

KNIGHTMUN XXI



November 4th - 6th, 2022

Esteemed delegates,

Welcome to KnightMUN XXI! My name is Eric Salhaney and I am honored to have you as the director/chair of this committee for the duration of your time here. I first started Model UN freshman year of high school and carried my involvement into college when I joined the Model UN club here at UCF. I am a film and business major, but have a large interest in politics and social justice. I did competitive gymnastics my whole life leading up to college, and have a strong love for traveling, learning new languages, and cats. I am absolutely thrilled to see everyone's participation and skills they bring to this committee, while also getting to know each of you as individuals beyond your assigned countries. Although general assemblies can often be overwhelming with a larger group of delegates, I assure you our committee will be an accepting, kind, and supportive environment for each participant. As your chair for this committee, I am here for any of your needs and concerns. PLEASE do not hesitate to speak with me after committee sessions to address any issues you may have. You may also speak with me if you have any questions or wish to receive delegate feedback. If you have any questions regarding the background guide before the conference, you may email me at ericshalhaney@gmail.com. The goal for your time here is to learn, gain experience, and most importantly enjoy yourselves and meet new faces. 😊 Good luck and happy caucusing!!!

- Eric Salhaney

This background guide I have created for you includes general information and statistics regarding LGBTQ+ issues, as well as provide you with an agenda for our committee.

Please use it as a reference and source of useful data.

Committee History

The Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee addresses issues such as racial discrimination, treatment of refugees, gender equality, LGBTQ+ rights, indigenous rights, crime prevention, and more. These issues delegated to the committee encompass affairs from a variety of different cultures around the world. All votes within this committee are decided on by a simple majority rules vote, not unanimously, because SOCHUM decides on non-pressing matters and non-military matters. As with all General Assembly committees, every resolution is of recommendatory nature alone. SOCHUM works with many non-government and government organizations like The World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and many other groups related to humanitarian causes. This committee is designed so that all delegations are able to represent the ideas and issues of their nation's inhabitants so that resolutions the committee passes protects and ensures the rights of the maximum number of people possible.

The third committee of the United Nations General Assembly is the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM), which focuses on upholding the basic rights of human beings internationally. It is one of six main committees at the General Assembly of the United Nations and was created in 1945 as a reaction to the establishment

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of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The General Assembly is the largest body within the United Nations and includes representation from all member states. All six of the committees have the responsibility of preparing draft resolutions for the General Assembly plenary body to approve. The United Nations has the obligation to ensure the rights of the people within each member state are protected. SOCHUM works to uphold these human rights by creating positive and proactive discourse about potential solutions to any possible threats towards the latter.



Committee Background

The LGBTQ+ communities in today's age are still facing extreme challenges globally. The rights and safety of LGBTQ+ is a common concern and issue worldwide; reflected by surprising data showing over 70 countries continue to criminalize same-sex sexual activities and relationships. A shocking number of only 32 countries have enacted national laws and legislation protecting and recognizing same-sex marriage as a legal act. Millions of LGBTQ+ individuals around the globe suffer from oppressive legislation and certain societal standards and norms that affect their physical safety, mental health, and access to essential life needs. As well as the violence and hate crimes many LGBTQ+ people face, they can also find themselves victims of unfair laws surrounding military involvement, marriage, immigration, medical access, and much more. In this committee, we will be focusing on our two main topics, the first being *Capital Punishment For Homosexuality*, and the second being *Abuses and Discrimination in Medical Settings*.

Beyond the important questions of physical and lawful protection of the LGBTQ+ community, this committee will seek to highlight and amplify the wants and needs of LGBTQ+ individuals globally. In what ways can we support the LGBTQ+ community as a whole, while also recognizing the distinct challenges individuals face varying from different locations and cultures around the world? And how can we efficiently affect deep societal shifts in favor of LGBTQ+ communities?

Topic I: Capital Punishment for Homosexuality

While LGBTQ+ rights have made great strides in certain parts of the world, homosexuality remains punishable by death in thirteen countries including Afghanistan, Brunei, Iran, Mauritania, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. All of these nations have sharia-based criminal laws. Legal sanctions against same-sex conduct vary in scale and application. In some countries, only certain sexual acts are punished, while in others the laws are more broad and general, leading to more abuse and a wider scale of the death penalty. In some countries, authorities actively seek out LGBTQ+ members to expose and prosecute, while in others, the laws are rarely enforced but nonetheless exist and have severe consequences for these individuals. The death penalty is usually enacted using public styles of execution such as stonings and hangings in order to set an example for the rest of the community. In these thirteen nations, as well as others that do not have capital punishment for homosexuality, murders of LGBTQ+ individuals are often enacted without any prevention or consequences from authorities.

