

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

BACKGROUND GUIDE



AGENDA

- 1. The Pushback Against the populist challenge in Cambodia.**

SECRETARY GENERAL'S ADDRESS

It is my pleasure to welcome all you budding delegates to the 5th edition of SelaQui International School's signature MUN conference-QMUN.

One of the country's premiere Junior MUNs, QMUN has grown from strength to strength in a short span of time. Since its inception, QMUN has had a special place for everyone in SelaQui, promoting negotiation, diplomacy and collaboration.

Seeing the current state of the world, there has probably never been a greater need to simulate the world's foremost diplomatic organization- The United Nations. With hostile ideals progressively plunging the world into anarchy, the people of the world must rally as one if we hope to extract ourselves from the precipice.

In this grand and often daunting scheme of things, one can make the mistake of neglecting the importance of the individual. This notion of reluctance - in various forms- acts as a catalyst for a myriad of issues that plague us. A delegate, therefore, has to shoulder enormous responsibility while evaluating events and formulating strategies to deal with their ramifications.

With QMUN'19, we hope to provide young delegates a glimpse of what it takes to strategise and coordinate at a global level while developing intrinsic skills of diplomacy and negotiation.

**Looking forward to welcoming you,
SECRETARY GENERAL**

CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS

Greetings Delegates,

As the Chairperson of the Human Rights Council, it is an honor to welcome you all to SelaQui International School MUN, 2019. I selected this very agenda so as to bring a sense of awareness to this generation and the young leaders of tomorrow. The awareness about the rights and the responsibility of the "Gullible youth" and come upon a solution for the greater good of this global village.

The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and make recommendations on them. It has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year. The Council is made up of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly.

The delegates are expected to follow the rules of procedure at all points of time. We are looking forward to have genuine thoughts and opinions based resolutions to the conflicts faced by the humanity today. Any form of plagiarism is discouraged. The delegates should be well informed of their foreign policies and are expected to research well in terms of all the aspects in regards with the provided agenda.

I will make sure apart from just reaching the resolution of the issues and conflicts, you all will have a memorable time here in QMUN'19.

I would be delighted to see you at Selaqui.

**Warm regards,
Monisha Surana**

SOME BEFOREHAND TERMS...

POPULISM

- Populism is a range of political approaches that deliberately appeal to "the people", often juxtaposing this group against the "elite". There is no single definition of the term, which developed in the 19th century and has been used to mean various things since that time.

HUMAN RIGHTS

- A right which is believed to belong to every person.

THE SITUATION SO FAR IN CAMBODIA AND GLOBE...

The surge of authoritarian populists appears less inevitable than it did a year ago. Then, there seemed no stopping a series of politicians around the globe who claimed to speak for “the people” but built followings by demonizing unpopular minorities, attacking human rights principles, and fueling distrust of democratic institutions.



FEW QUESTIONS TO LOOK UPON:

WHY DID FRANCE PROVIDE THE MOST PROMINENT TURNING POINT?

France provided the most prominent turning point. In other European countries—Austria and the Netherlands, foremost—centrist and center-right politicians competed with populists by adopting many of their nativist positions. They hoped to pre-empt the populists' appeal but ended up reinforcing the populists' message.

Emmanuel Macron took a different approach during his presidential campaign. He openly embraced democratic principles, firmly rejecting the National Front's

efforts to foment hatred against Muslims and immigrants. His resulting victory and his party's success in parliamentary elections showed that French voters overwhelmingly reject the National Front's divisive policies.

It remains to be seen how Macron governs. His move to make permanent many troubling aspects of France's emergency law was a disturbing early step. In foreign policy, he has shown leadership standing up to autocratic rule in Russia, Turkey, and Venezuela, and a willingness to support stronger collective European Union action against Poland's and Hungary's assault on rights. But he has been reluctant to confront widespread abuses in China, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. Despite this mixed record, he showed during his campaign that a vigorous defense of democratic principles can attract broad public support.

DOES THIS GET AFFECTED BY US ELECTION?

In reaction to the election of Donald Trump, the United States saw a broad reaffirmation of human rights from many quarters. Trump won the presidency with a campaign of hatred against Mexican immigrants, Muslim refugees, and other racial and ethnic minorities, and an evident disdain for women. A powerful response came from civic groups, journalists, lawyers, judges, many members of the public, and sometimes even elected members of Trump's own party.

Trump was still able to take regressive steps by executive action—deporting many people without regard to their deep ties to the United States, reviving a cruel and discredited policy of mass incarceration of criminal offenders, easing oversight against police abuse, and restricting global funding for women's reproductive health.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson largely rejected the promotion of human rights as an element of US foreign policy while more broadly reducing the role of the US abroad by presiding over an unprecedented dismantling of the State Department. He refused to fill many senior posts, dismissed several veteran diplomats, slashed the budget, and let the department drift. Many career diplomats and mid-level officials resigned in despair.

