Dear Delegates,

Welcome to SRMUN Atlanta 2023 and the General Assembly (GA) Plenary. My name is LeAnna Christensen and I have the pleasure of serving as your Director for GA Plenary. This will be my sixth time as a SRMUN staff member, having previously served as the Director of the Security Council, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, United Nations Population Fund, Group of Twenty, and Assistant Director of the General Assembly First Committee. I graduated with my bachelor's degree in International Business in 2020 and currently work for a scientific membership nonprofit. Our committee's Assistant Directors will be Jessica Case and Lilly Slipher. This will be Jessica's first time as a staff member. Jessica has attended three SMRUN conferences as a delegate and she's excited to serve on staff during this conference. Jessica is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in International Affairs with a concentration in Europe. This will be Lilly's first time as a staff member as well. Lilly has attended one SRMUN Atlanta in 2022 where she was a delegate in GA Plenary. She is very excited to return as a staff member this fall. Lilly is currently getting her degree in International Studies with a concentration in diplomacy and strategy, double minoring in Japanese and Women & Gender Studies.

The United Nations General Assembly, or GA Plenary, is comprised of all 193 Member States of the UN, which provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues. The GA Plenary occupies itself as the chief deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the United Nations. It also plays a significant role in the process of standard-setting and the codification of international law. The overarching mission of the GA Plenary is to recommend diplomatic and multilateral solutions to issues involving peace and security, human rights, development, international law and justice, and social, economic, and political unrest.

Focusing on the mission of the GA Plenary, we have developed the following topics for the delegates to discuss come conference:

   I.   Combatting Disinformation in Times of Crisis
   II. Addressing the Global Housing Crisis and the Right to Adequate Housing

This background guide will serve as the foundation for your research, yet it should not be the extent of the research. Preparation is given to each topic to help guide delegates in their initial research, and to serve as a starting place for more in-depth studies. It is expected that delegates go beyond this background guide in preparation for their position paper and to better prepare themselves for contribution within the committee in November. Further, each delegation is required to submit a position paper for consideration. Position papers should be no longer than two pages in length (single spaced) and demonstrate your Member State's position, policies, and recommendations on each of the two topics. For more detailed information about formatting and how to write position papers, delegates can visit srmun.org. ***All position papers MUST be submitted no later than Friday, October 27th, by 11:59pm EST via the SRMUN website to be eligible for Outstanding Position Paper Awards.***

Jessica, Lilly, and I are excited for the opportunity to serve as your dais for GA Plenary. I wish you all the best of luck in your conference preparation and look forward to meeting and working with each of you. Should questions arise as you are preparing for this conference, please don't hesitate to reach out to your committee staff at the emails below.

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History of the General Assembly Plenary

The United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945 to maintain international peace and security, develop diplomatic relations, foster social progress, and promote human rights.[1] Through its founding charter, the UN wields the power to undertake a variety of global issues and provide a forum for all Member States to express their views through six principal organs: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat.[2] As the chief deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the UN, the United Nations General Assembly (GA) plays a significant role in the process of standard-setting and the codification of international law.[3]

Intrinsically, the mandate of the GA is outlined in Chapter IV (Articles 10-22) of the *Charter of the United Nations*.[4] Article 10 stipulates the GA is tasked with discussing "any questions or any matters within the scope or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the [Charter]."[5] Article 15 asserts the GA "shall receive and consider annual and special reports from the Security Council; these reports shall include an account of the measures that the Security Council has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security."[6] In addition, the GA shall consider reports from other organs of the UN and make recommendations to the Security Council and all Member States.[7] The GA also serves to elect the UN Secretary-General based on recommendations from the Security Council.[8]

The GA is comprised of six Main Committees, organized around the body's main fields of responsibility: the Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee), the Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee), the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (Third Committee), the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), the Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee), and the Legal Committee (Sixth Committee).[9] The GA and the six main committees can mandate a subsidiary body to consider a particular issue and to submit reports to the GA.[10] The six Main Committees and subsidiary bodies discuss agenda items assigned to them, present their recommendations, usually in the form of draft resolutions and decisions, and submit a report to the GA.[11]

The GA has universal membership, with each of the 193 Member States attaining one equal vote.[12] Non-Member States, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) can participate in GA sessions with the status of Observer; however, these groups do not have voting rights.[13] Most resolutions in the GA Plenary are decided by a simple majority.[14] However, a two-thirds majority is required in the Plenary on essential issues, such as maintenance of international peace and security, the admission of new members, the suspension and expulsion of members, and all budgetary questions.[15]

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[1] United Nations, "History of the UN," United Nations, 2015, https://www.un.org/un70/en/content/history/index.html, (accessed
    February 9, 2023).
[2] United Nations, "History of the UN."
[3] United Nations, "Functions and Powers of the General Assembly," United Nations, 2022,
    https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml, (accessed February 9, 2023).
[4] United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, October 24, 1945, 1 UNTS XIV, available at
    https://www.unitar.org/sites/default/files/media/publication/doc/un_pga_new_handbook_0.pdf, (accessed February 9,
    2023), Chapter IV.
[5] *Charter of the United Nations*, Chapter IV.
[6] *Charter of the United Nations*, Chapter IV.
[7] *Charter of the United Nations*, Chapter IV.
[8] "The GA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly," Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the
    United Nations, 2017, https://www.unitar.org/sites/default/files/media/publication/doc/un_pga_new_handbook_0.pdf,
    (accessed February 9, 2023), pg.13.
[9] "The GA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly," pg.18.
[10] "The GA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly," pg.19.
[11] "The GA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly," pg.18.
[12] United Nations, "General Assembly of the United Nations," United Nations, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/ga/, (accessed
    February 10, 2023).
[13] "The GA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly," pg.30.
[14] "The GA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly," pg.68.
[15] "The GA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly," pg.54.

All assessments on the regular UN budget are considered and approved by the GA.[16] The Committee on Contributions advises the GA on how much each Member State pays to the UN.[17] Draft resolutions with budget implications must be examined by the Fifth Committee before they can be adopted in the GA.[18] The GA budget covers UN activities across a range of areas, including political affairs, international justice and law, regional cooperation for development, human rights and humanitarian affairs, and public information.[19] During the 72nd session, the GA approved a nearly USD 5.4 Billion program budget for the biennium 2018-2019 and endorsed the proposal to move from a biennial planning and budgeting period to annual program budget on a trial basis, as of 2020.[20] In May of 2022, the Fifth Committee approved a USD 3.2 Billion budget for the 2023 fiscal year, a 3.3% increase from the previous year.[21]

The GA meets in regular annual sessions and in special sessions, which consist of formal and informal meetings.[22] All GA sessions are numbered consecutively and open on Tuesday of the third week of September.[23] Since the GA's 44th session (1989–90), the GA has been formally regarded as being "in session" for the entire year.[24] Additionally, the GA may also hold special sessions, which can be convened either at the request of the Security Council or a majority of Member States.[25] There have been 32 GA Special Sessions as of February 2023.[26] The last two special sessions addressed the coronavirus pandemic (31st session) and the challenges and measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation (32nd session).[27] The GA can also hold emergency special sessions, in which the GA can make decisions on issues that are under the exclusive mandate of the Security Council if the Security Council fails to decide on an issue due to a lack of consensus among its permanent members.[28] There have been 11 emergency special sessions as of February 2023.[29] The 11th special session was called due to the lack of unanimity among the Security Council when deciding a course of action regarding the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine.[30] The GA adopted A/RES/ES-11/1 on March 2, 2022 in which they condemned the actions of the Russian Federation and urged Member States to help with the humanitarian crisis that resulted from this invasion.[31]

The 77th Session of the GA commenced on September 13, 2022, under the leadership of incoming President Csaba Kőrösi of Hungary.[32] During his opening remarks, Kőrösi pushed for Member States to come together and create

[16] United Nations, "General Assembly of the United Nations," United Nations, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/ga/, (accessed February 10, 2023).
[17] United Nations, "Committee on Contributions," United Nations, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/ga/contributions/, (accessed February 10, 2023).
[18] "The GA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly," Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, 2017, https://www.unitar.org/sites/default/files/media/publication/doc/un_pga_new_handbook_0.pdf, (accessed February 9, 2023), pg.77.
[19] United Nations Information Center Washington DC, "UN Budget for 2018-2019," United Nations Information Center, Washington DC, December 28, 2017, https://unicwash.org/budget_2018-19/, (accessed February 10, 2023).
[20] United Nations Information Center Washington DC, "UN Budget for 2018-2019."
[21] United Nations, "Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee) List of documents relating to the proposed programme plan and budget for 2023," A/77/6, United Nations, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/ga/fifth/77/ppb2023.shtml, (accessed February 10, 2023).
[22] "The GA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly," pg.14-15.
[23] "The GA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly," pg.14.
[24] "The GA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly," pg.14.
[25] "The GA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly," pg.14.
[26] General Assembly of the United Nations, "Special Sessions," United Nations, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/ga/sessions/special.shtml, (accessed February 11, 2023).
[27] General Assembly of the United Nations, "Special Sessions."
[28] "The GA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly," pg.15.
[29] General Assembly of the United Nations, "Emergency Special Sessions," United Nations, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/ga/sessions/emergency.shtml, (accessed February 16, 2023).
[30] United Nations, "Security Council Calls Emergency Special Session of General Assembly on Ukraine Crisis, Adopting Resolution 2623 (2022) by 11 Votes in Favour, 1 Against, 3 Abstentions," United Nations, February 27, 2022, https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc14809.doc.htm, (March 6, 2023).
[31] United Nations General Assembly resolution ES-11/1, *Aggression against Ukraine,* A/RES/ES-11/1, (March 2, 2022), https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/293/36/PDF/N2229336.pdf?OpenElement.
[32] International Institute for Sustainable Development, "Solidarity, Sustainability, Science to Drive Transformation During UNGA77," September 21, 2022, https://sdg.iisd.org/news/solidarity-sustainability-science-to-drive-transformation-during-unga77/, (accessed February 11, 2023).

