

# Human Rights



## Topic A: “Modern Slavery in Global Supply Chains: Combating Forced Labor in Multinational Enterprises”

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# Welcoming letter

Delegates,

We are pleased to have you all here, at the Human Rights committee of this eleventh edition of our Colegio Fontanar Model of the United Nations.

As well, we are excited to see you work in team and develop all those new abilities and skills a Model of the United Nations can bring.

Remember to not be afraid of making some mistakes, it is part of this learning stage!

We are all here to learn and acquire new experiences, it is challenging but it worth it.

We hope you learn and enjoy a lot this event.

Sincerely,

Sofía Montes de Oca and María José Carmona  
Moderator and Chair of Human Rights

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# I. Committee Background

The Human Rights committee, was established between 1946 and 2006 to support the Economic and Social Council.

It is focused on promoting and protecting civil and political rights worldwide.

Initially comprising 50 UN member states, it was tasked with overseeing the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The Commission monitors compliance, reviews reports, addresses violations, and has driven significant changes in national laws and policies to align with international human rights standards. Its efforts have positively impacted issues like freedom of expression, equality, and freedom from discrimination.

Despite these achievements, the Commission remains committed to its mission: advocating for universal civil and political rights as a core part of the broader human rights agenda.

## II. Introduction to the Topic

At the actual world, multinational enterprises (MNEs) are crucial in shaping global supply chains.

However, beneath the surface of economic growth and international trade, lies a serious issue: modern slavery. This term encompasses practices such as, forced labor, human trafficking, and debt bondage, affecting an estimated of 50 million of people worldwide, according to recent reports.

Global supply chains, which often span multiple countries and industries, are particularly susceptible to forced labor. The complexity of production networks, combined with cost pressures and a lack of transparency, allows exploitative practices to thrive, especially in sectors like agriculture, textiles, and electronics.

## II. Introduction to the Topic

While many multinational enterprises profess a commitment to ethical sourcing, instances of forced labor continue to surface, underscoring the urgent need for systemic solutions.

This issue raises not only moral and ethical concerns, but also legal and reputational risks even for businesses.

Governments, non-governmental organizations, and international bodies have ramped up their efforts to combat modern slavery, enacting regulations, like the UK's Modern Slavery Act and demanding corporate accountability. However, the success of these measures hinges on active collaboration among businesses, policymakers, and civil society.

## II. Introduction to the Topic

This paper will delve into the challenges posed by modern slavery in global supply chains, assess the role of multinational enterprises in tackling these practices, and discuss strategies for eradicating forced labor, ensuring that human dignity remains at the forefront of global commerce.

### **III. Evolution of the Topic**

The situation aggravates within economic pressures and lax regulations, which facilitate the exploitative practices.

Although legal frameworks, like the UK Modern Slavery Act and various international initiatives have enhanced accountability, enforcement continues to pose significant challenges. Modern slavery infringes upon basic human rights, ensnaring millions in perilous and inhumane conditions.

Stronger legislation, corporate responsibility, consumer awareness, and international cooperation are needed to eradicate exploitation and promote ethical supply chains.



## IV. Relevant Events

### A. Panorama

Modern Slavery goes from deceptive recruitment practices, servitude due to debts, until physical and verbal abuse.

This is a global issue, present at the seafood industry, as well as in fashion, construction, horticulture, among more.

50 million of people all around the world are victims of this terrible situation lived globally every day, which can be present since the recollection of materials, the production and until the selling of the products.

Some companies may be working in order, without slavery, while some others may be just pretending they do it as well, while they actually practice slavery at the inside of their doors, it is important to ensure this type of situations do not exist at all. (Bhakoo, V., 2024).

## IV. Relevant Events

### B. Points of View

**United States:** The U.S. is a committed nation into solving modern slavery, as it is the country that takes more action about it in all the region, and the second strongest response globally. They search to go from, helping those in need who were modern slaves, until eradicating modern slavery completely.

Even though, their actions have not been completely effective, and the U.S. still needs a better solution to the situation. (Walk Free., n.d.).

**China:** China is the main exporter of goods worldwide, which makes its situation worrying, due to the probable exploitation of people in order to achieve exporting all as they currently do, since 2018 there have been proofs of forced labour at the country, which come from different sectors. They have been trying to get to a solution without success. (Walk Free., n.d.).

