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**Social Humanitarian and Cultural Committee**  
**SAI International School Model United Nations 2026, Bhubaneswar,**  
**Odisha**



**Background Guide**

**Agenda:** Addressing the rise of loneliness, mental health challenges and social isolation among youth in the digital era.

**Dates:** 24-25 July, 2026

**Executive Board:**

*Mr. Sarthak Mishra*- Chairperson

*Ms. Namrata Mishra*- Vice Chairperson

**Note:** The present document intends to make you aware of the background of the agenda put forward for the discussion. It does not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of SAIMUN 2026

## **Letter from the Executive Board**

Dear Delegates,

We welcome you to this simulation of the UNGA SOCHUM at SAIMUN 2026. From the off, it is our hope that you have begun your initial and most basic research into the agenda and related topics. On the outset, we must be aware of the Mandate of the Committee and understand that though general debate can happen on this agenda, the resolutions made during council cannot pertain to matters beyond the ambit of our mandate.

We hope that the following study guide can provide an insight into the nature and functionality of the committee. However, we must also warn you that this guide is merely an assistive document, and should by no means encompass the entire scope of your research into the agenda. We, the members of the Executive Board, do indeed expect the debate in committee to follow a certain direction that shall be made clear by this guide; however, we would highly appreciate delegates to find different viewpoints and angles to the issues put forward by the agenda. Your Executive Board is here to guide debate, and will be taking part in substantive debate only through the updates and questions to you. Regarding Rules of Procedure, we would ask you to be conversant in them but not regard them as strict and unbreakable.

We urge you to use this background guide only as a starting point for your research. At no point are you supposed to rely completely on it. Only when you research beyond the guide can we ensure healthy debate. What this Executive Board expects is that you to express an analysis of the information you have, not to just read out that information. This will be a fast-paced committee, and despite the tremendous pressure, it will be a refreshing experience from the usual pace of debate in MUNs. Never be afraid to suggest something out of the box, because it is going to be discussed by your peers if you can lobby. We expect the delegates to perform well by striking the right balance between Substantive and Procedural knowledge.

Lastly, we would request all the delegates to put sincere efforts in preparation and research for the simulation and work hard to make it a fruitful learning experience for all. Feel free to contact us if you have any queries or doubt.

Best Regards

Executive Board- UNGA SOCHUM

## **Evidence or Proof Accepted**

Following sources will be accepted as credible in the committee:

### **1) News Sources**

a. REUTERS – Any Reuters’ article which clearly makes mention of the fact stated or is in contradiction of the fact being stated by another delegate in council can be used to substantiate arguments in the committee. (<http://www.reuters.com> )

b. State operated News Agencies – These reports can be used in the support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any country as such but in that situation, they can be denied by any other country in the council. Some examples are, RIA Novosti (Russia) <http://en.rian.ru/> IRNA (Iran) <http://www.irna.ir/ENIndex.html>

### **2) Government Reports**

These reports can be used in a similar way as the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country. However, a nuance is that the Executive Board as credible information can still accept a report that is being denied by a certain country. Some examples are Government Websites like the State Department of the United States of America <http://www.state.gov/index.htm> or the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation <http://www.eng.mil.ru/en/index.htm>. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of various nations like India (<http://www.mea.gov.in/> ) or People’s Republic of China (<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/> ). Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Reports <http://www.un.org/en/members/> Multilateral Organizations like the NATO, ASEAN, OPEC, etc.

### **3) UN Reports**

All UN Reports are considered credible information or evidence for the Executive Board of this joint session. UN Bodies like the UNSC (<http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/> ) or UNGA (<http://www.un.org/en/ga/> ). UN Affiliated bodies like the International Atomic Energy Agency (<http://www.iaea.org/>), World Bank (<http://www.worldbank.org/> ), International Monetary Fund (<http://www.imf.org/external/index.html> ), International Committee of the RedCross (<http://www.icrc.org/eng/index.jsp> ), etc.

## **Introduction to the Committee: UNGA SOCHUM**

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM), officially known as the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), is one of the six main committees of the General Assembly. It deals primarily with human rights, humanitarian issues, and matters that affect peoples and cultures worldwide. While it does not have the power to adopt legally binding resolutions like the Security Council, SOCHUM plays a crucial role in debating global human rights issues, shaping international norms, and recommending actions for the General Assembly to take.

