

<b>Forum:</b>	Human Rights Committee
<b>Issue:</b>	Measures to prevent state-sanctioned persecution of minorities
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## Introduction

As RCIMUN 2018's theme is *Political Polarisation: Fostering Accord in a World of Intolerance*, minorities are one of the main focuses in terms of human rights; minority groups tend to become discriminated and excluded by states due to the fact that their opinions, ideologies, and beliefs differ from the primary ones.

In most persecution of minorities cases, such states pursue totalitarian regimes; thus, one of their main objectives is to oppose to all religions and beliefs against their own. This is where the factor of oppression and persecution is observed. In order to unite the citizens in one common religion, ideology, or opinion, they persecute the minorities via oppression.

When these persecutions of minorities are led by the states, the issue becomes even more difficult to tackle. Many members of the United Nations are trying to come up with efficient solutions, but the solutions proposed are generally in order to prevent the persecution of their own citizens or people from their religion in different states. For example, the United States proposes solutions in order to prevent international anti-christian persecutions in countries such as China, North Korea, Sudan, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Hungary is also trying to become the "*center for efforts to combat Christian persecution*" (Website of the Hungarian Government).

To conclude, one of the main points of this issue would be to choose tolerance over discrimination. Democracy should take over totalitarianism and authoritarianism, and minorities' rights should be regulated and protected systematically. This would be the job of the government, the state; seeing that states are unable to prevent such persecutions, the intervention of the United Nations is necessary.

## Definition of Key Terms

**Persecution:** Persecution is the mistreatment and harassment of people because of their religious or political beliefs, ethnic or race, sexual orientation, or gender.

**Race vs. Ethnicity:** Race and ethnicity often get mistaken. However, race refers to a person's physical factors such as skin color, eye color, or bone structure. Ethnicity, on the other hand, refers to cultural factors such as nationality, language, and ancestry.

**Oppression:** Oppression is the act of exercising excessive authority over people. Government oppression is very common nowadays. States use oppression in order to obtain power and authority. It is a totalitarian regime.

**Totalitarianism:** A totalitarian government is ruled by totalitarianism if it does not tolerate, allow other religions, beliefs, ideologies, or differing opinions.

**Authoritarianism:** An authoritarian regime is a the concentration of all power in the hands of a single party or an individual. In this type of regime, power is sustained via oppression and arbitrarily, "without regard to existing bodies of law."

**State-sanctioned:** State-sanctioned simply means that the state is the subject of the action. State-sanctioned persecution is defined as the unlawful, unjust treatment that the state performs to its citizens.

**Minority groups:** Minority groups are groups that are less dominant in the society, meaning that they are not as numerous or not as powerful as the governing, dominant groups or parties.

**Coercion:** Coercion is forcing someone into doing something involuntarily by means of threats and force. It is mostly used in totalitarian and authoritarian regimes.

## General Overview

State-sanctioned persecution of minority groups is not a recent issue in human history; instead, for many centuries, large portions of populations of nations have been targeted by their own governments due to differences and intolerance, used as scapegoats for tribulations face by countries, and have been assaulted for their properties.

As stated in the Introduction to this report, persecution can be based on several main types of differences. These include ethnic (or “racial” as such persecutors often prefer to call these differences), religious, political, and orientation-based differences, among many others.

## **Ethnic Differences**

Ethnic differences have long been used as grounds for discrimination. One of the earliest instances of ethnic persecution can be found in the Torah, the Book of Deuteronomy 14:2). In this verse, it is stated that “...*thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be ... above all the nations that are upon the earth*” when talking about the Israelites (*The King James Bible*). While the consequences of this verse was limited in effect, they would later serve as a basis for the paranoia that Jews considered themselves to be superior to others and therefore “needed to be suppressed”. Both of these claims are now considered to be invalid

