MODEL UNITED NATIONS OF THE FAR WEST

69TH ANNUAL SESSION

OUR COMMON HUMANITY: BACK TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE UN CHARTER

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IS ONE OF THE SIX PRINCIPAL ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1945 UNDER THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS. THE ASSEMBLY CONSISTS OF ALL UN MEMBER STATES AND MAY DISCUSS ANY QUESTIONS OR MATTERS WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE CHARTER OR RELATING TO THE POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF ANY ORGAN PROVIDED FOR IN THE CHARTER. IT MAY MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO UN MEMBERS OR THE SECURITY COUNCIL OR BOTH ON ANY SUCH QUESTIONS OR MATTERS, EXCEPT DISPUTES OR SITUATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH THE SECURITY COUNCIL IS CURRENTLY EXERCISING ITS FUNCTIONS.

AT MODEL UNITED NATIONS OF THE FAR WEST, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY Considers two agenda items and also engages in a high-level event or special session as determined by the President of the General Assembly. The title of this session is introduced in the weeks leading up to conference and tests delegates' ability to work on the basis on consensus. In addition to voting on its own resolutions, the General Assembly votes to approve the outcome documents of its subcommittees at the closing plenary session on the final day of conference.

(UN HANDBOOK, 2017-18)

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According to Article I of the UN Charter, the purpose of the United Nations is “to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of … common ends.”¹

Technology and social media, increasing the proliferation of “fake news” and propaganda, make harmonization and cooperation impractical and cause deeper divides between developed states and developing states. In addition, disinformation campaigns rob citizens of the ability to obtain factual information and identify accurate sources. Propaganda and “fake news” represent an obstacle for global youth in attaining an authentic perspective on foreign relations, preventing the attainment of lasting peace and international cooperation in the next generation. Furthermore, the concept of information sovereignty, especially in an increasingly globalized world, is complex. Freedom of information and access to technology, however, are not new topics in the UN.

THE ROLE OF NAM

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is an international, non-governmental organization (NGO) promoting the interests of developing states. NAM was founded in 1961,² but the organization’s concern with mass media began at their 1973 meeting in Algiers.³ In fact, the meeting provided a basis for the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UNESCO) to compose the Mass Media Declaration of 1974. The document attempted to even the playing field

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² (N.D.). NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT | INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION | BRITANNICA.COM. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WWW.BRITANNICA.COM/TOPIC/NON-ALIGNED-MOVEMENT
³ (N.D.). NEW WORLD INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ORDER (NWICO) NWICO.HTML. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WWW.THEGRENADAREVOLUTIONONLINE.COM/NWICO.HTML
of international media by encouraging the participation of the public in both developed and developing states. It is estimated that the “big four” news agencies, United Press International (U.S.), Associated Press (U.S.), Reuters (U.K.), and Agence France Presse (France), supply over 90% of the world’s printed foreign news. Developing countries are often the substance of news, not the producers of news. The dominance of highly-developed states in the news and media arena produce a skewed international image. When UNESCO released its Declaration, opposition and criticism immediately arose in the West and little progress was made to assuage the disparity between developed and developing states in the media. However, in that same year, the New International Economic Order (NIEO) was founded. The economic interests of developing states, such as renegotiation of debts, effective trade agreements, using funds from disarmament for development, and assistance in attaining development, are promoted through the NIEO. The Declaration and the NIEO sewed the seeds of targeted action to address freedom of information.

