



# **United Nations Human Rights Council**

## **Study Guide**

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## **Letter from the Committee Directors**

Assalamualaikum Esteemed Delegates,

We are tremendously honored to be serving as your committee directors. Since this might be the first MUN experience for most of you, you are encouraged to give this article a thorough read since this will inform you about the topic of the committee and some information that will prove helpful for you in establishing your stances and articulating your debate.

MUN's are a great opportunity for you to polish your debating and argumentative skills and explore your love and passion for public speaking. They not only provide you with a platform to put your research and debating skills to the test but are also an amazing platform to gain more understanding and awareness of global issues and the way the UN works as well as a great chance to make some amazing memories and new friends. You are encouraged to get to know your fellow participants well and you will be given plenty of opportunities to do so.

Expect fierce debate from your sessions, listening is just as important as speaking. We expect you to be well researched and aware of the topic at hand. If this is your first time, don't worry about stepping up to the mantle.

A handful of tips for the committee sessions before we see you there, ensure you remain disciplined and maintain decorum. Having fun is important but so is observing the disciplinary limits of the committee. Utmost participation in the committee session is highly appreciated and will allow you to make the most of this experience. Look forward to fun sessions as well and interact with your peers and your chairs. You will be informed about the flow of a conference during your sessions so make sure you attend every single one.

Lastly, remember that everyone cannot walk away with an award but the experience matters just as much as the award. Looking forward to having you all there and to an incredible, informative and fiery debate.

Regards,  
Haziq Arbab and Momina Khan

**Introduction to Committee:**

The United Nations Human Rights Council was established by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 March 2006<sup>[c]</sup> to replace the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and make recommendations on them. It has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year. The Council has 47 members elected for staggered three-year terms on a regional group basis. The headquarters of the Council is in Geneva, Switzerland. The Council investigates allegations of breaches of human rights in UN member states.

It deals with issues regarding freedom of expression and speech, religious issues, women's issues and issues concerning people of different orientations and socio racial backgrounds.

The Council works closely with the Office of the High Commission on Human Rights (OHCHR) and engages the United Nations special procedures.

The seats are distributed among the UN regional groups as follows: 13 for Africa, 13 for Asia, six for Eastern Europe, eight for Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC), and seven for the Western European and Others Group (WEOG).

The Committee meets in Geneva and normally holds three sessions per year in March, June, and September. The UNHRC can decide at any time to hold a special session to address human rights violations and emergencies, at the request of one-third of the member states

The resolution establishing the UNHRC states that "members elected to the Council shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights".

## **Topic:**

# **Preventing and Countering Racial Discrimination and Extremism**

## **What is Racism?**

Racism is the belief that humans can be divided into separate and exclusive biological entities called "races"; that there is a causal link between inherited physical traits and traits of personality, intellect, morality, and other cultural and behavioral features; and that some races are innately superior to others. It stems from the view that race is fundamentally deterministic of the traits and capacity of a human being. It indicates discrimination by an individual or a group of individuals against a segment of the populace from different biological and sociocultural backgrounds, typically ones that are a minority or marginalized.

Modern variants of racism are often based in social perceptions of biological differences between peoples. These views can take the form of social actions, practices or beliefs, or political systems in which different races are ranked as inherently superior or inferior to each other, based on presumed shared inheritable traits, abilities, or qualities.

Racial discrimination refers to situations where people from a certain ethnicity face suppression and injustice primarily and solely due to their cultural, biological or social backgrounds. Any discrimination of this kind that may take place in any environment from workplaces to judiciary systems or workplaces is categorized under racial discrimination.

The term is also applied to political, economic, or legal institutions and systems that engage in or perpetuate discrimination on the basis of race or otherwise reinforce racial inequalities in wealth and income, education, health care, civil rights, and other areas.

## **What is Extremism?**

Extremism refers to holding extremely polarized views and ideologies typically with regards to political, economical or religious factors that are extremely removed from what may be considered the norm. While this opens up room for debate since what is considered to be the norm is highly subjective, the term is usually used to categorize views and ideas that lead to harmful or unjust consequences or support non-humanitarian causes.

