NHSMUN
National High School Model United Nations
2023

UPDATE PAPER: UNCAC

Topic A: Corruption and Press Freedom

Topic B: Cybercrime and Corruption

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Meg Torres
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Amy Zeng

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption at NHSMUN 2023! My name is Samuel Smith, and I am excited to be your Session I Assistant Director for my first-ever conference as a part of the NHSMUN team. As the conference rapidly approaches, I sincerely hope you are as excited as I am for a great weekend of debate, teamwork, and, most importantly, fun!

A little bit about myself: I am from Upstate New York, where I was homeschooled throughout middle school and high school. Currently, I am a sophomore at Ithaca College. I am majoring in physics, with minors in mathematics and piano performance. Although I now study physics, I have always loved Model UN, which I participated in for all four years of high school. In my free time, you will find me playing sports, gaming, or playing music. As a delegate, I had the wonderful opportunity to attend NHSMUN twice, and I am thrilled to continue giving back to such a wonderful community.

UNCAC's goal at NHSMUN 2023 is to tackle corruption from two important angles. Topic A, "Corruption and Press Freedom," covers the important role of a free press and journalist safety in combating corruption. Topic B, "Cybercrime and Corruption," explores the ways the internet can be used as a weapon and a tool to limit corruption. My co-AD Ximena and I are ecstatic to share several relevant updates to these two important topics. I would like to specifically highlight updates to Topic A, which deals with constant threats against journalists, anti-free press policies, and social media as a tool in the fight against corruption. Topic A of this update paper includes a few case studies that serve as examples of failures and successes in promoting transparency and press freedom. I highly recommend studying these examples and using them as a foundation for more extensive research.

I am very excited to see all of the hard work and creativity that you will apply to both topics. Corruption is one of the most difficult issues to tackle on the international stage, and I have complete faith this committee will be more than up to the task. It is likely questions will come up during the research process. Whether you are wondering about topic-specific information or general Model UN questions, I cannot stress enough how useful all of the NHSMUN resources are. If you need any guidance or assistance, please reach out to any of us on the dais. I can't wait to meet everyone in NYC in a few short months!

Sincerely,

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Amy Zeng

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption for NHSMUN 2023! I am looking forward to seeing everyone in March! My name is Ximena Faz, and I will be your Assistant Director for Session II.

Model UN has always had a special place in my heart. When I started participating back in junior high, I fell in love with the amazing learning opportunities and great friendships that came from it, so much so that MUN is still part of my life. Back in high school, I attended NHSMUN twice, and both are cherished memories filled with so much growth and incredible people. I strongly encourage you to make the most of this opportunity!

Currently, I am in my freshman year of college, and I am studying law and finance at the Universidad de Monterrey in Mexico. On campus, I am involved in the research assistant program, in which I have the opportunity to help one of my professors with research publications related to civil law. I also work on the Hult Prize Committee at my university. In my free time, I enjoy dancing, listening to music, and spending time with my friends and family.

Both topics that we cover are hugely important and very prevalent to many people across the world. Topic A, "Corruption and Press Freedom," covers the limitations that the press face in their work and the effect this has on themselves and their society. Topic B, "Cybercrime and Corruption," covers some of the main concerns that come with the lack of regulations that fail to provide a safe cyberspace for everyone. While you are reading this, a journalist somewhere is being silenced, a hacker is stealing private information, or someone is unsuccessfully trying to report a cyberattack due to the lack of regulation. I am sure that through negotiation and collaboration, some great ideas will be brought to the table, and I am very excited to hear them. Additionally, I would like to remind you that the UNCAC is the only legally binding multilateral treaty against corruption. This is important to consider and can help you greatly when coming up with resolutions.

Best of luck with the rest of your research! I hope that this paper gives you a broader understanding of both topics. If there is any way we can help you, please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the members of the dais. See you in March!

Sincerely,

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TOPIC A:
CORRUPTION AND PRESS FREEDOM

Photo Credit: Muhammad Mahdi Karim

Introduction

November 22, 2022, is the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists. This past November, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres spoke about the state of press freedom and the safety of journalists. "Most of these crimes [against journalists] go unsolved. Meanwhile, a record number of journalists are incarcerated today, while threats of imprisonment, violence, and death keep growing," said Guterres.[1] The year 2022 marked the 10th year since the UN created the Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. The UN Plan of Action aims to create a safe environment for journalists, with the goal of strengthening democracy and peace.[2] Despite significant progress made to improve the safety of journalists, 955 journalists have lost their lives over the last 10 years.[3] There is still much to be done to overcome corruption in the media. It is important to ensure the safety of journalists, maintain free speech on and offline, and improve transparency.

One current issue in the press is gender inequality. In the last few months, there have been new developments in this area. Ensuring gender equality in the press is vital to good media. For this reason, it is important that this work continues. Additionally, new technology has improved transparency in the press. This will ultimately aid in combating corruption. These factors are vital to consider when studying the intersection between the press and corruption. None of these improvements would be possible, however, without international cooperation. Strengthening the press and protecting journalists is necessary to combat corruption.