THE FOUNDING OF NWICO

At the 1975 Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries in Lima, NAM members adopted a resolution entitled “Cooperation in the Field of Diffusion of Information and Mass Communications Media.” However, progress on the solidification and promotion of the ideals of developing states in regard to freedom of information and technology was truly born in

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7 (2010, NOVEMBER 19). THE NEW WORLD INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ORDER: TESTIMONY OF ... RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTP://WWW.UTA.FI/CMT/EN/CONTACT/STAFF/KAARLENORDENSTRENG/PUBLICATIONS/PARIS.PDF
the NAM meetings of 1976 in Tunis and, later, in 1976 in New Delhi.⁸ Developing states wished for a kind of “new world order” in the media and Tunisia’s Information Minister, Mustapha Masmoudi, lead the charge in formalizing the ideals of NAM members.⁹ The document that resulted, known as the New Delhi Declaration, “not only advocated political pressure against ‘imperialist forces’ dominating the ‘free world’ information structures and flows but also implied a fundamental philosophical challenge.”¹⁰ In fact, the New Delhi Declaration made surprising implications. Laissez-faire philosophy in the information arena was asserted as the catalyst to the monopolization of media and the strengthening of developing states’ dependence. The document also noted the insufficiency of formal guarantees to freedom of information without the additional guarantee of technology, such as telecommunications and computers, to utilize that freedom. Finally, the Declaration insisted on the objectivity and accuracy of all information disseminated by the media.¹¹ Upon completion, the New Delhi Declaration was submitted to the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, better known as the MacBride Commission. At the time, the MacBride Commission was a 16-member UNESCO organization tasked with analyzing international communication concerns.¹² The MacBride Report, entitled “Many Voices, One World,” was issued in 1980.¹³ Recommendations of the report included integrating communication into development, strengthening cultural identity, increasing access to technical information, protecting responsible journalists, and supporting

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⁸ (N.D.). NEW WORLD INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ORDER (NWICO) NWICO.HTML. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WWW.THEGRENADAREVOLUTIONONLINE.COM/NWICO.HTML
⁹ (N.D.). NEW WORLD INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ORDER (NWICO) NWICO.HTML. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WWW.THEGRENADAREVOLUTIONONLINE.COM/NWICO.HTML
¹² (N.D.). NEW WORLD INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ORDER (NWICO) NWICO.HTML. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WWW.THEGRENADAREVOLUTIONONLINE.COM/NWICO.HTML
¹³ (N.D.). NEW WORLD INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ORDER (NWICO) NWICO.HTML. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WWW.THEGRENADAREVOLUTIONONLINE.COM/NWICO.HTML
integration and participation while bolstering communication capacities.\textsuperscript{14} The document also spoke of a “new world information and communication order,” which encompassed the concerns and recommendations listed in the report.

Resolution 4/19 adopted by the 21\textsuperscript{st} Session of the UNESCO General Conference in Belgrade, 1980, legitimized the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO). The resolution laid the foundation for and restricted the definition of NWICO. The primary concerns, as stated in Resolution 4/19, are as follows:

I. Eradication of imbalances and inequalities in communication,

II. Elimination of the negative consequences of monopolies in communication,

III. Destruction of impediments to freedom of information, especially in regard to increasing the spread and balance of information,

IV. Increasing the number of sources of information,

V. Ensuring freedom of the press

VI. Ensuring the freedom and responsibility of journalists,

VII. Providing technology and training, improving infrastructure, and assisting states in bolstering local media sources to enhance information self-reliance,

VIII. Encouraging developed states to aid developing states in attaining these objectives,

IX. Enforcing the right of states to express and educate the world of its own interests and culture,

X. Supporting the right of all peoples to engage in international communication on the basis of equality, justice, and mutual benefit,

\textsuperscript{14} (1980). \textit{MANY VOICES, ONE WORLD: TOWARDS A NEW MORE ...} - UN-DOCUMENTS.NET. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTP://WWW.UN-DOCUMENTS.NET/MACBRIDE-REPORT.PDF
XI. And promoting the right of individuals, ethnic groups, and social groups to have access to information, as well as the right to communicate.\(^{15}\)