Most recently, in August of 2022, two Iranian LGBTQ activists, Zahra Sedighi, 31, and Elham Choubdar, 24, were sentenced to death by Iran's Revolutionary Court. Both women's cases have been appealed to the Iranian Supreme Court, but are still being held for their crimes that according to the prosecution is "corruption on earth". Outrage struck worldwide with many demanding that Iranian authorities drop the death sentences for the two women, and calling the court decision unnecessary and barbaric. Zahra Sedighi was also reported to have been subjected to abusive interrogations without access to a lawyer,

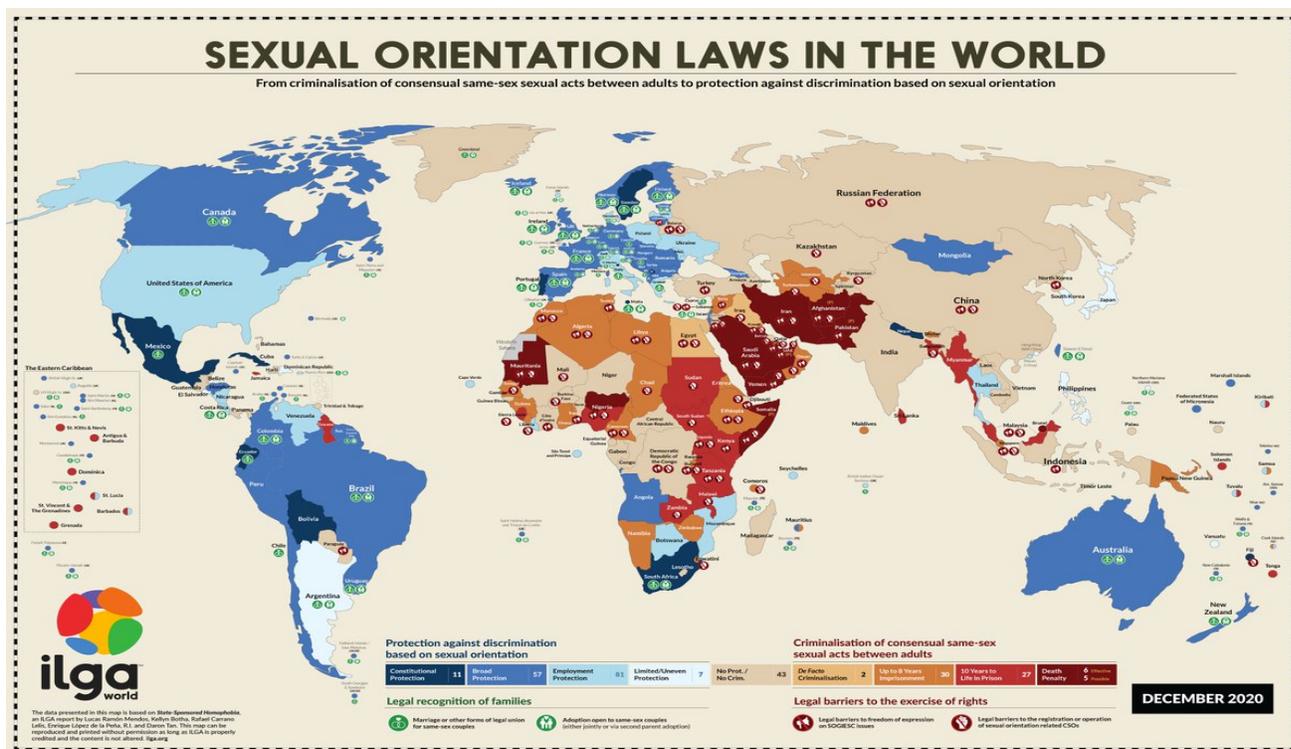
as well as homophobic insults and prolonged solitary confinement. These such cases are not uncommon; however, in some countries these death sentences are kept quiet, with many occurring on local, smaller levels where reports and coverage of these events are limited or may not exist. Executions like these are often called “honor killings” or “shame killings”, which refers to the murder of a family member or an outsider in order to protect the “dignity” of a community or household. These extreme punishments resulting in the loss of a human life go directly against the United Nation’s Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee’s value of upholding every person’s basic human rights. As a committee, it will be important to communicate data and address these pressing concerns regarding this topic in your final resolution, while also being mindful and considerate of LGBTQ+ individuals’ dignity and safety.

