



# GA3

## STUDY GUIDE

2025



# Third General Assembly

## Committee Mandate

The Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (GA3), formally referred to as the Social Humanitarian Cultural Committee or SOCHUM, primarily focuses on issues related to human rights, humanitarian affairs, and fundamental freedoms in social and cultural affairs. The mandate of the GA3 can be broken down into three distinct parts:

- 1. Social Issues** - The GA3 discusses and formulates policies on a range of social issues, including the advancement of the rights of women and children, the rights of Indigenous people, and the promotion of social development (such as family, ageing, crime prevention, and international drug control)
- 2. Humanitarian Issues** - The GA3 addresses humanitarian concerns, such as the treatment of refugees and displaced people and their rights, the protection of civilians in conflict zones, and humanitarian assistance.
- 3. Cultural Issues** - The GA3 also deals with matters related to the preservation and protection of cultural diversity. For example, the protection of cultural diversity and the promotion of fundamental freedoms, through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination.

Despite the large scope and mandate of the GA3, its principle goal can be encapsulated as the “advancing and preserving of human rights”.

## Agenda

- **Practice Debate 1 Topic**  
International Collaboration and Burden-Sharing in Addressing Refugee and Displacement Crises.
- **Practice Debate 2 Topic**  
Combatting human rights violations within armed conflict in the MENA region.
- **Conference Topic**  
Digital Access in Promoting Human Rights for Marginalized Groups.

## A message from the head table

Dear Delegates,

As chairs of General Assembly 3(GA3), we expect that delegates use this study guide as a foundation for further research, and use this to broaden their knowledge to guide their research. We hope that you explore profoundly the vast array of topics that we have outlined, and not rely on it as your only source of research.

The committee mandate of GA3 is broad, and it often involves a nuanced examination of past and contemporary events worldwide. Even if the topics may be perceived as trivial and that of general knowledge, your independent research can discover new ideas and perspectives. We, as a committee, aim to see a solution-oriented, constructive debate for all the practice debates and the main conference, and to end up with realistic, feasible resolutions.

We hope to have a great variety of perspectives and opinions to hear from, as nearly all countries can be member states. That being said, we advise each delegate to maintain their country's stance as well as they can – even if your delegation's perspective varies from your own, personal opinion. However, also note that any profanity and malice towards other delegates will not be tolerated. At the end of the day, we want to see constructive debate and a diplomatic attitude from all delegates. We hope that you meet many new people and make new friends, but remember that in debates, you must stick to your delegation's alliances. Staying true to your nation's position can be difficult, and we encourage you to do your best in taking on this role. Although we have presented talking points within the study guide we do not want debate to be limited to a specific scope. The 3rd General Assembly hopes to be open for all delegates of every skill set and we specifically expect to create an environment where both novice and experienced delegates can thrive. We wish you all the best in your research and expect to see high-quality debate in the months to come.

Chairs of the GA3

Rehan, Mandiv, and Nishthula

## **PRACTICE DEBATE 1: International Collaboration and Burden-Sharing in Addressing Refugee and Displacement Crises**

### **Background**

The global refugee and displacement crisis has escalated significantly over the years, with some instances being managed while others persist, leaving profound effects on individuals and nations alike. The global refugee problem is the result of a variety of events, including armed wars, political persecution, and institutional atrocities that force people to escape their homes. Economic insecurity, climate change, and environmental calamities all exacerbate displacement, as do poor governance and corruption in affected areas. International power dynamics and lack of global cooperation can impede effective responses, trapping millions in prolonged crises. Addressing these core problems needs a coordinated effort to assure refugees' safety, stability, and equitable opportunities.

A notable trend is the inevitable transnational spread of these crises, prompting multiple countries to intervene or become affected. As a result, these enduring challenges transcend regional boundaries and can rightfully be classified as global issues, demanding collective attention and action.

Global alliances showcase nations' interconnectedness but often lack the adaptability needed to address challenges like the growing refugee crisis. A critical issue lies in the failure of capable nations to identify and tackle the root causes of displacement. Consequently, the burden disproportionately falls on developing nations, which frequently lack the infrastructure and resources necessary to support large influxes of refugees, exacerbating an already dire situation.

We urge you, esteemed delegates, to creatively develop innovative strategies for effective collaboration and equitable burden-sharing to ensure that nations hosting refugees are equipped with the necessary resources to provide adequate support. Delegates are encouraged to align their proposals with their respective national policies while fostering a comprehensive understanding of other nations' priorities and strategies.

