

## 1. Welcome & Personal introduction

Honourable Delegates,

We are looking forward to chairing the Human Rights Council with you as our amazing delegates in this year's OLMUN conference . Admittedly, we were both really looking forward to seeing you in person in June. But, we are now just as excited to create a type of MUN experience with you that will be entirely new to most of us. We encourage all of you to use the opportunity given by this year's inner circle and everyone involved to have this type of OLMUN-experience in a time where so many things just end up not taking place at all. This counts just as much for those of you, who will make their first OLMUN or even MUN experience in this year's conference as it does for those who already participated in several conferences all over the world and would have probably schooled us on how to chair the committee.

We will definitely try to do the same and are excited to see the amazing things that you will create during this special situation!

Before we get into this year's topic, we want to start with us briefly introducing ourselves:

Hello! My name is Per Pagnia, I am 18 years old and I am thrilled to be one of the lucky two to chair the HRC at OLMUN 2021. At the beginning of this school year I started my A-level preparation and will have my finals in 2022. In my spare time, I love to do sports, for which I go to the gym, play handball, and enjoy a round of golf. Also, I love to go skiing when I get the chance to, but due to Covid I was very limited in my prospects to execute that. Further, I love to listen to all sorts of music and I'm often going for drives ever since I turned 18 last December.

In the last three years, I participated in the OLMUN as a delegate except for the previous year in which I was supposed to chair the GA3rd. Sadly, due to Corona I did not get the chance to chair at last year's conference as the conference couldn't take place. However I am even more excited and am very much looking forward to chairing this year's HRC and getting my first real chair experience with you guys and my Co-Chair Tom. As I believe there are also going to be many first-timers I would like to encourage all of you to be confident in your skills and use the opportunity to take the podium when you get the chance. I am aware that digital format does not encourage the same way as actually meeting in the Weser-Ems-Halle but I am certain that you guys will make the best of it. For achieving the best time possible for you I would love to see you come well prepared to participate in the discussions and have the opportunity to have some fun discussing.

I am really looking forward to meeting all of you soon!

Moin! My name is Tom, I am 23 years old and while I've taken part in 3 OLMUN's as a delegate, this will be my first time chairing a committee. For me, my first OLMUN is actually now almost 9 years in the past. I was a delegate in 2012, 2013

and 2014 and was not able to get back to OLMUN since then. I was already looking forward to chairing the ECOSOC last year but had to wait one more year for my return after the entire conference had to be cancelled last year. That is why this year I am even more excited that I will get to meet you guys in our committee, even if in a very unusual format.

Since I graduated from school, I was lucky to have the opportunity to study and work in the US and Uganda for a year each, and am currently close to finishing my bachelors degree at the Leuphana University Lüneburg. Besides studying, I am involved in research projects on Open Social Innovation and various forms of student representation or initiatives.

To me, above anything else, getting to know all of you guys with your diverse motivations, backgrounds and opinions will be the most exciting part of this year's conference. Especially in a time where meeting strangers unfortunately has become such a rare joy for all of us!

## 2. The Human Rights Council

In this year's conference, we will have the opportunity to get together in the Human Rights Council (HRC).

The HRC was founded as a subsidiary body of the United Nations in 2006. It replaced the Commission on Human Rights, which was regarded as overly politicized. As one of the main UN bodies tasked with human rights protection, the HRC discusses a large variety of issues, from preventing discrimination to political rights and the rights of refugees. In addition to being a discussion forum for these issues, the HRC issues recommendations to the General Assembly and promotes human rights education.

47 member states elected by the General Assembly make up this body, and the HRC meets for at least three sessions a year in Geneva. An innovative mechanism has been introduced in 2006 to improve respect for human rights: in the Universal Periodic Review, the human rights situation in every member state is reviewed every four years and recommendations are issued by the other members. Thus, the HRC hopes to resolve human rights issues through dialogue and practical recommendations. The council can also examine specific problems (thematic mandate) or situations in specific states (country mandate).

If you're curious about what the HRC currently is working or want to learn more about its mechanisms, more information can be found here: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/hrc>

### 3. Counteracting the Violation of Human Rights by Law Enforcement Agencies

On last year's 25<sup>th</sup> of May, the Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was captured on video pressing his knee into the neck of George Floyd, an unarmed black man, for 8 minutes and 46 seconds, resulting in Floyd's death. The video sparked worldwide protest and, along with many other cases of police violence, reopened the public debate about police brutality and structural racism. The Black Lives Matter movement took to the streets all over the world, demanding putting an end to systemic racism and police violence. Just as it was the case with protests in 2014 after the deadly shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and the death by chokehold of Eric Garner in New York City, the recent Black Lives Matter protests have sparked more research on these topics. While various researchers, politicians and activists are encouraged by this momentum for change, some are also concerned that leaders might not be able to find proper solutions. For years, many stakeholders have been asking for more data on unnecessary use of force by police and ways of combating them.

