



**Background
Guide**



**UNHRC:
HUMANITARIAN ISSUES
IN PAKISTAN WITH
SPECIAL EMPHASIS
ON THE FLOOR CRISIS**

2023

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Letter from the Executive Board

Welcome to this simulation of the United Nations Human Rights Council at Orpheus 2023. Kindly go through this study guide and make note of the pointer questions and research links provided as they shall be of utmost importance in ensuring a high level of debate during committee proceedings and it shall be expected that the delegates steer the discussion on those lines.

The given list of topics is not exhaustive and it is not intended to be. The list is simply indicative of pressing issues and topics of concerns which must be addressed and will give you a bird's eye view of the gist of the issue. The delegates are at full liberty to bring up any other relevant point

for discussion. We understand that Model UN conferences can be an overwhelming experience for first timers. We strongly suggest the MUNers to participate fully in the conference and if any doubt persists in their minds (either substantive or related to parliamentary procedure), they do not hesitate to clarify the same with the Executive Board.

The success of the UNHRC as a committee will depend on each delegate. It is imperative that the delegates come to the conference with a clear and decisive foreign policy as the representative of their respective countries.

Diplomacy and appropriate behavior is anticipated.

We hope to interact greatly with all of you in the committee. Please do not hesitate to contact us.

All the very best, and prepare well.

Best Regards!

Aryan Duggal, Co-Chairperson (9910037525, aryan.duggal123@gmail.com)

Credible Sources during the Committee

Evidence or proof from the following sources will be accepted as credible in the committee:

1. NEWS SOURCES:

a. REUTERS – Any Reuters’ article which clearly makes mention of the fact stated or is in contradiction of the fact being stated by another delegate in council can be used to substantiate arguments in the committee. [<http://www.reuters.com/>]

b. State-Operated News Agencies – These reports can be used in the support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any country as such but in that situation, they can be denied by any other country in the council. Some examples are:

i. RIA Novosti (Russia) [<http://en.rian.ru/>]

ii. IRNA (Iran) [<http://www.irna.ir/ENIndex.htm>]

iii. BBC (United Kingdom) [<http://bbc.co.uk/>]

iv. Al Jazeera (Qatar) [<http://www.aljazeera.com>]

v. Xinhua News Agency (PR China)

[<http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/china/>]

2. Government Reports: These reports can be used in a similar way as the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country. However, a nuance is that a report that is being denied by a certain country can still be accepted by the Executive Board as credible information.

Some examples are:

- i. Government Websites like the State Department of the United States of America [<http://www.state.gov/index.htm>] or the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation [<http://www.eng.mil.ru/en/index.htm>]
- ii. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of various nations like India [<http://www.mea.gov.in/>] or People's Republic of China [<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/>].
- iii. Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Reports <http://www.un.org/en/members/> (Click on any country to get the website of the Office of its Permanent Representative.)
- iv. Multilateral Organizations like the NATO [<http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/index.htm>], ASEAN [<http://www.aseansec.org/>], OPEC [http://www.opec.org/opec_web/en/], etc.

3. United Nations Reports: All UN Reports are considered credible information or evidence for the Executive Board of the UNHRC.

i. UN Bodies like the UNSC [<http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/>] or UNGA [<http://www.un.org/en/ga/>].

ii. UN Affiliated Bodies like the International Atomic Energy Agency [<http://www.iaea.org/>], World Bank [<http://www.worldbank.org/>], International Monetary Fund [<http://www.imf.org/external/index.htm>], International Committee of the Red Cross [<http://www.icrc.org/eng/index.jsp>], etc.

iii. Treaty Based Bodies like the Antarctic Treaty System [<http://www.ats.aq/e/ats.htm>], the International Criminal Court [<http://www.icccpi.int/Menu/ICC>]

NOTE — Sources like Wikipedia [<http://www.wikipedia.org/>], Amnesty International [<http://www.amnesty.org/>], Human Rights Watch [<http://www.hrw.org/>] or newspapers like the Guardian [<http://www.guardian.co.uk/>], Times of India [<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/>], etc. are typically not accepted as PROOF/EVIDENCE. However, they can be used for better understanding of any issue or on rare occasions, be brought up in debate if the information given in such sources is in line with the beliefs of a Government. Further, the information submitted as evidence citing reportage from sources such as

specified in this note may be at best, treated as having significance in terms of persuasive value – example: to cement one’s assertions, but never as binding, indisputable fact.

