

Forum: Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Committee (GA3)

Issue: Combating Ethnic and Religious Discrimination in Post-Conflict Reconciliation



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Position: Co-Chair

Personal Introduction

Dear Delegates,

My name is Nikoletta Roussaki, I'm 16 years old, and I am a first-year International Baccalaureate student at Pierce - The American College of Greece. It is with great honor that I'm serving as a Co-Chair in the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee in this year's ACGMUN Conference. This conference marks my fifth time chairing and tenth conference overall, and I'm extremely grateful for the opportunity.

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to this year's conference and applaud your decision to participate. I hope by the end of this conference, along with having engaged in fruitful debate, you will have understood that MUN is more than just an event, but is a tool, an exercise of diplomacy, global awareness and negotiation. That, along with the friendships made along the way, the opportunities to learn and collaborate with people from various backgrounds, are the reasons that have made MUN so valuable to me. I hope by the end you'll share this sentiment as well.

In this study guide, you will find information which will provide you with insight and an in-depth, thorough understanding of the third topic of this committee. However, I highly recommend conducting your own research to be in the position to engage fully and appropriately in the debate. In addition to that, being familiar with your country's policy is of equal importance.

I'm committed to dedicating my time and energy to this conference, and I am eager at the prospect of assisting you all in such a meaningful event. If you have any questions concerning this topic or about the conference itself, feel free to contact me via email at nikolettaroussaki@gmail.com, or the Main Chair of GA3, Katherine Eliopoulos, at kathyeliopoulos88@gmail.com. I look forward to meeting you all in February!

Kind regards,

Nikoletta Roussaki

Topic Introduction

While armed conflicts may end on paper with ceasefires or peace agreements, the social and psychological consequences that often consist of different divisions being formed, can persist long after violence has subsided. In many societies where the above takes place, religious and ethnic identities are discriminated against and therefore continue to shape different sectors such as power, justice and opportunities. Discrimination, since it's less visible than outright violence, becomes a more subtle yet deep integration when faced with post conflict reconciliation.

First of all, post conflict societies can be identified as any state emerging from civil wars, genocides, or prolonged violences; all of which “clear” hostilities have stopped, but tensions between people remain. Main regions where that can be found are in While peace agreements end armed conflict, they do at the same time often fail to address systemic discriminations that are present in political institutions, legal systems, and social structures in general. Stakeholders of the above consist from groups within national governments, due to the fact that they can design and implement policies, legal reforms, and reconstructing institutions and their roles, to localities and minority groups who are often disproportionately affected but can also be critical for the rebuilding of said societies.

With approximately 57% of post conflict countries experiencing recurring forms of violence within a decade¹, this matter more than ever is of essence. Persistent ethnic and religious discrimination increases the likelihood of renewed conflict, undermines democratic governance and can cause forced migration, refugee flows and in general regional instability. This deems the topic at hand not only important for today, but also one that goes beyond national borders.

As our world becomes increasingly interconnected, religious and ethnic conflicts pose international security and humanitarian challenges and therefore are crucial in our conference's theme “Shaping Tomorrow”. Effort from many aspects needs to be put in, in order for discrimination to be addressed and solved effectively.

¹ Walter, Barbara F. “Conflict Relapse and the Sustainability of Post-Conflict Peace.” Openknowledge.worldbank.org, 2011, openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/fc5910b6-0f23-57c0-9af8-ed56a76f5c77.

Definition of Key Terms

Discrimination

The treatment of a “person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way than the way in which you treat other people, because of their race, gender, sexuality, or religion².”

Post-Conflict Reconciliation

“The long-term process of repairing social relationships, addressing historical grievances, and building mutual trust between groups previously involved in violent conflict”³ It acts as an essential tool for preventing the recurrence of violence, something which is extremely important since more countries post war, return to conflict within a decade.⁴ This process has been used in many instances, such as Rwanda (post genocide) and South Africa (post-apartheid).