Gender-based Harm to Journalists

In October 2022, Samantha Feinstein, Vice-Chair of the UNCAC, spoke about journalist protection.[4] Feinstein stressed that "paper rights" are not sufficient in protecting journalists. This means that without accountability measures, paper laws do little to provide real protection for journalists. For example, in 2022, Journaliste en Danger reported 124 attacks on press freedom.[5] This number is up from 110 in 2021 and 116 in 2020.[6] Female journalists, in particular, do not receive sufficient protection. A study conducted by The Guardian found that out of 1000 female journalists interviewed in 15 different countries, three-fourths had experienced online harassment.[7] Threats of violence are abundant online. Furthermore, private social media platforms often do not punish gender-based discrimination and hate.[8] Online violence against female journalists can cause many problems. Primarily, it can scare them from speaking on important issues.[9] Without due attention, the press cannot continue to hold those in power accountable.

One example of harassment towards a female whistleblower is Carole Cadwalladr. Cadwalladr is a journalist for The Guardian and was famously involved in a recent lawsuit against Facebook. She exposed Facebook for selling individual users' personal data to Cambridge Analytica. This was done mainly for political advertising purposes.[10] In the two years

1 "Intimidated, jailed, abused: Threats against journalists harm us all, warns UN chief," United Nations, November 2, 2022, https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/11/1130117.
2 "UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity," UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, accessed December 29, 2022, https://www.ohchr.org/en/safety-of-journalists/un-plan-action-safety-journalists-and-issue-impunity.
3 United Nations, "Intimidated, jailed, abused."
4 Samantha Feinstein and Ian Herel, "Whistleblowers and Corruption Prevention - You Can't Have One Without the Other," *Whistleblower.org*, November 22, 2022, https://whistleblower.org/blog/whistleblowers-and-corruption-prevention-you-cant-have-one-without-the-other.
5 "DRC – ALARMING SECURITY SITUATION FOR CONGOLESE JOURNALISTS," Journaliste en Danger, November 1, 2022, https://jed-afrique.org/2022/11/01/rdc-situation-securitaire-alarmante-pour-les-journalistes-congolais/.
6 Journaliste en Danger, "DRC – ALARMING SECURITY SITUATION FOR CONGOLESE JOURNALISTS."
7 Helen Pidd, "Majority of female journalists have been target of online violence - report," *The Guardian*, November 7, 2022, https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/nov/07/majority-of-female-journalists-have-been-target-of-online-violence-report.
8 Pidd, "Majority of female journalists."
9 "Safety of Women Journalists," UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, November 25, 2022, https://www.unesco.org/en/safety-journalists/safety-women-journalist.
10 Pidd, "Majority of female journalists."

following her story, Cadwalladr experienced 10,400 separate instances of abuse and harassment.[11] Cadwalladr's work was important information. She brought new attention to an important issue concerning individuals' rights, but she faced harassment because of it. Because there is little regulation of online interactions, Cadwalladr receives no protection from these threats.[12]

The harm to female journalists extends past online harassment. In Sudan, female journalists experienced economic violence throughout COVID-19. Many female journalists lost their jobs, but their male counterparts did not. Employers provided male journalists in Sudan with accommodations to support their careers. On the other hand, female journalists were simply let go.[13] Labor laws in Sudan do not include specific rights for female workers like those outlined by the International Labour Organization (ILO). The Sudanese press suffers from many different forms of violence, including threats, physical attacks, and unlawful detentions. The lack of protection for female journalists makes them more likely to suffer these attacks.[14]

Censorship is another issue that female journalists face. For example, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) recently faced criticism for expelling Sonia Rolley, a French reporter working for Radio France Internationale. For almost 20 years, Rolley had been reporting on human rights, politics, and corruption in the region.[15] Rolley was expelled after the DRC's President, Felix Tshisekedi, promised to uplift the media and promote investigative journalism. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the DRC claims the expulsion was due to an issue with her work visa.[16] The

CPJ has recently identified several attempts from the DRC to censor journalists, however. Furthermore, Rolley previously reported on a case that exposed elites in the DRC for allegedly embezzling public funds.[17] This information raises concerns that the DRC attempted to censor Rolley by expelling her from the country.

Journalists in Brazil have also faced barriers to freedom of expression. In November 2022, at the end of former president Jair Bolsonaro's administration, Artur Romeu from Reporters Without Borders commented on the state of Brazil's media during his presidency. Romeu stated that Bolsonaro "created a climate of permanent hostility towards journalism."[18] Female journalists were disproportionately victims of harassment.[19] One notable example is the murder of Marielle Franco. Franco was a well-known civil rights activist in Brazil who was fatally shot in early 2018.[20] It was later discovered that police officers were involved in her murder. As a result, suspicions were raised that the crime was an attack on freedom of speech.[21] In January 2023, however, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva became the president of Brazil.[22] This marks a new start for Brazil and an opportunity to better protect journalists. In fact, Lula appointed Anielle Franco, a journalist and the younger sister of Marielle Franco, as the Minister of Racial Equity on January 11, 2023.[23] This is an important first step in reinstating the freedom of the press in Brazil.