Another early justification for ethnic persecution in the Western world had been an anecdote supposedly from the Bible whereby one of the sons of Noah, Ham, looks at his father when he was naked while his brothers refuse to do so and instead choose to cover up their sleeping father. While these events are indeed told in the Bible, in Genesis 9:20-27, they had been misconstrued for many centuries, under the claim that Ham’s skin was darkened by his sins, causing him and his descendants to be cursed to eternal servitude to his brothers (*The King James Bible*). This fictional claim was used as grounds to justify “racism” for many centuries in the Western Hemisphere, during the ages of slavery, colonialism, and Jim Crow laws around the globe. State-sanctioned slavery was most prominent in the United States and was conducted on the basis of “race”, causing the enslavement of tens of millions of African-Americans (“Curse of Ham”). After the abolishment of slavery in the United States with the American Civil War, discrimination against blacks did not cease, instead it merely took another form. With the Jim Crow laws, states now began enforcing a “separate but equal” doctrine, which was supported by the US Supreme Court decision on the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (Duignan), that was reflected into real life as a “seperate and dichotomically unequal” treatment of the members of the Caucasian and African-American ethnicities. The persecution was conducted mostly by state-level legislation, disallowing black people from accessing their right to vote, underfunding services for black people, passing legislation that enforced the segregation of people on the basis of ethnicity, and forcing them into continuing *de facto* slavery by tying them to the farms by the means of keeping them on subsistence-level wages. As both of these acts were state-organized and affected tens of millions, they together can be counted as the most significant instance of state-sanctioned persecution in human history (“Slavery in America”) (Urofsky).

In 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed as the Chancellor of the German state and his National Socialist Party came to power, establishing the Third Reich. One of the important, if not the most important, policy of the

Third Reich was the belief in Aryan superiority. This ethnicity-based ideology stimulated harsh state-sanctioned persecution of ethnic minorities, especially the Jews and Gypsies. Other groups such as Communists, Gays, and disabled persons were also targeted by the same government. Initially, the persecution took the form of requiring such persons to carry around documents and wear specially-colored stars indicating their minority status, then evolved into forced relocation to ghettos specific for minorities, later taking the form of concentration and labor, and finally, extermination camps ("Third Reich"). Around 17.5 million people are estimated to be killed as a part of this extermination operation, known commonly by its name, the Holocaust ("Documenting Numbers").

At the same time, a lesser known instance of state-sanctioned persecution was taking place, across the Atlantic Ocean; United States of America, the "Land of the Free" as claimed by its own national anthem, had established concentration camps for its Japanese-American nationals. The reasoning behind this move was that the government feared that people of Japanese ancestry, even if they had been citizens of the US for many decades and had no connections remaining with the Japanese Empire, could potentially begin supporting the Japanese side in the World War, creating internal insurrections. Of course, such measures were senseless since Japanese-Americans had chosen to live in the USA, exhibiting a clear preference for the States over their nation of origin and had, in some cases, lived in the United States for a much longer time than certain Caucasians. Also, the reality that American citizens of German origin were not subjected to the same internment procedures works to exhibit the ethnicist reasoning behind this instance of state-sanctioned persecution. The United States was not the only state implementing these policies either, Mexico and Canada -known usually for its liberal values that clearly were not in effect in this situation-, also implemented similar actions of their own. The standards to be considered to be of Japanese origin were set at a rate of 1/16 and any such persons, regardless of their young or old age or physical handicaps, were forcibly relocated to areas where the resident populations were not highly enthusiastic to host new migrants, especially of a non-Caucasian ethnicity. Tens of thousands of Japanese-Americans were affected by this tragic instance of state-sanctioned persecution, causing a significant deterioration of life conditions for a minority due to insubstantial reasons ("Japanese Internment Camps").

Apartheid regime in South Africa was yet another instance of state-sanctioned persecution, lasting for most of the second half of the 20th century. The state, through legislation, caused the treatment of the indigenous population as second-class citizens by the means of provisioning separate services for them, if at all, of a lower quality, when compared to the ex-colonialist Caucasians in the country. The government reinforced this policy by reallocating most of the country's land from the native peoples' ownership to the ex-colonialists and by prohibiting "interracial" marriages. These measures, disproportionately affecting the "colored" population of the country was yet another prominent example of

state-sanctioned persecution of a minority group (“Apartheid”). It is significant to note here that while the indigenous peoples consisted the majority of the country’s population, their lack of access to governmental power rendered them as a minority group.