The Committee has near-universal participation since all 193 UN Member States can take part in its discussions, reflecting the GA's principle of equal representation. This inclusivity makes SOCHUM a central platform for states to deliberate on politically sensitive human rights issues and humanitarian crises, especially when other UN organs are paralyzed by geopolitical divides.

### **Mandate**

The mandate of SOCHUM is rooted in the Charter of the United Nations and reinforced by General Assembly rules of procedure. It covers three broad areas:

1. Human Rights
  - SOCHUM examines human rights questions, including the reports of the Human Rights Council (HRC) and the Special Procedures system.
  - It deals with fundamental freedoms, self-determination, the right to development, elimination of racial discrimination, and protection of minorities.
  - It has historically addressed situations involving gross human rights violations, apartheid, and racial discrimination, and continues to deliberate on issues such as the rights of refugees, indigenous peoples, and self-determination for non-self-governing territories.
2. Humanitarian Affairs
  - The Committee discusses the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian agencies.
  - It addresses the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices and debates questions regarding occupied territories.
  - It also considers matters related to refugees, displaced persons, stateless individuals, and humanitarian responses to crises.
3. Cultural and Self-Determination Issues
  - The Committee examines matters of decolonization, self-determination, and the rights of peoples under colonial rule or occupation.
  - It has historically debated apartheid in South Africa, the question of Palestine, and self-determination for Western Sahara, among others.

### **Powers and Functions**

SOCHUM's powers are recommendatory, meaning it cannot itself impose sanctions, authorize peacekeeping operations, or establish binding international law. However, its functions are politically significant, as it shapes the agenda of the General Assembly and contributes to global human rights governance. Its functions include:

1. Examining Reports and Referrals
  - SOCHUM reviews reports from the Human Rights Council, the Human Rights Treaty Bodies, and Special Rapporteurs.
  - It also considers reports from humanitarian agencies such as UNHCR and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

2. Debating and Drafting Resolutions
  - The Committee drafts resolutions on human rights violations, humanitarian emergencies, and self-determination, which are then passed to the General Assembly plenary for adoption.
  - These resolutions, while non-binding, carry significant moral and political weight. For example, repeated GA resolutions on apartheid were instrumental in mobilizing international opinion against South Africa's racial regime.
3. Promoting Accountability
  - While SOCHUM itself cannot prosecute or enforce actions, it can refer issues to other UN bodies such as the Security Council, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), or International Court of Justice (ICJ).
  - It has played a vital role in keeping human rights crises on the UN agenda when the Security Council was deadlocked due to vetoes.
4. Facilitating International Cooperation
  - SOCHUM provides a forum for dialogue among states, NGOs, and observers.
  - It allows the international community to coordinate humanitarian responses, share best practices, and strengthen international law concerning minorities, refugees, and displaced persons.
5. Addressing Decolonization and Self-Determination
  - The Committee deals with petitions and reports relating to non-self-governing territories and peoples seeking independence.
  - Historically, it was a key forum for anti-colonial struggles, and today it continues to monitor unresolved questions of self-determination.

### **Relationship with Other UN Organs**

SOCHUM operates within a network of UN human rights institutions:

- Human Rights Council (HRC): SOCHUM receives and debates the HRC's annual report, enabling GA members to review and discuss the Council's actions.
- Security Council: While SOCHUM cannot take binding action, it can recommend that the Security Council consider human rights or humanitarian issues, such as genocide or war crimes.
- ECOSOC: SOCHUM coordinates with ECOSOC on human rights treaty bodies and broader social issues.
- International Court of Justice (ICJ) & International Criminal Court (ICC): Though not directly linked, SOCHUM debates can generate momentum for cases referred to these bodies.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

The contemporary global landscape for youth is increasingly defined by a profound dichotomy: unprecedented digital connectivity coexisting with an escalating crisis of social isolation and psychological distress. As the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee (SOCHUM) convenes to address social, humanitarian, and cultural issues, the mental well-being of the approximately 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24—accounting for 16 percent of the global population—emerges as a primary concern. This demographic is the first to navigate a fully digitized adolescence, where social interaction, education, and identity formation are mediated by complex algorithms and persistent online environments. The following guide provides a comprehensive analysis of the statistical trends, neurobiological mechanisms, legislative interventions, and cross-cultural case studies defining this era, structured to facilitate informed debate and the formulation of robust international policy.