Transitional Justice

“Transitional justice is a response to systematic or widespread violations of human rights. It seeks recognition for the victims and to promote possibilities for peace, reconciliation and democracy”⁵ It addresses the underlying structural inequalities, systemic biases and prejudices that are fueled in times of conflict. Mechanisms like these are used to transform society instead of just punishing perpetrators.

Minority Rights

“The normal individual rights as applied to members of racial, ethnic, class, religious, linguistic or sexual minorities; and also the collective rights accorded to minority groups⁶.”

Peacebuilding

“Peacebuilding seeks to address the underlying causes of conflict, helping people to resolve their differences peacefully and lay the foundations to prevent future violence.”⁷

² Cambridge Dictionary. “DISCRIMINATION | MEANING in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” Cambridge.org, 2025, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/discrimination.

³ “Post Conflict Reconciliation → Area → Sustainability.” Lifestyle → Sustainability Directory, 2025, lifestyle.sustainability-directory.com/area/post-conflict-reconciliation/.

⁴ Challenging the Conventional: Making Post-Violence Reconciliation Succeed. 2018. [25a06115-181102_kaf_reconciliation_report_web_v1.pdf](https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/right/minority-rights)

⁵ https://legal.un.org/avl/pdf/ls/Van-Zyl_RecReading1_.pdf

⁶ “#Minority Rights.” Front Line Defenders, www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/right/minority-rights.

⁷ Conciliation Resources. “What Is Peacebuilding? | Conciliation Resources.” Wwww.c-R.org, 2024, www.c-r.org/who-we-are/why-peacebuilding/what-peacebuilding.

Sectarianism

“Very strong support for the religious or political group that you are a member of, which can cause problems between different groups”⁸.

War Crimes

“A serious violation of international humanitarian law committed during armed conflict. It encompasses acts that are prohibited by international treaties and conventions, including the Geneva Conventions and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court”⁹.

Ethnic Cleansing

“The attempt to create ethnically homogeneous geographic areas through the deportation or forcible displacement of persons belonging to particular ethnic groups”¹⁰. Examples of the previous consist of the Bosnian War and the Kosovo War.

Genocide

“Certain acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group”, examples are the Holocaust and Armenian Genocide, as well as the Rwandan and Darfur too¹¹.

Hybrid Court

“Hybrid courts (also occasionally called ‘internationalized’ or ‘mixed’) are ad hoc courts with mixed characteristics of domestic and international courts, found in their applicable law, and in the rules of their composition, procedure and jurisdiction”¹². In the topic at hand, they mainly address atrocities that have roots in ethnic and religious discrimination. They bridge the gap between justice standards across the globe and provide a mechanism to prosecute war crimes.

⁸ ---. “Sectarianism.” Dictionary.cambridge.org, 2025, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/sectarianism.

⁹ Cornell Law School. “War Crime.” LII / Legal Information Institute, 2020, www.law.cornell.edu/wex/war_crime.

¹⁰ Andreopoulos, George. “Ethnic Cleansing | War Crime | Britannica.” Encyclopædia Britannica, 2020, www.britannica.com/topic/ethnic-cleansing.

¹¹ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. “What Is Genocide?” Ushmm.org, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2019, www.ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/learn-about-genocide-and-other-mass-atrocities/what-is-genocide.

¹² Ariel.ac.il, 2025, campuscore.ariel.ac.il/wp/rsg/hybrid-courts/.

Vetting Mechanisms

“The process of thoroughly investigating an individual, company, or entity to assess their soundness and integrity before proceeding with a decision”¹³. Such mechanisms again address the root causes of conflict by removing individuals who perpetrated abuses or supported such policies in order to rebuild citizen trust in public institutions. However, in a discrimination context, it must be part of a broader strategy too, with prosecutions including top level offenders, so all situations can be manageable.

Decentralisation

“The transfer of powers, responsibilities, and resources from the central government to elected authorities at the subnational level, with some degree of autonomy”¹⁴.

