

PORGMUN Conference – Committee Introduction: Human Rights Committee

The Human rights committee (UNHRC) is a subsidiary body of the General Assembly. It focuses, as hinted by its name, on the promotion and preservation of human rights. Throughout history, the committee has addressed several international clashes, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the committee is known for its staunch defence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, partly in response to the atrocities of World War II. Moreover, the body uses special procedures to address each specific situation in a given country. These special procedures are created by a mandate the committee defines in a resolution and often include independent experts or special Rapporteurs who help in clarifying the situation. In PORGMUN Human Rights Committee delegates will be encouraged to tackle the following issues concerning global infringement and protection of human rights:

- *Ensuring national terrorism legislations in order with democratic principles.* This topic deals with adjusting anti-terrorism legislation so that it is neither prone to abuse, nor insufficient to counter terrorism. The international community is witness to both situations where country states support terrorism to reach their own interests, and to situations where governments abuse strict anti-terrorism legislation to criminalize their political opposition.
- *Protecting political freedoms and human rights in post-soviet Eastern European countries.* The recent developments in Ukraine, as well as in Belarus show that there is still a long way to go for these states in order to achieve sovereignty. According to a resolution of the General Assembly, the Russian annexation of Crimea was illegal. How can the rights of Crimean citizens can be protected? This topic will be illustrated by a speech of Ales Michalevič, Byelorussian dissident, presidential candidate of 2011, and a John Humphrey Freedom Award laureate, who was formerly on the list of prisoners of conscience published by Amnesty International. He, having personal experience with the injustice in Belarus, is the most competent speaker on this topic.
- *Developing gender equality in Middle Eastern countries.* While a majority of the UN member states may recognize the rights of women, some Middle Eastern states have legislation directly oppositional to the internationally recognized women's rights. This is often, though not exclusively, caused by religious customs. Is there anything the Human Rights Committee can do to improve the situation?

Delegates taking part in this committee are expected to defend their country's views on human rights and propose timely responses to the issues stated above. These rights, which some of us may consider unalienable, are under serious threat in some parts of the world. If you believe you would like to defend human rights no matter how demanding it may be, this committee is exactly for you!