Although so far historic examples have been given, this does not mean that state-sanctioned persecution of ethnic minorities have come to an end in today’s world. One of the major contemporary examples include the Israeli state. Although the Israeli government does not officially condone racism against minorities inhabiting its occupied territories, its military has been observed many times conducting ethnicist practices and violence. An ex-soldier from the Israeli military who refused to serve in the ways asked of him has stated *“to achieve [what the governments asks of them], [the soldiers] have to become racist”*. His rationale behind this statement includes the fact that Israeli soldiers have checkpoints targeted specifically at the mobility of Palestinians in their own land, by the means of having them stop and be checked by short-tempered Israeli officers, resulting in many killings of Palestinian civilians in these checkpoints for trifles of reasons. The same soldier has also claimed that *“racism is a legitimate part of the Israeli discourse”* and that *“It’s okay to be racist in Israel today”*. This mindset common in the Israeli-occupied territory among the Jewish people who are in control of power creates a constant fear for safety and security on the part of the indigenous Palestinian people, who rightfully feel prosecuted by the state (Tahhan).

The persecution of refugees may also be considered to be state-sanctioned in some circumstances. For example, in Hungary, the autocratic government of Viktor Orban is vehemently opposed to refugees, even going as far as stating that *“We don’t see these people as Muslim refugees. We see them as Muslim invaders”*. This quote clearly conveys the message that the reason why Prime Minister Orban considers Syrian refugees as invaders as opposed to asylum-seekers is their Muslim background, as he does not reject and denounce the concept of refugees altogether but only for people from Muslim ethnicities. The position of the Orban government has not merely stayed verbal either, as they have also constructed a strictly-patrolled border wall to serve the purpose of keeping refugees away (Agerholm). Such also clearly constitutes state-sanctioned ethnic persecution, propped up by a far-right-wing government, as is often the case in such situations.

## **Religious Differences**

Religious differences, while often tied to ethnic differences, has also caused some both historic and current instances of state-sanctioned persecution. Just like in ethnic differences causing persecution, there also exists a Biblical basis for religion-based persecution of minorities. In Deuteronomy 13, punishments for apostates are listed. Verse 9 states directly that they must be killed and that action must be taken by a Jew or a Christian before anyone else while Verse 10 dictates that this execution shall

be done by stoning. Similarly, Verses 15-16 state that if one encounters a city filled with apostates, then *“Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that is therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword. And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof, and shalt burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every whit, for the Lord thy God: and it shall be an heap for ever; it shall not be built again”* (The King James Bible). Such direct and explicit denunciation later served as the basis of religious persecution by Christians, especially in the Crusades.

Crusades were offensives to the “Holy Lands” organized by the Catholic Church and supported by Catholic European states, mostly conducted during the first quarter of the second millennium. Although they set out with the intention of “liberating” Jerusalem from “Muslim apostates”, they became famous for how awry they went. The Crusades were based on the idea that Muslims deserve to be brought into the subjugation of Catholic Christians and ended up in the persecution of Orthodox Christians, as well, especially with the Fourth Crusade. All the civilian deaths and ransacking of property based on religious differences in the Crusades qualifies it as an instance of state-sanctioned persecution of religious minorities (Baldwin et al.).

To give an example outside of the Western civilization, we may look at the Indian Partition, in which the Indian State was divided into what is now the Hindu-dominated India and the Muslim-dominated Bangladesh and Pakistan. In this conflict, the Indian state either took no action or supported the Hindu side as tensions between the two different religious groups rose and erupted into more and more serious instances of violence, producing an increasing number of casualties. The persecution of religious minorities continued in either state (for some time immediately after the divide, Bangladesh remained as a part of Pakistan), causing further immigration between the countries. This series of events truly constitutes an egregious instance of state-sanctioned, religion-driven persecution of minorities (Dalrymple).

At our present time, the Muslims of Southeastern Asia are facing another problem originating from religious issues: The forced immigration of the Rohingya Muslims due to the pressures from the government and military of Myanmar (also known as Burma) for them to flee to the neighboring Bangladesh. The Rohingya’s villages are being burnt by the military, their properties are being actively destroyed, humanitarian aid targeted at them is being blocked, they are not even being allowed their subsistence. These serve as disincentives for the Rohingya to stay in Myanmar, as their government wishes, and they immigrate across the border to Bangladesh, which mostly consists of Muslims but does not wish to accept refugees as it sees this as an incentive for the Burmese government to continue forcing the immigration of

Rohingya people. These atrocious acts of the Burmese government constitutes another instance of religious differences culminating in state-sanctioned persecution of minorities (“Myanmar Rohingya”).

