

XXIX

TECMUN Jr.

Office of the United
Nations High
Commissioner for
Human Rights

XXIX TECMUN Jr.
Sessions Schedule

Miércoles 10 de noviembre

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|---------------------------|------------------|
| Ceremonia de inauguración | 9:00 – 10:00 h. |
| Receso | 10:00 – 10:30 h. |
| Primera sesión | 10:30 – 12:00 h. |
| Receso/comida | 12:00 – 12:30 h. |
| Segunda sesión | 12:30 – 14:00 h. |
| Receso | 14:00 – 15:00 h. |
| Tercera sesión | 15:00 – 16:00 h. |

Jueves 11 de noviembre

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|---------------------|------------------|
| Ceremonia magistral | 8:30 – 9:30 h. |
| Receso | 9:30 – 10:00 h. |
| Cuarta sesión | 10:00 – 11:30 h. |
| Receso/comida | 10:30 – 12:00 h. |
| Quinta sesión | 12:00 – 13:30 h. |
| Receso | 13:30 – 14:30 h. |
| Sexta sesión | 14:30 – 16:00 h. |

Viernes 12 de noviembre

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|-----------------------|------------------|
| Septima sesión | 8:00 – 9:30 h. |
| Receso | 9:30 – 10:00 h. |
| Octava sesión | 10:00 – 11:30 h. |
| Receso/comida | 11:30 – 12:00 h. |
| Novena sesión | 12:00 – 14:00 h. |
| Receso | 14:00 – 15:00 h. |
| Ceremonia de clausura | 15:00 – 17:30 h. |
| TECMUN GLOOM | 17:30 – 18:00 h. |

XXIX TECMUN Jr.
General Agenda

Secretary General: Vanessa Arroyo Jerez

Chief of General Coordination: Paola Ayelén Hernández Hernández

ASAMBLEA GENERAL

Subsecretary General: Andrea Michelle Martínez Lozano
Coordinating Supervisor: Ximena Serna Mendoza

Sesión Plenaria de la Asamblea General

President: Jade Artemis Gonzáles Díaz

- A) Estrategias para contrarrestar la epidemia contra el VIH y el Sida, en América Latina y el Caribe, partiendo desde las desigualdades existentes
- B) Acciones para erradicar la esclavitud sexual de mujeres y niñas en la región de China y Birmania

Primera Comisión de Desarme y Seguridad Internacional

President: Sofía Victoria Solís Uribe

- A) Contrarresto de la violencia cotidiana y la adulteración económica a causa del tráfico internacional de armas de fuego ilícitas entre grupos narcotraficantes de América Latina, con énfasis en la República de Colombia
- B) Fortalecimiento del desarme y desmovilización en el área del Estrecho de Ormuz, con énfasis en ataques nucleares y de fuego entre Estados Unidos de América y la República Islámica de Irán para prevenir un posible conflicto armado

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

President: Mariana Cortés Gallardo

- A) Strategies to ensure safe, affordable, and reliable innovation on nanotechnology in the field of healthcare to developing countries in Latin America and The Caribbean
- B) Strategies for the implementation of renewable energies in sub-Saharan Africa with emphasis on efficiency and reliability for the needs and resources of the area

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

President: Elena Ramírez Sandoval

- A) Strategies to cope with the massive illicit opioids trafficking in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan through the Balkan Route
- B) Measures to reduce the illegal production of injected drugs on Southeast Asia, focusing on HIV

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

President: Chiara Trejo Infante

- A) Actions to diminish government censorship in Belarus, focusing on the restriction of information and attacks on human rights activists and opposition
- B) Strategies to prevent human rights violations in South-Central Somalia, focused on al-Shabab's attacks on civilians and blockage of humanitarian assistance

Organización Internacional de Policía Criminal

President: Abraham Alejandro Carlos Mendoza

- A) Acciones para combatir la piratería marítima en el Golfo de Guinea con énfasis en buques de carga y plataformas petroleras
- B) Medidas para combatir el fraude cibernético de suplantación de identidad con énfasis en Europa

CONSEJO ECONÓMICO Y SOCIAL

Subsecretary General: Maria Fernanda Casillas Monrroy

Coordinating Supervisor: Anahí Amairany Pérez Escobedo

Counter-Terrorism Committee

President: Diego Márquez Sánchez

- A) Measures to mitigate the financing of the extremist group ISIL in the Middle East focusing on the illegal distribution of petroleum in the black market
- B) Actions to counter the interventions of the terrorist group Hamás in the Belic conflict between the State of Israel and the State of Palestine with a special emphasis on the consequences for the population residing in the Gaza Strip

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

President: Kenya Damaris Ruiz Arellano

- A) Measures to mitigate sexual violence as a form of hatred towards women part of the LGBTQ+ community in the region of South Africa
- B) Measures to address police brutality concerning the feminist movement as a result of the past women's day protests in the region of Mexico and the Republic of Chile

Comisión de Prevención del Delito y Justicia Penal

President: Emilio Díaz López

- A) Medidas para prevenir los homicidios de civiles por el uso indiscriminado de armas debido a la Segunda Guerra del Alto Karabaj entre Armenia y Azerbaiyán, con enfoque en los Principios Básicos sobre el Empleo de la Fuerza y de Armas de Fuego
- B) Medidas para prevenir cualquier método de tortura y detención indefinida en la prisión de Guantánamo, bajo dirección del gobierno de Estados Unidos de America, con enfoque al respeto de las Reglas Mínimas para el tratamiento de los reclusos de las Naciones Unidas y el Derecho Internacional

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

President: Paula Inclan Villamil

- A) Actions to ensure education in areas of armed conflict generated by extremist groups of Islamic Origin with a focus on Western Asia
- B) Measures to counter the appropriation of African culture in the United States of America with a focus on capitalisation of the fashion industry

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

President: Regina Montserrat Villalpando Camberos

- A) Strategies to face the humanitarian crisis in Bangladesh, as a consequence of the extreme migratory measures taken towards the Rohingya Muslim population in Myanmar
- B) Strategies to combat the migratory crisis of refugees in Southeastern Europe due to the civil conflict against the Bashar al-Ásad government in Syria

Conseil de l'Europe

President: Yunuen Blancas Cruz

- A) Mesures pour sauvegarder la liberté d'expression et d'information, notamment la liberté de la presse en raison de la pandémie de covid-19 dans les pays d'Europe du sud-est
- B) Stratégies pour assurer une utilisation correcte du certificat COVID numérique de l'UE et éviter les répercussions sur les droits de l'homme de la population européenne

AGENCIAS ESPECIALIZADAS Y ORGANISMOS REGIONALES

Subsecretary General: Javier Márquez Saucedo

Organización de los Estados Americanos

President: Andrea Burgos Mondragón

- A) Medidas para hacer frente a la violencia en procesos electorales con énfasis en las recientes elecciones de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos
- B) Medidas para frenar las injusticias socioculturales hacia los pueblos indígenas en Canadá con énfasis en el sistema jurídico

