North Brunswick Model United Nations Conference 2026

Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee (SOCHUM)

Chair: Bryson Agnew
Co-Chairs: Advika Gopal, Milan Shah, Soham Mishra

Letter to the Delegates.

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the seventh annual North Brunswick Township High School Model United Nations conference! My name is Bryson Agnew, and I will be your chair for the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM). I am currently a senior at NBTHS and joined MUN my freshman year. Model UN has been a way for me to explore my interest in international affairs, grow my public speaking skills, and improve my confidence, all of which I hope you all will also be able to gain from this conference. Outside of Model UN, I run cross country, am a member of the NBTHS marching band, and I also enjoy listening to music.

Your first co-chair will be Advika Gopal. She is a sophomore at NBTHS who has been in MUN since her freshman year. She enjoys playing soccer and loves to read. Another one of your co-chairs will be Milan Shah. He is a sophomore at NBTHS who joined MUN his freshman year. Outside of MUN, he enjoys playing tennis and hanging out with his friends. Your final co-chair will be Soham Mishra. Soham is a junior at NBTHS who joined MUN in his freshman year. He enjoys playing soccer and participating in FIRST Robotics.

In this committee, we will be discussing what rights should be afforded to undocumented immigrants. While I am sure most of you are aware of what is currently happening in the U.S. and in New Jersey as far as ICE raids and mass deportation, this is also a global issue, with many governments around the world similarly taking more aggressive stances towards immigration for a wide variety of reasons. This background guide provides insight into the specifics of this topic, and delegates should use it alongside their own research to be as prepared as possible for the conference. We wish you the best of luck in your preparation and look forward to seeing you at the conference!

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me via email.

Sincerely,
Bryson Agnew
brya72008@gmail.com

Structure and Procedure

The committee will run on extended Moderated Caucus: the default shall be a Moderated Caucus with one minute speaking times. The chair will recognize delegates wishing to speak, and motions will be entertained after each speech has elapsed. For procedural matters, a simple majority of 50% + 1 will be required and each delegate must vote either in favor or against, no abstentions will be entertained. No pre-set time limits on speeches are established; this determination, as well as any other particulars of procedure, is left to the discretion of the committee or the chair, as appropriate. The chair shall have final authority on all procedural questions, and will occasionally entertain appeals.

The following is a list of standard procedures that all committees must follow:

Unmoderated Caucus | The committee may choose to move into unmoderated caucus for a certain length of time, in which delegates may move freely about the room and speak to each other without direction from the Chair. However, it will be at the Chair's discretion to prohibit unmoderated caucus at certain times during committee.

Point of Order | A Point of Order may not interrupt a speaker and can be raised when the delegate believes the rules of procedure have been violated. The chair will stop the proceedings of the committee and ask the delegate to provide warranted arguments as to which rules of procedure has been violated.

Point of Personal Privilege | A Point of Personal Privilege may be raised when a delegate's ability to participate in debate is impaired for any physical or logistical reasons (for instance, if the speaker is not audible). This point may interrupt a speech, and the dais will immediately try to resolve the difficulty.

Point of Parliamentary Inquiry | This point may be raised by a delegate who wishes to clarify any rule of procedure with the Chair. It may not interrupt a speaker, and a delegate rising to this point may not make any substantive statements or arguments.

Point of Information | As the name suggests, this point may be raised by a delegate to bring substantive information to the notice. It may not interrupt a speaker, and must contain only a

statement of some new fact that may have relevance to debate. Arguments and analyses may not be made by delegates rising to this point. A point of information may also be used to ask questions of a speaker on the general speakers list.

Motions | Motions control the flow of debate. A delegate may make a motion when the chair opens the floor for points or motions. Motions require a vote to pass. Procedural motions, unless mentioned otherwise, require a simple majority to pass.

Motion for Moderated Caucus | This motion begins a moderated caucus, and must specify the topic, the time per speaker, and the total time for the proposed caucus.

Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus | This motion moves the committee into unmoderated caucus, during which lobbying and drafting of resolutions may take place. It must specify the duration of the caucus.

Motion to Suspend Debate | This motion suspends debate for a stipulated amount of time.

Motion to Adjourn | This motion brings the committee's deliberation to an end, and is only admissible when suggested by the Chair.

Motion to Introduce Documents | A successful motion to introduce essentially puts the document on the floor to be debated by the committee. The sponsor of the document will be asked to read the document and then, if deemed appropriate, the Chair will entertain a moderated caucus on the topic.

Motion to Divide the Question | This motion may be made by a delegate to split a document into its component clauses for the purpose of voting. This may be done when a delegate feels that there is significant support for some clauses of the document, but not for the complete document.

Motion for a Roll Call Vote | A delegate may move to have the vote conducted in alphabetical order.

Motion for Speakers For and Against | If it would help the proceedings of the committee, a delegate may motion for speakers for and against a document.

Amendments | After the first draft of a committee document has been introduced, delegates may move to amend particular clauses of the draft. If the amendment is supported by all the sponsors of the documents, it passes as a friendly amendment.

Committee Documents represent the product of the committee's deliberations and their collective decisions.

Between Delegates | Delegates can pass notes freely to other delegates within the committee or speak to other delegates during the unmoderated caucus. However, talking during another delegate's speech is not permitted.

To the Chair/Dias | Delegates may also communicate with the Chair through notes. Delegates

should feel free to write any questions or comments to the Chair that may improve the committee experience.

Members of the committee may take any of the following actions through private notes:

Between Delegates | Delegates should feel free to write personal notes to their fellow committee members. We ask that these notes pertain to the business of the committee.

To the Chair | Delegates may also write to the Chair with questions regarding procedural issues of the committee, as well as a wide range of personal inquiries. Delegates should feel free to write to the Chair on any issue that would improve the committee experience. This could range from a clarification of portfolio powers to substantive questions.

Topic A: The Rights of Undocumented Immigrants

Introduction

The International Organization for Migration estimates that there are 304 million immigrants worldwide. While there is no certainty as to how many of those are undocumented, it is estimated that 10-15% do not have legal authorization to live where they are living. This is a complex issue, especially when considering the reasons people end up being undocumented. Some migrants leave their countries looking for better economic opportunities; however, many others are forced to flee due to either conflict, poverty, persecution, or climate change, and despite their status as refugees, are sometimes unable to gain legal status in other countries. In recent years, the Sudanese Civil War, gang violence in Venezuela, and the war between Russia and Ukraine have been major drivers in creating an influx of people seeking refuge in specific countries, known as "destination countries", as well as entering nearby countries, known as "transit countries", with the intent of later moving to another country.

On January 15th, 2025, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detained barber Rodney Taylor, an undocumented immigrant who had come from Liberia to the United States on a medical visa as a toddler. Taylor's trial has helped reignite global debate over the rights of undocumented immigrants, and he is not alone. In many countries, undocumented individuals are deported to countries they left as children, in some cases, not even knowing the language spoken there. Still, growing rates of illegal immigration, especially into European and North American nations, have led to mixed reactions from both governments and citizens. Should countries be obligated to provide undocumented individuals with a court trial? What legal protections should children with different citizenship from their parents receive? As always at the UN, answering these questions involves addressing both the systemic causes and creating policy that can gain the support of nations at the center of this issue.

Historical Background

The concept of citizenship and immigration restriction dates back thousands of years. In Ancient Greece, citizenship was usually limited to free-born men and women (though women were denied political rights and property ownership). This left out foreigners and enslaved people. Through citizenship, men gained access to major rights such as legal protection, land ownership, and the ability to vote, reflecting the crucial role of citizenship in public life. Ancient Rome also had a complex system of citizenship rights. Known as the "civitas", this system granted citizens privileges such as exemption from certain taxes, the right to marry legally, and protection from execution. The state could grant, limit, or take away these rights. Non-citizens, or peregrini, were subject to different laws. Unlike citizens, they were excluded

from property inheritance, lacked political representation, etc. They could be expelled from Roman territories for political or security reasons, one of the earliest recorded forms of deportation.

