

Committee Guide

SOCHUM



Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (Third Committee of the UNGA)

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1. Presidents' Letter

Dear delegates,

Welcome to MUNCH III. We are Manuela Nieto and Gabriela Valencia, and we are pleased to serve as your chairs in this model. We hope to make this an enjoyable experience, one in which you can appreciate every moment.

We want you to expand your knowledge throughout the model and within this committee. Model UNs are a great opportunity to improve your debate skills, argumentative

skills, and research skills, among others, that you will discover throughout the course of the committee sessions.

In this debate, you will have the opportunity to discuss important topics such as religion and its impact on human rights and culture, as well as the rights of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, and how external factors influence the discrimination and treatment they receive. SOCHUM is a crucial committee within the United Nations, since its focus lies entirely on the protection and guarantee of human rights for the population in general, based mainly on cultural and humanitarian grounds.

We hope you have a great experience with the model. We know it is challenging to prepare for it, but we are confident that you will showcase all of your abilities. If you have any questions, feel free to share them with us. We are entirely at your disposal and will do our best to be as helpful as possible. See you at the debate!

Manu and Gaby.

2. Committee Information

I. History

SOCHUM (the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee) is the Third Committee in the United Nations General Assembly. It was established in 1945 as a way of guaranteeing the rights proposed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The committee, since the beginning, had the goal of protecting the fundamental rights of any individual worldwide, addressing cultural, humanitarian, and social issues mostly. Even though the committee's mission is primarily focused on protecting the aforementioned rights globally, to get to that, SOCHUM has to focus also on regional issues, in order to guarantee that every community, civilization, ethnic group, among others, is being properly treated, taking into account their cultural and religious beliefs, and always guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, finding a balance between religion, culture and rights.

II. Committee Structure

SOCHUM is part of the General Assembly of the United Nations as the Third Committee in it and is one of the six principal commissions of the UN. It is composed of the 193 delegations that are members of the United Nations, and is led by the president of the commission, the vice-presidents and a reporter, supported by the UN's Secretariat. The chair is chosen at the beginning of each period of the General Assembly.

Now, the committee during its sessions discusses the issues proposed on its agenda, while evaluating reports submitted by other UN's bodies. SOCHUM seriously considers what is being discussed in the HRC, ACNUR, and the C-24, and comes to an agreement (Resolution Paper) that must be written to send it to the General Assembly where it will be taken into final consideration.

III. Objectives

Generally speaking, SOCHUM goals are to protect all individuals' fundamental rights, guarantee their cultural and religious freedom, protect all human beings and advocate for their well-being.

More specific goals:

- To promote women and their rights
- To protect children in every aspect and advocate for those who don't have a voice
- To protect the indigenous community's rights
- To guarantee the accurate treatment of refugees
- To the fundamental freedoms through the elimination of racial discrimination ●
- To ensure the right to self-determination

Topic 1: *Freedom of Religion and Belief in a Polarized World: A Matter of Culture or Rights?*

I. Historical Context

Throughout history, the concept of religious freedom has stood at the core of the world's

greatest political, cultural, and ethical revolutions. Philosophers such as John Locke in *“A Letter Concerning Toleration”* (1689) explicitly said that *“the care of souls is not committed to the civil magistrate.”* He thought religion should be separated from government control. Religious intolerance is when people do that across the line, which is broadly speaking that the state should not get involved in somebody’s religious beliefs, and, at the same time, religious leaders shouldn’t try to use the power of the state as a way to resolve any kind of spiritual arguments. Voltaire, advocating for freedom of conscience, said, almost a century later, and writing in the aftermath of Europe’s devastating wars of religion and injustices, that *“tolerance has never provoked a civil war; intolerance has covered the Earth with carnage.”* For him, tolerance was not just about drawing boundaries between church and state, but about creating a moral principle within society itself; this being the disposition to let others believe differently without leading to violence or persecution. From his point of view, intolerance was not only a flaw of governance but also a deep human mistake that builds cruelty, division, and violence. On the other hand, tolerance created the possibility of peaceful coexistence of communities bound not by having exactly the same faith but by a respect for diversity. This talks about two sides of the same truth: that freedom of belief needs limits on power from institutions, and also a cultural commitment to tolerance and respect. We are reminded that faith is something no authority can touch or control, and that without tolerance, even the smallest ways of freedom fall into conflict. Such a long time after, this remains extremely relevant in a world where the lines between private conviction and human rights are still being threatened.