Social Exclusion

“A situation in which some people who are poor or who do not have a job do not feel part of the rest of society”¹⁵.

Political Underrepresentation

“Refers to the insufficient presence and influence of certain groups within political structures and decision-making processes”¹⁶.

Hate Speech

“Public speech that expresses hate or encourages violence towards a person or group based on something such as race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation”¹⁷.

¹³ Kopp, Carol M. “The Vetting Process Defined.” Investopedia, www.investopedia.com/terms/v/vetting.asp.

¹⁴ OECD. “Decentralisation.” OECD, 2024, www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/decentralisation.html.

¹⁵ ---. “SOCIAL EXCLUSION | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” Cambridge.org, 29 Jan. 2020, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/social-exclusion.

¹⁶ “Political Underrepresentation - (Appalachian Studies) - Vocab, Definition, Explanations | Fiveable.” Fiveable.me, 2025, fiveable.me/key-terms/hs-appalachian-studies/political-underrepresentation.

¹⁷ ---. “HATE SPEECH | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” Cambridge.org, 4 Dec. 2019, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/hate-speech

Background Information

Historical Background

Starting from the 1880s to 1960s, when colonial legacies and artificial borders were at an uprising, European colonial powers often drew borders without giving any regard for ethnic or religious lines¹⁸. This forced coexistence of rival groups or division of communities across borders deepens ethnic hierarchies, favoritism and of course, discrimination. These legacies laid the groundwork required to fuel civil wars and deep post conflict discrimination.

At the same time, the Cold War took place (1947-1991). This extraordinary rivalry fueled wars and divided states, while external support empowered authoritarian regimes or armed groups¹⁹. The ideological alignment in this war often outweighed human rights considerations, and the militarizing of societies as a whole only deepened ethnic chasms²⁰. Many post Cold War conflicts are said to stem from exactly that- unresolved Cold War divisions.

The Yugoslav Wars (1991-2001) also played a role in shaping responses and recognition of post conflict discrimination. The collapse of it led to a violent ethnic nationalism, and ethnic cleansing was used as a tool to create homogeneous territories. International intervention ended the violence, but it froze ethnic division²¹. Also, war crimes prosecutions did not automatically lead to reconciliation and instead created a lasting example of institutionalized ethnic separation.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, alongside the Sri Lankan Civil War and the situation in Northern Ireland, will be further analyzed in the Major Countries and Organizations section, but both demonstrated the limits that peace agreements that prioritize stability over equality have (the Dayton peace agreement) and how the absence of justice in many cases undermines chances at long term reconciliation.

Lastly, the most recent event is the Rohingya Crisis in Myanmar, taking place from 2017 to the present day. These circles around the conflict of the long-lasting denial of citizenship to Rohingya Muslims. The Rohingya are the greatest stateless minority in the world, despite having resided in Myanmar for many generations, as they are not acknowledged as an official ethnic group and have

¹⁸ Aithor. "The Impact of Colonial Borders on Modern Africa." Aithor.com, Aithor, 2 July 2024, aithor.com/essay-examples/the-impact-of-colonial-borders-on-modern-africa.

¹⁹ Zygmunt, Carolyn. "LibGuides: Cold War: About." Westportlibrary.libguides.com, westportlibrary.libguides.com/ColdWar.

²⁰ "Translators' Voices: Chinese People's Great Spirit of Resisting Aggression a Living Source of Strength - Global Times." Globaltimes.cn, 2025, www.globaltimes.cn/page/202508/1342234.shtml.

²¹ Ryan, Daniel, and Van Winkle. The Rise of Ethnic Nationalism in the Former Socialist Federation of Yugoslavia: An Examination of the Use of History. 2005. [Overview](#)

been denied citizenship since 1982²². Let alone the mass displacement and ethnic cleansing allegations, peace processes exclude Rohingya voices.

All the above show that peace agreements alone do not solve discrimination, and on the contrary require social, economic and political interventions. They may stop violence and war acts, but they do not dismantle discrimination and do not produce reforms that can result in sustainable reconciliation results.

