Introduction

Discrimination comes in many forms and yet societies have created this natural propensity to normalize the concept and to ‘accept’ that it is part of human nature. Due to this, significant historical occurrences like the Holocaust, Al Qaeda terrorism, Black history in America...have all contributed to perpetrating different forms of discrimination amongst social groups or populations from different countries with each other. The overarching form that is most pressing to address, however, is racial discrimination, as it involves the prejudice and intolerance that occurs between ethnic groups and religions and thus creates tensions and a lack of mutual understanding and cooperativeness between groups at a both national and regional level. For this reason, it is of high importance to tackle an issue that serves as an overarching one to many other distinct aspects that negatively impact society in different countries. Without a global cooperation and tolerance countries will not be able to prosper and to guarantee the same rights and conditions to everyone.

Definition of Key Terms

Interreligious dialogue:

Also known as 'interfaith dialogue', refers to a positive and tolerant interaction with which
individuals and institutions engage pertaining to different religious and/or humanistic beliefs.

**Intercultural dialogue:**

The process by which institutions and individuals from different cultural backgrounds or worldviews engage positively and respectfully with each other.

**Discrimination:**

Unjust treatment from an individual or social group towards specific categories of people, especially on the grounds of sex, race, or age.

**U.S. National:**

A person born in or having ties with "an outlying possession of the United States", they are not considered U.S. citizens.

**Violence:**

The intentional use of physical force or verbal language to harm specific groups or individuals.

**Xenophobia:**

Prejudice against people from other countries.

**Racism:**

A form of discrimination directed towards someone pertaining to a different race with the belief that one race is more superior than the other.

**Rohingya people:**

A Muslim ethnic minority that is stateless and are considered to be the most persecuted in the world; they are generally concentrated in Rakhine (Arakan) state in Myanmar (Burma) although other countries such as Bangladesh have them in refugee camps.
Al Qaeda:

Militant Islamist organization founded by Osama bin Laden in the late 1980s.

Anti-Semitism:

Ideology where individuals prejudge or discriminate Jews.

Background Information

History of violent and discriminative events

The Holocaust

The Holocaust, rooting from two Latin words “holos” (whole) and “kaustos” (burned) and ironically representing sacrificial offerings being burned in altars originally then became into a tragic, genocidal event taking place in Germany, Poland, and other nearby areas. The mass murder of 6 million European Jews took place during the Second World War (1939-1945), under the German Nazi regime, and Adolf Hitler, as an anti-Semitic Nazi, led the regime during the era of the Holocaust. Hitler believed Jews were an inferior race and a threat to German racial purity and community, for which he came up with the “final solution” and built concentration camps in occupied Poland. The hate for Jews quickly spread across the German population due to national misinformation and censorship imposed by the dictator. (“The Holocaust”)

Before the Holocaust

Anti-Semitism in Europe already existed before Hitler came into power, despite the recognition of the term in the 1870s, evidence of hostility toward Jews was present before the Holocaust happened. This evidence dates back to when Roman authorities destroyed a Jewish temple in Jerusalem and forced Jews out
of Palestine. The Enlightenment, as an era taking place during the 17th and 18th century emphasized religious tolerance, and in the 19th century Napoleon and other great European rulers executed legislation that ended long-standing restrictions on Jews. (“The Holocaust”)

Rise of the Nazis in Germany

By July 1933, 27,000 people in “protective custody” were held in German concentration camps. Nazi rallies and symbolic acts like public burning of books by Jews, Communists, foreigners, and liberals helped drive home the message of power and authority of the party that was in power. In addition, during this year, Jews in Germany numbered around 525,000, only 1% of the total German population. A complete segregation between Aryans (Germans) and non-Aryans (Jews and other ethnic groups) was done by liquidating Jewish-owned businesses and stripping clients away from Jewish doctors and lawyers. After the implementation of the Nuremberg Laws in 1935, anyone with three or four Jewish grandparents was considered a Jew and those with two Jewish grandparents were considered Mischlinge (half-breeds). These laws also made Jews become common targets for persecution and stigmatization. (“The Holocaust”)