Many of the foundational NWICO ideas were first expressed in Masmoudi’s New Delhi Declaration, but NWICO became embodied in the MacBride Commission. In fact, NWICO is not only the term for an idea, it has become a second name for the MacBride Commission itself. While NAM members were in support of NWICO policy, in general, western states were not.\(^{16}\) NWICO represents a challenge to the status quo; it is a “new world order.” Therefore, NWICO also represents a diminishment of the influence of developed states and world powers. If developing states have their own media sources, it is much more difficult for developed states to control international views. In addition, while official UNESCO policy did not support censorship or state-controlled media, some western states interpreted NWICO policy as such and refused to support NWICO.\(^{17}\)

Over decades, UNESCO has become less central to NWICO. Today, UNESCO focuses on developing infrastructure and technology, providing training, and disseminating media education in developing states. In the research arena, UNESCO studies the international balance of the flow of information. UNESCO’s efforts today are less controversial than its actions in the name of NWICO.\(^{18}\) Therefore, NGOs have since adopted the NWICO doctrine. The National Lawyers Guild, the Institute for Latin America (IPAL), the World Association for Christian


\(^{16}\) (N.D.). NEW WORLD INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ORDER (NWICO) NWICO.HTML. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WWW.THEGRENADAREVOLUTIONONLINE.COM/NWICO.HTML

\(^{17}\) (N.D.). NEW WORLD INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ORDER (NWICO) NWICO.HTML. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WWW.THEGRENADAREVOLUTIONONLINE.COM/NWICO.HTML

Communication (WACC), and the Union for Democratic Communication (UDC) are just a few examples.\textsuperscript{19}

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Freedom of information is not just a developing-world versus developed-world battle. When Russia launched Sputnik in 1957, Russian scholars pointed to the implications of satellite technology for international communication, “With the help of a large Sputnik, Moscow television programs could easily be relayed not alone to any point in the Soviet Union, but also far beyond its borders.”\textsuperscript{20} To prevent international issues of propaganda broadcasting, UNESCO adopted, with a vote 55 to 7 with 22 abstentions, the “Declaration of Guiding Principles on the Use of Satellite Broadcasting for the Free Flow of Information, the Spread of Education and Greater Cultural Change” on 15 November 1972.\textsuperscript{21} Not even the world superpowers of the time agreed with the declaration, however. The United States voted against the proposal while the Soviet Union was among the abstentions.\textsuperscript{22}

INFORMATION SOVEREIGNTY

An underlying theme in NWICO and the reason for polarity in topics related to freedom of information is information sovereignty. To be explicit, sovereignty refers to “the supreme powers exercised by a state over its own members” and “the powers exercised by an autonomous

\textsuperscript{19} (2013, JULY 16). THE NEW WORLD INFORMATION AND ... - ACADEMIA.EDU. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTP://WWW.ACADEMIA.EDU/4041289/THE_NEW_WORLD_INFORMATION_AND_COMMUNICATION_ORDER_NWICO_IN_THE_CONT
EXT_OF_THE_INFORMATION_SUPER-HIGHWAY


\textsuperscript{21} (1970, DECEMBER 18). INFORMATION SOVEREIGNTY REVIEWED. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WEB.URL.EDU/AIICS/FILES/10-WENXIAN-GONG.PDF

\textsuperscript{22} (1970, DECEMBER 18). INFORMATION SOVEREIGNTY REVIEWED. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WEB.URL.EDU/AIICS/FILES/10-WENXIAN-GONG.PDF
state in relation to other countries.”\textsuperscript{23} Sovereignty refers to a state’s internal power as well as its independence from external control. If viewed internally, information sovereignty is control of the policies that regulate and disseminate information. Externally, information sovereignty is the independence of states’ production and use of information.\textsuperscript{24} The concept of information sovereignty becomes even more complex in an increasingly globalized world. The satellite broadcasting UNESCO declaration, mentioned above, touches on information sovereignty in phrases such as “Satellite broadcasting shall respect the sovereignty and equality of all States.”\textsuperscript{25} However, it remains unclear how states can truly exercise internal and external information sovereignty. Even if a state completely isolates itself, information sovereignty cannot be achieved. Internal information sovereignty can be achieved with isolation, but external information sovereignty requires interaction with other states.\textsuperscript{26} For example, as demonstrated in the NAM summits and the subsequent formation of NWICO, the only avenue for developing countries to establish external information sovereignty and prevent developed states from dominating the media was through cooperation.

