

Human Rights Committee 2: **Protecting the Rights of Workers in the Animal Slaughtering Industry**

I. Background Information

Despite its lack of media attention, this topic is very controversial and has caused many conflicts on a global scale due to religious and cultural differences; unsafe work environments; laborers being deprived of their rights; connections to trafficking humans; mistreatment of employees and lastly, unenforced safety and regulation policies on these companies. In the U.S. alone there are over 500,000 people employed who are subjected to the above human rights abuse. Over 38% of the 500,000 are born in foreign nations, and there is no definite count of undocumented persons working in the industry. With bosses allowed unchecked power, and individuals whom are desperate for jobs, the threat of being fired or deported is ever present in the lives of these workers, thus making unionizing both unfeasible and unrealistic.

Despite slaughterhouses and “meat”-processing facilities being highly mechanized, manual labor is required at several stages of production. Workers are trained for one specific part of the process, much like employees in a car assembly line; some workers kill and bleed the animals while others make the needed incisions. This combination of sharp tools and machinery in these high-paced, stressful and crowded environments make injuries inevitable. A variety of U.S. and

international labor laws were created to guarantee workers a safe and healthy work environment; many of these regulations, however, are overlooked. These slaughterhouse and “meat”-processing workers labor each day in horrendous conditions with highly predictable risks despite the fact that employers are aware of safer alternatives.

II. U.N. Involvement

The U.N. Humanitarian Committee is heavily involved in many international work policies. The U.N. has a comprehensive 94 part ratified bill which discusses the rights of migrant workers on a global scale; (Link provided at the end) it remains the guideline for dealing with migrant workers. The UN consistently condemns nations in violation of these laws, and actively commends nations upholding the standards presented.

III Questions to Consider

- Does my country supply meats as a large income?
- Does my country buy meats from a nation that does follow the U.N. standard?
- What methods are used in my country's manufacturing?

IV Helpful Links

- <https://www.hrw.org/report/2005/01/24/blood-sweat-and-fear/workers-rights-us-meat-and-poultry-plants>
- <http://www.foodwhistleblower.org/issue/worker-rights/>

- (<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CMW.aspx>)