

Name of the committee : Youth Assembly 2 (UN)

Issues : UN 75th Anniversary: Building a better future through international cooperation and inclusivity

Name of the chairs : Brock Hosier, Caroline Lentz

UN 75th Anniversary: Building a better future through international cooperation and inclusivity

1. Introduction

In 2015, the 193 UN Member States established, by consensus, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the same year, 195 countries plus the European Union, during COP 21 (Conference of Parties), agreed to keep global warming below 2°C. However, in 2019, the United States left the climate agreements (COP 21), Iran left the nuclear agreements, the United Kingdom may leave the European Union and the veto vote is blocking the Security Council, the main organ of the United Nations for peace and the only one with decision-making power.

All these events lead us to believe that after the international progress of 2015, multilateralism is being undermined and some populations are suffering because they are not included in this international cooperation.

Key words (Definitions)

Sustainable development : development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations. It is based on three pillars.

Multilateralism : alliance of multiple countries pursuing a common goal.

International Cooperation : groups representing different nations interacting to achieve the same goal.

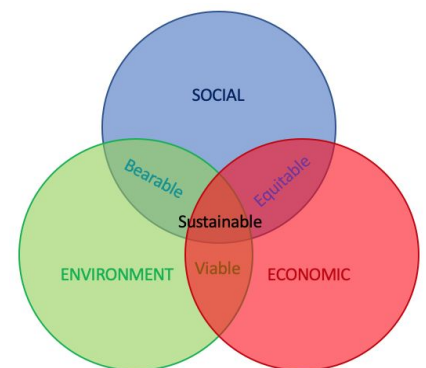


diagram of the three pillars of sustainable development

2. Overview of the issue

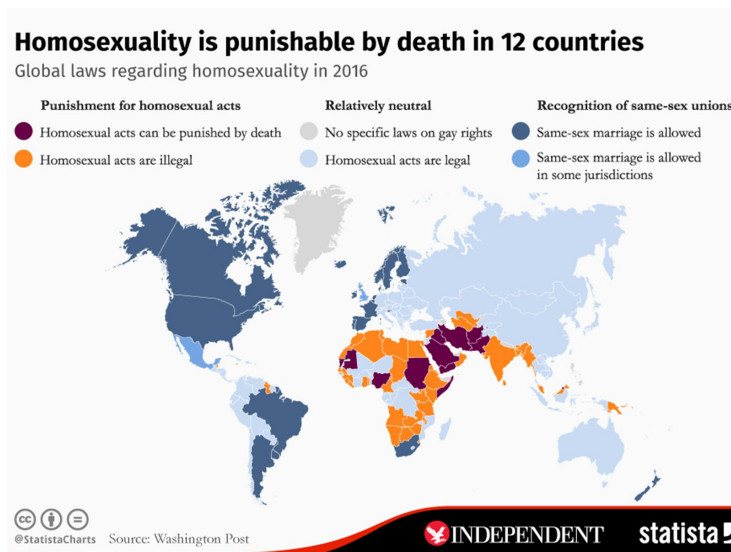
a. Why Inclusion is important

Since the development of the 2030 sustainable development goals (SDGs) by the United Nations, there have been parts of the world that are heading towards sustainability as well as increased inclusivity, which is one of the main goals of the sustainable agenda; However, there remains a large portion of the global population who continues to be excluded by their societies for a variety of reasons, including reasons that are cultural, racial, or socioeconomic. To achieve a global agenda, this exclusion is extremely detrimental as

nations need all types of people to collectivize overcome vast and challenging goals like reaching net zero fossil fuel emissions, and most importantly, nations need to foster minority inclusion to do so. It is currently estimated that over 20% of the world's population can be classified as minorities, meaning if countries do make these people feel included and equal there will be a major portion of the population that is not part of the collectivized movement towards sustainability.

b. Discriminations

One such group that continues to be predominantly discriminated against and



Source: The Independent, *LGBT relationships are illegal in 74 countries, research finds, 2016*

excluded by their societies is the LGBT community. While twenty-eight countries today may recognize same-sex marriage, there remain fourteen countries that classify homosexuality as a crime punishable by death, and seventy-six countries currently criminalize homosexual activity. This effort by countries to suppress homosexual activity is commonly rooted in religious or cultural beliefs, as well as colonial era laws that had been implemented in former colonized countries.