When considering solutions, keep in mind that specificity and international agreement do not always go together. Most international conventions sacrifice specific solutions to reach an international consensus. Delegates should consider the

11 Pidd, "Majority of female journalists."
12 Pidd, "Majority of female journalists."
13 "Sudanese women journalists faced underexposed economic violence during first lockdown," Dabanga, December, 2022, https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/sudanese-women-journalists-faced-underexposed-economic-violence-during-first-lockdown.
14 Dabanga, "Sudanese women journalists faced underexposed economic violence during first lockdown."
15 Thomas Fessy, "Congo Expels Renowned Journalist," *Human Rights Watch*, November 10, 2022, https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/11/10/congo-expels-renowned-journalist.
16 "French journalist Sonia Rolley expelled from DRC, denied accreditation," Committee to Protect Journalists, November 9, 2022, https://cpj.org/2022/11/french-journalist-sonia-rolley-expelled-from-drc-denied-accreditation/.
17 Committee to Protect Journalists, "French journalist Sonia Rolley expelled from DRC."
18 "Lula must end hostile climate for Brazil's media, hallmark of Bolsonaro for years," Reporters Without Borders, November 2, 2022, https://rsf.org/en/lula-must-end-hostile-climate-brazil-s-media-hallmark-bolsonaro-years.
19 Reporters Without Borders, "Lula must end hostile climate for Brazil's media."
20 "Brazil: Two years after killing of Marielle Franco, Rio de Janeiro authorities must solve unanswered questions," Amnesty International, March 14, 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/03/brazil-two-years-after-killing-of-marielle-franco/.
21 "Brazil: Marielle Franco Murder Remains Unpunished after 4 Years," *teleSUR*, March 14, 2022, https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Brazil-Marielle-Franco-Murder-Remains-Unpunished-After-4-Years-20220314-0011.html.
22 "Luiz Inácio Lula Da Silva," Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed January 19, 2023, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Luiz-Inacio-Lula-da-Silva.
23 Karen Juanita Carrillo, "Lula's New Cabinet, a 'Resistance' to Bolsonaro's Fascism," *New York Amsterdam News*, January 18, 2023, https://amsterdamnews.com/news/2023/01/19/lulas-new-cabinet-a-resistance-to-bolsonaros-fascism/.

Marielle Franco was a Brazilian civil rights activist known for her criticism against police brutality and gendered violence.

Credit: Mídia NINJA

ways in which protection measures for female journalists can be specific enough to cause meaningful change. However, they should also work to gain the support of all delegations. International cooperation is essential to ensuring the protection of female journalists.

Technology and Corruption

Technology has become a tool in the fight against corruption. However, the internet can also be a tool for corruption. Governments have tried to control the press in the past, but the internet is a two-way flow of information. In contrast, TV, radio, and newspapers are a one-way flow of information. Spreading misinformation on traditional media is simpler. The internet, on the other hand, is more difficult to control. The speed at which news can travel the internet allows journalists to publish stories and citizens to organize much more quickly and easily. Almost all social media platforms are owned and controlled by private companies. Most countries require that social media companies follow their domestic laws when doing business in their country.[24] Balancing free press, international regulations for social media, and country policy is extremely

difficult. However, in order to mitigate corruption, users must be able to exercise free speech on social media platforms. Transparency must be prioritized to limit corruption.

An emerging technology called blockchain has recently gained attention as a potential tool to help the press. Blockchain is a database that has many uses but is commonly associated with cryptocurrency. The data stored with blockchain is encrypted securely. This means that it is stored using a unique code that is individualized to each piece of data. This allows computers to verify the origin and content of that data. Additionally, each data piece has a unique "fingerprint" which allows it to be identified.[25]

These characteristics of blockchain can provide many benefits to journalism. First, blockchain can permanently store records of online interactions such as transactions or communications. Because these records are uniquely identifiable, they can be easily verified independently. This will allow journalists to verify the source of their information for more accurate reporting. It will also allow the public to trace the source of any news article so they can distinguish between accurate reports and false information.[26] Additionally, this

24 Anshu Siripurapu and Will Merrow, "Social Media and Online Speech: How Should Countries Regulate Tech Giants?" *Council on Foreign Relations*, February 9, 2021, https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/social-media-and-online-speech-how-should-countries-regulate-tech-giants.
25 Preethi Cheguri, "Most Popular Programming Languages Used in Blockchain," *Analytics Insight*, January 9, 2023, https://www.analyticsinsight.net/most-popular-programming-languages-used-in-blockchain-technology/.
26 "How Technological Advancements will Shape the Future of Journalism," Maryville University, accessed January 11, 2022, https://online.maryville.edu/blog/future-journalism/.

helps to protect the press against surveillance and censorship, increasing freedom of the press. Overall, this technology can increase trust and accountability for the press and help to limit the reach of corruption.[27]

While technology can present some dangers to the press, it can also be a tool to fight corruption. Transparency and accountability are essential goals of journalists. With technology such as blockchain, these goals can be accomplished, holding those in power accountable. It can also be used to increase reliability in the media in an age of misinformation. Overall, delegates in this committee should consider how technology can be used for good in the fight against corruption.