Comisión Económica y Social para Asia y el Pacífico

President: Valeria Loera Gómez

- A) Estrategias para abordar la crisis social tras el golpe de Estado en la República de la Unión de Myanmar, en el marco de la represión de manifestaciones pacíficas y la ley marcial
- B) Estrategias para contrarrestar las implicaciones económicas provocadas por fenómenos meteorológicos en el Océano Índico y el Sudeste Asiático

Comité Internacional de la Cruz Roja

President: Ana Lourdes García Nila

- A) Estrategias para la localización de víctimas de la trata de personas en México con énfasis en el reencuentro de familias y la ayuda esencial
- B) Acciones para mejorar las condiciones de vida en las prisiones de El Salvador con énfasis en la dignidad de los presos

Organismo Internacional de Energía Atómica

President: Ixtli Zenit Ramírez García

- A) Medidas para controlar la producción de uranio en la República Islámica de Irán con base en el Plan de Acción Integral Conjunto de 2015 con el objetivo de prevenir el desarrollo de armas nucleares
- B) Acciones para fomentar el uso de energía atómica de forma sostenible con el fin de combatir la contaminación atmosférica por carbonización con énfasis en Asia y el Medio Oriente

Security Council

President: Gerardo Calderón Huerta

- A) Measures to stop the criminal cybernetic groups commanded by Darkside based in the Russian Federation and Eastern Europe regarding the recent attacks made to The United States of America
- B) Mechanisms to address the growing crisis regarding naval disputes located in the South China Sea region

International Court of Justice

President: Fernanda Valentina Martínez Reyes

- A) Alleged Violations of the 1955 Treaty of Amity, Economic Relations, and Consular Rights (Islamic Republic of Iran v. United States of America)
- B) Alleged Violations of Sovereign Rights and Maritime Spaces in the Caribbean Sea (Nicaragua v. Colombia)

“Yet, in the face of oppression, plunder and neglect, our response is life. Neither floods nor plagues, neither famines nor cataclysms, not even eternal wars through the ages and centuries, have succeeded in reducing the tenacious advantage of life over death”.

- Gabriel García Márquez

For the present, the moment you read this,

Wanting to change the world is a dreamer's idea.

The world is full of monotony, conformism and intolerance. Years of violence, corruption, discrimination, injustice and selfishness have ended up dehumanizing the individuals who make it up, turning us into nothing more than fragments clinging to a concept of life that is far removed from goodness and innocence. We turn what we condemn into our normality, to such a degree that living under the incessant sensation of fear has been the only constant over the years. Wars, crises, inequality, weapons and crimes are just some of the words that make up the topics that you will discuss over the next three days, but today, I would like to ask you that beyond clinging to your position, you become that agent of change that remembers that mistakes are human and that empathy is a concept that can only prevail if we understand that the reality of this world is not limited to a shade of gray, but to a myriad of shades.

Humanity was condemned to freedom, to the ability to have options and create a criteria about them, implying a responsibility that goes beyond our understanding, since it is not limited to the selfishness of our actions but to the repercussions of this. In a world so full of inequality, frustration and hopelessness, it is easy to forget that the capacity for change still lies in the minds and hearts of those willing to see the truth. Beyond our passion for debate, we work on this model because we are dreamers and we faithfully believe that the world can change if we all dare to rebuild ourselves under the concepts of respect, forgiveness and empathy. We seek to remind you that your voice has value, just as your actions can represent the struggle of thousands of people. After four years in this project, I would like to share with you that my true reason for fighting for a better world lies with you and the people who make up TECMUN. It is here where I have found genuine hope for a better present and future, where I learned the importance of not being indifferent to your context, where I found the strength in my voice and where I found my place in the world. I want to remind you that it is that small spark of inspiration that we find in unexpected places that usually unleashes the greatest revolutions in our hearts and minds, that pushes us to take hold of that capacity for change that we are so terrified to explore and that ends up making us raise our voices against what we believe is right. Three days are not enough to change the world, but I hope they were enough to make you feel inspired. Don't be afraid to be a dreamer, to wish for a better tomorrow, and don't feel ashamed for being afraid to take the first step. At the end of the day, this is a path that we will walk together and never stop learning from. Today I just want to thank you for inspiring me once again and for being the reason TECMUN remains strong. *Hope*, that's what you and this model represent to me, so thank you for changing my life.



Vanessa Arroyo Jerez
Secretary General for the
XXIX TECMUN Jr.

"I am not throwing away my shot."

- *Lin-Manuel Miranda*

Participant,

A couple of years ago I met someone who could talk all day about TECMUN. I didn't really get it, to be honest with you, the way she talked like it was the most inspiring and breathtaking thing ever. I didn't get it for a while, until the very first model I was a part of. Seeing rooms full of delegates, like you, taking on a posture for three days to try and solve a problematic that probably nobody else cares to solve at the moment. Their excited looks, concentrated faces, and their firmness raising their hands to speak out is something that will always stay with me. There is something truly special in the way that hundreds of young people that have never met each other in their lives share ideas and possible solutions, all for a common, incredible end: the one of helping people in need.

I may not know you personally, but you, by reading this, have already given me hope in a better world. A world that can't only change, but that can be changed by people like you. Because, believe it or not, you have one of the greatest powers to ever exist: *courage*. Don't stick to the version of the world that has been sold to all of us. Believe in the power of a single, courageous voice that dares to defy the ones filled with indifference or that are deeply corrupted. Believe in the power of being alive, of being free, despite and *because* of the ones who are not. Be what many others can't or won't be. Believe in your own capacity, desires and goals, because when you want to be a part of change, your post doesn't matter; what matters is what you can do, want to do and dedicate yourself to do, and who you can become with all of that. I fully believe that you can grow to be and do something extraordinary, because you have taken the very first step by joining this model.

I have learned that TECMUN is not only a United Nations model; TECMUN is whatever you take from it. It can be an eye-opening place, an experience of growth, a space of support, and much more. But I can go as far as saying that it is an elemental opportunity. Many of us have gotten to know the pieces that make us up right here, and we put them together a little bit more with every day we spend being a part of it. Maybe the same will happen to you, or maybe not, but there is definitely something that you will take with you from the model.

It's time to stop waiting for the better. It's time to push away all of the doubt, and take a chance. Every single one of us, at some point, has been completely oblivious to the topics debated in this model. But, for you, that ends here and now. I have faith that the next three days will only be the beginning of a journey for you, of becoming a person who is aware of the challenges that surround millions of people in this world every day, and of wanting to do something about it. Lastly, I want you to know that, by being here, you have already inspired me in many ways. Today, at this very moment, you have taken your shot. And I know you will continue to do so.

Paola Ayelén Hernández Hernández
Chief of General Coordination for the
XXIX TECMUN Jr.