Mechanisms of Discrimination Post-Conflict

Mechanisms of discrimination post conflict reconciliation attempts are split into social exclusion, political underrepresentation, segregation, hate speech and propaganda.

Social exclusion is when minorities are often denied healthcare, education and employment.²³ Catalysts in this are discriminatory laws or informal practices that all reinforce inequality. Land ownership disputes, such as the biggest example in post genocide Rwanda, where some Tutsi communities face barriers to land, also disproportionately affect minority communities²⁴.

At the same time, political underrepresentation is as important when facing the challenges of this topic. Electoral systems may favor dominant groups, and therefore exclude minorities from government positions, advisory roles, parliament roles. Reserved seats entrench ethnic divides and exclude minorities based on discrimination from decision making processes. For example, Bosnia's political system reserves certain seats along ethnic lines, causing inequality in its presidency system²⁵. Segregation, on the other hand, involves the physical separation of different communities in schools, neighborhoods and workplaces²⁶. That way, it limits interaction in groups and trust building in society as a whole in states. Also, it reinforces specific stereotypes across generations and reduces opportunities greatly and oftentimes is normalized under the guise of security or cultural preservation.

²² Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK. A Briefing by Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK. Dec. 2014. [Myanmar's-1982-Citizenship-Law-and-Rohingya.pdf](https://doi.org/10.12688/hrbopenres.13746.2)

²³ Siersbaek, Rikke, et al. "Social Exclusion and Its Impact on Health over the Life Course: A Realist Review Protocol." HRB Open Research, vol. 6, 12 Dec. 2023, pp. 34–34, <https://doi.org/10.12688/hrbopenres.13746.2>.

²⁴ Jin, Xianan. "Land Dispossession as Continuum of Violence: Women's Political Agency in Post-Genocide Rwanda." The Journal of Peasant Studies, 22 Oct. 2024, pp. 1–23, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2024.2407167>.

²⁵ Admin crd.org. "Bosnian Constitution Discriminates - Civil Rights Defenders." Civil Rights Defenders, 4 Jan. 2010, [crd.org/2010/01/04/bosnian-constitution-discriminates/](https://doi.org/10.12688/hrbopenres.13746.2).

²⁶ Gomà Garcia, Aina, and Joel Muñoz Aranda. "Segregated in the City, Separated in the School. The Reproduction of Social Inequality through the School System." Urban Science, vol. 2, no. 4, 27 Nov. 2018, p. 112, <https://doi.org/10.3390/urbansci2040112>.

Lastly, hate speech and propaganda are defined as media, educational content, and even political rhetoric that can help augment fear and mistrust²⁷. Education systems may promote biased historical narration while social media accelerates the spread of prejudice. An example is the ethnic media narratives in the Balkans post-1995, where nationalist media spread rapidly and changed narratives just as much²⁸.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Bosnian War (1992-1995) was an international conflict that had roots in the ethnic and political divisions that ended with the breakup of Yugoslavia. This involved three main groups, the Bosniaks (Muslims), Serbs (Orthodox Christians) and Croats (Catholics) that fought over independence and territorial control. The Dayton Peace Agreement, which was a general framework that established Bosnia Herzegovina as a sovereign state and essentially put an end to the war, at the same time institutionalized ethnic divisions through two structures (Serb and Croat/Bosniak). This war resulted in entrenching ethnic divisions that systematically discriminate against citizens who don't belong in the three "constituent peoples".²⁹ From political exclusion (e.g. holding positions in top political offices like the tripartite Presidency and the House of Peoples) of Jews and Roma due to them being a minority, to ethnic segregation in daily life and more notably in the education system ("two schools under one roof"), these challenges all consist of the collateral damage to stopping a war but at the same time creating long term systems that institutionalize ethnic discrimination. Currently in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while large scale violence has not resumed, political acts often create ethnic fear, thereby showing that peace is maintained institutionally instead of reconciling through society. NGOs and youth exchange programs attempt to counter constitutional structures which tend to discriminate and in general, nationalist narratives. While their reach is uneven, they catalyze the attempts of Bosnia's integration into the EU and its membership.