Recent Conferences and Agreements

Although there have been challenges, the international community is currently working hard to overcome corruption in the press. A number of international conferences have gathered recently to discuss ideas related to corruption, journalist protection, and press freedom. These include the International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC), the Trust Conference, and the UN General Assembly.

Formed in 1983, the IACC is a forum where leaders discuss solutions to corruption. The IACC includes representatives from over 140 countries and individuals from the private sector and nonprofit organizations. The IACC's 20th conference took place from December 6–10, 2022, in Washington, DC, United States.[28] This conference was closely associated with the UN Development Programme and included speakers from the UNODC and the World Bank.[29] One major topic of discussion at this conference was the protection of anti-corruption fighters. There must be fewer restrictions on freedom of expression, association, and assembly to ensure

that journalists and whistleblowers can fight corruption. The conference also stated that efforts to combat corruption must respond to gender inequality. Finally, they emphasized that technology should be used when appropriate to fight corruption. This means improving technology that regulates activity to promote transparency and accountability.[30]

Aside from providing recommendations for policymakers, the IACC also includes its own initiatives. One of the most significant is their Journalists for Transparency (J4T) initiative. This is a network of young journalists who receive training and work together to expose corruption. Currently, over 60 young journalists are working for the IACC.[31] This example shows how international cooperation can help improve transparency and overcome corruption.

Another recent conference that discussed press freedom was the Trust Conference. Hosted by the Thomson Reuters Foundation, this event brought together journalists and human rights experts. The most important conclusion from this conference was that journalists need more legal protection. Currently, governments are using legal methods to harass journalists. Laws that allow this behavior must change to defeat corruption. Finally, this conference recognized that old methods for protecting journalists no longer work. This is where new technology can address problems that journalists currently face. For example, many news outlets that are censored by their governments also face a lack of funding. New technology like cryptocurrency allows journalists to receive money in a way that is more difficult for governments to stop.[32] These insights from the Trust Conference will help promote transparency and support journalists in overcoming corruption. The IACC and other conferences aid in the development of concrete solutions. Experts come together to share their knowledge, resulting in effective

27 "Agenda - Trust Conference 2022," Trust Conference, accessed January 11, 2023, https://event.trustconference.com/event/0b5f953f-68fb-4b65-8fa7-1f1b51810b4c/websitePage:9fc9e774-1dd9-4c30-b9bf-f8bc0f50e515.
28 "About the IACC Series," International Anti-Corruption Conference, accessed December 3, 2022, https://iaccseries.org/about/.
29 "Conference Agenda #IACC2022 Uprooting Corruption, Defending Democratic Values," Hopin, December 6, 2022, https://hopin.com/events/international-anti-corruption-conference-2022-uprooting-corruption-defending-democratic-values-84a93061-f7c7-43f0-b4a1-955ff27e9e30/registration.
30 "The Washington Declaration, 20th International Anti-Corruption Conference (6-10 December 2022): Uprooting Corruption, Defending Democratic Values," International Anti-Corruption Conference, December 12, 2022, https://iaccseries.org/blog/the-washington-declaration-20th-international-anti-corruption-conference-6-10-december-2022-uprooting-corruption-defending-democratic-values/.
31 "Journalists for Transparency (J4T) Initiative," International Anti-Corruption Conference, accessed January 8, 2022, https://iaccseries.org/iacc-initiatives/journalists-for-transparency/.
32 Marina Adami, "Trust Conference 2022: seven things we learnt about press freedom and new tools," *Reuters Institute,* October 27, 2022, https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/news/trust-conference-2022-seven-things-we-learnt-about-press-freedom-and-new-tools.

policy recommendations. As delegates of the UNCAC, it is important to keep in mind the successes of these conferences in promoting a corruption-free press.

Conclusion

The UN Convention Against Corruption has the mission to tackle corruption around the world. Corruption most often occurs in government. Media and journalists play a key role in exposing corruption to the public. When a government limits the freedom of the press, international organizations are responsible for reviewing the issues at hand. They then must create solutions to deal with this corruption. One of the UNCAC's main objectives is to achieve SDG 16, which seeks to "build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels."[33] Journalists' safety is a key part of achieving SDG 16. Threats against journalists directly oppose this goal. Without the press, institutions cannot be held accountable. Journalistic safety must also include all genders. This will ensure that all journalists feel safe. Moreover, strong democracies are closely tied to low rates of corruption. Exposing corruption will help to create stronger democracies around the world. It is crucial to set a higher standard for government-media relations. Still, the Charter of the United Nations emphasizes the importance of sovereignty. Targeting corruption within governments must maintain national sovereignty. At the same time, it must remain concrete, specific, and feasible for all members of the UN.