MUN Glossary

Bloc- a group of countries that form a logical combination because of geographical, economic, or cultural considerations (eg. G8, African bloc, Arab League).

Caucus- a forum where the rules of debate are suspended and delegates are able to gather in groups and freely discuss and write with one another (for others a bathroom or socializing break). Usually some of a committee’s most productive work is accomplished during caucuses.

EU (European Union)- an economic and political union created under the Maastricht Treaty in 1993, it comprises most of Western Europe and Germany, and is poised for future expansion into Central and Eastern Europe. Most customs regulations in Europe have now been abolished and a single currency is now in place, the Euro. As a political unit it has formidable power vis-à-vis the United States.

Foreign Aid- money given by one country to another for humanitarian or developmental purposes. It plays a key role in shaping foreign policy.

Foreign Policy- the attitudes and interests of a state towards external issues. Foreign policy can be influenced by a variety of factors, i.e. Military strength,

trading partners, history, domestic government.

Formal Debate- the committee follows a speaker's list, and each speaker is given a strict time limit within which to make their point. They must also formally yield the floor to questions, the chair, or another delegate. Rules regarding motions, voting and "right of reply" are enforceable only in formal consideration

Informal Debate- can be entered into by a simple motion and majority vote. The chair recognizes delegates wishing to speak, but there are no yields, time limits or opportunities to directly question one another. However, it offers the chance to proceed quicker through various issues that arise during debate. There are two types of informal debate or caucuses, moderated and unmoderated.

ICJ (International Court of Justice)- the ICJ is a body designed to resolve legal and territorial disputes between states.

Lobbying- refers to informal caucusing between a small group of delegates, usually outside the committee room while debate is still in progress. One may wish to lobby another delegate for support on a resolution or policy option, but use with caution.

Motions- All motions can only be made in formal debate. Motions must be made to open, close, postpone, or adjourn debate, to set the agenda, table the topic, or a caucus.

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)- security organization created in 1949 by Western powers to provide a collective force against the

Soviet Union. In the post-Cold War era it has taken on new responsibilities in peacekeeping and enforcement of international law (Bosnia, Kosovo).

NGO's (Non-governmental Corporations) - are organizations or associations that are not associated with a specific country or international political organization. Their aims can be broad (World Vision International, Amnesty International, Greenpeace) or quite specific (Doctors Without Borders) in their activities and goals. The United Nations has a history of working closely with NGOs on issues, especially relating to humanitarian projects.

Operative Clauses- are written in resolutions following the preamble. These numbered clauses set out actual solutions and initiatives for the committee to undertake.

Points- can be raised in formal or informal debate. There is one point that can interrupt a speech: Personal Privilege: if there's too much noise, heat/cold, etc...

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Three other points also exist:

Order: Factual or procedural error

Parliamentary Inquiry: a question on the rules and procedure of debate Information: general questions to the chair or another delegate

Preambulatory Clauses- these clauses go at the beginning of a resolution, and act to introduce the issue (concerns, previous UN actions, etc.). They

are not numbered.

Roll Call- a motion made in the voting procedure to individually call out each country's name for their vote.

Speaker's List- In formal debate the chair follows the speaker's list to recognize delegates. Your country's name can't be on it more than once at a time.

Veto Powers- the five permanent members of the Security Council (U.S., U.K., France, Russia and China) have the right to single-handedly veto a resolution by voting no.

Yield- In formal debate the delegate must yield his/her time at the beginning of their speech in one of three ways:

-to the chair: once the speech is over the chair takes the floor and moves on with the speaker's list.

-to questions: delegates can ask questions to the speaker for his/her remaining time. (A recommended practice)

-to another delegate: another speaker uses up the remaining time to give a speech, but cannot yield themselves.