Beginning of the War (1939-1940)
In September 1939, the western half of Poland was occupied by the German army. Polish Jews were forced into ghettos from their houses by the German police and they had to leave their belongings behind, most of which ethnic Germans living there, Polish gentiles, or Germans from the Reich kept for themselves. Diseases such as typhus emerged within these overpopulated ghettos and unemployment, hunger, and poverty kept growing in the Jewish communities that were being held captive. At the same time, during the fall of 1939, Nazi officials selected approximately 70,000 persons institutionalized for mental illness or disabilities to be gassed to death in what was thought to be the ‘Euthanasia Program’. This program, however, angered German religious leaders and Hitler shut it down in 1941, though killings of the disabled subjects continued in secrecy; by 1945, around 275,000 people considered handicapped from all over Europe had been killed. ("The Holocaust")

The ‘Final Solution’ (1940-1941)

Throughout the spring and summer of 1940, Germany expanded its borders in Europe, conquering Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, and Luxembourg. In 1941, Jews from all over the continent, including European Gypsies, were transported to the Polish ghettos. The German invasion of the Soviet Union also killed more than 500,000 Soviet Jews and others over the course of Hitler’s actively expanding empire. By September 1941, every person that was considered Jewish in German territory was marked
with a yellow star, making them identifiable targets; after this, tens of thousands of Jews were deported to the Polish ghettos and German acquired cities in the USSR. Since June 1941, brutal experiments had been done and ongoing at the concentration camp of Auschwitz, near Krakow, Poland. During that summer, 500 Soviet POWs were gassed to death by 500 officials with pesticide Zyklon-B. (“The Holocaust”)

**Holocaust Death Camps (1941-1945)**

In late 1941, Germans began to move Jews in the Polish ghettos to the concentration camps, starting with the “least useful” ones which could either be sick, old, weak, or very young. The first mass gassings occurred on March 17, 1942 at the camp of Belzec, near Lublin; afterwards, more camps started being built in Poland and soon, more than 300,000 people were deported from the Warsaw ghetto alone, by 1942. Outraged Warsaw civilians rose up and revolted, protesting against the frequent deportations, disease, and constant hunger; these days of April in 1943 ended in the death of 7,000 Jews and 50,000 survivors being sent to concentration camps, and was known as the ‘Warsaw Ghetto Uprising’. At Auschwitz, alone, more than 2 million people were murdered and a great amount of them worked in the labor camps with dreadful living conditions to which some died of starvation or disease. Medical experiments were also done in the process with twins and homosexuals, injecting them with
different toxic substances such as petrol or chloroform and the actions of the scientist who experimented on these people was known as ‘the Angel of Death’.

(“The Holocaust”)

The Aftermath

After the concentration camps were stopped and intervened by the Allies during WWII, survivors of the camps found it hard to go back to their normal lives. Most of them had lost their families or had lost their homes to their non-Jewish neighbors. Due to this, an overwhelming number of refugees spread across Europe trying to find a home during the late 1940s. Meanwhile, villains of the Holocaust were held for trial at the Nuremberg Trials of 1945-6, led by the Allies, and the Nazis faced their punishments. In order to resolve and find a home for the Jewish survivors, the Allied powers also implemented a mandate for the creation of Israel in 1948. Beginning in 1953, the German government paid individual Jews as a way of acknowledging the German people’s fault and responsibility for the crimes committed during the Holocaust in their name. ("The Holocaust")

Black racism in America

In the mid 1500s, European mariners began to bring black Africans to America as slaves. Many West Africans were kept slaves and they were usually prisoners of war, criminals, or low ranked member of caste systems. American slave markets were known to be of the toughest and most lethal ones, two out of five West African captives would die on the march to the Atlantic seacoast where they were sold to European slavers. The vessels in which they shipped the
slaves off between America, Europe, and Africa were in dreadful conditions and slaves were all kept in the bottom decks, chained in coffin sized racks; a third of the slaves transported would die during the trip. (Costly, Andrew)