### **Statistical Foundations and Global Prevalence of Mental Disorders**

The scale of the mental health challenge facing modern youth is often described as an "iceberg," where reported diagnoses represent only the visible portion of a much larger, submerged crisis of sub-clinical distress and social withdrawal. Data from the World Health Organization and UNICEF indicates that more than 13 percent of adolescents aged 10 to 19 globally live with a diagnosed mental disorder. This equates to roughly 166 million individuals, with the burden of disease falling disproportionately across different regions and genders.

### **Global Prevalence and Demographic Variations**

The prevalence of mental health disorders varies significantly by region, often reflecting the intersection of digital penetration and existing social support structures. In Europe and North America, the rates are notably higher than the global average, suggesting that high-income, hyper-connected societies may be particularly vulnerable to the side effects of digital saturation.

Region	Adolescent Mental Disorder Prevalence (%)	Estimated Number of Affected Youth (10-19)
Global Average	13.2%	166 Million
Europe	16.3%	9 Million
Middle East & North Africa	Highest Regional Rates	17.5 Million (Approx.)
North America	Significant Peak	18 Million (Approx.)
Western Europe	Consistently High	7 Million (Approx.)

Within these statistics, gender-based disparities emerge. While 89 million adolescent boys live with a mental disorder compared to 77 million girls, the nature of the disorders and their manifestations differ. Boys are more likely to exhibit conduct disorders and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), while girls show higher rates of internalizing disorders such as depression and anxiety. Specifically, for girls aged 15 to 19, suicide has become the third leading cause of death, while for boys in the same age group, it is the fourth. The economic toll

is equally staggering, with an estimated US\$387.2 billion in human capital lost annually due to mental health conditions in the 0-19 age group.

### **The Shift Toward Problematic Digital Use**

A critical driver of these trends is the shift from "casual" to "problematic" digital engagement. The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study, which surveyed 280,000 young people across 44 countries in 2022, found a sharp rise in problematic social media use, increasing from 7 percent in 2018 to 11 percent in 2022. This condition is characterized by addiction-like symptoms, including an inability to control usage, withdrawal symptoms when offline, and the neglect of personal relationships and academic responsibilities in favor of digital interaction.

Behavior Type	Prevalence Among Adolescents (%)	Primary Gender Association
Problematic Social Media Use	11%	Girls (13% vs Boys 9%)
Problematic Gaming Risk	12%	Boys (16% vs Girls 7%)
Constant Online Contact	36%	15-year-old Girls (44%)
Daily Digital Gaming	34%	Boys
Heavy Gaming (>4 hours/day)	22% (of gamers)	Boys

The implications of these behaviors extend into the physical realm. Problematic social media use is consistently associated with less sleep and later bedtimes, which in turn correlates with poor academic performance and increased symptoms of depression and anxiety. Furthermore, adolescents who exhibit problematic digital habits are more likely to report lower mental and social well-being and higher levels of substance use compared to their non-problematic peers.

### **The Digital Mechanism: Algorithms, Design, and the Neurobiology of Connection**

To address the rise of loneliness and social isolation, the committee must understand the technical and biological mechanisms that facilitate these states. Modern digital platforms are not neutral tools; they are engineered environments designed to capture and sustain human attention through sophisticated algorithmic feedback loops.

#### **Algorithmic Vulnerability and the Dopamine Cycle**

The core of digital engagement lies in the manipulation of reward-processing pathways in the brain. Adolescence is a critical developmental window during which the prefrontal cortex—responsible for executive function, impulse control, and long-term planning—is still maturing, while the amygdala and reward centers are highly sensitive. Digital platforms exploit this "developmental gap" by providing intermittent, variable rewards in the form of likes, comments, and notifications.

Research indicates that frequent engagement with algorithmic feeds alters dopamine pathways, fostering a dependency analogous to substance use disorders. Features such as "infinite scroll" and "autoplay" remove natural stopping points, leading to a state of "partial attention" and compulsive usage. For teenagers, this constant need for social validation through digital metrics

creates a "dopamine cycle" where the anticipation of a digital reward takes precedence over real-world social engagement.

### **The Polarization of Experience: Normalization vs. Marginalization**

The impact of digital use on mental health is often described through the "Digital Goldilocks Hypothesis," which suggests that moderate use is associated with the best mental health outcomes, while both total abstinence and excessive use are linked to lower well-being. In the contemporary youth culture, digital interaction has become the "normative" mode of peer engagement. Consequently, those who do not participate in these digital spaces (non-active users, approximately 15 percent of adolescents) may experience lower well-being due to social exclusion and a lack of connectedness.