Technology has advanced considerably since 1972, when UNESCO released its declaration concerning satellite technology. With the advent of the internet and the world wide web, information flows are less restricted and more difficult to control. The boundaries of information sovereignty have become blurred. In fact, there are two categories of information sovereignty: hard and soft. Hard information sovereignty is the governmental powers that control information sharing with other nations. Soft information sovereignty is the control over political,

\textsuperscript{23} (1970, DECEMBER 18). INFORMATION SOVEREIGNTY REVIEWED. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WEB.URI.EDU/IAICS/FILES/10-WENXIANG-GONG.PDF
\textsuperscript{24} (1970, DECEMBER 18). INFORMATION SOVEREIGNTY REVIEWED. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WEB.URI.EDU/IAICS/FILES/10-WENXIANG-GONG.PDF
\textsuperscript{25} (1972, NOVEMBER 15). DECLARATION OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON THE USE OF SATELLITE ..., UNESCO. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTP://PORTAL.UNESCO.ORG/EN/EV.PHP-URL_ID=17518&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.HTML
\textsuperscript{26} (1970, DECEMBER 18). INFORMATION SOVEREIGNTY REVIEWED. RETRIEVED AUGUST 5, 2018, FROM HTTPS://WEB.URI.EDU/IAICS/FILES/10-WENXIANG-GONG.PDF
educational, social, and cultural information that flows between states. It is easy to measure and control hard information sovereignty, but soft information sovereignty is almost impossible to supervise, especially if a state exercises freedom of expression.

Developing states have traditionally been staunch supporters of information sovereignty, especially soft information sovereignty, because it is viewed as a state security issue. For example, it is widely believed by scholars that the ruling communist party in Romania, that fell in 1989, began to crumble due to the importation of western TV programs that replaced domestic programs. Information sovereignty is related to concerns with both “cultural security” and “information technology security.” Cultural security lies within the realm of soft information sovereignty, while information technology security is related to hard information sovereignty. The Romania example above demonstrates concerns with cultural security; it is the spreading of information related to ideologies, cultural traditions, lifestyles, and political systems, which vary from state to state. Some states view cultural security and soft information controls as restrictions of freedom of expression, speech, and press, while others view it as prevention of “cultural domination.” Information technology security refers to a state’s access to and use of information technology, such as access to the world wide web, television sets, computers, and telecommunications. Again, UNESCO’s efforts are currently concentrated in hard information sovereignty, as it is less controversial.

NII AND GII

In 1995, the G-7 Conference on Information Society formulated and approved the National Information Infrastructure (NII) and Global Information Infrastructure (GII) proposals. NII is a plan to connect all corners of a given state through all forms of information technology, including telecommunications, satellite, and internet. GII has the same goals, but on a global scale. However, the NII and GII have been criticized for only representing the interests of developed states, especially the G-7 countries. Supporters of the proposals claim that the plans encourage international cooperation, thereby assisting developing states regardless of the focus on developed states’ interests.

Fast paced technological advancements and confusion over the limits of freedom of information and information sovereignty have pitted developing states against developed states on many key issues. In this state of global confusion, disinformation campaigns, also known as “fake news,” have been allowed to propagate within and between state borders. NWICO ideals seem to have fallen by the wayside while the UN focuses on technology infrastructure. The door is open to interpretation of information sovereignty and questions have been raised on whether the enforcement of information sovereignty should include both hard and soft definitions. Until a clear definition of freedom of information and information sovereignty has been established on the international stage, issues with cultural security, state sovereignty, disinformation campaigns, and the realization of UN Charter ideals will likely continue.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What is your state’s stance on NWICO ideals?