One of the earliest legal recognitions was the Edict of Milan in 313 AD, when Emperor Constantine ordered tolerance of Christianity in the Roman Empire. This marked such an important historical turning point toward the legal acceptance of religious diversity and away from persecution. Moving forward, however, challenges to religious freedom remained, sometimes violently. The Crusades, for example, were a series of religious wars that were started in the late 11th century by the Catholic Church, aiming to reclaim the ‘Holy Land’. These wars show the dark side of religious monopoly and power, where faith was intertwined with political and military ambitions, particularly impacting the Muslim community, which faced mass violence, displacement, and persecution heavily.

The monopolization of religious authority by the Catholic Church during the Inquisition remains one of the most known and tragic events in religious freedom history. They sought to enforce religious uniformity through torturing and prosecuting thousands suspected of heresy, people whose only “crime” was having different beliefs or practices. The methods they used reflected a huge problem, which is that the combination of state power with religion, where challenging official faith was treated as treason against the authorities. This repression caused communities to be silenced and years of long-lasting oppression.

The Jewish people have faced some of the most intense struggles around religious freedom, from forced expulsions in medieval Europe to violent mass murders and, the well-known, genocide of the Holocaust under Nazi Germany. The Holocaust stands as a devastating example of what can happen when religious identity is manipulated as a tool of hatred. The Nazis ripped Jewish people of their rights, humanity, and ultimately their lives in an attempt to erase an entire faith and culture. It is widely recognized that the acknowledgment and enforcement of freedom of religion as a universal right in international law gained relevance as an answer to these horrific events, shaping post-World War II documents that its main goal is to never allow such horrors to be forgotten or, especially, repeated.

Now, the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, and belief is contained in several international human rights documents. Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.” Furthermore, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights expands on this by establishing that no one shall be subject to coercion which would impair their freedom to have or adopt a religion or belief of their choice. However, the same covenant acknowledges that manifestations of religion or belief may be subject to certain limitations when necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others. Another critical instrument is the 1981 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, which calls on states to actively ensure protection from discrimination and intolerance in all forms.

European countries, too, have reinforced this right within their regional frameworks, notably in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950). Article 9 of this convention guarantees the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, recognizing that this freedom is tied not only to individual identity but to broader social harmony.

These documents put freedom of religion and belief as a fundamental part of the international human rights law, making it not just a cultural detail but a legal obligation for all. As it was said by the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, “freedom of religion or belief is a deeply entrenched human right, inseparable from human dignity itself”. Since religion and belief are not simply private matters, but are deeply rooted in cultural identity and societal structures, reality is way more complicated. Beliefs shape customs, laws, education systems, and the political discourse itself. They can promote community and solidarity, but they can also, under certain circumstances, contribute to division and violence. As a report from the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom highlighted: “across the globe, the failure to protect freedom of religion or belief often correlates with broader societal instability and conflict”. The prior just demonstrates not only the importance of the right itself and its recognition but also its need for protection to ensure that society does not fall again into authoritarian systems or that oppression and silence remain threatening.

II. Current Situation

Currently, we are in a world marked by increasing political, cultural, and ideological polarization, and that’s why the space for religious tolerance has become slimmer and more fragile. The prior leads us to question what polarization is, and why it plays such an important role in such a conversation. Polarization, then, is understood as the growing distance and hostility between ideological camps, which weakens the character of human rights and threatens the idea of a pluralistic society. So, the question is no longer just whether individuals can believe freely, but whether societies can hold space for different beliefs to coexist without leading to marginalization or violence. Despite international standards and declarations, violations are frequent and alarming. The UN Human Rights Council

emphasized in a press release in 2023 that states must “use human rights frameworks to promote freedoms of religion, belief, and expression”, recognizing that the disintegration of these rights is a clear sign of broader authoritarianism. Reports consistently show that restrictions on religion are not only growing but also spreading worldwide: More than four out of five people around the world live in countries with “high” or “very high” restrictions on religious freedom, either through government policies or social hostility. When this right is denied to one faith, it is only a matter of time before the pattern extends to others, and that’s what inherently been happening. This makes clear that the debate is not only limited to a few regions or countries; it is global, concerning, and deeply connected to questions about the role of culture, law, and democracy in shaping human dignity.