### **Political Differences**

Especially in the 20th century, political differences have served as justification for the persecution of minority groups. One such example has been discussed above, the Nazi regime in Germany had prosecuted its political opponents, especially the Communists, alongside the ethnic minorities in the country (“The Third Reich”). The Third Reich, however, was not the only autocratic regime to do so; the Soviet Union banished political opponents to gulags in Siberia, which were labor and “correction” camps in which all types of political dissidents were corrected, many of whom died there or were “lost” (“Gulag”).

On the other hand, in the United States, state-sanctioned persecution of political groups may be observed in McCarthyism and the Red Scare. This was an era in which Senator Joseph McCarthy searched alleged communists who supposedly posed threats to the integrity of the United States -despite communism being a valid political ideology- and published lists of them, asking the people to boycott their employers or products if these persons were not separated from the products or companies (Achter). Due to the large number of followers McCarthy had, his attempts at political persecution were highly successful and worked to even take down prominent American figures such as Charlie Chaplin (Blazeski). These examples, together, highlight the fact that the government-sanctioned persecution of political minorities can happen in regimes both autocratic and democratic, both leftist and rightist, as long as there exists an individual with enough political influence.

### **Differences in Sexual Orientation**

Difference in sexual orientation has commonly been a focus of persecution over the last few millennia, especially for religious reasons, and such discrimination has largely been supported by the state, often in the form of legislation demanding the execution of non-heterosexual individuals. An example of religion supporting such persecution may be found in Leviticus 20:13, where it is stated that gay men should be executed, after heteronormatively describing homosexual intercourse (*The King James Bible*).

Due to the plethora of historical cases where states have sanctioned persecution of homosexuals, often citing religious reasons, none will be discussed here. Instead, a contemporary case, from a time when “Gay Pride” movement is gaining momentum and openly being non-heterosexual is no longer condemned by most of the population in Western nations, will be discussed: The persecution of homosexuals in Russia.

Despite the government officially claiming that homosexuality is not outlawed in the Russian Federation, the broadly defined crime of “gay propaganda” is, and laws regarding this charge are largely being used for the suppression of the gay community (“Q&A: Gay Rights”). Gay conversion therapy, however, is being largely publicized in Russia as a solution to the “problem” of being non-straight (Golubeva). Considering the fact that the same actions are not conducted about heterosexual groups, it can be said that this, too, is an instance of state-sanctioned persecution of minorities.

### **Other Differences**

Aside from the ones listed up above, many other bases other those listed above exist, for which state-sanctioned persecutions of minority groups may take place. One such example may be the disabilities of some individuals, serving as the basis of state-sanctioned persecution of them; such examples have been observed under the Third Reich, as an example (“The Third Reich”).

Whether one has served in the military, or not, may also serve as a basis for discrimination. For example, in Israel, discharge cards are given to those who leave the military or are excused from it. Considering the fact that Israel has compulsory service for all non-Arab citizens, employers frequently ask for discharge cards and are particularly interested in the reason of discharge recorded on top of them. It is known that potential employers discriminate against those who were deemed excused from military service, and some even list “Full Military Service” as a prerequisite for being employed in a job. In this situation, we can see a government-ran program affecting directly a minority of the society yet a very aware but artificially ignorant government making no change regarding the issue. Additionally, there exists legislation that officially prohibits those excused from military service from working in certain jobs (“Persecution”). Both of these circumstances constitute instances of persecution of minorities, sanctioned by the government.

A final basis for state-sanctioned persecution to be discussed here is economic and casteist discrimination. Firstly, we may look at the caste system in India. Despite existing for over three millennia, the highly-discriminatory caste system was abolished in the constitution of the independent Indian State. The caste system divided the Indian society into several classes called castes, with no switching between classes being possible during one’s lifetime but only through reincarnation. The privileges enjoyed by the different castes were remarkably different (“What Is India’s”), which is the reason why this system may be counted as an instance of persecution against minorities, but not necessarily by a singular entity: When it had existed, the caste system was held up mainly by traditions and values enforced by religion. This collective will and actions constituted the pressure that held up the caste system (“Explaining the Persistence”), as a non-centralized state that still has enforcement power.

