A/HRC/RES/37/L.20)



forced as many as two million to submit to re-education and indoctrination.³¹ The Uighurs are mostly Muslims, and number about 11 million in western China's Xinjiang region, a mineral-rich autonomous region located in North-West China. However, the region has been under Chinese control since 1949 when the communist People's Republic of China was established.³² Uighurs, who number approximately 10 million in Xinjiang, speak their own language - an Asian Turkic language similar to Uzbek - and most practice a moderate form of Sunni Islam.³³ Currently, it is reported that as many as 1 million members of this minority religious group have been detained by the Chinese government in so-called "re-education centres" and are forced to undergo psychological indoctrination programs.³⁴



source: vox.com

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination reported that nearly 1.1 million Uighur Muslims were being held in concentration camps in Xinjiang, but the total imprisoned population could be as high as 2 million.³⁵ Gay McDougall, a member of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, stated that China had turned Xinjiang into "something resembling a massive internment camp, shrouded in secrecy, a sort of no-rights zone". He further stated that reports from the region pointed to Muslims "being treated as enemies of the state solely on the basis of their ethno-religious

³¹ Cumming-bruce, N. (2018, August 10). U.N. Panel Confronts China Over Reports That It Holds a Million Uighurs in Camps. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/10/world/asia/china-xinjiang-un-uighurs.html>

³² Kirby, J. (2018, November 07). China's brutal crackdown on the Uighur Muslim minority, explained. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/2018/8/15/17684226/uighur-china-camps-united-nations>

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23431>





identity”.³⁶ China director for Human Rights Watch, Sophie Richardson, observed that China lacks any legal basis to detain Uighur Muslims.³⁷

In addition, the United Nations Human Rights Council, during its universal periodic review, called on China to release detained Uighurs and other Muslim minorities, and to protect religious freedoms.³⁸ On the other hand, China has defended the mass detention of Uighur Muslims, terming the camps as ‘vocational training centres’ and ‘re-education camps’, aimed at combating extremism.

Yu Jianhua, China’s ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, praised China’s policies toward minorities, saying they were aimed at promoting unity and harmony.³⁹ Chinese officials have said that tightened security measures and limits on the religious practices of Uighurs, who are mostly Sunni Muslim, are aimed at trying to prevent violent, anti-state episodes in Uighur areas, which they have attributed to separatism, terrorism and religious extremism.⁴⁰

E. CURRENT SITUATION

While there is seemingly global consensus over the gravitas of religious persecutions, global efforts to address the same have been wanting. At the United Nations level, the Human Rights Council established the Office of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur includes identifying existing and emerging obstacles to the enjoyment of the right to freedom of religion or belief and presenting recommendations on ways and means to overcome such obstacles.⁴¹ In a recent press release, the Special Rapporteur, Mr Ahmed Shaheed, called on governments worldwide need to strengthen efforts to protect freedom of religion or belief while tackling the challenge of violent extremism.⁴²

³⁶ Cumming-bruce, N. (2018, August 10). U.N. Panel Confronts China Over Reports That It Holds a Million Uighurs in Camps. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/10/world/asia/china-xinjiang-un-uighurs.html>

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/06/china-un-criticism-human-rights-record>

³⁹ Cumming-bruce, N. (2018, August 10). U.N. Panel Confronts China Over Reports That It Holds a Million Uighurs in Camps. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/10/world/asia/china-xinjiang-un-uighurs.html>

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/freedomreligion/pages/freedomreligionindex.aspx>

⁴² <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23759&LangID=E>



Specifically, on the persecution on Uighur Muslims in China, regional blocs within the United Nations framework have taken different stances. Members of the UN Human Rights Council from Africa and the Middle East have not offered vocal criticism, perhaps as a result of China's development policies in the former region.⁴³ On the other hand, western governments including those in Europe, the United States, and Canada, had the harshest words for China.⁴⁴

The United States chargé d'affaires Mark Cassayre demanded that China "abolish all forms of arbitrary detention" for Uighurs and other Muslims minorities, and that China release the "possibly millions" of individuals detained there.⁴⁵

At individual state level, the United Kingdom's House of Commons, following growing concerns of persecution of minority groups worldwide, which may amount to crimes against humanity, war crimes or even genocide, has called on the government to support a proposal for the establishment of an annual International Day Commemorating the Victims and Survivors of Religious Persecution, and to support the tabling of a United Nations General Assembly Resolution for this.⁴⁶ The proposed date is the 3 August each year, being the day when Daesh unleashed its genocidal campaign against the Yazidis in Sinjar followed by a similar campaign against Christians and other religious minorities in the region.⁴⁷

F. ADVANCEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE, AND ARE CURRENTLY STILL IN PLAY OR IN EFFECT;

"During the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, European thinkers offered a new idea—that the fabric of human civilization could be stronger and more beautiful if the religious threads woven into it were replaced by threads of rational thought. Science, in a broad sense, could take the place of religion as a support for morality and a basis for human dealings with the cosmos".⁴⁸

⁴³ Kirby, J. (2018, November 07). China's brutal crackdown on the Uighur Muslim minority, explained. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/2018/8/15/17684226/uighur-china-camps-united-nations>

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ UK Parliament. (2018). ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL DAY COMMEMORATING THE VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION. Retrieved from <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/51949>

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Engh, M. J. (2007). *In the name of heaven: 3000 years of religious persecution*. Amherst, N.Y: Prometheus Books.





The United Nations in a 2008 declaration welcomes and encourages the continuing efforts of all actors in society, including civil society organizations, religious communities, national human rights institutions, the media and other actors to promote the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, and also encourages their work in promoting freedom of religion or belief and in highlighting cases of religious intolerance, discrimination and persecution.

Furthermore The Interim report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief (2018) urges States for promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, to ensure vigilant action by States to protect from violence all individuals within their territories and those subject to their jurisdictions, while fully respecting international human rights law; undertake further research on the phenomenon of radicalization; pursue evidence-based policies that meet the human rights obligations of States; and ensure a gendered perspective that complies with the duty to respect, protect and promote the human rights of women, children and sexual minorities.⁴⁹

The Special Rapporteur states in the Report (2018) that international human rights law imposes a duty on States to be impartial guarantors of the enjoyment to freedom of religion or belief of all individuals and groups within their territory and those subject to their jurisdiction. Moreover, there is no hierarchy of human rights and where freedom of religion clashes with the right to non-discrimination and equality, or laws of general effect, the focus should be on ensuring that all human rights are protected, including through reasonable accommodation. Amid rising diversity, it appears axiomatic that the role of the State as an impartial guarantor of the rights of all is mostly likely to be fulfilled when the State adopts a posture of cooperation and accommodation without identification.⁵⁰

According to UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs {hereafter the “OCHA”} a new initiative to establish an International Day Commemorating Victims and Survivors of Religious Persecution has been launched. The primary subject are victims and survivors and their religious identity. It is about highlighting their experiences, their stories,

⁴⁹ UN freedom of religion and belief chief slams anti-blasphemy laws. (2018, March 07). Retrieved from <https://humanism.org.uk/2018/03/07/un-special-rapporteur-on-freedom-of-religion-and-belief-criticises-anti-blasphemy-laws-and-state-religion-relationships/>

⁵⁰ Ibid.



their lives: their past, present and the future. The proposal is that it would be commemorated on August 3.⁵¹

G. Agreements on the issue that have been reached / made;

The 1981 General Assembly Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief was the first agreement within the United Nations framework that sought to address religious intolerance, outside of human rights instruments. This Declaration guarantees the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and elaborates the right to include freedom to have a religion or whatever belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.⁵²

The Declaration further the terms ‘intolerance’ and ‘discrimination based on religion or belief’ to mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on religion or belief and having as its purpose or as its effect nullification or impairment of the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis.⁵³

Still within the United Nations framework, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), following a series of workshops on incitement to national, racial or religious hatred, developed the Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence. The Plan of Action contains conclusions and recommendations by experts who participated in the Rabat workshop. The action plan notes, among other things, that the freedom of expression and freedom of religion or belief are mutually dependent and reinforcing. As such, restrictions on the freedom of expression require a high threshold so as not to bar down on the enjoyment on the freedom of religion or belief.⁵⁴ The action plan also found that there are numerous examples

⁵¹ Religious Freedom. (2018). Call for UN to Establish International Day for Victims of Religious Persecution. Retrieved from <https://www.religiousfreedomnews.com/2018/07/06/call-for-un-to-establish-international-day-for-victims-of-religious-persecution/>

⁵² United Nations General Assembly. (1981). Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. (Article 1). Retrieved from <http://www.un-documents.net/a36r55.htm>

⁵³ United Nations General Assembly. (1981). Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. (Article 2). Retrieved from <http://www.un-documents.net/a36r55.htm>

⁵⁴ United Nations Human Rights Council. (n.d.). *Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence* (Rep. No. A/HRC/22/17/Add.4). Retrieved January 11, 2013, from https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Opinion/SeminarRabat/Rabat_draft_outcome.pdf.