"solutions through solidarity, sustainability, and science to achieve the transformation necessary for better outcomes."[33] In December 2022, the GA adopted 86 resolutions and 17 decisions recommended by the First and Third Committee covering a range of issues, from the threats nuclear weapons pose on international security, to the repairing of trust and confidence in the rule of law, as well as increasing the protection of diplomatic missions and officials.[34] The GA adopted a resolution in response to threats of nuclear war in which the committee condemned nuclear war, recognized the immorality of nuclear weapons, and their potential to obliterate mankind. [35] Additionally, in the 58th meeting of the 77th session, UN Secretary-General António Guterres encouraged Member States to "seize the moment and act before it is too late," as well as emphasizing the need for Member States to pursue a more peaceful, safer, and sustainable world.[36]

[33] International Institute for Sustainable Development, "Solidarity, Sustainability, Science to Drive Transformation During UNGA77," September 21, 2022, https://sdg.iisd.org/news/solidarity-sustainability-science-to-drive-transformation-during-unga77/, (accessed February 11, 2023).

[34] United Nations, "General Assembly Adopts over 100 Texts of First, Sixth Committees Tackling Threats from Nuclear Weapons, International Security, Global Law, Transitional Justice," United Nations, December 7, 2022, https://press.un.org/en/2022/ga12478.doc.htm, (accessed February 11, 2023).

[35] United Nations, "General Assembly Adopts over 100 Texts of First, Sixth Committees Tackling Threats from Nuclear Weapons, International Security, Global Law, Transitional Justice," United Nations, December 7, 2022, https://press.un.org/en/2022/ga12478.doc.htm, (accessed February 11, 2023).

[36] United Nations, "Humanity Must Act Urgently to Avert Total Global Catastrophe, Secretary-General Warns General Assembly, Outlining 2023 Priorities for United Nations," United Nations, February 6, 2023, https://press.un.org/en/2023/ga12489.doc.htm, (accessed February 11, 2023).

I. Combatting Disinformation in Times of Crisis

Introduction

During times of crisis, disinformation has the unique ability of altering public perception on information, encouraging violent extremism, and increasing the polarization of public opinion.[1] Disinformation also has the ability to undermine democratic institutions, international norms, and manipulate people worldwide.[2] As of early 2023, there is no universal working definition for disinformation due to the complexity of the issue.[3] Disinformation can most easily be described as the spread of inaccurate information with the intention of causing harm.[4] Due to the lack of a universal definition of disinformation and misinformation, both are often used interchangeably, which is done so incorrectly.[5] While disinformation is the intentional spreading of inaccurate information, misinformation is done so accidentally.[6] Disinformation can be presented in a wide range of formats, including propaganda, manipulated content, imposter content, false content, and synthetic media among other examples.[7] Attempts at checking and limiting disinformation are vital; however these efforts fall short of real progress as solutions commonly address the effects and fail to address the true causes of disinformation.[8] As the strain on international cooperation increases, the responses and actions taken regarding disinformation during times of crisis are now more important than ever.[9]

History

The UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948, which sets forth fundamental human rights that are to be protected worldwide.[10] Disinformation has the ability to impact these fundamental human rights, including the right to freedom of expression and opinion according to the UN Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council (HRC).[11] Member States have the ability to combat disinformation by protecting and promoting the right to freedom of expression.[12] In an environment which safeguards the right to freedom of expression, civil society, journalists, and other actors can have an open discourse on information which allows for these groups to question the legitimacy of disinformation campaigns in their respective Member States.[13] The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights stresses the importance of the protection of freedom of expression as a powerful way to combat disinformation.[14] As long as this right is continuously protected and supported, then

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[1] Council of Europe, "Dealing with propaganda, misinformation and fake news," https://www.coe.int/en/web/campaign-free-to-speak-safe-to-learn/dealing-with-propaganda-misinformation-and-fake-news, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[2] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Balancing Act: Countering Digital Disinformation While Respecting Freedom of Expression,* Paris, FR: UNESCO, 2020, https://en.unesco.org/publications/balanceact.

[3] United Nations, "Countering Disinformation," United Nations, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/countering-disinformation, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[4] United Nations, "Countering Disinformation."

[5] Marla Beebe, "Fake News, Misinformation & Disinformation," *Shawnee State University*, November 22, 2022, https://shawneesu.libguides.com/fakenews, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[6] United Nations. "Countering Disinformation."

[7] "Factsheet 4: Types of Misinformation and Disinformation," Using Social Media In Community Based Protection: A Guide, (January 2021), https://www.unhcr.org/innovation/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Factsheet-4.pdf, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[8] Claire Pershan, "Human Rights & Disinformation: For the Special Rapporteur's annual thematic report," *EU DisinfoLab*, (February 2021): 4, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Expression/disinformation/2-Civil-society-organisations/EU-Disinfo-Lab.pdf, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[9] United Nations, "A New Era of Conflict and Violence," United Nations, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/un75/new-era-conflict-and-violence, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[10] United Nations General Assembly resolution 217 A, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, A/RES/217 (III) (December 10, 1948, https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights.

[11] United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression*, A/HRC/47/25, April 13, 2021, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3925306/files/A_HRC_47_25-EN.pdf.

[12] "A Human Rights Approach To Tackle Disinformation," *Amnesty International*, April 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/IOR4054862022ENGLISH.pdf, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[13] "A Human Rights Approach To Tackle Disinformation," *Amnesty International*.

[14] United Nations. "Freedom of expression is key to countering disinformation." United Nations, November 3, 2022. https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2022/11/freedom-expression-key-countering-disinformation, (accessed June 10, 2023).

disinformation campaigns won't have as great an effect as if they were spread in a right-limited environment.[15] The UDHR states, "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression."[16] The UDHR claims individuals have the right to their respective opinions and the ability to voice them without interference.[17]

Disinformation dates back to as early as the fifth century B.C.E. with Sun Tzu, a Chinese military general, stating that "all warfare is based on deception."[18] Politically and militarily post-World War II, disinformation has links with Joseph Stalin's "dezinformatsiya," a part of the Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (KGB) who oversaw persuading public opinion and deceiving enemies.[19] As the Cold War progressed, disinformation was used heavily to sway public opinion regarding the actions and beliefs of Member States through propaganda and war posters.[20] For example, in the 1980s, the spread of disinformation about the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) virus and following epidemic was used as a military tactic by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) through an intentional effort to spread disinformation about the AIDS virus to create anti-United States sentiment.[21] The USSR created seemingly-verifiable informant stating the United States was spreading AIDS as a way of using bioweapons, distributed to Western Europe, the United States, and developing Member States.[22] The USSR was successful in distributing falsified research, becoming popular amongst African Member States who felt victimized by claims that the AIDS virus originated from Africa.[23] By purposefully taking advantage of a vulnerable population during a time of crisis, the false information was given credibility through its crowd of believers.[24]

Disinformation has also impacted many civil arenas, such as environmental, health, and social causes. Public disinformation regarding global warming, for example, dates to the 1980s from the fossil fuel industry pushing narratives that would push policymakers to favor policies that would consider the interests of the fossil fuel industry.[25] These actions affected the policies and discourse concerning global warming in the 1980s and this has had a lasting impression.[26] Disinformation campaigns and the responses of the past have shaped the way that these campaigns and these actors are functioning today with regard to climate change.[27] Additionally, throughout history, the tobacco industry has pushed disinformation campaigns which have played a part in increasing their profits and increasing people's reliance on the industry at the expense of health.[28] Beginning in the 1970s and continuing for the

[15] United Nations. "Freedom of expression is key to countering disinformation." United Nations, November 3, 2022. https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2022/11/freedom-expression-key-countering-disinformation, (accessed June 10, 2023).

[16] United Nations General Assembly resolution 217 A, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, A/RES/217 (III) (December 10, 1948, https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights.

[17] United Nations General Assembly resolution 217 A, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

[18] Geoff Nunberg, "'Disinformation' Is The Word Of The Year — And A Sign Of What's To Come," NPR, December 30, 2019, https://www.npr.org/2019/12/30/790144099/disinformation-is-the-word-of-the-year-and-a-sign-of-what-s-to-come, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[19] Geoff Nunberg, "'Disinformation' Is The Word of the Year…"

[20] Megan Ward, Shannon Pierson & Jessica Beyer, "Formative Battles: Cold War Disinformation Campaigns and Mitigation Strategies," *The Wilson Center*, August 2019, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/publication/cold_war_disinformation_campaign.pdf, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[21] Douglas Selvage & Christopher Nehring, "Operation "Denver": KGB and Stasi Disinformation regarding AIDS," *The Wilson Center*, July 22, 2019, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/operation-denver-kgb-and-stasi- disinformation-regarding-aids, (accessed March 25, 2023).

[22] Douglas Selvage & Christopher Nehring, "Operation "Denver": KGB and Stasi Disinformation regarding AIDS."

[23] Soviet Union, Committee for State Security (KGB), "KGB, Information Nr. 2955 [to Bulgarian State Security]," *The Wilson Center,* September 7, 1985, https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/kgb-information-nr- 2955-bulgarian-state-security, (accessed March 25, 2023).