Throughout history, many individuals have lived in foreign countries without the reliability of full citizenship or access to rights such as property and political participation. This situation has left them at risk of exploitation and discrimination. In the United States during the 19th and 20th centuries, immigrant laborers from Japan, China, and later Mexico could work but often had no steady path to citizenship because of exclusionary laws. Case in point, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. This act, similar to the Immigration act of 1924, restricted the immigration of Chinese laborers, barring them from naturalization.

Most frequently, the source of major migrations originated from economic instability and political unrest. Many undocumented immigrants were coerced into fleeing their homelands due to persecution, war, and violence, only to grapple with banishment when they were only seeking safety. One example would be the 1937 Deportation of Koreans out of the USSR, which was when Joseph Stalin forced the removal of 172,000 ethnic Koreans from the Russian Far East to Central Asia, primarily Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. The justification for this removal was the suspicion that Korean immigrants living in the USSR near the border with Japanese controlled territory could work for Japanese Intelligence. Considering the Japanese invasion of China on July 7, 1937, this was a huge fear, thus resulting in the brutal deportation process. They were given a limited amount of time to gather their belongings, forced into overcrowded trains, and were left to survive in harsh, unsanitary conditions. Approximately 11,000 people died on the way due to the freezing temperatures, starvation, and disease. Eventually, the deported Koreans and their descendants became an integral part of Central Asia's society, but their original language and culture faded and were lost over time.

One of the most remarkable examples of mass deportation in modern history took place in the United States during the 1950s through "Operation Wetback." It was implemented amid growing anti-immigrant sentiment, including labor tensions. There was swelling anxiety among citizens that undocumented workers and immigrants would take job opportunities away from them. Beginning in 1954, this government program targeted Mexican immigrants, many of whom were legal residents, and U.S. citizens with Mexican ancestry. Officials used racial

profiling, conducted workplace raids, and carried out military-style roundups to detain individuals. Over one million people were deported, often done without due process. Many were sent deep into Mexico, including Veracruz and Nuevo León, to prevent their return. The program reflected Cold War era fears and persistent racial bias, leaving deep scars on Hispanic communities, tearing families apart, creating fear, and perpetuating decades of racial inequality.

An additional example is the migration resulting from the India-Pakistan partition. In 1947, India was divided into two independent dominion states, India and Pakistan. This partition harshly relocated between 12 and 20 million people along religious lines, creating an immense refugee crisis. The resettlement that occurred included mass violence, and between 700,000 and 2 million people died. This partition heavily influenced an environment of hostility and bitterness that affects immigrants in each country to this day. Pakistanis in India and Indians in Pakistan were treated with severe hostility and faced violence daily. The displacement forced several into refugee camps with poor sanitation, where many died from starvation and diseases. The bitter and traumatic aftermath of the partition still lingers today between India and Pakistan. Ongoing tensions about control over the region of Kashmir, minority rights, and their history of disastrous wars spark the animosity between India and Pakistan.

Another long standing issue facing many migrants and refugees is tatelessness, where a person is not recognized as a citizen by any country,. It often arises from war, targeted discrimination, or border changes. A prime example of this is Myanmar’s treatment of the Rohingya people after World War ll. The Rohingya are a Muslim ethnic minority who lived in Myanmar for several generations, but were not recognized by Myanmar's government as citizens after it gained independence, with the national government labeling them as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh. This left them stateless, making them vulnerable to violence, displacement, and denial of basic rights. Many have fled to neighboring countries like Malaysia and Bangladesh, where they live with limited access to education, healthcare, and work opportunities in overflowing refugee camps.

