



STUDY GUIDE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Development for Whom: Forced Evictions,
Migrant Labour and the Human Cost of
Hosting a Global Sporting Event.

31 Oct - 01 Nov 2026

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Human Rights Council at Sabarmati Model United Nations 2026.

We want to be direct with you about what this committee is and is not. It is not a debate about whether sport is good. Nobody in this room is going to argue that stadiums should not exist or that football is a human rights violation. If your speech is built on that premise, you will lose the room in ninety seconds.

What this committee is actually about is a chain of decisions. A federation awards an event. A government makes commitments in a bid book. A city clears land. A contractor hires a labor supplier. A labor supplier recruits a worker in another country and charges them a fee to be recruited. Somewhere along that chain, a family loses a home with fourteen days of notice, or a man dies on a site in July and his death certificate says cardiac arrest. Every actor in the chain can point to the actor beside them and say, accurately, that it was not their decision. That is the problem you are here to solve. Not the cruelty of any one party, but the design of a chain in which responsibility dissolves.

You will notice that this guide gives you very few conclusions. That is deliberate. We do not know which country you have been assigned. A delegate representing a state that has just won a hosting contract and a delegate representing a state that exports two million workers a year are both going to find material in these pages that they can use, and both of them should. What we have tried to give you instead is machinery: the legal instruments that actually exist, the arguments that actually get made, the numbers that will survive a chair asking where you got them, and the counter-arguments that will be thrown at you in the second unmoderated caucus.

A word on tone. This agenda involves people losing their homes and people dying at work. Handle it accordingly. You can be a forceful, ambitious delegate without turning a family's eviction into a rhetorical flourish. The most effective speeches in committees like this one are usually the calmest.

Read Sections 10 through 12 twice. Read the rest once. Come with a position paper you actually wrote yourself, and come ready to be persuaded by somebody in another bloc, because a committee where nobody moves is a committee where nothing passes.

We are looking forward to your work.

The Executive Board

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

Where are you sitting, and what can you actually do? Before you decide what you want the Council to do, you need to know what the Council is entitled to do. This section is short and dry, and it will save you from the single most common first-timer error: writing a resolution your committee has no power to pass.

The Human Rights Council is the United Nations system's principal intergovernmental body on human rights. It was created by General Assembly resolution 60/251 on 15 March 2006, replacing the older Commission on Human Rights, which had been criticized for allowing states with poor records to shield themselves through membership. The Council is a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, not of the Economic and Social Council, and that distinction matters: it reports directly to the Assembly and its members are elected by the Assembly.

Composition:

- **Forty seven member states**, elected by an absolute majority of the General Assembly, meaning at least 97 votes, by secret ballot.
- **Three year terms**, with no member eligible for immediate re-election after two consecutive terms.
- **Seats allocated by regional group**: thirteen for African States, thirteen for Asia-Pacific States, six for Eastern European States, eight for Latin American and Caribbean States, and seven for Western European and Other States.

The Decision Rule: Resolutions pass by a simple majority of members present and voting. There is no veto. A bloc of twenty four states can carry a text, which is why the arithmetic of the African and Asia-Pacific groups, holding twenty six seats between them, shapes almost every contested vote in this room.

What the Council produces: Resolutions and decisions, presidential statements, the Universal Periodic Review of every UN member state on a roughly four and a half year cycle, and the special procedures, meaning the independent experts, special rapporteurs and working groups who investigate and report. The Council can create a mandate, extend one, or fold one. It can convene a commission of inquiry. It can request the High Commissioner for Human Rights to report. These are its real tools, and they are more powerful than they sound, because a mandate creates a permanent institutional actor that outlives the session that made it.

What This Committee Cannot Do:

- **It cannot bind states.** Council resolutions are recommendatory. They interpret existing obligations and create political expectation; they do not create new legal duties on their own.
- **It cannot regulate FIFA or the International Olympic Committee.** These are private associations under Swiss law, not member states. The Council can address them, call upon them, and invite them to engage, but it has no jurisdiction over them. This constraint sits at the center of your agenda.
- **It cannot impose sanctions or authorize force.** Only the Security Council can do that, and only under Chapter VII of the Charter.
- **It cannot adjudicate individual complaints in a binding way.** The confidential complaint procedure exists, but it produces reports, not judgments. Treaty bodies and regional courts do that work.
- **It cannot expel a member.** Suspension of a member's rights requires a two thirds vote of the General Assembly under paragraph 8 of resolution 60/251, not a Council vote.

Pro Tip: Your verbs are the whole game. In a Council resolution you may write “calls upon States,” “urges,” “encourages,” “requests the Special Rapporteur to,” “decides to establish,” and “invites international sporting federations to.” You may not write “demands that FIFA shall” or “requires host States to.” A chair who sees “shall” attached to a non-state actor will strike the clause, and a delegate who wrote it will look unprepared. The strongest thing this Council can do to a private federation is create a reporting mandate that watches it every year and publishes what it finds.

INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENDA

Why does this matter, and why now? Because the pipeline of awarded events currently stretches to 2034, the commitments in those bid books have already been made, and the people who will be moved to make room for them mostly do not know it yet.

The pitch for hosting a mega-event is always the same, and it is not a lie. Infrastructure gets built. Transit lines open ten years early. Derelict industrial land becomes a park. Cities do get things they would otherwise have waited a generation for. Delegates who ignore this are arguing against the entire development case, and they will be beaten by any competent opponent.

The problem is what the promise conceals. The regeneration is real, and so is the fact that the people living on the land before regeneration are frequently not the people living there afterward. Housing researchers call this displacement by beautification, meaning the removal of poverty from view rather than the removal of poverty. The infrastructure arrives. The residents do not return.