“There is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind”

Virginia Woolf

Delegadx:

Quiero que sepas que ya estuve en tu lugar, ya viví lo que estás a punto de experimentar, ya viví esos nervios, ese estrés, esa incertidumbre y esa emoción al entrar a la sala, y créeme que puedo asegurarte que todo valdrá la pena. El hecho de que estés leyendo esto, habla más de lo que te imaginas; habla de tu compromiso, tu capacidad, y sobre todo, tu sed de cambiar al mundo, porque así es delegadx, hoy ya eres parte del cambio. Es cierto que es imposible transformar al mundo en tres días, pero puedo asegurarte que este solo es el inicio, y que a partir de este momento, nunca volverás a ver el mundo como lo veías antes de vivir esta experiencia. Quiero darte un consejo, y te lo daré desde mi experiencia como delegada, mesa, presidenta y, ahora, como subsecretaría para la Asamblea General: no te limites a dejar tu ingenio, empatía y tus conocimientos en un debate, o en una hoja de 15 puntos. Estos tres días de trabajo arduo te irán enriqueciendo en muchas formas, pero te pido delegar, dalo todo, no tengas miedo, confía en tus habilidades y en ti mismo, tú puedes. De hoy en adelante, empieza por ti, y luego, marca la diferencia; haz hasta lo imposible por ser el cambio que tanto deseas ver en el mundo. Créeme que al igual que tú, el miedo en muchas ocasiones me intentó consumir, pero ese mismo miedo se ha convertido en fortaleza, y desde ese sentimiento, quiero pensar, protestar y luchar en voz alta. Si bien, al crecer nos damos cuenta que es una realidad que vivimos en un país machista y opresivo, donde como mujeres, escuchar historias de abuso es parte de lo ordinario, estando siempre bajo la incertidumbre de salir sin terror a no volver, y vivir sin saber hasta cuando. Hoy te digo que, también es una realidad que nunca más otorgaremos la comodidad de nuestro silencio, haremos ruido, porque la lucha por nuestros derechos es y seguirá siendo en voz alta. Finalmente me gustaría cerrar diciendo lo siguiente, por favor no te conformes, recuerda que el éxito no se mide únicamente por lo que logras, también se mide por todos los obstáculos y las barreras que superas. Espero con todo mi corazón que después de esta experiencia no puedas ver las cosas de la misma manera, espero que tus ganas de querer cambiar al mundo sean más fuertes que nunca, porque de eso se trata, de abrir tus ojos para tener esas ganas de innovar, crecer y mejorar.



Andrea Michelle Martínez Lozano
Subsecretara para la Asamblea General para el
XXIX TECMUN Jr

Hello, delegate,

I am delighted to welcome you to our beloved committee of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. You are now part of an outstanding community devoted to debating, comprehending, and reflecting upon contemporary social issues.

We have put together a handbook introducing the topics you will be debating in the days of the model. Please feel free to build up your knowledge on both subjects with investigations of your own. You can still dive deeper into the human rights situations that we present in the two research pieces ahead, focused on the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Somalia. Throughout your research, you will encounter shattering truths. The human rights problems presented in these pages may distress you: do not fret. I would like to propose an alternative. Instead, read the topics through the eyes of the entire nation you will represent as a delegate; reflect on it with the joint mind of a council of nations; discern with the hands of humanity. Feel the hunger Somalis face. Imagine the desperation of Belarusian protesters. Sense what you read. Grasp every word. Remember the problem. Remember the people. Remember the agony they feel. Only then may you come to realize how much is still needed to reach the ideal of human equality. Only then will you do something about it today or in twenty years' time. In the days of debate, we expect you to contribute with your ideas, enthusiasm, and collaborative efforts to construct an extraordinary XXIX TECMUN Jr. model. The amount of energy you put into TECMUN will dictate what you receive from it in return. If you decide to give your best from the moment to start reading this handbook, you will exercise your critical thinking and investigation skills. Applying this knowledge in debate will increase your open-mindedness, teamwork skills, and empathy. I admire your disposition to enter a model that will teach you so much in so little time. Above all, remember to be kind. Remember to enjoy the process, and to forget about the expectations your tutors, school, teacher, friends or even you have forced upon your delegation. Let this be an enriching experience to all of us. I am excited to grow and learn from what you have to offer to this committee.

Chiara Trejo Infante

President of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for the XXIX
TECMUN Jr.

Background

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was founded through the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action in December 1993. The committee was established to promote, protect and monitor the fundamental rights stated in the International Bill of Human Rights. The OHCHR enables governments, United Nations (UN) programmes and bodies, international organizations, and human rights institutions to preserve dignity and address civil rights violations by implementing human rights and enforcing the fulfilment of obligations on a global scale. The High Commissioner is the UN's maximum authority in regard to civil rights management. Donations from its 71 participating states provide 60 percent of its funding.

Faculties

The OHCHR seeks to assist states and other UN bodies in the promotion, protection, and monitoring of human rights, as well as human rights obligations, using the following strategies:

- Assisting governments and National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) by training personnel or by deploying human rights experts to national and institutional offices.
- Monitoring a country's civil rights situation by using statistical indicators and conducting social studies in a region of interest.
- Tackling threats to civil liberties by developing new international plans and policies.
- Raising awareness on the importance of civil rights protection by engaging in advocacy, promoting basic rights education and by encouraging international

cooperation.

- Advising state governments and other UN agencies on matters of justice administration, plans, reforms, and electoral processes by offering a human rights perspective.

Topic A

Actions to diminish government censorship in Belarus, focusing on the restriction of information and attacks on human rights activists and opposition

Background

Since 1994, the Republic of Belarus has been under the rule of President Alyaksandr Lukashenko. On August 9th, 2020, Lukashenko was elected for his seventh consecutive term in office. After the 2020 presidential elections, protests occurred throughout the country, as civilians and political opposition were not convinced of the authenticity of the results. In response, the government has implemented numerous tactics to silence critics. The latest Belarusian election has triggered a large quantity of human rights violations that disturb civilians and worry the international community. However, state¹ authority has not been held accountable.

In mid-2020, the veracity of the election results sparked controversy. On one hand, official government sources state that Lukashenko received “80.1 % of the vote at the presidential election” (Official Internet Portal of the President of the Republic of Belarus, 2021), claiming his popularity has only decreased by 0.02 % compared to his first election. On the other hand, some citizens believe the results were altered, as twenty-seven years later his popularity seems to have gone downhill due to the poor management of the recent pandemic and its economic implications. Similarly, the results were “regarded as fraudulent by numerous independent election monitors” (Amnesty International, 2020). In addition, the European Union (EU) has not recognized the outcome, declaring “the elections were neither free nor fair” (Council of the EU, 2020).