In the United States, religious liberty remains constitutionally protected yet politically challenged. An increasing tendency to use lawsuits to resolve issues about the balance between religious freedom and civil rights has been identified, with the Supreme Court prepared to decide in cases related to education and healthcare. The last is diminishing protections for LGBTQ+ communities, too, under the excuse of religious freedom, creating an environment where belief is weaponized against human rights. At the same time, initiatives like Project 2025, which explicitly aim to reshape education and governance in ways that privilege certain religious viewpoints, show how religion can be weaponized as a political tool rather than a neutral guarantee of pluralism. Civil society groups such as the Interfaith Alliance warn that under these proposals, schools could restrict practices in ways that undermine both religious diversity and democratic values. In Oklahoma, there’ve been active political movements that are trying to blur the line between church and state, threatening the secular nature of public institutions.

The dangers of politicized religion are even deeper in contexts where authoritarian regimes rule. Afghanistan under the Taliban showcases how religion can be used to erase entire groups from public life. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom all state that women and girls are excluded from secondary and higher education, barred from most employment, and heavily restricted in movement. The Taliban’s “Law on the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice” has codified systemic repression, effectively erasing freedom of religion for other groups and

relegating women to a second-class status. As USCIRF noted in 2024, religious freedom has been “eradicated” in Afghanistan, making it one of the world’s most worrying examples of how the erasure of this right immediately leads to violations of nearly every other human right.

In Nicaragua, the suppression of religion takes a different form but produces the same result. The Ortega government has escalated its campaign against the Catholic Church, expelling clergy, shutting down religious schools and charities, and even criminalizing public expressions of faith when linked to political opposition. AP News has reported that dozens of religious leaders have been imprisoned or exiled, while thousands of Catholic institutions have had their legal status revoked. Here, religion is not used to impose conformity, like in Afghanistan, but instead as a way to regime stability. Yet in both cases, freedom of belief is the first victim of authoritarianism.

In liberal democracies, restrictions are not absent either. France provides a clear example of how secular principles, when interpreted harshly, can end up in the exclusion of minorities. The government’s push to ban hijabs in competitive sports has been criticized because it is seen as a measure that violates basic human rights and targets Muslim women and girls unjustly. Instead of guaranteeing neutrality, such policies marginalize women who wish to participate fully in public life while expressing their identity. At the European level, the European Court of Human Rights has created and maintained restrictions on visible religious symbols in schools, provided they apply “equally” to all religions. Yet, young Muslims, particularly women, seem excessively affected, with discrimination rates three times higher than among their peers in the general population. These measures risk normalizing Islamophobia, presenting exclusion as a neutral expression of cultural tradition rather than a violation of universal and fundamental rights.

In Pakistan, there are laws designed in the name of protecting faith that can institutionalize persecution. According to USCIRF’s latest statements, blasphemy accusations continue to rise against Ahmadis, Christians, and Hindus. These laws not only legitimize violence but also create a constant environment of fear, turning personal belief into grounds for criminalization. Pakistan remains one of the world’s most concerning violators of religious

freedom, with systemic violence making minorities suffer terribly.

The prior situations are living proof of what was said in the 2024 Report on Global Religious Liberty: “progress remains stagnant or has worsened in most regions,” showcasing an alarming trend towards impunity and regression that represents a global failure to live up to commitments made under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The challenge is therefore not only to protect belief itself but to recognize how important it is to the entire human rights framework. As the prior shows, the international community cannot treat this right as only a cultural or secondary matter; it is primordial to dignity and basic democracy values.

The solutions, even if they seem extremely complicated, should aim for the same thing. Countries must seek to view freedom of religion or belief as a right that protects all human beings equally, rather than as a political tool to manipulate societies or defend majority traditions. Regulations should exist only where strictly necessary and proportionate, and when fundamental rights, the well-being of others, or their integrity seem directly threatened. The only way to eradicate these issues is to take this right seriously, to prioritize human dignity, and to avoid division and polarization to grow.