Past United Nations Actions

On December 11th, 2011, the first ever UN report on the human rights of LGBTQ+ people details how people are killed or endure hate-motivated violence, detention, criminalization, and discrimination because of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. The report was prepared in response to a request from the Human Rights Council earlier that year and drew from data and statistics included in past UN reports. The report outlined the human rights violations that governments have too often overlooked. In October of 2017, the United Nations passed a historic resolution condemning the criminalization of and use of the death penalty for crimes including apostasy, adultery, and same-sex relations. The committee called on nations in which the death penalty to ensure that it is not imposed in a discriminatory manner. The resolution

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specifically called for the end of discriminatory use of the death penalty against individuals with mental disabilities, those under the age of 18, and pregnant women. Twenty-seven nations voted in favor, while thirteen voted against and seven abstentions. The United States shocked many by being the only Western democracy to oppose the resolution. The United States, after receiving backlash for their vote against the resolution, clarified that they condemn the discriminatory use of the death penalty for same sex relations; however, according to a State Department spokesperson stated sadly the United States did not vote in favor "because of broader concerns with the resolution's approach in condemning the death penalty in all circumstances".



Constitutional Protection
 Broad Protection
 Employment Protection
 Limited Protection
 No Prot./No Crim
 De Facto Criminalization
 Up To 8 Years Imprisonment
 10 Years To Life In Prison
 Death Penalty

Topic II: Abuses and Discrimination in Medical Settings

The United Nations, time and time again, has affirmed and reaffirmed the notion that all humans, regardless of identity, have a right to proper and necessary health and medical care. Discrimination and abuses in medical settings endangers LGBTQ+ people's lives through delays or denials of medically urgent care. Members of LGBTQ+ communities suffer from a multitude of issues in health care systems and other medical settings worldwide. Underrepresentation of the LGBTQ+ community in clinical trials results in higher rates of sexually transmitted infections and diseases, as well as an unfair lack of competence of medical professionals for transgender individual's necessary needs. Members of LGBTQ+ communities are often afraid to admit their sexuality in censuses and data collection as well as in other medical settings such as doctors' offices and clinics. This stress to give honest answers about an individual's health may stem from stigma in their community or fear of consequences. This is another reason why there is a misrepresentation and lack of data in medical studies and statistics for LGBTQ+ members. Many medical settings around the world do not cater to the needs of LGBTQ+ patients at the same length they do for heterosexual patients because of societal norms, and doctor's and practitioner's discomfort they have based off their personal beliefs. In certain countries with strict laws prohibiting same-sex relations, law enforcement works in tandem with medical personnel to subject LGBTQ+ individuals suspected of committing a crime to forced anal examinations and other procedures comparable to torture, in order to find "proof" of homosexual conduct. These forced examinations violate the Convention

against Torture, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the African Convention on Human and Peoples Rights.

Past United Nations Actions

Most recently the topic of abuses and discrimination in healthcare against LGBTQ+ peoples was discussed by Victor Madrigal-Borloz in the Human Rights Council. Madrigal-Borloz's June 2022 report states that the "social and institutional drivers of health-related discrimination and violence based on SOGI, including pathologisation, criminalisation, stigmatisation and negation." After highlighting the issue, Madrigal-Borloz, using the mandate's ASPIRE framework, laid out a set of actions to meet these challenges. Stating that "most fundamentally, States should acknowledge that 'leaving no one behind' also means a supportive and protective environment for LGBTI-serving and LGBTI-led organisations, and their allies, to carry out their work without fear or arbitrary restriction, creating channels for meaningful representation and participation in Sustainable Development Goals tracking and implementation." Although many reports have been written on the issue, little to no resolutions have been passed to address abuses and discrimination to LGBTQ+ peoples in healthcare.

Sources

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