2015 ELECTIONS AND ROLE OF GERMANY:

Germany over the past year made headlines when the Alternative for Germany (AfD) became the first far-right party to enter its parliament in decades. That ascent cut into support for the ruling coalition including Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party and complicated her task of forming a new governing coalition. Merkel's preoccupation with domestic politics, and her ongoing defense of her courageous 2015 decision to admit large numbers of asylum seekers to Germany, have ironically deprived Europe of a strong voice for the rights of refugees and immigrants—the most contentious issue on the continent today. That also left Macron without his most obvious European partner for resisting authoritarian populism.

“FERTILE GROUNDS” - POLAND AND HUNGARY:

Central Europe has become especially fertile ground for populists, as certain leaders use fear of migration elsewhere in Europe to undermine checks and balances on their power at home. But there, too, the populists encountered resistance.

In Poland, public protests and strong international criticism including from EU institutions, their President vetoed the Polish government.

In Hungary, the threat of EU legal action—as well as international condemnation, including from the United States—impeded the government's plans to close Universities with European origin, and stood in opposition to the “illiberal democracy”.

VENEZUELA AND VARIOUS PROTESTS ON THE STREETS UNDER THE RULE OF MADURO:

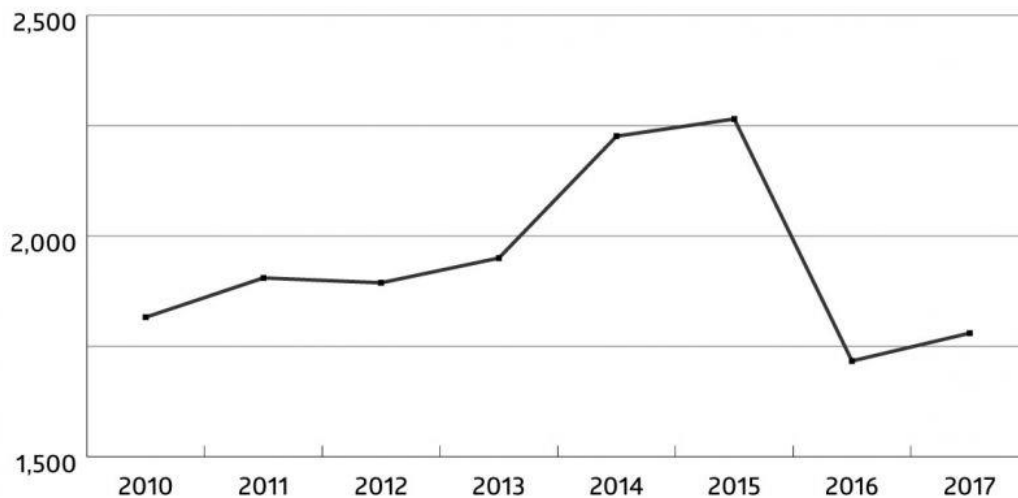
In Latin America, President Nicolás Maduro continued to eviscerate Venezuela's democracy and economy under the guise of standing up for the little people and against those whom he calls the imperialists. But as his rule became more brutal and autocratic, his corrupt and incompetent management of the economy became painfully apparent.

People took to the streets in large numbers to protest. Some officials defected from his government. An unprecedented number of Latin American countries shed their traditional reluctance to criticize a neighbor's repression.

Maduro managed to stay in office, due largely to the violent repression he was willing to deploy. Taking advantage of a subservient Supreme Court and the Constituent Assembly that he created to take over legislative powers from the opposition-controlled National Assembly, he carried out a brutal crackdown on dissent.

DEATH TOLL

2010-2017



SOURCES: Ministry of Interior, WHO

THE PARTICIPATION OF SMALL AND MEDIUM STATES



The past year saw an impressive willingness by small and medium-sized states to step into leadership roles when the major powers fell silent in the face of mass atrocities or even obstructed efforts to address them.

This is hardly the first time that smaller states have taken the lead on rights issues. The ICC, the Mine Ban Treaty, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Optional Protocol on Child Soldiers, and the International Convention against Enforced Disappearance were all secured largely by global coalitions of small and medium-sized states operating without or despite the major powers. Yet the willingness of

these alternative voices to take center stage was particularly important in the past year as major powers largely walked off the stage or even tried to upend it.

HOW ARE WOMEN AFFECTED BY THIS ISSUE?