We strongly advise against narrowing the scope of discussion to a single refugee crisis. Instead, we encourage the inclusion of diverse crises from various regions across the globe. Each displacement crisis presents unique challenges, and as such, requires tailored solutions. This broad and inclusive approach will enable more nuanced and impactful outcomes, addressing the multifaceted nature of refugee and displacement issues.

### **Case Studies**

#### **South Sudan Refugee Crisis**

The South Sudan refugee crisis began in 2013 as a result of civil war and ethnic violence, forcing over 2.3 million people to neighbouring countries, with Uganda hosting the majority. The ongoing fighting,

food insecurity, and instability have extended the catastrophe, making it one of the world's largest displacement emergencies. There have been collaborative efforts to deal with the following crisis such as international aid and World Bank partnerships to support Uganda's progressive refugee policy, regarded as one of the most inclusive in the world, grants refugees the right to work, access education, and utilize healthcare services. Entities have provided financial support, technical assistance, and infrastructure development under programs like the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF).

Despite these efforts, there are still issues that make it difficult for Uganda to maintain its open-door policy, such as large financing gaps, host community resource shortages, and strain on local infrastructure and services.

### **Syrian Refugee Crisis**

The Syrian refugee crisis, one of the largest in modern history, began in 2011 with the outbreak of civil war in Syria. The conflict displaced over 13 million people, with 6.8 million fleeing to neighbouring countries like Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, and 6.2 million displaced internally. Refugees face challenges such as limited access to resources, education, and healthcare, while host nations struggle with economic and social pressures.

As a developing nation, Turkey has borne the primary responsibility for hosting the large and rapid influx of Syrian refugees, resulting in significant strain on its resources. Despite the establishment of the EU-Turkey Deal in 2016, which provided direct financial aid to support the hosting of refugees, substantial challenges persist. These shortcomings are largely due to the inequitable burden-sharing framework, which has left countries like Turkey and Jordan overwhelmed. Meanwhile, wealthier nations have notably restricted their refugee intake, further exacerbating the disparity in global responsibility and the resources available for those displaced.

### **Ukrainian Refugee Crisis**

After Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, more than 8 million Ukrainians were forced to flee their homes, sparking the start of the current refugee crisis. The majority escaped to nearby European nations, where the European Union (EU) provided them with access to healthcare, employment, and education. Millions of people are still displaced because of the catastrophe. Initiatives such as the temporary protection directive established by the EU granted immediate access for Ukraine-specific refugees to work, education, and healthcare.

This case exemplifies effective burden-sharing, with neighbouring nations such as Poland and Romania collectively hosting a significant number of refugees, while wealthier Western countries, including the United States and Canada, have contributed through resettlement opportunities and financial assistance. The swift, coordinated international response, coupled with the robust infrastructure of host nations, highlights the success of collaborative efforts in managing the refugee crisis and ensuring equitable distribution of responsibilities.

## **Talking Points**

- The profound issue of inequitable distribution
- The principle of solidarity and its effect in real-world scenarios
- Recommendation to amend international law to adapt to the evolving refugee crisis.
- The perfect balance between humanitarian aid and development aid
- The principle of non-refoulement
- The inevitable effect of nationalism on refugee intake

## **Further Reading**

- <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/sharing-the-burden-of-the-global-refugee-crisis/>
- <https://isim.georgetown.edu/research/past-projects/international-responsibility-sharing-and-refugees/>
- <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/GRF%20Fact%20Sheet%20-%20Burden%20and%20Responsibility-Sharing.pdf>
- <https://www.undp.org/speeches/global-refugee-forum-high-level-debate-burden-and-responsibility-sharing>
- <https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications/refugee-burden-and-responsibility-sharing-revisiting-the-debate-on-the-right-to-compensation-to-refugee-hosting-states>
- <https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications/refugee-burden-and-responsibility-sharing-revisiting-the-debate-on-the-right-to-compensation-to-refugee-hosting-states>

## PRACTICE DEBATE 2: Combating human rights violations within armed conflict in the MENA region

### Background

***'Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more.'***

There has been an uprising in the violation of human rights and how conflict is conducted, considering the rise of intra-national and international armed conflicts across the globe. Even though there have been efforts towards accountability and transparency within the conduct followed by conflicts, the violations of these rights continue to occur at a large scale.

Specifically, the definition of the violation of human rights has been within unspecified bounds. The bounds of what constitutes a human rights violation against an IDP (Internally Displaced Person) is not clearly defined, and also the dealing of rights violations by intervening parties is unclear. For example, it may be argued that the nation of Israel may have or may have not committed crimes against humanity within the Gaza Strip, however, the scale of these alleged violations or if they even exist at all have different interpretations according to varying definitions of what a human rights violation is.