Three interlocking problems define this agenda:

- **Forced eviction under the cover of planning law.** States rarely announce an eviction as an eviction. It is announced as slum rehabilitation, riverfront development, corridor widening, or the enforcement of an anti-encroachment rule that went unenforced for thirty years. Each of these is a lawful category of state action. What makes it a human rights question is not the demolition; it is whether notice, consultation, compensation, and an alternative were provided.
- **Migrant labor built into the delivery model.** Construction on a deadline that cannot move requires a workforce that cannot bargain. Recruitment fees charged in the origin country, passport retention in the destination country, and employer-tied visa status combine into what the International Labour Organization describes as debt bondage, even where no individual actor set out to create it.
- **The clearing of street populations before broadcast.** Encampment sweeps, transit-hub operations, anti-vagrancy enforcement, and the temporary relocation of unhoused people out of camera range. This one is legally the murkiest, because it is usually done by municipal authorities under ordinary policing powers.

Why now, specifically? Because the 2026 FIFA World Cup was hosted across the United States, Mexico and Canada this June and July, and it generated documented displacement concerns in wealthy democracies rather than in the authoritarian states that absorbed most of the criticism in the last decade. Amnesty International's March 2026 report on the tournament found that only four of the sixteen host cities had published a human rights plan at all, and that none of those plans addressed immigration enforcement. That finding removes the comfortable

assumption that this is a problem of certain kinds of governments. It is a problem of a certain kind of deadline.

And the pipeline continues. Los Angeles hosts the Summer Olympics in 2028. Brisbane follows in 2032. The 2030 World Cup runs across three continents. Saudi Arabia hosts in 2034 as the sole bidder, with construction on a scale that has already drawn a joint statement from more than twenty human rights organizations. Ahmedabad, the city you are sitting in, has been recommended as host of the 2030 Commonwealth Games and is central to India's bid for the 2036 Olympic Games. This is not a retrospective committee. Almost every decision that will produce the next decade of displacement has either just been made or is being made now.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

How did we get here? The pattern you are being asked to regulate is roughly forty years old, and it has been documented at every single event since.

The pattern establishes itself, 1988 to 2000. Seoul's 1988 Olympics produced the first systematic documentation of mass eviction tied to a sporting event. The Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, a housing rights organization that closed in 2010, estimated in its 2007 study of the issue that roughly 720,000 people were displaced in Seoul in connection with Olympic preparation. That figure is an estimate compiled from Korean civil society and press sources rather than an official count, and you should present it that way. Atlanta in 1996 introduced the second half of the pattern: rather than mass demolition, the city used arrest and ordinance enforcement against unhoused residents, with civil society groups documenting thousands of citations in the run-up to the Games.

Institutionalization, 2001 to 2010. Beijing 2008 and Delhi's 2010 Commonwealth Games moved displacement from a byproduct to a planning method. In both cases the state described the clearances as urban renewal that had been long planned and merely accelerated. That defense, that the event did not cause the eviction but only changed its date, is the single most common argument you will face in this committee, and it is not a frivolous one.

This decade also produced the first serious international response. Miloon Kothari, then Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, submitted the Basic Principles and Guidelines on Development-Based Evictions and Displacement in 2007, annexed to document A/HRC/4/18. His successor Raquel Rolnik devoted her 2009 thematic report to mega-events specifically, and on 25 March 2010 the Council adopted resolution 13/10, which acknowledged that mega-events can improve housing stock while expressing concern about their effect on the poor. Read that resolution. It is short, it is the Council's own precedent on exactly your agenda, and any resolution you write is effectively an update to it.

The labor decade, 2010 to 2022. Qatar's award of the 2022 World Cup, made in December 2010, shifted the center of the debate from housing to labor. Under the kafala sponsorship system, a worker's legal status was tied to a single employer, meaning that leaving an abusive job could convert a lawful worker into an undocumented one. Following sustained pressure, an ILO country office opened in Doha in 2018 and Qatar removed the exit permit requirement and introduced a non-discriminatory minimum wage in 2020 and 2021.

The death toll is the most contested number in this entire agenda, and you must handle it precisely. A 2021 investigation by The Guardian counted 6,500 deaths of migrant workers from

five South Asian countries in Qatar between 2010 and 2020, drawn from origin-country embassy records. That figure covers all deaths from all causes across the whole decade and the whole economy, not deaths on World Cup construction sites. Qatari authorities and the tournament organizers reported three work-related deaths and thirty seven non-work-related deaths on stadium projects specifically. Both numbers are defensible and they measure completely different things. A delegate who cites 6,500 as the number of workers killed building stadiums will be corrected and will lose credibility for the rest of the session. A delegate who explains the divergence, and then points out that the real question is why so many deaths were classified as natural causes without autopsy, has just made the strongest available argument on this point.

The accountability era, 2016 to the present. Rio 2016 produced Vila Autódromo, a community adjacent to the Olympic Park that was reduced from several hundred families to twenty households who negotiated the right to stay. Paris 2024 produced a coalition of civil society organizations, operating under the name Le Revers de la Médaille, meaning the other side of the medal, which documented the clearing of informal settlements and squats in the Paris region in the year before the Games and reported figures in the region of twelve thousand people moved. The French government characterized the same operations as routine shelter placement and public order enforcement. Once again, the same events, two descriptions, and the gap between them is where your committee works.

Alongside this, an accountability architecture slowly assembled. The Council endorsed the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in resolution 17/4 of 16 June 2011. FIFA adopted a Human Rights Policy in 2017 and required human rights strategies from bidders for the 2026 tournament. The Centre for Sport and Human Rights was established in 2018 with participation from governments, federations, sponsors, unions and civil society. The instruments exist. What has never existed is a mechanism that attaches a consequence to ignoring them.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

What is actually true today? Start with the numbers, and know exactly what each one measures, because on this agenda the difference between a strong delegate and a weak one is almost entirely a difference in precision.