The economic system of some 20th century Eurasian “Communist” nations was also reminiscent of casteist system, in so far as that the majority of the people in these systems were ruled by a ruling class, which had access to much better conditions of life than the rest of the population, as some of the ordinary people faced famines, poverty, and in some cases, even death. Considering the definition of minorities is a group of people with access to lower levels of power than the rest of the population, despite these impoverished groups of people constituting a majority of the population, the ordinary citizens in these regimes may be considered to be minorities and the discrimination made against them in centralized resource distribution (as compared to the members of the ruling class) may be classified as persecution (“Droughts and Famines”). However, this classification is up to debate.

Also subject to argument may be the classification of the modern, Western, capitalist system as an example of state-sanctioned persecution of economic minorities. As an example, we may consider the United States, where the political power is disproportionately concentrated in an oligarchy of two parties, the leaders of whom are selected through a primary process which, while it is supposed to be fair, is largely dependent on the contributions made by the elite, ultra-rich portion of the population, who in turn, benefit from the legislation passed by the elected officials, which serves as a source of societal friction against members of the lower classes accumulating the wealth necessary to move up the socioeconomic scale. This also works to create a segregated society, one facilitated through legislation that permits for this system to continue (Hutton); making it possible to classify it as an instance of state-sanctioned persecution, although that label is arguable.

## Major Parties Involved and Their Views

**United States:** The United States is one of the biggest advocates of preventing persecution, especially that of Christians around the world. Most US administrations, such as Clinton’s and Bush’s, have regarded anti-Christian persecution as one of the main elements of America’s US policy. Furthermore, according to Michigan State Law Review titled “America’s Role in Preventing International Anti-Christian Persecution”, “Americans [...] agree that believers enjoy relatively abundant religious freedom in this country. Unfortunately, American Christians seem to assume that the same level of persecution exists in other countries, when the reality of anti-Christian persecution worldwide is in fact far worse.”

**North Korea:** Huffington Post (HP) has declared North Korea as the world’s worst religious persecutor. Kim Jong-un, North Korea’s current leader, has many penal camps around the country; most of these camps keep people of faith hostile. In 2016, the British group Aid to the Church in Need published a persecution report on which it states that “Since 1953, at least 200,000 Christians have gone missing. If caught by the regime, unauthorized Christians face arrest torture or in some cases public execution.”

Those who believe in Buddhism also risk “imprisonment, forced labor, poor living and sanitary conditions, abuse, violence and torture.”, according to a report by Christian Solidarity Worldwide.

**Afghanistan:** Even though religious persecution is quite common in Afghanistan, the minorities that suffer the most are the Hazara people from the central highland region of Hazarajat in Afghanistan. Their persecution dates back to the 16th century, and since then, the persecution has not come to an end. The discrimination against this ethnic group was the highest during the time of the Taliban rule. The Taliban commander Mauwali Mohammed Hanif even told reporters that “Hazaras are not Muslim, you can kill them.”

**Myanmar:** Another ethnic cleansing ideology is ongoing in Myanmar. The government of Myanmar has been leading a military operation against the minority ethnicity, the Rohingya people. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein stated that this operation is the “textbook example of ethnic cleansing.” At least 313 thousand people have fled Myanmar since August 25, the time when the fighting broke out.

**Amnesty International:** Amnesty International has been fighting against state-sanctioned persecutions since its debut. It organizes events in order to raise awareness on the issue and to prevent the cases of persecution from further spreading and reoccurring. Beyond such organized events, Amnesty International signs petitions, donates to other charities in the regions of prosecution, speaks for those who are mistreated and persecuted, and advocates for the need of other organizations.

## Timeline of Events

<b>18 May 1896</b>	The US Supreme Court rules in the Plessy versus Ferguson case found that the “separate but equal” doctrine of Jim Crow laws to be constitutional (Duignan).
<b>30 January 1933</b>	Adolf Hitler becomes the new Chancellor of Germany, marking the beginning of the Nazi Third Reich (“The Third Reich”).
<b>12 March 1942</b>	The military-controlled relocation of the Japanese-Americans begin in the United States of America (“Japanese Internment Camps”).

