Rivka Sullivan
United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC): Welcome Paper
YUNMUN XXXVII

Esteemed delegates of UNHRC:

Let's get RIGHT(s) to it! My name is Rivka Sullivan, and I am sooo hyped to serve as Chair for this year's United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

For a little info about me: I'm from Queens, NY, attended Central (YUHSG) for high school and spent an incredible year studying at Michlelet Mevaseret Yerushalayim (MMY) in Israel. I am pre-med, now in my senior year at Stern College for Women, majoring in biology. This will be my 7th (!!) YUNMUN, and UNHRC is the same committee I was on in my senior year of high school! I am UN-believably excited for all the terrible puns that will title your resolutions and will always fall for a good dad joke :)

As the United Nations Human Rights Council, we are responsible for–you guessed it–human rights (or, rather, lack thereof) and establishing guidelines to promote and protect those rights globally. Our job is to investigate human rights violations, respond to human rights emergencies and provide recommendations to better implement human rights.[1]

Now, onto this year's topics: human rights and statelessness, as well as the fundamental right to healthcare.

Approximately four and a half million people worldwide are stateless,[2] and as conflicts and forced displacements continue to occur worldwide, that number is only likely to rise. Without recognized nationality, stateless individuals often face significant barriers towards accessing education, healthcare, employment and legal protections. As a result, many of these individuals are vulnerable to governmental exclusion and discrimination, and face barriers towards gaining legitimacy and recognition legally.

Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) recognizes every individual's right to an adequate standard of living, including access to medical care.[3] Similarly,

1. https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/about-council
2. https://www.unhcr.org/us/news/stories/five-things-know-about-statelessness
3. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights

Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights states that they "recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health."[4] Despite these international commitments, about 4.6 billion people worldwide lack access to essential healthcare.[5] This contrast highlights the need for an updated, and implementable, strategy to work towards minimizing these issues.

While I am so excited to read all of your position papers and meet all of you, please don't forget a few important things! One: staying true to your country's positions and stance is significantly more important (and impressive) than representing what you would want your country to believe. Research your country as you would Instagram stalk that new person on your favorite TV show. Two: it will be pretty hard for me to check sources that don't exist, so as you research your country and topics, don't forget to copy and paste the website you are researching onto your position paper. Three: speaking of copying and pasting, don't do it (for anything but your source)! As UNHRC we are firmly pro human rights, but the same does not apply to AI rights. To quote YUNMUN's policy regarding AI: a delegate may "[p]olish, with disclosure. You may use AI to check and correct the grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and mechanics of text you have already written. AI may not generate, rewrite, or restructure your content."[6] (Note the use of sourcing!!) Lastly, to reiterate, I am so so excited for YUNMUN and to meet every single one of you! If you have any questions, thoughts or want to share a terrible pun or dad joke and your friends are just too boring for it, feel free to send me an email at rsulliv2@mail.yu.edu! Looking forward to an incredible YUNMUN XXXVII!

Sincerely,

Rivka Sullivan

Chair, United Nations Human Rights Council

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4. https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights
5. https://www.who.int/news/item/06-12-2025-most-countries-make-progress-towards-universal-health-coverage-but-major-challenges-remain-who-world-bank-report-finds
6. https://YUNMUN.chair_groupchat/YUNMUN-XXXVII