Following recent events, the Belarusian government has aimed to reduce opposition

¹ **State:** the government of a country (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

and improve the image of the administration. Consequently, authorities have introduced measures to silence criticism. To date, the main tactics include; detaining² political candidates and journalists, censoring mass media and the internet, and dispersing peaceful demonstrations. These actions directly violate the freedoms of information and expression, as well as the liberty of peaceful assembly and association, stated in Articles 19 and 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In response to public outrage, countries such as the United States of America (USA), the Dominion of Canada, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) have started to impose sanctions on the Republic of Belarus. However, without political opposition and proper international initiative, the administration may continue to deprive its citizens of fundamental rights.

Violent dispersion of peaceful protests

Since the evening of polling day in August 2020, citizens have organized peaceful protests to ask for fair elections. “The opposition claimed victory for Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya (...) and demanded Mr. Lukashenko's departure” (Louis, 2021). The rallies³ have been widely supported; so far, the largest demonstration has “attracted up to 200,000 people” (Lederer, 2021). To minimize gatherings and to discourage further protests, the government deployed Belarusian security forces as a tactic of intimidation⁴: during the demonstrations, police used excessive force and violence. The use of “tear gas, water cannons, rubber bullets, and stun

² **Detain:** to keep somebody in an official place, such as a police station, a prison or a hospital, and prevent them from leaving (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

³ **Rally:** a large public meeting, especially one held to support a particular idea or political party (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

⁴ **Intimidation:** the act of frightening or threatening somebody so that they will do what you want (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

grenades” (OHCHR, 2020), has caused serious wounds to protestors, varying from skin burns to traumatic brain injuries.

Furthermore, Belarusian security forces arbitrarily arrested⁵ thousands of civilians who attended the protests. Participants were detained without breaking any law stated in the Criminal Code of Belarus. Nevertheless, they were held illegally in overcrowded cells for days and were “denied food, water, access to the toilet and medical treatment” (OHCHR, 2020). The deputy for the Ministry of Internal Affairs rejected that anyone had been beaten or tortured. In contrast, by the end of October, 2,000 civilian testimonies alleged ill-treatment with “violent and random beatings, as well as acts of humiliation, insults, and threats.” (OHCHR, 2020). In the trial, detainees did not have access to lawyers, impeding⁶ the right to a fair trial, and those taken before a judge have claimed their cases lasted only a few minutes.

After the presidential election protests, there was a significant increase in journalist persecutions. The Belarusian Association of Journalists states that, of the 477 total detentions in 2020, 160 took place in August alone. The government illegally detained reporters who documented, recorded, live-streamed, or covered the demonstrations. Likewise, YouTube bloggers and other media workers who reported or broadcasted⁷ the protests have also been targeted. Most were threatened, beaten, and received charges like “organizing group actions disrupting the public order, (...) participation in unauthorized mass events and illegal

⁵ **Arbitrary arrest:** when an individual is arrested and detained by a government without due process and without the legal protections of a fair trial (The Center for Justice & Accountability, n.d.).

⁶ **Impede:** to delay or stop the progress of something (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

⁷ **Broadcast:** to spread information to a lot of people (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

distribution of media products” (Human Rights Watch, 2020). Authorities have not opened any criminal cases, although 25,000 detainees have pleaded guilty to Belarusian institutions.

Internet and media censorship

In the Republic of Belarus, it is a challenge for most local media outlets to publish political content. By reducing funds on small and medium publishers and by making large media companies economically dependent on the government, authorities are able to censor information. “Currently, the state directly controls all broadcast and most print media, totaling more than 600 mass media outlets and their websites” (Freedom House, 2020). In addition, broadcast media is predominantly⁸ owned by the state and some Russian stations. Thus, political opponents were rarely able to appear on broadcasting outlets during the election campaign period.

Belarusian authorities also restrict international media outlets. Many foreign presses’ accreditations⁹ were revoked in 2020. As a result, reporters from the BBC, Associated Press, Deutsche Welle, and Reuters were unable to cover the presidential election process (United States Department of State, 2020). After the polling results were published, the Ministry of Information censored “news media, political opposition, pro-democracy, and election-related websites, as well as communication and circumvention tool sites” (Xynou, 2020). The Ministry claims it banned around 70 internet sites; nevertheless, the official list of websites

⁸ **Predominant:** more noticeable or important, or larger in number, than others (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

⁹ **Accreditation:** to give official authorization to or approval of; to provide with credentials (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

is not available to the public.

Furthermore, authorities use its law enforcement bodies as a manner of repression¹⁰. The government does not have a judiciary¹¹ or court system that adequately protects the freedoms of expression, information, and assembly. In particular, recent amendments¹² to the law have increased the Ministry of Information's authority to filter data while failing to defend these fundamental rights. Firstly, the Amendment to the Law on Mass Events has banned public protests against the state. Moreover, a vague alteration on the Law on Mass Media has enabled media outlets to be banned if their content is considered “propaganda, harmful to national security, or extremist¹³” (Human Rights House Foundation, 2021). Finally, modifications to the Law on Telecommunications facilitates the blockage of internet access. The approved decrees permit the state to censor reports, publications, broadcast, and newspaper content. The amendments contradict the United Nations (UN) General Assembly Resolution that advises governments to promote “a safe and enabling environment for individuals and groups to exercise their rights to freedom of peaceful assembly, of expression and association, (...) in conformity with their international human rights obligations” (2018).

Additionally, internet blackouts have been a common technique utilized by the government to restrict the spread of information regarding protests. “Google traffic data

¹⁰ **Repression:** the use of force or violence to control a group of people (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

¹¹ **Judiciary:** the part of a country's government that is responsible for its legal system, including all the judges in the country's courts (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

¹² **Amendment:** a small change or improvement that is made to a document or proposed new law; the process of changing a document or proposed new law (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

¹³ **Extremist:** having or involving beliefs that most people think are unreasonable and unacceptable (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

shows that Belarus experienced major internet disruptions” (Xynou, 2020) in the days following the polling results. During the week of the election, access was restricted for 61 hours. Subsequently, mobile services were shut down on August 23, when a protest of 100,000 people took place in Minsk. Ahead of the blockage, a private internet service provider¹⁴ informed that there would be disruptions in its services due to “requests by the authorities related to ensuring national security” (Human Rights Watch, 2020). At the same time, telecommunication companies reported that authorities had asked them to restrict mobile signal on days of demonstrations. The August 2020 blackouts caused an approximate \$56M daily loss on online transactions. Deep Packet Inspection, the \$2.5M technology used to block web traffic, targeted “messaging apps, social media platforms, email providers, VPNs” (Xynou, 2020). Lukashenko has attributed these websites restrictions to “foreign forces” (Makhovsky, 2020). Correspondingly, the government organizations that monitor online activity back the president’s claim by accrediting the disruptions to an external DDOS41 attack.