## IV. Relevant Events

**United Kingdom:** As a developed country with monetary funds to invest in eradicating modern slavery, the country have achieved very good results, having the first place globally into a governmental response about the topic. Even though, it is still and problem, and in the last years, UK politics about immigration have been threatening with discriminating the most vulnerable ones, potentiating modern slavery. (Walk Free., n.d.).

**France:** At 2021 in France, approximately 2.1 out of a thousand of people suffered from modern slavery.

This country occupies the 139<sup>o</sup> place globally and 36<sup>o</sup> of Europe and Central Asia talking about modern slavery. The government has a response for the 62% of the cases (more than the regional average). (Walk Free., 2023).

## IV. Relevant Events

**Russia:** At 2021 in Russia, approximately 13 out of a thousand of people suffered from modern slavery.

This country occupies the 8<sup>o</sup> place globally and 3<sup>o</sup> of Europe and Central Asia talking about modern slavery. The government has a response for the 24% of the cases (less than the regional average). (Walk Free., 2023).

## V. UN and External Actions

The United Nations has taken important steps to combat modern slavery, through laws, campaigns, and by working in collaboration with other organizations.

- **2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention:** In 2014, the International Labour Organization (ILO) added a new protocol to strength measures against forced labour. Countries pledged to stop forced labour, punish those responsible, and assist victims.
- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948):** This document clearly prohibits slavery and forced labour, setting the stage for global efforts against exploitation.

## V. UN and External Actions

- **The 50 Million Reasons Campaign** was the brainchild of the Human Rights Committee to raise awareness about the suffering of victims of modern slavery. These campaigns encourage the public, governments, and businesses to take action against forced labour.
- **The 2030 Agenda** for Sustainable Development includes Goal 8.7, which calls for the elimination of forced labour, human trafficking, and child labour.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) and groups like the United Nations Global Compact help monitor the situation, promote fair practices by companies and set standards to stop forced labor in supply chains.

The UN's actions demonstrate its interest in ending this alarming situation. The organization works to eliminate modern slavery and protect human rights around the world.

## V. UN and External Actions

### EXTERNAL ACTIONS.

- **The UK Modern Slavery Act (2015)** mandates that companies disclose their measures to prevent slavery within their supply chains.
- Similar regulations are in place in countries such as Australia (**Modern Slavery Act 2018**) and the United States (**Tariff Act**, which bans imports produced with forced labour).
- Many **large corporations** have implemented ethical sourcing policies and conduct audits to ensure their supply chains are free from forced labour. For instance, tech and apparel companies are increasingly expected to trace their supply chains.

## V. UN and External Actions

- Organizations like **Anti-Slavery International and Human Rights Watch** advocate for policy changes, offer support to survivors, and investigate cases of forced labor worldwide.
- **The Freedom Fund** actively works to rescue and rehabilitate victims, while **Walk Free** publishes the Global Slavery Index to evaluate modern slavery risks by region.
- **NGOs and advocacy groups** run initiatives that promote ethical consumerism and encourage boycotts of products associated with forced labor.
- **Countries** and **organizations** work together through frameworks like the Alliance 8.7 initiative, which aligns efforts to achieve SDG 8.7.



## VI. Conclusion

Slavery is not a new problem, it has existed for millions of years and continues to affect millions of people today.

Despite the fight through laws and campaigns to end modern slavery, it remains being a serious problem, with hundreds of reported cases. This is worrying, as there are currently 50 million victims of slavery, with the most affected countries being the United States, North Korea and several Arab countries. Modern slavery is a clear violation of human rights. Victims are not protected and are often subjected to overexploitation and forced labour.

However, with efforts and increasing awareness, it is possible to eradicate this global critical situation and to protect people's rights.

## VII. Committee Focus

- What are the main factors that provoke modern slavery globally?
- Which people are the most vulnerable to experience modern slavery? How to help them to get out of there?
- Which actions that have been taken around the world have been effective and in which measure?
- What specific measures can be taken to completely eradicate modern slavery depending on each of the country's situation?

## VIII. Participation List

- Canada
- Federal Republic of Germany
- French Republic
- Ireland
- Kingdom of Denmark
- Kingdom of Norway
- Netherlands
- People's Republic of Bangladesh
- People's Republic of China
- Republic of Costa Rica
- Republic of Cuba
- Republic of Chile
- Republic of Korea
- Republic of the Maldives
- Republic of the Sudan
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- State of Kuwait
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- United States of America

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