When in America, they were sold at auctions to wealthy white people, who needed plantation workers mainly. Slave owners had many rights and power over their workers and they could punish them however they found was best; most punishments were harsh and inhumane, also driven by the ideology of white supremacy that was instilled in Americans from the very beginning, the black race was considered inferior. Families of slaves were also broken up at times and despite said hardships, they all created a wholesome community where they created family bonds with the ones who also lived with them. Religion was also not optional to slaves and they were forced to turn to Christianity; they, however, developed their own forms of worship from that religion (Costly, Andrew). (Costly, Andrew)

Abolition and War

In the 17th and 18th centuries, some blacks gained their freedom and other important rights such as owning properties. Many moved to the North where slavery was less favored and present. Significant economic and infrastructural contributions were also acquired thanks to the African Americans as they worked on roads, canals, and construction of cities. Frederick Douglas, a young black laborer, with the fortunate skill to read managed to escape Massachusetts, where he was able to become a powerful lecturer for the growing abolitionist movement. Apart from this, during the beginning of the Civil War, many Northern blacks offered themselves as volunteers to fight for the Union of
the South and the North, in hopes of liberating their people enslaved in the South. (Costly, Andrew)

Reconstruction and Reaction

After the defeat of the Confederacy, Northern troops remained in the South to make sure the slaves won their freedom. The Black people started to build their own churches, schools, purchased land, and finally voted themselves into office. The black emancipation, however, came with a reaction from many Southerners. Ku Klux Klan members, which were white supremacists, organized terrorist raids and lynchings against the Blacks and they burned their homes, schools, and churches. When the Northern troops finally left in 1877, the known ‘white power structure’ returned in the South. African Americans were excluded from voting and Southern states wrote the famous ‘Jim Crow laws’, which ensured segregation towards blacks from white society; Blacks started to live under constant threat of violence once again. (Costly, Andrew)

Al-Qaeda terrorism

Al-Qaeda is a militant Islamist organization that was founded by Osama Bin Laden in the late 1980s. The organization started as a logistical network in hopes of supporting Muslims that fought against the Soviet Union during the Afghan War. However, when the Soviet people withdrew from
Afghanistan in 1989, the organization dispersed yet still remained active to an extent. The group eventually re-established its headquarters in Afghanistan in 1996 but this time under the leadership of the Taliban militia. With the merging of Egypt’s Islamic Jihad and other militant Islamist organizations, Al-Qaeda declared a holy war against the United States. Due to this, the members in this group attacked U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Tanzania. The well-known September 11 attacks against the US in 2001 by 19 militants associated with Al-Qaeda also weighed in the future decisions made by the US to respond to said attacks. Within weeks of constant suicide bomb attacks the government of the U.S. responded by sending attacks towards Taliban and al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan. But apart from the discrimination against Americans and other member nations opposing the terrorist regime the groups also went against their own populations, more specifically the Sunni tribes. According to Foreign Policy’s source on a speech made by John Brennan in 2011, Al-Qaeda’s four main objectives are the following: “first, to terrorize the U.S. into retreating from the world stage; second, to use long wars to financially bleed the U.S. while inflaming anti-American sentiment; third, to defend the rights of Muslims; and finally, claims al-Qaeda has ‘a feckless delusion’ and ‘grandiose vision’ for global domination through a ‘violent Islamic caliphate’”.