The 2026 tournament, and why it changed the argument. The FIFA World Cup held in June and July 2026 across sixteen cities in the United States, Mexico and Canada was the largest in the tournament's history. Amnesty International's March 2026 report on the event, titled Humanity Must Win, found that only four of the sixteen host cities had published a human rights plan, and that none of the published plans addressed immigration enforcement. Advocacy organizations in Vancouver documented an intensification of what the city calls street cleaning operations and what residents of the Downtown Eastside call sweeps. Pivot Legal Society, a Vancouver legal advocacy organization, had already documented in 2022 that these operations regularly remove the personal property of unhoused people. In Toronto, a winter shelter was closed in the lead-up to the tournament. In Mexico, civil society organizations in Mexico City, Monterrey and Guadalajara described a coordinated urban image strategy affecting street vendors, sex workers and unhoused people.

Note carefully what this does to the shape of the debate. For fifteen years the standard argument in rooms like this one was that mega-event abuses are a governance problem specific to states without independent courts, free press or organized labor. The 2026 tournament was hosted by three consolidated democracies with all three of those things, and the pattern still appeared. The mechanism, therefore, is not regime type. It is a fixed date, a global audience, and a municipal incentive to present a particular image.

The pipeline. Los Angeles hosts the 2028 Olympics in a metropolitan area with one of the largest unhoused populations in the United States, and California's approach to encampment enforcement has been reshaped since the Supreme Court's 2024 decision in *City of Grants Pass v. Johnson*, which held that ordinances penalizing public camping do not by themselves constitute cruel and unusual punishment under the Eighth Amendment. Brisbane hosts in 2032. The 2030 World Cup is distributed across Morocco, Portugal and Spain, with three centenary matches in Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay. Saudi Arabia hosts the 2034 World Cup, awarded in December 2024 as the only bidder, following a bid human rights assessment that more than twenty organizations publicly criticized as inadequate. Ahmedabad has been recommended by Commonwealth Sport as host of the 2030 Commonwealth Games and anchors India's bid for the 2036 Olympics, with reported land assembly of several hundred acres for sports infrastructure and an athletes' village.

What the labor picture looks like now. The reform record in the Gulf is genuinely mixed, and delegates on both sides of it overstate their case. Qatar abolished the exit permit for most

workers, introduced a minimum wage covering all workers regardless of nationality, and established a workers' support and insurance fund. The ILO's own reporting acknowledges these as substantive legal changes. The same reporting, and independent monitoring by trade union federations, finds that enforcement remains the weak point: passport confiscation continues despite being illegal, changing employers remains difficult in practice, and recruitment fees are still charged in origin countries where the destination state has no jurisdiction. This is the crucial structural insight for your committee. The abuse that matters most, the recruitment fee, is charged in Kathmandu or Dhaka by an agent operating under Nepali or Bangladeshi law, and paid to secure a job in Doha or Riyadh. No single state has jurisdiction over the whole transaction.

Three structural features you should be able to name.

- **The bidding ratchet.** Cities compete by promising more: more venues, faster timelines, larger guarantees. No bid has ever won by promising less. Because human rights protections cost time and money, the bid process systematically rewards the city willing to make the least protective commitments.
- **The special purpose vehicle.** Delivery is typically handed to a dedicated authority or corporation created for the event, sometimes with powers to acquire land quickly and with reduced ordinary planning scrutiny. This is efficient, which is the point, and it also means the body doing the evicting is often not the body a court would ordinarily review.
- **The compressed timeline.** Consultation is the first thing sacrificed when a delivery date cannot move. Every safeguard in international housing law, meaning genuine consultation, adequate notice, exploration of alternatives, and legal remedy, is a process that takes time.

Think of the accountability system here as a net rather than a wall. What matters is not the strength of any single cord, because FIFA's Human Rights Policy and the Guiding Principles are individually well drafted. What matters is the size of the gaps between them, and the gaps are exactly wide enough for a subcontractor, a municipal authority and a private federation to each fall through.

Contested evidence you should know about. The economic legacy claim is disputed in the academic literature, and it is disputed by serious people on both sides. A substantial body of economics research, associated with researchers including Andrew Zimbalist and Victor Matheson, finds that mega-events rarely deliver the growth projected in ex ante impact studies and frequently produce long-term public liabilities. Other researchers, and host-city authorities, point to genuine and durable infrastructure gains, particularly in transport and sanitation, and argue that the counterfactual, meaning what the city would have built anyway, is usually assumed rather than measured. Do not present the economic case as settled in either direction. The strongest version of your argument does not need it: even if the regeneration is entirely real, it does not follow that the cost of it should fall on the poorest residents without compensation.

LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

What rules actually bind us here? More than delegates usually assume on housing, and much less than delegates usually assume on federations.

The core housing obligation. Article 11, paragraph 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognizes the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living, including adequate housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. This is the anchor. As of the most recent count, more than 170 states are parties, which means most delegates in this room represent a state that has already accepted it. The United States has signed but not ratified, which is a fact worth knowing before you attack or defend an American position.

The two general comments that do the real work. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the treaty body that monitors the Covenant, has issued two interpretations that are cited in essentially every serious document on this agenda.

- **General Comment No. 4 (1991)** defines adequate housing as more than shelter, requiring legal security of tenure, availability of services, affordability, habitability, accessibility, location with access to livelihood, and cultural adequacy.
- **General Comment No. 7 (1997)** addresses forced evictions directly. It defines a forced eviction as the permanent or temporary removal of individuals, families or communities from their homes or land against their will, without access to appropriate forms of legal or other protection. It requires genuine consultation, adequate and reasonable notice, information on the proposed use of the land, the presence of government officials during the eviction, identification of those carrying it out, no eviction in bad weather or at night, provision of legal remedies, and legal aid where needed. It also states that evictions must not result in homelessness.

