

# Handout A: UN Human Rights Panel Members

## Introduction to the Human Rights Panel Hearing

In July of 1964 Malcolm X attended the second meeting of the Organization of African Unity. He presented a petition asking "In the interest of world peace, we beseech the heads of the independent African states to recommend an immediate investigation into our problem by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights." According to UN procedures, a nation can request a human rights investigation of another country on behalf of the people whose rights have been violated. The African heads of state discussed the proposition at the OAU summit but failed to bring the case before the UN.

Although the United Nations Commission of Human Rights did not conduct the investigation, you will conduct this investigation in your classroom to determine whether human rights had been violated in the United States. Each of you will play a different but important role so be sure to know your part. Good luck!

## Instructions for UN Human Rights Panel Members

You are one of five panel members who will run the investigation and hearing. Your job is to prepare questions for your witnesses, review the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), run the hearing and create a report for the UN body based on your findings. In order to accomplish your task use the following action items.

1. Meet with the panel members, elect a chairperson and decide on procedures.
2. Review the UDHR. Identify possible violations of articles.
3. Prepare questions for your witnesses.
4. Decide the order witnesses will be questioned. Note that your witnesses will have a brief opening statement.
5. Take notes during hearing to prepare for your writing assignment.
6. At the end of the hearing, reporters will interview witnesses, delegates and citizens. At that time your panel will vote whether or not human rights violations have occurred and decide on recommended action. The Chairperson will announce your decision.

**Writing Assignment:** After the hearing and announcement of your findings, prepare a report to the United Nations. In your report include the most important information from your witnesses, the specific violations of the UDHR and your recommendations for action.

# Handout B: UN Delegates

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## Instructions for UN Delegate

You are Minister Milton Obote of Uganda. As a UN delegate you will listen to the hearing and determine whether human rights violations have occurred in the United States and whether the United Nations should take action. If you believe the United Nations should take action, what action will you recommend? In order to accomplish your task use the following action items.

1. Review the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).
2. Research the history of the United Nations and Human Rights Commission.
3. Create a name plate to be placed on your desk during the hearing.
4. Take notes during the hearing for use in your writing assignment.
5. Be prepared to answer questions from the press. They will ask you whether you believe human rights violations have occurred and what action, if any, the United Nations should take.

**Writing Assignment:** Write a speech to be given on the floor of the United Nations regarding your conclusion at the end of the hearing. Include a summary of the human rights violations and the actions you believe the United Nations should take.

# Handout C: African American Leaders

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## Instructions for African American Leaders

You are the witnesses to human rights violations in the United States. Follow the action items in order to prepare for the hearing. As a witness to the Human Rights Commission, you will provide the panel with evidence of human rights violations by the United States. Your teacher will assign to you one of the individuals listed below.

1. Review the UDHR.
2. Research your assigned role.
3. Create a name plate to be placed on your desk during the hearing.
4. Prepare a 4-5 sentence opening statement including your name, the organization you represent. During the hearing you will be asked questions by the panel. Be prepared to share your evidence.
5. Take notes during the hearing for use in your writing assignment.
6. Feel free to create informational posters to share with the panel.

**Writing Assignment:** At the end of the hearing create a letter to report on the content of the hearing and the decision of the panel. The letter will be addressed to the organization you represent.

## African American Leaders of the 1950's and 1960's

William Patterson, Chairman of the Civil Rights Congress

Fannie Lou Hamer, Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party

Malcolm X, Organization of Afro-American Unity

Martin Luther King, Jr., SCLC

Diane Nash, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

John Lewis, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

Septima Clark, Highlander Folk School

Bayard Rustin, Congress on Racial Equality

Fred Shuttlesworth, Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACHR)

Use the King Encyclopedia to begin your research:

[http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/liberation\\_curriculum/encyclopedia/index.htm](http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/liberation_curriculum/encyclopedia/index.htm)

# Handout D: US Citizen

## Introduction to the Human Rights Panel Hearing

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## Instructions for US Citizen

You are a US citizen concerned with human rights violations in the United States. You served during World War II and believe strongly that your fellow soldiers fought bravely to secure democracy across the globe. You believe that democracy is threatened as a result of human rights violations against African Americans in the United States. You are also concerned that communist ideas are threatening American democracy.

Your role as a citizen attending the hearing is to form an opinion and share it with the press. In order to accomplish your task use the following action items.

1. Review the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).
2. Research the history of the United Nations and the Human Rights Commission.
3. Listen closely to the witnesses and take notes during the hearing. You will use your notes during the press interview and the writing assignment.
4. After the hearing you will be interviewed by a member of the press. Share your opinions and the action you believe the United Nations should take.

**Writing Assignment:** Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper about the hearing and the action you believe the United Nations should take. Be sure to include a summary of the witnesses, the information covered in the hearing and the human rights violations which occurred.

# Handout E: Journalist

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## Instructions for Journalist

You are a reporter for the New York Times and you have been covering the marches and demonstrations of African American civil rights leaders, such as the Montgomery bus boycott, the Birmingham campaign and the Selma to Montgomery march.

Your role as a reporter is to write an article about the hearing. In order to accomplish your task use the following action items.

1. Review the UDHR and research the events mentioned above.
2. Take notes during the hearing for your article.
3. As you take notes, create a list of questions to ask the witnesses.
4. After the hearing you will have a chance to ask questions of the witnesses, citizens and a UN delegate.

**Writing Assignment:** Write an article for the New York Times about the hearing. Be sure to include a summary of the witness testimony, the human rights violations and the opinions of the UN delegates and the US citizens who attended the hearing.

Use the King Encyclopedia to begin your research on the Montgomery bus boycott, the Birmingham campaign and the Selma to Montgomery march:

[http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/liberation\\_curriculum/encyclopedia/index.htm](http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/liberation_curriculum/encyclopedia/index.htm)