Political prosecutions¹⁵ against activists and opposition

The recent elections have triggered a governmental campaign of intimidation against human rights activists and political opposition. More than “900 people have reportedly been treated as suspects in criminal cases” (OHCHR, 2020); this figure also includes protesters, journalists, and lawyers. Belarusian activists have been harassed, imprisoned, and deprived

¹⁴ **Internet service provider:** a company that provides its customers with access to the Internet and that may also provide other Internet-related services (such as email accounts) (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

¹⁵ **Prosecute:** the process of trying to prove in court that somebody is guilty of a crime (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

of their freedoms of assembly and association. Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, the leading opposition candidate in the August 2020 elections, claims that “more than 32,000 people have been detained and about 900 are suspects in politically motivated criminal cases” (Lederer, 2021).

In the months before the election, the government used two effective tactics to drop opposition candidates from the presidential race. Firstly, the Central Election Commission, a state body that controls the electoral processes in the Republic of Belarus (Belarus.by, n.d.), invalidated possible presidential nominees by discrediting the signatures they needed to register their candidacy. Secondly, political party leaders were investigated for alleged illegal activities, such as tax evasion, or for violating the Law on Mass Events. Nevertheless, political teams who support the current regime did not receive the same pressure from authorities. During the campaign process, the government allowed “approximately six (...) pro-Lukashenko political parties to operate freely” (United States Department of State, 2020).

Most recently, authorities dispersed opposition figures by forced exile¹⁶. Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya was the first person deported. In August 2020, she left the Republic of Belarus under government pressure. She currently resides in the Republic of Lithuania. Tsikhanouskaya is the founder of the Coordination Council for the Transfer of Power, formed after election results, to “protect the sovereignty¹⁷ and independence of the Republic of

¹⁶ **Exile:** being sent to live in another country that is not your own, especially for political reasons or as a punishment (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

¹⁷ **Sovereignty:** the power of a country to control its own government (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

Belarus” (Coordination Council for the Transfer of Power, n.d.). In September 2020, members of the Council were expelled from the Republic of Belarus. Victims of expatriation¹⁸ include Olga Kovalkova, Maria Kolesnikova, Anton Rodnenkov, and Ivan Kravtsov. Within a month, all senior members were either detained or residing abroad. Now, “not a single member of the Coordination Council (...) still lives in Belarus in liberty” (Louis, 2021). Political refugees have sought asylum¹⁹ in the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Poland, and Ukraine.

Similarly, civil rights activists have been subjected to political prosecutions. Even before the elections, the government had a hostile attitude towards non-governmental human rights organizations (NGOs). Authorities refused to register many NGOs and only cooperated with a selective few. In addition, they did not cover their work in state media and ignored their reports on human rights abuses. Following the protests in mid-2020, the state increased inspection and monitoring. Notably, the government has arrested human rights activists and employees of NGOs by imposing “unfounded criminal charges, opening bogus²⁰ criminal investigations, and conducting raids and searches” (Amnesty International, 2021).

The biggest raid took place on February 16, 2021, where officers from the Department for the Prevention of Organized Crime and Corruption searched 90 localities simultaneously. The targets included staff and offices of the Human Rights Centre Viasna, the Belarusian

¹⁸ **Expatriation:** (see “exile”) the use of force or law to remove someone from their own country (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

¹⁹ **Asylum:** protection that a government gives to people who have left their own country, usually because they were in danger for political reasons (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

²⁰ **Bogus:** false, not real, or not legal (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

Association of Journalists, and independent unions. The activists were charged with documenting and offering legal help to the opposition. The government has used Article 342 of the Criminal Code of Belarus, concerning the “organization of group actions violating public order” (International Labour Organization, 2016), to justify these detentions. After the raids in February, most activists were released without charges. However, two rights activists are detained, “facing criminal charges punishable by years in prison” (OHCHR, 2020).

International response

The international community has spoken out about the lack of transparency in Lukashenko’s elections. The EU deemed the presidential election unfair and has “imposed sanctions on 84 individuals, including Aleksandr Lukashenko” (European Union External Action, 2021), as well as seven Belarusian companies who supported and benefited from the regime²¹. Similarly, the USA and European countries such as the Federal Republic of Germany and the UK refused to recognize Lukashenko as president. In August 2020, the governments of various Baltic States, as well as the USA, the Dominion of Canada, and the UK banned the president from entering their national territories (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

In contrast, the Russian Federation has acted in favor of Lukashenko’s government. To enhance relations, President Lukashenko paid an official visit to the Russian Federation in May 2021. Subsequently, Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, expressed his support to the Belarusian government by “offering security assistance, providing significant financial support, and sending Russian propagandists” (House of Representatives, 2020) to work in

²¹ **Regime:** a government in power (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Belarus' state television. Although most Belarusians welcome Putin's assistance, they consider that the Russian Federation should remain neutral during the post-election period, so it does not take sides with neither the government nor protestors.

There have been a variety of international sanctions²² due to the ongoing human rights abuses imposed by the USA, the Dominion of Canada, and the UK. The restrictions are directed towards Belarusian individuals or entities that violate civil liberties. For instance, the Dominion of Canada has halted²³ trades, transactions, financial aid, good exportation, and offering services to individuals on their sanctions list (Government of Canada, 2021). Furthermore, the EU has tightened travel bans and asset²⁴ freezes, which have been implemented since 2004 (BBC, 2021). Similarly, airlines have diverted travel routes around the Republic of Belarus, after a Ryanair airplane was diverted by Belarusian authorities and forced to land in Minsk.

Several UN organisms have addressed the recent human rights violations. The UN has expressed its concern against the latest Belarusian presidential elections. Moreover, the Secretary-General of the UN has requested that authorities allow citizens to exercise their civil and political liberties (UN News, 2020). Furthermore, the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) hosted a debate in September 2020 and adopted a resolution that asks the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to monitor the conditions of the Republic of

²² **Sanction:** an official order, such as the stopping of trade, that is taken against a country in order to make it obey international law (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

²³ **Halt:** to bring to a stop (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

²⁴ **Asset:** a thing of value, especially property, that a person or company owns, which can be used or sold to pay debts (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

Belarus in the context of the 2020 presidential elections (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

In addition, various regional organizations have spoken against human rights violations in the Republic of Belarus, as a consequence of the abusive actions taken by authorities and security forces upon the opposition. Firstly, the European Parliament, an institution representing the European Union, has set up the Belarus Accountability Platform to gather evidence of human rights violations. The objective is to prosecute Belarusian nationals who have damaged civil liberties declared in the International Bill of Human Rights. Likewise, the Council of Europe, a human rights organization, has expressed its support for “human rights activists in the Republic of Belarus who have successfully compiled a substantial body of evidence of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment and identified presumed perpetrators²⁵” (Louis, 2021). Finally, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), requested the immediate and unconditional release of all journalists and media workers, as it considers Belarus, an OSCE participating state, has violated the organization’s “commitments related to freedom of expression and media freedom” (OSCE, 2021).

Obstacles towards the solution

The 2020 protests show that the majority of Belarusian citizens no longer support Lukashenko. However, the government still has the power to intimidate, censor, and commit

²⁵ **Perpetrator:** someone who has committed a crime or a violent or harmful act (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

other human rights abuses. In his years in office, Lukashenko has empowered the executive²⁶ branch of the government to dominate all other bodies. He created flawed amendments to the Belarusian Constitution in 1996 and 2004 to “broaden his powers, extend his term in office, and remove presidential term limits” (United States Department of State, 2020). Hence, authorities can manipulate ballots and create questionable election commissions.

