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United Nations Security Council



Background Guide

them. It has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year. It meets at the UN Office at Geneva. The Council is made up of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly. In 2007, the Council adopted an “institution-building package” to set up its procedures and mechanisms. Among these were the mechanism of Universal Periodic Review to assess the human rights situations in all UN Member States, the Advisory Committee that serves as the Council’s think tank providing it with expertise and advice on thematic human rights issues, and the Complaint Procedure, which allows individuals and organisations to bring human rights violations to the Council’s attention. The Council also works with the UN Special Procedures established by the former Commission on Human Rights, consisting of special rapporteurs, special representatives, independent experts, and working groups that monitor, examine, advise and report on thematic issues or human rights situations in specific countries.

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

The Human Rights Council is an intergovernmental body of 47 member States based in Geneva. It meets for at least 10 weeks a year spread over no fewer than three sessions, and can also hold special sessions. The Human Rights Council is a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly. Its role includes addressing violations of human rights, including gross and systematic violations, and the promotion of effective coordination and the mainstreaming of human rights within the United Nations system.

The Council serves as a forum for dialogue among States, with input from other stakeholders. As a result of its discussions, the Council may issue resolutions calling on States to take specific actions or uphold certain principles, or it may create mechanisms to investigate or monitor questions of concern.

The Human Rights Council has created or renewed the mandates of various “special procedures.” The special procedures are experts appointed to monitor human rights around priority themes or in specific countries with serious human rights problems. The special procedures may be individual experts or working groups. The Council also manages the Universal Periodic Review, a process through which each UN Member State’s overall human rights record is reviewed.

MODERN SLAVERY ADMITS AN INCREASINGLY GLOBALIZED WORLD

Forum: Human Rights Council

Issue: Modern slavery amidst an increasingly globalised world

Student Officer:

Position:

Introduction : Globally, more than 40 million people are subject to modern forms of slavery with 71% of them women and girls, a grave human rights situation exacerbated by gender inequality, poverty, cultural norms and discriminatory laws that demand change. The link between the increasing globalisation of the economy and the labour rights of workers have been widely reported. With competition between countries and manufacturers, the consequence has been a downward pressure on the rights of workers.

Globalisation has had a profound impact on the economic, political and social order in most countries of the world. The new world has opened up opportunities for organisations to conduct business across borders. For these organisations with a globally diverse workforce, they have yet to grip with the varying legal and ethical labour relation standards.

Modern slavery refers to institutional slavery that continues to occur in our present globalised, modern present-day world which range from debt bondage to child labour. With 152 million children being subjected to child labour the growing pressure to feed a consumerist world can be felt by these individuals as well as others being subjected to situations demeaning the human right standards set by international organisations.

The Sustainable Development Goals established in 2015 mention taking immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms. However currently the world won't be in a position to achieve their goals unless there is a dramatic increase in efforts to ward off these scourges.

Definition of Key Terms

Modern Slavery : Although it is not defined in any law, modern slavery is used as an umbrella term covering practices such as forced labour, debt bondage, forced marriage, and human trafficking. It essentially refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, and/or abuse of power.

Forced Labour : Along with other traditional forms of forced labour such as bonded labour and debt bondage, in the current globalised world there exists a more contemporary form of forced labour, such as migrant workers, who have been trafficked for economic exploitation in a wide

range of economic sectors : working in domestic servitude, the construction industry, the agricultural sector, in forced prostitution and other sectors.

Child Labour : Globally more than 150 million children are subject to child labour, amounting to almost one in ten children being economically exploited that is likely to be hazardous or interfere with the child's education or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

Human Trafficking : Human trafficking is defined in the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol, which supplements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, as "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation".

Key Issues

Bonded Labour : Also termed as forced labour or debt bondage, it occurs when individuals give themselves up into slavery as security against a loan they had either taken or inherited from a relative. It can be simply understood as work performed involuntarily and under the menace of any penalty. Individuals can be forced to work through use of violence or intimidation, or by other means such as manipulated debt, retention of identity papers or threats of denunciation to immigration authorities.