For example, in Jamaica, there currently remains colonial laws known as Buggery laws which make what are considered “unnatural sexual acts,” such as sodomy, to be criminal acts because they go against Christian teachings. Although the laws were originally enforced during England’s colonial rule over Jamaica, the same laws were later repealed in England in 1828, and yet, Jamaica continues to enforce these laws despite achieving independence in 1962.

Even in wealthy countries, such as those in the G20, these laws continue to exist, and in Russia a law signed by Vladimir Putin in 2013 nicknamed the “Anti-LGBT propaganda law” made it legal to convict someone for spreading “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations among minors.”

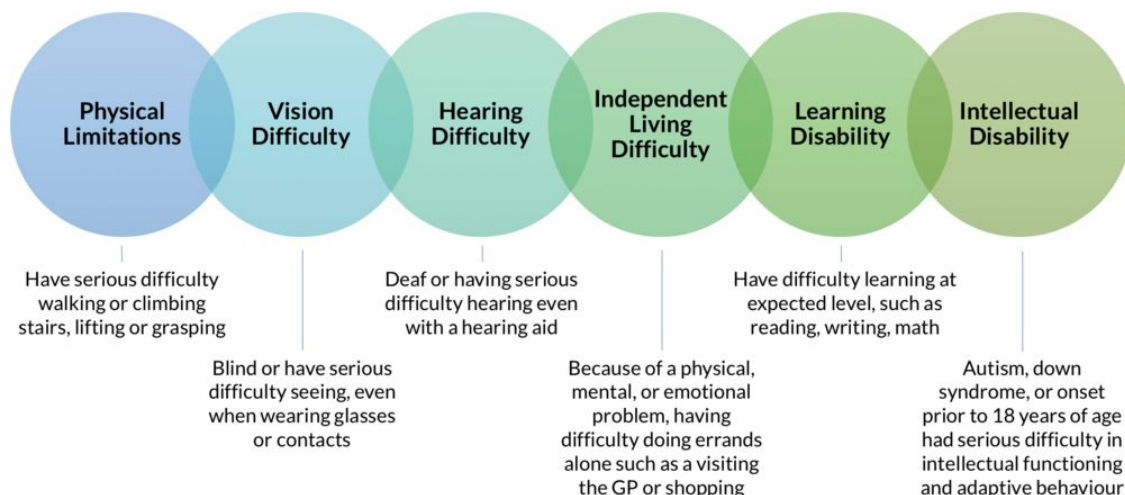
These laws have increasingly segregated members of the LGBT community from the rest of society and have made it more difficult for LGBT people to be involved in their societies. One of the biggest threats towards LGBT inclusion is labor discrimination laws, and in one study conducted by an assistant professor at Harvard, it was found that members of the LGBT community are more than twice as likely to be unemployed in the United States and also twice as likely to not have health insurance. Overall, the refusal by employers to employ LGBT people because they disagree with their sexual orientation is a blatant form of discrimination, and most governments have minimal protections for LGBT people in the workplace. In fact, some nations have even tried to pass laws that defend people from having

to employ LGBT people, including the United States, where the idea of a religious rights bill has been proposed, and only 5% of UN member nations have laws written into their constitutions that forbid discrimination towards LGBT people.

Furthermore, another community that is commonly excluded from their societies are the disabled. The disabled community includes a broad variety of disabilities that can be defined under one of the four following categories: intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, mental illness, and sensory disabilities. For people with disabilities, finding a source of income can be a severe challenge as employers are often not provided any incentive to hire people with disabilities, there are minimal laws in many countries that protect the employment of those with disabilities, and there may exist negative stereotypes towards disabled people.

In one census held by the Minnesota Population Center in 2015 that surveyed a wide variety of nations, it was found that the average workforce participation rate for those without disabilities was 60% while for those with disabilities it was under 40%.

