

HMDC Presents... SOCHUM: Part 2 (The United Nations)

HMDC Presents... Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM): Role of Non-Governmental Organizations, Foreign Aid and Local Institutions (Research Report, December 2026)

Prepared for HMDC Forensics delegates attending Harvard Model United Nations Online, December 5-6, 2026. Every fact below comes from a page that was opened and read in October 2026. Each evidence entry repeats its publication and date so the source is always visible.

WHAT OUR CHAIRS WILL FOCUS ON

Harvard explains that this SOCHUM topic is about foreign aid: money and help that rich countries send to poorer ones, and how that help can build lasting growth without making a country depend on it or lose control of its own choices. The October session looked at the UN and other international organizations, but our December session turns to non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Our chairs will ask us how NGOs and other humanitarian groups can help communities while also making local institutions stronger, such as local governments, hospitals and community groups. By the end, we will be asked to build a framework for international development, one that "promotes efficiency and sustainability."

Harvard Model United Nations, HMUN Online Committee Page, Last Accessed: October 2026

<https://www.harvardmun.org/sochum-online>

The parts of this report that match this focus most closely are the Introduction, Part 1B (Localization), Part 1C (Pooled Funds), Part 1F (Working Through National Governments and Institutions), Part 3A (Humanitarian Reform Agreements) and Part 3B (Development Effectiveness Standards).

How we use this report: Harvard's focus is on long-term development and on NGOs making local institutions stronger, while much of this report describes emergencies, such as aid cuts, famine risk and attacks on aid workers. We put localization, pooled funds, national institutions and the Paris Declaration first, because these answer Harvard's question of how help can last and avoid dependency. We treat the numbers in Part 1A, the aid-worker safety material in Part 2D and the counterterrorism rules in Part 3C as background that explains why the problem is urgent, not as the centre of our speeches or resolutions. When we write our framework, we also make sure it says how a country will one day need less outside help, because that is the word "sustainable" in Harvard's summary.

PART 2, THE UNITED NATIONS RECORD

2A. TABLE OF UN RESOLUTIONS AND INSTRUMENTS

Every symbol below was confirmed on an official UN site (un.org, digitallibrary.un.org or documents.un.org) in October 2026.

Symbol	Year	Body	What it does
UN Charter, Article 71	1945	UN founding treaty	Allows the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to make arrangements to consult with NGOs.
A/RES/46/182	1991	General Assembly	Creates the framework for coordinating UN emergency humanitarian assistance, the basis of today's system.
ECOSOC resolution 1996/31	1996	Economic and Social Council	Sets the rules for how NGOs gain, keep or lose consultative status at the UN.
A/RES/53/144	1998	General Assembly	Adopts the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, protecting the right of people and groups to promote human rights.
A/RES/69/313	2015	General Assembly	Adopts the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, including aid commitments.
A/RES/70/1	2015	General Assembly	Adopts the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, which call for partnerships with civil society.
S/RES/2664 (2022)	2022	Security Council	Creates a humanitarian exemption so UN sanctions asset freezes do not block legitimate aid (adopted December 9, 2022).
HRC resolution 53/13 (A/HRC/RES/53/13)	2023	Human Rights Council	Addresses civil society space, including the right of groups to seek, receive and use funding.
S/RES/2730 (2024)	2024	Security Council	Calls on states to respect and protect UN and humanitarian personnel (adopted May 24, 2024).
A/RES/79/1	2024	General Assembly	Adopts the Pact for the Future, the UN's plan for reforming global

			cooperation (adopted without a vote on September 22, 2024).
A/RES/79/138	2024	General Assembly	Addresses the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of UN personnel.
A/RES/79/323	2025	General Assembly	Adopts the Sevilla Commitment on financing for development (adopted on August 25, 2025, by 158 votes to 2, with 1 abstention).