While use of the term may be encountered in pejorative contexts, it refers to beliefs that are usually ill-founded and stem more from negative emotional responses such as hatred or may be motivated as a consequence of propaganda to incite hatred towards or fear responses against a particular segment of society. As such, extremist movements usually encourage unjust and unfair actions, best described to be extreme, hence the name which fall under gray or black areas on ethical and moral scales.

Due to the varied nature of the causes of extremism, it is an incredibly complex problem to tackle, the core group may be motivated by hatred or simple fear for their security and any responses must have the capacity to tackle the varied array of reasons giving birth to extremist movements.

There are four types of extremist ideologies :

- Right-Wing Extremism. A form of radicalization associated with fascism, racialism/racism, supremacism and ultranationalism. ...
- Politico-Religious Extremism. ...
- Left-Wing Extremism. ...
- Single-Issue Extremism.

## **History of Racism**

While various examples of behavior similar to modern definitions of racism may be found throughout history, institutional, structural, or systemic racism became a particular focus of scholarly investigation in the 1980s with the emergence of critical race theory, an offshoot of the critical legal studies movement. Since the late 20th century the notion of biological race has been recognized as a cultural invention, entirely without scientific basis. There have been various attempts to counter racism especially in recent years however, it remains a problem at large in many places around the globe.

### **Critical Race Theory:**

Critical race theory is an intellectual movement and a framework of legal analysis according to which

- (1) race is a culturally invented category used to oppress people of color and
- (2) the law and legal institutions in the United States are inherently racist insofar as they function to create and maintain social, political, and economic inequalities between white and nonwhite people.

Before the dawn of anti-racist movements on a widescale, underrepresented minorities faced significant suppression and discrimination as a result of racist policies and laws.

Historically, those who openly professed or practiced racism held that members of low-status races should be limited to low-status jobs and that members of the dominant race should have exclusive access to political power, economic resources, high-status jobs, and unrestricted civil rights. The lived experience of racism for members of low-status races includes acts of physical violence, daily insults, and frequent acts and verbal expressions of contempt and disrespect, all of which have profound effects on self-esteem and social relationships. These discriminated sets of people faced legal repercussions for transgressions against inhumane racist laws as well as denial of basic human rights.

By the 19th century, racism had matured and spread around the world. In many countries, leaders began to think of the ethnic components of their own societies, usually religious or language groups, in racial terms and to designate “higher” and “lower” races. Those seen as the low-status races, especially in colonized areas, were exploited for their labour, and discrimination against them became a common pattern in many areas of the world. The expressions and feelings of racial

superiority that accompanied colonialism generated resentment and hostility from those who were colonized and exploited, feelings that continued even after independence. Since the mid-20th century many conflicts around the world have been interpreted in racial terms even though their origins were in the ethnic hostilities that have long characterized many human societies (e.g., Arabs and Jews, English and Irish)

Some examples of inhumane racist policies included having separate public spaces for people belonging to different classes, denying entry and use of public utilities to people of lower classes, for example public restrooms and cafeterias, wrongful arrests and criminal accusations against people of lower classes without enough proof and absence of legal protection for people of different ethnicity, declaring people belonging to lower classes as ineligible to apply for positions of influence or power despite merits and qualifications, disallowing people of color and religious identities access to public resources and education and occupational opportunities, laws and regulations to ensure misrepresentation and underrepresentation of lower class citizens and minorities.

## **Examples of Extremist Movements and Incidents in recent history**

### **Uyghar Muslims**

China has detained more than one million Uyghurs against their will over the past few years in a large network of what the state calls "re-education camps", and sentenced hundreds of thousands to prison terms. Several crimes against humanity are common in these camps and muslims face severe cruel treatment in these camps simply due to their religious orientation. Uyghurs are being used as forced labor and women are being forcibly sterilized. Some former camp detainees have also alleged they were tortured and sexually abused.