Bonded labour perpetuates poverty, as adults are forced to work for long hours, children are engaged in other household activities denying them education and perpetuating inter-generational poverty, leading to a cycle of bonded labour throughout generations. A global trend can be seen whereby vulnerable people, including those belonging to minority groups, indigenous people, women, children, people determined as being of low caste, and migrant workers, are disproportionately impacted by debt bondage.

The practice of debt bondage is particularly widespread in South Asia especially in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal along with instances in Afghanistan. Bondage labour is also found in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, all these regions together amounting for 83% of the global total of victims of forced labour.

Human Trafficking : With recent findings confirming that the share of children being detected as being victims of human trafficking change is dire. A complex set of factors collectively fuel

human trafficking, including poverty, unemployment, social norms that discriminate on basis of sex, institutional challenges and increased globalisation.

With longer life expectancies and increased demand for human organs in developed countries it has created a thriving international black market which is fueled by people in poorer countries who are not given due compensation or care.

Globalisation and the rise of the internet has again facilitated human trafficking, with various popular websites such as Craigslist, Facebook, Twitter and Backpage among others have come under scrutiny for being used by clients and traffickers in facilitating sex trafficking and sex work in general.

With human trafficking ranking as one of the most profitable transnational crimes, it has created a breeding ground for it to thrive. With employers demanding for cheaper labour, corporations maximise profits at the expense of trafficked labourers, while the low cost of illegal immigrant labour tends to depress wages for legal labourers.

COVID-19 on Modern Slavery : There was a direct link between the pandemic, socio-economic vulnerability and the risk of exploitation, reported various independent UN human rights experts. The pandemic has resulted in many countries having limited operations of anti-slavery organisations while at the same time there is an increased risk for current victims of slavery and increased susceptibility to workers who are turning to bonded labour and other methods for their survival.

Individuals who are marginalised and discriminated against are already at a greater risk of exploitation, and currently they face an even greater risk as they are vulnerable to exclusion from adequate healthcare and have their movements constrained further with border closures and travel disruptions. For example, in the Gulf there is a serious concern about the risks of infection for migrant workers accommodated in densely packed, poorly sanitised labour camps. This treatment can lead to easy exclusion of these workers to services or even stigmatised as sources of infection risk.

Vulnerability to enslavement too will increase due to the simple fact as there will be an increased supply of workers vulnerable to exploitation. With growing informalisation and casualisation of the labour force it heightens global modern slavery risks. Along with others losing their means of employment and healthcare crises knows to push people towards risky labour market decisions. In other instances, in order to meet demand for hand sanitisers and masks, countries including the United States have turned to prison labour as a means of production - a population at a heightened risk of labour exploitation and countries have tended to relax import restrictions on goods in critical supply chains.

As schools shut down throughout the world, it creates economic stress on households leading to situations that may lead to child labour or even an increase in child marriage.

Major Parties Involved :

United States of America : The practices of slavery and human trafficking are still prevalent in modern America. According to The Global Slavery Index on any given day in 2016, there were 403,000 people living in conditions of modern slavery in the United States. Several recent legal cases against The GEO Group, Inc. have brought to light allegations of forced labour in privately owned detention facilities contracted by the Department of Homeland Society.

While the 13th amendment to the US Constitution provides that slavery and involuntary servitude can be used as a punishment for a crime where the affected party has been duly convicted, the use of compulsory labour in administrative detention for the benefit of private individuals, meets the ILO typology of state-imposed forced labour.

India : Practices of modern slavery especially human trafficking, bonded labour and forced marriage are rampant in the country of India. Forced labour is found throughout the country with poor individuals finding themselves trapped by employers and being exploited with no means of help. Furthermore, Indian migrants who work in Gulf Countries, there have been various different cases of contract violations and exploitation, often facilitated by unscrupulous recruitment agents with fake promises which are not delivered.

With a high sex ratio trafficking and selling of brides is being fuelled in India especially women from impoverished backgrounds.