**Current violent and discriminative events**

**Refugee Crisis**

**Myanmar**

The Rohingya people have been targeted with violence, systematically discriminated, and left stateless in Rakhine State, Myanmar for decades; and have been part of what is considered to be the “world’s fastest growing refugee
crisis”, according to the UN. Having a separate ethnic group, language and culture, they have been persecuted and even denied citizenship by the government, which considers them as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh. Due to the constant and ongoing persecution of these people, women and children have felt forced to flee to Bangladesh to seek for safer homes. The largest and fastest refugee influx into Bangladesh happened in August 2017, where an estimated 745,000 Rohingya with more than 400,000 children fled to the country. Back in Myanmar, many villages were burned, families were separated and killed, and women and small girls were raped by street gangs in the area. These people, whom lived unspeakable atrocities back in their homes fled to one of the world’s largest refugee camps, located around Cox’s Bazar, in Bangladesh. By March 2019, over 909,000 stateless refugees pertaining to these groups resided in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas. However, the biggest camp is considered to be Kutupalong, where pressing issues like limited space and extreme lack of aid have worsened the situation. It is important to note though that basic assistance has been provided to these people as well as living conditions in the camps have improved. They now have access to the basics, including food and health care, as well as malnutrition treatments and vaccination, although are still vulnerable to external factors such as monsoons and are highly dependent on aid. (OCHA)

Catalonia Independence

Catalans, Spanish citizens living in the region of Catalonia, are and have been politically divided for a long time. A little less than half of their population have been advocating for the region’s independence due to certain factors that have not been able to reach a mutual agreement between the Catalan government and the central
government of Spain, in Madrid. Firstly, they protested that their region sent excessive amounts of money to poorer areas in Spain as taxes are controlled by Madrid. Spain’s changes to their autonomous status in 2010 also undermined the Catalan identity for which tension and outrage grew within the Catalan population. For this reason, their wish to become independent from Spain has grown further and has led major independent parties to be created such as Candidatura d’Unitat Popular (CUP), Junts per Catalunya (JuntsxCat), and Esquerra Republicana Catalana (ERC), along with other terrorist organizations such as Comités de Defensa de la República (CDR). The other greater half of the population in Catalonia, however, continue to believe the region should be a part of Spain and feel Spanish and Catalan altogether. Due to this interregional difference, discrimination from both sides has been root to many violent and verbal offenses against Catalans for the past few years. On one side anti-independent Catalans have been physically attacked for wearing clothes or accessories with the Spanish flag whereas independent Catalans have been ‘supposedly’ oppressed by the state in that national security bodies have intervened in many of their week-long protests and violations against the Spanish Constitution. In
October 1, 2017, Catalunya held an illegal referendum to vote for independence of the region, it ended with a turnout of 43.03%, the “yes” side winning with 2,044,038 (92.01%) in favor of independence, and the “no” side losing with 177,547 (7.99%). The majority of those who didn’t support independence refused to vote and for said reason the poll indicated inaccurate results. The central government of Spain had warned the Catalan government not to make the referendum and given they did national security bodies intervened in Catalonia, keeping citizens from voting and removing the illegal ballot boxes placed across different schools in the region. The “Mossos d’Esquadra”, the Catalan police had various members disobey direct orders to prevent the referendum from happening and for said reason Madrid found itself in the position to intervene and temporarily govern the region. On this day, the former president of ‘Generalitat de Catalunya’, Carles Puigdemont declared Catalunya to be independent from Spain, and this led him to having to flee the country in order to not get arrested; to this day Puigdemont hasn’t returned to Spain and several orders from the central government have been made to bring him back.

Comités de Defensa de la República (CDR)

Comités de Defensa de la República (CDR) is a collective organization of different smaller entities favoring the independence of Catalonia. The organization was created days before the 1-O referendum given its
members wanted to make sure the event happened and that the declaration of independence was made on the same day. Since then, the organization has been active until now, opting for Catalonia becoming a free state and creating large masses of people to attract the media into talking about their independence movement. These groups are also known to be as the radical independent people which utilize urban guerrilla warfare and discriminate against individuals in disagreement with their ideals. For this reason, multiple members of the group have been arrested for inciting rebellion amongst the Catalan population as well as discussing terrorist tactics and storing bombs in specific buildings that were localized and quarantined a few weeks ago.