However, when use becomes problematic, the "Normalization Theory" suggests that the cultural context matters. In societies where intense digital use is widespread, it may be perceived as normative and associated with higher life satisfaction; conversely, in regions where such use is less common, it is more likely to correlate with psychological complaints and lower peer support. This nuance suggests that social isolation is not merely a function of time spent online, but a function of how digital habits align or conflict with the surrounding social infrastructure.

### **Loneliness and Social Isolation: Defining the Modern Epidemic**

While often used interchangeably, loneliness and social isolation are distinct psychological and sociological phenomena that require targeted interventions. Loneliness is the subjective, painful feeling that arises from a gap between desired and actual social connections. Social isolation is the objective lack of relationships and contact with others.

### **The Scale of Youth Loneliness**

Contrary to the traditional view of loneliness as a concern for the elderly, recent data reveals that young adults are among the loneliest groups in modern society. In the United States, 30 percent of adults aged 18 to 34 reported feeling lonely every day or several times a week in early 2024. Globally, between 17 and 21 percent of individuals aged 13 to 29 reported feeling lonely, with the highest rates observed among teenagers.

Loneliness Context	Statistic	Implication
Global Youth Loneliness	17-21%	Affects mental health and economic productivity
Low-Income Countries	24%	Twice the rate of high-income countries (11%)
Adolescent Social Isolation	1 in 4	Higher risk of depression and anxiety
Academic Impact	22% increase in poor grades	Loneliness directly impacts human capital

The causes of this "loneliness epidemic" are multifaceted. While digital technology is a primary contributor, other factors include families spending less time together (66%), increased work-related exhaustion (62%), and the breakdown of community infrastructure. Loneliness is not merely a psychological state; it is a systemic health risk linked to increased rates of stroke, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and cognitive decline. For adolescents, the feeling of loneliness is a significant predictor of self-harm and suicidal ideation, with lonely individuals twice as likely to develop clinical depression.

## **Hikikomori: The Global Spread of Extreme Social Withdrawal**

A severe manifestation of social isolation is the phenomenon of *Hikikomori*, traditionally defined as pathological social withdrawal where an individual remains isolated in their home for six months or more. Originally identified in Japan in the 1990s, *Hikikomori* is now recognized as an international phenomenon, with cases documented in South Korea, Italy, France, India, and the United States.

Recent research distinguishes between "pathological" and "non-pathological" withdrawal. Non-pathological *Hikikomori* describes individuals who may be isolated but are self-sufficient through remote work and digital communication, reflecting a shift in social norms post-COVID-19. However, pathological withdrawal is marked by extreme distress and functional impairment. The "infrastructure of withdrawal"—enabled by the digital economy, remote learning, and delivery services—allows individuals to live entirely within their own rooms, potentially masking a growing crisis of hidden social isolation. South Korea reports that over 5 percent of its youth show signs of *Hikikomori*-like isolation, while Italy estimates 100,000 young people are living in social withdrawal.

## **Legislative Frontiers: Balancing Regulation and Human Rights**

In response to these trends, several Member States have pioneered legislative frameworks designed to hold technology companies accountable and protect youth mental health. These interventions represent a shift from parental responsibility to a "Duty of Care" model for platform providers.

### **The United Kingdom Online Safety Act 2023**

The Online Safety Act (OSA) 2023 is a comprehensive set of laws designed to make the internet safer for users under 18. The Act moves beyond physical safety to recognize the psychological impact of digital environments, targeting issues like "doomscrolling," toxic influencer culture, and exposure to harmful algorithms.

#### **Key Obligations for Platforms under the UK OSA:**

- **Illegal Content Duties:** Platforms must implement systems to proactively identify and remove "priority illegal content," including material related to terrorism, child sexual abuse, and the encouragement of self-harm or suicide.
- **Protection of Children:** For services "likely to be accessed by children," platforms must prevent minors from encountering "primary priority content," such as pornographic images and content promoting eating disorders or self-injury.
- **Age Assurance:** Platforms must implement "highly effective age assurance" to prevent children from accessing age-inappropriate content.
- **User Empowerment:** Large "Category 1" platforms must provide tools for adult users to filter out unverified accounts and harmful content, giving them greater control over their digital environment.

Despite its ambitious scope, the OSA has faced criticism. Experts argue that its complexity—described as a "house where the furniture is put in later"—gives excessive power to the regulator (Ofcom) and government ministers to rewrite rules without full parliamentary debate. Furthermore, there is concern that the focus on "reasonable and proportionate" measures may deter platforms from innovating beyond current best practices for fear of losing "safe harbor" protections.