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33 "Sustainable Development Goal 16," United Nations, accessed December 15, 2022, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16.

TOPIC B:
CYBERCRIME AND CORRUPTION

Introduction

Digital connections are essential to everyday interactions and communication. However, there is little regulation in the digital world. As a result, criminals often take advantage of this lack of regulation. This can impact people and governments worldwide. The international community has recently worked to address cybercrime and corruption. For example, the UN drafted the Cybercrime Treaty to combat the effects of cybercrimes on a global scale.[1] To add, the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act in the United States includes a gender perspective in cybercrimes. This includes legal charges against those that commit cyberstalking and non-consensual distribution of intimate photos.[2] There have also been discussions about the use of blocking technology to protect against cryptojacking and corruption. These are important to prevent cybercrime in procedures such as land title registration. Like these initiatives, the United Nations Convention Against Corruption must work to combat digital corruption.

Cryptojacking

Cryptocurrency is a primary target for cybercrime. Its rapid growth has attracted the attention of cybercriminals. Cryptocurrency has no central authority. This is one of the main reasons for its popularity, but it also makes it difficult to regulate. Cryptocurrency has risen in popularity due to its high market value. The five most popular digital coins are valued together at more than USD 600 billion.[3] This makes them important to the banking, supply chain management, and financial industries.

Cryptojacking is common among cybercriminals. Cryptojacking is a type of hijacking where an individual's computer is used to create new digital coins (also known as mining or crypto mining) without their knowledge.[4] In order to do this, complex mathematical operations and a powerful computer are needed.[5] The most popular devices

for this are application-specific integrated circuits (ASIC) and field-programmable gate arrays (FPGA). These devices are high-maintenance and use a lot of electricity, making them very expensive.[6] Cybercriminals may cryptojack another individual's device to avoid these costs. To do this, they use a computer virus that converts existing software (such as a web browser) into an energy source for their own crypto mining.[7] Users provide the energy needed to run the ASIC or FPGA when they stay on a webpage. This leaves them with underperforming devices, a high energy bill, and a declining value of cryptocurrencies.[8]

This practice is very new, which makes it difficult to identify victims of this cybercrime. Thus, cryptojacking is a growing concern. In 2022, cryptojacking cases increased 230 percent from 2021.[9] Between July and September alone, there were over 150 thousand different types of cryptojacking software detected.[10] This is mainly because it is easy to set up but

1 "A UN treaty on cybercrime en route," UN Regional Information Center for Western Europe, May 4, 2022, https://unric.org/en/a-un-treaty-on-cybercrime-en-route/.
2 "Fact Sheet: Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)," The White House, March 16, 2022, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/03/16/fact-sheet-reauthorization-of-the-violence-against-women-act-vawa/.
3 "Cryptocurrency price list," Coinranking, accessed January 6, 2022, https://coinranking.com/.
4 Domhnall Carlin, Jonah Burgess, Philip O'Kane, and Sakir Sezer, "You Could Be Mine(d): The Rise of Cryptojacking," *IEEE Security & Privacy* 18, no. 2, (April 2020): 16-22, https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/8753587.
5 Maurantonio Caprolu, Simone Raponi, Gabriele Oligeri, and Roberto Di Pietro, "Cryptomining makes noise: Detecting cryptojacking via Machine Learning," *Computer Communications* 171, (March, 2021): 126-129, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.comcom.2021.02.016.
6 Clive Max Maxfield, "Chapter 4 - FPGA vs. ASIC Designs," *FPGA: Instant Access,* (2008): 61-73, https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-7506-8974-8.00004-1.
7 Carlin, Burgess, O'Kane, and Sezer, "You Could Be Mine(d): The Rise of Cryptojacking."
8 Sead Fadilpasic, "There's been a huge growth in malicious cryptomining," *Future US, Inc.*, November 14, 2022, https://www.techradar.com/uk/news/theres-been-a-huge-growth-in-malicious-cryptomining/
9 Ian Barker, "Cryptojacking sees a 230 percent increase in 2022," *Beta News*, November 11, 2022, https://betanews.com/2022/11/11/cryptojacking-malware-sees-a-230-percent-increase-in-2022/.
10 Amy Sarah John, "Cryptojacking malware rises by 3 times in Q3 2022," *Wire 19,* November 23, 2022, https://wire19.com/cryptojacking-malware-rises-by-three-times/.

A Genesis Mining cryptocurrency mining farm located in Iceland.

