



MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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RIGHTS TO PRIVACY IN THE DIGITAL
AGE



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Rights to Privacy in the Digital Age

Greetings Delegates! My name is Audrey Lee, and I am honored to be your Head Chair at SOCOMUN 2023. I am currently a Junior at Santa Margarita Catholic High School in my third year of Model United Nations. MUN has given me the opportunity to learn about a variety of different issues which exist around the world. From the Global Arms Trade, the Yemen Crisis, and Alternative Energy Sources, I have become a better educated student and citizen of our globe. On top of this, speaking in front of others and being able to collaborate with so many different people has really pushed me to become the best version of myself possible. In addition to MUN, I am on the varsity swim team at SM and enjoy spending my free time with friends or reading a good book. If you put your all into MUN, it is an excellent opportunity to get out of your comfort zone, and I wish you all the best of luck with your research and preparation. I look forward to seeing you all at SOCOMUN XXXII and remember to always believe in yourself and your abilities!

Hello! My name is Lillian Schulze and I will be your Vice Chair for the SOCOMUN XXXII Conference. I am a junior at SMCHS and have done MUN since my freshman year. I love MUN because of how much it has taught me regarding research, public speaking, and current events. I think this topic specifically is super important because the world is digitizing so quickly. I am super excited to hear about all the innovative solutions that will be introduced in committee.

Hello delegates, I am Baron Stamer, a Sophomore at Santa Margarita. My experience with MUN has been great. I have gotten to expand my social skills and learn how to solve real world issues. I am super excited for the upcoming SOCOMUN conference as your Rapporteur!

At SOCOMUN, we will try our best to ensure that every delegate learns something new. In committee, I will be as clear as possible to ensure that all delegates know the policies and proceedings to help the conference run smoothly. Within the committee, delegates will begin by giving individual speeches which contain their solutions on the topic. If delegates wish to debate specifics of the topic, it is suggested that they motion for caucus to expand on the topic at hand. Throughout the day, country policies and solutions can be talked about individually or in groups. Delegates will form resolution groups and present all their combined solutions to the rest of the committee. Remember to participate as much as possible while also focusing on having solid content. If you have any questions or concerns about committee, do not hesitate to email us at socomununhrc@gmail.com.

Background:

Privacy is a right that all humans are born with. Every citizen has the right to keep certain information away from the public and should never be afraid of an intrusion of this private information. Privacy is important because it strengthens one's autonomy. It is therefore a critical feature of democracy as it ensures that individuals can maintain their identities while also contributing to society as a whole. Whenever a citizen is surfing the



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web, they are very likely to censor their online behavior and search history because of a fear they are being monitored and might receive consequences. In this way, many individuals' rights to freedom of speech and freedom of expression are limited. This has the potential to limit civil engagement in all sorts of governments by making the actions and thoughts of citizens predictable. The personal assessment is much harder to make, and it is difficult to reflect on one's preferences and opinions. Privacy is an important aspect of civil life that much be protected at all costs, especially in an age as digital as the one we live in today.

Data collection allows governments and companies to accumulate and analyze large amounts of information about people's online behavior. This collection of data sometimes happens through hacking into people's private banks of data, but sadly happens through simple data harvesting more often than not. Governments will intercept communications, collect, and process bulks of data, and intrude into Information and communications technology (ICT) systems to acquire personal information. One example of a government infringing on the privacy of its citizens was when a software called "Pegasus" was purchased by the Mexican Government. It was purchased to spy on journalists, anti-corruption activists, and human rights defenders. A cyberattack was sponsored by the government to intrude upon an online conversation between a civil rights journalist and a prominent lawyer's son.

Over the past few years, light has been shed on businesses that use data collection and automation, surveillance of customers' activities to encroach on many citizens' privacy. A recent scandal involving Facebook users and researchers from Cambridge Analytica has led to the mishandling of data of over 40 million users of the social media platform. Facebook has also worked hard to market its company and platform as a place where users are in full control of what data is shared. This scandal brings to light the fact that users of Facebook have little to no control over what is secretly shared about them.