Organ trafficking, usage of child labour and use of children in armed conflict all further add to the worrying modern slavery situation in India.

Democratic Republic of the Congo : With DRC ranking high on the Global Slavery Index, it is another country of worry wreaked by wars and other horrors. Forced labour by the hands of military groups are still widespread and there is a strong potential for labourers to fall into debt bondage with the informal lending system in the country. The usage of children in armed conflict by armed groups and forces have been a common feature of the conflicts in the country. Young boys, and sometimes girls are trained to kill upon annexing their village, and the same children are also highly vulnerable to sexual exploitation as well. Poverty and lack of access to education leave the children vulnerable to enslavement.

Pakistan : Pakistan a country of high concern in regards to modern slavery and the governments response to the issue, with an estimated 3 million people living in modern slavery and every 75 out of 100 people being vulnerable to modern slavery, it is cause for alarm. With labour

exploitation being prevalent in Pakistan, it is a major cause of concern in regards to child labour, bonded labour and forced labour. Marginalised groups from the scheduled castes and religious minorities make up a large chunk of the victims.

Women are exploited through forced marriages, sexual abuse and physical violence, and women are prime victims of trafficking in and out of the country. Lately it has emerged that Chinese nationals that have migrated to Pakistan lure local women by promising them money, foreign nationality and job prospects through marriage with Chinese immigrants. These women are later sold by their husbands into prostitution and sex slavery.

Afghanistan : Despite a worrying situation regarding modern slavery within the country the Government does not meet required standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making sufficient efforts for the same. Trafficking within Afghanistan is more prevalent than transnational trafficking, and the majority of victims being women and children. It faces the same issues as other countries in the subcontinent with children being used for organ trafficking, forced begging and forced prostitution and labour. Men frequently fall prey to forced labour and debt bondage under the pretense of high-paying employment opportunities.

The United Nations reported that children were associated with the Afghan National Police. Children are also used by militant extremist groups as suicide bombers.

Other countries too are guilty of being a host of modern slavery despite their best efforts, the same debt bondage, forced labour, forced prostitution and human trafficking can be found throughout the world. It is upon all the countries involved to achieve our sustainable development goal of eradicating modern slavery and making the world a happier place for everyone.

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue :

Sustainable Development Goals : The Sustainable Development Goals are the world's shared plan in their attempt to protect the planet, which is planned to be achieved by the year 2030. These goals aim to end extreme poverty and reduce inequality among others. Under goal 8 which includes Decent Work and Economic Growth goals, point 7 states to take "immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms."

Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 : In 2014, after being convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, adopted a Protocol updating the previous protocol set by the international body. The Protocol recognises and senses the need for effective and sustained suppression of forced or compulsory labour and released its 12 article Protocol going into the details of their stance on the issue and changes which were made to the previous protocol existing.

In the last few decades with the growing emergence of social media and social awareness, modern slavery has been more widely recognised as a formidable global epidemic, with multiple international and governmental organisations as well as private organisations taking action to address the issue at hand.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What are the various ways in which the pandemic impacted the issue at hand?
2. How can the UNHCR advise the countries that practice modern slavery to implement rules that protect those whose rights are breached?
3. What are some ways that the UNHRC can utilize funds and resources to provide aid to those whose human rights are being violated?

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/slavery-abolition-day#:~:text=Although%20modern%20slavery%20is%20not,forced%20marriage%2C%20and%20human%20trafficking.>

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/faqs.html#h1>

<https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-modern-slavery>

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<https://www.futureofworkhub.info/comment/2014/7/21/itucs-global-rights-index-poses-questions-for-multinational-corporations>

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**CURBING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS ON THE BASIS OF GENDER IDENTITY
AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

FORUM : Human Rights Council

ISSUE : curbing human rights violations on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation

STUDENT OFFICER :

POSITION :

INTRODUCTION :