[24] Heller, Jacob, "Rumors and Realities: Making Sense of HIV/AIDS Conspiracy Narratives and Contemporary Legends," *NCBI,* January 2015, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4265931/, (accessed June 6, 2023)

[25] Benjamin Franta, "Early oil industry disinformation on global warming," *Environmental Politics* 30, no. 4 (January 2021): 663-668, https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2020.1863703, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[26] Benjamin Franta, "Early oil industry disinformation on global warming."

[27] Megan Ward, Shannon Pierson & Jessica Beyer, "Formative Battles: Cold War Disinformation Campaigns and Mitigation Strategies," *The Wilson Center*, August 2019, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/publication/cold_war_disinformation_campaign.pdf, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[28] World Health Organization, "The tobacco industry: decades of deception and duplicity," WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, accessed June 25, 2023, https://www.emro.who.int/stop_tobacco_industry/tobacco_industry.html.

five next decades, the tobacco industry has invested heavily into disinformation on the health benefits of smoking and using tobacco products.[29] By the use of these disinformation campaigns and deceptive marketing techniques, the tobacco industry was valued at 849.9 billion USD in 2021, but this number is expected to grow with a compound annual growth rate of 2.4 percent to 2030.[30]

Current Situation

Disinformation is spread for a multitude of reasons which include, but are not limited to ideological, commercial, and political motives.[31] The UN General Assembly has acknowledged that if solutions to combat disinformation do not address these motives, then these potential solutions will fail.[32] Current discussions on disinformation center around the impacts that disinformation has had on the COVID-19 pandemic, Member State elections, climate change, and the new digital frontier.[33] The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted faults hidden in the international system, such as "lack of global preparedness, cooperation, unity and solidarity."[34] Due to the global reach of the pandemic, accurate and reliable information was needed.[35] Without the presence of accurate information, global cooperation is put at risk, which presents major challenges for Member States to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.[36] Common examples of disinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic included things like false claims about the virus and vaccine, conspiracy theories, and deceptive medical facts. [37] Purposefully misleading information could lead to many people being hurt or even killed, not only slow down the recovery efforts of the pandemic but also hurt other people in the process.[38]

Additionally, many Member States are dealing with the rising political polarization, and global insecurity is expected to increase.[39] Political polarization presents a ground for disinformation campaigns.[40] Disinformation can be damaging to electoral processes and the legitimacy of Member States which can lead to political crises.[41] If a political crisis were to outbreak during an election cycle, it has the ability to alter the perception of governmental institutions and create mistrust of electoral systems.[42] Claims regarding the involvement of disinformation campaigns in elections have increased in the past few years.[43] Most recently, these campaigns were present in the

[29] World Health Organization, "The tobacco industry: decades of deception and duplicity."

[30] Grand View Research, "Tobacco Market Size, Share & Trends Analysis Report By Product (Smokeless, Cigarettes, Cigars & Cigarillos, Next-Generation Products, Waterpipes), By Distribution Channel (Online, Offline), By Region, And Segment Forecasts, 2022 - 2030," Grand View Research, accessed June 25, 2023, https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/tobacco-market.

[31] United Nations General Assembly, *Countering disinformation for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms,* A/77/287, 3.

[32] United Nations General Assembly, A/77/287

[33] United Nations, "Countering Disinformation," United Nations, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/countering-disinformation, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[34] United Nations, "Secretary-General Highlights 'Essential' Failure of International Cooperation, in Address to Security Council Meeting on Post-Coronavirus Global Governance," United Nations, September 24, 2020, https://press.un.org/en/2020/sc14312.doc.htm, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[35] United Nations, "UN combats disinformation during pandemic," United Nations, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/un-coronavirus-communications-team/un-combats-disinformatoin-during-pandemic, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[36] United Nations, "UN combats disinformation during pandemic."

[37] European Commission, "Tackling coronavirus disinformation," *European Commission*, 2022, https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/coronavirus-response/fighting-disinformation/tackling-coronavirus-disinformation_en, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[38] European Commission, "Tackling coronavirus disinformation,"

[39] United Nations, "Political, Social Polarization Leading to Rise in Global Insecurity, Secretary-General's Report Finds," United Nations, February 6, 2023, https://press.un.org/en/2018/org1681.doc.htm, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[40] Mathias Osmundsen, Michael Bang Petersen, & Alexander Bor, "How partisan polarization drives the spread of fake news," *The Brookings Institute*, May 13, 2021, https://www.brookings.edu/techstream/how-partisan-polarization-drives-the-spread-of-fake-news/, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[41] European Commission, "Fighting disinformation to support elections in Zambia," 2023, https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/news-and-events/stories/fighting-disinformation-support-elections-zambia_en, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[42] Yves-Marie Doublet, "General overview of the situation," in *Disinformation and Electoral Campaigns* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2021), https://rm.coe.int/disinformation-and-electoral-campaigns/16809fa91f.

[43] Yves-Marie Doublet, "General overview of the situation,"

2022 French Presidential Elections, where disinformation campaigns targeted distrust in the electoral process.[44] These campaigns included claims of loss of voting rights for the Yellow Vest protestors, favoritism of Emmanuel Macron with the electronic voting machines, and destruction of voting ballots for Marine Le Pen.[45] Disinformation also affected the 2021 Zambian general election, where the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in conjunction with the European Union (EU), established an initiative to push back against harmful claims regarding the election.[46] Claims made during the Zambian election included the Electoral Commission officers manipulating the votes received; that led to this claim being spread quickly due to voters' lack of understanding of the software that was being used in the election.[47] The UNDP and the EU helped play a key role during the Zambian election, which led to an unprecedented peaceful transfer of power for the Member State.[48]

Environmentally, climate change continues to be impacted by disinformation campaigns, resulting in delays in actions to combat and reduce the effects on the environment.[49] The UN regards disinformation as a major hindrance to combating the climate crisis.[50] The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change stated, "deliberate undermining of science [has] contributed to misperceptions of the scientific consensus."[51] Disinformation targeting climate change includes claims that climate change is not caused by humans, climate change is not real, and the solutions to climate change such as renewable energy, electric vehicles, and recycling are in fact dangerous.[52] Corporations use disinformation to 'green wash,' or promote a climate-conscious and friendly image while still heavily contributing to pollution and climate change.[53] This act of disinformation makes it harder for Member States and international actors to agree on climate change solutions if all parties involved do not have unbiased facts.[54]

With Member States entering a new digital era, a rise in artificial intelligence (AI) has occurred and challenges are being presented.[55] 'Deep fakes,' a form of synthetic media, present a danger to international stability and security.[56] AI systems can create 'deep fakes' by altering audio and visual content to present new fabricated content.[57] The use of 'deep fakes' can be presented in a wide range of formats, such as video or audio recordings.[58] AI systems and

[44] Nicolas Hénin, "What did disinformation look like during the 2022 French presidential election? An overview based on fact-checking articles," *EU Disinfo Lab*, June 28, 2022, https://www.disinfo.eu/publications/what-did-disinformation-look-like-during-the-2022-french-presidential-election-an-overview-based-on-fact-checking-articles/, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[45] Nicolas Hénin, "What did disinformation look like during the 2022 French presidential election…"

[46] European Commission, "Fighting disinformation to support elections in Zambia."

[47] European Commission, "Fighting disinformation to support elections in Zambia."

[48] European Commission, "Fighting disinformation to support elections in Zambia."

[49] Melissa Fleming, "Rampant climate disinformation online is distorting dangers, delaying climate action," *We The Peoples*, May 16, 2022, https://medium.com/we-the-peoples/rampant-climate-disinformation-online-is-distorting-dangers-delaying-climate-action-375b5b11cf9b, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[50] United Nations, "Communicating on Climate Change," United Nations, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/communicating-climate-change#:~:text=Communicating%20on%20climate%20change%20is,cultural%20contexts%2C%20and%20underlying%20values, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[51] United Nations, "Communicating on Climate Change."

[52] European Digital Media Observatory, "Disinformation about climate change – Main narratives in June at the European level," *European Union*, July 21, 2022, https://edmo.eu/2022/07/21/disinformation-about-climate-change-main-narratives-in-june-at-the-european-level/, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[53] Union of Concerned Scientists, "Fossil Fuel Accountability: Oil, gas, and coal companies share an outsized responsibility for the climate crisis," *Union of Concerned Scientists*, 2023, https://www.ucsusa.org/climate/accountability, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[54] "Climate Action," United Nations, https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/rampant-disinformation-delaying-climate-action, (accessed July 9, 2023).

[55] Audrey Azoulay, "Towards an Ethics of Artificial Intelligence," United Nations, 2018. https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/towards-ethics-artificial-intelligence, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[56] "The 2021 Innovations Dialogue: Deepfakes, Trust and International Security," *United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research*, 2021, https://unidir.org/events/2021-innovations-dialogue, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[57] Tom Cassauwers, "Can artificial intelligence help end fake news?," Horizon: The EU Research & Innovation Magazine, April 15, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/research-and-innovation/en/horizon-magazine/can-artificial-intelligence-help-end-fake-news, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[58] Meredith Somers, "Deepfakes, explained," Massachusetts Institute of Technology Sloan School of Management, May 9, 2023, https://mitsloan.mit.edu/ideas-made-to-matter/deepfakes-explained, (accessed May 9, 2023).

