

GMUNC XII

Social,

Cultural, and

Humanitarian

Teddy Nguyen • Head Chair
Sarah Grupenhoff • Co-Chair



About Chairs

Head Chair

Welcome, delegates! I'm Teddy Nguyen, and I'm incredibly excited to meet you all as your head chair this year. As a recent high school graduate, I had the delight of participating in GMUNC for the past four years. What I loved most about this conference was how beginner friendly it was. Especially as it was my first ever conference as a baby freshman, I had the chance to grow from it, meet so many people, and get myself out of my comfort zone, which is my goal for you all today. Outside of Model UN, I teach around 12 students piano weekly or bi-weekly, listen and *attempt* to compose movie soundtracks, and just love analyzing film and music as a whole. Anyway, I hope this is a strong committee experience for you all, and that all delegates have the chance to break out of the shell, speaking for the first time, or even presenting for the first time. GMUNC is a great way to face the unknown and the stress head-on, and as many will tell you, it gets easier the more you speak. Take this chance to do so, and of course, we'll always be there for feedback if you have any.



I understand that for many, this will be an incredibly hard and strenuous experience, but I hope you walk away seeing the benefit of it. I hope this is a genuinely inviting environment for you, one that will encourage you to speak even when every fiber of your body tells you not to. If you are scared, don't worry. I, as a chair, will never force anyone to speak, however, I do encourage you all to speak at least once. For many others and I, after that first speech, speaking afterward will be much easier. Just relax, take a deep breath, and try your best. There's no harm in speaking up, and to be frank, no one will remember the mistakes you make but yourself. Of course, never be afraid to ask questions before, during, or even after the committee! We're here to help support you in any way we can, so don't be afraid to reach out to us.

If you'd like to reach out to me earlier, my email is teddyn591@gmail.com.

Note this is not the official committee email. DO NOT submit your papers to this one >:)

Good luck, delegates!

Co-Chair

Hello! My name is Sarah Grupenhoff, and I am delighted to be your co-chair for GMUNC this year. I am currently a junior at Henry M. Gunn High School and have been part of Model UN since my freshman year. Outside of Model UN, I am also involved in the Palo Alto Youth Council, along with my school's cultural magazine, newspaper, and Amnesty International club. In my spare time, I love to read, volunteer at a local library nonprofit, and rewatch *Gilmore Girls* and the Harry Potter films. I look forward to reading everyone's research papers and hearing many engaging debates. Wishing you the best of luck!

About Committee

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM) strives to peacefully resolve basic human rights issues occurring around the world. It also aims to promote social development and fundamental freedoms. SOCHUM is incredibly important to the UN and to the world as a whole. SOCHUM acknowledges that all humans deserve equal rights, actively discussing ideas of social development, equities in social groups, etc.

Foreword

Welcome to the Gunn Model United Nations Conference XII and the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM). Having previously attended GMUNC, I am honored to be a part of this conference again and excited for another memorable year.

This committee will explore the suppression and persecution of specific Indigenous populations. While no single group will be assigned, delegates are strongly encouraged to focus their research on highly subjugated Indigenous communities. Although it is not mandatory to focus on Indigenous peoples within your delegation's country, doing so is highly encouraged. However, do remember that this topic is broad as it is tackling all indigenous groups. Researching one's own country is important, but without researching other indigenous groups, delegates may find it much more challenging to participate fully in delegate speeches or discussion. This committee's goal is to identify solutions that address the broad challenges faced by Indigenous populations worldwide. Since this is a GA, all writing will be done in the form of resolutions. If you have any questions regarding resolutions, please feel free to reach out to the chairs.

Position papers are due on October 4 to be considered for a research award, with the final deadline on October 10. If you do not submit a position paper by this date, you will not be eligible for any committee awards. Please send position papers and committee-specific inquiries

to the committee email address: gmuncxiisochum@gmail.com. Additionally, all delegates are required to complete contact and medical forms to participate in the conference. Please confirm with your delegation that the required documents have been submitted.

I wish you the best with writing your position papers and look forward to seeing everyone on October 11, 2025 for GMUNC XII.

Teddy Nguyen
Head Chair

Introduction



The girls of Dongria Kondh, an Indian indigenous group, totaling 8,000 tribe members.

Across the globe indigenous people roughly make up 6.2% of the population, numbering to 476 million people spanning more than 90 countries. Indigenous people have been the original stewards of many of the world's ecologically significant regions, producing countless cultures and diverse languages. By common definition, indigenous people are the descendants of those who inhabited a country or region at the time when people of different ethnic origins arrived. However, despite their countless contributions indigenous groups remain some of the most marginalised groups globally.

All delegates are expected to remain diplomatic and mindful of all indigenous groups, whether the groups are in one's country or not. Delegates must be able to entertain nuanced ideas from all countries, and respectfully agree or disagree on said points. By doing so, all indigenous groups can be protected and supported equally. Delegates must refrain from being unbiased in such decisions and legislature.

Historical Context



A POWWOW WITH CHEYENNES.

