



UNHRC

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TOPIC A:

SPORTSWASHING AND THE RIGHTS OF ATHLETES

Sportswashing refers to the practice of individuals, groups, corporations, or governments laundering a reputation or normalizing wrongdoing by capitalizing from the attraction of the sporting world. Although sportswashing is a relatively new term, the practice has been used throughout history, dating as far back to the first Olympics in Athens, Greece. In this modern era of sports, global integration, and digital technology, the sports industry has evolved into much more than a simple game of fair play. With corporations and governments involved in an age of advanced capitalist societies, states have manipulated sports as a form of soft power—the ability to achieve goals through attraction rather than coercion.

The difficulty of organizing mass response from individual actors is the core of the efficacy of sportswashing practices. Sports, in general, are an integral part of societies and communities; thus, refusing participation in sporting events or staging large-scale resistance strategies is difficult for fanbases who maintain strong connections and interests in sports. For example, major international sports competitions like the Olympics and the World Cup demand worldwide coverage; essentially many audiences would rather consume information of entertaining plays and scores as opposed to the covert human rights violations and wrongdoings of the host country. The success of sportswashing within the host country is the way an authoritarian government frames the story within its own borders, relying on specific narratives to shape the perceptions of reality for viewers at home. When examining this topic, it is important to consider the success of sportswashing practices and how solutions can address the challenges of mandating regulation in the sporting world.

The second part of this topic focuses on the rights of athletes, a topic that is often overlooked by the appeal of the competitiveness of sporting games. In many com-

munities, the sports culture is dominated by the need to perform well, and many athletes are victims of this harmful mentality that prioritizes winning over health. Women and children are the most vulnerable groups when it

comes to sports, often undergoing physical and mental abuse by regulators, trainers, and fans. While researching this topic, consider the sports culture within your own country as well as the political and social environment that allows abuse in sports to flourish both on and off the field. Consider what laws and standards are in place to regulate sports and competitors and the effectiveness of these legislative acts.

By becoming aware of the action of sportwashing, individuals can overlook these manipulation tactics to become aware of the human rights violations, abuses, and overall actions of oppression. Because sporting events attract a lot of attention, understanding the mechanics of sportwashing can make it more accessible for individuals to call out the human rights violations occurring, increase awareness, and advocate for the rights of those being affected. This empowers people to recognize biased reporting, question official narratives, and seek alternative sources of information to form a more comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand. By design, sportwashing undermines the integrity of sports by allowing questionable entities to gain power and influence, awareness can then promote awareness.

Along with this, athletes' rights are pivotal to their well-being, safety, and fair treatment. Athletes have unique platforms as they hold a large influence that can be used to share opinions and address social issues. Understanding their rights ensures that they are protected and supported in expressing their opinions and advocating for the causes they believe in. Along with this, it helps to ensure the physical as well as mental health of athletes, equal opportunities and prevents exploitation and abuse.

Finally, many people choose to support teams, brands, and events that agree with their values. Understanding sportwashing helps customers make informed decisions and can therefore align their consumption with their ethics. With each individual contributing to a more just and equitable sporting environment, they will be better equipped to discern when sports are being used as a political tool, fostering a more nuanced understanding of international relations and geopolitical dynamics.

TOPIC B:

RITUAL ATTACKS AND HONOR KILLINGS

According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), cultural violence refers to “any type of behavior, whether physical, psychological, or verbal, which is based on cultural norms and practices and has the aim or effect of inflicting harm or suffering on another person or group of persons.” There are many forms of cultural violence, but this committee will focus on two: ritual attacks and honor killings. Ritual attacks and witchcraft-related violence result in the violation of human rights permitted by the belief in supernatural powers. Although not widely portrayed in the media, witch hunts continue to prevail in many tribalized communities across the globe with often no robust state-led response or judicial system to condemn impunity for these abuses. Honor killings refer to the murder of a girl or woman by her family or community members who justify their actions by claiming that the girl or woman has brought dishonor to the family.

Although ritual attacks and honor killings are different forms of cultural violence, they are both based on community mentality and sanctioned by cultural traditions and taboos. Seen as purification rites, ritual attacks and honor killings can be viewed as a means of social control in defiance or assimilation to other cultures. In many instances, these forms of cultural violence are intertwined with fears of disease, expulsion, and eternal punishments.

As you conduct your research, it is important to recognize the aspects of culture that are violent as opposed to labeling the entire culture to be violent. Traditional beliefs that are mainly practiced in African and Asian countries and related to magic and supernatural powers can be done for benevolent purposes involving peaceful means. Therefore, it is important that solutions differentiate between harmful cultural beliefs

and lawful and legitimate ones in order to adequately address the issues of cultural violence while still respecting the dignity and beliefs of different communities. Additionally, ritual attacks and honor killings tend to transpire among tribalized communities; thus, the scope of legislative action is often limited in its capability for efficient regulation. While researching solutions, keep in mind the cultural and social structures of these marginalized communities, taking into account the difficulties of implementing solutions in these affected regions.

With the fundamental rights to life, security, and freedom from violence being attacked by the normalization of honor killings, understanding and addressing these forms of cultural violence are crucial for protecting the communities and individuals affected by these practices. That being said, it is essential to differentiate between the aspects of culture that promote peaceful coexistence and those that perpetuate violence. In doing this, we can address cultural violence and find solutions without resorting to prejudice or stereotyping. In bringing awareness to this topic, legal frameworks and the notion of providing justice and ending impunity can grow in areas where communities lack robust state-level responses. Finally, cultural violence disproportionately affects vulnerable groups such as women and children, and addressing this topic can help to create safer environments for these individuals.



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