Past UN Action

On 10 December 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was drafted and later adopted by delegations from diverse legal and cultural backgrounds. Passed as the General Assembly resolution 217 A, this declaration states that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” (Article I). This resolution further reinforces the rights of all humans, anywhere in the world.

In July 1951, the United Nations held the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees in Geneva, Switzerland. A core principle from this convention was that refugees should not be returned to a country in which they face serious threats to their life or freedoms. The convention provided obligations to host countries, including the rights to housing, work, and education while displaced, allowing refugees to lead an independent life. It further outlined that refugees must meet certain requirements, and that countries can not host refugees such as war criminals, for example. An addition to the 1951 convention in 1967 stated that refugees can seek asylum at any time for any future event that threatens their security and freedoms, removing the restriction that it could be sought only before 1951.

The UN Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) passed General Assembly resolution 45/158 on 18 December 1990, addressing the rights of undocumented migrants. The resolution documents numerous rights, including the right to liberty, protection against arbitrary arrest, and the right to fair treatment by law officials.

In 2013, the OHCHR published a report titled “International Migration, Health and Human Rights” in Geneva, Austria. This report emphasizes that migrants, regardless of their legal status, are entitled to basic human necessities, including the fundamental human right to healthcare. It further emphasizes that access to basic shelter, food, and water is essential for every human being, regardless of race, identity, or legal status, in any country around the world. However, the report lacks binding authority for implementation. The report notes that “the realization of the rights of migrants is a sound public health practice that benefits all” (12). Spain is an example of a country that has strongly implemented ideas from this report, but greater cooperation among countries and stronger partnerships to address funding needs are needed for more countries to effectively address the rights of undocumented migrants.

In Marrakech, Morocco, resolution 73/195 was adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2018. This was the first agreement between governments that affirmed the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration. The Global Compact calls for countries to work with each other in reducing illegal trafficking, efficiently sharing data, and emphasizing the protection of undocumented migrants' human rights. This resolution ensures that undocumented migrants receive access to healthcare and education; protection from abuse, violence, discrimination, and punishments due to legal status; and that countries cooperate to dismantle illegal smuggling networks. As a result, the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) serves as a progressive intergovernmental forum for countries to share their progressand to keep each other in check. Countries are sharing data, engaging in talks, and making commitments, as

shown in the IMRF framework. However, there is still room for cooperation between more nations.

Current Events

Globally, the main drivers of undocumented migration remain armed conflict, climate change, economic inequality, and limited legal migration pathways across multiple regions. This is a problem that touches virtually every continent and corner of the world, and the urgency has only grown to address the problem comprehensively, given a number of accelerating crises throughout the world

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has raised serious due-process and family separation concerns in the United States. In April 2025, ICE deported minor-aged U.S. citizens, including a stage-4 cancer patient and their undocumented mother, to Honduras. This was allegedly done without sufficient legal representation or consent, and led to legal outcry and a call for immediate review of immigration law enforcement practices. With the climate of fear among mixed-status families containing children born in the United States, local school boards have made some efforts to protect children, including New York City, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia, which prohibit ICE from entering schools in the absence of a court order. NGOs and child advocates point to these instances as evidence of underlying systemic failures threatening vital rights of citizens and noncitizens alike.

The case of Kilmar Abrego García, wrongfully removed to El Salvador in March 2025 and later the subject of emergency litigation, has become an illustration of how removals can happen even where court orders and protection determinations exist.

The U.S. also moved more quickly and with greater urgency in its use of third-country deportation methods. In mid-2025, the Supreme Court allowed the Trump administration to rapidly send people to countries they had never resided in before, under recently ratified diplomatic agreements with nations such as Eswatini and Kazakhstan, and to limit protection for deportees. A deportee flight was flown into Eswatini, for example, and a new agreement has now been reached to transport up to 250 people in total to Rwanda. Human rights advocates from Human Rights First warn that this undermines the policy of non-refoulement, which prohibits returning asylum seekers to a place where they would face persecution or torture, reduces access to asylum processes, and remains untested by effective legal scrutiny, raising substantial humanitarian and legal concerns.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that Syria remains one of the world's largest displacement crises, with over 13 million people displaced either internally or as refugees.

