

Mazapan School Model United Nations Simulation

Background Guide

United Nations Social, Humanitarian & Cultural
Committee (SOCHUM)





SOCHUM
Social, Cultural and
Humanitarian Committee

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Dear Delegates,

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to this year's Mazapan Model United Nations Simulation. Our names are Laurence Salazar and Zita Lobo, and we are more than thrilled to be chairing this year's SOCHUM committee. We hope that this year's agenda will grasp your attention and be of interest to you.

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee, (SOCHUM), was established to discuss themes of human rights, freedom of culture, promotion of social development, etc. Our two topics have been chosen to fit current world matters, which serve the higher purpose of the committee.

We encourage you to participate and take advantage of the sessions, become knowledgeable about the topics beforehand to make for compelling debates and unique solutions. Once again, we are thrilled to meet each and every one of you. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Laurence Salazar and Zita Lobo

SOCHUM Chairs



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Table of Contents

United Nations Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Committee (SOCHUM)	1
Table of Contents	3
Introduction	4
Mission Statement	5
Overview of Topics	6
Addressing the ethical and human right implications of artificial intelligence in social surveillance and law enforcement systems.	6
Establishing measures against the integration of children in state-sponsored warfare	8
Topic A: Addressing the ethical and human right implications of artificial intelligence in social surveillance and law enforcement systems.	9
Introduction	9
Importance	11
History of the Issue	12
Bloc Positions	13
Sources	15
Topic B: Establishing measures against the integration of children in state-sponsored warfare	17
Introduction	17
Importance	19
History of the Issue	20
Bloc Positions	23
Sources	25
When Writing a Position Paper...	30
Bibliography	31



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Humanitarian Committee

Mazapan Model United Nations Simulation

Introduction

SOCHUM

The United Nations Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Committee (SOCHUM), was established in 1945, as a reaction to the creation of the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights*. Serving as the UN's General Assembly's Third Committee, the mandate is utilized to promote discussions of human rights, equality for both genders, putting a halt to discrimination, promotion of sustainable development, and the protection of rights of indigenous cultures. The importance of the aforementioned sectors creates a floor, specifically one for the development of effective strategies, ideas, and practices. Thus, SOCHUM strives for the employment of strategies that address humanitarian, cultural, and social issues.



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Mission Statement

As your SOCHUM committee chairs for the 2025 MMUN simulation, the goal brought forward is to address the ethical and human rights violations of A.I in governmental systems, as well as the importance of prohibiting the use of Children in State-Sponsored Conflict. Delegates should strive to pioneer unique and authentic solutions for the aforementioned topics. Additionally, it is crucial that delegates remember that they're representing a member state's perspective, not an individual one. Finally, delegates should take an active role in the simulation, contributing to discussions and resolutions for each of the individual topics.



Overview of Topics

Addressing the ethical and human right implications of artificial intelligence in social surveillance and law enforcement systems.

The ethical and human rights implications arising from the integration of AI in social monitoring and law enforcement are profound and warrant scrutiny and policy interventions. The following points stand out as the main areas of concern:

- Violations of privacy:
 - AI tools permit the abuse of monitoring and collection of data which could potentially amount to a violation of an individual's right to privacy.
- Discrimination and Bias:
 - These communities do not only face discrimination but are more likely to experience AI's bias whereby they are targeted disproportionately. This poses difficult concerns about the right to equality and freedom from discrimination in the application's of law enforcement.
- Accountability:
 - The use of AI in the decision-making process creates more confusion as to who is accountable when wrongful acts are executed by AI systems. The importance of sovereignty and HR's impels that there is a degree of responsibility assigned to decisions made by AI.



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Humanitarian Committee

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- Transparency:
 - Public confidence undermines the debate over the uses of AI in surveillance, as the mechanism used cannot be exposed. Guidelines should be presented about Ai usage so that accountability of its work activities can be observed at all times.
- Ethical Governance:
 - Ethics must be strengthened through internal and external legal mechanisms, as legal challenges precede robust arguments in support of strong ethical frameworks for AI.



Establishing measures against the integration of children in state-sponsored warfare

Child soldiers are defined by the Paris Principles as, “any person below 18 years of age who is or who has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, spies or for sexual purposes”. The importance of establishing measures against children in armed conflict cannot be underestimated. According to UNICEF, “Between 2005 and 2022, more than 105,000 children were verified as recruited and used by parties to conflict, although the actual number of cases is believed to be much higher”. Statistics such as these, should not only promulgate cooperation between member states, but also support the creation of reintegration programs for those affected. A lack of proper reintegration strategies for children create stigmatizations, affecting them even further. As such, delegations should seek not only to establish innovative measures to deal with children in armed conflict, but to create new programs, pacts, that speak to the psychological and physiological impact suffered by children.