### **Australia's Social Media Minimum Age Legislation**

In 2024, Australia passed the Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act, establishing a world-first legal age limit of 16 for social media platforms such as Instagram,

TikTok, Snapchat, and X. The law places the onus on platforms to take "reasonable steps" to prevent underage users from holding accounts, with potential fines of up to A\$49.5 million for non-compliance.

Legislative Feature	Detail
Minimum Age	16 years
Platform Definition	Services using recommender algorithms, infinite scroll, or feedback features (likes)
Exemptions	Messaging, gaming, education, and health support services
Transition Period	12 months for platforms to implement systems (by end of 2025)
Enforcement	eSafety Commissioner

Early reports and surveys from 2025-2026 suggest significant implementation challenges. Internal government briefings indicated that teenagers largely bypassed restrictions or returned to platforms after brief absences, with only about 25 percent of 14-to-15-year-olds complying with the ban. The social nature of these platforms means that compliance often depends on a "tipping point" of peer behavior; teenagers report that they would need roughly two-thirds of their peers to stop using social media before they would stop themselves. Furthermore, while some parents reported positive behavioral changes (e.g., more in-person interaction), others noted a shift to alternative, less-regulated platforms and increased digital inequality.

### **Geopolitics and Human Rights: The UNGA SOCHUM Perspective**

The international community's response to youth mental health and digital technology is shaped by a complex interplay of human rights, national sovereignty, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### **Resolution 80/215: Human Rights in the Digital Age**

Adopted in December 2025, UNGA Resolution 80/215, "Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Context of Digital Technologies," represents a milestone in the global normative framework. The resolution affirms that the same rights people have offline must also be protected online and stresses the importance of closing the digital divide, which often reflects and amplifies existing social and economic inequalities.

The adoption of Resolution 80/215 was not without controversy, passing with 174 votes in favor, 3 against (United States, Argentina, and Israel), and 4 abstentions. The United States' "no" vote was driven by concerns over "overly broad or undefined commitments to international regulatory frameworks" that might impinge on state sovereignty and constitutional protections for free speech. This geopolitical tension highlights the challenge of creating a unified global standard for digital safety while respecting diverse legal and cultural traditions.

### **The Ecosystem Model and Meaningful Youth Engagement**

The UN Youth Office advocates for an "Ecosystem Model" for youth mental health, which recognizes that well-being is shaped by interconnected dimensions including governance, peace, education, and technology. Within this framework, technology is viewed as a "digital determinant of health" that can either protect or exclude.

### **Key Principles of the Ecosystem Model:**

- **Holistic Approach:** Well-being is not simply the absence of illness but the ability to participate fully in community life.
- **Meaningful Engagement:** Youth must be treated as "agents of change" rather than passive recipients of care. This involves inclusive, intentional partnerships where power is shared between youth and adults.
- **Rights-Based Development:** Strategies must be grounded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ensuring that every young person has the right to be heard and to access the highest attainable standard of health.

### **Case Studies: Innovation and Advocacy in the Global South**

While much research originates in high-income countries, the most innovative responses to youth mental health challenges are often found in regions with limited formal healthcare infrastructure.

#### **Nigeria: Digital Advocacy and Stigma Reduction**

In Nigeria, where mental health remains heavily stigmatized and services are underfunded, youth-led startups like SereniMind are using digital platforms to create a "new way for young Africans to connect". The Africa Wellness Voices Initiative (AWVI) coordinates digital advocacy campaigns across 25 African countries, leveraging digital storytelling and AI-assisted coordination tools to manage messaging. By spotlighting personal reflections and wellness messages tailored to specific cultural contexts, AWVI has reached over 300,000 young people, fostering social acceptance and encouraging help-seeking behaviors in a region where stigma often keeps people silent.

#### **Kenya: Addressing the Digital Gig Economy**

Kenya's "Silicon Savannah" has seen rapid growth in the digital gig economy, with approximately 1.9 million Kenyans involved in digital labor by 2022. However, this economic opportunity comes with unique psychological hazards. Workers moderating graphic content for AI training have reported developing PTSD-like symptoms, highlighting the need for labor protections in digital spaces.

In response, the *Akili Innovative Synergy Hub* launched the *AkiliBora* mobile application. This tool integrates an AI-powered chatbot to provide mental health screening and referral options for Kenyan youth. Recognizing the digital divide, the project also developed SMS/USSD features to extend its reach to populations without internet access, demonstrating how digital interventions can be made equitable and scalable in low-resource settings.