The United Nations (UN) framework expressed concern regarding persistent acts of discrimination and human rights abuses on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity taking place around the world in the early 1990s. Nonetheless, it has been only over the last several years that the question of sexual orientation and gender identity was formally broached within the Human Rights Council (HRC) due to its perception as a controversial and sensitive topic. Despite progress in the universal promotion of human rights, discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people remains a prevailing issue at an international and national level. Many countries have discriminatory laws and practices, as well as laws that criminalise expressions of sexual orientation and gender identity. All human beings are equal persons before the law regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and are entitled to rights and freedoms deriving from the inherent dignity of the human person, as well as to the equal protection of the law without discrimination. Judges and lawyers, as protectors and guarantors of human rights, have an essential role to protect the rights and freedoms of all persons irrespective of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Advancing universal human rights to protect against discrimination based on sexual oriented gender identity is at the core of HRC's mandate, reflecting the principle of non-discrimination, which is a cornerstone of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Thus, protecting LGBTQIA people from violence, stigma, and human rights violations requires the respect and reinforcement of existing fundamental human rights standards. Addressing this topic on the HRC agenda is essential, given that not all voices within the UN agree on the best way to prevent discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identities.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS :

1. **Gender identity** : For many people, their gender identity will align with the sex they were assigned at birth, but this is not true for everyone — some people's gender identity may line up with their assigned sex, and others may identify with neither or multiple genders. Gender identity reflects a deeply felt and experienced sense of one's own gender. Everyone has a gender identity, which is part of their overall identity.
2. **Sexual Orientation** : The enduring pattern of physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction to a person of the same and/or other genders.

3. **LGBTQIA+** : This umbrella term is used to describe a wide range of sexual and gender minorities and has expanded over the years in an effort towards inclusion. The terms for the community of people that encompasses people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual are as broad as that community itself: As society's understanding, recognition, and inclusion of diverse sexual identities and gender expressions has grown, so has its acronym.
4. **Cisgender privilege**: The implicit and explicit privileges that cisgender people exercise. These privileges include, but are not limited to, the ability to use public restrooms without fear of verbal abuse, physical intimidation, or arrest. The privileges also encompass freedom from questions about one's anatomy (often by strangers) and the freedom from frequent misgendering. Cisgender people also enjoy a presumed "validity" as a man/woman/human and this validity is not based on surgical procedures or how well one "passes" as a man/woman/human.
5. **Marginalized** : most frequently used in academic and activist circles, this term describes anyone who is not a cis man. The term points toward the ways cisgender women and LGBTQ individuals, historically and currently, have experienced systemic inequities and greater regulation over their rights.
6. **SGBV/ sexual and gender based violence** : SGBV refers to violence that is directed against a person on the basis of gender, and entrenched within gender inequalities and power dynamics. Women are the most vulnerable to this form of violence, but men can also fall prey to it. SGBV reflects on a wide range of abuses including rape, exploitation, domestic violence, involuntary prostitution, torture, female genital mutilation or cutting, and sexual harassment.

HISTORY :

On 10th December 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It states that 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.' Yet in 2011, the UN Human Rights Council expresses grave concern at acts of violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. All over the world, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, or LGBT, people are still being subjected to discrimination and acts of brutal violence, torture, kidnapping, even murder. In 76 countries same-sex relationships are criminalised, in violation of basic rights. These abuses must end.

Since 1990 almost 40 countries have legalised same-sex relationships. Many more have lawfully banned discrimination against LGBT people. More and more countries now recognise the urgency and are pressing for action at the UN. In the past 4 years, this has led to the first adopted

UN resolution on the issue, the first official UN report, and the first formal intergovernmental debate at the UN Human Rights Council.

On the 26th of July 2013 the UN launched 'Free & Equal', a global campaign designed to raise awareness of homophobic and transphobic violence and discrimination, and to help stop millions of LGBT people being abused for being who they are. Like the struggle against racism, like the struggle for gender identity and LGBT equality will only be won if we join together, if we speak out, if we stand in the defence of the rights of others.

