**Agenda 1: Historic Council: ‘Addressing the Military Human Rights Violations of the Vietnam War’**

This Historic Council will take place in November 1969. Take into account technologies and advancements available when creating your resolution, given the time period.

**Background Information**

The Vietnam War began in November 1955 and was one of the most powerful conflicts recorded. The United States were unable to accept the spread of communism to another eastern country, and took over the ‘protection’ of the southern part of Vietnam. This triggered the involvement of the communist countries of China and the Soviet Union. This war was one of the most deadly military conflicts,through which major human rights violations have taken place. The atrocities that happened during this war encroached on many human rights that have been followed and accepted by the UN since 1948. The methods used in the Vietnam war caused tremendous damage not only to the environment, but to civilian goods, and most importantly the innocent civilians and refugees, causing millions of deaths. One of the most common, and most devastating methods was chemical weaponry, specifically Agent Orange.

*The My Lai Massacre:*

In 1968, US soldiers murdered several hundred unarmed Vietnamese civilians in the most infamous event of the Vietnamese war, The My Lai massacre. More than 500 people were killed including old men, women, and children. Young girls and women were raped and mutilated before being killed. The brutality and official cover-up fueled anti-war sentiment.

**UN Involvement:**

TThe UN was opposed to the Vietnam war, but it did refrained from aiding during the war and generally opposed the idea of helping, as well as actively denying permission to other countries who wished to help in the Vietnam war. Despite this, certain countries did send aid . The Human Rights Council this year will focus on what the outcome would have been if the UN had indeed interjected and helped reduce the number of human rights violations.

**Guiding Questions:**

* What position and political ideology did your country have during the war?
* Who were your countries allies, and what was their position?
* Did your country partake in war methods that violated human rights, or did it ally with countries that did?
* What could your country, given its political background, have done to resolve human rights violations during this war?

**Suggested resources:**

Eyewitness accounts of the My Lai massacre; story by Seymour Hersh Nov. 20, 1969. Cleveland Plain Dealer.

My Lai Massacre:

<https://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/my-lai-massacre-1>

History of the Vietnam war:

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Vietnam-War>

**Agenda 2: ‘Combatting Human Rights Abuses in Detention Camps’**

**Background Information**

Detention centers can be defined as an institution for the short-term detention of illegal immigrants, refugees, people awaiting trial or sentence, or young offenders. Persons being detained have the right of freedom from torture or degrading treatment, the right to religion, the right to life, liberty and security and lastly the right to legal aid. Unfortunately, many of these basic human rights are being violated at detention camps all over the world, some examples of those being:

*Chinese Re-education Camps:*

In the past few years, the authorities in Xinjiang have placed hundreds of thousands of predominantly Muslim minority groups into indoctrination camps in mass detention. Data shows that this being done in the name of ‘increasing security’. The UN Human rights council says it has received many credible reports that over 1 million Uyughurs Muslims are being detained in these re-education camps. Leaked documents detail brainwashing of Muslims in a network of high-security prison camps. The Chinese government has consistently claimed the camps in the far western Xinjiang region offer voluntary education and training. But official documents, seen by BBC Panorama, show how inmates are locked up, indoctrinated and punished.

*Immigration Detention Camps*

Immigration detention is the policy of holding individuals who are suspected of illegal entry or unauthorized arrival, visa violation and those subject to deportation and removal based on decisions made by immigration authorities to either grant the visa or repatriate them to their countries. Certain countries have set a maximum period of detention while others permit indefinite detention. Some immigration detention camps violate basic human rights and have inhumane rules in place. While the UNHRC is trying to combat migrant detention countries like India continue to build detention camps that can hold upto 2 million people. Other shocking statistics include the fact that in between May and June of 2019, The USA was detaining between 14,000 to 18,000 people per night. Detention camps can also be found in countries such as Japan, Australia and several European countries.

**UN Involvement:**

The UNHRC (United Nations Human Rights Council) states that Detention for immigration-related purposes, of asylum seekers, refugees and stateless should be avoided. It should always be a measure of last resort, with liberty being the default position. Furthermore, children should not be detained for immigration-related purposes, irrespective of their legal or migratory status or that of their parents. Limitations of any basic rights should not be applied in a discriminatory manner. The 3 main goals of the UNHRC is to end the detention of children, ensure alternatives to detention are available in law and implemented in practice and to ensure that conditions of detention where detention is necessary and unavoidable meet international standards by, inter alia, securing access to places of immigration detention for UNHCR and/or our partners and carrying out regular monitoring.

Countries at the UNs’ top human rights body took the step of issuing a joint statement calling for China to end its arbitrary detentions and other violations against the rights of Muslims in the north-west border region of Xinjiang. Signatories included the UK, Australia, Canada and a number of European countries. Chinese authorities deny they run detention camps and say the “vocational education and training centers” are part of a focused crackdown on extremism and terrorists. United Nations human rights experts have called for China to shut down alleged political “re-education camps” for Muslim Uighurs and called for the immediate release of those detained on the “pretext of countering terrorism”.

UN human rights offices in Mexico and Central America have documented numerous violations and abuses against migrants and refugees in transit, including the excessive use of force, family separation, denial of services and arbitrary expulsions.

A key United Nations body has condemned as arbitrary and illegal Australia’s indefinite incarceration of refugees and asylum seekers, issuing critical statements on five separate cases in a year. But those unlawfully held remain in indefinite detention, where they have been held for up to nine years without charge.

**Key Terms:**

*Immigration:*

The action of coming to live permanently in a foreign country.

*Repatriate:*

Send (someone) back to their own country.

*Detention:*

The action of detaining someone or the state of being detained in official custody.

*Stateless:*

In international law, a stateless person is someone who is "not considered as a national by any state under the operation of its law". Some stateless people are also refugees. However, not all refugees are stateless.

*Liberty*

The state of being free within society from oppressive restrictions imposed by authority on one's way of life, behavior, or political views. Liberty can also be defined as the power or scope to act as one pleases.

*Asylum Seekers*

a person who has left their home country as a political refugee and is seeking asylum in another.

**Guiding Questions:**

* Does your country have any type of detention centre that matches the descriptions above?
* Does your country have laws in place regarding detention centers?
* What are your country’s immigration laws?
* What are the views of your country regarding immigration, migrants, and refugees?

**Suggested resources:**

Arizona migrant detention facilities, where some sleep in bathroom stalls, are unfit for humans, judge rules:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/02/20/arizona-detention-facilities-unconstitutional/>

Data leak reveals how China 'brainwashes' Uighurs in prison camps:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-50511063>

Australia's onshore immigration detention 'unlike any other liberal democracy:

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/jun/18/australias-onshore-immigration-detention-unlike-any-other-liberal-democracy>

A short history of immigration detention:

<https://www.freedomforimmigrants.org/detention-timeline>

Everything We Know About the Inhumane Conditions at Migrant Detention Camps:

<https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2019/07/the-inhumane-conditions-at-migrant-detention-camps.html>

Australia and Mandatory Detention:

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/6-australias-immigration-detention-policy-and-practice>