Credit: Marco Krohn

difficult for users to detect. Even though law enforcement agencies are aware of this practice, it is difficult for them to track these cybercriminals.[11]

Recently, there was a widespread cryptojacking attack on OneDrive. OneDrive, a popular Microsoft online storage platform, is used across the world. This system allows users to upload and store files without taking up storage space on their devices. A recent crypto jacking program hides as a OneDrive file. This allows it to pass undetected by OneDrive's security system.[12] Although OneDrive is programmed to refresh itself every day, the cryptojacking software continues running. Cybercriminals who employ this program can expect to make an income of USD 13 per infected device.[13] This may not seem like a lot of money, but it serves as a passive income for these criminals. This type of program requires very little maintenance from the hacker. This makes it an attractive activity for cybercriminals, as it presents low risks.[14] Unfortunately for the victims, this type of attack is difficult to detect. This type of program could run undetected for months, providing criminals with a steady stream of cryptocurrency.

Cryptojacking is an easy way for cybercriminals to take advantage of weaknesses in others' software for their own gain. While this may seem like a minor problem, cryptojacking becomes a larger issue when it affects financial systems. In 2022, cryptojacking attacks on financial services increased by 269 percent. Cybercriminals are becoming more aware of the power they can hold with this attack. For this reason, it is increasingly important that the international community work together to find solutions. These should include improving user awareness of these attacks and better security.

Blockchain Technology

Technological advances help to combat cybercrime. An example of this is blockchain technology. Blockchain technology works similarly to a database. It stores information in linked blocks of data, which allows information to be shared transparently.[15] This technology has improved digital security. Furthermore, many countries have implemented it as a way to regulate cryptocurrency. This helps create a more

11   Julia Magas, "Law Enforcement's Guide to Policing Crypto Cybercrimes," *Cointelegraph*, https://cointelegraph.com/news/the-law-enforcements-guide-to-policing-crypto-cybercrimes.
12   Martin Zugec, "Deep Dive into a Cryptojacking Operation," *Bitdefender*, October 5, 2022, https://businessinsights.bitdefender.com/deep-dive-into-a-cryptojacking-operation.
13   Apurva Venkat, "New Cryptojacking campaign exploits OneDrive vulnerability," *CSO*, October 7, 2022, https://www.csoonline.com/article/3676230/new-cryptojacking-campaign-exploits-onedrive-vulnerability.html.
14   Venkat, "New Cryptojacking campaign."
15   "Exploring Blockchain Technology for Government Transparency: Blockchain-Based Public Procurement to Reduce Corruption," *World Economic Forum*, June 2020, https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Blockchain_Government_Transparency_Report_

secure cyberspace. [16]

Blockchain technology protects users' personal information in many ways. First, when properly implemented, blockchain technology is confidential. This protects information on the device, making it inaccessible to hackers. Blockchain also traces data to its original source to further prevent hacking. Users can then confirm that all interactions are valid and not part of a criminal attack.[17] This is especially useful in cryptocurrency transactions, which are often vulnerable to criminal activity. Blockchain also verifies individuals. This prevents identity fraud and protects personal information. Finally, blockchain can create ownership records and enforce intellectual property rights.[18]

Many industries have taken advantage of the benefits that blockchain technology provides. The banking and financial industry, in particular, relies on this technology for security, especially with the growth of cryptocurrencies. In 2022, around 23 banks reported making at least one investment in blockchain technology.[19] Additionally, one study found that using blockchain technology can increase trust between financial organizations. This positively affects banking partners and the financial industry overall.[20]

The healthcare industry also heavily relies on blockchain technology. Blockchain is used in the healthcare industry to protect private health records. Between July 2021 and June 2022, there were 692 data breaches in the United States healthcare industry alone.[21] These attacks steal patients' financial information as well as medical and genetic testing results. Blockchain can prevent these attacks by making

systems more secure.[22]

Many new companies have taken advantage of this technology in the health industry. Chronicled is a company that tracks prescription medicines. Blockchain helps this company ensure that prescriptions arrive when a patient is transferred from one facility to another. Chronicled also allows law enforcement to use blockchain to detect suspicious activity on their platform. This can help combat drug trafficking. Patientory, another medical company, uses blockchain to secure communication between patients and medical personnel. This allows healthcare professionals to transfer data quickly and securely. Akiri, a security company, uses blockchain to ensure that only authorized individuals can access healthcare data.[23] These are just a few examples of how blockchain is used to secure data in the healthcare industry.