Other Online Resources

The United Nations Website - <http://www.un.org>

The UN Development Programme - <http://www.undp.org/>

The UN Economic and Social Committee -
<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/> The UN Environment

Programme - <http://www.unep.org/>

The UN General Assembly - <http://www.un.org/ga/59/>

The UN International Court of Justice - <http://www.icj-cij.org/>

The UN International Law - <http://www.un.org/law/>

The UN Refugee Agency - [http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-](http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home)
[bin/texis/vtx/home](http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home)

The UN Security Council - <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/>

UNICEF - <http://www.unicef.org/>

Something to keep in mind You can also log on to YouTube and look at links simulating MUNs, like here https://youtu.be/aBh_RaX0gvs .Another very useful resource is this website that carries many MUN related tutorials. Feel free to browse through the internet, and utilize YouTube and www.bestdelegate.com as much as you can.

Brief on the Agenda

Agenda - Humanitarian issues in Pakistan with special emphasis on the flood crisis

Pakistan is affected by recurrent natural disasters and an ongoing nutrition crisis. The country also hosts the second-largest number of refugees in the world, predominantly from Afghanistan. Vulnerabilities are exacerbated by pervasive poverty and poor access to basic services, including safe water, sanitation and health

care, in many communities. Women and girls also face grave protection risks, including gender-based violence and harmful practices such as early and forced marriage. Pakistan is affected by massive monsoon rainfall and unprecedented levels of flooding and landslides. Damage to health infrastructure, shortages of health workers, and limited health supplies are disrupting health services. Significant public health threats include the spread of water- and vector-borne diseases, with outbreaks of diarrheal diseases, skin infections, respiratory tract infections, malaria, dengue, injuries, and more. With health services reduced, the management of non-communicable diseases are also affected. In addition, the loss of crops and livestock will have a significant impact on the nutrition and health of many communities who depend on these resources. The scale of the humanitarian crisis in Pakistan is unprecedented, with a third of the country under water. Significant human rights issues include credible reports of: unlawful or arbitrary killings, including extrajudicial killings by the government or its agents; forced disappearance by the government or its agents; torture and cases of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment by the government or its agents; harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; arbitrary detention; political prisoners; transnational repression against individuals in another country; arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy; serious restrictions on free expression and media, including violence against journalists, unjustified arrests and disappearances of journalists, censorship, and criminal defamation laws, and laws against blasphemy; serious restrictions on internet freedom; substantial interference with the freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, including overly restrictive laws for the operation of nongovernmental organizations and civil society organizations; severe restrictions of religious freedom; restrictions on freedom of movement; serious government corruption; lack of investigation of and accountability for gender-based violence; crimes involving violence or threats of violence targeting members of racial and

ethnic minorities; crimes involving violence or threats of violence targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or intersex persons; the existence or use of laws criminalizing consensual same-sex sexual conduct between adults; restrictions on workers' freedom of association; and existence of the worst forms of child labor. There is a lack of government accountability, and abuses, including corruption and misconduct by security services, often go unpunished, fostering a culture of impunity among perpetrators. Authorities seldom investigate or punish government officials for reporting human rights abuses or acts of corruption. Violence, abuse, and social and religious intolerance by militant organizations and other nonstate actors, both local and foreign, contribute to a culture of lawlessness. Terrorist violence and human rights abuses by nonstate actors contribute to human rights problems, with terrorist violence exceeding that of the prior year. Terrorist and cross-border militant attacks against civilians, soldiers, and police causing hundreds of casualties. Military, police, and other law enforcement agencies continued to carry out significant campaigns against militant and terrorist groups.

