

Social Humanitarian and Cultural Committee: Social Rating Systems.

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I. Historical Context

China, one of the world's most powerful countries, has finished implementing its social rating system or as The Chinese Communist Party calls it “Social Credit.” It began in 2014 and aimed to reinforce the trust the government had in its people and punish those who were deemed untrustworthy. They say “keeping trust is glorious and breaking trust is disgraceful.” The purpose of said credit system is to implement a more sincere society in which the government could bestow trust upon its citizens and improve the economic and social operating environment. It is mandatory for all citizens and everything you do, say and buy is controlled and evaluated by the authorities. With the help of a sophisticated network of 200 million surveillance cameras, ratings are appointed with information on facial recognition, body scanning and geo-tracking of each person. In addition to that, medical and educational records, along with financial and internet browsing histories are taken into consideration for your social credit. The score fluctuates based on the person's behavior, but can also be affected by people they are associated with. Trustworthy citizens are placed on lists in public areas called “walls of honor” and receive discounts on their utility bills. The benefits of being ranked on the higher end of the scale include waived deposits on hotels, priority job applications and fast-tracking to the most prestigious universities. On the other hand, infractions can consist of bad driving, leaving the trash outside, smoking in non-smoking zones, buying too many video games and posting fake news online. The residents are rated from D, being the worst behaved, to AAA, being an outstanding citizen. Ratings are also needed for businesses; these show how reliable the company is in the eyes of the government. It is used to perfect the “Socialist Market Economy.”

The Chinese Government has been very secretive in showing how the credit system works but one of the main points is interconnectivity. The Chinese Government has created various platforms that link the financial, social and drivers aspects of a person's life. They use a

mobile payment app that is linked with their social media platform, driver's license, and car registration. This allows the government surveillance team to monitor every transaction, driving incident and any nonstandard actions that occur. The UN has yet to establish any unified views on the Social Rating Systems but Vuk Jeremic, a Serbian diplomat with the UN, proposed that an international rating system be put in place. Like Vuk other diplomats have expressed their approval, as well as their discontent with the Social rating System. The UN is a critical part in determining the development of countries. This is why it is imperative that the UN decide on whether to support or repel any type of social rating system.

II. Conflicts

A. Social/ Human Rights

The implementation of the rating system has received, both, extreme backlash and praises from the Chinese people. Some believe they are being deprived of their liberty to differ from the Chinese Communist Party and some think that it instills harmony throughout the nation. For one thing, the government encourages companies to consult “the blacklist” in which people who have low ratings are written down. This affects the citizens because being on “the blacklist” lowers your chances of getting good jobs, buying property, etc. Moreover, the social rating system gives too much power to the system creators when it comes to determining morals and ethics, such as the intrusion on personal privacy. Lastly, the system is a black and white situation; it leaves no room for mistakes or accidents. Either you earn points or lose them, there is no in between in situations. However, some citizens do believe it reinforces good behavior or, rather, behavior deemed favorable by the Communist Party. Some citizens have already noticed that the social rating system has been making them better behaved, and how, hope that with time they will continue to improve. In some cities, cameras scan train stations for China’s most wanted, doing this helps capture criminals with more ease, hence keeping the streets safer. In addition, one could argue that such a system has helped create a better democratic society by enhancing transparency in it.

B. Economic Implications

China's economy has also been one of the topics of discussion when it comes to the social rating system. It has brought both positive and negative aspects, such as whether it has been proven to be compatible in a way that the rating system doesn't disturb the economy. After Mao Zedong's totalitarian regime, his successors also craved order but feared the consequences of totalitarian rule. As a result of this, the Chinese government entered a tacit agreement with its citizens: in exchange for less oppressive government controls, it would provide relative peace and economic prosperity to its citizen. For a few decades, this way of governing helped with the breakneck economic growth, but then, China's economy wasn't growing at the same pace. With the social rating system, some people thought that it could be a new way to manage the economy and society, while the government and the Chinese people prosper. With it, they could take the precautionary measures to help the government identify and check for fraud and theft. Furthermore, according to Foreign Policy, credit systems monitor whether people pay bills on time, and would prevent them from taking on more debt that they may not be able to pay back. Contrary to this line of thought, it wouldn't benefit everybody since "the central bank has the financial data from 800 million people, but only 320 million have a traditional credit history," and because of that the annual economic loss caused by lack of credit information is more than 600 billion yuan. The lack of a complete national credit system is the reason behind why the government is determined that Citizen Scores are long overdue and how they badly need to fix what they refer to as a "trust deficit."

III. International Implementation

One of the main points of this committee is to determine if a system similar to the Social Credit System is viable for other western countries. Implementing a system like the social credit system is extremely controversial, as discussed above, but other countries seem to be heading in the same direction. Germany appears to be investigating a system like the social credit system. Gerd Gigerenzer, director of the Harding Center for Risk Literacy and head of the council that advises the German Ministry of Justice, said that "We live in a world where judgment is being replaced by numbers – by scores that calculate the value of a human being, with the help of

algorithms.” Like Germany, other countries have expressed intrigue in such system and may take steps forward with it, but for many other countries, a system like the Social Credit is contradictory to their laws, constitution, and foundation.

IV. Guide questions

1. How does the implementation of the Chinese Social Rating system affect your delegation?
2. What is your delegations position regarding the implementation of The Social Credit in China, and whether it should be used to improve the social and economic affairs of a country?
3. What is your delegations position regarding obstacles other countries could encounter while implementing systems similar to China's? What plans does your delegation propose to overcome these obstacles?
4. What is your delegation’s position regarding the extreme surveillance, and lack of privacy, the chinese government has on its people?
5. How can your delegation help the Chinese people, if deemed necessary?
6. Does your delegation benefit from the implementation of said system?
7. What is your delegations position on the implementation of a similar system in other western societies?

V. Message of the Dias

This committee poses a very current and important debate; this is why we believe it is imperative that clear positions be expressed. The purpose of this committee is to determine what the UN deems of a system as controlling as the Social Credit System and if it is supportive of it. It also aims to clarify if a Social Credit System is a plausible idea for other countries.

Taking into consideration the size of the committee, the due date for the position papers is Tuesday, November 6 at 11:59 pm. We would like to start correcting as early as possible; therefore the earlier they are sent in, the better. Please note that late turn-ins will be penalized. Position papers must follow the following format: Times New Roman font, size 12 at 1.5

spacing, have references and have a maximum of 5 pages. Failure to fulfill these requirements will result in a deduction of points from your final position paper grade. Please email the position paper to both chairs. You may write the position paper in either English or Spanish, whichever you feel most comfortable with. We are very excited about this committee and to see what excellent ideas you come up with. Feel free to contact either of us if you have any questions. Good luck!

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VI. Resources used and referenced

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