Native Americans continually resisted colonists by either diplomacy or force.

As this topic is incredibly broad, indigenous communities globally have historically faced countless repression and attempted colonization. Intrusion has rampaged these humble communities, affecting their livelihood, culture, and standard of living. Therefore, this section will focus on one indigenous culture.

The Native Americans arguably are the strongest form of indigenous colonization and repression in history. Living in large and diverse groups, 10 million indigenous Native Americans inhabited North America, either as agricultural or hunter-gatherer communities. Their first contact with Europeans occurred in the 1500s to the 1600s, followed by many deaths due to

disease from foreign contact. These epidemics contributed to the Native Americans' difficulty in opposing the colonists, often surrendering to the power of newly formed European technology outclassing Native American weaponry.

Despite the disheartening beginning, Native Americans continued to oppose the colonists through the colonial era, either by fighting with rebellious force, or taking it to the courtroom to draft legal documents and agreements over land use. Despite the Native Americans holding their side of the deal, the colonists continued to push, forcefully removing Native Americans from their land, and creating harsh reserves for them. Having been uprooted from the culture and history, killed and massacred, and betrayed on numerous occasions, what left of the Native Americans became cold and distant, often distrusting foreign allyship or relationships. Europeans continually exploited their use through war, food, and land, disregarding their autonomy and tradition.

Today, protests still occur over the U.S. government returning once sacred land back to indigenous people in order to preserve their history and culture. Though the damage has been done hundreds of years prior, the effects still remain as clear as day.

Past UN Action



An indigenous Cakchiquel family in the hamlet of Patzutzun, Guatemala.

Major UN efforts to protect indigenous rights began in 1982 with the creation of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. Formed by the Economic and Social Council, the group's specific purpose was to develop a set of minimum standards that would protect indigenous peoples. The Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities approved the group's draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples in 1994.

However, the final approval process for this draft with the greater UN General Assembly took a significantly longer amount of time, due primarily to some States expressing concerns about how the draft provided indigenous peoples the right to self-determination and control over natural resources on traditional lands. In an attempt to find a middle ground, the open-ended inter-sessional working group was established in 1995 to elaborate on the content of the 1994 draft declaration.

On June 29, 2006, The UN Human Rights Council adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on June 29, 2006. Then, on September 13, 2007, it was finally adopted by a majority of 144 states in favour, 4 votes against, and 11 abstentions. Those who abstained included Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States, but since then they have all reversed their stances and currently support the declaration.

Following this adoption, the UN has continued to implement various methods of protecting indigenous rights through different programs.

Current Situation



Indigenous people continue protesting in small, authorized groups.

[Current situation on your committee topic]

As of today, indigenous communities are facing severe threats to their land and culture due to urbanization and forced deportation. Many indigenous people have to either assimilate to the modern, urbanized culture, or try to relocate elsewhere. Even by trying to assimilate, many face discrimination and violence based on their cultural background.

There have been a multitude of incidents where indigenous groups will attempt to defend their land by peacefully protesting, however, they are faced with charges of criminalized penalties, and subjected to imprisonment. All around the world, indigenous people do not have any legal-recognition where they can be able to protect the ownership over their territories. Because of this, many organizations or businesses are able to raid their land, and take their agricultural resources.

Due to the oil extraction, deforestation, and urbanization of the indigenous land, their lands are left polluted. Indigenous people must subdue these harsh realities just so countries can exploit their lands in order to benefit economically.

With this, many indigenous groups are facing a loss of cultural identity as they are unable to continue their culture in practice. Statistically, there have been over 500 indigenous languages lost over the last century, and it is expected that at this rate, more than half of the world's languages will be gone by the end of this century.

Overall, it is critical that indigenous people are able to proudly practice their culture, and find legal representation and recognition around the world.

Goals for Committee

- Delegates must draft resolutions aimed to support and help restore what has been lost in indigenous communities.
- Delegates must draft resolutions aimed to tackle cultural preservation
- Delegates must draft resolutions aimed to increase diplomacy and positive relations with indigenous groups
- Delegates must draft resolutions aimed to support Indigenous people and to diminish societal discrimination
- Delegates must draft resolutions aimed to support impoverished indigenous groups as many face hardship, starvation, and disease.

Questions to Consider

- What resources can your country provide to support Indigenous communities within your own country as well as other countries?
- How can SOCHUM amend already broken relations between indigenous communities and state governments?

- What is the best way to support cultural preservation without overstepping or rewriting history?
- How can SOCHUM tackle issues of discrimination in local communities?
- What resolutions can support both short-term and long-term issues in present day?

References

Source list (will convert to MLA later):

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Committee Members

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 Canada
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 Australia
 New Zealand
 Peru
 Guatemala
 Brazil
 Chile
 United States
 Colombia
 Venezuela
 Ecuador
 Paraguay
 Argentina
 Panama
 Honduras
 Nicaragua
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 Belize
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 Sweden
 Finland
 Denmark
 Russia
 Kenya
 Tanzania
 Namibia
 Botswana
 South Africa
 India

Nepal
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