#### **Indonesia and the Global Summit on Youth Mental Health**

Reflecting a broader shift toward youth-led solutions, the 2025 Global Summit on Youth Mental Health—co-authored by leaders from Brazil, Greece, and South Africa—emphasized the "power of authentic storytelling to shift stigma". Youth participants highlighted the "digital dilemma": while technology can harm through addictive design and bullying, it also provides the platform for "reclaiming online spaces" and translating complex research into culturally adaptable tools. This summit underscored a deep desire among youth to move beyond clinical diagnoses and into "shared, cross-border action".

#### **Corporate Accountability and the Benchmark for Change**

The role of the private sector in the youth mental health crisis is under increasing scrutiny. The *Benchmark Report 2024* examined the practices of global technology and telecommunications giants, revealing significant gaps between corporate rhetoric and actual commitment to child safety.

These findings suggest that while technology companies have enormous potential to steer the "digital revolution" toward positive outcomes, current self-regulatory models are insufficient. Critics argue that blaming a single company (e.g., Meta) for the mental health crisis ignores broader social failures—such as the underfunding of schools and the breakdown of traditional social safety nets—but it does not absolve these companies of their responsibility to design products that do not actively harm their most vulnerable users.

### **Conclusion: Strategic Pathways for the Third Committee**

As SOCHUM deliberates, it must move beyond the "technology is bad" versus "technology is good" binary. The evidence indicates that the digital era has permanently altered the social-emotional landscape of youth, creating both new risks and new opportunities for resilience.

### **Synthesis of Findings**

The rise in loneliness and mental health challenges is driven by a convergence of addictive algorithmic design, the erosion of physical community infrastructure, and a global increase in "problematic" digital habits. While legislative efforts in the UK and Australia represent important steps toward corporate accountability, their success is hampered by the rapid evolution of technology and the social norms that drive non-compliance. Meanwhile, youth-led digital advocacy in the Global South proves that technology can be harnessed as a tool for healing and stigma reduction when it is culturally grounded and equitably distributed.

### **Recommendations for International Action**

1. **Standardize Digital Safety Metrics:** Member States should work toward a global consensus on what constitutes "problematic social media use," similar to the WHO's definition of "Gaming Disorder," to facilitate better data collection and intervention.
2. **Mandate Human Rights Due Diligence:** Following Resolution 80/215, international frameworks should require technology companies to conduct and publicly disclose "Human Rights Impact Assessments" for their algorithms, specifically focusing on the developmental needs of children and youth.
3. **Invest in "Social Infrastructure":** Mental health is not just a clinical issue; it is shaped by environments. Member States should prioritize investments in schools, community centers, and accessible public spaces that encourage in-person social connection.
4. **Promote Digital Literacy and Self-Regulation:** Rather than relying solely on bans, educational systems must teach youth "digital literacy" and self-regulation skills, enabling them to understand and mitigate the "dopamine cycle" of social media.
5. **Expand Telehealth and Digital Support:** Member States should support the integration of digital mental health tools (like *AkiliBora* or the *Clear Fear* app) into national healthcare systems, ensuring these tools are evidence-based and culturally adaptable.

### **Questions for the Committee**

1. How can Member States balance the sovereign right to regulate digital technologies with the universal human rights of youth to access information and freedom of expression online?
2. What international mechanisms can be established to hold multi-national technology corporations accountable for the psychological harms associated with "addictive" algorithmic design?
3. Given the high rate of non-compliance with age-based social media bans, what alternative regulatory models (such as "Duty of Care" or "Age-Appropriate Design Codes") are most effective for protecting youth mental health?
4. How can the United Nations better support the scaling of youth-led digital mental health initiatives from the Global South to other low-resource settings?
5. What strategies should Member States employ to address the "digital divide" ensuring that efforts to reduce online harm do not inadvertently increase social isolation for marginalized youth?
6. How can the international community address the unique mental health challenges posed by the "digital gig economy" and content moderation for young laborers?
7. What role should the WHO and UNICEF play in creating standardized, cross-national guidelines for "healthy digital habits" in educational curricula?
8. How can the Third Committee facilitate the integration of "mental health literacy" into the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) to reflect the realities of the digital era?
9. In what ways can the "Ecosystem Model" for mental health be used to foster intergenerational dialogue and reduce the "loneliness gap" between youth and older adults?
10. To what extent should the "right to privacy" include protection from "behavioral inferencing" and the algorithmic profiling of minors by social media platforms?