

Houston Area Model United Nations Standard Committee

Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee



Chair | Sophia Pham
Topic B: Reversing High Crime Rates in
Young Adults
Houston Area Model United Nations 52
February 4 & 5, 2027

Chair Letter

Hello Delegates,

My name is Sophia, I'm a Sophomore majoring in Biology and minoring in Health at the University of Houston this year!

I joined Model UN during my sophomore year of high school and it instantly became a big part of my life. Model UN has pushed me out of my bubble, shaping me into someone who is more confident and outgoing, and while that sounds typical, I'm sure many of you can relate. After my first year, MUN became the club that I looked most forward to as the school year would creep around again. I've been blessed to have had the chance to serve as a Chair at one of the biggest Model UN conferences in the state two years in a row now.

I'm excited to be Chair-ing for SOCHUM at the upcoming conference alongside my Vice Chair, and more importantly, being able to meet you all! We're going to be covering some exciting topics and I can only hope that you'll be as thrilled as I am to talk about these topics.

I expect everyone to work hard and to do more than just the bare minimum. If you're looking to be able to fully participate in our debates, you'll feel as though it's a whole lot easier when you know your stuff. Do the research, spend the time to understand the concepts, and ask questions! If there is something you truly want to know but you can't find it anywhere, shoot me an email and I'll respond to the best of my ability.

Make sure to have fun and hopefully you love these topics like I do. See you all in February!

Lots of Wishes & Luck,

Sophia Pham

Sophia Pham

Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee

HAMUN 52

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How We Run Things

To prepare all delegates for how Michael and I run our committee, I've provided information about certain things that we do or tolerate that might differ from what you've learned or experienced in other committees in the past. Below, are also the broad ways that we grade papers/rank delegates so you can understand what we look for in best delegate(s).

1. Opening and beginning debate is as usual. It is discouraged to motion for unmoderated caucuses until we have done, at the very least, speaker's list and 1-2 moderated caucuses.
2. Don't curse out/make personal attacks at other delegates. Those will result in a report to the OSG and/or your school's sponsor. We don't tolerate disrespect amongst delegates.
3. There is no tolerance for delegates who decide to come back 10-20min late, it's disrespectful to the other delegates and to us as Chairs. If your school is late or there are other circumstances, let us know in advance. This also includes disappearing for no reason in the middle of session without informing us.
4. Positions papers are all scanned for AI use before we even read them; if they fail the initial scan, we won't read them at all, period.
5. Our methods to find the best delegate include looking out for those who put in the effort to help draft resolutions, include others, and promote the wellbeing of the committee itself. It is not about talking a lot or making your face known to us, but rather your efforts towards the topic and debate as a whole. We give feedback at the end of Day 1 for a short period of time, so feel free to seek us out post-session for notes on how you performed.



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SOCHUM's History

The Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian committee (SOCHUM), founded in 1945, was created in order to address global human rights violations, social inequities, and various cultural disputes. This committee, being the third body out of the main six, has helped to create unity amongst nations in promoting fundamental freedoms and drafting declarations. One of the major achievements that it has accomplished is the signing of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The committee commonly deals with issues facing gender equality, indigenous rights, and human trafficking. SOCHUM has also dealt plentifully with the protection of children, a particular point of focus in one of the topics that we will be discussing. While this committee has no official motto to stand by, it constantly advocates for the same matters. SOCHUM is built around some of the most fundamental standings that we as a race hold onto, and it continues to guide the globe with its instructions and settings on many subjects such as worldly equality and human rights.





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Background Information

Over the years, since the 1990s, crime rates internationally have been decreasing in young adults due to the efforts of some countries. The number of juvenile delinquents may be significantly less than it previously was, but the goal is to continually lessen those numbers. There are many countries that still retain their high rates while others continue to watch their numbers decrease. With the proper attention, those countries with high rates would be able to promote a decrease in crime rates.

With this, delegates are to debate on what is and is not considered a crime. Following that quick discussion, delegates will analyze methods on how to prevent young adults from committing said crimes. Delegates should be sure to include talk on short term and long term resolutions, alongside what methods may benefit specific countries compared to others. Delegates are expected to understand the differences in first versus third world countries, cultural disparities, and so on, applying that basic knowledge to understanding how differences such as that may affect a country's crime rates. Connect the separate focuses and center it around the main point of the topic, working to find a solution that would work for all UN countries.