Furthermore, the Republic of Belarus lacks adequate tools for the protection of civil liberties. On one hand, the state does not have a national human rights institution. On the other hand, Lukashenko’s regime has been reluctant to support local NGOs. Many civilians are not informed about the activities and services these NGOs provide. At the same time, Belarusians believe public institutions, such as the country’s police force and courts, are incapable of adequately responding to human rights abuses. A study conducted by the Freedom House organization shows that “63.8 % of respondents say they do not know where to go if their rights are violated” (2016).

In the same manner, Belarusian authorities have shown hostility²⁷ towards international human rights help. Neighboring countries have provided shelter to political prisoners and medical aid to victims of protest dispersion, and international NGOs continue to report on civil liberties abuses (Nechyparenka, 2011). But human rights aid inside Belarusian territory is limited. External human rights defenders often find it hard to enter the country, and the government obstructs the NGOs’ economic support by taxing their

²⁶ **Executive:** the part of a government responsible for putting laws into effect (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

²⁷ **Hostility:** when someone shows that they do not agree with or like something (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

international funding at a rate of 40 %. Furthermore, the Republic of Belarus is the only European country that is not registered with the Council of Europe. Even though it is an active member of the OSCE, Lukashenko has obstructed its monitoring incentives. In some cases, the administration has prevented UN representatives from operating in its territory (OHCHR, 2021).

Finally, Lukashenko's alliance with the Russian Federation diminishes the effectiveness of international sanctions. Western countries do not wish to add more bans, as this could deter²⁸ their relationship with the Republic of Belarus, and subsequently increase Lukashenko's political and economic dependence on the Russian Federation. Alternatively, if human rights violations continue, countries may consider implementing more sanctions against the regime. Nonetheless, the international community has not outlined specific goals it wishes to achieve with these restrictions. Besides, broader sanctions will directly affect the Belarusian population and economy.

²⁸ **Deter:** to make someone less enthusiastic about doing something (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

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Topic B

Strategies to prevent human rights violations in South-Central Somalia, focused on al-Shabab's attacks on civilians and blockage of humanitarian assistance

Background

In the rural regions of the Federal Republic of Somalia, the Islamist group *al-Shabab* poses a threat to citizen's human rights. Regardless of the harsh civil liberties violations the group has committed, the Somali population is forced to support the militia²⁹, due to its vast influence on the territory and region. Civilians suffer due to large-scale attacks on the population and the lack of international aid these regions receive. The United Nations (UN) states there are "5.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance," (2020) as civilians face insecurity, a lack of state protection, and a humanitarian crisis.

The Federal Republic of Somalia is a country made up of complex clans³⁰ and territorial divisions. Through independence declarations in the late 90s, the northern region was separated into two administrations: Somaliland and Puntland. These areas are not recognized as autonomous³¹ states by the international community, though they have avoided recent conflicts in contrast to the rest of the country. The other regions, commonly grouped and referred to as south-central Somalia, have withstood³² the occupation of militias for more than twenty years.

²⁹ **Militia:** a private group of armed individuals that operates as a paramilitary force and is typically motivated by a political or religious ideology *specifically*: such a group that aims to defend individual rights against government authority that is perceived as oppressive (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

³⁰ **Clans:** a group of people tracing descent from a common ancestor (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

³¹ **Autonomous:** (a region of a country) able to govern itself or control its own affairs (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

³² **Withstand:** to be strong enough not to be hurt or damaged by extreme conditions, the use of force, etc. (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

The presence of the insurgent³³ militants of *al-Shabab*, allied to al-Qaeda, wishes to establish a “fundamentalist Islamic rule” (Felter, Masters & Sergie, 2021) in the center and southern zones that are characterized by feeble³⁴ state government presence. Controlling most of the rural areas, the militia acts as a “quasi-government,” (Harper, 2020) by collecting revenue and non-voluntary tax payments from citizens, to produce up to “at least \$15m (£11m) a month” of profit. Somalis support the militia out of fear, whilst it continues to dominate the population without regard to civil liberties. Weakened by corruption and underdeveloped security forces, the state government has failed to prevent these human rights violations.

In addition to non-voluntary tax payments, *al-Shabab* has oppressed civilians as a way to inflict terror, reminding them of its influence and control of the area. Disturbing daily life, even mundane activities, have served as excuses for unlawful detentions. Furthermore, Somalis have witnessed political and religious executions, forced marriages, gender-based violence, and the recruitment of child soldiers. The insurgent group has targeted Somalis through practices such as torture, sexual harassment, abductions, and kidnapping. “By conservative estimates, it has killed over 4,000 civilians since 2010” (Congressional Research Service, 2020, p.1). The country needs rigorous international aid due to this ongoing conflict, floods, desert locust³⁵ swarms, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, *al-Shabab* blocks international support as a political strategy to reduce the Western influence

³³ **Insurgent:** fighting against the government or armed forces of their own country (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

³⁴ **Feeble:** very weak (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

³⁵ **Locust:** a large insect that lives in hot countries and sometimes flies in large groups, destroying all the plants and crops of an area (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

in the Federal Republic of Somalia, targeting attacks against service workers. In the international community, *al-Shabab*'s initial promise of providing security to citizens has lost its credibility once human rights were violated. The centralized, official government has also shown its incompetence³⁶ to tackle the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

Al-Shabab's territorial and economic influence

The first way in which *al-Shabab* maintains its power is through its territorial influence. The militant group currently controls around 20 % of the Federal Republic of Somalia (Security Council Report, 2019). The militia maintains rural areas in its dominance, which include “the Lower and Middle Juba and Lower Shabelle regions” (Overseas Security Advisory Council, 2020). To avoid central government intervention in the south-central areas, their main strategy is to intimidate populations in parts of the territory they already control. Thus, civilians are subjected to physical abuse, torture, degrading punishments, and the use of excessive force. Furthermore, *al-Shabab* has caused several forced disappearances, kidnappings, and arbitrary detentions³⁷.

The armed group is also interested in expanding its zone of influence. Hence, they have launched violent attacks in the main cities still under the government's control. A favorite spot for these assaults is the Federal Republic of Somalia's capital, Mogadishu. For example, in July 2021, an explosion targeting a tea shop in the capital took ten lives. The

³⁶ **Incompetence:** lack of ability to do something successfully or as it should be done (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

³⁷ **Arbitrary detention:** when an individual is arrested and detained by a government without due process and without the legal protections of a fair trial (The Center for Justice & Accountability, n.d.).

following week, at least nine people died after a car bomb, directed towards a top police chief, exploded in the city (Africa News, 2020). Similarly, they have raided³⁸ “foreign countries [such] as the Republic of Kenya and the Republic of Mozambique” (Human Rights Watch, 2019). To illustrate, in 2013, *al-Shabab* militants raided a mall in Kenya, massacring 67 people. Subsequently, in 2015, a siege³⁹ conducted at Garissa University College resulted in 700 students hostages and the assassination of 148 people. (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020).