of persecution of religious minorities or dissenters, but also of atheists and non-theists, as a result of legislation on what constitutes religious offences or overzealous application of laws containing neutral language.⁵⁵

J. The “War on Terror” and Religious Persecution

The origins of the “War on Terror” is most commonly associated with the 2001 military campaign of USA’s former President, George W. Bush, in response to the September 11 attack by Al-Qaeda on USA soil.⁵⁶ Yet history would venture to states its origins begin much earlier. In the 1972 Olympics, the Black September terror group carried out a religiously targeted attack on Jewish Olympian competitors.⁵⁷ The attack showed the world that terrorism is not just aimed at disfunction, chaos, and anarchy, but it is also affected and inspired by religion.

The Somali-based terrorist group, al-Shabaab, has “carried out attacks [...] it targeted non-Muslims because of their faith”. In Kenya, “al-Shabaab has waged religious war by rallying its militants to battle against the Kenyan forces who they accuse of spreading Christianity”.⁵⁸ These attacks and killings are not unique to al-Shabaab. In Lebanon, we see the Hezbollah terror group carry out attacks as early as the 1980’s on Jews, Christians, and

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ *Highlights of Accomplishments and Results: The Administration of President George W. Bush (2001-2009)*. (n.d.). <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/bushrecord/documents/legacybooklet.pdf>

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⁵⁷ Calahan, A. B. (1995, April). Countering Terrorism: The Israeli Response to the 1972 Munich Olympic Massacre and the Development of Independent Covert Action Teams. Retrieved from <https://ia600301.us.archive.org/2/items/BlackSeptember/Countering%20Terrorism%20The%20Israeli%20Response%20to%20the%201972%20Munich%20Olympic%20Massacre.pdf>

Lamoureux, A. (2018, July 20). The 1972 Munich Olympics Massacre That Brought Terrorism Into The World's Living Room. Retrieved from <https://allthatsinteresting.com/black-september-munich-massacre>

⁵⁸ Pease, J. (2018, June 04). 10 of the Top Persecutors of Christians Around the World Today. Retrieved from <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/stories/10-of-the-top-persecutors-of-christians-around-the-world-today/>



religious freedom supporting entities. In Nigeria, as well as in neighbouring Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, Boko Haram has killed thousands of Christians and Muslims civilians.⁵⁹

In Syria, the Islamic State has killed multitudes of innocents because of religious callings. They have massacred Christians, Muslims, and Yazidis, and they have called for their followers and believers to rise up and kill as well. They call for the killings of heretics and apostates such as the Jews and Hindus without a shred of mercy.⁶⁰ As the Former U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, said in a 2016 address, “The fact is the [ISIS] kills Christians because they are Christians; Yazidis because they are Yazidis; Shia because they are Shia; etc.”⁶¹ The Islamic States even kills fellow Sunni Muslims because they are not devout enough, or simply because they have not declared its leader, al-Baghdadi, as the Caliph.⁶²

While the world sees the call for freedom and prevention of religious persecution by national governments, it experiences a new, possibly even more devastating phenomenon in the fight against religious persecution – terrorist organizations and the war on terror.⁶³ While the world watches in anguish and sorrow, the battle for freedom of religion takes a turn to a

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Thurston, A. (2018). *Boko Haram: The History of an African Jihadist Movement*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Retrieved from <http://assets.press.princeton.edu/chapters/i11094.pdf>

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⁶⁰ Pease, J. (2018, June 04). 10 of the Top Persecutors of Christians Around the World Today. Retrieved from <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/stories/10-of-the-top-persecutors-of-christians-around-the-world-today/>

⁶¹ Counter Extremism Project. (2018, October 31). ISIS's Persecution of Religions. Retrieved from <https://www.counterextremism.com/content/isiss-persecution-religions>

⁶² Martel, F. (2014, July 03). Sunni Mufti: ISIS and Affiliates Have Killed over 300 Sunni Imams, Preachers. Retrieved from <https://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2014/07/03/sunni-mufti-isis-and-affiliates-have-killed-over-300-sunni-imams-and-preachers/>

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⁶³ Koechler. (2002). *The war on terror, its impact on the sovereignty of states, and its implications for human rights and civil liberties*. Retrieved from <http://www.i-p-o.org/koechler-war-on-terror-paper-manila.pdf>





new arena. The battle is no longer about nations and governments, but has taken a turn to join the, now global call to the, “War on Terror”.