### **ISIS and Taliban**

ISIS is a militant Islamic group and former unrecognized quasi-state that follows a salafi jihadist doctrine. Islamic State was founded by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and gained global prominence in 2014 when it drove Iraqi Security Forces out of key cities in its Western Iraq offensive, followed by its capture of Mosul and the Sinjar massacre.

In June 2014, the group proclaimed itself a worldwide caliphate and began referring to itself as the Islamic State. As a caliphate, it claimed religious, political, and military authority over all Muslims worldwide. Its adoption of the name Islamic State



and its idea of a caliphate have been criticised, with the United Nations, various governments, and mainstream Muslim groups rejecting its statehood. In Syria, the group conducted ground attacks on both government forces and opposition factions, and by December 2015, it held an area extending from western Iraq to eastern Syria, containing an estimated eight to twelve million people, where it enforced its interpretation of sharia law. The IS is known for its videos of beheadings and other types of executions of both soldiers and civilians, including journalists and aid workers, and its destruction of cultural heritage sites. The United Nations holds ISIL responsible for committing human rights abuse, genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. The Islamic State committed genocide and ethnic cleansing on a historic scale in northern Iraq.

### **George Floyd**

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, was murdered in the city of Minneapolis by a 44-year-old white police officer.<sup>[4]</sup> Floyd had been arrested on suspicion of using a counterfeit \$20 bill. Chauvin knelt on Floyd's neck for over nine minutes while Floyd was handcuffed and lying face-down in a street. Two other police officers, J. Alexander Kueng and Thomas Lane, assisted Chauvin in restraining Floyd. Lane had also pointed a gun at Floyd's head prior to Floyd being put in handcuffs. A fourth police officer, Tou Thao, prevented bystanders from intervening. In December 2021, Chauvin pled guilty to federal charges of violating Floyd's civil rights by using unreasonable force and ignoring Floyd's serious medical needs.

### **Canadian truck drivers murders muslim family**

Nathaniel Veltman, a 20-year-old man ran over four members of a Muslim family, living in Ontario, Canada. According to the police investigation this attack was premeditated and motivated by hate.

This particular family was targeted because of their religious beliefs.

### **Anti muslim movements in Europe and America**

Islamophobia and Anti-Islamic sentiments are significant themes in many communities in Europe and the Americas and there have been several incidents in the past couple of years where certain incidents have sparked up tensions due to these sentiments

## **The Holocaust**

One of the most famous examples of extremist movements. The Holocaust was the genocide of Jews at the time of World War II. Between 1941 and 1945, Nazi Germany and its collaborators systematically murdered some six million Jews across German occupied Europe, around two-thirds of Europe's Jewish population. The murders were carried out in pogroms and mass shootings; by a policy of extermination through labor in concentration camps; and in gas chambers and gas vans in German extermination camps.

## **Forced conversions in Sub-continent and Asia**

It has been estimated that 1000 women and girls from religious minorities are abducted, forcibly converted and then married off to their abductors every year. In most cases the victim is abducted and is then subjugated to sustained emotional and physical abuse often involving threats of violence towards their loved ones.

## **Srilankan manager beat to death and burnt in Pakistan**

A mob of factory employees in Pakistan's Punjab province tortured and burned Priyantha Kumara (Srilankan factory manager). He was accused of committing blasphemy by the attackers.

You are encouraged to look up more information on the movements and incidents mentioned here and do your own research on more examples of extremism if you feel the need to improve your understanding of extremist movements and acts of extremism. For your help, some other topics worth looking up are human rights violations in the occupation of Kashmir, the Israel-Palestine issue and the Yemen-Syria issue.

## **Questions the committee must answer**

1. Impacts of Racism on cultures and communities
2. Why are Racism and Extremism global issues
3. What is the importance of having a collaborative approach to combat these issues
4. Socio Political and Economical effects of Racism

5. Impact of Racist and Extremist movements on upcoming generations
6. What are steps that can be taken to combat ongoing extremist crises
7. Steps and measures to prevent and combat extremism and racism