

HMDC Presents... SOCHUM: Video 2 Transcripts

These are the words spoken in the two Video 2 films for SOCHUM (The United Nations and International Efforts). We read along while we watch, pause at each time mark, and circle any word we do not know so we can look it up together.

VIDEO 2 (EXPLAINER)

[0:00] HMDC Presents... SOCHUM, the UN and international efforts. Welcome delegates, let's jump right into this explainer. Today we are breaking down exactly what the United Nations and other international groups are doing when it comes to non-governmental organizations, foreign aid, and local institutions. Think of this toolkit as your personal roadmap for debate. We are going to cover six key areas. First, NGOs at the UN. Second, coordinating humanitarian relief. Third, protecting workers and society. Fourth, UN reform and results. Fifth, agreements outside the UN. And finally, closing gaps with SOCHUM. Let's get started with item one. Section one, NGOs at the UN, the foundation of civil society participation.

[0:45] To understand how things work today, we have to look at how non-governmental organizations first got a seat at the table. It all begins with a very solid legal foundation. Way back in 1945, UN Charter Article 71 created the very first setup for consulting with non-governmental organizations. Then, decades later, ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31 built on that history. It set the exact rules we still use today for how these organizations participate. Under those rules, there is a tier system with three levels of consultative status. General status, special status, and roster status. According to the United Nations DESA NGO branch, last accessed in October 2026, this tier system is essentially the key that decides who actually gets official recognition to attend and speak at critical meetings.

[1:33] But take a look at the current numbers. According to UN DESA, on February 3rd, 2025, a solid 6,468 NGOs currently hold consultative status. However, there's a catch. 326 applications have been deferred. That means they were stalled or pushed back from earlier sessions. Section 2, Coordinating Humanitarian Relief, Funding and Organization in Crises. Now, let's explore how the UN actually organizes emergency aid, and importantly, the money that makes it happen. For your resolutions, you absolutely need to know the primary framework. Resolution A-slash-Res-slash-46-slash-182 passed in 1991, established the central structure for UN emergency humanitarian assistance.

[2:20] Even today, this resolution is the bedrock of the entire global relief system. But, you know, that historical system requires an urgent update. According to United Nations Ukraine on December 4th, 2024, when launching the 2025 appeal, UN Relief Chief Tom Fletcher put it perfectly. He said, we must reset the world's relationship with people in direst need. And we are already seeing this humanitarian reset change how money flows. As cited by OCHA, last accessed in October, 2026, a record 55% of country-based pooled funds were sent directly to local and national NGOs in 2025. That is a massive shift of resources, sending funds straight to the local responders who know their communities best. Section 3, Protecting Workers and Society, Security for Personnel and Civic Space.

[3:09] Let's move on to the resolutions designed to protect those brave people working on the ground. The UN has written very clear standards here. First, according to the United Nations on May 31st, 2024, the Security Council adopted S-slash-Res-slash-2730 to protect humanitarian personnel. This was closely followed by the General Assembly's A-slash-Res-slash-79-slash-138. Next, according to the UN Human Rights Council on July 6th, 2023, HRC Resolution 53/13 firmly defends the right of civil society groups to seek and use funding. Finally, the UN Digital Library on July 4th, 2024 published report A-slash-HRC-slash-57-slash-31, which actively tracks trends in civic space worldwide.

[3:57] Section 4, UN Reform and Results, What is Functioning and What is Not. Let's examine the massive structural changes happening right now and look at the raw figures showing us the results. Right now, we are seeing two major shifts collide. On one side, according to UN News on February 27th, 2026, the new Humanitarian Compact proposes sharing supply chains, data, and services to speed up aid. But on the other side, according to the Council on Foreign Relations on September 15th, 2025, the UN80 Initiative planned a severe 20% budget cut for the Secretariat. Basically, the UN is trying to merge its systems to operate with significantly less money. Accountability is another huge focus of these reforms. According to the United Nations Office of the Special Coordinator on SEA in 2025, efforts to prevent abuse by aid workers include the UN Partner Portal.

[4:50] That portal checks partners in high-risk countries. There is also the Misconduct Disclosure Scheme, which shares information so abusers cannot just quietly move to a new organization. So let us clearly detail what is actually functioning and what is not, using the UN's own figures. Because assuming all these systems function perfectly is simply incorrect. Here is what is working. Pooled funds sent 55% to local groups. And despite severe budget cuts, the UN still reached 98 million people. But here is what is not working. ALNAP's State of the Humanitarian System 2026, last accessed in October 2026, shows direct local funding remains extremely low at just 4.3%. Furthermore, UN News in August 2025 reported a tragic record of 383 aid worker deaths.

[5:40] And as we saw earlier, 326 NGO applications remain deferred, just stuck in limbo. Section 5, Agreements Outside the UN, Standards and Pledges Beyond the Assembly. It is time to look at international standards created outside the UN walls. These outside agreements are absolutely crucial because they fill gaps the UN leaves behind. First, according to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on May 7, 2024, the Grand Bargain pledged 25% of funding directly to local actors. Next, according to the OECD on March 2, 2005, the Paris Declaration established that receiving countries must lead their own strategies. And building on that, according to the ICNL on July 12, 2021, the OECD adopted a standard focused entirely on enabling civil society.