Note the drafting move in that definition: it is the absence of protection, not the fact of removal, that makes an eviction forced. A relocation with genuine consultation, real notice, compensation and an adequate alternative site is not a forced eviction under this standard. That distinction is your best friend if you represent a host state, and your hardest obstacle if you represent a critic, so learn it whichever side you are on.

The operational guidance. The Basic Principles and Guidelines on Development-Based Evictions and Displacement, annexed to A/HRC/4/18, translate the general comments into a sequence of steps before, during and after an eviction. This is the most practical instrument on the agenda and it is under-cited in committee, which means citing it well will distinguish you.

The Council's own precedent. Resolution 13/10 of 25 March 2010, adopted after Special Rapporteur Rolnik's thematic report, is the Council's existing statement on mega-events and housing. It encourages states to share good practice and asks the Special Rapporteur to continue considering the issue. It is deliberately gentle. Whether your resolution should build on it or supersede it with something firmer is one of the genuine strategic choices in this committee. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing was most recently extended for three years by the Council at its sixty first session in 2026, so the mandate holder is available as a vehicle for whatever monitoring you design.

The labor instruments. The relevant spine here is the ILO framework rather than the Covenants.

- **Convention No. 29 on Forced Labour (1930)** and its **2014 Protocol**, which requires states to take effective measures to prevent forced labor and to provide access to remedy, including for migrant workers, regardless of their legal status.
- **Convention No. 97 (1949)** and **Convention No. 143 (1975)** on migrant workers, both with modest ratification levels, particularly among destination states.
- **The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990)**, in force since 2003, which is the most comprehensive instrument on this subject and also the least ratified. Almost no major destination state is a party. If you cite it, cite it as the standard states have declined to accept, not as binding law on host states, or you will be corrected.
- **The ILO general principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment**, which establish the fee-free recruitment principle, meaning that recruitment costs should be borne by the employer and never by the worker. This is the single most useful concept for your operative clauses, because it is specific, measurable and auditable.

The business and human rights layer. The Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, endorsed by Council resolution 17/4 in 2011, rest on three pillars: the state duty to protect, the corporate responsibility to respect, and access to remedy. They apply to sporting federations and their commercial partners as business enterprises. They are explicitly voluntary. Their practical value is that they supply an agreed vocabulary, particularly the concept of human rights due diligence, meaning the ongoing process by which an enterprise identifies, prevents, mitigates and accounts for its human rights impacts. When you draft, use that phrase. It is understood by every actor in the field and it commits an organization to a process rather than an outcome, which is why federations have accepted it.

The sport-side instruments. FIFA's Statutes commit the organization to respect internationally recognized human rights, and its 2017 Human Rights Policy elaborates that commitment. Bidders for the 2026 tournament were required to submit human rights strategies. The Olympic Charter and the Host City Contract were amended for the 2024 Games onward to include human rights obligations reflecting the Guiding Principles. These are contractual and internal

instruments, enforceable only by the federation against the host, if the federation chooses. No external party has ever successfully enforced one.

Distinguish three things, always. What the treaty text says, what state practice actually does, and what commentators argue it should mean. The Covenant does not mention sporting events. General Comment No. 7 is an authoritative interpretation but is not itself a treaty. The Basic Principles are guidance from a special procedure mandate holder, not negotiated law. Blurring these produces delegates who confidently cite obligations that do not exist, and chairs notice.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND BLOC POSITIONS

Who wants what, and who is your ally? Positions in this committee do not sort neatly into North and South, and delegates who assume they will are going to spend the first unmoderated caucus in the wrong corner of the room.

Current and Recent Host States

Core position: Hosting is an exercise of sovereign development policy, and urban planning decisions taken in connection with an event are domestic matters like any other.

Stated justification: Non-interference in domestic affairs, and the principle that international human rights bodies should not create special rules for one category of infrastructure project.

Actual interest: Protecting delivery timelines, avoiding a precedent under which any large public works program becomes internationally reviewable, and preserving the ability to bid without accepting conditions competitors have not accepted.

Fracture line: This bloc contains states with very different exposures. A state that has already hosted has nothing left to protect and can afford generosity. A state hosting in four years has everything to protect. Watch for the past host that votes with the critics.

Aspirant and Emerging Host States

Core position: The proposed standards are being written after the traditional hosting powers have already built their stadiums, and would apply in practice only to newer entrants.

Stated justification: Equity in international standard-setting, and the observation that criticism has historically been distributed unevenly across host countries.

Actual interest: Access to hosting as an instrument of economic diversification and international standing, without conditions that raise costs or create a permanent monitoring relationship.

Fracture line: Several states in this group have introduced substantive labor reforms and would like credit for them. A resolution that acknowledges progress by name can move a state in this bloc from opposition to abstention, and sometimes further.

Labor-Origin States

Core position: Protection must attach to the worker across the whole migration corridor, including at the point of recruitment, and destination states should not be the only actors under scrutiny.

Stated justification: The rights of nationals abroad, and the state's duty of consular protection.

Actual interest: Remittance flows are macroeconomically significant for several of these states, which creates a strong incentive not to disrupt the labor relationship even while demanding better terms within it. They also face the uncomfortable fact that the illegal recruitment fee is usually charged inside their own borders.

Fracture line: This is the most internally conflicted bloc in the room. A delegate representing an origin state has to demand protections without endangering access to the labor market, and has to answer for domestic recruitment agencies. Handled honestly, this is one of the most interesting positions to argue.