Several of today's populists display a misogynist slant. In the past year, Russia decriminalized certain acts of domestic violence. Poland, already possessing one of the most restrictive abortion laws in Europe, is now limiting access to emergency contraception.

Under Trump, the US government reintroduced an expanded "Global Gag Rule" that vastly reduces funding for essential health care for women and girls abroad.

Yet there were rising voices in response. The Women's March, convened initially as an American response to the election of Trump, morphed into a global phenomenon, with millions gathering in support of women's human rights.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and French President Macron both identified themselves as feminists, with Canada making the pursuit of gender equality a central part of its aid programs and France announcing new measures to combat gender-based violence and sexual harassment. The Dutch, Belgian, and Scandinavian governments led efforts to establish an international reproductive rights fund to replace US funding lost through the Global Gag Rule, and Sweden pursued a "feminist foreign policy" that prioritizes the rights of women and girls in places such as Saudi Arabia.

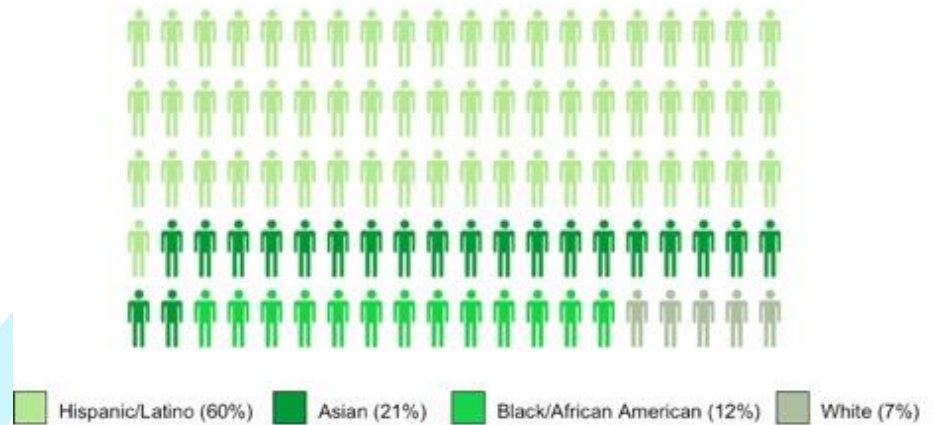
ITS IMPACT ON LGBT RIGHTS

Sexual and gender minorities were a common target of governments seeking to rally conservative backers, often as a diversion from governance failures. Whether

Putin in Russia, al-Sisi in Egypt, or Mugabe in Zimbabwe, leaders tried to stoke moral panic for their own political gain against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. Police in Indonesia, Tanzania, and Azerbaijan targeted LGBT people in public and raided private spaces with impunity.

Regardless of its form, heightened persecution of LGBT people is a good indication that the government is failing to deliver on public expectations. Yet the assumption that persecution of LGBT people would inevitably meet with approval is becoming less certain.

Cambodia Town Racial Composition



Most Latin American countries have moved squarely into the pro-LGBT rights camp in international forums, joining Japan along with many North American and European countries. Mozambique, Belize, Nauru and the Seychelles have in recent years all decriminalized same-sex conduct.

TIME TO ACT, NOT DESPAIR...

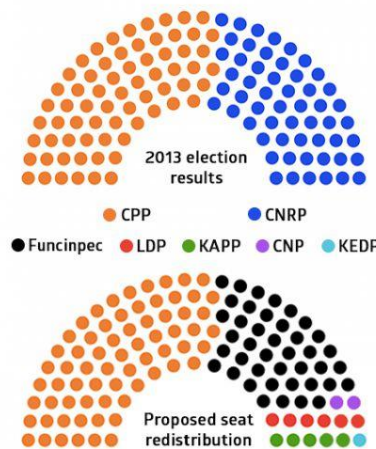
The central lesson of the past year is that despite the considerable headwinds, the defense of human rights can succeed if the proper efforts are made. Populists offer superficial answers to complex problems, but broad swathes of the public, when reminded of the human rights principles at stake, can be convinced to reject the populists' scapegoating of unpopular minorities and their efforts to undermine checks and balances against government abuse.

The inward orientation of Western powers wrought by the struggle over populism has led to an increasingly fragmented world where mass atrocities are too often left unchecked. Still, principled small and medium-sized countries can make a difference when they join forces and act strategically.