Hong Kong political violence

Hong Kong’s protests began in June of 2019, with the rise of anti-government, pro-democracy advocacy groups and protests. It began as peaceful mass marches, but as the anger and violence rose on both pro and anti government sides, it rapidly turned into a drastic political crisis, including worldwide companies and politicians. It started when groups of citizens of the country showed their complete disagreement with the government’s plans to allow extradition to mainland China. With fear that the bill, passed in March 2019, could undermine judicial independence and target dissidents, protests have continued to grow ever since. The
main objectives included: the full withdrawal of the bill, the establishment of an autonomous inquiry to regulate police brutality, the release of arrested protestors and the implementation of universal suffrage in Hong Kong. The bill was withdrawn in September, however, demonstrations and violence have continued as the residents demanded full democracy and questioned police actions against the protests taking place in the past few months. On October 1st of this year, during China’s 70 years of Communist Party rule celebration, Hong Kong lived on of its most violent days. BBC described the following things happening in the country on those days:

“An 18-year-old was shot in the chest with a live bullet as protestors fought officers with poles, petrol bombs and other projectiles. The government then banned protestors wearing face masks, and in early November a pro-Beijing lawmaker was stabbed in the street by a man pretending to be a supporter. One week later, a policeman shot one protester at close range when activists were trying to set up a roadblock. Later that day another man was set on fire by anti-government protestors. In November, a standoff between police and students barricaded on the campus of Hong Kong’s Polytechnic University became another defining moment” (BBC).

Such issues have had a great impact on Hong Kong’s economy as well, since retail, tourism, employment and the proper functioning of small businesses ave all decreased. It has also had an impact on global companies, which might consider relocating their branches in other locations (CNN).
## Timeline of Events

### History of violent and discriminative events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1619</td>
<td>Slavery comes to North America</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• North American colonies were progressing economically and technologically for which labor was needed and they recurred to enslaved Africans as their 'cheapest' source of labor, instead of poor (white) Europeans. 6 to 7 million slaves were imported to the New World during the 18th century alone, slowing down the growth of the African continent.</td>
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<td>1793</td>
<td>Fugitive Slave Act in America</td>
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<td>• Congress passed this act which made it a federal crime to assist slaves when trying to escape.</td>
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<tr>
<td>August, 1831</td>
<td>Nat Turner’s Revolt</td>
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<td>• Nat Turner incited an important slave rebellion that made white Southerners afraid and concerned given their labor relied fully on slaves.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>American Civil War and emancipation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Sectional conflicts between the North and South erupted into a civil war, resulting in 11 southern states seceding from the Union and forming the Confederate States of America; this happened due to President Abraham</td>
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</table>
Lincoln’s antislavery views which had been recently elected as the nation’s first Republican president. The war resulted in 4 million slaves being freed.

1865 13th Amendment adopted in America

- The 13th Amendment was adopted in America’s constitution abolishing slavery although the post-war South status on slavery remained unchanged. To ensure freed blacks were still available as labor force, white southerners restricted their activities through the establishment of the ‘black codes’.

1909 National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded

- The organization was created by a group led by the prominent black educator W.E.B. Du Bois where they advocated for the abolition of black slavery and rights given violent acts and hostility was still present towards black people. The NAACP’s goals included the abolition of all forced segregation, the enforcement of the 14th and 15th amendments, complete enfranchisement of all black men, and equal education for blacks and whites.

April 1, 1933 Boycott Day

- The Nazis proclaimed a national wide boycott to businesses and shops owned by Jews. This day is considered as the first mass action that Hitler’s regime took
against the Jews of Germany.

April 1, 1935  Benches “For Aryans only"

- Benches started being placed in Germany for two separate
groups, for Aryans, and for Jews.

September 15, 1935  Nuremberg Laws

- Hitler proclaimed the Nuremberg Laws, they consisted of
two separate antisemitic laws where the first one prohibited
marriages and relationships between Germans and Jews,
and the second one stripped Jews from their German
citizenship. Indoctrination of these laws were set in place in
school books and public spaces.