The European Union and Like-Minded States

Core position: The Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights supply the correct framework, and the answer is mandatory human rights due diligence extending through the supply chain.

Stated justification: Corporate accountability and the coherence of existing commitments.

Actual interest: European companies dominate the construction, engineering, hospitality, broadcast and sponsorship layers of these events, so a due diligence regime is simultaneously a genuine rights measure and a competitive framework that European firms are already structured to comply with.

Fracture line: European enthusiasm for scrutiny of hosting practices has historically been louder about some hosts than others. Expect this to be raised against you if you are in this bloc, and prepare an answer that does not sound defensive.

Latin American and Caribbean States

Core position: Displacement risk is real and documented, and several states in this group have direct experience of it as hosts.

Stated justification: The right to the city and to adequate housing, concepts with deep roots in regional constitutional law and in the Brazilian and Ecuadorian legal traditions particularly.

Actual interest: Continued eligibility to host, alongside a genuine reformist current in domestic urban policy and strong civil society networks that carry weight at home.

Fracture line: Willingness to accept external monitoring varies sharply depending on whether the government in question is currently the target of housing rights litigation at home.

African Group

Core position: The development benefit of hosting is real and the continent has been largely excluded from it, so new conditions must not become a further barrier to entry.

Stated justification: Equitable geographic distribution of major events and the right to development.

Actual interest: Access to hosting and to the infrastructure investment that accompanies it, together with a substantial interest as an origin region for labor migration.

Fracture line: Origin-state interests and aspirant-host interests pull in opposite directions inside the same group, and sometimes inside the same delegation.

Non-State Actors You Must Account For

You cannot seat them, but your resolution fails if it ignores them.

- **Sporting federations.** FIFA and the IOC set the bidding conditions and hold the contract with the host. They have accepted human rights language and have consistently resisted anything resembling external enforcement.
- **Sponsors and broadcasters.** They supply the revenue and are subject to consumer and shareholder pressure, which makes them the most responsive point in the chain and the one your resolution is most likely to be able to move.
- **Global trade union federations.** Building and Wood Workers' International has run inspection and complaint mechanisms at multiple events and is the institutional memory of this agenda.
- **Housing and civil society coalitions.** Pivot Legal Society in Vancouver, Le Revers de la Médaille in Paris, the Popular Committee in Rio, and equivalent networks in every host city. They produce the documentation your resolution depends on.

If your country is not covered above, look up six things before you write a word of your position paper. First, has your state hosted, bid for, or announced an intention to bid for a major event in the last twenty years? Second, is your state a party to the ICESCR, and has it accepted the Optional Protocol allowing individual communications? Third, is it a party to the 1990 Migrant Workers Convention, ILO Convention No. 29, and the 2014 Protocol? Fourth, what did your state's most recent Universal Periodic Review say about housing, evictions and migrant labor, and what recommendations did it accept or note? Fifth, is your state a significant sender or receiver of migrant construction labor, and what does the remittance figure look like as a share of GDP? Sixth, how did your state vote on resolution 13/10 in 2010 and on subsequent housing resolutions. Those six facts will generate a defensible position on any clause in this committee.

CASE STUDIES

What has actually been tried, and what happened? Four cases, chosen because each one tests a different proposed solution.

Qatar 2022: the reform-under-pressure model. Sustained international attention produced real legislative change, including the removal of the exit permit requirement, a non-discriminatory minimum wage, and a labor dispute resolution system, developed in cooperation with an ILO office established in Doha in 2018. Independent monitoring since then has consistently found the gap to be enforcement rather than legislation. The lesson your committee should take is double-edged: external pressure works on the statute book, and the statute book is not where the abuse lives. Any resolution that ends with a call for legal reform has solved the easier half of the problem.

Rio de Janeiro 2016: the community that stayed. Vila Autódromo sat beside the Olympic Park and was slated for removal. Residents, supported by university researchers and a local popular committee, produced an alternative upgrading plan and litigated. Most of the community was removed. Twenty households negotiated the right to remain and were rehoused on site. Read this two ways. It demonstrates that documented, organized, technically credible resistance can shift outcomes, which is the case for funding civil society participation. It also demonstrates the limits of that approach: twenty households out of several hundred is not a model of protection, it is an exception that proves the rule.

Paris 2024: the wealthy democracy case. In the year before the Games, French authorities cleared informal settlements and squats across the Paris region and offered onward placement in regional accommodation centers. A coalition of roughly a hundred civil society organizations documented the operations and reported that around twelve thousand people were moved, a figure compiled by the coalition rather than by government. Authorities described the same activity as ordinary public order enforcement combined with shelter provision. What makes this case essential for your committee is that France has independent courts, a free press, organized unions and full ratification of the relevant treaties, and the pattern appeared anyway. Any theory of this agenda that depends on weak institutions cannot explain Paris.

Ahmedabad and the Sabarmati Riverfront: the pre-event baseline. The city you are meeting in offers the clearest available illustration of how displacement operates through ordinary planning law rather than through an event. The Sabarmati Riverfront Development project, run through a corporation wholly owned by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation and conceived in the late 1990s, reclaimed roughly two hundred hectares of riverbed land and created eleven kilometers of public promenade. Estimates of displacement vary by source and by what is counted, with academic and civil society accounts commonly citing more than ten thousand

households; the project authority's own framing emphasizes rehabilitation provided. Public interest litigation in the Gujarat High Court from 2005 produced orders requiring resettlement plans before eviction. Subsequent legal scholarship, including work from the National Law School of India University, found that documentation requirements left many long-term residents unable to prove eligibility, and that some resettlement sites were poorly located and served. Note what this case does for your committee: no mega-event was involved, and the outcome was the same. Ahmedabad has since been recommended as host of the 2030 Commonwealth Games and anchors a 2036 Olympic bid, with substantial land assembly reported for sports infrastructure. The riverfront is the baseline against which any future event-linked displacement in this city would be measured.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS AND APPROACHES

What could this Council actually do? Here are five named approaches. Each is a real position that real delegations hold. Pick one, or build a coalition text that fuses two, but know what each one costs.