<p><b>15 August 1947</b></p>	<p>India was officially partitioned into two new states, India and Pakistan, divided on religious lines, marking the end of years of violent, sometimes state-sanctioned, religious difference-based persecution in the region ("Partition of India").</p>
<p><b>May 1948</b></p>	<p>The Apartheid regime begins in South Africa, with the new elections forming a new, right-wing government ("Apartheid Timeline").</p>
<p><b>14 May 1948</b></p>	<p>The State of Israel was officially formed, establishing the grounds for many decades of persecution against the local Arab population ("Creation of Israel").</p>
<p><b>10 December 1948</b></p>	<p>The UN General Assembly passes the International Bill of Human Rights (<i>International Bill of Human Rights</i>).</p>
<p><b>21 December 1965</b></p>	<p>The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination is signed (<i>International Convention on the Elimination</i>).</p>
<p><b>16 December 1966</b></p>	<p>The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights are signed (<i>International Covenant on Civil</i>) (<i>International Covenant on Economic</i>).</p>
<p><b>10 May 1994</b></p>	<p>Nelson Mandela is elected as the President of South Africa, marking officially the end of the Apartheid regime ("Apartheid Timeline").</p>

<p><b>20 December 2006</b></p>	<p>The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance is signed (<i>International Convention on the Elimination</i>).</p>
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## UN Involvement

**United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR):** OHCHR has the duty to “*promote and protect all human rights*”, and it is its responsibility to assist the treaty bodies of human rights treaties, some of which are listed below, as well as the Human Rights Council. They are tasked with conducting research and publishing reports on human rights (“OHCHR in the World”), in addition to conducting “field operations” to support human rights in specific countries. These operations naturally include work against the persecution of minorities but can only happen with the assent of the government (“Who We Are”); thus, little can be done through their field operations to prevent state-sanctioned instances of persecution.

**United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):** UNHCR works to ensure the human rights of refugees are not being violated by ensuring asylum-seekers are able to settle in a secure location, in addition to facilitating their integration into the host society or their return home, once the threat against their human rights subsides. They also fund operations to provide refugees they need for nutrition, accommodation, and health (“What We Do”). They also conduct diplomatic work with governments to ensure the rights of minorities, particularly to ensure they are not persecuted (“Minority Groups”).

**United Nations Human Right Council (HRC, formerly the UN Commission on Human Rights):** It is HRC's duty to strengthen the protection of human rights globally, promote human rights, and to respond to emerging and serious violations of human rights. So, it would be its duty to immediately respond to any human rights crises that may arise in any part of the globe (“About HRC”), such as an instance of state-sanctioned persecution.

**OHCHR Treaty Bodies:** These treaty bodies, under the Human Rights Treaties Division of OHCHR, are bodies set up as a result of the ratification and acceptance of certain treaties on human rights, some of which are mentioned in the Treaties and Events section of this report below. The treaty bodies relevant to the issue include the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and the Committee on Enforced

Disappearances. The first of these bodies works to ensure the implementation of “civil and political rights”, and the rest of the bodies’ focus issues are apparent from their names. These bodies receive reports from their signatories and also monitor themselves directly the implementation of their respective treaties, in addition publishing reports based on their research detailing the current situation in the world with regards to their issues of focus (““Committee on Economic”) (“Committee on Enforced”) (“Committee on the Elimination”) (“Human Rights Committee”).

## **Relevant UN Documents**

While no significant UN document has been published on the issue of state-sanctioned persecutions of minorities as a whole, there exists a preponderance of UN documents on instances of the same, and some of those documents will be discussed here.

### **International Bill of Human Rights, 10 December 1948 (A/RES/3/217)**

The international bill of human rights was a six-part resolution including Part A, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which sets the basis for the human rights known to us today and the persecutions born out of their violations, as well as prohibiting discriminatory practices, declaring that all are equal before law, providing people of the world with the right to seek asylum from persecution, outlawing arbitrary punishment and intrusion in private life, disallowing honor and reputation tarnishing attacks, guaranteeing freedom of belief and expression, and many other rights violated by persecutor states. Part C of the Bill also is of particular relevance here, which is titled Fate of Minorities. It reminds Member States of the universality of the Declaration of Human Rights, acknowledges that each case of persecution of minorities is unique and that it should be treated as such. Lastly, Part E of the Bill calls the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to draft a covenant on human rights, as previously demanded by the predecessor of the HRC (*International Bill of Human Rights*), details about which can be found in the Treaties and Events section of the report down below.