In Afghanistan, the Taliban's return to power in 2021 triggered large-scale departures, with millions of Afghans now living in Pakistan and Iran, many without legal status. Recently, Pakistan has stepped up expulsions of Afghan nationals, carrying out large-scale returns that human-rights monitors say expose returnees to serious risk in Afghanistan.

In Sudan, the ongoing civil war has displaced over 10 million people, with neighboring states such as Egypt and Chad struggling to register arrivals or provide access to asylum procedures. Rights groups have documented mass arbitrary arrests and forced returns of Sudanese refugees from Egypt, with Amnesty reporting that detained men, women, and children were held in inhumane conditions and pushed back to areas of active conflict without meaningful access to asylum procedures.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, renewed fighting has driven displacement to over 8 million people, forcing constant cross-border movement into nearby countries with limited capacity to document new arrivals.

Meanwhile, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has produced Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II, with nearly 6 million Ukrainians currently living abroad and millions more internally displaced, placing sustained pressure on asylum and residency systems. There are reports across Europe of some Ukrainians being expelled or returned by neighbouring states for reasons ranging from alleged criminality to loss of legal status, alongside the far larger pattern of forcible transfers of Ukrainians into the Russian Federation documented since 2022.

Climate-related displacement is also increasing. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre estimates that over 26 million people were displaced by disasters in 2023 alone, primarily due to floods, droughts, and storms. Because people fleeing environmental collapse do not qualify as refugees under international law, many cross borders without legal status when livelihoods fail, and humanitarian visas are unavailable.

Economic inequality and limited legal pathways continue to push people into irregular migration and expose them to exploitation. In Europe, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) recorded over 200,000 arrivals across Mediterranean routes in 2024, while asylum systems remain overwhelmed by backlogs, leaving applicants in prolonged legal uncertainty. In the Middle East, millions of migrant laborers from South Asia live under restrictive sponsorship systems that tie legal status to employers, and loss of employment can immediately result in irregular status. Across parts of Asia and Africa, porous borders, regional conflict, and weak civil-registration systems contribute to large undocumented populations moving between neighboring states.

These pressures also sustain human smuggling and trafficking networks. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime reports rising trafficking linked to migration routes through North Africa, the Balkans, and Southeast Asia, while the ILO estimates 27.6 million people are currently trapped in forced labor worldwide, many of them migrants without secure legal status.

Deportation is not the only issue, though. In the United Arab Emirates, millions of migrant workers from South Asia work legally under restrictive "kafala" sponsorship systems. This ties their legal status to their employers, leaving them in danger of abuse and limiting mobility. However, immigrant workers have no chance of attaining citizenship, even after spending several years in the country. In Italy, children of foreign parents may also struggle to obtain citizenship, despite having lived in the country their entire lives.

Questions to Address

How can governments work together to protect individuals fleeing persecution?

Should nations accepting refugees receive resources to offset the cost of taking them in?

How can the UN ensure all refugees are treated equally?

What working protections can be afforded to undocumented immigrants?

What steps can nations take to protect undocumented individuals from human trafficking?

Should nations be obligated to provide undocumented individuals with a court trial?

What legal protections should children with different citizenship from their parents receive?

Are third-country deportations a violation of the UN Charter?

Are nations obligated to provide medical treatment to individuals who cannot receive it in their home countries?

Do governments have a responsibility to assist undocumented individuals in applying for citizenship?

How can the UN help governments alleviate economic concerns with processing large amounts of undocumented individuals?

Do governments have a responsibility to protect unaccompanied minors who cross their borders?

How can nations create more accessible pathways to citizenship?

What standards should migrant detention facilities be held to?

How does racial discrimination affect treatment of migrants?

What role does statelessness play in growing rates of immigration?

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