SOCOMUN XXXIII

MODEL UNITED NATIONS

UNHRC
RIGHTS TO PRIVACY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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Rights to Privacy in the Digital Age

Hello Delegates! My name is Audrey Lee, and it is an honor to serve as your Head Chair for SOCOMUN 2024. I am in my fourth year of Model UN as a senior at Santa Margarita Catholic High School. MUN has provided me with the chance to gain knowledge about a wide range of global topics and issues. From the global arms trade, the Yemen crisis, and alternative energy sources, my knowledge as a student and global citizen has been greatly improved. In addition, having the opportunity to work with so many different people and giving public speeches have both truly challenged me to grow into a better version of myself. I participate in the varsity swim team at SM in addition to MUN, and during my free time, I love reading and hanging out with friends. Best of luck with your research and preparation, and remember that if you give MUN your all, it's a great chance to step outside of your comfort zone. I am very excited to see you all at SOCOMUN XXXIII and always remember to have faith in your own skills!

My name is Baron Stamer, and I am going to serve as your Vice Chair for SOCOMUN XXXIII. I got the opportunity to start MUN during my freshmen year at SM. I enjoy going to conferences. Whether I am making new friends or learning about each committee, I always get outstanding experience from conferences. As for outside hobbies and activities, I participate in lacrosse, our school broadcasting network, and love watching football with my friends. I was also able to be a rapporteur at SOCOMUN last year, and I deeply look forward to the new experiences this year as a vice chair.

Hi, my name is Sophie Herbert and I will be your Co-Rapporteur for SOCOMUN XXXIII. I started MUN my freshman year at SMCHS. I have loved my MUN experience because you get to learn so many things about beautiful places you had never heard of before and you get to meet so many interesting people. Outside of school, I am a black belt in Taekwondo, and I also do boxing and jiu jitsu. Outside of sports I love playing with my dog and hanging out with my friends at the beach. This is my first year helping to lead a committee and I can't wait to see what you all bring to the table!

My name is Sailor Todd, and I will be serving as your Co-Rapporteur for SOCOMUN XXXIII. This is my second year in MUN at SMCHS as a sophomore! MUN has been a very rewarding experience for me since the conferences provide a hands-on learning experience! I am very passionate about exploring the business field with an emphasis on International Relations and MUN helps me with my confidence, debate, and knowledge regarding global relations. Outside of MUN, I play indoor and beach Volleyball both for SMCHS! I am very excited about my first leadership opportunity in MUN, and I cannot wait for SOCOMUN!

At SOCOMUN, we will try our best to ensure that every delegate learns something new. In committee, we will be as clear as possible to ensure that all delegates know the policies and proceedings to help the conference run smoothly. Within the committee, delegates will begin by giving individual speeches that contain their solutions on the topic. If delegates wish to debate specifics of the topic, it is suggested that they

motion for a caucus to expand on the topic at hand. Throughout the day, country policies and solutions can be talked about individually or in groups. Delegates will form resolution groups and present all their combined solutions to the rest of the committee. Remember to participate as much as possible while also focusing on having solid content.

If you have any questions or concerns about committee, do not hesitate to email us at socomununhrc@gmail.com.

Background:

Although privacy is a right that everyone is born with, this right is in a constant state of violation in the digital age. There is no such thing as true privacy when it comes to digital data- this includes everything from simple conversations and photos to vital information regarding finances and health. Although the new adoption of technology and the Internet around the globe has led to many positive effects such as more equal access to services of the government that are digital and a boost of economic growth for developing nations, these benefits do not come without their losses. Many digital companies create a profit off the collection of data about customers, surveillance of activity on networks, and the location and transactions of consumers. This data is kept track of and analyzed for governmental purposes and commercial use. Because data is collected and always stored by companies, this makes online data very prone to being stolen by foreign powers, criminals, and terrorists. Even though some countries have agreed to create regulatory authorities for telecommunications, few have made authorities focusing on independent data protection who oversee the collection, use, and storage of data. On top of this, cybersecurity strategies and centers that analyze the data of attacks and defenses of cybersecurity are severely lacking in number around the world.