Flood Crisis

Since 1959, Pakistan has accounted for 0.4% of historic emissions and yet it is listed as one of the most climate vulnerable places in the world, according to joint findings by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. These floods alone have, by early estimates, cost the country USD 10 billion. The recent floods are a devastating reminder that the consequences of climate change are intensifying, underscoring the importance of states catching up with their adaptation and mitigation efforts. According to government reports, the flood damage in Pakistan is far-reaching,

leaving close to three quarters of a million people without access to safe and adequate housing. Large swathes of agricultural lands have been flooded, destroying crops and threatening the country's food supply. Damage to infrastructure and internet and phone connectivity is severely hampering rescue and relief operations. Climate change involves not only rising temperatures, but also extreme weather events. While flooding can be caused by a variety of factors, rising temperatures can make the likelihood of extreme rainfall much higher, overwhelming Pakistan's river embankments in some areas. The 2010 floods, which killed 1,700 people, were also found to be largely attributable to rising global temperatures. The destruction and death in Pakistan has shown how these floods risk entrenching existing inequalities and putting millions at risk of homelessness, hunger, ill-health and even premature death. The climate crisis is the prime suspect for the devastating scale of flooding in Pakistan, which has killed more than 1,000 people and affected 30 million. But the catastrophe, still unfolding, is most likely the result of a lethal combination of factors including the vulnerability of poor citizens, steep mountainous slopes in some regions, the unexpected destruction of embankments and dams, and some natural climate variation.

The floods have had a particularly devastating impact on people living in poverty as many of them live in inadequate and poor-quality housing along riverbanks, low-lying areas and areas that are difficult to reach due to lack of adequate infrastructure. Little has been done so far to protect these communities from the impacts of climate change. Women are particularly adversely affected by the floods. According to the **United Nations Population Fund**, there are almost 650,000 pregnant women in the flood-affected areas, with almost 73,000 women expected to deliver in the next month. More than 1,000 health facilities are either partially or fully damaged in Sindh province, whereas 198 health facilities are damaged in affected districts in

Balochistan. There is also a heightened possibility of women and girls being at risk of gender-based violence, according to UNICEF, owing to the breakdown of order and social protection mechanisms during a crisis. Menstrual hygiene must also be given its due consideration when developing relief programs, with the UNFPA estimating the victims of the floods to include 8.2 million women of reproductive age. Existing inequalities based on people's gender, socio-economic status, age, and other identities will no doubt be exacerbated by the floods. Marginalized groups, such as people living in poverty are bound to be much worse off.

Climate Change Impacts on Economic Sectors

Climate change will influence food production via direct and indirect effects on crop growth processes. Direct effects include alterations to carbon dioxide availability, precipitation and temperatures. Indirect effects include impacts on water resource availability and seasonality, soil organic matter transformation, soil erosion, changes in pest and disease profiles, the arrival of invasive species, and decline in arable areas due to the submergence of coastal lands and desertification. On an international level, these impacts are expected to damage key staple crop yields, even on lower emissions pathways. Shifts in the optimal and viable spatial ranges of certain crops are also inevitable, though the extent and speed of those shifts remains dependent on the emissions pathway. A further, and perhaps lesser appreciated influence of climate change on agricultural production is through its impact on the health and productivity of the labor force. In combination, it is highly likely that the above processes will have a considerable impact on national food consumption patterns both through direct impacts on internal agricultural

operations, and through impacts on the global supply chain. Agriculture employs 38.57% of Pakistan's workforce and contributes 22% to GDP, making potential climate impacts and adaptation needs in the sector a high priority. The five most important crops in the country, wheat, rice, cotton, sugarcane, and maize, are grown predominantly by subsistence farmers, and a large proportion of the nation's agricultural land is degraded. Around 80% of Pakistan's agricultural production area is irrigated. Damage to key cash crop yields, such as cotton, is a particular concern. Pakistan is the fifth largest producer of cotton in the world—the industry contributes 10% of the country's GDP and employs approximately 30% of the country's farmers, many of whom are rural women. Studies suggest Pakistan's crops are highly sensitive to changes in temperature and water availability, and that temperature rises in the region of 0.5°C–2°C could lead to around an 8%–10% loss in yield. Many crops are particularly sensitive to extreme heats and days of $T > 35^{\circ}\text{C}$ are projected to increase in frequency. With the exception of the northern mountainous region, projected yield declines are widespread, particularly for crops such as cotton, wheat, sugarcane, maize, and rice. The impacts of climate change on the livestock sub-sector are less clear and further study is required. However, the impact of the extended drought period between 2015–2017 which reduced livestock output by 48% in the worst affected districts highlighted the potential threat of future increases in drought frequency. The impact of extreme climate events on the agricultural sector in Pakistan can be very significant, raising concerns regarding any increase in their frequency attributed to climate change. Floods inundate fertile land, kill livestock, destroy standing crops, and reduce or eliminate yields.