This discrimination towards disabled people is called ableism and is based on the notion that people with disabilities are incapable of doing certain things that non-disabled people can. Financially, ableism can greatly affect disabled peoples' quality of life because it prevents them from getting jobs that they need to support themselves.



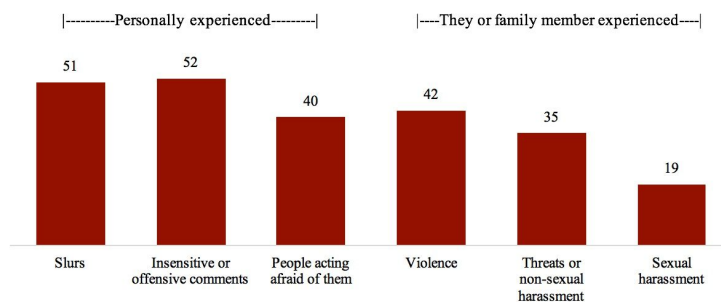
Source: Neatebox, Why Inclusion Must Matter to Businesses, 2018

In fact, in one survey it was found that 70% of disabled participants said that they would certainly or probably not be able to pay an unexpected expense of USD 2,000 were they to be put in such a situation. Comparatively, only 37% of nondisabled respondents said the same. Not only can this lack of inclusivity of disabled people in working environments affect their economic situation, but it can also affect their ability to get needed medical care. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately half of all disabled people cannot afford the medical care that they need, 970 million people require glasses or low vision aids, only 5-15% of people who need a wheelchair have access to one, and the global production of hearing aids only meets 10% of the demand. More so, disabled people are three times as likely to be denied medical assistance, and they are four times as likely to be treated poorly by medical professionals. Thus, if disabled people are to be further included in society countries must protect their right to work and their right to adequate health services.

A third minority group that is commonly excluded from their societies is racial or ethnic minorities. Minority groups vary drastically by nation or region, and as to who is a racial or ethnic minority is often determined by that nation or region's culture, history, and dominant religion.

For example, in Myanmar Rohingya Muslims have been evicted by the government from their homes and the nation, and they have been persecuted by the government because the nation's Buddhist nationalists have pushed to remove anything from the country that is not in line with Buddhism. In fact, Myanmar refuses to recognize Rohingya Muslims as

Chart 3:
Percent of Black Americans Reporting
Various Forms of Individual Discrimination Because of Their Race



Harvard School of Public Health,
<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/press-releases/black-americans-discrimination-work-policy/>

citizens, and as a result Rohingya people do not receive the documentation that is necessary for them to do things like get a job or buy a house. For the Rohingyas, these ethnically biased laws have greatly inhibited their economic status and ability to be included in society.

In general, discrimination towards ethnic and racial minorities can drastically impact their socioeconomic status even in wealthy nations like the United States. In the United States, 39% of African American children and 33% of Latino

children are impoverished while only 14% of white and Asian children are impoverished. Additionally, African American unemployment rates are double those of white Americans, and full-time working African American men only make 72% of what white men make while African American women make 85% of what white women make. As a result of this financial instability, minority racial groups like African Americans also have less access to education. In the United States, African Americans and Latinos are more likely to attend high-poverty schools, and Latinos have the highest dropout rate compared to other racial groups, followed by African Americans and then white people.

Overall, the gap in equal access to economic and educational resources can severely impact racial or ethnic minorities' ability to be included in society and work towards the sustainable development goals as they are deprived of the resources that help them contribute to society. While these three groups may be some prominent and common minorities in countries, there are hundreds of different types and subcategories of minority groups, all of whom face some type of challenge or discrimination that is impeding their economic status and ability to be included in society.