Governments have also used blockchain to promote legal transparency. Colombia, Georgia, and Honduras recently implemented blockchain technology for land title registration. This increases transparency in the process of registering land ownership, which often suffers from corruption. Blockchain gives governments a decentralized and publicly verifiable record system that allows them to prove ownership and land rights. Some governments also implemented blockchain for the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. Blockchain technology helped them address communication problems between companies that made vaccines. Moreover, it lowered distribution costs lower and made the distribution process more secure. This prevented missing or stolen doses.[24] Governments can use blockchain technology to create

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16 Diego Valdeolmillos, Yeray Mezquita, Alfonso González-Briones, Javier Prieto, Juan Manuel Corchado, "Blockchain Technology: A Review of the Current Challenges of Cryptocurrency," *Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing* 1010, (June 2019), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-23813-1_19.
17 Eric Piscini, David Dalton, Lory Kehoe, "Blockchain & Cybersecurity Point of View," *Deloitte,* 2017, https://www2.deloitte.com/tr/en/pages/technology-media-and-telecommunications/articles/blockchain-and-cyber.html.
18 Jessica Groopman, "6 blockchain use cases for cybersecurity," *TechTarget,* February, 2022, https://www.techtarget.com/searchsecurity/tip/6-blockchain-use-cases-for-cybersecurity.
19 "Top Banks Investing in Crypto and Blockchain May 2022 Update," Blockdata, September 4, 2022, https://www.blockdata.tech/blog/general/top-banks-investing-in-crypto-and-blockchain-may-2022-update
20 Renee Rui Chen, Kun Chen and Carol X. J. Ou, "Facilitating Interorganizational trust in strategic alliances by leveraging blockchain-based systems: Case studies of two eastern banks," *International Journal of Information Management* 68, (February 2023), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2022.102521.
21 "June 2022 Healthcare Data Breach Report," HIPAA Journal, December 6, 2022, https://www.hipaajournal.com/june-2022-healthcare-data-breach-report/.
22 Sam Daley, "Blockchain in Healthcare: 17 examples to know," Built In, August 9, 2022, https://builtin.com/blockchain/blockchain-healthcare-applications-companies.
23 Daley, "Blockchain in Healthcare."
24 Yuriy Kamenivskyy, Abhinav Palisetti, Layal Hamze, and Sara Saberi, "A Blockchain-Based Solution for COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution," *IEEE Public Health Emergency Collection* 50, no. 1 (January 25, 2022): 43-53, https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/9691912.

secure, publicly verifiable records and prevent document manipulation. [25]

Blockchain provides many solutions to cybercrime. However, it still has challenges to overcome. Because this technology requires a large energy source, it is very costly. Therefore, it is not accessible in many countries. Delegates in this committee should take this into consideration when discussing these technologies as a solution. Increasing the accessibility and sharing of blockchain technology should be a priority for the UNCAC when it comes to addressing cybercrime and corruption.

Gender

Anyone can be a victim of cybercrime, but women are more vulnerable. Women are less protected from cybercrime.[26] This is because laws cannot keep up with the rapidly growing cyber-culture. This leaves women without legal protections. In fact, 60 percent of women have been victims of virtual violence.[27] The cybercrimes they experience are also harsher than those individuals of other genders face. These crimes include cyberstalking, blackmail, harassment, and identity theft.[28]

Furthermore, crimes that particularly affect women can be amplified online. These crimes include trafficking, receiving unwanted explicit images or messages, and violent threats.[29] Women are also 26 percent more likely to be victims of identity fraud.[30] Harmful attitudes towards women in the real world carry over to the digital world. This results in cybercrimes targeted toward women.[31]

Cyber violence that is carried out against women can also affect them offline. Over half of the women who reported cyberstalking also had an offline encounter with their stalker.[32] Cyberstalking is a crime that includes sending repeated threatening messages, following or spying on someone through technology, and sharing intimate photos of an individual online. A report by Plan International showed that more than 50 percent of women and girls from 31 different countries had been victims of cyberstalking.[33] Cyberstalking can worsen depending on other factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation.[34]

One reason for this high impact on women is a lack of education. Digital literacy rates tend to be lower among women than among men. A study showed that women were 1.6 times more likely to report a lack of skills as an obstacle to internet use than men.[35] Women must be able to access these technologies to eliminate the digital literacy gender gap.

There is also little attention given to how cybercrime affects women. When it comes to digital security, women are more likely to focus on issues that affect them. Men, however, are more likely to focus on crimes that affect men. Only 25 percent of cybersecurity experts around the world are women.[36] There is a need for greater representation of women in cybersecurity jobs. This will improve protection for women in cyberspace. UNCAC must ensure that technological rights extend to women.

Leading international organizations, such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), are working to ensure gender equality in the way that cybercrimes are treated. One example is the Gender Mainstream approach

25 Valdeolmillos, Mezquita, González-Briones, Prieto, and Corchado, "Blockchain Technology."

26 "Gender-based interpersonal cybercrime," UN Office on Drugs and Crimes, February, 2020, https://www.unodc.org/e4j/zh/cybercrime/module-12/key-issues/gender-based-interpersonal-cybercrime.html#/top.

27 "Why are women more victims of cybercrime than men?" ImpactoTIC, April 12, 2022, https://impactotic.co/en/Why-are-women-more-victims-of-cybercrime-than-men%3F/.