- **Conditionality-First.** Build human rights requirements into the bidding and award stage, so that a bid book commitment on evictions and recruitment becomes a condition of the contract, monitored by an independent body and reported publicly. *Strength:* it acts at the only moment when the host has maximum incentive to concede anything. *Weakness:* the Council cannot impose conditions on a private federation's contracting process, so this only works if the federation adopts it voluntarily, and it risks entrenching the advantage of states that have already hosted.
- **Monitoring-First.** Create or extend a mandate to track displacement and labor conditions across the full event cycle, from award through delivery to legacy, and report annually to the Council. *Strength:* squarely within the Council's competence, cheap, and durable, because a mandate outlives the government that opposed it. *Weakness:* it produces reports, not remedies, and states already under scrutiny will argue that a new mandate duplicates the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing.
- **Remedy-First.** Focus on what happens to the individual: legally enforceable notice periods, compensation at replacement value rather than assessed value, access to courts with suspensive effect so that demolition halts while a case is heard, and a fee-free recruitment guarantee with a reimbursement mechanism. *Strength:* it changes the experience of the affected person rather than the paperwork of the state, and it is measurable. *Weakness:* it requires domestic legislative and judicial change, which the Council can only recommend, and states will resist prescriptive detail as interference.
- **Leverage-First.** Target the commercial layer. Encourage sponsors, broadcasters and construction contractors to conduct and publish human rights due diligence, and encourage home states of those companies to require it. *Strength:* it works on the actors most sensitive to reputational pressure and least protected by sovereignty arguments. *Weakness:* it is indirect, it offloads enforcement onto the market, and it can be dismissed as an attempt by capital-exporting states to regulate through their firms.
- **Corridor-First.** Address labor migration as a corridor rather than a destination problem, through bilateral labor agreements with published minimum terms, licensing and liability for recruitment agencies in origin states, and mutual recognition of complaints across jurisdictions. *Strength:* it is the only approach that reaches the recruitment fee, which is where the debt starts. *Weakness:* it requires origin states to regulate a domestic industry that generates revenue and employment, and bilateral agreements have a long record of going unenforced.

BUILDING EFFECTIVE ARGUMENTS

How do you actually speak in this room? You build a chain in which each link earns the next, and you end on something a delegate has to vote on.

Consider this chain of reasoning:

1. Host cities are selected through competitive bidding
2. Bids compete on cost, speed and the scale of guarantees offered
3. Human rights safeguards, meaning consultation, notice and remedy, all consume time and money
4. A bid that offers stronger safeguards is therefore, all else equal, a weaker bid
5. So the selection process systematically rewards the least protective proposal
6. Therefore safeguards written into the award stage are not an ethical add-on; they are the only point at which the incentive can be corrected

That argument ends in a clause somebody has to vote on. Saying that host cities should respect human rights ends in agreement and nothing else, because everyone in the room already agrees with it.

Here is a second chain, for delegates working the labor side:

1. A worker pays a recruitment fee, often equal to several months of expected wages, before departure
2. The fee is typically financed by borrowing against land or family assets
3. Arriving in debt, the worker cannot afford to leave the job, whatever the conditions
4. Employer-tied legal status means leaving may also mean becoming undocumented
5. So the coercion is produced by the combination of a financial transaction in the origin state and an immigration rule in the destination state
6. Therefore any measure targeting only one of those two states leaves the mechanism intact

Three habits that make a speech land.

- **Name the actor.** Not “displacement occurs” but “the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation’s development corporation cleared the riverbed,” or “a labor supply company subcontracted to a stadium contractor retained passports.” Systemic claims without an actor sound like background noise. Claims with an actor sound like evidence.
- **Give the measurement basis with every number.** Not “6,500 workers died,” but “The Guardian’s 2021 analysis of origin-country embassy records counted 6,500 deaths of South Asian migrant workers in Qatar from all causes between 2010 and 2020.” The

second version cannot be dismantled, and the fact that you drew the distinction yourself makes every other number you use more credible.

- **Concede the strongest point on the other side, early.** Say that infrastructure legacy is real, that some regeneration genuinely improves the housing stock, and that the alternative to hosting is often not a better housing policy but no investment at all. Then argue that none of that determines who bears the cost. A delegate who has already conceded the opposition's best argument cannot be ambushed with it.

On the language of this agenda. Use forced eviction as a term of art with a definition behind it, taken from General Comment No. 7, rather than as a synonym for any removal. Use the phrase human rights due diligence when addressing federations and companies, because it is the vocabulary they have already accepted. Use fee-free recruitment rather than describing the problem loosely. Precision in these three phrases will mark you immediately as a delegate who has read the instruments.

ADDRESSING COUNTER-ARGUMENTS

What happens when someone attacks your position? These are the five objections you will actually face. None of them is stupid, and a first-timer handed a weak version of the opposing case gets ambushed in committee.

Counter: “This is domestic urban planning. The Council has no business reviewing a city’s zoning decisions.”

Legally serious and rhetorically strong. You might respond by proposing:

- Anchoring in an accepted treaty obligation, since Article 11 of the ICESCR binds the state regardless of which level of government acts
- Pointing out that the Council reviews domestic policy in every Universal Periodic Review cycle without that being treated as interference
- Framing your text around process rights, meaning notice, consultation and remedy, rather than around the planning decision itself

Counter: “The eviction was already planned. The event changed the date, not the outcome.”