Topic A: Addressing the ethical and human right implications of artificial intelligence in social surveillance and law enforcement systems.

Introduction

International human rights are uniquely well-laced to serve as a normative foundation for AI risk management, for three key reasons:

1. International human rights are universally applicable and already function as a shared international language to enable effective due diligence and technology governance.
 - a. International human rights law is referenced in multiple technology-related resolutions at the UN and can play an important role in AI governance around the world. In March 2024, all 193 United Nations member states affirmed this in adopting a resolution that emphasizes “that human rights and fundamental freedoms must be respected, protected and promoted throughout the life cycle of artificial intelligence system”, and “calls upon all Member State and, where applicable, other stakeholders to refrain from a cease the use of artificial intelligence system that are impossible to operate in compliance with international human rights law or that pose undue rises to the enjoyment of human rights”.
2. Human rights commitments are relevant to both government and private sector actors, who play significant roles in AI design, development, deployment, use and governance.
 - a. Both the government and private sector have commitments to protect and respect human rights. Governments are obligated to safeguard these rights, while the



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private sector must ensure their products do not infringe upon them. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) provide principles for conducting human rights due diligence applicable to AI, although specific guidance for AI has been limited.

3. Many risks posed by AI are related to human rights.

- a. Many AI-related risks directly impact human rights, including issues related to privacy, legal protection, freedom of opinion, expression, and peaceful assembly.

Understanding these risks is essential for mitigating their effects on human rights.

Integrating international human rights into AI risk management is vital given their universality, the responsibilities of various stakeholders, and the direct relevance of AI risks to the protection of human rights.



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Importance

Using artificial intelligence in social surveillance and law enforcement brings up important ethical issues and questions about human rights that we have to deal with. These problems aren't easily solved and need deep thinking and clear discussion. But if we want to be the kind of society that values freedom and respect for individuals, we can't avoid these issues.

Invasive AI monitoring can violate privacy rights and lead to unfair systems that keep tracking and publishing the same people. Without privacy, there is no freedom. Using AI in law enforcement might violate people's rights. Research shows that AI systems can make existing inequalities worse and lead to wrong accusations. If AI is used unfairly, public trust in justice and law enforcement agencies will suffer. To reduce risks, it's important for governments and organizations to step up strong legal systems that firmly protect people's rights. This means making laws that follow the international human rights rules everyone agrees on, especially about privacy and data protection. These laws should be clear and well-known, so people understand how their rights are protected.



History of the Issue

The United Nations (UN) has increasingly addressed the ethical and human rights implications of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly in social surveillance and law enforcement contexts. To guide the ethical use of AI, the UN has established principles emphasizing that AI applications must respect human rights and ethical standards throughout their lifecycle. Concerns have been raised regarding AI's potential to facilitate mass surveillance, with technologies such as facial recognition undermining privacy rights and fostering an environment of fear.

Additionally, the UN focuses on identifying legal and human rights challenges posed by AI, aiming to protect rights against the backdrop of evolving capabilities, especially in law enforcement where abuse is a risk. This issue of bias within the AI system has also been highlighted, urging the adoption of ethical guidelines to prevent discrimination and ensure fair treatment. Lastly, the UN advocated for ongoing human oversight in AI decision-making, emphasizing the importance of human judgment to uphold accountability and ethical standards in critical situations affecting lives.



Bloc Positions

In United Kingdom,

The UK lacks specific AI legislation, relying instead on existing laws related to data protection, equality, human rights, and intellectual property. In March 2023, the UK Government introduced a “pro-innovation” framework for AI regulation that utilizes current laws administered by existing regulatory bodies. This framework includes cross-sectoral principles like safety, security, transparency, and accountability for regulators to implement. Although it is applicable throughout the UK, some areas of policy are devolved. The Government has also initiated legislative and regulatory actions concerning automated vehicles and data protection.

In Germany,

In November 2018, the German Federal Government initiated its National AI Strategy, collaboratively developed by various ministries, aiming to advance AI in Germany. The strategy outlines progress made, future objectives and specific policy actions to enhance Germany and Europe as leaders in AI, ensure responsible development that benefits society, and promote the ethical and legal integration of AI through societal dialogue and political action. An interim report released in November 2019 details the measures taken during the year of the strategy, including key facts, figures, and perspectives for future developments.