2. Has your state openly supported or produced propaganda? Has your state disseminated propaganda to other states?

3. What measures has your state taken to ensure freedom of information for its population?

4. Does your state support programs to assist developing states in the procurement of technology and the advancement of freedom of information in those states?

5. Should steps be taken to address soft information sovereignty and cultural security? What should these measures be?

6. What is your state’s definition of information sovereignty? Does it include both hard and soft definitions?
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Sexuality applies to all humans that inhabit this planet; however, the global community continues to ignore the contentious issues that are affecting citizens of every sovereign state. It is the duty of the United Nations (UN) to look back to the beginning of the UN Charter “to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small” in order to rectify the grievances of ignored sexual rights that continue to pervade contemporary society.¹

**LGBTQ+ PERSECUTION**

Although significant strides have been made in the past few decades in favor of the LGBTQ+ community, many LGBTQ+ people and their allies face persecution on a daily basis throughout the world. Homophobic attacks continue to be seen regularly, whether it be through brutal violence or hate speech. Not only do these attacks occur, but they are also often overlooked by the media and governments. For example, Armenia, and many other member states, still do not consider “sexual orientation and gender identity as a ground for protection from discrimination.”² Because of this, LGBTQ+ fueled violence does not receive proper justice within global governmental systems.

¹ "UN CHARTER (FULL TEXT)." UNITED NATIONS. ACCESSED AUGUST 10, 2018. HTTP://WWW.UN.ORG/EN/SECTIONS/UN-CHARTER/UN-CHARTER-FULL-TEXT/.
In the United States, members of the LGBTQ+ community are more likely to be targets of hate crimes than any other minority group. The United States is not alone in this statistic, however. LGBTQ+ peoples are the targets of hate crimes across a plethora of member states. Although the general theme of LGBTQ+ acceptance is on the rise, especially with maturing generations, this rise of generalized acceptance has also led to a rise in intolerant behaviors. As of 2016, homosexuality was an offense punishable by death in ten nations. LGBTQ+ relationships are illegal in seventy-four nations, forty of which have laws that allow for being gay as a defense in a criminal hearing. Although many nations are progressing in terms of LGBTQ+ rights, regressive states are inflicting significant harm, both emotionally and physically, to global LGBTQ+ populations.

The United Nations has attempted to protect the human rights of the LGBTQ+ community with both legislation and advocacy. In July 2013, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights launched the U.N.’s Free & Equal campaign to promote understanding of the human rights of LGBTQ+ people. That campaign spotlights discrimination of the LGBTQ+ community, including access to health care, treatment in schools, blackmail, arrest, and imprisonment. Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General from 2010 to 2017, consistently spoke out as an advocate for equality during his term. He urged the international community to work for equal treatment of LGBTQ+ people, as all people should have their most basic human rights.

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5 SAINATO, MICHAEL, 2018.
6 "UN FREE & EQUAL." UN FREE & EQUAL. ACCESSED AUGUST 9, 2018. HTTPS://WWW.UNFE.ORG/.
7 "UN FREE & EQUAL," 2018.
protected. His approach was direct, saying, for example, “I will always fight for the equality of the LGBT members of our human family.”

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Another violation of sexual rights involves female genital mutilation (FGM). FGM is the collective term for various procedures that involve partial or total removal of female external genitalia, or injury to any of the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM has no health benefits for girls or women and can often cause severe bleeding, infection, and complications during childbirth. FGM is concentrated in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, and currently affects more than 200 million girls and women. FGM is a serious violation of the human rights of girls and women. In most of the societies where FGM is commonplace, the practice is considered a cultural tradition. This argument is frequently invoked to continue the detrimental practice. FGM is a social norm in many areas, and, in some societies, all the women have undergone it. Because of this, FGM’s degrading connotation is lost.