Additionally, the *jihadist*⁴⁰ group asserts influence over the Federal Republic of Somalia by controlling a significant portion of its economy. During the first years of the militia, funds were provided by their “millionaire founder Osama bin Laden” (Esglobal, 2017), as *al-Shabab*’s origin was highly assisted by *al-Qaeda*, an extremist group with Pakistani roots. In later years, *al-Shabab* has found several ways to obtain its resources. To fund its activities, it has appropriated, confiscated, or gained control over enterprises⁴¹ located in south-central territories. Furthermore, *al-Shabab* funds itself through illegal activities, including drug trafficking, bank robbery, human trafficking, extortion, illegal mining, and illegal bank transfers.

Significantly, non-voluntary tax payments are widely implemented in *al-Shabab* territories, as they are a great source of income, as well as an effective tactic to intimidate

³⁸ **Raid:** to attack a place suddenly (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

³⁹ **Siege:** the surrounding of a place by an armed force in order to defeat those defending it (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

⁴⁰ **Jihad:** (in Islamic religion) the expending of utmost effort in upholding and defending justice (National Geographic, 2003).

⁴¹ **Enterprise:** a company or business (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

civilians. These taxes are collected by the insurgent⁴² group, justifying them as the payment for the supposed security they provide. Nevertheless, if people refuse to pay their taxes, the militant group displaces them and takes their properties, with violence and excessive use of force. The implications of this effective system of unlawful funding are grave human rights abuses towards citizens.

The impact on civilian population

The Somali people, especially those who live in rural areas, face constant violence and have been deprived of many of their civil liberties due to militia operations. Disputes between the government and the insurgents have generated displacements, injuries, and assassinations of civilians. An estimated 45 % of *al-Shabab*-related assaults are directed to civilians; it is estimated that 4,500 civilians have been executed since 2010 (Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, 2020). The armed group has burned homes in Somali villages, causing “more than 15,000 people to flee their homes” (Human Rights Watch, 2017). Some citizens have become victims of the militia’s abuse by being directly targeted after being accused of spying for the government. Most commonly, civilian casualties arise “through the use of the indiscriminate bomb and suicide attacks” (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2017). According to the UN, over 750 civilians have been targeted and attacked with “improvised explosive devices (IEDs), suicide bombings, and shelling, as well as assassinations” (Human Rights Watch, 2019). Raids have been reported in diverse localities,

⁴² **Insurgent:** fighting against the government or armed forces of their own country (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

including hotels, restaurants, clubs, shopping malls, military bases, and universities.

In the same manner, the extremist group exercises censorship in the populations it controls. Services such as television and the internet, including online newspapers, have been restricted, violating the freedoms of expression and information. Additionally, *al-Shabab* limits internet service providers and regulates smartphone use. Reporters Without Borders has noted that these are tactics to cut the marginalized populations “from the rest of the country and the world and reducing them to silence” (2016).

Likewise, detention⁴³ centers are used to unlawfully incarcerate people for crimes that go against *sharia*, a set of religious and civil Islamic-based rules: minor misconducts, such as not wearing a hijab, having inappropriate content on a phone, or playing soccer, result in imprisonment (US Department of State, 2020). Civilians fear engaging in everyday activities since *al-Shabab* has prohibited actions such as playing music in restaurants, attending the cinema, and cultural events such as art exhibitions, dance recitals, or music concerts. As a consequence, civilians are taken to overcrowded prisons with “poor sanitation and hygiene, inadequate food and water, and lack of medical care” (US Department of State, 2020). Detainees are held for long periods without following the established, Somali law procedures. Furthermore, several cases of maltreatment, threats, and torture during the interrogations have been reported to authorities. However, those complaints have been inefficiently

⁴³ **Detain:** to keep somebody in an official place, such as a police station, a prison or a hospital, and prevent them from leaving (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

prosecuted⁴⁴.

Blockage of humanitarian aid

Humanitarian operations in the Federal Republic of Somalia are dangerous, mainly due to *al-Shabab* blockages. The insecurity and instability across the country impede⁴⁵ humanitarian efforts to reach marginalized zones. An estimated 1.3 million persons are out of reach due to the *jihadist* group's control (Security Council, 2020, p. 7). Furthermore, because of the extremist group's threats, the local population rarely accepts charity. To avoid the risk of eviction⁴⁶, gatekeepers, landowners, and land brokers⁴⁷, contribute to the blockage of beneficiaries (Security Council, 2020, p. 8). Additionally, the challenge of providing humanitarian aid has increased due to the recent pandemic. Disruptions to imports and social distancing have halted or slowed many programs.

Al-Shabab has a history of showing hostility⁴⁸ to international aid agencies. It claims many of these organizations have political agendas. Sheikh Mukhtar Abu Zubair, one of the founders of the militia, has stated: "aid agencies and some countries declared famine and pretend they want to help you. They do so for these reasons: for trade purposes, to convert you from your religion and to colonize you." (Zimmerman, 2011). The group has accused

⁴⁴ **Prosecute:** the process of trying to prove in court that somebody is guilty of a crime (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

⁴⁵ **Impede:** to delay or stop the progress of something (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

⁴⁶ **Eviction:** the act of forcing somebody to leave a house or land, especially when you have the legal right to do so (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

⁴⁷ **Broker:** a person who buys and sells foreign money, shares in companies, etc., for other people (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

⁴⁸ **Hostility:** when someone shows that they do not agree with or like something (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

humanitarian workers of being Western spies. Likewise, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government staff face *al-Shabab* repression. Thus, militants restrain NGOs' efforts and harass their employees. In 2009, *al-Shabab* established the Office for the Supervision of the Affairs of Foreign Agencies (OSAFA) to monitor NGOs' operations. It attacked UN offices in the Bay and Bakool provinces, alleging that their practices were anti-Islamic. Since then, humanitarian agencies must follow OSAFA guidelines by demanding registration fees, illegal taxes, and forbidding female employees. The bans are enforced through violence, by raiding offices, destroying supplies, and kidnapping workers.

Furthermore, the armed group has used a variety of methods to obstruct humanitarian aid. It controls the main supply routes in 42 districts of the south-central region. To impede the stock of food and medicines from reaching citizens, the militia "confiscates or destroys supplies, or attacks suppliers" (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2019, p. 13). Assassinations, kidnapping for ransom, abductions, arrests, and detentions commonly occur in random road checkpoints. As a safety precaution, some beneficiaries use expensive, slower air transport to move materials; so far, there have been two incidents where militants target these aircraft. Thus, "in the first eight months of 2019, at least 51 humanitarian personnel were directly affected by violent incidents" (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2019, p. 14). Furthermore, the extremist group has damaged telecommunications⁴⁹ by vandalizing installations or by threatening the service

⁴⁹ **Telecommunication:** communication over long distances by radio, phone, television, satellite, etc. (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

providers to cut communication lines to slow down NGOs' work. By creating insecurity and violent hostility, it has managed to suspend humanitarian programs in the regions of Jubbaland, South-West State, Hirshabelle, Galmudug, Hoose, and Lower Juba.