On June 17 2020, the UN Human Rights Council held an urgent debate on "current racially inspired human rights violations, systemic racism, police brutality and violence against peaceful protests", which resulted in a [consensus resolution](#) passed on June 19. During these discussions, many delegations called for international investigations on killings of black people and violence against demonstrators in the USA. Others added that the issue impacted all nations and required a broader approach. In countries of every continent and region, far too many cases of police officers resorting to excessive use of force against protesters, mistreating persons in detention, targeting minorities and otherwise engaging in misconduct are reported every year. The Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) reports ill-treatment in the form of slaps, punches, kicks as well as blows with hard objects to various parts of the body when questioning detainees in order to extract information. Violence targeting minorities also shows in many regions of the world, with reports for example showing ill-treatment of migrants and ethnic minorities by several countries' police forces and coast guards along European borders. All of these human rights violations undermine public trust in the state, social cohesion, and effective law enforcement, which rests on cooperation between police and local communities.

Beyond the work of the Human Rights council, different groups of researchers, activists and politicians have demanded a variety of potential solutions to the issues at hand. Political leaders and activists pushing for change in the United States have widely endorsed body-worn cameras, de-escalation training, implicit-bias training, early intervention systems, the banning of chokeholds, and civilian oversight since the tragedies of 2014. Many have also underlined the need for more transparency and reliable data to assess current human rights violations.

As a part of that, some have for example suggested for (riot) police officers to wear easily visible and memorable identification numbers that would enable people to report abuses in a more direct way.

Others have called for states to develop clear, transparent guidelines concerning the proportionate use of force by law enforcement in different situations. In line with international standards, these guidelines would include the use of tear gas, pepper spray, water cannons and firearms. Furthermore, in the selection, recruitment and promotion of police, special attention could be paid to reports of past misconduct, racist attitudes, and the ability of individuals to withstand stressful situations. Scientists have tried to identify some predictive factors, such as racial bias, a bad temper, insecure masculinity and other individual characteristics, many of which can be identified through simulations already used in officer training. Such screening could help with vetting officers before they are recruited. But raising the bar for hiring might be impractical, because many police departments are already struggling to attract and retain highly qualified candidates. The recruitment of officers among minority groups would also help reduce the risk of racially motivated violence and contribute to make the police more representative of society's diversity.

To University of Illinois researcher Thomas O'Brien, trust in law enforcement bodies also plays a key role in this process: "If police are to be of service to communities, they need to build trust with communities that are likely to distrust them". He suggests that such trust-building requires the police to both acknowledge its role in creating the distrust, as well as apologize for.

In order to achieve this form of trust, some have also called for the eradication of impunity for human rights violations committed by law enforcement officials. This could help victims to receive justice, future misconduct by law enforcement officials to be deterred and public trust in and cooperation with law enforcement to be strengthened. To them, it is of utmost importance that all allegations of police misconduct are effectively investigated so as to lead to the identification and punishment of those responsible. Regrettably, many investigations of human rights violations committed by law enforcement officials are ineffective, as it is often members of the same force who are investigating actions of their colleagues and there is sometimes a "code of silence" about protecting one's own. The creation of independent bodies evaluating cases of human right violations could be one of the solutions to this problem.

In this year's OLMUN conference, you will represent your delegations on how we can counteract human rights violations by law enforcement agencies. You will be tasked with something that the real Human Rights Council is also currently working on and will continue to do so even beyond the date of our MUN. To us, this can open up a very interesting pool of information for you as well as enabling you to compare the work done in our committee with the real UN committee. Keep in mind that the issues and solutions listed by us should just serve as an inspiration and are by no means extensive. We are looking forward to seeing your delegation's ideas and opinions on the issue at hand.

#### 4. List of helpful resources for delegates research

We have collected a few links that can help you to start off your research. However, keep in mind that they are just meant as a friendly tip. Your research can and should go beyond these links and does not necessarily have to include any of them. There is no right or wrong way to do this: For some of you, research will be almost more fun than the conference itself, for some it at first might feel like the most boring thing you have done in a long time. Try to get a feeling for the topic and find out why it matters to the government and people of the country you represent in our committee. During this process, we also encourage you to critically reflect on the topic yourself, even if the opinions you form are not supposed to find their way into your delegations policy statements or resolutions. While we encourage you to scan the internet for written sources, sometimes it can also be a good introduction to just watch YouTube Videos or TED talks on the issue at hand. It is on you to find your way of doing research that yields the results you are looking for and, just as important, lets you enjoy this process and allows you to follow your curiosity and interests.