We want you, the delegate, to address a wide variety of human rights violations. Instead of highlighting a singular perspective of violations we expect you to bring a multitude of different aspects such as refugee rights, women and child rights, the handling of humanitarian aid, and even the freedom of press and speech, all within the context of conflicts.

We expect the debate to specifically revolve around the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) as a wide variety of conflicts, such as Coup d'Etats and international and civil combat, stem from this region. We hope that the debate will not be constricted to a specific conflict, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but will cover a range of conflicts. Most importantly, we expect delegates to provide solutions whilst considering regional context, and culture.

### Case Studies

#### The Arab Spring

The Arab Spring was a series of protests which occurred between 2010-2011 within the MENA region where the citizens of many authoritarian regimes protested against the government and their respective leaders. Although the protests sparked an initial upsurge against the multiple human rights violations conducted by regimes, other than a few successes there have been persistent rights violations after the protests. More importantly, before the protests the freedom of speech and press was not exercised by the nations of the region. There were acts of censorship by the Libyan

government and more notably the 'Tahir Square' incident where on the 15th of September 2011 the government of Bahrain deployed their riot police on protesters which led to the deaths of civilians. The Arab Spring contains a vast range of human rights violations and it is argued that it led to an 'Arab Winter' where violations and conflicts were more persistent in the following decade.

### **The Syrian Civil War**

The Syrian Civil War has been a major talking point in the context of human rights violations within the Middle East. With over 613,000 civilians perishing over the 12-year nature of the conflict, it is an unexpected outcome of what initiated a peaceful conflict. What is important to consider in this conflict is the role of geopolitics and how the influence of foreign parties led to further violations such as the government-led, foreign-backed, torture prisons, which have led to the deaths of over 50,000 civilians. The conflict has led to a refugee crisis where over 5 million citizens were either displaced or are now under refugee status.

### **The Israel-Palestine War**

Although the Israel-Palestine conflict has been ongoing for the better part of over half a century, a culmination of events sparked when the conflict reignited in 2023. With Hamas clashing with the Israeli Government there have been nearly 50,000 deaths recorded within the tenure of the conflict. More importantly, acts such as the Israeli blockade of aid to Rafah and the Gaza Strip in January 2024 have led to the criticism of the nation of Israel.

### **Talking Points**

- The violations conducted by armed forces including the UNPKF
- The prosecution of war criminals and foreign powers that have conducted violations
- The amendment or establishment of international humanitarian laws in a modern context and defining human rights violations
- Whistleblower and Press rights within a conflict
- The Rafah and Gaza Strip Aid Blockage
- *Jus Cogens* and its applicability to human rights

### **Further Reading**

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/report-middle-east-and-north-africa/>

[https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/external/doc/en/assets/files/other/law1\\_final.pdf](https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/external/doc/en/assets/files/other/law1_final.pdf)

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/01/11/un-peacekeeping-has-sexual-abuse-problem>

<https://sites.bu.edu/pardeeatlas/advancing-human-progress-initiative/back2school/peacekeeping-in-haiti-successes-and-failures/>

<https://www.newarab.com/news/press-freedom-index-mena-countries-go-bad-worse>

# **CONFERENCE: Digital Access in Promoting Human Rights for Marginalized Groups.**

*"The Internet is becoming the town square for the global village of tomorrow." - Bill Gates*

## **Background**

Digital access is a technological term that means the ability to use and access digital technology (Chris Mays, 2024). In terms of human rights, digital access plays a huge role. This includes bringing together the world and making the globe connected. Technology has aided humanity in various ways. However, there have been countless occurrences in which this has also caused major damage to reputation, marginalized groups, as well as the flow of the world.

With the rise in technology and its development in various fields, it is clear that technology can be used for the benefit of the world as well. This is by promoting voices and advocating for positive change. This will enhance the world making it a better place.

With the rise in the digital implications present in the world, the world constantly needs to give attention to how technology will be used for the well-being of people. The rising access to digital access also increases issues such as trafficking, pornography, and ransoms as well as on a major scale, military-based threats caused by other parties. The scope of technology expands and the boundaries expand as well every second giving more and more focus to how humans can be affected in both beneficial and negative ways.

There have been countless occurrences in which minor groups have been subject to cyberbullying which reduces the possibilities of them leading a better life and being technologically inclusive with the rest of the world. Several such cases include racial and ethnic minority harassment. This also includes areas that might go unnoticed namely memes. Memes, despite their humorous nature, may play a key role in harassment. This has various levels of consequences for these groups ranging from mental health effects to digital disengagement which is when individuals withdraw from online spaces limiting access to opportunities as well as to social polarization which is the growing division between society.

