



Background Paper

Committee: Human Rights

Topic B: Preservation of Human Rights in War Torn Countries

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War is a state of armed conflict between different countries or different groups within a country. However, in recent decades, these armed conflicts have committed human rights violations. Some of these violations may even constitute genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity. These violations should not happen nor be tolerated, and that is why there is a need for debate regarding this topic. Human rights abuses can emerge as a result of violent conflicts, either through the promotion of a political and/or ideological agenda, the welfare of one or more groups, or over the access to resources. Also, human rights that are or not violated are constantly the cause of many conflicts, making its resolutions a greater challenge every single time they are denied, which makes this a subject that needs urgent attention and a solution to solve the previously mentioned issues. The most important events that occurred in relation to this topic were the Geneva Conventions between 1864 and 1931, which set the standards in international law for humanitarian treatment of wounded soldiers, prisoners of war and civilians during conflict and military occupation. Also, the United Nations has shown interest in the topic by continuously reforming international humanitarian law to achieve the main goal of preserving the dignity and humanity of all people.

War has existed for thousands of years, but, ever since World War II, these confrontations have been more politically motivated by every country's specific expectations. After World War 2, there was a trial to deal with war crimes committed by high ranking political, military, and judicial members of the Nazis. The categorization of war crimes committed represented a judicial advancement, this would later be used by the United Nations for establishment of future consequences of war crimes. In recent years, due to its ongoing conflict, Syria is the most war-torn country in the world, followed by Afghanistan and Iraq. Syria's civil war started in the early Spring of 2001, in which people demanded the eradication of President Bashar Al-Assad's government. These protests soon transformed into an armed rebellion in which more than 11 million Syrians have had their human rights violated, including more than 250,000 deaths. Just like Syria, the situation in Afghanistan and Iraq relates

to their government institutions and the controlling of terrorist groups in both countries violating civilians' human rights, as well as claim lives through bombings, crossfires, assassinations, and improvised explosive devices. Both the United Nations and the Human Rights Committee have a strong history of maintaining constant action by improving human rights in war-torn countries. These actions include the Conferences of Paris (1856), Geneva (1864), St. Petersburg (1868), Brussels (1874), The Hague (1899, 1907) and Geneva (1949 and 1977). Their purposes included setting out humanitarian rules to be followed in international armed conflict, establishing a number of actions which parties must refrain from in all circumstances, band the utilization of human shields, and the fact that civilians may not be compelled to work for an occupying power unless certain strict conditions are met. All of this has increased society's attention towards human rights during these situations, as well as helped the maintenance of peace, the protection of collective security and of cultural property.

Sadly violations of human rights in war torn countries are something that has been occurring for thousands of years. Fortunately, the acknowledgement that there is need for preservation of these rights has been constantly increasing.. The war conflicts occurring today are mostly politically motivated by every country's specific goals, the conflicts are usually towards the bad management of the government and its governmental institutions. The United Nations and the Human Rights Committee have been continuously reforming human rights for people since it is essential that dignity and humanity can be preserved in people all over the world. There is still work to be done and the finding of a main solution to stop and prevent these horrible violations from happening in the near future is very important for everyone in the world.

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