### **Statement by the President of the Security Council, 6 November 2017 (S/PRST/2017/22)**

In this statement, concern is expressed for the military-conducted violence on and human rights violations faced by the Rohingya people, *“including those involving the systematic use of force and intimidation, killing of men, women, and children, sexual violence, and including the destruction and burning of homes and property”*, clearly stating that this persecution of minorities is a current and state-conducted one, making it one the delegates should keep in mind while drafting their resolutions. This statement is also significant because of its clear stance for the ending of all violence in the reason and against the further

provocation in the region, both of which are currently culminating in the observed persecution of ethnic and religious minorities through egregious means (*Statement by the President*).

### **Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar, 23 March 2016 (A/HRC/31/L.30/Rev.1)**

This Human Rights Council resolution also emphasizes the state-sanctioned nature of the persecution of the Rohingya people in Myanmar by pointing out the discriminatory legislation passed in Myanmar to justify the discrimination done against the Rohingya by the means of not providing them with citizenship, which deprives of them of many rights, especially access to education and health services, they could have otherwise accessed. This resolution also call upon the Myanmar government to recognize the international human rights treaties it has not thus far recognized and implement their suggested measures, as a means to prevent such persecutions from occurring in the future (*Situation of Human Rights*).

### **Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, 12 November 2015 (A/C.4/70/L.19) and Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, 12 November 2015 (A/C.4/70/L.22)**

These resolutions highlight the ongoing state-sanctioned persecutory practices of the Israeli government in the occupied Palestinian territories against the Palestinian inhabitants of the region and recommend some actions to some UN authorities while demanding Israel stops these practices. Persecutory practices against ethnic Muslims these resolutions impute to the government of Israel include “*excessive use of force, including that against peaceful protesters*”, “*death of and injury dealt to civilians*”, destruction of infrastructure owned and used by Palestinians, “*confiscation of property*” including land, “*forced displacement of civilians*”, arbitrary punishment of Palestinians, in some cases even for many decades, collective punishment measures, imposing an extrajudicial blockade, unjust detention of thousands of Palestinians, and even “*actions ... designed to change the legal status, geographical nature and demographic composition of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*”, basically amounting to genocide with limited killing (*Israeli Practices Affecting*) (*Work of the Special*). There is no doubt that these actions are of a persecutory nature and the affirmation of this resolution by the UN General Assembly clearly shows that a large portion of the Member States believe that such practices are currently being held in Israel. This conflict and these actions should serve as an impetus for the delegates of the house in resolving this issue and the case of the Palestinian should not be forgotten by the delegates while drafting resolutions.

## Treaties and Events

### International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

This covenant, after recommendation from the General Assembly for its drafting in the International Bill of Human Rights Section E, was signed in 1976 and lists some basic rights possessed by all humans, some of which are of particular significance to the issue at hand. Articles 2 and 26 of the Covenant bar an array of causes for possible discrimination, including, but not limited to, ethnicity, religion, and political position. Similarly, Article 24 demands all signatory states to not discriminate between children for the same causes when the provision of the fundamental rights of children under each country's law is considered and it is important to note that this includes the right to citizenship, which is currently being violated by some states, as stated in other parts of this report. Article 4 prohibits governments from persecuting against portions of its populations citing extraordinary circumstances and only allows restriction of human rights only for the entirety of the population, not a discriminatively selected part of it (*International Covenant on Civil*). The Covenant is of further significance when it is considered that most of the countries on earth have signed and ratified it, with the notable exception of China and some Islamic countries with some degree of Sharia Law implementation not having ratified it ("Status of Ratification").

### International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Similarly to the previously listed covenant, this covenant also works to ensure some rights of all human beings, this time with a heavier focus on living and working conditions, right to education, and other economic, social, and cultural aspects of life. It also has a similar Article 2, disbaring governments from implementing discriminatory policies among its citizens, on ethnic, religious, or political bases, when the implementation of the rights covered in the Covenant are concerned (*International Covenant on Economic*). Despite most nations in the United Nations having ratified this Covenant, Saudi Arabia and some other countries ran by Sharia Law, some small island nations, Cuba, and, most significantly, the United States of America have failed to ratify the Covenant ("Status of Ratification").

### Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

This convention deals with a minority group not covered by the two previous covenants, the people affected by physical disabilities, making it particularly significant. The Convention, for the most part, lists the rights and freedoms possessed by persons with disabilities, and states, especially in Article 5, that the signatory states should "*prohibit all discrimination on the basis of disability*" and also ensure equal protection and status in courts of law with other persons ("Convention on the Rights"). Most Member and Observer States have signed the Convention, with the notable exceptions of some African nations and the United States of America ("Status of Ratification").

## **International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance**

The significance of this convention to the issue at hand arises from the fact that enforced disappearance is a form of persecution, often sanctioned by the state. This Convention, if ratified, would prevent the extrajudicial detention and arrest of people by the ratifying states, as well as taking some additional measures to achieve the same ends. This practice is relevant to the present discussion since such measures are often used in a discriminatory manner, with the deliberate targeting of minorities of all sorts by the state ("International Convention for the Protection"). Many Member States, however, have failed to ratify the Convention; so many, in fact, that those who have actually signed and ratified the Convention will be discussed here. The ratifiers of the treaty, who make up less than a third of the UN Member States, are mainly European, Northwestern African, and Latin American nations. All P5 members except for France, Canada, Israel, India, Pakistan, and most countries in and around the Middle East have all failed to ratify the Convention ("Status of Ratification"). This lack of ratifications may be arising from the fact that such methods of enforced disappearance may be legal and frequently used in most of the non-ratifying nations and as the connection between extrajudicial arrests and persecution of minorities by the state are more than obvious, it might be a productive solution attempt in the resolution of this issue for the delegates to attempt to increase the number of signatories and ratifiers of this Convention.

## **International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination**

This Convention is of particular significance because it reinforces the prohibition on the banning of "racial" or ethnic discrimination by Member States, especially through its Article 2, which prohibits signatory states from committing ethnic discrimination and asks for the nullification and repeal of all legislation that commits discrimination on such a basis. Considering the fact that the most common cause of persecution of minorities by states is ethnic differences, the ratification of this convention by Member States constitutes an important step in resolving the issue at hand (*International Convention on the Elimination*). The nearly universal ratification of this convention therefore works to express Member States' shared desire to bring an end to all forms of state-sanctioned persecution of ethnic minorities ("Status of Ratification").

## **Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue**

With the Second World War, and the Holocaust conducted by the Third Reich that accompanied it, the peoples of the earth began gaining consciousness about the damages ethnic hatred, discrimination, and persecution might cause; in a reactionary movement, after the formation of the United Nations to ensure and maintain world peace, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as discussed above, was passed.

After that declaration, many other international treaties and their ratifications followed, and genuine improvements were made in achieving the end goal of eradicating state-sanctioned persecutions of minorities globally. However, as this progress was being made, some countries refused to ratify the new measures passed and new types of persecution became apparent and turned into concerns. Furthermore, refugee crises began plaguing the world, escalating tensions in communities around the world. Reactionary nationalist, right-wing movements gained power and extremist groups went on the rise. This nationalist surge caused the normalization of some discriminatory approaches to social issues and tarnished the progress made in preventing state-sanctioned persecutions of minorities.

## **Possible Solutions**

The resolutions drafted by delegates must approach the issue in a more general manner that can work to resolve many causes of persecutions at once. For the reasons stated above, in the “evaluation of previous attempts to resolve the issue” part, encouraging and cajoling or coercing more Member States to ratify the treaties listed above may also be contributive to progress being made in the issue.

As this is a highly multifaceted issue, the effects of attempted solutions to the issue will be best seen in the long term, with the education of the next generations and the establishment of non-discriminatory values; therefore, it might actually be too early to evaluate the effects of the attempts made in the resolution of this issue properly. The delegates should also consider the long-term outcomes of their resolution, as it will likely be those measures that will have the most effective results.

Furthermore, another issue is caused by the Member States not abiding by the Charter of the United Nations, as they are not abiding by the resolutions, treaties, or conventions they have previously ratified. In this case, an effective solution would be sanctions and restrictions that the United Nations Security Council imposes on that specific State.

Finally, most of the resolutions and treaties passed by the United Nations are international, meaning that they are not specific to a unique region. Regional conventions or treaties could be a more effective solution when it comes to the persecution of minorities, since regional NGOs and UN officials could collaborate in an easier manner.

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