October 28, 1938  Polish Jews expelled from Germany

- About 18,000 Jews living in Germany but with Polish
passports were expelled to the Polish border and the Poles
did not accept them; they were left stranded in a nearby
town, Zbaszyn.

November 25, 1941  Ordinance To Reich Citizenship Law

- Came into effect and all Jews residing outside of Germany
lost their citizenship and became stateless refugees; they
had to leave their belongings and assets behind in
Germany.
June 30, 1942  Closing of Jewish Schools

- Jewish schools in Germany were forced to close.

January 18, 1945  Death March From Auschwitz

- Given that the Soviet army was approaching Germany to stop the labor and concentration camps, the Germans forced 58,000 prisoners of Auschwitz on Death Marches to the camps in Germany.

April 29, 1945  Liberation of Dachau

- The concentration camp of Dachau was liberated by the American forces.

November 20, 1945  Nuremberg Trials

- The trials of 22 top-level Nazi war criminals began at Nuremberg. The court was composed of judges from the four Allies. Twelve of the criminals were sentenced to death.

February 26, 1993  Van explosion below New York Twin Towers

- Six people were killed when a bomb in a van exploded under the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York; Osama bin Laden was linked to the attack. This was the first attack of the Al Qaeda terrorist group.

June 25, 1996  Fuel explosion at a U.S. military housing complex

- A bomb in a fuel truck killed 19 American soldiers and wounded nearly 400 people at a U.S. military housing complex.
complex in the eastern city of Khobar in Saudi Arabia. The U.S. later declared bin Laden as the prime suspect of said occurrences.

April 11, 2002  Truck explosion near El Ghiroba synagogue

- A truck exploded on the southern Tunisian island of Djerba, killing 5 Tunisians, 14 Germans, and a Frenchman. Al Qaeda claimed responsibility for the explosion.

November 28, 2002  Car explosions in Kenyan Resort of Mombasa

- Three suicide car bombers blew up in a hotel popular to Israelis in the Kenyan resort of Mombasa; they killed 15 people. On the same day, two missiles narrowly missed an Israeli Arkia Boeing 757 carrying 261 passengers on take-off from Mombasa airport; Al Qaeda assumed entire responsibility for the act.

December 11, 2017  Explosions at U.N. offices in Algiers

- Two blasts killed at least 41 people, of which 17 were U.N. staff, at U.N. offices in Algiers; Al Qaeda claimed responsibility for this.

**Current violent and discriminative events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early 1990s</td>
<td>Rohingya people persecuted and stateless</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Rohingya people living in Rakhine State, Myanmar, are not recognized as citizens of the country, making them</td>
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stateless as a population. Persecution of these people also began during this time in Myanmar forced them to begin fleeing to Bangladesh.

June 28, 2010       Catalan Independence problem reemerges

- Court ruling deauthorized and stripped power from a new law that gave more power to regional governments; this angered Catalans for which pro-secession sentiment grew, driven by Spain’s fragile economic troubles.

October 1, 2017      1-O day – ‘Referendum day’

- Over two million people turned out at schools to vote in the referendum. Catalans against independence stayed at home and refrained from voting. Catalan police stood down and did not intervene when they were told to do so for which Civil Guard and National Police officers intervened in riot gear and raided several polling stations, clashing against the voters. Carles Puigdemont declared this day a success for Catalan Independence. 92% of the polls voted in favor of independence.

August 2017          Military crackdown in Rakhine State

- Violent military crackdown in Rakhine State, where targeted attacks, murder, and arson was reported, forcing hundreds of thousands of Rohingya to flee; this was the beginning to the largest exodus of Rohingya refugees to
Bangladesh.

September 2017  UNHCR intervention in Rohingya crisis

- Given Rohingya refugees were rapidly fleeing to Bangladesh, UNHCR declared the situation an emergency.

October 31, 2017  Puigdemont and other members flee to Belgium

- Carles Puigdemont and several members of his Cabinet fled to Belgium. Puigdemont settles in Belgium and establishes residence in Waterloo, willing to fight extradition to Spain.