KEY ISSUES :

1. EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION :

Although various authorities have found that sexual orientation and gender identity have no relationship to workplace performance, during the past four decades a large body of research using a variety of methodologies has consistently documented high levels of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people at work.

Many employees do not in fact disclose that they are LGBT in order to avoid discrimination in the workplace. Governments, social partners, NGOs and other actors have recently undertaken various initiatives aimed at addressing the plight of LGBTs in the workplace. Such initiatives seem to be more prevalent in countries where the social climate towards LGBT tends to be more positive. This situation is worrying, because it means that the lowest activity regarding LGBT rights in the workplace is taking place in countries where it is needed the most.

There is a need for effective anti-discrimination measures covering both the public and private spheres, stressing on the need to build a community open to understanding and respecting sexual and gender diversity. Human rights defenders are also increasingly targeted for their work in raising issues of sexual orientation and gender identity, which is another area of great concern.

2. CONVERSION THERAPY :

LGBT persons endure severe pain and long-lasting psychological and physical damage because of so-called 'conversion therapies'. Conversion therapy describes interventions that purport to achieve a change in a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, and thus claim to aim at changing people from gay, lesbian or bisexual to heterosexual, and from trans or gender diverse to cisgender - meaning whose gender identity corresponds to the sex they were assigned at birth.

Practices of conversion therapy are rooted in the belief that persons of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity are somehow inferior, either morally, spiritually or physically because of

their orientation or identity, and that they must modify that orientation or identity to remedy that inferiority. Acts of physical, psychological and sexual abuse, electrocution and forced medication, isolation and confinement, verbal abuse and humiliation are all examples of methods applied to attempt conversion.

Practices of conversion therapy are not only ineffective, but they can also be extremely harmful. They often lead to pain and suffering that will last far beyond their occurrence, leaving indelible scars on a person's body and mind, the combined effects of feeling powerless and extreme humiliation generate profound feelings of shame, guilt, self-disgust and worthlessness, which can result in a damaged self-concept and enduring personality changes. Exposure to such interventions is associated with anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicidal ideation and suicide attempts.

3. DETERIORATING MENTAL HEALTH :

The bisexual and transgender communities have the highest rates of mental health concerns within the LGBTQ+ population. Younger members of the LGBTQ+ community struggle the most with mental health concerns of all the age groups.

Humans need to live as they identify. When these basic rights are met, humans experience less stress and have an increased self esteem.

Most LGBTQ+ individuals are incredibly resilient and will thrive in the face of adversity, with the help of supportive families, communities, and peers. One study even found that LGBTQ+ people used mental health services at 2.5 times higher rates than their heterosexual counterparts. However, they are also at particular risk for experiencing shame, fear, discrimination, and adverse and traumatic events.

4. VIOLENCE :

Homophobic and transphobic violence has been reported in all regions of the world. This ranges from aggressive, sustained psychological bullying to physical assault, torture, kidnapping and targeted killings. Violence takes place on the streets, in schools, private homes and even prison cells. Transgender persons, especially those involved in sex work or in detention, face an especially high risk of deadly and extremely cruel violence.

LGBT people face higher rates of poverty, stigma and marginalization, which put us at greater risk for sexual assault. Within the community, transgender and bisexual women face the most alarming rates of sexual violence, often beginning during childhood. Ideally, states are obliged under international law to protect LGBT peoples rights to life, security and freedom from torture

and ill treatment. States have a heightened responsibility to take measures to prevent hate motivated killings, violent attacks and torture, to investigate such crimes promptly and thoroughly and to bring those responsible to justice.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE :

Led by the UN Human Rights Office and launched in 2013, the UN Free & Equal campaign is an unprecedented global public information campaign aimed at promoting equal rights and fair treatment of LGBTI people. Its goal is to raise awareness about the human rights challenges LGBTI people face around the world. It aims to inspire people to take action through factsheets, infographics, videos and other multimedia content, spread through social and traditional media.

In 2011, the U.N. Human Rights Council passed a wide-ranging resolution on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity, expressing concern about violence towards LGBTQ people and commissioning the first-ever U.N. study focused on LGBTQ issues.