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Humanitarian Committee

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In Mexico,

Mexico currently lacks a national AI plan or strategy, facing significant challenges in the development and implementation of artificial intelligence. However, the country benefits from a strong legal framework that upholds human rights, privacy, and data protection. According to the Latin American Artificial Intelligence Index, private sector AI adoption in Mexico is relatively low, scoring 12.5, compared to a regional average of 25. In contrast Mexico shows promise in public sector advancement, ranking third in Latin America, following Argentina and Uruguay.

As for France,

On March 29 of 2018, the President of the French Republic presented an ambitious policy for artificial intelligence (AI) and launched a National Strategy for AI, during a day of debate at the College of France. This National Strategy for AI (SNIA), with a budget of €1.5 billion in public fund for five years (2018-2022), include three objectives: to achieve the high scientific level in AI by training and attractive the best global talent in this field, to widespread artificial intelligence in the economy and society, notably through startups, public-private partnerships and data sharing, and finally to give in an ethical frame.



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Topic B: Establishing measures against the integration of children in state-sponsored warfare

Introduction

Across the world, thousands of children are situated in state-sponsored conflict under the umbrella term of “child soldiers”. Child soldiers are defined by the *Paris Principles* as, “any person below 18 years of age who is or who has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, spies or for sexual purposes”. Usually, children are situated in armed conflict due to the sustainment of their families, while others are manipulated and intimidated by threatening consequences. Furthermore, children take part in armed conflict partly for their own survival, as poverty and lack of employment create dire desperation. Nonetheless, the application of child soldiers creates a worldwide conflict that needs to be addressed. Child soldiers are prone to the dangers of various forms of violence, injuries, disabilities, substance abuse, sexual abuse, deterioration of psychological well being, and lack of proper living conditions. Evidenced by the International Red Cross, *ICRC*, they state, “children need to be assessed differently in war scenarios because they are less able than adults to accurately assess risks, and are more vulnerable due to their physiology”. Moreover, establishment of support systems for the reintegration of child soldiers have to be taken into account, as made paramount by UNICEF, stating, “The reintegration of former child soldiers is a long process, which needs extensive



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Social, Cultural and
Humanitarian Committee

Mazapan Model United Nations Simulation

support from the international community”. Furthermore, the lack of proper cooperation, communication, and transparency exalts armed conflict as the only way for children to survive, leading to an increase in stigmatization. According to WarChild, the increase in stereotypes prohibit the reintegration of those affected by their application in armed conflict, thus, a repetitive cycle of children seeking armed conflict is established.



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Importance

The conflict of children in state-sponsored violence is a clear violation of the fundamental rights of a child. According to Article 38 of the of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, “state parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities”. However, the issue does not only engage the employment of children in armed warfare, but the root causes that cause children to join, the psychological and physiological damage they suffer, as well as their reintegration back into society. The intensification of innovative strategies and measures has to be upscaled; considering that in 2021, the study by the *Annual UN Report on Children and Armed Conflict*, reveals, “At least 5,242 girls and 13,663 boys were victims of grave violations in 21 country situations and one region”. Furthermore, 2021 reports done by both the UN and Crisis Group, reiterate the importance of strengthening cooperation in member states located in Latin America and Central Africa; regions deemed epicenters of child warfare. The integration of new policies, legislations, and pacts will allow future generations to flourish.



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History of the Issue

The UN and SOCHUM have worked together to establish various entities, conventions, and resolutions regarding children in armed conflict. This commitment set forward exalts the humanitarian needs of the actors affected; made possible by the following groundwork:

- 1996 - Following the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, Graça Machel was appointed to develop a report based on resolution 48/157, titled, *Protection of children affected by armed conflicts*. The report that ensued utilized the Convention on the Rights of the Child as a standard, exposing the abuse that children suffered, whether it was through forced participation in conflict, sexual abuse and exploitation, and gender-based violence.
- 2000 - The adoption of the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in involvement of children and armed conflict* (OPAC). The OPAC states:
 - “States will not recruit children under the age of 18 to send them to the battlefield”.
 - “States will not conscript soldiers below the age of 18”.
 - “States should take all possible measures to prevent such recruitment, including legislation to prohibit and criminalize the recruitment of children under 18 and involve them in hostilities”.
- 2005 - The UNSC Resolution 1612 gave way to the creation of the *Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism* (MRM). According to the UN, “The purpose of the MRM is to provide for the systematic gathering of accurate, timely, objective and reliable



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information on six grave violations committed against children in situations of armed conflict”. The employment of the MRM highlights countries such as: Afghanistan, Syria, Palestine, Iraq, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo as epicenters of child warfare. (UNICEF)