TOPIC HISTORY

The United Nations began their first efforts towards fixing crime rates in young adults some time in the 1960s. The London 1960 conference discussed delinquency in minors and prevention methods. Since then, there has been a steady and significant decline in crime rates between the ages 15 to 24. Through those proven methods, all conditions were stable and working for a long period of time. Resurfacing now is greater crime rates in certain countries across the world, especially the Americas. North and South American countries are showing higher rates due to recurring gang violence, drug trade, and the lack of care for those living in unjust situations. Newer first world countries tend to have lowering crime rates, but long time first world countries have continual fluctuating rates. Post pandemic era specifically, there was a large resurgence of crime after the period of quarantine that kept everyone off the streets.

CASE EXAMPLES & FACTS

Comparing Homicide Rates—
Continents (in 2021):

→ 15 in 100,000 in the Americas

→ 12.7 in 100,000 in Africa

→ 2.3-2.3 in 100,000 in Europe and Asia

Gang and organized crime/killing groups make up about 50% of homicides in the Americas, but firearms are also significant killing factors as they are used in 75% of all homicides in the Americas, verses the 17%-18% in Europe and Asia.

Countries:

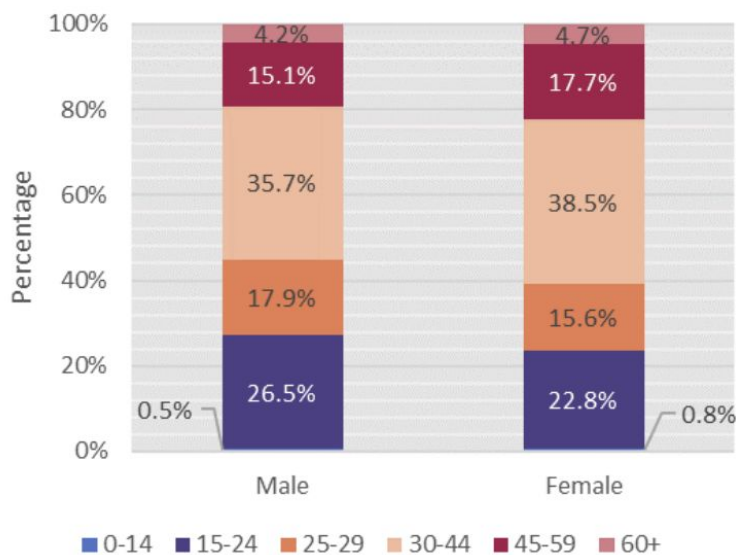
→ 50.9 in 100,000 in Ecuador (record high)

→ 15-20 in 100,000 in Mexico and Brazil

→ 0.23 in 100,000 in Japan

Considering how all of the above countries have organized crime groups that reside within the country, other factors must to contributors as to why the rates vary so much. The main sources can be attributed to education, cultural standards, societal attitudes, etc.

44% of suspects are from the 15-29 age group.



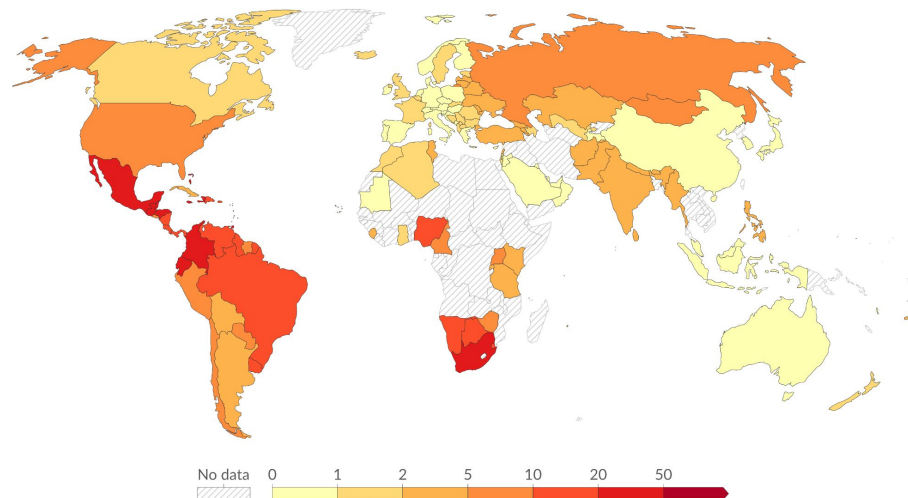
CASE EXAMPLES & FACTS CONTINUED...

Additional data pertaining homicide rates per country is depicted in the graph pictured to the right. See: [Our World In Data - Homicide Rates](#) for further data from throughout the years.

Initiative: Gamechangers, an organization made for and composed of the youth, works towards promoting young adult crime prevention through youth-led and science-backed initiatives. One of the many programs they have led is the recent creative contributions program where individuals from around the world were encouraged to submit artwork telling their story (see UN Past Actions).

Homicide rate 2024

Annual number of deaths from homicide¹ per 100,000 people.