c. International Responses

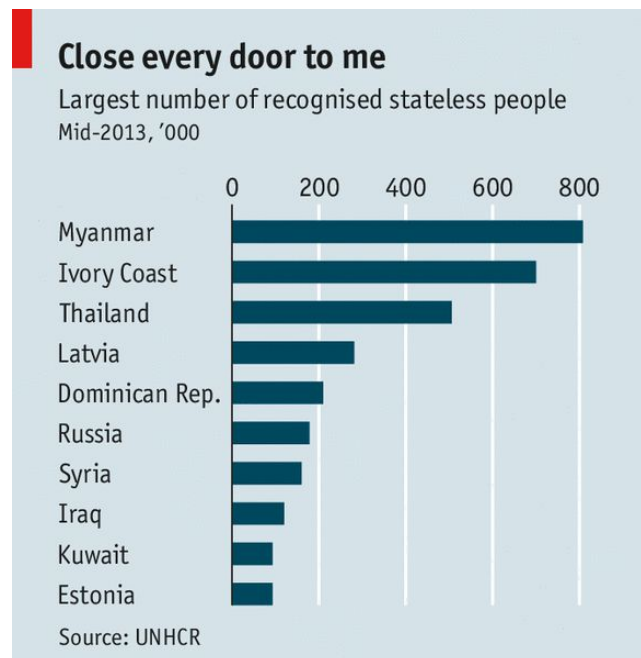
While there remains a lack of inclusion among minority groups, the United Nations, other international bodies, and nations have taken action to help reduce exclusion.

One of the first UN documents that aims to protect minorities is the United Nations Minorities Declaration, which was passed in 1992 by the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR). Overall, this document attempted to create a written declaration for countries to commit themselves to the protection of national, ethnic,

religious, and linguistic minorities, as well as remind nations that minorities can also include marginalized groups. However, there was one major flaw to this declaration, which is that it does not provide an international and agreed upon definition of what a minority is. This is one of the biggest challenges that the United Nations faces when addressing how to protect minorities across various regions and countries, as the definition of a minority or a marginalized group changes depending on the culture, societal norms, and laws.

Thus, the discrepancy caused the declaration to be mostly ineffective, and to help consolidate this the UN established the Forum on Minority Issues in 2007. When this forum was established it was mandated to “analyze and identify best practices, challenges, opportunities and initiatives for the further implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.” However, this forum only meets two days in a year for thematic discussions, which prevents continuous discussion and action on how the international community can increase minority inclusivity. At the forum’s most recent session on November 28, 2018 the topic of discussion was the connection between statelessness and the rights of linguistic, ethnic or national and religious minorities. The aspects of this topic that were most thoroughly discussed were the main challenges faced by people who are stateless as a result of conflict or forced population movement, providing stateless people with nationality through the distribution of birth certificates, naturalization, and obtaining citizenship, and how stateless women face greater discrimination and are disadvantaged by many countries’ nationality laws. At the end of this discussion, the recommendations for how countries should manage this problem were compiled into the UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues so that they could be presented to the fortieth session of the Human Rights Council in March 2019.

In recent years, it has become increasingly stressed by the United Nations that in order to achieve the goals set forth by the 2030 SDGs there needs to be an increase in social inclusivity, and the main UN department that is responsible for helping achieve this is the Division for Inclusive Social Development (UN DESA). To achieve this, UN DESA utilizes multiple approaches such as supporting intergovernmental bodies, collecting and analyzing data in regards to a countries’ inclusivity, and helping drive socioeconomic trends in countries facing a lack of inclusivity, and currently UN DESA operates in seventy-five different countries where they work with governments and NGOs to determine the best way to increase inclusivity for a certain country. Additionally, UN DESA holds multiple summits and conferences each year on various issues that pertain to inclusivity in the SDGs. For example, the next conference is planned for September 21-23, 2019, and the topic of discussion will be how nations can collectivize to end climate change, a goal that would require all groups of people in a society to achieve. Unfortunately, like other action that has been taken by the UN to better inclusivity UN DESA can only provide support and policy



The Economist

<https://www.economist.com/international/2014/05/17/nowhere-to-call-home>

advice to countries as to what they should do to increase inclusivity; thus, it is entirely up to countries to implement these suggestions, something that is not always done.