This is frequently true and it is the most effective defense a host state has. You might respond by proposing:

- Arguing that acceleration is itself the harm, because compressing a ten year process into eighteen months removes exactly the consultation and appeal stages that make a relocation lawful
- Asking for the paperwork, since a genuinely pre-existing plan has a budget line, a published notification and a file predating the bid
- Accepting the point where it is true and shifting to compensation adequacy, which is a separate obligation that acceleration does not excuse

Counter: “FIFA and the IOC are private associations. This Council has no jurisdiction over them, and pretending otherwise is theater.”

Correct, and delegates who deny it lose credibility. You might respond by proposing:

- Directing operative language at states, requiring them to regulate the conduct of entities within their jurisdiction, which is exactly what the Guiding Principles contemplate
- Using invitational language toward federations paired with a reporting mandate, so that non-participation is visible and annual
- Working through the sponsor and contractor layer, which consists of ordinary companies that states can and do regulate

Counter: “These conditions will simply mean the events go to states that accept no conditions at all, and the workers will be worse off.”

The displacement-of-hosting argument, and it has real empirical force. You might respond by proposing:

- Building floors rather than ceilings, meaning minimum standards achievable by any host rather than aspirational ones only wealthy states can meet
- Attaching technical and financial assistance to the standards so that compliance is not purely a cost
- Pointing out that the reforms achieved in Qatar happened precisely because a state under scrutiny chose engagement over withdrawal, which suggests the effect runs the other way

Counter: “Wealthy democracies criticize hosts in the Global South and then run identical operations at home. This is selective.”

After the 2026 tournament this is the single most powerful counter available in this room, and it is largely accurate. You might respond by proposing:

- Accepting the charge and using it, since a universal standard applying identically to every host is the direct answer to selectivity
- Naming recent practice in wealthy host states explicitly in the preamble, which costs you nothing if your standard is genuinely universal and disarms the objection entirely
- Rejecting any drafting that creates a category of state to which the text does not apply

QUESTIONS YOUR RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER

What has to be in the document? A resolution that leaves any of these unanswered will be picked apart in the question-and-answer session on the draft.

- **Who is the addressee of each operative clause?** States, the federations, the Secretariat, the Special Rapporteur, or the Office of the High Commissioner. Every clause needs one, and mixing addressees inside a single clause is the most common drafting failure in this committee.
- **At which point in the event cycle does your measure bite?** Bidding, award, construction, delivery, or legacy. A measure with no specified moment is a measure with no effect.
- **What is the threshold for coverage?** Only the Olympics and the World Cup, or any event above a defined scale? Continental championships? The Commonwealth Games? Draw the line and be able to defend it.
- **Who monitors, and against what benchmark?** An existing special procedure, a new mandate, the OHCHR, or a reporting obligation on host states themselves.
- **What happens to the person actually evicted?** Notice period, consultation mechanism, compensation basis, alternative accommodation standard, and access to a remedy that can halt the demolition rather than compensate afterward.
- **How is recruitment addressed across the corridor?** Origin-state licensing, destination-state liability, or a joint mechanism, and who reimburses a fee that has already been paid.
- **What does the text ask of federations, in language they might accept?** Invitation, reporting, dialogue, or the publication of their own due diligence.
- **How is this funded?** Voluntary contributions, existing OHCHR resources, or a request to the Secretary-General for provision within existing means. The budget clause is where ambitious texts quietly die.

Modelling a Clause

A preambular clause:

“Recalling its resolution 13/10 of 25 March 2010 on adequate housing in the context of mega-events, and recalling further general comment No. 7 (1997) of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on forced evictions,”

Look at what each element is doing. “Recalling its resolution” establishes that the Council has competence here, because it has acted before, which pre-empts the jurisdictional objection before anyone raises it. Naming the resolution with its number and date makes it checkable, and chairs check. “Recalling further” imports the operational definition of forced eviction

without you having to negotiate a definition in the operative section, which is where definitions go to die. The clause is short, it is accurate, and it has already won two arguments.

An operative clause:

“Requests the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing to prepare, within existing resources, a report examining measures taken by States to prevent forced evictions in connection with major international sporting events, including notice periods, compensation practice and access to effective remedy, and to present it to the Council at its sixty-eighth session;”

Take it apart. “Requests the Special Rapporteur” addresses an actor the Council actually controls, which nobody can object to on competence grounds. “Within existing resources” removes the budgetary objection, which is what kills more operative clauses than any substantive disagreement. “Examining measures taken by States” is framed as a study of practice rather than an accusation, which lets states that would vote against condemnation vote for information. The three named subjects are specific enough to produce a real report rather than a survey of good intentions. Naming a session creates a deadline, and a deadline creates a document, and a document creates the basis for next year’s resolution.

Now the weak version: “Urges all States to respect the human rights of persons affected by sporting events.” Nobody votes against it, nobody is bound by it, no report is produced, and next year the committee starts from exactly where it started this year. If your clause could be adopted by acclamation, it probably does not do anything.

RESEARCH AND PREPARATION GUIDELINES

Where do you look, and what should you avoid? The material on this agenda is unusually good if you go to primary sources and unusually bad if you go to headlines.

Start with the instruments themselves. General Comment No. 7, the Basic Principles annexed to A/HRC/4/18, and resolution 13/10 are all short and freely available on the OHCHR website. Reading three primary documents will put you ahead of most of the room.

Then find your country's own record. The Universal Periodic Review database gives you every recommendation your state has received on housing and migrant labor, and crucially, whether your state accepted or merely noted it. A delegate who can say what their own government accepted in its last review, and quote the paragraph, is instantly credible. Treaty body concluding observations on the ICESCR do the same job in more detail.

