

GRIFFMUN 2019

Novice: WHO

Euthanasia Assisted Killings

Abortion Rights

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Committee Description

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that is concerned with international public health. Its current priorities include HIV/AIDS, Ebola, malaria and tuberculosis; the mitigation of the effects of diseases such as sexual and reproductive health, development, and aging; nutrition, food security and healthy eating; occupational health; substance abuse. As of 2016, WHO has over 196 countries working together to make this planet a safe and healthy place for everyone.

Chair Introductions

Head Chair:

Hello! My name is Svati Sundararangan, and I am your Head Chair. I am a senior and the Undersecretary of Events on the Secretariat. Outside of MUN, I am the president of my school's French Club, and I am the Editor-in-Chief of the school newspaper. If I'm not running around trying to get things done for the activities I am a part of, you will find me in front of my books and notes cramming for an upcoming test. Some of my best memories of high school are all tied to MUN; it helped me grow as a human being and gave me innumerable opportunities. For this conference, just prepare well and have an open mind to collaborate with other people. But, most importantly, try to have fun and live in the present.

I am extremely thrilled to see you all and hear all your wonderful ideas.

Vice Chair:

Hello delegates! I am Justin Kim, and I will be one of your vice chairs for GriffMUN 2019 this year. This is my third year in MUN and my second year in chairing. MUN is a real life-changer to me. Before I joined, I did not have the courage to speak in front of my peers. However, as I continued to participate in conferences, I started to gain confidence in speaking in front of crowds and improved my ability to speak to others comfortably. Besides MUN, other club activities I participate in are Japan Bowl, Lifehacks Club, and Japanese Club. If you know me personally, I would be finding easier ways to do things, eating an insane amount of food, or listening to music. My greatest advice for this committee is to start preparing early. Feel free to ask me questions about my life and about MUN! See you in committee!

Vice Chair:

Hello MUNers! I am Andy Fong, and I am one of the vice-chairs of this year's GriffMUN. I am a Sophomore and this is my second year in MUN. If you want to know more about me, I am currently participating in choir and in Track and Field this season. Science and Math are some of my favorite things both in class and in clubs I am a part of. Most likely, 99.9% of you delegates will only find me at the most recent MUN conference near you if you choose to participate. MUN has not only taught me things about the world, but has also given me confidence to speak in front of a crowd. It goes to show how the things you do can impact your life. One tip I have for you all as you get yourselves prepared is not to do your policy papers the day it is due! Good luck!

Euthanasia Assisted Suicide

Background:

Euthanasia assisted suicide is defined as the killing of a sick person by a doctor who is allowed by law to end a person's life by a painless mean, as long as the patient and their family agree. There are three different types of euthanasia assisted suicide, voluntary, non-voluntary and involuntary. Voluntary is when euthanasia is conducted with consent. Non-voluntary is when euthanasia is conducted on a person who is unable to consent due to their current health condition. In this scenario, the decision is made by another party, on behalf of the patient, based on their quality of life and suffering. The third type is, the involuntary euthanasia. This type of euthanasia is when it is performed on a person who would be able to provide informed consent, but does not, either because they do not want to die, or because they were not asked. This is called murder, as it is often against the patient's will. There is active and passive euthanasia, whose primary difference lies in the way a patient is killed. Many countries have declared involuntary euthanasia illegal and have made it an offence punishable by law. In November 1994, the first US state passed a law to legalize physician-assisted suicide. In 1995, the Northern Territory in Australia tried to legalize euthanasia but was defeated by the parliament in 1996. The 21st century started with the legalization of euthanasia in the Netherlands in 2001, followed by Belgium in May 2002 and Luxembourg in February 2008. In addition, Montana and Washington of the United States permitted physician aid in dying in 2008. Additionally, Belgium expanded its euthanasia law and approved euthanasia for children.

Many countries want Euthanasia Assisted Suicide (EAS) to be illegal because it encourages state-sanctioned suicide over the long run. However, others argue that EAS helps put an end to suffering. There have been many issues relating to Euthanasia since World War II.

From 1939 until 1945, Hitler's government carried out involuntary euthanasia under the codeword "Aktion T4." Their goal was to eliminate "life unworthy of life" and the prevention of the heredity of illnesses or disabilities.

Recently, involuntary euthanasia has increased in many countries due to the high demand for organs of healthy people. Furthermore, this topic is highly controversial since assisted killing can make the elderly feel like a burden or be called selfish for using natural resources.

Additionally, if patients have the option of ending their lives due to great suffering, there may be less of an incentive to push for advances in treating physical and psychological pain. Thus far, however, experience has shown that legalized assisted suicides correlates with greater overall investment in palliative services.

UN Involvement:

Article 55 of the UN Charter states that the United Nations is "promoting respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion." The UN defined these as "the right of life, liberty and the security of person," and every position regarding euthanasia is arguing with this. Proponents of euthanasia believe that if assisted suicide is not legalized, the right of liberty would be limited. Opponents believe that if euthanasia is used to kill terminally ill persons, the right of life would be taken away from them. The UN has not taken any serious actions pertaining to euthanasia in the past.

WHO is working closely with UNHRC to redefine the meaning of human rights and how countries interpret this. The UN has not taken a stance on this issue and currently remains passive. But organs like WHO and UNICEF are taking steps to make sure that euthanasia is voluntary and that people are not forced to make this decision. They are on the active look out for any medical personnel who might be benefitting from involuntary EAS.