## **Case Studies**

### **DigitalDialog21 Project**

This research project conducted by the Ludwigsburg University of Education in Germany highlights the importance of digital change on marginalized groups and how this would affect the perception and point of view on change. Moreover, the project highlights the issues such as exclusion, misrepresentation as well as the probability of marginalized groups being subject to hate speech as well as cyberbullying. This is most commonly occurring in the LGBTQI+ Community mainly due to platform policies.

The research project also highlights the need to implement tools to mitigate and reduce the gap between groups as well as individuals. Key points include the risks of misrepresentation and hate speech, expectations and pressures including stress, and hope and caution.

Refer: <https://philarchive.org/archive/EICDCA-2>

### **UNU-EGOV Report on Digital Access as a Human Right**

This report brings out issues and information from cities such as Barcelona, Johannesburg as well as Mexico City. A deep examination of how urban areas adopt new technology to improve the lives of residents as well as streamline the daily operations of a city. Moreover, it elaborates on the challenges that marginalized groups face and the solutions and practices to enhance digital access around the globe.

Refer: <https://unu.edu/news/report-explores-digital-access-human-right>

### **SWAYAM Initiative in India**

This case study from UNESCO brings out vital information about the SWAYAM online learning platform which aims to provide education opportunities to all citizens around the globe. Despite challenges that are to be faced such as poor infrastructure and low broadband penetration, the case study highlights several comprehensive strategies such as the Four-Quadrant Approach which is to utilize e-Tutorials, e-Content, Assessments, and Discussion forums to enhance education.

Refer: <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20241212124227215>

## **Talking Points**

### **1. Digital Divide**

Digital Access is, from the name itself, a broad topic in which delegates are expected to cover various sub-topics including, the digital divide, social justice, and digital inequality. Elaborating on the digital divide is the invisible gap between the information rich and poor. The continuation of this would cause critical human rights issues. According to research, around 60% of people globally are not interconnected and do not have access to the internet. This is even higher in developing nations where the percentage rises to 65%. This digital exclusion exacerbates existing inequalities and hinders the progress of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Despite the UNGA recognizing access to the internet as a basic human right, there are various factors that blind access including gender and geographic disparities in digital access.

## **2. Challenges and Barriers**

Another point that should be addressed includes the challenges and barriers in implementing access to the internet and digital technology. This includes the infrastructure that needs to be taken into consideration. Moreover, other social factors include the initial resistance to change from the traditional systems. This might initially cause issues that can be mitigated later on.

It is of the utmost importance that human rights be promoted for the betterment of human lives. Delegates are expected to study broadly the various reasons as to how digital access can help find, solve, and mitigate problems all around the globe.

## **3. Cyber Violence and Discrimination**

Marginalized communities are often vulnerable to cyber violence and discrimination via means that are invented every day. Women and LGBTQI+ individuals face harassment and abuse on digital platforms. This usually includes the rise in stalking, sexual assault as well as suicide. This has reduced the interest as well as the probability of development in regions that are not well known to the world. A great example of this is a recent suicide case from Kerala where a 26-year-old took her own life following “persistent cyber-violence”. Moreover, the cases are also present in areas such as Spain, Pakistan as well as Peru.

## **4. Surveillance and Censorship**

This is most common when the government, which is automatically involved, gets a stake in the security and management of technology. Despite human rights concerns, governments continue to monitor their nations due to security policies. However, mismanagement and misuse might cause data breaches which might cause personal and sensitive data to be leaked violating Global Data Protection Laws (GDPR). Governments might also cause the censorship of marginalized voices. This might hinder the freedom of expression and cause barriers to strengthen rather than be loosened.

## **5. Barriers to Meaningful Access**

Despite having access to technology namely the Internet, there are several issues faced by marginalized groups that prevent them from using it effectively. These barriers include language differences, infrastructure issues as well as socio-economic factors. This limits the ability to engage with the changing world at the same pace as the rest of the world.

## Treaties, Conventions, and Acts

1. The 1951 Refugee Convention

*Refer: <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/4ca34be29.pdf>*

2. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

*Refer: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>*

3. Kampala Convention

*Refer:*

*<https://au.int/en/treaties/african-union-convention-protection-and-assistance-internally-displaced-persons-africa>*

4. The Global Data Protection Act

*Refer: <https://gdpr-info.eu/>*

5. The Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention)

*Refer: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cybercrime/the-budapest-convention>*

6. TUNIS AGENDA FOR THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

*Refer: <https://www.itu.int/net/wsis/docs2/tunis/off/6rev1.html>*

7. FCC Digital Discrimination Rules (2023)

*Refer: <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-398477A1.pdf>*