IV. POINTS THE RESOLUTIONS SHOULD ADDRESS

There can be more than one resolution in the debate. As long as it is cohesive and coherent with the topic, delegates are free to compose their resolution(s) as they see fit to what is relevant in the ongoing debate.

The first issue is establishing an effective implementation, enforcement, and monitoring method of prevention against, and freedom from, persecution of a set individual or group based on a set ethnicity or religion.

The second issue the prevention of issues leading to the gateway discrimination of an individual or group based on an ethnicity or religion.

All delegates are also advised to think about the topic importance in the current worldwide scenario. Consider researching what are the many solutions and measures Nations across the globe have taken and how effective or not they were in dealing with those issues. You may also use the following questions to help in your research:

- 1) How and to what extent is your country involved in or with religious persecution(s)?
- 2) To what extent is your country affected, impacted, or negatively implicated by religious persecution?
- 3) Does your country support and/or promote religious freedom? To what extent?
- 4) Does your country support and/or promote religious discrimination and/or persecution? To what extent?
- 5) Can the UNSC take action and impose sanctions on countries found to be discriminatory against individuals, groups, communities, or societies on the basis of religion or belief? If so, to what extent?
- 6) To what extent are countries allowed to act or take measures against their citizens, individual or groups, for discrimination against individuals, groups, communities, or societies on the basis of religion or belief?
- 7) Can countries establish, enact, and/or enforce criteria or judicial rules, specific or general, which would allow or promote differential treatment between different individuals, groups, communities, or societies based on religion or belief?



- 8) How can the UNSC motivate UN member-states to recognize, protect, and promote religious and faith-based equality?
- 9) How can the UNSC motivate UN member-states to protect and promote against discrimination?
- 10) What are the most reasonable and important solutions that can be agreed upon in the UNSC session(s) towards the resolution and conclusion of religious and/or faith-based discrimination and/or persecution?

V. FURTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

The first step for making a good intervention during the debate is to research the topic itself, in a more general way. Make sure to not only attend to not only statistics, but also research information that identify the roots of the problems and effective policies that have been promoted both nationally and by the UN.

After getting a general idea on the topic itself, you should research your state's policy about it. It is crucial to know what your country's aspirations are, and what kind of measures can be put into practice. Besides that, political alliances are one of the master keys to make sure that your state's goals will be successful. How is your state in terms of diplomacy? Is it more bellicose, strategist and likes to be a leader? Or is it more peaceful and gentler, more like a follower, in an already formed block? These are some points that you should keep in mind to get information about the subject.

After that you need to have a **look in statistics, legal framework** and, maybe, try to find **interesting facts** and **stories** that capture the Committee's attention! That will help you to reach partners and political coalitions for your ideas. Because of that, we highly recommend delegates to check-out a **MUN application** available both on Google Play, App Store and <http://munapp.com/>. The application not only has an offline database of all States, but also provides general information on States' positions on different matters in the international scenario as well as a quick guide on rules of procedures.

The **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** website can also be useful tools for your research since you can look for information on Draft Resolutions about this topic or related issues, and some official speeches from your state, explaining its position about this problem. Beyond that, and if you have curiosity, you can also





see other state's speeches to have an idea of which are the ones that are on your side and the ones that you should convince with your views.

You should also keep in mind that not all sources are reliable. NGO's websites are always good choices for a good investigation because they usually have interesting articles and correct statistics. Then again, you must keep in mind that regarding social and political affairs, and particularly, if you search for media coverage, being impartial is almost impossible so it is likely to find more obstinate convictions about this topic. However, media articles are always very useful for your researches and you shouldn't forget to take a look at them too.

You, as a Delegate, are **an official representative of your State** in the UN. Therefore, you **must share its views as faithful as possible**.

Unity makes strength so don't forget that consensus must be a goal, and this can only be achieved through dialogue and tolerance. Finally, if every delegate is open to new suggestions, the Debate will be much more successful – and even if we don't find a solution to the problem, we are making efforts to accomplish one soon.

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[2018 Report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion and belief](#)





VII. Country Matrix:

The French Republic (France)

The Russian Federation (Russia)

The United States of America (USA)

The People's Republic of China (China)

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK)

The Kingdom of Belgium (Belgium)

The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire (Côte d'Ivoire)

The Dominican Republic

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea (Equatorial Guinea)

The Federal Republic of Germany (Germany)

The Republic of Indonesia (Indonesia)

The State of Kuwait (Kuwait)

The Republic of Peru (Peru)

The Republic of Poland (Poland)

The Republic of South Africa (South Africa)



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