International response

The state government has committed several violations of international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Firstly, Somali authorities have restricted media freedom and have not established "a National Human Rights Commission" (Human Rights Watch, 2020). Secondly, the Somali government has not yet prosecuted any accusations towards the *al-Shabab* militant members in civilian courts. Hence, the government of the Federal Republic of Somalia has received international complaints about the humanitarian crisis and the internal insecurity of its population.

On a regional level, the African Union (AU) has offered humanitarian assistance to the Federal Republic of Somalia. Nevertheless, it has been rejected by the militant group *al-Shabab*. The central government has requested the AU for mediation⁵⁰ to find a solution to the conflict. Therefore, the AU has organized military operations against *al-Shabab* (Human Rights Watch, 2020). The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has been operating since 2007 and continues to work for the safety and dignity of the Somali population.

The former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein stated that "the respect of human rights and the protection of civilians are essential as the foundation

⁵⁰ **Mediation:** the process of talking to two separate people or groups involved in a disagreement to try to help them to agree or find a solution to their problems (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

of a strong, legitimate State that works for the benefit of all its people,” since Federal Republic of Somalia has not been able to adopt a stable government (UN News, 2017). Several UN bodies have created humanitarian programs to aid citizens. The World Food Program offers online shopping and home delivery services to protect Somali women from insecurity in the streets. Likewise, the Somalia Humanitarian Fund coordinates the distribution of resources and has “allocated more than \$400 million for critical humanitarian response” (OCHA, n.d.). Furthermore, the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia overlooks AMISOM and aids the federal government in human rights issues.

In addition, the United States of America (USA)’s government has condemned the attacks performed by *al-Shabab* where thousands of people have been affected. It is currently involved with silent military interventions in the Federal Republic of Somalia. It has sent troops to fight against *al-Shabab*, and more than 200 air raids have been deployed. In 2020, former president Donald Trump requested troops to retire from Somali territory. Yet the United States Africa Command, responsible to the USA’s military operations in Africa, has expressed its desire to work on stabilizing the country

Obstacles towards the solution

Experts and representatives consider some international plans to increase stability in the country ineffective. On the one hand, representatives have addressed the efficiency of the USA's participation in Somali territory. The Trump administration increased drone strikes, going from “11 in Somalia in 2015, to 64 in 2019 and 54 in 2020, according to the non-governmental group Airwars” (Crilly, 2021). Subsequently, in July 2021, the Biden

administration resumed the raids, targeting *al-Shabab* militants. However, Representative Ilhan Omar, a Member of the United States House of Representatives of Somali origin, has pointed out that “the increase in strikes corresponded with an almost doubling of (...) attacks on civilians committed by Al-Shabaab” (Crilly, 2021). On the other hand, the UN-backed AMISOM operations have functioned in Somali territory since 2007. Yet its corresponding Security Council Resolution 2568 (2021) only authorizes their deployment until December 31st, 2021 (European Asylum Support Office, 2020). The UN plans to hand over AMISOM forces to the Somali National Army after said date. Nonetheless, critics are concerned that the slow development of Somali security forces will not be enough to counterattack⁵¹ the *jihadist* group by the end of 2021 (UN Meeting Coverages and Press Releases, 2020).

Likewise, the UN points out that the weak government infrastructures impede accountability for the human rights violations that *al-Shabab* commits against civilians. There is no formal government mechanism to track abuses, even though there have been several attempts to form an independent civil rights commission. In 2020, the Federal Republic of Somalia became a member of the UN Human Rights Council. Nevertheless, governmental bodies tasked with protecting human rights are still in their early phases of development.

Finally, the insurgent group poses an acute⁵² threat to the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections. As it works towards toppling the central government to establish

⁵¹ **Counterattack:** to make an attack in response to the attack of an enemy or opponent in war (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

⁵² **Acute:** very serious or severe (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

its own administration, the election days are susceptible to their attacks. To illustrate, a month before the polling process of 2019, Al-Shabaab raided a conference in Kismaayo, Jubbaland, massacring 25 civilians and a presidential candidate (Human Rights Council, 2019, p. 6). The insecurity is an obstacle to one-person-one-vote elections in the Federal Republic of Somalia. The country has not held this type of ballot⁵³ since 1969; instead, it relies on a complex clan system. Of the 15 million inhabitants, only 101 can to vote (BBC, 2021). Even though there were plans to attempt democratic elections this year, security problems and the ongoing pandemic have discouraged the government efforts. An inclusive ballot might improve the country's prospects for stability and security, while weakening *al-Shabab*'s influence.

⁵³ **Ballot:** the system of voting in writing and usually in secret; an occasion on which a vote is held (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

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Preambulatory Phrases

Preambulatory Phrases are used at the beginning of every Resolution Paper in order to give context about the resolutions made for the topic. Preambulatory Phrases must be written in italics followed by a sentence that gives said context. For each Resolution Paper there must be five sentences beginning with a Preambulatory Phrase.

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Affirming | Desiring | Noting with deep concern |
| Alarmed by | Emphasizing | Noting with satisfaction |
| Approving | Expecting | Noting further |
| Bearing in mind | Expressing its appreciation | Observing |
| Believing | Fulfilling | Reaffirming |
| Confident | Fully aware | Realizing |
| Contemplating | Further deploring | Recalling |
| Convinced | Further recalling | Recognizing |
| Declaring | Guided by | Referring |
| Deeply concerned | Having adopted | Seeking |
| Deeply conscious | Having considered | Taking into consideration |
| Deeply convinced | Having examined | Taking note |
| Deeply disturbed | Having received | Viewing with appreciation |
| Deeply regretting | Keeping in mind | Welcoming |

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Glossary for Resolution Papers

Operative Clauses

Operative Clauses are used at the beginning of every resolution within the Resolution Paper on the debated topic. It must be written in italics and bold.

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Accepts | Endorses | Notes |
| Affirms | Draws the attentions | Proclaims |
| Approves | Emphasizes | Reaffirms |
| Authorizes | Encourages | Recommends |
| Calls | Expresses its appreciation | Regrets |
| Calls upon | Expresses its hope | Reminds |
| Condemns | Further invites | Requests |
| Confirms | Further proclaims | Solemnly |
| Congratulates | Further reminds | affirms |
| Considers | Further recommends | Strongly |
| Declares accordingly | Further requests | condemns |
| Deplores | Further resolves | Supports |
| Designates | Has resolved | Takes note of |
| | | Transmits |
| | | Trusts |