Bloc Position:

- ***Middle East and African Bloc***

Euthanasia legality is based on religion in the Middle East and African blocs. In countries like South Africa, euthanasia is neither permitted nor allowed. This is similar to the Middle East where euthanasia is illegal.

- ***Central and Eastern European Bloc***

Euthanasia of any kind is illegal in Central and Eastern Europe. In Russia, euthanasia is an offence punishable by 14 years of jail time. Many countries consider EAS to be inhumane.

- ***Latin American and Caribbean Bloc***

Euthanasia is not legal in many Latin American countries. It is considered a crime of murder by many countries. However, there are talks amongst doctors and the government about the benefits of making euthanasia legal. Colombia is the only country where

- euthanasia is legal.

- ***Western European and Developed Bloc***

Many countries in Europe and the Western World have legalized euthanasia-assisted killings. In 5 of the 50 states in the US, euthanasia is legal. Canada decriminalized euthanasia after many years of debate. Netherlands and Belgium were among the first few countries to legalize euthanasia.

- ***Asia-Pacific Bloc***

The status of legality of euthanasia is unknown in many Asian countries. However, in India, passive euthanasia is legal. Euthanasia is legal in South Korea, and it is legal within certain administrative divisions in Australia.

Questions to Consider:

1. Should EAS be an option to a patient who has a history of depression or has evidence of depression in their genetics?
2. Should the licence of doctors who perform involuntary euthanasia be revoked? How can such people be prevented from gaining a doctorate?
3. In relation to legal framework, should the government of each country define what rights each person has or should they all collectively follow the definition of the UN charter?
4. Should child euthanasia be legal or illegal? Is euthanasia different from abortion in the way of a child's voice not being heard?
5. Is there any other way of ensuring that people are not in pain due to severe illness?

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Abortion Rights

Background

Abortion rights are the rights of a woman to legally undergo abortion, a process where a woman terminates her pregnancy before the child can survive outside of the mother. One method of abortion is to remove the embryo or fetus using surgical methods, such as a manual vacuum aspiration (MVA) from the womb. Another method is through the use of an abortion pill, which blocks the hormone that is “needed to make fertilised eggs stick to the womb lining.” However, some women undergo a method known as a partial birth abortion that involves killing an unborn and near-developed child by removing the contents of the skull because it threatens their life. Many countries and people debate over whether abortions should be legal or not, mainly due to the moral, ethical, and religious aspects of the act.

In the past, almost every country practiced abortion legally until the 1880s, where many banned the practice unless it would save the life of a woman. As technological advances emerged, abortion practices became safer and dominated by physicians, who replaced the “back-alley” illegal abortions carried out by midwives and apothecaries. According to the U.N., over 47,000 women die and five million women suffer a disability due to unsafe abortions. The controversy of abortion rights comes from moral, legal, and religious beliefs, and is separated into pro-life (against abortion) and pro-choice (for abortion). In present-day, over 97% of countries allow abortions to be carried out, but most with the condition that it would save the mother’s life. Only 26 countries, ban abortions altogether with no exceptions.

UN Involvement

The United Nations currently supports abortion and affirms that access to abortion is a human right. Since 1990, the U.N. has set aside September 28 as “International Safe Abortion Day,” in order to encourage the international community to provide access to safe abortions. In December 1966, the U.N. formed a resolution known as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which urged countries to legalize abortion for situations such as rape, physical and mental disorders, and child disabilities. In addition, the U.N. has requested for governments to protect women who have had abortions from being discriminated against by medical services who refuse to acknowledge them. In June of 2017, the UN Human Rights Council put forth a resolution condemning the abuse and discrimination of women, especially on abortion rights. However, many countries, including Egypt, China, and the U.S., have had issues with parts of the amendment.

Bloc Positions

- ***Middle East and African Bloc***

Many Middle East and African countries are very strict on abortions, and some ban abortions altogether. In general, the pro-choice movement has little traction in the region.

A few exceptions include Zambia, South Africa, and Tunisia.

- ***Central and Eastern European Bloc***

Many in the Central and Eastern European Bloc have accepted abortions as a human right. These countries include Russia, Armenia, and Ukraine.

- ***Latin American and Caribbean Bloc***

Most Latin American and Caribbean countries are strict on the rights of abortion, such as Brazil and Bolivia. Some exceptions that fully accept abortion rights include Cuba and Puerto Rico.

- ***Western European and Developed Bloc***

European countries, mostly of those in the European Union, have laws in place that make abortions legal. Also, most developed countries have moved abortion rights in favor of the U.N., such as the U.S., Russian Federation, and Great Britain. Some exceptions include Ireland, New Zealand, and Poland, who still have many restrictions on abortions.

- ***Asia-Pacific Bloc***

Abortion rights are mixed in this region. While some countries, such as Hong Kong, China, and the DPRK give no restrictions to abortion services, other countries, such as Iraq and the Philippines, have banned abortions.

Questions to Consider:

1. Is an unborn fetus or embryo considered “living”?
2. Is the unborn child considered a separate entity from its mother?
3. Is abortion the right thing to do if it was done to save the mother’s life?
4. Under what circumstances can a person take a life away?
5. Should abortion be legal or illegal, and under what circumstances?

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