Women Rights in Pakistan

Women rights mean privileges and freedom equal to those of men. Women rights refer to the fundamental rights in the political, economic, civil, social and cultural spheres. A gender-based violence crisis in Pakistan is depriving millions of women in Pakistan of legal protection and leaving them fearful for their rights and livelihood. According to the Women, Peace and Security Index, Pakistan is ranked 167th out of 170 countries in terms of women's health and wellbeing. In recent years, women in Pakistan have been engaging in protests to speak out against inequality and violence and demanding action from the government to improve women's rights in Pakistan. Women in Pakistan suffer an alarmingly high rate of domestic violence. The USIP estimates that 28% of women in Pakistan face some kind of physical violence in their lives before the age of 50. Because of the constant threat of violence against women, many women have to labor as domestic workers and often receive little to no wages as a result. Women account for 49% of the Pakistani population but receive only 18% of its labor income, according to the USIP. The Pakistani government often denies legal protection and social security to women of low social classes, particularly home-based workers. The crisis of women's rights in Pakistan is especially evident in environments like education and health care, where women cannot access social protections and face threats of violence. In 2018, the U.N. reported that only 48.6% of Pakistani women had their reproductive health care needs satisfied by the resources available to them because of these inequalities and injustices against women, women in Pakistan are more likely to live in poverty than men, while also carrying the burden of domestic work. Gender-based discrimination in education forces women at a social disadvantage. In 2021, the USIP found that women had a 22% lower literacy rate than men. The relationship between social disadvantages, threats of violence and poverty is a

vicious cycle for the women living in Pakistan. Because they experience discrimination in education and face threats of violence from men in power, they have to labor domestically and receive low wages, which keeps them in poverty. Women in Pakistan have not been silent in recent years about the injustices against them. In 2018, Pakistani women held the Aurat March on International Women's Day. Thousands of women rallied across Pakistan to demand an end to the gender-based violence that has been sweeping Pakistan for decades. The march became an annual tradition and women have gathered to collectively use their voices and fight against gender and class-based oppression for the most recent four International Women's Days. Pakistan ranks as the sixth most dangerous country for women in regards to domestic violence. Patriarchal and cultural norms greatly impact women's rights in Pakistan. Honor killings and violence within the home are prevalent.

Topics suggested for Research (in context with the agenda)

- Causes
- Political freedom in Pakistan
- Freedom of press in Pakistan
- Provincial Inequality
- Political abuse of Human Rights
- Humanitarian response to conflict
- Impact on mental health
- Discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities

- Silencing of Human rights abuses
- Blasphemy Laws
- Intolerance against minorities
- Forced conversions
- Solutions

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/asia-and-the-pacific/south-asia/pakistan/report-pakistan/>

<https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/pakistan/#:~:text=Significant%20human%20rights%20issues%20included,the%20government%20or%20its%20agents%3B>

https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/08/pakistan-deadly-floods-reminder-to-wealthy-countries-to-remedy-unfettered-climate-change/?utm_source=annual_report&utm_medium=epub&utm_campaign=2021

https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/15078-WB_Pakistan%20Country%20Profile-WEB.pdf

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/aug/29/monster-monsoon-why-the-floods-in-pakistan-are-so-devastating>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/initial-economic-losses-pakistan-floods-least-10-bln-planning-minister-2022-08-29/>

<https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/women-and-girls-bearing-brunt-pakistan-monsoon-floods>

<https://www.unicef.org/media/67346/file/The-material-risks-of-gender-based-violence-in-emergency-settings-2020.pdf>

<https://www.ifrc.org/article/pakistan-floods-six-months-humanitarian-needs-remain-dire>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/01/pakistan-pledges-for-flood-recovery-must-be-followed-through-with-meaningful-climate-action/>

NOTE

This background guide is only the tip of the iceberg in the information available regarding the agenda. Please do not restrict your research only to this document.