For this reason, if inclusivity is going to be increased the UN needs to explore other ways in which they can encourage countries and individual people to take action to build a more inclusive world.

d. The role of youth

The United Nations Organisation was founded on October 24th, 1945. One of its central missions has always been to maintain peace between all the Nations. Nowadays, the UN has resolved a lot of emerging conflicts through The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) which focuses primarily on five areas in international peace and security: ensuring sound analysis and early warning, preventing conflict and engaging in peacemaking, managing political crises and violent conflicts, sustaining peace and enhancing partnerships. With Special Political Missions (SPMs) and Good Offices, DPPA is maintaining peace in growing conflicts. But there are some conflicts that are still unresolved since the creation of The United Nations, like the Kashmir or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. So, 75 years after the date of the creation of the UN, should the peacekeeping mission between nations remain the priority of this organisation? And what should this new priorities of the UN be in 2045, when the organisation turns 100?

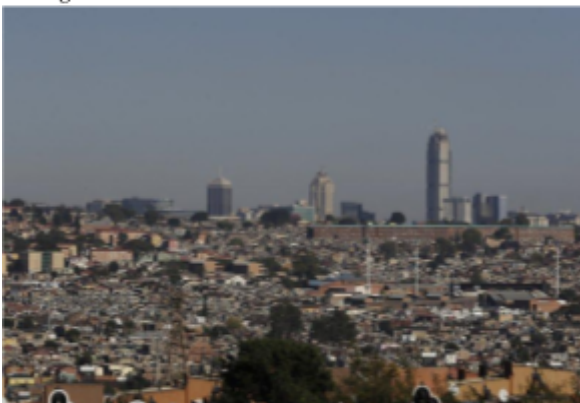
To achieve a better future both in 25 and 200 years, we need to know what future our world is headed for if we do not change anything. More importantly, we must define the future we want to build the UN we need. The answer to this problem lies in the consultation of all and in global agitation.

As a separate member of this reflection, young people who have not experienced a major world conflict are free to define what should the next global issue be.

3. Case studies :

a. South Africa Post Apartheid

The neighborhood of Alexandra in the foreground compared to the skyscrapers of Sandton in the background.



Source: The Associated Press, *Post-apartheid South Africa is world's most unequal country*, 2019

Apartheid was a system of laws in South Africa that were meant to racially segregate South Africa's majority black African and Asian South African population from the minority white South African population. These institutionalized racial laws covered a wide variety of matters, but all sought to achieve the same goal: make it harder for black South Africans to improve their economic and social status. For example, the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act was a law that prohibited interracial marriages, and the Population Registration Act put all citizens into one of four racial classes, being white, black, coloured, and Indian.

While these laws were abolished in 1991, forty-three years after they were created, the effects of Apartheid are still felt by black Africans and colored people. One way that the

lasting impact of Apartheid in South Africa can still be seen today is in its highly segregated neighborhood suburbs. One example in particular that provides a stark contrast between the living conditions of blacks and whites is in Johannesburg with the neighborhoods Sandton and Alexandra. Less than one kilometer away from each other, Sandton, which is known as “the richest square mile in South Africa,” has a population that is only 30% black, even though 79% of the countries’ population is black, while the neighboring suburb of Alexandra is 98% black.

This lack of integration between whites and blacks in South Africa is primarily the result of a lack of incentive to integrate post Apartheid, as after Apartheid was abolished the government began mass housing projects for black South Africans but these homes were built in already impoverished black neighborhoods. As a result, black people and neighborhoods are highly disadvantaged compared to their white counterparts. In some schools in Alexandra there is a student to teacher ratio as high as seventy to one, and in 2017 the unemployment rate was nearly 28% in South Africa, most of which was made up of black South Africans.

Additionally, just about 10% of South Africa’s population, most of which is white, owns 90% of the wealth, leaving little for black South Africans. The effects of Apartheid on modern day South Africa are not only economic but also social, and in a recent survey it was found that 43.5% of South Africans say they rarely or never speak to someone of the opposite race. Only 27.4% say they interact with someone of the opposite race on a regular basis. Furthermore, in a separate survey in 2012 it was found that 41.4% of South Africans find the customs and culture of a different race difficult to understand, which shows how little communication and socializing there is between racial groups. Even more concerning is the fact that only 61.8% of South Africans said that they think it is important to establish national unity among racial groups; however, on a more positive note, 83.8% of South Africans said that Apartheid was a crime against humanity.