²⁷ Nahid de Belgeonne. "The Emotional Manipulation of Propaganda." Substack.com, Soothe with Nahid de Belgeonne, 20 Sept. 2024, nahiddebelgeonne.substack.com/p/the-emotional-manipulation-of-propaganda.

²⁸ Abazi, Enika, and Albert Doja. "The Past in the Present: Time and Narrative of Balkan Wars in Media Industry and International Politics." *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2017, pp. 1012–1042. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/26156157, <https://doi.org/10.2307/26156157>.

²⁹ Collateral Damage of the Dayton Peace Agreement: Discrimination against Minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Twenty Years On. Minority Rights Group, 14 Dec. 2015, minorityrights.org/resources/collateral-damage-of-the-dayton-peace-agreement-discrimination-against-minorities-in-bosnia-and-herzegovina-twenty-years-on/.

China

China's official position emphasizes national unity, sovereignty and non-interference. Ethnic and religious policies (e.g. Xinjiang, Tibet) are framed more as internal security matters than matters which impact and concern the globe. Much like other nationalistic blocs, they are skeptical of reconciliation frameworks that include mechanisms Western based or that include accountability. Lastly, as a global actor with influence, they are more likely to resist binding international policies on post conflict reconciliation, deeming them as a decelerator in any attempts made for international cooperation and post conflict reconciliation.

Iraq

Iraq was under the rule of Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath's party, which in essence can be characterized by brutal repression, brutal wars, and severe sanctions. After 2003, when the war with the US started, sectarian divisions (e.g. Sunni, Shia, Kurdish), both ethnic and religious, intensified after regime change.³⁰ Reconciliation after such events that caused mistrust between communities had several challenges, including weak institutions, external influence and unresolved grievances.³¹ The above shows how a state post conflict can easily regress into instability if no priority is put into reconciliation, and also the current policy of Iraq and its decisions in dealing with such situations.

Northern Ireland

"The Troubles", a violent, ethno-nationalist conflict that took place in Northern Ireland over its status during 1968-1998, involved mostly Protestant Unionists and Catholic Nationalists or Republicans. At its core, Republicans wanted a united Ireland while Unionists wanted to stay in the United Kingdom (UK); political and national divisions collided with religious identities. The Good Friday Agreement (1998), or Belfast Agreement, was a peace accord that ended the war. It established a power sharing form of government, where unionists and nationalists would govern together.³² While it was relatively successful, tensions remained. Those tensions included segregated communities, identity disputes and post Brexit instability, alongside implementation of rights like the Bill of Rights not being fully

³⁰ Council on Foreign Relations. "The Iraq War." Council on Foreign Relations, Council on Foreign Relations, 2025, www.cfr.org/timeline/iraq-war.

³¹ Rend Al-Rahim. "Transitional Justice in Iraq: The Challenges of National Healing and Recovery." IAI Istituto Affari Internazionali, 3 Aug. 2023, www.iai.it/en/pubblicazioni/c03/transitional-justice-iraq-challenges-national-healing-and-recovery.

³² The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Good Friday Agreement | British-Irish History | Britannica." Encyclopædia Britannica, 2019, www.britannica.com/topic/Good-Friday-Agreement.

implemented and political instability.³³ This was a successful post conflict reconciliation attempt, but also one that still requires maintenance. Anti-discrimination frameworks and reforms improved representation and reduced violence and violence has dramatically decreased yet disputed over accountability in their past history and identifying victims continue to bother Ireland trying to move forward, and shape many political debates.