The issue of how to express public policy which may temporarily or permanently restrict civil liberties while also protecting basic civil liberties has been especially aggravated by the effects of Covid-19. During Covid-19, many differences in the beliefs of governments and people from a variety of countries emerged. Some countries' citizens leaned toward allowing their government to track data more closely for the sake of identifying people who may have possibly been infected by Covid-19. However, other countries directly opposed the idea of giving the government consent to track their data extra closely for the sake of Covid-19. For countries whose citizens supported their government's actions in tracking data to stop the spread of the virus, a question that remains is how long the "temporary" arrangements to track citizens more closely through the digital world should last. These arrangements could be abused as governments can state that the virus still lingers within their population leading to measures that were "temporary" to last for quite some time. Therefore, the vagueness of the concept of to what degree governments should be allowed to collect and analyze their citizens' data remains.

As for the United Nations' take on this topic, the General Assembly has leaned more towards the side of protecting citizens' basic rights to privacy in the digital age. During a meeting in 2013, many members expressed a deep concern that the interception of communications done digitally, electronic surveillance, and the collection of personal data has a large negative impact on the protection of human rights which the United Nations strives towards. During this meeting, it was called upon that all countries should

make an effort to end any sort of actions that violate the right to privacy which was stated to be a fundamental principle of a democratic society. This was the first time that the Assembly officially stated that the same rights that citizens have online must and should be protected online as well. Surveillance that lacks enough safeguards to keep the right to privacy safe risks negatively impacting the human right to privacy and fundamental freedoms.

Possible Solutions:

The chairs understand the broad range of this topic and therefore encourage delegates to create specific and creative solutions. The chairs also urge delegates to make solutions that can pass when reviewed in resolution groups. An important role of the committee is to encourage both communication and cooperation between delegates of all countries, so please prepare to collaborate with others to form new solutions by combining solutions. The chairs hope that the following solutions will guide delegates in the creation and development of their own solutions, while working to clarify the process of making new solutions as well. Note that the chairs highly smile upon the presentation of original solutions over more generic ones, which can be shown through the production of solutions that are organized and detailed. Please assume that funding is supposed to come from the UN and therefore should not be considered very seriously when creating and developing solutions.

The issue of the lack of implementation of laws regarding keeping citizens' digital information safe needs to be addressed and tackled. This could be done through the implementation of certain unnegotiable standards and laws of privacy that apply to different governments and countries throughout the globe. Chief privacy officers should be hired to oversee the implementation of said digital privacy standards. Although laws requiring this to be brought to life have been passed, there is not anything that has been implemented so far, especially on a global scale. Chief privacy officers would also help to address issues that are based around the government using commercial databases for their own surveillance and gain. On top of this, these officers could work to train and educate citizens and employees in practices of data protection policies and help to assess proposals of policies that address the protection of the rights to private information in the digital world.

Both children and older citizens are particularly vulnerable to falling prey to online threats, theft, and predators. Therefore, delegates should explore the necessity of expanding educational opportunities and curriculums addressing and relating to the dangers of the digital world for these age groups. Regarding the education of children, programs should work to show them how to promote and create a safe online environment for themselves while also teaching them the dangers of being online. Older citizens should have easy access to classes or courses teaching them how to keep any personal and valuable information that is stored online as safe as possible. Considering that the digital world will only continue to expand, all citizens need to have a more well-rounded and better knowledge and understanding of their rights to digital privacy. It is also necessary to make education regarding this topic as accessible as possible to all, no matter the financial background of a person.

Delegates should also take a look at the possibility of the creation or simplification of an already existing alert system. This alert system would let internet

users know when either their privacy or data has been breached. On top of this, the alert system could also inform users of dangerous "terms and conditions" or "cookies" that they have or are about to accept. The alert system should keep these alerts short and simple yet effective enough to express the gravity of the danger that a user is in. This solution supports the belief that users should have the ability to fully understand the conditions that different websites have. Delegates can look to cooperate with a variety of companies and NGOs who may have expressed their support for a similar solution or are already beginning to carry it out.

Questions to consider:
The following questions are listed to guide delegates in their research and solutions. These are NOT required to be answered during committee.

1. What is your country's policy on this topic? Do the citizens within your country support the government having more control over their data for the sake of public safety or not?
2. Are there any laws or organizations based in your country that are working to protect citizens' rights to digital privacy?
3. How have citizens' digital rights been compromised due to Covid-19? How can you address this issue?
4. Is it possible for the government to be the ones in charge of keeping citizens' digital privacy safe if they are also collecting the data of said citizens?
5. Are there different ways to convince companies, corporations, and governments to not collect the data of internet users for the sake of monetary gain?
6. How can the United Nations as a whole work to protect the privacy of people around the globe?

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