Data source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2025)

OurWorldinData.org/homicides | CC BY

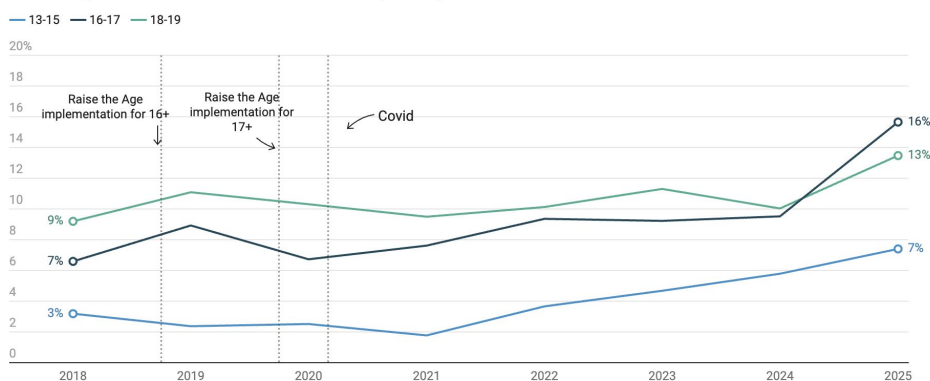
Note: Where data for 2024 is unavailable, the value from the closest year between 2019 and 2023 is shown instead.

Case Example: In New York City in the United States, officials have seen increases in the count of felony and serious crime arrests for those apart of the youth age group. Since COVID-19, there have been particular spikes in given categories.

See: [NYC Criminal Justice - Youth Crime Arrest](#)

Serious Violent Crime Share Up for 13–15-Year-Olds, With 2025 Spike Among Older Teens

A clear rising trend in serious violence comes from 13–15-year-olds, whose share more than doubled from 2018 to 2024.



¹Serious¹ Violent Felony Offenses include arrests for murder, attempted murder, and assault 1.

Source: NYCJA • [Get the data](#)

How to Use (For Delegates): collect case examples and facts to help deliberate about why factors such as education and societal influence may contribute to the increase in youth crime rates. From the given and found data, show that there are both underlying and surface issues that are solvable through thoughtful action.

UN PAST ACTIONS

1. August 1960
This conference addressed what it is that may cause young adults to lean towards delinquency and what can be done to help and prevent that. It also delves deeper into the crime rates of various countries, the good and bad differences, and what should be done to those who committed said crimes. This led just about 84 countries to join in on the movement to decrease their national, young adult crime rates.

Read more: [Second UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders](#)
2. December 1990
The General Assembly 45th session focused on seeking out ways to properly engage the youth in activities that would help push their brain development towards recognizing what “non-criminogenic attitudes” were. They wanted to encourage stronger educational systems, support for families in need, and perform further research on what promotes youth delinquency to continue working away from it.

Read More: [Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency \(The Riyadh Guidelines\)](#)
3. Current 2025/2026
A currently active initiative by the UN to promote those ages 18 to 29 to share their stories through various artforms. It's to encourage others to share their life and for others to see how they can also change themselves/avoid walking down the wrong path. Additionally, it's acts as a way for officials to further study the what causes youth crime and what the best methods to help individuals grow from it is.

Read More: [GameChangers - Your Story Can Change The Path](#)

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- 1). Base: What defines youth crime? What is the age range? What is the general demographic that makes up that group of individuals (race, ethnic origin, financial background, etc.). Analyze variations from around the world.
- 2). What are the previously enacted resolutions by the UN that failed, and why had they failed? Do those ideas need better implementation, tweaking to fit modern society, or were they simply just not the right direction to move in.
- 3). Should there be more youth-to-youth involvement or adult-to-youth involvement? What method cultivates more meaningful relationships and is able to help and bring more improvement to those crime rates.
- 4). Consider how crime is not only about thievery, murder, or breaking the law. For the youth, crime includes sexual assaults and drug abuse, which are often overlooked as criminal since it is so common in today's world for young adults to be involved in such situations, perpetrator or victim. Ask yourself: do these normalized situations need to be reevaluated and marked more strictly as unlawful or is there an alternative path to guide the public further from these particular offenses.
- 5). What is the prevention of crime primarily focused towards? Is it enacting stricter laws to scare people from continual wrongdoing or discovering ways to educate people to steer them away from the idea of starting in the first place.
- 6). What may be the main reasons behind differences in youth crime rates across continents and countries? What positives about a certain state may allow them to have lower crime rates, and how may their standards be applied to other countries to help lower crime rates? Consider how some positives may be taken on as negatives in another country, and therefore not all strategies will transfer the same into one nation state as it was used in another.



Topic B References

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