III. Key Points of the Debate

- Freedom of religion and belief must be recognized as a fundamental human right that transcends cultural and political differences, ensuring respect and protection for all human beings.
 - The use of religion as a political tool threatens the right execution of religious freedom, raising concerns about manipulation, intolerance, and the debilitation of democracy.
 - Finding a middle ground between cultural traditions with universal human rights is an important part, especially when some customs appear to oppose the protection of other fundamental human rights.
 - State regulation of religious practices should aim to preserve democratic values and public safety without violating individual rights to religion and belief. ●
- International mechanisms created to protect freedom of belief must develop to be

effective and impartial, avoiding using it as a tool of political and ideological manipulation in order to genuinely support tolerance and prevent authoritarianism.

IV. Parties/organizations involved

The parties and organizations involved in the protection of freedom of religion and belief are pretty diverse. At the international level, NGOs like the United Nations and its human rights mechanisms set the global framework, constantly reminding countries of their obligations under treaties and declarations. Regional organizations are another side of it all, interpreting these principles within their own contexts and sometimes legitimizing restrictions or, on the contrary, pushing for greater protections. Governments also play the important role of taking the lead in defending religious liberty and applying diplomatic pressure, while others actively restrict it, politicizing religion to consolidate their power. Also, advocacy groups and religious institutions document abuses, give voice to vulnerable communities, and demand accountability. Their work demonstrates that freedom of belief is not only a matter for states or international law but a living right defended every day by all of us, different faith communities, and human rights defenders around the world.

V. Guiding Questions

- How can the right to freedom of religion or belief be genuinely respected in a world where religion is often used as a political tool?
- To what extent should the state regulate religious practices to protect democratic principles without infringing on individual rights?
- Can cultural traditions be reconciled with universal human rights when they seem to oppose them?
- Should limitations on religious freedom ever be permitted to protect broader societal values, and where should that line be drawn?
- How can the right to believe freely be protected while also safeguarding societies from religious extremism?

Topic 2: *The violation of the Rights of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) by addressing Systemic Racism, Xenophobia, and Discrimination and its impact on Human Rights and cultural aspects*

I. Historical Context

● Refugees

The term refugee started as a need to name the people that had been displaced in the framework of World War I and later World War II. The process began in 1921, with the initiative of the League of Nations to give these people rights and international recognition. This process culminated three decades later with the adoption of the 1951 Refugee Convention, led by the United Nations in the aftermath of World War II, and the adoption of the 1967 Protocol which gave more protection and opportunities to the refugees.

The rights of thousands of people had been violated during the second “Great War”, especially among the Jewish community who suffered all kinds of discrimination, but mainly racism and xenophobia mostly propagated by Adolf Hitler and absorbed by most of the Dutch population. This widespread persecution highlighted the urgent need for an international framework to protect individuals from such systemic human rights abuse.

Of course, this is not the only case of such violations; it is simply the most well-known and striking, as it embodies many of the very injustices the United Nations was founded to oppose (discrimination, inequality, genocide, etc.). Besides, it is the most extreme case of discrimination in modern history, and it is important to know how much society has evolved since then.

To talk about how political leaders have an enormous influence on the population in this sort of topics, it is needed to understand what a hate speech is. As the United Nations stands: “*hate speech refers to offensive discourse targeting a group or an individual based on inherent characteristics (such as race, religion or gender) and that may threaten social peace*”. Based on this definition it is easier to understand why political leaders have such power with their oratory and their discourse, they can absolutely change the ideology of millions of people by being convincing and manipulative, using stereotypes, racism, gender discrimination, xenophobia, among other factors. In order to illustrate this influence more

clearly, it is essential to examine specific cases of political leaders whose hate speech has shaped public perception and exacerbated discrimination.

1. Adolf Hitler: Germany

In the afterwards of the “Great War”, Germany was devastated economically, socially, politically, etc. This was the main reason why Adolf Hitler started his political career, to avenge Germany from the injustice and betrayal that from his point of view the country had suffered. The base of Hitler’s politics was nationalism and antisemitism, always promoting that with the removal of the Jewish community Germany was going to be what it was before the World War I. To sustain these ideas, Hitler discourse was mainly about how the Jewish were responsible for Germany’s economic situation, political instability, and social decay. He painted them as foreign agents whose only purpose was to take advantage of the country’s difficult situation and who had betrayed the nation during the war. His speeches framed the Jews as a hostile community who was gaining monetary power, dominating the finance, spreading the communist ideology and corrupting German values, making them the enemies of the people.