'deep fakes' have been used to leverage political, personal, and professional gains.[59] For example, in 2022, a 'deep fake' video circulated of Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy issuing an order of surrender to Ukrainian troops, that was proven to be fake.[60] However, the technology behind the production of 'deep fakes' boasts the ability to accomplish remarkable things.[61] The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was a part of a collaboration that resulted in the creation of Deep Empathy, a project aiming to create a culture of mutual understanding among the world's population.[62] The project took photos from the Syrian War and combined them with different cities to show citizens what the disaster would look like on their home front.[63] Although AI systems and 'deep fakes' have been used to accomplish great technological feats, AI also presents areas in which disinformation can thrive.[64]

Disinformation is also spreading through the use of social media. Social media has gained prevalence as a different platform to disseminate disinformation due to its known flexibility and interactivity compared to traditional media sources, like news networks.[65] The disinformation that users of these platforms are exposed to can create confusion and misdirection, which results in these disinformation campaigns continuing to develop.[66] Governments and social media platforms must come together to resolve this issue, but need to be mindful of individual freedoms and ensure protection of the freedom of expression of these users.[67] In recent years, the use of AI technology has greatly influenced social media, so when AI technologies are used to disseminate disinformation on social media, both AI technology and social media have a part to play in the disinformation spread digitally.[68]

Actions Taken by the United Nations

The UN as a whole has developed multiple programs and initiatives aimed at preserving and promoting democracy for the past 75 years.[69] In 2000, the first Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies led to the creation of the Warsaw Declaration which acknowledged that countries fell into different stages of democratization.[70] The declaration promoted the idea of sharing of ideas and practices to promote further democratic development.[71] The United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) was created in 2005 as a result of the 2005 World Summit.[72] Most of the funding allocated by the UNDEF is used by civil groups which leads to protection and promotion of democracy through a bottom-up approach.[73] Every year the UN General Assembly adopts at least one resolution dealing with democracy.[74] In 2015, the UN acknowledged during the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for

[59] Kyle Hiebert, "Democracies Are Dangerously Unprepared for Deepfakes: Disinformation, foreign interference, fraud and conspiracy will worsen as digital forgeries become indiscernible from reality," Artificial Intelligence, *Centre for International Governance Innovation*, April 27, 2022, https://www.cigionline.org/articles/democracies-are-dangerously-unprepared-for-deepfakes/.

[60] Kyle Hiebert, "Democracies Are Dangerously Unprepared for Deepfakes."

[61] "Project: Deep Empathy," *MIT Media Lab*, 2023, https://www.media.mit.edu/projects/deep-empathy/overview/, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[62] "Project: Deep Empathy," *MIT Media Lab.*

[63] "Project: Deep Empathy," *MIT Media Lab.*

[64] David Klepper, "Learning to lie: AI tools adept to creating disinformation," *AP News*, January 24, 2023, https://apnews.com/article/technology-science-business-artificial-intelligence-afb4618ff593db9e3e51ecbd91dc3eef, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[65] "Countering Disinformation on Social Media," *Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights*, L'Association européenne pour la défense des droits et des libertés (ASSEDEL), https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Expression/disinformation/2-Civil-society-organisations/Association-europeenne-pour-la-defense-des-droits-et-de.pdf, (accessed July 9, 2023).

[66] "Countering Disinformation on Social Media," *Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights*…

[67] "Countering Disinformation on Social Media," *Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights*…

[68] John Villasenor, "How to deal with AI-enabled disinformation," *The Brookings Institution,* November 23, 2020, https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-to-deal-with-ai-enabled-disinformation/, (accessed June 13, 2023).

[69] "Democracy," *United Nations*, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/democracy, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[70] Foresti, Marta, et al., *Democracy Support through the United Nations*, Oslo, Norway: Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, 2010, https://www.oecd.org/derec/norway/48085855.pdf.

[71] Foresti, Marta, et al. *Democracy Support through the United Nations.*

[72] "About UNDEF," *United Nations Democracy Fund*, accessed June 25, 2023, https://www.un.org/democracyfund/about-undef.

[73] "About UNDEF," *United Nations Democracy Fund.*

[74] "Democracy," *United Nations.*

Sustainable Development that democracy was an essential aspect of ensuring sustainable development.[75] The UN states "democracy is a core value" of its institution and in doing so, supports democracy through the promotion of security, peace, development, and protecting human rights.[76] The UN also participates in the monitoring of elections, safeguarding good governance, and the involvement of civil society within Member States.[77] Disinformation threatens the nullification of preservation and promotion of democracy due to the challenges it presents.[78] Institutional credibility and trust can be undermined through coordinated efforts of disinformation.[79]

In December 2021, the General Assembly (GA) Third Committee adopted A/RES/76/227 on countering disinformation in relation to human rights and freedoms.[80] The resolution also included an explanation on how disinformation can incite discrimination and violence against vulnerable groups, vulnerable situations, or emergencies.[81] Member States were educated on the influence social media and businesses have on disinformation and urged Member States to make policies so that businesses do their part in combating disinformation.[82] The Third Committee asked for the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Right (OHCHR) to help address the impacts of disinformation on human rights.[83] Finally, the resolution requested that the Secretary-General coordinate and check in on Member State's progress, with checks planned to take place at a later date, for the efficient implementation of this resolution.[84]

During the peak period of the pandemic there was an increased amount of disinformation being spread. The World Health Organization (WHO) responded by establishing the Information Network for Epidemics (EPI-WIN).[85] EPI-WIN used social media to track disinformation and misinformation and respond to it.[86] For example, soon after Uganda confirmed its first case of COVID-19, many Ugandans believed that it was evil spirits brought by westerners because of the spread of harmful narratives. This caused an increase in hate speech towards foreigners.[87] EPI-WIN identified the incorrect statements and made steps to dispel the narrative by translating accurate information into the local languages and ensured it was spread to all, even remote, hard to access, locations.[88] While EPI-WIN was established in effort to combat misinformation, it is still a prevalent action taken, and shows that tools are useful in stopping the spread of incorrect information in times of crisis.

In July 2022, the HRC published a report outlining the guiding principles of business and human rights considerations by technology companies.[89] Member States were asked to model the suggestions within the report to protect against human rights violations, including the spreading of disinformation.[90] The report emphasized that it is

[75] "Democracy," *United Nations.*
[76] "Democracy," *United Nations.*
[77] "Democracy," *United Nations.*
[78] Carme Colomina, Héctor Sánchez Margalef & Richard Youngs, "The Impact of Disinformation on Democratic Processes and Human Rights in the World," *European Parliament*, (April 2021): 19-22, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2021/653635/EXPO_STU(2021)653635_EN.pdf, (accessed April 2, 2023).
[79] Carme Colomina, Héctor Sánchez Margalef & Richard Youngs, "The Impact of Disinformation."
[80] United Nations General Assembly, *Countering disinformation for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms*, A/RES/76/227, January 10, 2022, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3954983?ln=en#record-files-collapse-header, (accessed March 25, 2023)
[81] United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/76/227.
[82] United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/76/227.
[83] United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/76/227.
[84] United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/76/227.
[85] "5 ways the UN is fighting 'infodemic' of misinformation," *The United Nations Department of Global Communications (DGC)*, April 30th, 2020, https://www.un.org/en/un-coronavirus-communications-team /five-ways-united- nations-fighting-%E2%80%98infodemic%E2%80%99-misinformation, (accessed March 24, 2023)
[86] "5 ways the UN is fighting 'infodemic' of misinformation," *(DGC)*.
[87] "5 ways the UN is fighting 'infodemic' of misinformation," *(DGC)*.
[88] "5 ways the UN is fighting 'infodemic' of misinformation," *(DGC)*.
[89] United Nations Human Rights Council, *Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the practical application of the guiding principles on business and human rights to the activities of technology companies,* A/HRC/50/56, April 21, 2022, https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G22 /323/96/PDF/G2232396.pdf?OpenElement.
[90] United Nations Human Rights Council, A/HRC/50/56.

the Member State's duty to protect against human rights abuses by third parties.[91] Within the report the HRC identified businesses and social media as the largest contributors to the spread of disinformation.[92] The report stressed that it is ultimately the Member State's responsibility to uphold international law and protect human rights when approaching disinformation.[93] Since businesses are one of the largest offenders, the report further encourages Member States to hold Multinational Corporations (MNCs) accountable for their actions that contribute to the spreading of disinformation.[94]

Conclusion

Disinformation is a powerful threat that influences public opinion on topics of discussion worldwide such as politics and healthcare, as well as disrupting daily life of citizens and exacerbating crises.[95] There is no universal definition for disinformation, making it even harder to combat.[96] As humanity has gone through a technological revolution, so has disinformation, with social media being one of the largest perpetrators.[97] Disinformation historically was spread through war posters or other forms of propaganda.[98] Now, with the rise in social media and the internet, institutions are using social media platforms as a medium for spreading disinformation in order to reach large audiences.[99] The digital revolution has led to audiences who believe the incorrect information to discriminate or commit violence towards subjects of disinformation.[100] While there are some frameworks on combatting disinformation, disinformation continues to spread throughout the globe.[101]

Committee Directive

Disinformation is currently one of the most pressing threats to the international community, especially during times of crisis. While some Member States have systems of flagging disinformation, the systems have not been thoroughly effective to combat the problem, both nationally and globally. Delegates should consider how to best define disinformation to create a comprehensive plan to combat the manufacturing and spread of disinformation. Delegates should ask: what are the consequences that Member States will face if they fail to combat disinformation? What impacts does disinformation have on economies, cultures, societies, and the international system as a whole? What roles do Member States play in the dissemination of disinformation? How should the UN create solutions while also respecting Member State's sovereignty, and does sovereignty create barriers to solving this issue? Overall, delegates should be formulating realistic solutions to combat the use of disinformation within Member States and by other institutions, such as corporations, businesses or non-governmental organizations. Delegates should focus on building upon established UN and other multilateral programs rather than creating new bodies within the UN system. Delegates should also focus on the issue as a whole, and not specific situations.

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[91] United Nations Human Rights Council, A/HRC/50/56.

[92] United Nations General Assembly, *Countering disinformation for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms*, A/RES/76/227, January 10, 2022, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3954983?ln=en#record-files-collapse-header.