[6:27] There are also key measures protecting the ability of nonprofits to operate safely. According to the Financial Action Task Force on November 16, 2023, FATF recommendation 8 was revised to protect nonprofits from the misuse of counterterrorism rules. Additionally, according to the UN Digital Library on December 9, 2022, the S slash RES 2664 created a vital humanitarian exemption to UN sanctions. Finally, according to CIVICUS on December 9, 2025, the CIVICUS Monitor actively rates civic freedom worldwide, showing us exactly where organizations face the heaviest restrictions. Section 6, Closing Gaps with SOCHUM, Translating Research into Resolutions. Okay, delegates, this is where you come in. How can you use this toolkit to fix the systemic gaps in your own committee resolutions?

[7:17] As we have seen, our current systems leave undeniable gaps. Right now, many of these pledges outside the UN are merely voluntary, and local staff remain incredibly vulnerable in the field. But a new SOCHUM resolution can change this. You can hold participants accountable by turning those voluntary pledges into binding country by country reports and creating dedicated security funds. Here are four concrete steps your new SOCHUM resolution could take. First, measure the 25% localization promise with yearly public reports. Second, add security funding, training, and insurance specifically for local staff. Third, ensure local NGOs are included in the common services of the new humanitarian compact. And fourth, speed up UN access for NGOs by strictly limiting deferrals.

[8:05] You are now equipped with the facts. The question is, how will you shape the future of these global efforts? HMDC Forensics, Harvard MUN Online, December 2026.

VIDEO 2 (CINEMATIC)

[0:00] The United Nations cannot deliver global humanitarian aid alone. It relies on a massive network of non-governmental organizations to turn international funding into actual food, medicine, and shelter. This reliance is written into the institutions' bedrock. Article 71 of the 1945 UN Charter officially recognized the need to consult with outside organizations, cementing NGOs into the global system from the very beginning. Today, that partnership spans 6,468 NGOs holding consultative status. But the bureaucracy required to manage them is heavily strained. Hundreds of new applications sit deferred year after year, tangled in the UN's administrative backlog.

[0:47] The modern architecture for managing all these moving parts comes from a 1991 General Assembly Resolution, 46-182, which established the framework the UN still uses to coordinate emergency assistance across borders. We have a legal foundation built for global partnership, but an administrative apparatus struggling to process the sheer volume of modern civil society actors trying to help. That strain is now colliding with an acute financial contraction. In 2025, official development assistance recorded its deepest one-year drop in history, falling 23.1%. Going into 2026, 239 million people required help. To reach half, the UN requested \$33 billion, a target the funding environment cannot support.

[1:37] The consequences are immediate. The World Food Program's 2025 budget fell by 40%, compromising emergency food assistance for nearly 14 million people. The math is impossible. Acknowledging this, the UN Relief Chief declared that the international community must entirely reset its relationship with people in crisis. With aid down nearly a quarter, the global budget forces a structural choice. Delegates must either engineer a highly efficient new delivery model or accept that millions of people will be deliberately cut from the delivery manifests. In theory, the international community provides unanimous legal protection to the people delivering this aid in conflict zones. In 2024, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2730, passed with zero opposing votes.

[2:25] It explicitly called on all states to respect and shield humanitarian personnel from violence. Yet, the operational reality contradicts the ink on the page. That same year, a record 383 aid workers were killed in the field. The vast majority of those casualties were not international diplomats. They were local, national staff serving their own communities, absorbing the physical danger of localization without the necessary security infrastructure. Resolutions drafted in New York are failing to provide physical safety for the most vulnerable local actors operating in the crossfire. Despite these security failures, there are operational successes. UN-managed pooled funds have proven capable of bypassing heavy bureaucracy to reach local groups directly.

[3:11] In 2025, these country-based funds hit a system record, routing 55% of their distributions directly into the hands of local and national NGOs. Legally, Human Rights Council Resolution 53/13 defends the right of these local civil society groups to seek and utilize this specific type of international funding. This pie chart represents the internal pressures forcing the UN to rethink its logistics. For 2026, the UN Secretariat's own operating budget is slated for a 20% reduction. To survive these internal cuts, the new Humanitarian Compact proposes centralizing operations. It aims to merge separate agency supply chains, vehicle fleets, and data systems into a single shared network. The audit of the UN's performance presents a sharp contrast.

[3:58] The system still managed to reach 98 million people during the deepest funding cut on record. Yet, it continues to miss its own targets for funding local actors system-wide. The UN can deliver bulk emergency aid, but it is financially starved from within and structurally rigid. Reaching local actors reliably will require outside intervention. Outside the UN, major donors made a voluntary pledge known as the Grand Bargain. They promised to send 25% of all humanitarian funding as directly as possible to local actors. This progress bar tracks the reality of that promise. The goal is 25%, but system-wide direct funding remains stagnant at just 4.3%. The money is blocked by banking friction. Strict international counterterrorism rules, specifically FATF recommendation 8, are frequently misapplied by banks to freeze the accounts of legitimate aid groups. This world map highlights an expanding legal crackdown. By 2025, 83 countries and territories enacted domestic laws rating their civil society spaces as closed or repressed.

[5:06] Local NGOs are caught in a systemic vice. They are starved of international funds from the top due to banking laws and legally choked by their own national governments at the bottom. The responsibility now falls to the delegates of the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee to draft a legally binding framework that closes these gaps. First, you must establish enforcement mechanisms to accurately measure and compel progress toward the 25% localization goal. Second, you must design specific security and insurance frameworks to protect the national staff who are absorbing the highest casualty rates in the field. Third, you must create legal avenues to include informal, youth-led community responders in these global funding streams, without burying them in impossible paperwork. To stretch a shrinking budget, paper promises must become operational reality. That is your mandate at Harvard Model UN Online 2026.