This campaign, led to anti-Jewish laws, based mainly on the race of these people, dividing the world into high and low races, being the German the highest one, and the Jewish the lowest one. According to the once Chancellor of the Third Reich, Jews were germs, communists, war profiteers, thieves, a danger to international security, disloyal to the country, and the opposite of what Germany should be. Based on all these arguments he did anti-Jewish boycotts, book burnings, and an antisemitism campaign, which gave rise to the Holocaust where nearly six million Jewish were murdered, one of the biggest and cruelest genocide of all history.

This case proves completely how the power of oratory can make a whole community turn against refugees, migrants, and foreign people, which can cause horrible consequences.

2. Joseph Stalin: USSR

During Stalin term as leader of the USSR, the fear of losing the greatness the country had achieved and the soviet supremacy in which the nation’s ideology was based on, he started

what was called “Stalin’s Great Terror” a time where he persecuted the minorities that were part of the USSR (Poles, Germans, Finns, Estonians, Latvians, etc). These operations were led by the NKDV (People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs) and supervised by Stalin himself. The operations included campaigns to arrest, torture, execute and deport members of these minorities, around 335,513 people were arrested and more than 70% were executed. The motivation of these operations was the possible betrayal of foreign states who could serve as spies or traitors, threatening the security of the country. However, this was more of an excuse than anything, what Stalin promoted in his discourse was that to maintain the “Russification” it was necessary to eliminate the different nationalities that affected the country’s identity and ideology, and who wanted to undermine the Soviet unity, mainly highlighting the danger of foreign influence. This was a huge violation of some of the Human Rights, such as the right to life, identity, cultural expression, human dignity, and freedom.

Once again it is demonstrated that political speeches, policies, and measurements can end up into widespread discrimination, systematic human rights violations, and even the normalization of violence within societies.

● IDPs

The displacement of people in the framework of armed conflicts and therefore violence has been an issue for a long time. Forced displacements are extremely hard for people who experience them, as they lose everything they own (their home, culture, traditions, even family) and have to start a new life. In Colombia, for instance, forced displacement by illegal armed groups since the 50’s, when the firsts insurgent armed groups emerged in response to political exclusion, social inequality, and rural neglect, is one of the most critical issues of the country.

Historically, IDPs have been victims of political and economic exclusion, have been neglected by the authorities, have been discriminated against because of their ethnic origin, and have been stigmatized as conflicting. This has led to a culture of violence that comes from violence, meaning that physical violence (armed conflict) is leading to other forms of violence (the ones mentioned above).

Colombia is only one example of a global phenomenon: internal displacement has also marked countries such as Sudan and Syria, where armed conflicts and ethnic persecution have generated millions of IDPs. Unlike refugees, who are protected under the 1951 Refugee Convention, IDPs lack a binding international instrument, although efforts such as the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the 2009 Kampala Convention in Africa have tried to address their situation, they haven't done it successfully. Today, the number of IDPs worldwide surpasses the number of refugees, showing the urgency of the issue.

II. Current Situation

• Definition

To develop the topic, it is important to know the definition of the key concepts of it, such as: Refugee, IDPs, Racism, Xenophobia, and Discrimination; to later explain the relation between all of them.

There is a difference between a refugee and an IDP, basically consists in the fact that refugees are people displaced by conflict and violence, who are requesting or have obtained asylum in a country other than their country of birth, while internally displaced persons have to move from their homes for the same reasons but continue to live in their country of origin. As defined by the UNHCR: *"A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence."* And also defined by the UNCHR: *"Internally displaced people, referred to as IDPs, have been forced to flee their homes by conflict, violence, persecution or disasters, however, they remain within the borders of their own country."* These people have rights and it's the country's in which they are staying duty to protect them.

Defined by the Cambridge Dictionary:

Discrimination: "treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their race, gender, sexuality, etc."

Racism: *"treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse*

way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their race, gender, sexuality, etc.” and “policies, behaviors, rules, etc. that result in a continued unfair advantage to some people and unfair or harmful treatment of others based on race”

Xenophobia: *“extreme dislike or fear of foreigners, their customs, their religions, etc.”*

With these definitions it can be concluded that racism and xenophobia are forms of discrimination, and they lead to treat people differently in an unworthy and undignified way. These forms of discrimination are the ones from which migrants who are leaving a difficult context and are looking for a better future suffer the most.