Overall, if South Africa plans to help move towards a healthy, sustainable economy and society it must find a way to incentivize citizens to integrate, and the government itself needs to help black South Africans reach an economic situation similar to that of white South Africans.

b. LGBT rights and religious liberty in the United States

With gay marriage becoming recognized across all of the United States in 2015, the treatment of the LGBT community in the United States has improved drastically from the treatment the community received just decades earlier.

However, while conditions for the LGBT community have improved for the most part, there has grown a recent movement by many conservative Christians to advocate for what they have coined “religious liberty.” The movement primarily began when a baker in Colorado refused to make a wedding cake for a same-sex couple, which led to the gay couple suing the baker for



Source: United Press International, Supreme Court Demonstrations over Masterpiece Cakeshop Case, 2017

discrimination. After a series of court proceedings the case eventually landed itself at the supreme court in 2018 where the baker said that under his first amendment right, which guarantees citizens freedom of expression, he has the right to express his artistry as he would like to. In the end, the supreme court ruled in favor of the baker with a vote of seven in favor and two opposed, and the Trump administrations' Department of Justice stated that they were "pleased" with the court's decision. Since this case, many similar ones have arisen and they mostly follow the common theme of a religious business owner refusing to provide service to a same sex couple; however there have been cases of religious medical professionals refusing to provide service.

As a result of all of this, many state governments have begun to take action to either protect the LGBT community or the conservative Christian community. In Texas, a state that is primarily conservative with a Republican majority, there was a bill called the religious freedom bill that was passed by the Texas state senate in April. The bill permits state licensed workers, such as teachers, doctors, and counselors, to refuse to provide their services if they believed it would conflict with their religious beliefs, with the only exception being if their services were needed to prevent death or severe bodily damage. Additionally, the bill allows for anyone who feels that their religious beliefs are being impeded upon to file a lawsuit, which opponents of the bill say would make fighting discrimination of the LGBT community harder and costlier. This is not the first time the state of Texas has tried to pass a bill that would segregate the LGBT community, as just two years prior the state tried to pass a transgender bathroom bill that would make it illegal for transgender people to use the bathroom of the gender they align with; however, that bill never made it past the Texas senate.

Unlike Texas, there have been states that have proposed and passed legislation that protect the LGBT community from discrimination, including Kansas, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin, where governors from both political parties, Democratic and Republican, have signed bills that make workplace discrimination against members of the LGBT community illegal. Overall, the debate of religious freedom in the United States is not likely to end anytime soon, and it is more than likely to be a debate that other countries may find themselves having, if not already, as the rights of the LGBT community improve. To help find a solution, the international community will need to find a way to convey the importance of LGBT equality to religious conservatives, as well as ensure the LGBT community and the religious community feel equally included and protected in their society.

c. Muslim Persecution in China

Even though Islam has been practiced in China for over 1,400 years, over the past couple of decades Muslims have come under increased scrutiny and persecution in China. In total, China's population is 1.6% Muslim, or twenty-two million people, and while Muslim discrimination began to increase after Mao Zedong's cultural revolution, the tensions that exist today between China's majority Han population and its Muslim population began after the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. After 9/11 there grew to be a sense of Islamophobia in China, like many other countries, and this Islamophobia persists today. However, unlike many other countries, the government of China has been a major perpetrator of this Islamophobia, and in the past couple of years they have even begun to arrest and persecute Muslims. This persecution has been primarily observed in the Xinjiang region, where China's largest Muslim group the Uyghurs reside, and in the past year there has been an estimated three million Uyghurs that have been arrested and put in detention camps. Overall, the Uyghur population is estimated to be eleven million, meaning more than a quarter of the Uyghur population has been arrested. Former detainees in these camps have

described the conditions as prison like, stating that they often were tortured or observed others being tortured, and they also reported being forced to live in overcrowded cells.