[93] United Nations Human Rights Council, A/HRC/50/56.

[94] United Nations Human Rights Council, A/HRC/50/56.

[95] United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/76/227.

[96] Countering Disinformation," *United Nations*, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/countering-disinformation, (accessed April 2, 2023).

[97] United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/76/227.

[98] Douglas Selvage & Christopher Nehring, "Operation "Denver": KGB and Stasi Disinformation regarding AIDS," *The Wilson Center*, July 22, 2019, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/operation-denver-kgb-and-stasi- disinformation-regarding-aids, (accessed March 25, 2023).

[99] Spencer Feingold, "The four key ways disinformation is spread online," *World Economic Forum*, August 9, 2022, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/08/four-ways-disinformation-campaigns-are-propagated-online/, (accessed May 9, 2023).

[100] United Nations General Assembly, *Countering disinformation for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms*, A/RES/76/227, January 10, 2022, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3954983?ln=en#record-files-collapse-header.

[101] United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/76/227.

II. Addressing the Global Housing Crisis and the Right to Adequate Housing

Introduction

In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Humans Rights (UDHR) was the first United Nations (UN) proclamation to detail what human rights were universally and fundamentally protected, including outlining the right to adequate housing.[1] In Article 25, the UDHR states "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstance beyond his control."[2] While the definition of "adequate housing" is not defined in the UDHR, international law views the definition as having secure tenure without the threat of forced evictions and violation of basic freedoms.[3] The housing should also be affordable, habitable, accessible, and having proper infrastructure.[4] As such, adequate housing is considered a human right under the UDHR and not a commodity.[5] The growing global population has led to approximately three billion people needing adequate housing by 2030, and currently more than 100 million people experiencing homelessness globally.[6] The right to adequate housing should be discussed by Member States to meet the needs of both those currently lacking adequate housing and those in future generations.[7]

History

The global housing market is heavily reliant on an efficient financial system, as the state of financial markets "affect the behavior of homeowners, developers and builders, as well as real estate investors, and determine housing supply and demand."[8] As economic recessions and depression occur both globally and in individual Member States, the entire global housing market is impacted.[9] This was seen when the New York Stock Exchange – the world's largest stock exchange – crashed in October 1929, the starting point of the Great Depression.[10] The Great Depression was one of the worst economic depressions recorded in recent global history, with home foreclosures hitting an all-time high for the time period.[11] In the United States of America (USA), more than 273,000 homes were foreclosed in 1932, increasing to 1,000 homes a day being foreclosed in the next year.[12] The Great Depression's impact led to between 40-to-50 percent of all mortgages in the USA being in default in 1933.[13] The USA government was criticized by social reformers for their lack of responsibility in providing adequate housing, as thousands of US citizens lost their homes and were forced into inadequate living conditions.[14] Due to this lack of support from government agencies and corporations, all repairs to current homes were abandoned, new home constructions stopped, and slums were expanded.[15]

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[1] United Nations General Assembly resolution 217 A, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, A/RES/217 (III) (December 10, 1948, https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights.

[2] United Nations General Assembly resolution 217 A, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

[3] "The Human Right to Adequate Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner,* 2023, https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-housing/human-right-adequate-housing, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[4] The Human Right to Adequate Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.*

[5] The Human Right to Adequate Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.*

[6] "Housing," *UN-Habitat*, 2023, https://unhabitat.org/topic/housing, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[7] "Housing," *UN-Habitat.*

[8] Ashok Bardhan, Robert Edelstein, and Cynthia Kroll, "A Comparative Context for U.S. Housing Policy: Housing Markets and the Financial Crisis in Europe, Asia, and Beyond," *Economic Policy Program*, April 2012, https://bipartisanpolicy.org/download/?file=/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/housing20comparative20context_4-11.pdf.

[9] Ashok Bardhan, Robert Edelstein, and Cynthia Kroll, "A Comparative Context for U.S. Housing Policy…"

[10] "Stock Market Crash of 1929," History.com, A&E Television Networks, August 12, 2022, https://www.history.com/topics/great-depression/1929-stock-market-crash, (accessed May 15, 2023); "New York Stock Exchange," New York Stock Exchange, 2023, https://www.nyse.com/index, (accessed May 16, 2023).

[11] "Housing 1929-1941," *Encyclopedia.com,* 2023, https://www.encyclopedia.com/education/news-and-education-magazines/housing-1929-1941, (accessed May 4, 2023).

[12] "Housing 1929-1941," *Encyclopedia.com.*

[13] "Housing 1929-1941*," Encyclopedia.com.*

[14] "Housing 1929-1941," *Encyclopedia.com.*

[15] "Housing 1929-1941," *Encyclopedia.com.*

While the Great Depression impacted the USA primarily, the international economy and world was also impacted severely.[16] While unemployment rates reached a peak of 25 percent in the USA, Member States such as the United Kingdom and Germany's unemployment rates packed at 16 and 30 percent respectively.[17] While the international community faced many economic depressions in the past, none lasted as long or had as deep of an impact as the Great Depression.[18] Many Member States experienced a lower housing crisis from the Great Depression as they had a vastly larger public housing system in place.[19] Member States had larger portions of the housing markets as public housing during the time, most of which were started or more heavily funded post-World War I.[20] During the Great Depression, Member States like the United Kingdom and France had 46 percent and 37 percent respectively of their housing markets part of public housing, which lead to these Member States having fewer citizens evicted from foreclosed homes.[21] Member States such as Japan and the United Kingdom purchased land in more rural areas cheaply to continue providing public housing during the Depression.[22] The Soviet Union turned all housing into public housing and the government's responsibility in response to the Depression.[23]

Each Member State's policies on housing have a large impact on the global housing market.[24] Member States like the USA, Canada, and Australia have had a higher private sector presence in their housing market, leading to most homes built without government support and done so by companies and corporations.[25] Other Member States have utilized a combination of private sector and public built housing for their housing supply.[26] Many Member States in Eastern Europe that have switched from socialist to more capitalist markets following the Cold War have also changed housing stock producers.[27] What used to be owned and built by the public sector in these former socialist states is now mostly in the private sector.[28] There are Member States, like Singapore, whose government is heavily involved in the housing market by managing land use and financing for housing.[29]

Changes in housing policy can impact citizens' ability to have adequate housing, as seen in the People Republic of China's (PRC) policy history.[30] From the creation of the PRC in 1949 up till 1978, all land was publicly owned and was not able to be purchased, sold, or traded per Chinese law.[31] Housing was assigned through citizen's employer as "in-kind compensation," but conditions, location, and size of housing accommodations were decided by the employer[32] In the mid-1980s, a reform to consider new housing policies was introduced and in 1988 a law was passed to allow land to be sold and purchased.[33] The PRC officially abolished the traditional, employer-allocated housing model in 1998.[34] To boost home ownership, the People's Bank of China (PBC) subsidized and lowered interest rates into the early/mid 2000s, while also establishing policies that would boost housing development, such as expanding the scope of development loans.[35]

[16] "Great Depression," *Encyclopedia.com*, 2023, https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/great-depression, (accessed May 4, 2023).
[17] "Great Depression," *Encyclopedia.com*.
[18] "Great Depression," *Encyclopedia.com*.
[19] Housing 1929-1941," *Encyclopedia.com*, 2023, https://www.encyclopedia.com/education/news-and-education-magazines/housing-1929-1941, (accessed May 4, 2023).
[20] "Housing 1929-1941," *Encyclopedia.com*.
[21] "Housing 1929-1941," *Encyclopedia.com*.
[22] "Housing 1929-1941," *Encyclopedia.com*.
[23] "Housing 1929-1941," *Encyclopedia.com*.
[24] Ashok Bardhan, Robert Edelstein, and Cynthia Kroll, "A Comparative Context for U.S. Housing Policy: Housing Markets and the Financial Crisis in Europe, Asia, and Beyond," *Economic Policy Program*, April 2012, https://bipartisanpolicy.org/download/?file=/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/housing20comparative20context_4-11.pdf.
[25] Ashok Bardhan, Robert Edelstein, and Cynthia Kroll, "A Comparative Context for U.S. Housing Policy…"
[26] Ashok Bardhan, Robert Edelstein, and Cynthia Kroll, "A Comparative Context for U.S. Housing Policy…"
[27] Ashok Bardhan, Robert Edelstein, and Cynthia Kroll, "A Comparative Context for U.S. Housing Policy…"
[28] Ashok Bardhan, Robert Edelstein, and Cynthia Kroll, "A Comparative Context for U.S. Housing Policy…"
[29] Ashok Bardhan, Robert Edelstein, and Cynthia Kroll, "A Comparative Context for U.S. Housing Policy…"
[30] Hanming Fang, Quanlin Gu, Wei Xiong, Li-An Zhou, "Demystifying the Chinese Housing Boom," *NBER Macroeconomics Annual* Volume 30, Issue [1] (2015): 1-62, accessed on June 28, 2023, https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/epdf/10.1086/685953 .
[31] Hanming Fang, Quanlin Gu, Wei Xiong, Li-An Zhou, "Demystifying the Chinese Housing Boom."
[32] Hanming Fang, Quanlin Gu, Wei Xiong, Li-An Zhou, "Demystifying the Chinese Housing Boom."
[33] Hanming Fang, Quanlin Gu, Wei Xiong, Li-An Zhou, "Demystifying the Chinese Housing Boom."
[34] Hanming Fang, Quanlin Gu, Wei Xiong, Li-An Zhou, "Demystifying the Chinese Housing Boom."
[35] Hanming Fang, Quanlin Gu, Wei Xiong, Li-An Zhou, "Demystifying the Chinese Housing Boom."