● Refugees

Unfortunately, society has not evolved as much as everyone thinks. Nowadays, discrimination against immigrants has brought the attention of the International Community, with the most recent case being Donald Trump’s hate speeches against them and treating them like criminals. The rejection towards the immigrants that comes from one of the world’s most important political leader has caused concern worldwide, making people question if the treaties and mechanisms that refugees already have are enough for them to be protected. Trump is polarizing more a world that’s divided enough, is encouraging people to discriminate against each other, and is promoting racism and xenophobia, which demonstrates that the cycle of violence continues to be perpetuated.

There are numerous cases of this kind, not only in the United States, but in Turkey, South Africa and Sudan also, among other countries. This makes people wonder if it is just an ideological problematic, or if it is related to the uncontrolled migratory situation that has made different nations apply more rigid restrictive policies or measurements that sometimes are appropriate but often end up worsening the problem.

To get a better understanding of the topic, it is important to know that racism, xenophobia, violence and other kinds of discrimination are not only consequences but also causes of migration. Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers often leave their country of origin looking for better opportunities, better treatment, security and protection of their rights. However, it is

not as easy as it should be, often the welcoming to a new country is hostile, and to get to have the proper rights and be treated the way they should, refugees have to sort out different awkward situations that alter their quality of life. Often, immigrants are blamed for social and economic problems, for crime and unemployment and for taking opportunities away from native-born citizens. The reasons mentioned above tend to create a stereotype in most cases promoted by political leaders that puts the population against foreign communities. To exemplify this, it is useful to analyze specific cases of political leaders whose speeches and policies have reinforced xenophobia and discrimination, directly influencing how society perceives and treats migrants.

1. Donald Trump: United States

The current president of the United States, Donald Trump, is known for his radical ideology and controversial speeches, in which one of the main topics are immigrants and refugees. Now, having cleared that, it is crucial to analyze the way he speaks about them and refer to them to completely understand why his discourse is making the situation much worse. Trump's rhetoric has always been linked to xenophobia, racism and the undermining of immigrants, having them as an excuse that according to him prevents the process of "Making America Great Again".

Some nationalities have been stigmatized with stereotypes that the president confidently spreads across the country. Trump frames immigrants mostly from Venezuela and Mexico as a threaten to security and social order, taking extreme measurements to "make sure" that they won't affect in any way the American territory. However, his speech is correlating with the raising of hate crimes and xenophobic attitudes which not only affects migrants and refugees but is also counterproductive for the country, its order, and its international perception.

The president has managed to associate immigrants with risk, illegality and instability, and through its attempts to limit the entry and settlement of refugees and immigrants, as well as expelling those already residing in the country, it has repeatedly infringed on fundamental human rights.

Trump's administration implemented several controversial measures that reflected his

rhetoric, such as the 2017 “Muslim Ban,” which restricted entry to citizens from several Muslim-majority countries, the 2018 family separation policy at the southern border that was widely condemned as inhumane, and the 2019 “Remain in Mexico” policy that forced asylum seekers to wait in unsafe conditions without access to proper protection, not to mention the controversial policy aimed at identifying when a Venezuelan is allegedly linked to the criminal organization “El Tren de Aragua” where the criteria used rely on stereotypes that are highly discriminatory and xenophobic, making the procedure inadequate for proper identification. Beyond policies, studies have shown a strong connection between his discourse and social consequences, areas where Trump held rallies saw a measurable increase in hate crimes, FBI data reported a rise in racially motivated violence during his presidency, and surveys revealed that exposure to his speeches increased prejudicial attitudes toward immigrants and minorities.

The “Trump Case” allows us to understand that by equating all immigrants with criminals, terrorists, or in some cases drug traffickers, we are only exacerbating a discriminatory and violent situation that does nothing but divide the world instead of uniting it to make it a better place.

2. Recep Tayyip Erdogan: Turkey

From decades now, there has been a complicated migratory situation implicating the Syrians and Turkish, which has not improved significantly throughout the years. In 2024, Türkiye hosted over 2.9 million Syrians under temporary protection plus approximately 195,000 asylum applicants from other countries (Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran).