Data protection legislation has the potential to cut back, if not completely end, data collection by companies. So far, data privacy laws have not been placed in spots where they protect individuals' rights when using different technologies. This being said, there are a few voices that are working to fight against blanket surveillance. In recent years, the Council of Europe has requested that all Member States withhold from mass digital surveillance. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was drafted by representatives from all around the world with a variety of cultural and legal backgrounds. Although this document does not specifically address technology, for the first time in history, it sets out the basic human rights which are to be protected universally. It has been translated into around 500 languages and serves as guidance for human rights treaties which have been created at global and regional levels permanently.

Possible Solutions:

The chairs understand the broad scope of the topic and therefore encourage delegates to delve deeply into creative and specific solutions. The chairs urge delegates to create solutions which have the potential to pass when discussed in resolution groups. A critical role of the committee is to nurture cooperation and communication between delegates, so prepare to collaborate with others with the goal of forming combined and new solutions. The chairs hope that the solutions that follow will help guide delegates in creating and developing their own solutions, while also working to clarify the procedure of generating new solutions. Please also understand that the chairs highly smile upon



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original solutions over more generic ones which can be demonstrated through the creation of both organized and detailed solutions. Please keep in mind that funding is assumed to be provided by the UN, and should not be a prevalent consideration when developing solutions.

Kids are especially prone to falling prey to online predators and threats, so delegates should look into the need to expand educational curriculums which relate to and address some of the dangers of the digital world. This should work to inform children of the dangers, while also promoting an online environment which is safe. Children can learn how to keep their personal information safe, and considering that the digital world only continues to expand, it is necessary for the new generation to have a better and more well-rounded understanding of their rights to digital privacy. On top of this, there is also a great need to expand the public's knowledge of this topic, which can be done through a variety of different ways.

Protecting and monitoring data is a main pillar of digital privacy, noting that surveillance should be conducted with respect for the human rights of citizens and users of technology. There is a need for systematic government surveillance in our digital age, so this solution necessitates the creation of the International Data Protection Plan. It will follow the same framework as the European Union's General Data Protection Plan. The goal of this system will be to monitor data to prevent the number of data breaches which may take place and also reduce violations of digital privacy. By also using synthetic data, vital information can be replicated without ever exposing user data to different software tools and to developers.

Delegates should look into the creation/simplification of an alert system for internet users which lets users know when their data and privacy has been breached. Another possible alert system would be one which informs internet users of the "cookies" or "terms and conditions" which they are accepting. When simplifying these alert systems, delegates should keep in mind the need to make the alerts short but still informative enough to relate the message of danger which comes with accepting different terms and conditions. Internet users should have the ability to thoroughly read and understand the conditions before giving companies and governments access to their private data and information. To implement this solution, delegates should look into cooperation between different NGOs and companies who have already started to carry out this solution.

Another issue that should be tackled is the lack of implementation of many laws which relate to keeping citizens' digital information safe. Chief privacy officers should be required to oversee the implementation of standards of privacy within different companies and governments all throughout the world. Laws requiring this to take place have been passed, yet it has not been implemented so far in any sort of way. Chief privacy officers could help to tackle and address many of the issues which revolve around the government use of commercial databases. They could help to educate and train employees in the proper practices of data protection policies, and also work to evaluate policy proposals which address private information of users.



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Questions to consider:

The following questions are listed to guide delegates in their research and solutions. These are NOT required to be answered during committee.

1. What are the different policies your country has regarding this topic? What steps, if any, has your country taken to getting one step closer to fully maintaining their citizens' digital privacy?
2. Are there any laws within your country that protect individuals' and communities' rights to digital privacy?
3. Has COVID-19 had an effect on digital privacy? Has lack of digital privacy affected peoples' rights to receive help from the effects of COVID-19?
4. How much can the United Nations aid citizens who are trying to protect their digital privacy?
5. How can the government of your country protect the digital privacy of its citizens while also ensuring that they are not the ones violating the human rights of the people?
6. What do different corporations, companies, and governments stand to gain from gathering classified information on individuals which they interact with?
7. How will you work to implement your solutions to cover the issue on a much larger scale?



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