Verification links: - Charter Article 71: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-10> - A/RES/46/182: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/135197> - ECOSOC 1996/31: <https://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/about.htm> - A/RES/53/144: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/265855> - A/RES/69/313: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/801013> - A/RES/70/1: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3923923> - S/RES/2664 (2022): <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3997259> - HRC resolution 53/13: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4061481> (the report submitted under resolution 53/13) and the draft text at <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/ltd/g23/135/49/pdf/g2313549.pdf> - S/RES/2730 (2024): <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4049572> - A/RES/79/1: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4061879> - A/RES/79/138: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4071344> - A/RES/79/323: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4087700>

2B. HOW NGOS TAKE PART IN THE UN

United Nations (DESA NGO Branch), Last Accessed: October 2026: Three levels of NGO status at the UN

Tagline: Defining NGO consultative status

Source: According to... United Nations (DESA NGO Branch), Last Accessed: October 2026

Link: <https://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/about.htm>

Fact: It states... ECOSOC has granted consultative status to NGOs since 1946, starting with 41 organizations. Article 71 of the UN Charter provides for this, and ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 sets the current rules. A 19-member Committee on NGOs recommends which groups receive status. General status is for large international NGOs, special status for groups expert in a few fields, and the roster for groups with a narrow or technical focus.

This means... NGOs can speak at the UN, but governments decide which NGOs get in. Delegates could propose changes to how this committee works.

UN DESA, February 3, 2025: 6,468 NGOs hold UN consultative status

Tagline: Counting NGOs with UN status

Source: According to... UN DESA, February 3, 2025

Link: <https://www.un.org/en/desa/amplifying-voices-civil-society>

Fact: It states... At the end of 2024, 6,468 NGOs held consultative status with ECOSOC. In its 2025 session the Committee on NGOs reviewed 213 new applications, and 326 applications had been deferred (postponed) from earlier sessions.

This means... Many NGO applications wait session after session. Delegates who favor wider NGO access may criticize repeated deferrals, while others may argue careful review protects the UN from groups with political agendas.

2C. UN HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION AND FUNDING

United Nations Ukraine, December 4, 2024: The 2025 appeal seeks 47 billion dollars

Tagline: Launching the 2025 appeal

Source: According to... United Nations Ukraine, December 4, 2024

Link: <https://ukraine.un.org/en/285114-%E2%80%98-world-fire-we-must-reset-our-relationship-people-crises%E2%80%99>

Fact: It states... When launching the 2025 Global Humanitarian Overview, UN relief chief Tom Fletcher said, "We must reset the world's relationship with people in direst need." About 305 million people would need aid in 2025, and the UN sought 47 billion dollars to help 190 million of them, working with over 1,500 partners. Only 43 percent of the 2024 appeal had been funded by November 2024.

This means... The UN depends on more than 1,500 partners, most of them NGOs, to deliver its plans. Funding gaps were already serious before the 2025 cuts, showing the problem is long-term.

OCHA, December 26, 2025: The humanitarian reset sends 55 percent of pooled funds to local NGOs

Tagline: Reviewing the humanitarian reset

Source: According to... OCHA, December 26, 2025

Link: <https://www.unocha.org/news/ochas-2025-review>

Fact: It states... In 2025 the humanitarian system reduced its appeal to 29.1 billion dollars from the 44 billion first requested, and funding was the lowest since 2016. Still, nearly 98 million people were reached. Country-based pooled funds gave 55 percent of their money to local and national NGOs, the highest share ever, and 17 percent of that went to local women's organizations. The "humanitarian reset" has four priorities: setting priorities, delivering aid more efficiently, handing power to local responders, and defending humanitarian space.

This means... The UN itself now says local responders should have more power. Delegates can build on the reset's four priorities as a ready-made structure for their resolution.

United Nations Meetings Coverage, December 10, 2025: The yearly humanitarian resolution is withdrawn after 33 years of consensus

Tagline: Breaking a 33-year consensus

Source: According to... United Nations Meetings Coverage, December 10, 2025

Link: <https://press.un.org/en/2025/ga12742.doc.htm>

Fact: It states... Sweden withdrew the General Assembly's annual "omnibus" resolution on coordinating emergency humanitarian assistance (draft A/80/L.25), which had been adopted by consensus for 33 years, after amendments were introduced; one delegation had sought changes to more than 70 paragraphs. The United States proposed amendments against language on sexual and reproductive health care and climate change and called the text a "globalist wish-list," while the Russian Federation proposed a paragraph against unilateral coercive measures (sanctions imposed by one country alone). The Assembly still adopted a text on the safety of humanitarian and UN personnel by 153 votes to 1 (the United States), with 6 abstentions including the Russian Federation, and a text on natural disasters by 162 votes to 1.