Sri Lanka

The civil war in Sri Lanka that took place between 1983 and 2009 between the government and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was rooted to ethnic (Sinhalese versus Tamil) and religious differences. After it ended the country with the defeat of the Tamil Tigers, the country focused mainly on reconstruction and security, but despite it all faced issues concerning allegations of war crimes and lack of accountability.³⁴ This serves as a great example that ending conflict in military terms does not equal reconciliation, seeing as Tamil communities are marginalized and mechanisms by the state are viewed as insufficient or biased.

International Crisis Group (ICG)

“The International Crisis Group is an independent organization working to prevent wars and shape policies that will build a more peaceful world. Crisis Group sounds the alarm to prevent deadly conflict.”³⁵ Except for prevention, this organization also deals with post conflict analysis. Through early warning reports, recommendations for policies and mediation support, it contributes to peace globally. It has assessments based on evidence, and that in ethnic and religious tensions is extremely important. However, due to lack of enforcement power, and reliance on state cooperation, it has limited power.

Search for Common Ground

“For over 40 years, Search for Common Ground has been building trust around the world, opening opportunities for collaboration between communities, and creating breakthroughs for peace.”³⁶ Their mission is focused on transforming conflicts through dialogue and community engagement. Specifically,

³³ “25 Years of the Belfast Good Friday Agreement.” The Irish Congress of Trade Unions, 2023, www.ictu.ie/news/25-years-belfast-good-friday-agreement.

³⁴ Ganguly, Meenakshi. “15 Years since Sri Lanka’s Conflict Ended, No Justice for War Crimes | Human Rights Watch.” Human Rights Watch, 14 May 2024, www.hrw.org/news/2024/05/14/15-years-sri-lankas-conflict-ended-no-justice-war-crimes.

³⁵ International Crisis Group. “Preventing War. Shaping Peace.” Crisis Group, 7 July 2016, www.crisisgroup.org/who-we-are.

³⁶ SFCG Team (www.sfcg.org. “About Us.” Search for Common Ground, 30 May 2013, www.sfcg.org/about-us/.

they work in post conflict areas in order to rebuild trust in lines including ethnic and religious. This is an important show of how society based organizations also contributed to creating or maintaining peace.

Blocs Expected

Alliance 1

In the first alliance, we would expect states that prioritize multilateralism, human rights and transitional justice. Those include Western Europe (Germany, France, UK, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway), Canada, Australia, Latin America (Costa Rica, Chile, Colombia) and South Africa. Specifically, Western Europe has a strong history with conflict reconciliation, considering WW2 Europe and the Balkan involvement, and has shown great emphasis on human rights law, minority protections and several accountability mechanisms. On the other hand, states like Canada, Australia and South Africa are active supporters of peacekeeping, mediation and justice initiatives, and focus as much on domestic and international missions for reconciliation. Lastly, Latin American states experience several internal conflicts, and for that reason, have strong advocacy for restoration rather than punitive approaches; they emphasize dialogue, reintegration, and the healing of society as a whole.

Alliance 2

In the second alliance, more expected are states that emphasize sovereignty, stability and non-interference, so it would be considered as more of a nationalistic bloc. These states involve China, Russia, India, Iran, Syria, Myanmar, Turkey and Egypt. Especially China and Russia prioritize things like sovereignty, national unity, and centralized authority. Often skeptical in external involvement to domestic ethnic or religious issues are also India, Syria, Myanmar, Turkey and Egypt. Lastly, Iran is more centered around regime stability and resistance to Western frameworks, specifically; rejecting any that may seem politicized.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
15/11/1884-26/02/1885	Berlin Conference in which European powers formalized colonial borders in Africa
16/05/1916	Sykes- Picot, a secret Anglo-French agreement dividing Ottoman territories into

