



THE FIFTY-SIXTH ANNUAL NORTH AMERICAN INVITATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Dear Delegates and Moderators,

Welcome to NAIMUN LVI and more specifically welcome to SOCHUM. The staff of NAIMUN LVI has been working day and night to make this the most rewarding and educational experience yet, and we are excited to welcome you all to DC in February!

This document is the topic abstract for SOCHUM. It contains three key elements to allow you all to prepare well in advance for the committee: topics, structure, and research avenues. The goal of this abstract is to give you a better understanding of the content in the committee. As well, it is meant to be a launch point for further research about the content of this committee. By reading and understanding the topic abstract, you will more fully get a sense of how this committee will be run at NAIMUN and what specific issues the NAIMUN staff want you to focus on.

We hope to be of assistance to you in your preparation for NAIMUN LVI. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact the Secretary-General or Director-General. We look forward to welcoming you to the NAIMUN family!

Best,
Chase and Charlotte

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Topic Abstract: SOCHUM

Introduction

The Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly: The Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee is one of the largest and most important bodies of the United Nations. It deals with complex and nuanced issues relating to a “range of social, humanitarian affairs and human rights issues that affect people all over the world”¹ This has, in the past, manifested itself in the discussion of questions relating to the advancement of women, the protection of children, indigenous issues, the treatment of refugees, and much more. SOCHUM’s core purpose stems from the desire for an international effort to combat even the most specific and niche humanitarian issues by creating effective resolutions. In order for these resolutions to be produced, the utmost cooperation and compromise is practiced by international diplomats. Due to the complex and heavy nature of SOCHUM’s topics, this level of cooperation is exceedingly difficult, and diplomacy must be practiced with the utmost care.

This year at NAIMUN LVI, the two topics that this committee will be discussing are the Intersection between Nuclear Terrorism and Human Rights, and the Rights to Privacy in the Digital Age. An abstract is below of each topic and is meant to get delegates thinking about the issues and begin researching in advance of the Background Guide. This is by no means an exhaustive set of information.

Topic A: Intersection of Nuclear Terrorism and Human Rights

The thought of nuclear warfare, nuclear terrorism, and even nuclear energy seems to be in the realm of international security, a common DISEC topic. However, it is important to realize that nuclear terrorism extends beyond just high-level talks and diplomatic

¹ “United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly.” United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/en/ga/third/.



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moves - it has real world implications. This year, NAIMUN LVI is proud to run this unique topic in SOCHUM, challenging delegates to look at the human rights aspect of nuclear terrorism. Millions are directly affected by the threat and reality of nuclear terrorism, an ordeal that has proven to be catastrophic in the past. A debate over whether nuclear weapons violates fundamental human rights is fierce and controversial. Nuclear terrorism however, is internationally denounced but human rights laws are seldom used as explanation for their detriment to society

“International human rights law is an as-yet underused branch of international law when assessing the legality of nuclear weapons and advocating for their elimination. It offers a far greater range of implementation mechanisms than does international humanitarian law (IHL), and arguably strengthens the protections afforded to civilians and combatants under IHL, particularly in non-international armed conflict.”²

It is important to place a close attention to the rights to life, to humane treatment, to health and to a healthy environment, associated with the right to a remedy for violations of any human rights. Delegates must be prepared to debate the relevance of human rights laws when it comes to nuclear terrorism while also bearing in mind the divided international community on nuclear weapon possession.

Topic B: Right to Privacy in the Digital Age

As modern technology evolves, communication and information-sharing are increasingly digital. Technology has great potential to improve the spread of information and facilitate debate. It has also become clear, however, that these new technologies are vulnerable. Hacks of major companies reveal customer’s personal data and states track of citizens’ communication; digital communication and information technology leaves some individual rights in threat - most directly, the right to privacy.

² Casey-Maslen, Stuart. "The Use of Nuclear Weapons and Human Rights." International Committee of the Red Cross. July 07, 2016. Accessed July 03, 2018. <https://www.icrc.org/en/international-review/article/use-nuclear-weapons-and-human-rights>.



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The United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 68/167 in 2013, affirming that rights held offline must also be protected offline, including one's right to be free from "arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence" and "a right to protection of the law against such interference."³

Despite this resolution's recognition of the importance of privacy in digital communications, the topic has certainly not been agreed upon with any specificity under international human rights law. Furthermore, there has been considerable debate on the use of surveillance and data collection for the use of state security.

Improving communication and the accessibility of information strengthens democracy and civil society, but abuse of the technology that makes this possible infringes upon the right to privacy and threatens free communication and a free civil society. Delegates must examine the interference of the right to privacy, including communications surveillance and data collection carried out by governments, companies, and individuals, and consider means by which international human rights law regarding the right to privacy may be upheld in the digital age.

Resources for Further Research

Topic A:

1. Casey-Maslen, Stuart. "The Use of Nuclear Weapons and Human Rights." International Committee of the Red Cross. July 07, 2016. Accessed July 03, 2018. <https://www.icrc.org/en/international-review/article/use-nuclear-weapons-and-human-rights>.
2. Human Rights, Terrorism and Counter-terrorism - Fact Sheet #32. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Factsheet32EN.pdf>

³ General Assembly resolution 68/167, *The right to privacy in the digital age*, A/RES/68/167 (18 December 2013), available from <http://undocs.org/A/RES/68/167>



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3. Docherty, Bonnie. "Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Adopted." Human Rights Watch. November 28, 2017.
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/07/07/treaty-banning-nuclear-weapons-adopted>.
4. Foot, Rosemary. "The United Nations, Counter Terrorism and Human Rights: Institutional Adaptation and Embedded Ideas." *Human Rights Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (May 2007): 489-514. doi:10.1353/hrq.2007.0018.
5. "Secretary-General Stresses Political Solutions in Addressing Nuclear, Terrorism, Migration Issues, as United States President Warns Pyongyang | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases." United Nations.
<https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/ga11947.doc.htm>.

Topic B:

1. "A Shift In Focus: New Developments on the Right to Privacy at the UN." Medium. January 24, 2017. <https://medium.com/privacy-international/a-shift-in-focus-new-developments-on-the-right-to-privacy-at-the-un-d40217139537>.
2. "Data Security: Research on Privacy in the Digital Age." Journalist's Resource. April 12, 2018. <https://journalistsresource.org/studies/society/internet/data-digital-privacy-cambridge-analytica>.
3. "OHCHR | Right to Privacy in the Digital Age." OHCHR | Convention on the Rights of the Child.
<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/DigitalAge/Pages/DigitalAgeIndex.aspx>.
4. "The Right to Privacy in the Digital Age: Where Do Things Stand?" Council on Foreign Relations. March 5, 2015. <https://www.cfr.org/blog/right-privacy-digital-age-where-do-things-stand>.
5. Brown, Deborah. "New UN Resolution on the Right to Privacy in the Digital Age: Crucial and Timely." Internet Policy Review. November 22, 2016.
<https://policyreview.info/articles/news/new-un-resolution-right-privacy-digital-age-crucial-and-timely/436>.