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/06/1066722>

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Racism/Pages/Implementation-HRC-Resolution-43-1.aspx>

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G20/158/27/PDF/G2015827.pdf?OpenElement>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/police-brutality/>

[https://www.geneva-academy.ch/joomlatools-files/docman-files/in-brief6\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.geneva-academy.ch/joomlatools-files/docman-files/in-brief6_WEB.pdf)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_killings\\_by\\_law\\_enforcement\\_officers\\_by\\_country](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_killings_by_law_enforcement_officers_by_country) (also see the sources at the end of the article for country specific articles or reports)

[https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/use\\_of\\_force.pdf](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/use_of_force.pdf) (also see the sources at the end of the article for country specific articles or reports)

<https://policehumanrightsresources.org/category/country>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-01846-z>

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/7/7/21293259/police-racism-violence-ideology-george-floyd>

<https://www.usnews.com/news/world-report/articles/2020-06-23/amnesty-international-accuses-us-police-of-human-rights-violations>

## 5. How to prepare for this years conference

In preparation for this year's conference you should prepare both a draft resolution and a policy statement which summarize your delegation's opinion on the topic. Each draft resolution should be at least one page long and concentrate on the Operative Clauses. Policy statements should be more concise and generally be limited to less than 200 words.

You will find more information on how such documents are written and structured in the OLMUN handbook which is available for free download in the download sections of OLMUN's official website (olmun.org).

To be able to support you in your preparations for this year's conference, we encourage you to **send us your policy statement by the 1st of June**. We will then look through all of your ideas and give you feedback and ideas that you can incorporate in your final stages of conference preparation.

Also, we would love to get to know you a little better in order to plan our committee sessions: Please let us know about your prior MUN-experiences, some of the things that you are looking forward to the most for this year's conference as well as things that might still worry you. You can just include those things in your mail when sending in your policy statements.

While the deadline is not mandatory, we will definitely create a list of delegates who decide to hand in their documents either too late or not at all.

Keep in mind that these delegations then might mysteriously find themselves to be targeted with punishments more frequently than others.

## 6. Final words

First, we want to put things into perspective. This last year has been very different for all of us. For a lot of people, the COVID19-pandemic had and still has severe consequences. Hence, when formulating disappointment about issues like OLMUN 2021 not being able to take place in the way that we are used to, we want all of us to keep in mind the thousands of things that are so much more important.

Still, we admit that we would have loved to meet you in Oldenburg for this year's OLMUN, that we are a little disappointed to not sit next to each other during productive sessions every day or walk through the city together in the evenings. However, disappointment is not what we feel when we are thinking about this year's HRC with you. In fact, we are looking forward to meeting almost 50 new people in this committee alone, more people than we have met in the last 12 months combined. To hear your first speeches, to learn about new points of view, to watch the first ones of you fall asleep during committee sessions or to see the

fear in your eyes light up once you discover how creative we actually got with punishment ideas. We are already thinking about the different ways we can spend our lunches and evenings together or which type of sweatpants to match with which tie. While it will be us chairing this committee, we want to encourage you to just think of this committee as our 50-people group project. You are at least just as capable of making this committee work as we are.

This year's OLMUN, even more than every OLMUN before, will depend on what we make of it.

Right now, we are not entirely certain about the tools that we will use for this year's conference. However, we are certain that most of you already spent some amazing time in digital events or calls with friends. So, we want to learn with and from you: Let us know about your ideas or suggestions for things we can do together, no matter if productive tools, fun games or ways of getting to know each other better. We would also definitely be open to "yielding the floor" to any of you who want to prepare things for the rest of the committee, no matter if it's an icebreaker or punishment, a game we can play together or whatever else you come up with.

Also, just as importantly, feel free to reach out if you feel overwhelmed with your preparations or need anything from us. We will answer all of your questions, no matter how "stupid" they might seem to you. Reach us via email at: [HRC@olmun.org](mailto:HRC@olmun.org).

Also, in order to make sure that all of

We're excited to get to know all of you in June and can't wait for this year's HRC!

See you soon and all the best  
Per & Tom

## **Text for the conference guide**

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