November 2, 2017  Oriol Junqueras and eight other members taken into custody

- Oriol Junqueras and eight other members of the former Catalan government who didn’t flee the country were taken into custody.

July 23-5, 2018  Monsoon storms in Bangladesh

- Due to monsoon storms causing heavy flooding and landslides, Rohingya refugee camps throughout Bangladesh were destroyed. With over 602,000 refugees in the Kutupalong-Balukhali expansion site, overcrowding exacerbated the risk of landslides. UNHCR responded to this situation by reinforcing shelters and relocating families to safer ground.

November 10, 2018  Injured male in Barcelona metro

- A participant in the protest of Jusapol in favor of Spain and
against independence was wearing a Spanish cap and a flag and he was attacked by a group of Catalan independent people.

February 2019  Hong Kong’s Security Bureau’s amendment propositions

- Hong Kong’s Security Bureau proposed a series of amendments to the extradition laws that would allow extraditions to countries such as mainland China, beyond the 20 states with which Hong Kong continues to have treaties.

February 12, 2019  Trial of former Catalan independent politicians

- The trial of Oriol Junqueras, Puigdemont’s right hand, Cuixart, Sanchez, and nine other associates began at the Supreme Court in Madrid.

March 31, 2019  Hong Kong protest against the proposed extradition bill

- Thousands of civilians in Hong Kong marched in a protest against the proposed extradition bill in February.

April 2019  Rohingya obtain documentation

- Given Rohingya Muslims remained stateless, they carried no documentation that verified their identity whatsoever. In April, UNHCR began registering Rohingya refugees, giving them identity for the first time.

June 12, 2019  Police intervention in Hong Kong protests

- Police fired tear gas and rubber bullets during the city’s
largest and most violent protests in decades; government offices were shut.

August 2019  Rohingya documentation furthered

- By this time, half a million Rohingya had been registered and given documentation that verified their identity; said documentation allowed them to be able to return to Myanmar when the situation was safe and controlled.

October 14, 2019  Supreme Court sentences former Catalan secessionist politicians

- The Supreme Court issued a verdict for all 12 politicians, all of them found guilty, and sends nine of them to prison. Junqueras received 13 years for sedition and misuse of public funds. Other primary politicians received sentences ranging from nine to 12 years.

October 18, 2019  ‘Tsunami Democràtic’ Barcelona Airport movement

- One of the organization’s first actions against the Spanish government and the sentencing of the former Catalan politicians was to mobilize thousands of independent Catalans to the Barcelona Airport “El Prat”; this was the first day of the five-day planned mobilization of the organization. Over 100 flights were cancelled. All police bodies intervened with riot gear.

October 29, 2019  Pro-democracy activist Joshua Wong

- Authorities ruled out pro-democracy activist Joshua Wong
November 2, 2019  Vandalization of China’s official Xinhua news agency

- Protesters vandalize China’s official Xinhua news agency by smashing doors, throwing paint, and setting fires.

**Relevant UN Treaties and Events**

- **United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2106 (XX), December 21, 1965**
  - Adopted and opened for signature the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)

- **United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1510 (XV), December 12, 1960**
  - Condemned all manifestations and practices of racial, religious, and national hatred in the political, economic, social, educational, and cultural spheres of the life of society, as violations of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Rights.

- **United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1904, 1905, 1906 (XVIII), November 1, 20, 1963-5**
  - Measures to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

- **UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education Treaty**
  - Multilateral treaty adopted by UNESCO on December 14, 1960 came into effect on May 22, 1962
Aims to combat discrimination, cultural or religious assimilation, or racial segregation in the field of education [1].

Major Organizations Involved

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)

Alliance pertaining to the UN which was established in 2005, with the political initiative of Mr. Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General and co-sponsored by the Governments of Spain and Turkey. A group of known ‘High-Level’ experts was formed by him and they looked to address and explore the ‘roots of polarization’ between societies and cultures today, and to recommend a programme of action to resolve said issue. This alliance is based and operates from New York and maintains a global network of partners including states, international and regional organizations, along with other entities.