While the People's Republic of China had a more stable housing market in the late 2000's, the same couldn't be same for the rest of the international community.[36] The 2008 USA financial crisis – the Great Recession – was one of the biggest economic declines of the twenty-first century, that resulted in approximately 3.8 million home foreclosures in the USA, as well as unemployment highs of ten percent.[37] USA government lowered interest rates to one percent, leading to home prices skyrocketing as more people were approved for mortgages, including those who could not afford these loans.[38] As banks in the USA were rapidly losing money and defaulting on the bad loans, the international interbank market froze, fearing the crash's impact on other Member States.[39] International banks like the Bank of England either asked for emergency funding or were already hit with billions of USD losses like the Swiss bank UBS.[40] Individual Member States' vulnerability to the Great Recession was determined on how "reliant on global credit markets" they were.[41] While the USA passed the Wall Street bailout package to stop the economic devastation internally, the Great Recession resulted in immense human and economic suffering with lasting impacts globally, especially related to housing.[42]

Current Situation

As the global population continues to grow, the demand for housing continues to rise.[43] The UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) predicts by 2030, upwards of three billion people, or 40 percent of the global population, will need housing.[44] To meet this housing demand, approximately 96,000 accessible and affordable homes will need to be built every day.[45] UN-Habitat also reports that 100 million people globally are experiencing homelessness, while 25 percent of the global population are living in conditions that are harmful to their safety, health, and prosperity.[46] According to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), more than one billion people are living in slums and inadequate housing globally, with 85 percent of slums residing in three regions: Central and Southern Asia, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa.[47]

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has greatly impacted and exacerbated the global housing crisis.[48] A 2020 report by the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing stated globally, the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak have been unequally distributed along pre-existing racial, gender, and other inequalities, leading to significantly higher mortality and infections rates among these minority groups within Member States where

[36] Hanming Fang, Quanlin Gu, Wei Xiong, Li-An Zhou, "Demystifying the Chinese Housing Boom," *NBER Macroeconomics Annual* Volume 30, Issue [1] (2015): 1-62, accessed on June 28, 2023, https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/epdf/10.1086/685953 .

[37] "History of Housing Market Crashes and What They Mean for the Future," New Silver, August, 13, 2020, https://newsilver.com/the-lender/history-of-housing-market-crashes/, (accessed May 15, 2023), Manoj Singh, "The 2007-2008 Financial Crisis in Review," Investopedia, March 19, 2023, https://www.investopedia.com/articles/economics/09/financial-crisis-review.asp, (accessed May 15, 2023)

[38] Manoj Singh, "The 2007-2008 Financial Crisis in Review."

[39] Manoj Singh, "The 2007-2008 Financial Crisis in Review," Investopedia, March 19, 2023, https://www.investopedia.com/articles/economics/09/financial-crisis-review.asp, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[40] Manoj Singh, "The 2007-2008 Financial Crisis in Review."

[41] Ashok Bardhan, Robert Edelstein, and Cynthia Kroll, "A Comparative Context for U.S. Housing Policy: Housing Markets and the Financial Crisis in Europe, Asia, and Beyond," *Economic Policy Program*, April 2012, https://bipartisanpolicy.org/download/?file=/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/housing20comparative20context_4-11.pdf.

[42] Manoj Singh, "The 2007-2008 Financial Crisis in Review."

[43] "Housing," *UN-Habitat*, 2023, https://unhabitat.org/topic/housing, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[44] "Housing," *UN-Habitat*.

[45] "Housing," *UN-Habitat*.

[46] "Housing," *UN-Habitat*.

[47] "Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable," *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Sustainable Development*, 2023, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[48] Emily A. Benfer, et al., "Eviction, Health Inequity, and the Spread of COVID-19: Housing Policy as a Primary Pandemic Mitigation Strategy," *National Library of Medicine*, January 7, 2021, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7790520/#:~:text=The%20COVID%2D19%20pandemic%20precipitated,color%20and%20low%2Dincome%20populations.

inadequate housing conditions have contributed to the spread of the virus.[49] With record-breaking unemployment rates across Member States, the eviction risks increased and consequences became worse during the pandemic, with low-income and people of color populations particularly affected, especially in Western Member States.[50] As eviction rates increased, COVID-19 infection rates increased, as well as living environments becoming more crowded, healthcare access limited, and pandemic mitigation strategies such as self-quarantining and social distancing becoming unattainable.[51] For example, within the USA, historic trends and recent data reveal that "people of color are more likely to face eviction and associated comorbidities."[52] As rates of both evictions and COVID-19 infections continue to be disproportionately in communities of color, eviction protections and bans remain a critical tool to address racial health inequality and pandemic control.[53]

Armed conflicts and disasters continue to be a large threat to the right to housing.[54] During conflict and in post-conflict settings, bombing and shelling of civilian cities and villages leave impacted communities devastated.[55] Conflicts can displace thousands of people into homelessness, temporarily or permanently.[56] While all people are impacted by these conflicts, the lower socioeconomic class are worse affected, as they are less-able to withstand economic shocks and cannot recover as quickly compared to higher socioeconomic class citizens.[57] International law states all civilians should protected from "arbitrary destruction of housing, arbitrary displacement, forced evictions and other serious and large-scale violations of the right to adequate housing;" however, these violations continue to occur with little to no justice.[58] The UN Human Rights Council published report A/HRC/16/42 in December 2010, detailing the right to adequate housing in post-disaster and post-conflict reconstruction.[59] While post-disaster and post-conflict situations have different needs during their reconstruction, the report focuses on three target entry points: consultation and participation, security of tenure, and institutional coordination.[60] These common issues were target as they all highlighted elements of the right to housing.[61] In July 2022, the UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner published report A/77/190, "the Right to Adequate Housing During Violent Conflict," calling out the continued attack on housing during and after violent conflict. [62] This report calls for domicide – defined as the deliberate and systematic mass destruction of housing during violent conflict – to be recognized as a severe violation of international law.[63]

[49] Balakrishnan Rajagopal, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, *COVID-19 and The Right To Housing: Impacts and the Way Forward*, A/75/148, , July 27, 2020, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Housing/COVID19andHousingReportSummary.pdf.

[50] Emily A. Benfer, et al., "Eviction, Health Inequity, and the Spread of COVID-19: Housing Policy as a Primary Pandemic Mitigation Strategy," *National Library of Medicine*, January 7, 2021, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7790520/#:~:text=The%20COVID%2D19%20pandemic%20precipitated,color%20and%20low%2Dincome%20populations.

[51] Balakrishnan Rajagopal, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, *COVID-19 and The Right To Housing: Impacts and the Way Forward*, A/75/148.

[52] Emily A. Benfer, et al., "Eviction, Health Inequity, and the Spread of COVID-19…".

[53] Emily A. Benfer, et al., "Eviction, Health Inequity, and the Spread of COVID-19…".

[54] "The Right to Housing in Disasters, Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner,* 2022, https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-housing/right-housing-disasters-conflict-and-post-conflict-settings, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[55] "The Right to Housing in Disasters, Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings," *United Nations Human Rights Office.*

[56] "The Right to Housing in Disasters, Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings," *United Nations Human Rights Office.*

[57] "The Right to Housing in Disasters, Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings," *United Nations Human Rights Office.*

[58] United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, Balakrishnan Rajagopal*, A/77/190, July 19, 2022, https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/431/55/PDF/N2243155.pdf?OpenElement.

[59] United Nations Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing as a Component of the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living …*

[60] United Nations Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing as a Component of the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living …*

[61] United Nations Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing as a Component of the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living …*

[62] United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living…*

[63] United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living…*

During the past decade, climate-related disasters have been the largest cause of internal displacement, with about 20 million people a year forced from their homes because of these disasters.[64] Those living with inadequate housing are most likely to be impacted by climate-fueled disasters as they tend to "live in areas that are vulnerable to floods, hurricanes and cyclones, storm surges, mudslides, earthquakes and tsunamis."[65] Member States also often tend to fail to consider their impacts on vulnerable communities when taking disaster risk management measures during these disasters.[66] The manner in which Member State's adequate housing for all may also have harsh effects on climate change.[67] Approximately 39 percent of global energy-related carbon dioxide emissions comes from the construction and building sector, with a high concentration in middle- and high-income Member States.[68] During the COVID-19 pandemic, construction rates drastically decreased in 2020 due to lockdowns.[69] While this was a positive in regards to climate change, this exacerbated the global housing crisis, especially in markets already short in housing supply.[70] With low-income Member States needing the most construction to meet SDGs and the UN-Habitat's guidelines, Member States and the international community will need to create sustainable housing while responding to the climate crisis.[71] As climate change continues to impact the earth, we are seeing it's negative impact on current habitual land. With 25 percent of all land on Earth being rendered unusable by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, not only is this a threat to future housing, but a threat to "everything we eat, drink, and breathe."[72] Currently, almost 900 million people, or 10 percent of the global population, live in coastal areas with low elevations that will be displaced due to climate change.[73] The United Nations Security Council discussed the "emerging global security risk that of rising sea level portend" during their meeting in February of 2023.[74] Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged the international community to act, and act quickly, as "people's human rights do not disappear because their homes do."[75]

Actions Taken by the United Nations

Ratified in 1948, the UDHR was the first international treaty to recognize adequate housing as a human right, rather than a commodity.[76] Following the UDHR, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) was another milestone treaty that was ratified in the UN General Assembly (GA) in 1966.[77] Article 11 of the ICESCR states Member States "recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions."[78] Building off the work of these two documents, many international human rights treaties have referred or reference adequate housing rights, including works from various UN organizations or other international bodies.[79]

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[64] "Climate Change and the Right to Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner,* 2023, https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-housing/climate-change-and-right-housing, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[65] "Climate Change and the Right to Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.*

[66] "Climate Change and the Right to Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.*

[67] "Climate Change and the Right to Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.*

[68] "Climate Change and the Right to Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.*

[69] Judit Montoriol Garriga, Pedro Alvarez Ondina,"The Impact of the Pandemic on International Housing Markets: Is There a Risk Overheating?," *CaixaBank Research*, August 24, 2021, https://www.caixabankresearch.com/en/sector-analysis/real-estate/impact-pandemic-international-housing-markets-there-risk-overheating (accessed June 28, 2023).