This means... Countries no longer agree on the basic yearly UN statement about how humanitarian aid should work. SOCHUM delegates can try to rebuild agreement by separating widely shared points, such as protecting aid workers, from the most divisive ones.

2D. PROTECTING AID WORKERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

United Nations, May 31, 2024: Security Council adopts resolution 2730 on protecting aid workers

Tagline: Protecting humanitarian personnel

Source: According to... United Nations, May 31, 2024

Link: <https://www.un.org/en/node/218150>

Fact: It states... On May 24, 2024, the Security Council adopted resolution 2730 by 14 votes in favor, none against and one abstention, with 97 co-sponsoring countries. It calls on states to respect and protect UN and humanitarian personnel, urges states to join the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, and expresses concern that false information is eroding trust in aid groups.

This means... The Security Council has already spoken on protecting aid workers, yet 2024 still set a death record. SOCHUM can focus on what the Council left out, such as the special risks faced by local staff.

UN Human Rights Council, July 6, 2023: States should not misuse funding rules against civil society

Tagline: Defending civil society funding

Source: According to... UN Human Rights Council, July 6, 2023

Link: <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/ltd/g23/135/49/pdf/g2313549.pdf>

Fact: It states... The draft resolution on "civil society space" (later adopted as resolution 53/13) calls on states to make sure funding rules respect human rights and are not misused to block civil society work. It stresses the ability of groups to ask for, receive and use resources, and urges states to protect civil society actors from threats, harassment and arbitrary detention.

This means... The UN already has language protecting the right of NGOs to receive money, including foreign money. Delegates can quote this language when debating foreign agent laws.

UN Digital Library, July 4, 2024: The High Commissioner reports on civil society space

Tagline: Reporting on civil society space

Source: According to... UN Digital Library, July 4, 2024

Link: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4061481>

Fact: It states... The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights issued report A/HRC/57/31, "Civil society space," on July 4, 2024. It was submitted under Human Rights Council resolution 53/13, which asked for a report on assessing trends in civic space.

This means... The UN is now monitoring how much freedom NGOs have country by country. Delegates can propose that this monitoring continue or expand.

2E. UN REFORM AND ACCOUNTABILITY

UN News, February 27, 2026: The New Humanitarian Compact aims to cut duplication

Tagline: Building a new humanitarian compact

Source: According to... UN News, February 27, 2026

Link: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/02/1167055>

Fact: It states... Under the UN80 reform effort, Tom Fletcher briefed member states on a "New Humanitarian Compact" to make aid faster, leaner and more accountable. Proposals include simpler planning and reporting, joined-up supply chains, a common services catalogue, a shared humanitarian data system, and clearer roles for agencies in food, health and nutrition. UNICEF's chief called separate warehouses, fleets and logistics "unsustainable."

This means... The UN is merging its own systems to save money. Delegates can ask whether NGOs, especially local ones, will be included in these shared systems or left out.

Council on Foreign Relations, September 15, 2025: The UN plans a 20 percent budget cut

Tagline: Cutting the UN budget

Source: According to... Council on Foreign Relations, September 15, 2025

Link: <https://www.cfr.org/article/un80-initiative-what-know-about-united-nations-reform-plan>

Fact: It states... The UN80 Initiative, launched in March 2025, planned to cut the Secretariat's 3.7 billion dollar budget by 20 percent in 2026, with roughly 6,900 jobs at risk out of about 35,000. A task force listed more than 50 proposals, including streamlining the work of WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO. About 2.4 billion dollars in member dues were unpaid as of April 2025.

This means... The UN itself has less money to coordinate NGOs. Delegates must consider whether NGOs will need to take on work the UN can no longer do.