UNAOC project activities

The alliance fashioned its plans and activities around four priority areas: Youth, Education, Migration, and Media, which, according to their site, “play a critical role in helping to reduce cross-cultural tensions and to build bridges between communities” (UNAOC). They initiated and led projects such as The Youth Solidarity Fund (YSF) [1], UNAOC Fellowships [2] in Europe, North America (EUNA) and Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Young Peacebuilders [3], Intercultural Innovation Award [4], #SpreadNoHate initiative [5], and other activities.

KAICIID International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID)

KAICIID is an intergovernmental organization, founded on November 2012, in Vienna,
whose role is to promote the use of dialogue globally to prevent and resolve conflict through the enhancement of understanding and cooperation. This organization aims to foster dialogue among people of different faiths and cultural backgrounds, reducing fear and instilling mutual respect among each other. On November 5, 2007, the first-ever meeting between the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and a Pope; King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz and His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI happened, where they shared their vision of an initiative for interfaith dialogue; this was organized by KAICIID.

**Governance**

The organization is composed of representatives from major world religions some of which are the Holy See, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Spain, and the Republic of Austria, making up the Council of Parties, which is the organ of the Centre. The board of directors comprise representatives from religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

**International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)**

It is a United Nations convention that commits its members to work to eliminate racial discrimination and to promote common understanding among all races. This convention also requires its parties to outlaw hate speech and criminalize membership in racist organizations (Wikipedia). ICERD was opened and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 21, 1965 and began running on January 4, 1969; in April 2019, the Convention already had 88 signatories and 180 parties [1].

**Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)**

This committee is a body of human rights experts with the task of monitoring the implementation of the ICERD. The body is composed of 18 independent human rights
experts, elected for four-year terms, with half the members elected every two years. On August 10, 2018, this UN body were alarmed by verified reports that informed that China had detained a million or more ethnic ‘Uyghurs’ in Xinjiang. A member of the committee, Gay McDougall, stated that “In the name of combating religious extremism, China had turned Xinjiang into something resembling a massive internment camp, shrouded in secrecy, a sort of no-rights zone” [2]. Another important event in which the Committee worked happened in August 13, 2019, where they considered the first report submitted by the Palestinian Authority. Some experts questioned the delegation regarding antisemitism, especially in textbooks.

Possible Solutions

A possible solution to countering violence and discrimination is the use of peacekeeping, which allows positive peace to be achieved. When a ceasefire is settled, peacekeepers can be sent to the region, in which they will help establish this peace. This can come as either as the use of armed forces from an international body (as for example the UN), or rather the use of unarmed monitors from other organisations, such as OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe). Moreover, the United Nations itself is heavily involved with peacekeeping missions since 2000, in which they have sent UN peacekeepers to countries in Africa, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan. These peacekeeping missions are taken into effect once the UN Security Council resolutions have been legitimised.

Another possible solution would be to obtain peace through justice. This is seen for example with the prosecution of individuals who have committed war crimes or genocide in ; the International Criminal Tribunal (ICC) is a permanent international body that is responsible for
dealing with crimes against humanity that have occurred since 2002. Crimes before this, were dealt with in the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Therefore, individuals who have committed genocide, as with the case in Myanmar, have been prosecuted by the ICC.

Moreover, the democratic peace theory is relevant to countering violence and discrimination. This theory argues that peace originates from democracy, meaning that it is unlikely for conflict to surge between democratic nation states and suggests that democratic countries are more internally stable as they have an appropriate power balance. Democracy in a country allows conflict to be resolved through democratic means rather than exerting on violence. Thus peacebuilding efforts have often revolved around the establishment of democracy, however a problem with this is that it does not assure of gaining this internal stability. As for example, the US have led military campaigns that as well established democratic institutions in Iraq (2003-2011) and Afghanistan (2001-2014), that were constantly at threat because of rebel insurgent groups.
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