The 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) call for an end to FGM under Goal 5: Gender Equality. Targets 5.3 and 5.3.2 aim to “eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation” due to the “proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age.” In addition to the recognition of FGM in the SDGs, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has

9 “FGM NATIONAL CLINICAL GROUP.” FGM NATIONAL CLINICAL GROUP. ACCESSED AUGUST 10, 2018. HTTP://WWW.FGMNATIONALGROUP.ORG/.
14 “SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS :: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM.” UNITED NATIONS. ACCESSED AUGUST 10, 2018. HTTPS://SUSTAINABLEDEVELOPMENT.UN.ORG/?MENU=1300.
spoken out on the issue, asserting that “With the dignity, health, and well-being of millions of girls at stake, there is no time to waste. Together, we can and must end this harmful practice.”

Although the UN recognizes February 6th as the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, the practice continues, afflicting some of the world’s most vulnerable people.

FORCED CHILD MARRIAGES

Throughout many of the world’s current war zones, the increased need for security is causing more and more young girls to be forced into child marriages in order to provide for their families. Countries, such as Yemen, marred by civil war have become increasingly devastated areas to inhabit. Because of this, increased numbers of desperate families are selling their daughters to grown men as child brides. Families are able to use their daughter’s dowry to supply themselves with food and other human necessities for extended periods of time.

Meritxell Relano, the United Nations Children’s Fund representative in Yemen, commented on the alarming issue, “It is impossible to say how many kids are being pulled out of school now to be married off...but we know that more and more parents are doing this. The lack of livelihood and unemployment is forcing them to do this.” The United Nations Population Fund notes child marriage as “the toxic product of poverty and gender inequality.” Being forced into marriage as a child significantly thwarts a young girl’s development. A girl married away as a child bride faces social isolation due to her relationship with her husband, which often

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17 “FGM, GENITAL MUTILATION.” 2018.
20 GIRLS NOT BRIDES, 2018.
21 YOUSSEF, NOUR, 2018.
22 “CHILD MARRIAGE.” UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND. ACCESSED AUGUST 7, 2018. HTTPS://WWW.UNFPA.ORG/CHILD-MARRIAGE.
results in domestic violence, as well as pregnancy at a young age. These factors often result in girls being unable to attend school or have any career opportunities.

The 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) call for an end to child marriages under Goal 5: Gender Equality. Targets 5.3 and 5.3.1 seek to “eliminate the harmful practices of child, early, and forced marriages” owing to the “proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18.” In addition to the mention of forced child marriages in the SDGs, the UN has also spoken out on the detrimental effects of cohabitation. Cohabitation is the same concept of marriage — a couple lives in a union; however, there is a lack of societal and legal recognition. Girls coaxed or coerced into these informal unions are often just as vulnerable, if not more vulnerable, than girls in forced child marriages. This is due to the undefined nature of the relationship, coupled with the same detrimental effects of a “legitimate” marriage, such as early pregnancy and denial of possible career goals.

SEX TRAFFICKING

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, “Human trafficking is the acquisition of people by improper means such as force, fraud or deception, with the aim of exploiting them.” Sex trafficking incorporates this exploitation of human beings through the sex industry, whether it be through prostitution rings, pornography, sexual slavery, or even

30 ALFONSO, GEORGINA. “UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME.” UNODC - HUMAN TRAFFICKING. ACCESSED AUGUST 11, 2018. HTTPS://WWW.UNODC.ORG/UNODC/EN/HUMAN-TRAFFICKING/INDEX.HTML.
forced surrogacy.\textsuperscript{31} This practice is condemned by 158 nations, yet the rate of convictions continues to remain extremely low and victims rarely receive the services that their respective governments should supply.\textsuperscript{32} Seventy-one percent of all human trafficking victims are currently women and girls; one third also happen to be children.\textsuperscript{33}

The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,\textsuperscript{34} created via Resolution 55/25, addresses an important subject matter. Three additional documents ensued: the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air; and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components, and Ammunition.\textsuperscript{35} The first protocol helped member states collectively define the issue of human trafficking by establishing an agreed upon definition of the crime.\textsuperscript{36}