[70] Judit Montoriol Garriga, Pedro Alvarez Ondina,"The Impact of the Pandemic on International Housing Markets…"

[71] "Climate Change and the Right to Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.*

[72] "Loss of World's Arable Land Threat to 'Everything We Eat, Drink, Breathe,' Speaker Says, as Second Committee Takes Up Sustainable Development," *United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*, October 14, 2019, https://press.un.org/en/2019/gaef3519.doc.htm (accessed June 28, 2023).

[73] "Climate Change-Induced Sea-Level Rise Direct Threat to Millions Around World, Secretary-General Tells Security Council," *United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*, February 14, 2023, https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15199.doc.htm (accessed June 28, 2023).

[74] "Climate Change-Induced Sea-Level Rise Direct Threat to Millions Around World, Secretary-General Tells Security Council."

[75] "Climate Change-Induced Sea-Level Rise Direct Threat to Millions Around World, Secretary-General Tells Security Council."

[76] "The Human Right to Adequate Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner,* 2023, https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-housing/human-right-adequate-housing, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[77] "The Human Right to Adequate Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.*

[78] United Nations General Assembly resolution 2200A, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,* A/RES/2200A (XXI), December 16, 1966, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/cescr.pdf.

[79] "The Human Right to Adequate Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.*

Adequate housing is pertinent to all Member States, as they have "all ratified at least one international treaty referring to adequate housing."[80]

In January of 1975, the UN created the first body to address urbanization issues: the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation (UNHHSF).[81] While underfunded and lacking political support – as about two-thirds of the global population was still rural – the UNHHSF hosted the first international UN conference on urbanization challenges in 1976 known as Habitat I.[82] UNHHSF struggled to prevent or improve urbanization problems, especially in developing Member States.[83] In 1996, the UN held Habitat II to evaluate the progress made in the past two decades.[84] Adopted by 171 Member States, the "Habitat Agenda" has over 600 recommendations and 100 commitments for Member States to work towards.[85] In January 2002, the GA created UN-Habitat to strengthen their mandate and elevated it to a full UN programme.[86] This would allow UN-Habitat to become the "focal point for all urbanization and human settlement matters within the UN system."[87]

The SDGs were adopted in 2015 by the UN as an international call to action to protect the planet, end poverty, and ensure all people have peace and prosperity by 2023.[88] Goal 11 provides a guideline on how Member States can make more safe, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable cities and settlements. [89] Goal 11.1 focuses on adequate housing for all and reducing the number of slums and slum like areas.[90] Goal 11.1 is judged by the "proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing."[91]

Following the approval of the SDGS, the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development – or Habitat III – was held in 2016.[92] Participants in Habitat III created the New Urban Agenda (NUA).[93] The NUA recognized the "unprecedented era of increased urbanization," and how increased urbanization has caused unsustainable cities and inadequate housing.[94] The NUA provides a framework and expected standards for "planning, construction, development, management, and improvement of urban areas," with the intention to improve the access of adequate housing to all.[95]

Case Study

Mega Events

Mega Events are large-scale events that often have an international profile and impact and are organized on a much larger scale than typical events in a sporting calendar, such as the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup.[96] Events like

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[80] "The Human Right to Adequate Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.*

[81] "History, Mandate & Role in the UN System," *UN-Habitat*, 2023, https://unhabitat.org/history-mandate-role-in-the-un-system#:~:text=On%201%20January%201975%2C%20the,UN%20body%20dedicated%20to%20urbanization, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[82] "History, Mandate & Role in the UN System," *UN-Habitat*.

[83] "History, Mandate & Role in the UN System," *UN-Habitat*.

[84] "History, Mandate & Role in the UN System," *UN-Habitat*.

[85] "History, Mandate & Role in the UN System," *UN-Habitat*.

[86] "History, Mandate & Role in the UN System," *UN-Habitat*.

[87] "History, Mandate & Role in the UN System," *UN-Habitat*.

[88] "The SDGs in Action," UNDP, 2023, https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals#:~:text=The%20Sustainable%20Development%20Goals%20(SDGs)%2C%20also%20known%20as%20the,people%20enjoy%20peace%20and%20prosperity, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[89] "Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable," *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Sustainable Development*, 2023, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[90] "Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable."

[91] "Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable."

[92] "History, Mandate & Role in the UN System," *UN-Habitat*.

[93] "History, Mandate & Role in the UN System," *UN-Habitat*.

[94] United Nations General Assembly resolution 256, *New Urban Agenda*, A/RES/71/256, (December 23, 2016), https://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/NUA-English.pdf.

[95] United Nations General Assembly resolution 256, *New Urban Agenda*.

[96] "Mega-Events," Oxford Reference, https://tinyurl.com/38rftn5c (accessed June 28, 2023).

these can provide economic boosts to the host Member States through tourism and commerce during the events.[97] Mega Events can also provide opportunity for a Member State to make infrastructure and environmental improvements that will enhance adequate housing for their citizens, including improvements of mobility throughout the host city, construction of new or rehabilitation of existing dwellings, improved waste management and sanitation systems, and establishing cultural and social infrastructure, all which are part of adequate housing.[98] However, these redevelopment projects established in preparation for these events have potential to lead to widespread housing rights violations, such as mass forced evictions and displacement of citizens in host cities are common for Member States to implement the needed development projects for the event.[99]

An example of how these Mega Events can damage a Member State's housing conditions would be Brazil's hosting of the World Cup and Olympics within two years of each event. Brazil won the bid to host the 2014 FIFA World Cup, an international football association competition.[100] The Member State struggled with preparing for the event as reports seven months before the kick off, half of the needed stadiums were unfinished, and infrastructure projects had been canceled or significantly changed.[101] There were estimates that showed more than 30,000 families would be forced to move for the competition in just Rio de Janeiro – the second largest city in Brazil – with a total of 170,000 people across Brazil forced from their homes.[102] A former Head of Housing Rights in Rio de Janeiro stated "many of these removals did not respect principles and rights considered basic in local and international law."[103] Complaints were filed of violent evictions where families received notifications to leave their homes a few hours before their homes were demolished.[104] The same was seen when the city of Rio de Janeiro won the bid for the 2016 Summer Olympics.[105] Reportedly 77,000 people were removed from their homes to prepare for the Olympic Games.[106] While they were offered public housing units, the units were inadequate, with lacking infrastructure, extremely expensive utility bills, and militia intimidation.[107] Instead of residents benefiting from the new infrastructure built for the Games, they were removed from their homes, and sent upwards of 25 miles outside of the city with limited public transportation, employment, and commercial activity in one of the biggest waves of forced evictions in the city's history.[108] Currently, Brazil is promising the Olympic Park in Rio de Janeiro will not be abandoned, to rebuild their bus system, and creating schools in the arenas, but little is to be said regarding housing.[109]

While Brazil's experience with Mega Events is unique as they hosted two separate events in the span of two years, many other Member States have struggled with housing crisis when hosting these events. In the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games, 48,000 buildings that housed 720,000 people were destroyed in perpetration for the Games, with 90 percent

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[97] "Mega Events and the Right to Adequate Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner,* 2023, https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-housing/mega-events-and-right-adequate-housing, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[98] "Mega Events and the Right to Adequate Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.*

[99] "Mega Events and the Right to Adequate Housing," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.*

[100] The Associated Press, "Brazil Confirmed as Host for the 2014 World Cup," *CBC*, October 30, 2007, https://www.cbc.ca/sports/soccer/brazil-confirmed-as-hosts-for-the-2014-world-cup-1.682549, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[101] Jarrad Peters, "How Much Has Housing the World Cup Cost Brazil," *Bleacher Report*, November 11, 2013, https://bleacherreport.com/articles/1845944-how-much-has-hosting-the-world-cup-cost-brazil, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[102] Christopher Atkins, "The Social Cost of Brazil Hosting World Cup 2014," *Bleacher Report*, June 6, 2013, https://bleacherreport.com/articles/1663701-the-social-cost-of-brazil-hosting-world-cup-2014, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[103] Christopher Atkins, "The Social Cost of Brazil Hosting World Cup 2014."

[104] Christopher Atkins, "The Social Cost of Brazil Hosting World Cup 2014."

[105] Knowledge at Wharton, "Brazil's Gold: How Rio Won Its Olympic Bid," *Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania*, March 3, 2010, https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/podcast/knowledge-at-wharton-podcast/brazils-gold-how-rio-won-its-olympic-bid/, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[106] Meg Healy, "Life After the Olympics: Housing in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil," *Edge Effects*, August 8, 2021, https://edgeeffects.net/olympic-legacies/, (accessed May 15, 2023).

[107] Meg Healy, "Life After the Olympics: Housing in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil."

[108] Meg Healy, "Life After the Olympics: Housing in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil."