In 2012, the U.N. General Assembly (UNGA) passed a resolution on extrajudicial killings that included crimes motivated by the victim's sexual orientation and gender identity. This was the first time that was mentioned in a UNGA-passed resolution.

In July 2013, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights launched the U.N.'s Free & Equal campaign to promote understanding of the human rights of LGBTQ people. The campaign has reached an estimated two billion people through traditional and social media, and generated a stream of widely shared materials – including these powerful videos.

The U.N. refugee agency has played a crucial role in assisting LGBTQ people in fleeing violence and persecution, and in helping them resettle in countries that are more welcoming to LGBTQ people. They have repeatedly updated their guidance on how to effectively and sensitively assist LGBTQ refugees and asylum seekers.

When the U.N. released its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, many countries committed to interpreting their language to ensure that LGBTQ people are not “left behind.”

In September 2016, the U.N. appointed Vitit Muntarbhorn to serve as its first-ever Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. In that role, he has worked to reduce violence and discrimination against LGBTQ people and sought to improve their situation in all U.N. member states.

The U.N. has published several groundbreaking reports covering “discrimination and violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity,” including guidelines and recommendations for national governments.

MAJOR PARTIES INVOLVED :

Pakistan : In 2009, Pakistan's Supreme Court called on all governments to recognize the rights of transgender people. The judgment specifically called for more communication with transgender communities and better coordination on cases reported to the police. Although that is the case, according to the local group 'Trans Action', 479 attacks against transgender women were reported in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province in 2018. At least four transgender women were killed there in 2018, and at least 57 have been killed there since 2015.

Bangladesh : Since the late 20th century, some activists and non-government organizations have lobbied for official recognition of the Hijras (refers to transgender, intersex, and effeminate homosexual people) as a kind of "third sex" or "third gender", being neither man nor woman. In a landmark achievement, the Bangladesh Government formally recognized the Hijras in 2013, making them eligible for priority education and low paid jobs. However, this was cut short in 2015. Overall Bangladesh is a Sunni-majority country, and although historically a relatively tolerant and open-minded Muslim majority country, it remains conservative on homosexuals, bisexuals, and other gender and sexual diverse matters.

Egypt : here have been consistent reports of discrimination and violence being committed against LGBT people in Egypt, including abuse, harassment, forced anal examinations, and the forced payment of bribes. Egypt rejected recommendations by several states to end arrests and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. A Cairo-based LGBT rights organization documented 92 arrests for alleged same-sex conduct in 2019 under Egypt's "debauchery" law. According to the organization's report, 69 percent of those arrested were "picked up randomly on the street," indicating that Egyptian authorities are discriminating against people based on their gender expression.

USA : LGBTQ people in the United States have experienced a long history of discrimination, including criminalization and classifications as mentally ill, attempts to forcibly change LGBTQ people's sexual orientation and/or gender identity, hate crimes and violence, and exclusion from employment, housing, public spaces, and social institutions. Despite this history and despite research examining beliefs about discrimination generally and the consequences of experiencing discrimination, very few national efforts have been made. LGBT individuals are twice as likely to be uninsured as non-LGBT individuals and many have difficulty finding providers who will treat them without passing judgment on their sexual orientation or gender identity or offer the services they need, particularly in rural areas.

CHINA : China is home to the world's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) population. Until a decade ago, LGBT people were an invisible and hidden population in Chinese society. Although legal persecution was repealed in 1997, discrimination against LGBT people still exists. Workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity is common and is not prohibited by any law or national regulation. As such, LGBT individuals, particularly transgender people, suffer discrimination in the workplace or find challenges securing a job. Many choose not to be open about their sexual orientation or gender identity.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Should there be such a thing as a neutral stance when it comes to LGBTQ+ rights?
- What can UNHRC do to ensure that rights of LGBTQ+ is protected in countries where freedom of such rights are prohibited?
- How can UNHRC play a role in reinforcing LGBTQ+ rights in countries which have already accepted it?

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