However, even though these numbers seem impressive, the Turkish government on behalf of the president Recep Tayyip Erdogan has taken some measurements that have undermined their refugee status. As stated by the Human Rights Watch: *“Many Syrians and other refugees had their protection status deactivated when their identity documents were cancelled or address verifications failed”. This pushed people into irregularity and left them vulnerable*”. Besides, the Human Rights Watch also stated: *“Xenophobic violence against Syrians amidst rising hostility to refugees, stoked by political parties regularly weaponizing the issue in their*

political discourse, also continued". This allows us to conclude that the situation of refugees in Turkey, particularly Syrians, remains highly precarious. Despite hosting millions, government policies and administrative measures, such as deactivating protection status through document cancellation or failed address verification, have undermined their legal security, pushing many into irregularity. Additionally, xenophobic attitudes and political hostility exacerbate their vulnerability, leaving refugees exposed not only to legal uncertainty but also to social discrimination and violence.

3. Conclusion

With both the United States and Turkey it is possible to exemplify how political leaders, their discourses, hate speeches, and measurements affect not only their country, and their refugees, but also the international community by spreading their ideology worldwide. It is crucial to find effective policies to guarantee refugees' fundamental rights, international legislation that controls the way in which any leader expresses about immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, without undermining their right of free expression, but taking into account the consequences of their discourse, only with the purpose of giving refugees and asylum seekers the proper treatment.

• IDPs

Now, moving forward to the Internally Displaced Persons, there has not been much progress either, and the situation is serious, considering that even though this issue has been present in our society for decades, no organization has been able to elaborate a binding international document or treaty that formally recognizes their rights. In the actuality, over 70 million people are internally displaced across the world due to armed conflict, violence, natural disasters, and human rights violations, yet their legal status remains weak, and their protection overlooked.

Many of the IDPs belong to marginalized ethnic or religious groups that are considered as minorities, and are often excluded from essential services, employment, and political life. Hosting communities may view them as a problem or a threat, only worsening their vulnerability. Without legal recognition or protection, IDPs continue to be among the most neglected populations worldwide.

In Colombia, decades of armed conflict have resulted in millions of internally displaced persons, particularly affecting Indigenous, Afro-Colombian communities and the rural population. Despite government programs that aim to provide assistance, many IDPs live in precarious conditions, lacking adequate support and facing social exclusion. In Syria, the ongoing conflict has forced millions of people to flee their homes multiple times, creating one of the largest IDP crises in the world. With these two situations we can evidence that the absence of binding legal frameworks leaves people exposed to violence, limited access to basic services, and extreme vulnerability. These cases illustrate that without formal recognition and protection, IDPs remain among the most marginalized and overlooked populations globally.

III. Key Points of the Debate

- The 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol
- The influence of political leaders and their ideology in how a population treats refugees
- The need for a document that recognizes the rights of IDPs internationally
- Mechanisms to mitigate xenophobia, racism and all kinds of discrimination
- The influence of the culture of violence in multiple countries on this issue
- The influence of organized criminal groups in the perception of Latin-American immigrants

IV. Parties/organizations involved

The parties involved in this issue are the countries that receive refugees, such as the United States and Turkey, among others; the countries from which migrants depart, such as Syria, Venezuela, and Mexico; and countries with serious IDP problems, such as Colombia and Syria. Refugees, IDPs, and political leaders also play a crucial role in the topic. In addition, United Nations commissions such as UNHCR, HRC, and SOCHUM are involved, as are various NGOs.

V. Guiding Questions

- How do the international protocols and agreements protect refugees

internationally? And, how effective have these legal frameworks been in ensuring refugee rights in practice?

- In what ways do the ideologies and public discourse of political leaders shape the treatment of refugees by local populations?

- Can political rhetoric exacerbate xenophobia or social exclusion, and if so, how?

- Why is there a need for an international document that formally recognizes the rights of IDPs?

- What challenges do IDPs face without formal legal recognition or protection? ●

How do previous and perpetrated cultures of violence in certain countries affect the vulnerability and treatment of refugees and IDPs? Are there patterns where violence directly influences migration or displacement trends?

- Are migrants unfairly associated with criminal activity, and how does this impact their safety and integration?

- What mechanisms can be implemented at local, national, and international levels to mitigate xenophobia, racism, and other forms of discrimination against refugees and migrants?

- How can education, media, and civil society play a role in changing public perception?

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