[109] David Biller, Mauricio Savarses, "Five Years On, Rio de Janeiro Chases Elusive Olympics Legacy," *Associated Press*, July 13, 2021, https://apnews.com/article/business-lifestyle-sports-caribbean-rio-de-janeiro-cee3cab68e868a1eedd5ca1e8750fa73 (accessed June 28, 2023).

of those evicted not receiving replacement housing in the redeveloped areas.[110] Home prices skyrocketed a 240 percent in Barcelona between receiving the Olympic bid in 1986 and hosting the Games in 1992.[111] The 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta saw an increase in criminalization of homelessness, with 9,000 arrest citations issued to those experiencing homelessness and local advocates.[112] By April 2007, urban development connected to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing had displaced at least 1.25 million people, with about 60,000 homes a year destroyed between 2006 and 2008.[113] Most recently, the 2022 FIFA World Cup hosted in Qatar in 2022 saw forced evictions as well as the Member State evicted thousands of foreign workers from apartment blocks for visiting fans to use.[114] One building that housed 1,200 people were told at 8pm they had two hours to leave.[115] Overall, Member States can see patterns of forced evictions preceding the hosting of these Mega Events.[116] In most host cities, evidence also shows rising housing costs, leading to a decrease in the availability of affordable housing and declines in the availability of public housing and low-cost housing in general.[117] In each case, those who are especially vulnerable to the impacts of these patterns are marginalized groups such as low-income earners, those with insecure tenure, and ethnic minorities.[118]

Conclusion

The World Bank has reported that by 2025, more than 1.6 billion people will be impacted by the global housing crisis.[119] This could be through homelessness, forced evictions, insufficient infrastructure, or unaffordable housing, all of which are a part of inadequate housing.[120] While the right to housing and the lack of adequate housing has been discussed a lot in the international sphere, especially in recent years due to the COVID pandemic, the gap continues to grow between supply and demand for adequate housing.[121] With many factors impacting adequate housing from climate change, armed conflicts, the COVID-19 pandemic, and even Member State's own policies, it will take detailed and thoughtful plans to help these vulnerable groups find housing.

Committee Directive

As all Member States have ratified at least one global treaty referring to adequate housing, how can Member States go about solving this complex issue? Should Member States reevaluate their own policies on public vs private owned and built housing? How can Member States address the disproportionate impacts of the housing crisis to those most vulnerable and marginalized groups? How can Member States be held accountable for creating sustainable housing during the climate crisis that is still affordable for residences? What ways can Member States motivate companies and corporations to build more adequate housing? How can housing be protected during armed conflict? Overall, delegates should take these questions and others into consideration when researching this topic and working on realistic solutions for implementing their goals to the issue as a whole. Delegates should focus on building upon established UN and international programs rather than creating new bodies.

[110] "Fair Play For Housing Rights," *Center on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE),* 2007, https://www.ruig-gian.org/ressources/Report%20Fair%20Play%20FINAL%20FINAL%20070531.pdf (accessed June 28, 2023).
[111] "Fair Play For Housing Rights," *Center on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE).*
[112] "Fair Play For Housing Rights," *Center on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE).*
[113] "Fair Play For Housing Rights," *Center on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE),* 2007, https://www.ruig-gian.org/ressources/Report%20Fair%20Play%20FINAL%20FINAL%20070531.pdf (accessed June 28, 2023).
[114] Andrew Mills, "Exclusive: Thousands of Workers Evicted in Qatar's Capital Ahead of World Cup," Reuters, October 29, 2022, https://www.ruig-gian.org/ressources/Report%20Fair%20Play%20FINAL%20FINAL%20070531.pdf (accessed June 28, 2023).
[115] Andrew Mills, "Exclusive: Thousands of Workers Evicted in Qatar's Capital Ahead of World Cup."
[116] "Fair Play For Housing Rights," *Center on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE).*
[117] "Fair Play For Housing Rights," *Center on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE).*
[118] "Fair Play For Housing Rights," *Center on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE).*
[119] Victoria Masterson, "What Has Caused the Global Housing Crisis - and How Can We Fix It?," *World Economic Forum*, June 16, 2022, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/06/how-to-fix-global-housing-crisis/, (accessed May 15, 2023).
[120] Ashok Bardhan, Robert Edelstein, and Cynthia Kroll, "A Comparative Context for U.S. Housing Policy: Housing Markets and the Financial Crisis in Europe, Asia, and Beyond," *Economic Policy Program*, April 2012, https://bipartisanpolicy.org/download/?file=/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/housing20comparative20context_4-11.pdf.
[121] Emily A. Benfer, et al., "Eviction, Health Inequity, and the Spread of COVID-19: Housing Policy as a Primary Pandemic Mitigation Strategy," *National Library of Medicine*, January 7, 2021, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7790520/#:~:text=The%20COVID%2D19%20pandemic%20precipitated,color%20and%20low%2Dincome%20populations.

<u>**Annotated Bibliography**</u>

I.   Combatting Disinformation in Times of Crisis

Elsa Hedling, "Transforming practices of diplomacy: the European External Action Service and digital disinformation," *International Affairs* 97, no. 3 (May 2021): 841-859, https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiab035.

> *International Affairs* is a journal started by Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, which is an independent policy institute that covers most topics in international affairs. The article, "Transforming practices of diplomacy: the European External Action Service and digital disinformation," discusses disinformation and how it has impacted European Union (EU) diplomacy specifically. The EU created the East StratCom Task Force in 2015 due to a rise in disinformation within the region. This Task Force used strategic communication to advance EU policies in eastern Europe, build the media environments of Member States, and increase the EU's ability to handle disinformation acts done by other Member States or organizations. The article offers a reflection of past actions done by a regional intergovernmental organization and how Member States could look to improve.

Global Disinformation Index, "The Global Disinformation Index," The Global Disinformation Index, https://www.disinformationindex.org/research.

> The Global Disinformation Index (GDI) is an independent database that publishes data in relation to disinformation risk ratings. The GDI founded itself based on independent, neutral, and transparent data, which is vital in the rise in disinformation. This database showcases different reports and datasets for Member States' status who are currently dealing with disinformation campaigns. These datasets act as plans for potential courses of action to resolve disinformation both domestically and internationally.

Wolf J. Schünemann, "A threat to democracies?: An overview of theoretical approaches and empirical measurements for studying the effects of disinformation" in *Cyber Security Politics: Socio-technological Transformations and Political Fragmentation,* ed. Myriam Dunn Cavelty and Andreas Wenger, (London and New York: Routledge, 2022), 32-47, https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/52574/9781000567113.pdf#page=47.

> *Cyber Security Politics: Socio-technological Transformations and Political Fragmentation* is a book on different political facets of cyber-security and relates them to political fragmentation and socio-technical uncertainty. This chapter examines the potential links disinformation can have upon democratic institutions and democracies. This chapter discusses disinformation on three fronts: effects on audience (micro-level), mass media communication (meso-level), and extent of disinformation in public discourse (macro-level). Cyberspace provides a borderless zone for the spread of disinformation and these disinformation narratives can have negative effects on Member States' offline activities.

Rachel Kuo, and Alice Marwick, "Critical disinformation studies: History, power, and politics," Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) Misinformation Review, 2(4), August 12th , 2021, https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/6e17/dd3ac12e4080c0a7b3ad109a42d694f10190.pdf.

> The Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) Misinformation Review is a journal in which misinformation experts and scholars discuss a wide variety of topic areas that are impacted by misinformation. This specific publication focuses on the relationship that disinformation has on history, social politics, and culture. The authors argue the stance that disinformation is being used by those in power to further push systems of inequality. Overall, this publication provides a theory-based approach and a more distinct approach to disinformation compared to most arguments made today. This document provides ideas for improvement in a more-nuanced approach to solutions to combat disinformation.

II. Addressing the Global Housing Crisis and the Right to Adequate Housing

"International Standards," *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner*, 2023, https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-housing/international-standards

> "International Standards" is a portion of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing created by the UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. This is a collection of UN and other regional bodies' resolutions, treaties, and guidelines that reference the right to adequate housing. The right to adequate housing has been discussed by many organizations, Member States, regional bodies, and different bodies of the United Nations. This list provides information on efforts already and currently being done by the international community as a whole and what more can be improved in the housing arena.

United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context.* New York, NY: UN Headquarters, 2018. https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G18/007/65/PDF/G1800765.pdf?OpenElement

> The *Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context* was reviewed by the Human Rights Council during their 37th Session. The Report details implementation guidelines for housing policies that respect human rights and non-discrimination practices. The Report recognizes that housing strategies and policies will be different for each Member State and their unique challenges, and details how these key practices have impacted local and national communities. These principles are something each Member State should consider when making recommendations for improvements and change.

Ingrid Leijten and Kaisa de Bel, "Facing financialization in the housing sector: A human right to adequate housing for all," *Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights,* 2020, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0924051920923855.

> The Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights, member of the Committee on Publication of Ethics, is an independent journal that publishes works regarding human rights law issues globally. The article discusses how housing is seen more as an asset of wealth rather than a social good in society. The article also discusses how the creation of housing corporations has led to unaffordable and/or low-quality housing. The article emphasizes the root cause of the continuation of the problem is financialization, which is when financial institutions increase in size and influence. The article provides an economic understanding of the housing crisis and how financial institutions have exacerbated the crisis.

"Sustainable Housing and Building Materials for Low-income Households." *Journal of architectural Engineering Technology,* 2016. https://center4affordablehousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Sustainable HousingandBuildingMaterials2016J.Bredenoord.pdf

> The Global South has been heavily affected by the housing crisis. This research article, written by international urban planner J. Bredenoord, highlights many issues that inhibit Global South Member States from eradicating the housing crisis. The article goes into the specifics of how socio-economic differences, spatial and technical profiling, costs, and even building materials play a role in the situation. The article emphasizes how difficult it is for Global South Member States to alleviate this issue because these Member States lack the resources to make significant changes to overcome the housing crisis. The article also proposes how low-income households could contribute to sustainable development in the long-term. This article provides perspective of how the global housing crisis plays a particularly impactful effect on Global South Member States.