



PACE MUN 2025
CONFLICTS TO CONSENSUS

BACKGROUND GUIDE

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND CULTURAL COMMITTEE
(SOCHUM)

AGENDA: BRIDGING CULTURAL DIVIDES: COMBATING HATE SPEECH AND
POLITICAL POLARIZATION IN A FRAGMENTED WORLD



LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS

Esteemed Delegates,

It is with great pleasure to address you as members of The Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Issues Committee, or SOCHUM of the PACE MUN 2025. We are thrilled to have you as a part of this committee, and we hope to provide you with the opportunity of engaging in thought-provoking and enjoyable discussions.

Considering all the environmental distress present in the world today, the call for resilience has never been timelier at SOCHUM, an organ of the United Nations, as it supports the tackling of these global issues by engaging nations in partnership that brings forth benefits for the collective. The conference will discuss the opportunities and challenges associated with narrowly focused issues such as the Protecting the rights of migrants and refugees amidst rising nationalism and restrictive immigration policies. It is your responsibility to not only assess and discuss these matters but also develop and advocate for practical and workable solutions which are premised on the ideals of resilience, fairness, and brotherhood of nations. This background guide has been prepared to assist you in gaining an understanding of the topics and will act as a foundation for your research. However, we deeply encourage you to conduct your own research, as this background guide should not be your sole source.

All being said, we encourage you all to be open-minded and engage with this journey with optimism. To be resilient one must be able to adapt, strategize, and look beyond conventional thinking. You are the future leaders, and you can lead conversations that will foster cooperation and equitable opportunities across generations.

We wish you the best of luck with your preparations and hope you will enjoy this

experience. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us using the email address added below.

sochumpacemun@gmail.com

Regards,

The Dias of SOCHUM,

Abhinav Manchala and Adithya Rajesh

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM), commonly known as the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, stands as a pivotal entity dedicated to addressing multifaceted challenges in the global arena. Established in 1945 in response to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, SOCHUM remains steadfast in its commitment to upholding fundamental human rights and promoting a just and inclusive international Society.

At its core, SOCHUM concentrates on a broad spectrum of issues encompassing social, cultural, and humanitarian affairs. The committee diligently navigates the intricate landscape of human rights, delving into categories that span social, economic, empowerment, and physical integrity rights. These efforts are guided by the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, providing a foundation for fostering peace and equitable solutions to the myriad challenges faced by the international community.

A DELVE INTO THE AGENDA:

From algorithm-fuelled echo chambers to fringe platforms that monetize outrage, incitement to hostility has migrated from the margins to the mainstream, threatening democratic processes, stalling development gains, and most gravely costing lives. Delegates therefore confront an agenda that is less about abstract principle than about the daily safety of minorities, migrants, political opponents, and increasingly, of every citizen who logs on.

The challenge is to combat incitement without bludgeoning free expression. Article 20 of the ICCPR already obliges states to prohibit advocacy of hatred that constitutes incitement, but definitions, enforcement capacity, and technological realities vary wildly with 38 % of Member States still lacking dedicated hate-speech laws, while a handful of private companies moderate four-fifths of global online discourse. Historical efforts from the 2001 Durban Declaration to the 2019 UN Strategy and Plan of Action offer blueprints, yet voluntary pledges and ad-hoc deletions have proven insufficient against weaponized memes, deep-fake vitriol, and disinformation-for-hire campaigns that can be purchased for less than the price of a delegate's suit.

Success will require SOCHUM to craft tools as innovative as the threats: a flexible Model Incitement Threshold adaptable to diverse legal systems, a youth-led Observatory that identifies emerging slurs within twenty-four hours, and a Counter-Speech Accelerator Fund seeded by micro-levies on digital advertising. By bridging the divide between security and liberty, Silicon Valley and the General Assembly, delegates can transform this committee into the first plank of a broader bridge, one that allows cultures to argue, satirize, and disagree without ever questioning one another's right to exist.

PAST ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE

1. UN General Assembly Resolution 67/155 (2012) - Global Efforts for the Total Elimination of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance
 - Requiring states to prohibit any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence
2. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) – 1965
 - Requires criminalization of dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, and incitement to racial discrimination.
3. General Assembly Resolution 79/180 (2024) - Combating Intolerance, Negative Stereotyping, Stigmatization, Discrimination, Incitement to Violence and Violence Against Persons Based on Religion or Belief
 - Addresses the need to combat intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination, and incitement to violence against persons based on religion or belief.
4. Rabat Plan of Action (2012)
 - Provides a high threshold test for determining when hate speech crosses the line into criminal incitement, balancing free expression with protection from harm.
5. UNESCO's "Addressing Hate Speech Through Education" Guide (2022)
 - This guide developed by UNESCO and the UN Office on Genocide Prevention provides concrete strategies for countering hate speech through education systems.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Which national or regional legal threshold for “incitement” has proven enforceable in your country, and how could it be translated into a universal metric adaptable to both common and civil-law systems?
2. What proportion of your population receives news primarily through algorithmic feeds, and which domestic regulatory or incentive models could compel platforms to down-rank, rather than merely hate-laden content?
3. How does your constitution balance Article 19 (freedom of expression) with Article 20 (prohibition of incitement), and what case law or oversight bodies exist to prevent politicized enforcement?
4. Which youth-led or civil-society counter-speech campaigns in your region have measurably reduced online hostility, and what scalable funding streams (public, private, or hybrid) could replicate their success globally?
5. Does your electoral law require disclosure of micro-targeted political ads; if so, could a similar “polarization impact assessment” be mandated for any campaign that purchases trans-border digital influence?
6. How do existing UN or regional mechanisms (e.g., Durban follow-up, Christchurch Call, Rabat Plan of Action) overlap or conflict with your national strategy, and where can SOCHUM harmonize reporting obligations to avoid forum-shopping by perpetrators?

QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION SHOULD ADDRESS

1. What legislative and policy measures can member states adopt to clearly define and prohibit hate speech and incitement to hostility, while protecting legitimate freedom of expression and dissent?
2. How can educational systems be strengthened to foster intercultural understanding, respect for diversity, and critical thinking, as a means of preventing hate speech and intolerance in society?
3. What practical tools or frameworks can be developed to support vulnerable groups and minorities who are disproportionately affected by hate speech or polarization, ensuring their safety and inclusion?
4. In what ways can governments, community organizations, and cultural institutions promote dialogue and reconciliation between groups with differing ideologies or backgrounds, reducing polarization and fostering peaceful coexistence?
5. What oversight and accountability mechanisms are needed to ensure that the prohibition of hate speech is not used to stifle political opposition or restrict civil liberties?

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GOOD LUCK DELEGATE!

See you at the Conference!