- 2010 - UNSC Resolution 2143 strengthened the MRM, which emphasized the need to establish a list of parties responsible for violating the humanitarian rights of children. According to the 2010 *Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict*, nations such as Colombia, Sudan, Burundi, Car, Myanmar and Sudan were all designated hubs of child warfare.
- 2014 - UNSC Security Council Resolution 2143 established new guidelines, regarding timely and effective action to combat violations against children. The 2014 *Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict* documented Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and the DRC as territories with the highest violations against children in armed conflict. UN Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict, Leila Zerrougui, stated, “We have documented the cases of children recruited and used by 7 national armies and 50 armed groups fighting wars in the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Syria, and in 11 other countries”.
- 2016 - UNSC Security Council Resolution 2225 further strengthened the MRM, calling for member states to employ action plans to end and prevent violations. The 2016 *Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict* states, “there were at least 4,000 verified grave violations by Government forces and over 11,500 by non-State armed groups”.



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Furthermore, countries such as DRC and Colombia saw a decrease in the implementation of child soldiers, however, Afghanistan, Syria, Nigeria, Iraq, and Syria all saw an increase in the atrocities committed against children.

- 2020 - UNSC Security Council Resolution 2540 propagated a new monitoring and reporting framework, all for the protection of children against armed conflict. According to the 2020 *Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict*, “More than 25,000 grave violations against children were verified by the United Nations, including late verifications of violations that occurred before 2019”.
- 2021 - Regions in central and west Africa all saw an increase in conflict escalation, military coups, the creation of new conflict, and finally, the violation of international law. According to the 2021 *Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict*, “5,242 girls and 13,663 boys were victims of grave violations in 21 country situations and one region”. The recruitment and use of children saw an increase, with about 93,000 children being employed in armed warfare from 2005 to 2021.
- 2023 - The Seventy-Eighth session of the Third Committee of the General Assembly put a focus on the data regarding children in armed conflict. Representatives of countries such as Ecuador, Syria and Italy all emphasized the rising numbers of children in armed conflict. According to the press release of the seventy-eight session, the Syrian representative stated, “8,000 children and women from terrorist combatant families are being held in illegitimate prisons in the country’s north-east”.



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Bloc Positions

In Afghanistan,

Afghanistan is considered a major perpetrator in regards to child warfare. The uprising of the Taliban gave leeway to various human rights violations, specifically those committed against children. The 2022 *Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict* reports that about 2,612 grave violations have been committed against children, with about 60 being used in child warfare. It is important to note that there are various violations which are unaccounted for. Furthermore, according to the Borgen Project, “The Taliban continued to illicitly use child soldiers in combative roles such as planting and setting off IEDs, carrying out suicide attacks, transporting weapons, standing guard and spying”. A lack of governmental effort to address the damage to children creates urgency to reach new solutions.

In Columbia,

Columbia suffers from a high index child induction in armed conflict. According to the 2023 *Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict*, Columbia suffered from an increase of child recruitment and use in the first four months of 2024. The *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo* (FARC-EP), *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (ELN), and other various dissident groups contribute to the high index in recruitment of children. Additionally, according to the Single Registry of Victims (RUV), as of December 2023, 9,707 children under 18 years of age were victims of forced recruitment.



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In Iraq,

The regime of Saddam Hussein laid the international groundwork for the implementation of child soldiers in armed conflict. Peter W. Singer, journalist for Brookings states, “The recruitment, training, and indoctrination of children also offers the regime the opportunity to deepen its reach into Iraqi society”. However, in recent years, following the Iraq War, there has been a decrease in child warfare. According to the 2022 *Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict*, there have been 0 reported cases regarding the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict. Although no reports have been made regarding the aforementioned conflict, the reintegration of children into society has been a crucial issue.

As for Pakistan,

Pakistan is deemed one of the major epicenters of child warfare. According to the 2022 *Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict*, there have been 0 cases of child recruitment. However, this has been due to the undocumented cases regarding non-political factions. Additionally, the Borgen Project states, “Pakistan struggles with the problem of active recruitment from factions and parties that are not associated with an official government. These militant groups work on cross-border recruitment strategies to bolster their ranks”. Furthermore, the lack of economic opportunities fuels the decision of children to integrate themselves in armed conflict.



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When Writing a Position Paper...

Your position paper requires a **single-spaced page or pages for each topic area**. Remember to include your country's national interests, national policies, and your potential resolution. **Though your potential resolutions include your personal opinion, it is an opinion that should be based upon your country's national interests and national policies.** For a more detailed explanation, refer to the 2025 MMUNS website under Delegate Information and Position Paper Guidelines. Good luck!

If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact us! Submit your position papers to these email addresses:

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