UN News, October 12, 2026: The UN refugee chief warns that "efficiency has limits"

Tagline: Reaching the limits of doing more with less

Source: According to... UN News, October 12, 2026

Link: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/10/1168575>

Fact: It states... The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) had received only 3 billion of the 8.5 billion dollars it needs for 2026, while 117 million people are forced from their homes, and about 8,000 staff have left the agency since 2024. Its chief, Barham Salih, said, "There comes a point when greater efficiency cannot compensate for fewer resources." He warned that cuts threaten specialised care for more than 50,000 survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in Sudan and services for unaccompanied children in Chad, and that refugee registration has stopped for tens of thousands of new arrivals in Ethiopia.

This means... UN reform can save money, but it cannot replace money that is gone. Delegates who argue that mergers and efficiency will solve the crisis should be ready for this answer from inside the UN itself.

United Nations Office of the Special Coordinator on SEA, 2025: Checking implementing partners for abuse risks

Tagline: Preventing abuse by aid workers

Source: According to... United Nations Office of the Special Coordinator on SEA, 2025

Link: https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/sites/www.un.org.preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/files/2025_-_oscsea_annual_psea_factsheet.pdf

Fact: It states... The UN Partner Portal checks implementing partners in 15 high-risk countries for protection against sexual exploitation and abuse. In WHO's Ebola response in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, only 9 of 83 cases were proven to involve WHO staff, and most survivors were linked to people from partner agencies. A Misconduct Disclosure Scheme, which stops abusers from moving between aid groups, had 323 participating organizations.

This means... Accountability problems affect UN staff and NGO partners alike. Any plan to hand more money to NGOs needs strong rules to protect the people receiving aid.

2F. WHAT IS WORKING AND WHAT IS NOT

Working: - UN pooled funds have reached local organizations far better than direct donor grants, rising to 55 percent in 2025. - The UN still reached nearly 98 million people in 2025 despite the deepest funding cuts on record. - The UN has clear written standards protecting aid workers (S/RES/2730) and civil society funding (HRC resolution 53/13).

Not working: - Direct funding to local actors remains near 4 percent, far below the 25 percent goal set in 2016. - Aid worker deaths reached a record in 2024 despite Security Council resolutions. - Hundreds of NGO applications for UN status are deferred year after year. - The system depended on one main donor, so a single government's cuts sharply reduced aid worldwide. - In December 2025 the General Assembly could not agree on its yearly humanitarian resolution for the first time in 33 years.

2G. WHERE THE MAJOR BLOCS STAND

Countries rarely act alone in SOCHUM. The groups below are the ones delegates are most likely to meet in committee, with their known positions on aid, NGOs and local institutions.

Bloc or country	Known position	Source
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United States	Cut its aid sharply in 2025 and closed USAID (see Part 1A and Part 1C). At the UN it voted against the 2025 text on the safety of aid workers and called the yearly humanitarian resolution a "globalist wish-list," objecting to language on reproductive health and climate change.	According to... United Nations Meetings Coverage, December 10, 2025
European Union	Says it is the largest humanitarian donor (35 percent of global funding in 2025, with its member states). Its 2026 plan backs a greater role for local actors, cash, pooled funds, multi-year funding and stronger protection for aid workers.	According to... European External Action Service, May 27, 2026
Russian Federation	Abstained on the 2025 text on the safety of aid workers and pushed for language against unilateral coercive measures (sanctions). At home it uses a "foreign agent" law, in force since 2012, that has led many non-profits to close or lose funding (see Part 1E).	According to... United Nations Meetings Coverage, December 10, 2025
Group of 77 and China	The largest group of developing countries at the UN. Speaking for it in December 2025, Iraq introduced the text on natural disasters, which calls for acting before disasters strike, and regretted that texts once adopted by consensus were now forced to a vote.	According to... United Nations Meetings Coverage, December 10, 2025
African Union	Wants "African solutions to African problems." It has endorsed an African Humanitarian Agency, funded mainly by Africa's own resources and working through regional and national systems (see Part 3E).	According to... African Union, April 15, 2019
Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter	Speaking through Venezuela in December 2025, this group blamed humanitarian crises on "politically driven actions" and condemned unilateral coercive measures. Delegates should expect it to defend national sovereignty and oppose outside pressure on governments.	According to... United Nations Meetings Coverage, December 10, 2025

Links for the sources in this table appear in the matching entries: Part 2C (United Nations Meetings Coverage), Part 3E (European External Action Service and African Union).