Then the documentation layer. OHCHR special procedures communications, ILO country reports and committee of experts observations, and reports from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, the Centre for Sport and Human Rights, and Building and Wood Workers' International. For host-city specifics, local organizations are usually better than international ones: Pivot Legal Society for Vancouver, the popular committee networks in Rio, and the coalition reporting from Paris.

Read the host's own case. Bid books, host city human rights strategies, and government responses to criticism are public and are frequently ignored by delegates. If you are defending a host state, this is your primary material. If you are attacking one, it tells you exactly which argument you will face.

What to avoid.

- **Uncited aggregate figures.** Round numbers about displacement circulate widely with no methodology attached. If you cannot say who counted and what they counted, do not use it.
- **Advocacy summaries of research they have not linked.** Use the underlying report, not the press release about the report.
- **Anything that treats the 6,500 figure as a stadium construction death toll.** This single error appears in more MUN speeches than any other on this agenda, and it will be corrected in front of you.

POSITION PAPER FRAMEWORK

Paragraph one, your state's position on the problem. State whether your country is a host, an aspirant host, a labor-origin state, a labor-destination state, or none of these, and what that means for its interests. Name one specific piece of national law, policy or practice: a resettlement and rehabilitation policy, a recruitment licensing statute, a bilateral labor agreement, an eviction notice requirement. Specificity here is what separates a paper that was researched from a paper that was assembled.

Paragraph two, your reading of the legal framework. Which instruments your state is party to, and which it is not, stated plainly. If your state has not ratified the 1990 Migrant Workers Convention, say so and give the reason your government has given. Do not hide non-ratification; delegates who do get caught, and a stated position is always stronger than an evasion.

Paragraph three, what you propose. Two or three concrete measures, each with an addressee and a mechanism, written as something that could become an operative clause. Not “greater cooperation” but “a reporting requirement on host states, submitted to the Special Rapporteur eighteen months before the event.”

Close with one line on where you can compromise. Chairs read this, and delegates who signal flexibility get invited into the sponsor group early, which is where a resolution is actually written.

SIMULATION AND CRISIS SCENARIOS

What might get thrown at you? The Executive Board may introduce developments during committee. These are not predictions; they are the categories you should be ready for.

- **A demolition begins during committee.** A host state's municipal authority commences clearance of a settlement adjacent to a venue site, citing a court order and a safety notice. You will have to decide whether your resolution's mechanism can respond to something happening now, or whether you have drafted a purely prospective text. Most first drafts turn out to be purely prospective.
- **A federation makes an offer.** The relevant federation announces a voluntary due diligence framework and an independent grievance mechanism, funded by the federation and reporting to it. This splits the room instantly. Delegates who wanted engagement will call it progress. Delegates who wanted independent monitoring will call it self-regulation. Both are right, and your resolution has to decide whether to welcome it, build on it, or treat it as a reason to insist on something external.
- **An origin state suspends labor deployment.** A labor-sending state announces a temporary ban on deployment to a specific destination following a cluster of deaths. Remittances fall, workers migrate through irregular channels instead, and the ban is quietly reversed within months. This scenario exists to test whether your labor clauses account for the fact that the origin state's strongest lever also hurts its own nationals.
- **A funding constraint appears.** The Secretariat advises that a new mandate cannot be resourced within existing means. Ambitious texts either find a voluntary funding formula or shrink. Have your fallback drafted before this happens rather than after.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FURTHER READING

What should you cite? These are the documents that will hold up when a chair asks where you got it.

Core instruments and Council documents:

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, article 11, paragraph 1
- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, general comment No. 4 (1991) on the right to adequate housing
- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, general comment No. 7 (1997) on forced evictions
- Basic Principles and Guidelines on Development-Based Evictions and Displacement, annex I to A/HRC/4/18
- Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing on mega-events, A/HRC/13/20
- Human Rights Council resolution 13/10 of 25 March 2010
- Human Rights Council resolution 17/4 of 16 June 2011, endorsing the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
- General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, establishing the Council

Labor instruments:

- ILO Convention No. 29 on Forced Labour (1930) and its Protocol of 2014
- ILO Conventions No. 97 (1949) and No. 143 (1975) on migrant workers
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990)
- ILO general principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment

Documentation and analysis:

- Amnesty International, Humanity Must Win, March 2026, on the 2026 FIFA World Cup
- Reports of the ILO office in Qatar on labor law reform implementation
- Centre for Sport and Human Rights, materials on host city human rights strategies
- Building and Wood Workers' International, inspection reports on event construction sites
- Pivot Legal Society, Vancouver, on street sweeps and property seizure
- Academic work on the Sabarmati Riverfront Development project, including legal analysis published by the National Law School of India University
- FIFA Human Rights Policy (2017) and host city human rights strategies for the 2026 tournament

FINAL NOTE FOR DELEGATES

Two habits will distinguish a strong delegate in this committee.

The first is precision about numbers. This agenda is saturated with figures that mean something narrower than the way they are usually quoted. The delegate who says where a number came from, what it counts, and what it does not count, will be trusted on everything else they say for the rest of the session. The delegate who quotes a dramatic figure and cannot source it will be quietly discounted from that point forward, and will not know it has happened.

The second is taking the other side's best argument seriously. Every position in this room has a real interest behind it. The host state protecting a delivery timeline is not being cynical; it has signed a contract with a fixed date. The origin state that does not want to disrupt a labor corridor is protecting the income of millions of households. The federation that resists external enforcement is protecting an institutional autonomy it has held for a century. You will write a better resolution, and you will build a wider coalition, if you can state each of those interests fairly before you argue against them.

Come ready to move somebody. That is the whole job.

IN SUPPORT OF



Building
Our Future
Together



IN COLLABORATION WITH



THE
WORLD
WE WANT



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THE UNITED NATIONS
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