THE PERPETUATION OF RAPE CULTURE

Although not all violence against women is tangible, the perpetuation of rape culture continues to foster an underlying aggression towards women worldwide. Rape culture is defined as an environment in which rape and sexual violence against women are normalized and are often dismissed in the news and popular culture.\textsuperscript{37} Rape culture exists in the use of misogynistic language, objectification of women, and the downplay of sexual violence, which contributes to a societal standard that is unsafe for women everywhere.\textsuperscript{38} Rape culture subconsciously forces all

\textsuperscript{31} “SEX TRAFFICKING | HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR SEX.” END SLAVERY NOW. ACCESSED AUGUST 11, 2018. HTTP://WWW.ENDSLAVERYNOW.ORG/LEARN/SLAVERY-TODAY/SEX-TRAFFICKING.
\textsuperscript{32} ALFONSO, GEORGINA, 2018.
\textsuperscript{33} ALFONSO, GEORGINA, 2018.
\textsuperscript{34} DE VIVO, ANTONIO “UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME.” UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME. ACCESSED AUGUST 11, 2018. HTTP://WWW.UNODC.ORG/UNODC/EN/ORGANIZED-CRIME/INTRO/UNTOC.HTML.
\textsuperscript{35} DE VIVO, ANTONIO, 2018.
\textsuperscript{36} DE VIVO, ANTONIO, 2018.
\textsuperscript{38} “RAPE CULTURE,” 2018.
women into a subordinate role, one in which women and girls live with the fear of rape and sexual assault on a daily basis.\textsuperscript{39}

Victim blaming is a practice that has developed as a direct cause of rape culture; victim blaming places the fault of the occurrence of sexual and domestic violence on the survivors of the attacks, rather than on the attackers.\textsuperscript{40} This practice has resulted in a vicious cycle of extreme guilt for victims over acts which they had no control of.\textsuperscript{41} The attitude of victim blaming merely supports the cases of attackers and belittles victims of brutal crimes. Victim blaming can be seen in the derogatory discussion of women, false linkage of rape to promiscuity, and the overall refusal to take rape allegations seriously. Rape culture has developed into something that constantly affects all women and victims of sexual violence.

The 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) call for increased support of women under Goal 5: Gender Equality.\textsuperscript{42} The UN recognizes the need for additional support of women in Goal 5 by committing to “adopt[ing] and strengthen[ing] sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.”\textsuperscript{43}

CONCLUSION

The global community has continuously downplayed or ignored drastic violations of sexual rights in the 21st century, such as but not limited to, LGBTQ+ persecution, female genital mutilation, forced child marriages, sex trafficking, and the perpetuation of rape culture. It is the UN’s duty to tackle these issues head-on, with the guidance of the UN Charter, “to reaffirm faith

\textsuperscript{39} “RAPE CULTURE,” 2018.
\textsuperscript{40} “HOW TO AVOID VICTIM BLAMING,” HARVARD LAW SCHOOL HALT. ACCESSED OCTOBER 16, 2018. HTTPS://ORGS.LAW.HARVARD.EDU/HALT/HOW-TO-AVOID-VICTIM-BLAMING/.
\textsuperscript{41} “HOW TO AVOID VICTIM BLAMING,” 2018.
\textsuperscript{42} “SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS,” 2018.
\textsuperscript{43} “SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS,” 2018.
in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.” In an optimal scenario, the UN can provide justice to those discriminated against and put in harm’s way due to their sexuality, gender, or bodily autonomy.\footnote{UN CHARTER (FULL TEXT), 2018.}
QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Do some groups require special human rights? If so, does this mean that some groups should have more rights than others?

2. Has the United Nations made any true progress in reducing sexual rights violations?

3. How has the United Nations been successful in tackling issues of sexual rights? Are any particular strategies (i.e., advocacy or legislation) benefiting certain causes more than others?

4. Are certain violations more prominent in particular regions?

5. How can the United Nations initiate action pertaining to varying member states across multiple regions?
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