Source: Medium, China's securitisation of the Uyghur takes an alarming development, 2018

Of course, China has denied all of these claims of poor living conditions, and they have said their arrests of Muslims are an attempt to prevent them from joining radical Islamic terrorist organizations. Yet, are these arrests made by China on the sole ground of anti-terrorist protection being made without any evidence that Uyghurs are involved in a terrorist organization? Is it because China not only intends to prevent terrorism in its country, but also to put an end to Islam in that country? Former detainees have stated that while they were being tortured they were

forced to denounce Islam, and they also described receiving daily regimens of indoctrination where they were forced to pledge loyalty to the Chinese Communist Party. Former detainees described these regimens as so intense and traumatic that they drove some to commit suicide. So not only are Uyghurs being forced into massive prison camps, but they are also put through harsh reeducation programs which the Chinese government has labeled as “vocational training.” For the Uyghurs that have not been arrested, China has also made sure to limit their ability to practice Islam, as men have been forced to shave their beards and hijabs have been banned. Additionally, there have been reports of Chinese police forcing Muslim restaurant and shop owners to open their business in the daytime during Ramadan, and mosques have also been destroyed. Moreover, China has also restricted Uyghurs’ ability to move into and outside of Xinjiang, as there have been checkpoints set up at the region’s borders. Perhaps most frightening, there have also been reports of Chinese officials conducting mass DNA collection of Uyghurs, the purpose of which is currently unknown.

While all of this occurs in Xinjiang, there has been little action by the international community to stop it, especially from Muslim countries. In fact, Saudi Arabia has made no comment on the situation in Xinjiang, and King Salman has even announced that Saudi Arabia is ready to strengthen relations with China “at all levels.” This lack of response from Muslim countries is maybe due to fear that China will withdraw its massive investments in infrastructure in Muslim countries if they are to speak out against human rights violations. For example, China is Saudi Arabia’s biggest importer of Saudi oil and purchased USD 46 billion of Saudi oil last year. Additionally, China is currently building a high-speed train line in Iran, ports and power plants in Indonesia, and in Malaysia, China is building a rail link and property development. Overall, Uyghurs have been extremely excluded from Chinese society because the Chinese government has maybe institutionally polarized them, and the lack of response from the international community is only proof that governments can not increase inclusivity by themselves. Instead, the people are needed to move towards an inclusive society as well, and they need to be encouraged to voice concern when governments like China persecute minority groups like the Uyghurs.

3. Possible Solutions:

- **Reforming the organization of the debates at the United Nations:** Nowadays, UN assemblies are composed only of nations, there is no place for associations or independent actors. Reforming assemblies to include participation rights, such as in the Human Rights Council where NGOs have a

right to speak (certainly shorter than that of governments) may be a solution to ensure freedom of expression for all.

4. Main international actors :

United Nations : The United Nations is an intergovernmental organization whose mission is to address the challenges facing humanity in the 21st century, such as peace and security, climate change, sustainable development, human rights, disarmament, terrorism, humanitarian and health emergencies, gender equality, governance, food production, and more.

Center on International Cooperation : The goal of the CIC is making advanced research in terms of international cooperation to find the best solution to an international issue. This organization is creating programs to focus research on a defined issue like humanitarian crises or the multilateralism reform.

European Commission : One of the European Commission's missions is to promote development and international aid through the cooperation of countries and partners of the European Union. It aims to reduce global poverty, promote economic, social and environmental development and promote democracy, the rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights.

5. Guidelines for research :

International Cooperation

- ❑ look at your country's previous actions
 - ❑ Check in which organization they already are and what they do, how they participate in the debate
 - ❑ Look at what kind of action your country is taking in an international way (commerce, defense ...)
 - ❑ You can also look at how your country is doing with the SDG's
- ❑ What is your country working on ? With which Country ?

Inclusivity

- ❑ Look at your country's previous actions
 - ❑ How your country deals with minorities
 - ❑ Are there any laws in your country to include people (like the LGBT but also the people in the governance of the country)

Future

- ❑ What kind of future do you want to see and how can we reach it

❑ **You can also do surveys or experiments by yourself (Contributions)**

Don't hesitate to be creative and to find solutions of your own !

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