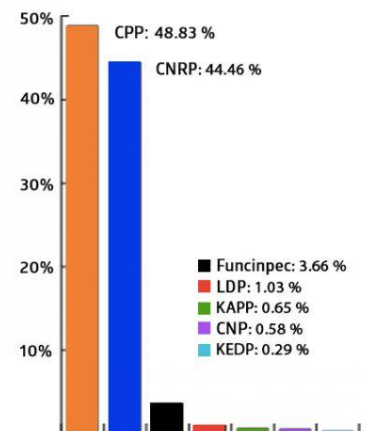
A fair assessment of global prospects for human rights should induce concern rather than surrender—a call to action rather than a cry of despair. As we enter the 70th anniversary year of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the challenge is to seize the considerable opportunities that remain to push back against those who would reverse hard-fought progress.

Human rights standards provide guidance but become operational only with champions among governments and ordinary people. Each of us has a part to play. The past year shows that rights can be protected from populist assaults. The challenge now is to strengthen that defense and reverse the populist surge.

National Assembly seat allocation
Out of 123 seats



Popular vote share
2013 National Election



The Phnom Penh Post

FEW NEWS ARTICLES...

HUMAN-RIGHTS PROBLEM IN CAMBODIA (NY.TIMES)

The spirited defense (letter, Dec. 19) of human-rights conditions in Kampuchea, formerly Cambodia, by members of a National Lawyers Guild delegation to that country does considerably less than justice to the report of the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights summarizing

our recent fact-finding mission to that area. Worse yet, it reflects a disturbingly politicized basis for assessing human-rights abuses...

UN Reviews Human Rights Situation in Cambodia

Cambodia's human rights record comes under review at the UN Human Rights Council today as part of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process...

Cambodia Faces Next Trade-Sanctions Move by the European Union

The European Union moved closer to imposing trade sanctions against Cambodia as a result of alleged human-rights violations in the country...

Cambodia: 12 NGOs prepare a petition to call on the govt. to address women's challenges

"NGOs draft petition to improve women's rights", 5 March 2019

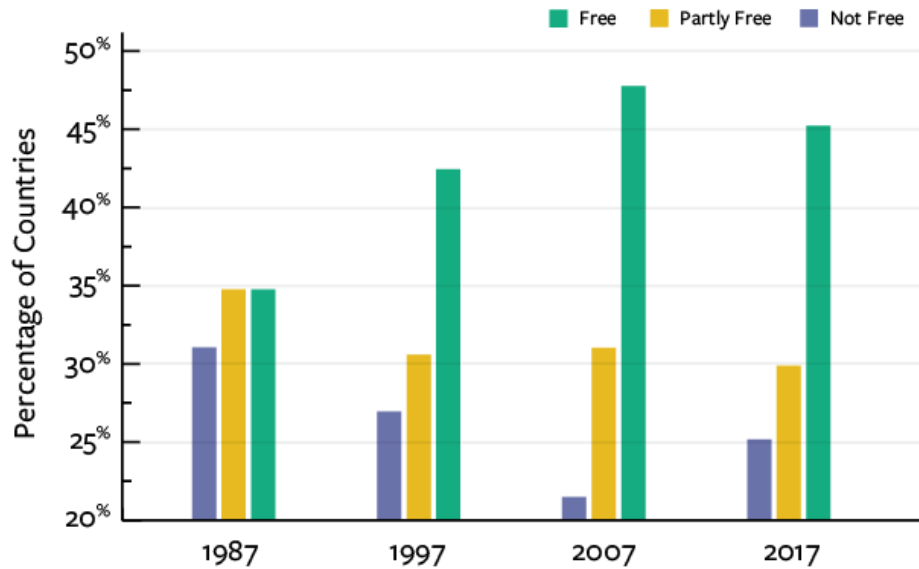
As International Women's Day approaches, 12 organisations have finished drafting a petition calling on the government to continue to address challenges women are facing, including violence, inequality and poverty...

UN expert calls on Cambodian government to 'choose path of human rights'

Phnom Penh — The United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights in Cambodia called on the government on Wednesday to "choose the path of human rights", while expressing serious concerns about restrictions on the media, freedom of expression and political participation ahead of a national election in July.

Freedom in the Balance

After years of major gains, the share of Free countries has declined over the past decade, while the share of Not Free countries has risen.



www.freedomintheworld.org

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FEW INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE DELEGATES...

- The delegates must represent one of the 47 current member states.

- **All delegates must present their opening statements.**
- **The opening statements must not exceed more than 60 to 90 sec.**
- **A GSL (general speaker's list) will be established and the floor will be open to points or motions.**
- **The main goal of the committee is to draft a resolution; issues that have not been discussed during the formal debate may not be included in the resolution.**
- **Use of Internet during the formal sessions is prohibited for research. Cell phones are to kept on silent during the session.**
- **The position paper are supposed to be content specific and should not exceed more than 2 pages under any circumstances.**
- **Delegates should establish their presence by raising the placards and declaring themselves as 'present' or 'present and voting'.**