	spheres of influence, splits middle east along artificial lines
15/08/1947	Partition of India
18/08/1955-16/05/1972 05/06/1983-09/01/2005	South Sudan wars in which North–South ethnic and religious conflict that later led to South Sudan’s independence
1960s-1970s	Ethnic Conflicts spiking in Nigeria, Congo, Ethiopia
1968-1998	Northern Ireland “The Troubles”: Sectarian conflict between Unionists and Nationalists.
1991-10/04/1999	The Yugoslav Wars, caused from Yugoslavia’s breakup, including Bosnia and Kosovo
26/1/1991	Somalia conflict
18/12/1992	UN minority rights declaration (where international standards for minority protection were established)
7/4/1994-15/7/1994	Rwandan Genocide
28/2/1998-11/6/1999	Kosovo War: Ethnic conflict between Serbs and Albanians leading to NATO intervention.
2000	UNSC Resolution 1325 that recognized women’s role in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.
7/10/2001	Afghanistan ethnic conflict
20/3/2003	US invasion of Iraq
7/2004	Darfur genocide (ethnic cleansing and displacement in western Sudan)
2006	UN peacebuilding commission established
2009	End of Sri Lankan Civil war
2011-present	Syrian Civil War
2013-2018	South Sudan Civil War

2017- present	Myanmar Rohingya ethnic cleansing (mass displacement of Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar)
18/6/2019	UN Strategy on Plan of Action on hate speech
2020- present	Tigray Conflict in Ethiopia
21/1/2021	UN resolution on religious discrimination which emphasized on strengthening commitments against faith-based persecution.

Relevant UN Resolutions, Treaties & Events

[Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination \(CERD\), 1965](#)

This is at its core a legally binding framework used to combat racial and ethnic discrimination. At the same time, it requests that states eliminate any discriminatory laws it may have, alongside practices. This is highly relevant to post conflict societies that are focused more on rebuilding legal systems, and effectiveness varies depending on state compliance and political willingness to adopt characteristics in the resolution.

[International Covenants on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights \(ICESCR\), 1966](#)

This covenant, which was established in 1966, focuses on education, work, health and cultural participation. Additionally, it addresses discrimination that can persist after conflict. The above is relevant because exclusion from the rights mentioned in this result in the continuation or renewal of grievances. However, weak enforcement limits any effectiveness it may have, especially in post conflict context. Nevertheless, it serves as an important criterion for evaluating whether post-conflict reconciliation includes material justice alongside political peace.

[Convention of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities \(CRPM\), 18 December 1992](#)

This convention protects the identities of minorities, language, culture and religion. This is specifically relevant to post conflict societies with divided populations, or ones with chasms. At the same time though, it lacks enforcement mechanisms. However, it does serve as a document for the foundation of minority protection internationally.

UN General Assembly Resolution 60/80, 27 February 2006

This resolution focused on combating racism and promoting tolerance, encouraging education and international cooperation. Once more, this is a non-binding resolution, so its power is again limited, but at the same time, it strongly reinforces reconciliation since it gives it global responsibility rather than national responsibility.

Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

This is a framework asserting international responsibility in order to prevent mass atrocities such as genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and generally crimes against humanity. It is also relevant in situations where discrimination escalates into violence. R2P is the most politically controversial and inconsistently applied of the UN attempts to solve this topic.

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

South African Truth Reconciliation Commission (TCR) (1995)

The main goal of this commission is to emphasize and promote restorative justice over punitive. Through creating national dialogue and acknowledgement of abuses, it has made a change, but at the same time, it is criticized for the insufficient and lacking reparations³⁷. Despite that, though, it is an influential worldwide model that serves as an example for transitional justice.

Gacaca Courts in Rwanda (2001)

Due to the genocide that happened in Rwanda in 1994, which deeply stigmatized the state, the Gacaca Courts were created. These are community-based justice systems to address mass crimes³⁸. Taking into consideration that around 800.000 Tutsi were killed in over 100 days³⁹, and international

³⁷ 4 TH BRAINSTORMING RETREAT of the PSC and OTHER AU MEMBER STATES PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES to the AU 4 -5 SEPTEMBER 2005, DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA toward an AFRICAN UNION FRAMEWORK for POST CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION and DEVELOPMENT (PCRD) toward an AFRICAN UNION FRAMEWORK for POST CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION and DEVELOPMENT (PCRD).