28 *Combating Cyber Violence Against Women and Girls* (Lithuania: European Institute for Gender Equality, 2022), https://eige.europa.eu/publications/combating-cyber-violence-against-women-and-girls.

29 "Cybercrime through a gender lens: what does it mean, how do we deal with it?" EL PACcTO, July 21, 2022, https://www.elpaccto.eu/en/news/espanol-cibercrimen-en-clave-de-genero-que-significa-como-lo-abordamos/.

30 ImpactoTIC, "Why are women more victims of cybercrime than men?"

31 *Combating Cyber Violence Against Women and Girls.*

32 *Combating Cyber Violence Against Women and Girls.*

33 *Combating Cyber Violence Against Women and Girls.*

34 *Combating Cyber Violence Against Women and Girls.*

35 Alexandra Tyers-Chowdhury and Gerda Binder, *What we know about the gender digital divide for girls: A literature review* (New York: UN International Children's Emergency Fund, 2021), https://www.unicef.org/eap/media/8311/file/What%20we%20know%20about%20the%20gender%20digital%20divide%20for%20girls:%20A%20literature%20review.pdf.

36 ImpactoTIC, "Why are women more victims of cybercrime than men?"

proposed in the Cybercrime Convention. This approach accounts for the distinct needs of all groups of people.[37] It explicitly seeks gender equality in the implementation of any solution. This includes having consultations that specifically look to eliminate gender biases. This approach encourages all member states to view activities related to the Cybercrime Convention from a gender perspective.[38]

Some countries have made significant progress in addressing gender-based cybercrimes through law enforcement. One example is the implementation of the *Ley Olimpia* (Olympian Law) in México.[39] This reform was made to the Penal Codes of 17 states after a woman's intimate images went viral on social media. This law gives law enforcement officers a clear definition of what entails digital violence and media violence. It also clearly defines behaviors that violate individual privacy. This makes it easier to identify and punish cybercriminals in Mexico. [40] Similarly, in December 2022, the Violence Against Women Division of the Council of Europe took important steps to address cybercrime. It gave recommendations to

member states of the Istanbul Convention on the Digital Dimension of Violence Against Women. These included addressing the lack of regulations on "stalkerware" apps.[41]

Delegates of this committee must consider various solutions to address the role of gender in cybercrime. Current regulations can provide inspiration for creating international agreements. These agreements should seek to promote education, provide care to victims of cybercrime, and carry out actions to raise awareness of cybercrime.[42] It is the responsibility of the international community to ensure these crimes do not go unpunished.

Conclusion

Cyberspace is growing rapidly, and with it, cybercrime rates are increasing exponentially. It is necessary that regulations in this area are put in place. A very useful approach for this is cyber-diplomacy. This is defined as the use of diplomacy

37   Katharine M. Millar, "What Does it Mean to Gender Mainstream the Proposed Cybercrime Convention?" *Chatham House,* May 26, 2022, https://www.unodc.org/documents/Cybercrime/AdHocCommittee/Second_session/Documents/Chatham_House_Millar_What_ does_it_mean_to_gender_mainstream_the_proposed_cybercrime_convention.pdf.
38   Millar, "What Does it Mean to Gender Mainstream the Proposed Cybercrime Convention?"
39   EL PACcTO, "Cybercrime through a gender lens."
40   "La "Ley Olimpia" y el combate a la violencia digital," Procuraduría Federal del Consumidor, April 26, 2021, https://www.gob.mx/ profeco/es/articulos/la-ley-olimpia-y-el-combate-a-la-violencia-digital?idiom=es.
41   "Joining forces for high-level conference on digital violence against women," Council of Europe, December 6, 2022, https://www.coe. int/en/web/cyberviolence/-/joining-forces-for-high-level-conference-on-digital-violence-against-women.
42   EL PACcTO, "Cybercrime through a gender lens."

Activist Olimpia Coral Melo during a government event in Mexico City promoting the "Ley Olimpia."

Credit: Wikimedia user EneasMx

to accomplish a state's national interest in cyberspace.[43] This will help create the needed frameworks to regulate cyberspace and prevent and control cyber crimes. This can also strengthen existing frameworks, as it leads the way to promote international funding and collaboration. It is important to consider that the UNCAC is a legally binding body. Thus, the mandatory character of its provisions makes it a useful tool for developing an all-inclusive response to the global problem of cybercrime and corruption.[44] As a committee, it will be crucial that delegates take a collaborative approach in order to ensure that cybersecurity and corruption are addressed appropriately. Implementing the appropriate frameworks, regulations, and initiatives with the level of efficiency needed is crucial.

43 Mark Bryan F. Manantan, "Defining Cyber Diplomacy," Australian Institute of International Affairs, November 10, 2021, https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/defining-cyber-diplomacy/
44 "United Nations Convention against Corruption," UN Office on Drugs and Crime, accessed February 9, 2023, https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/uncac.html.

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