<https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/toward-au-framework.pdf>

<https://www.gfmd.org/sites/g/files/tmzbd11801/files/documents/Colombia2024-2025/Summit/Roundtables/Roundtable%205%20-%20Full%20package.pdf>

³⁸McKenna, Amy. "Gacaca Court | Establishment, Outcome, Function, & Rwanda." Encyclopedia Britannica, 30 Jan. 2025, www.britannica.com/topic/gacaca-court.

³⁹ BBC News. "Rwanda Genocide: 100 Days of Slaughter." BBC News, 4 Apr. 2019, www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-26875506.

attempts failed to intervene, it aimed to balance accountability and reconciliation. At the same time, though, it was criticized for its limited due process and political bias. There are often trade-offs between restorative justice and legal standards and the attempts to societal healing.

African Union Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development Framework (PCRD) (2006)

The PCRD framework focuses on security, justice, governance and reconciliation, but this, unlike the previous attempts of the UN, encourages and focuses on African led solutions⁴⁰. Its implementation varies widely across states and is limited by funding since that way integration, and the spreading of is harder.

The African Great Lakes Regional Initiative (IGGLR) (2006)

This is a regional cooperation aiming to address ethnic conflict and displacements, particularly in the DRC, Burundi, and Rwanda, through dialogue and economic integration⁴¹. Its success is limited due to instability in regions and weak or varying enforcement depending on the state.

Possible Solutions

Protection of Press

Some form of whistleblower and journalist protection acts has to be included within the new policies proposed. A suitable example for this is the protection of individuals who report violations of human rights or discriminatory acts. Whistleblower protection laws should be proposed and include specific remarks on individuals who report violations concerning ethnic and religious discrimination, should be mentioned specifically. Also, it is important to strengthen accountability through policies. This solution is particularly important since it empowers citizens to expose abuse without fear and therefore reinforces democracy and human rights.

Develop Penalties for States Violating Human Rights

⁴⁰ "Truth and Reconciliation Commissions: International Experiences." Aph.gov.au, 2024, www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_departments/Parliamentary_Library/Research/Research_Papers/2024-25/Truthandreconciliation.

⁴¹ BUILDING RESILIENT PEACE: Strategic Pathways for Strengthening the UN Peacebuilding Architecture in Africa EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. 2024. [2025 Review of the UN-PBAR 22–23 October 2024 REPORT](#)

Ensuring that all states remain dedicated to not discriminating against citizens and their rights in any way is an impossible task. Thus, we can only make sure that when a violation is made aware, the appropriate punishment exists and is put into motion. Something yet to be explored is the creation of binding frameworks which will hold states accountable for unlawful and unjust laws or acts. When the perpetrator is known, possible mechanisms are economic sanctions, temporarily removing power from those who authorized the violations and the government in charge of human rights, etc. Those punishments and the choice of which should be appointed when the role of international courts or other national human rights bodies is. If a state's sovereignty is concerned, a balance should exist between jurisdiction and enforcement. That way, no further human rights violations happen, and the punishments are only an aid to countries and a further sense of safety for their citizens' rights.

UN Framework for National Reconciliation Action Plan

Establish a framework encouraging post conflict states to develop an Action Plan in which outlined are goals for reducing ethnic and religious discrimination in governance, education and public life. These plans should be reviewed through a periodic peer-review mechanism in which states must present progress, challenges, opinions and best practices in a transparent way (open forum). The purpose of the above should be made clear, that it isn't punitive but instead cooperative, since it seeks to promote transparency and gain international support and share knowledge on a larger level. That way, by linking domestic affairs and planning with international monitoring, accountability while maintaining sovereignty is strengthened, and it also steps towards normalizing reconciliation as a process that is ongoing and requires work and dedication, rather than a one-time event post conflict, making states realize that effort should be made to succeed in goals and maintaining long term peace.

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