MASMUN'27

UNFOLDING THE DAWN



International Criminal Court

Topic 2:

Michael Jackson v. The State of California: Neverland Ranch Allegations

MASMUN'27

UNFOLDING THE DAWN

Topic Overview

This mock case deals with accusations of child sexual abuse at Michael Jackson's Neverland Ranch, and the State of California criminal trial that was held in 2005. Please note that this is a state criminal case and is not within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. The jury found him innocent of all charges. It is for the delegates to focus on the criminal trial procedure, evidence, witness credibility and the presumption of innocence, and not on the provisions being as facts.

Background Information

Jury found Jackson not guilty of all charges The result: the jury found that the prosecutors had not met their burden of proving the case against Jackson beyond a reasonable doubt. Therefore, the acquittal should not be used in other cases or issues.

International Frameworks and Previous Actions

The relevant legal basis is California and United States criminal procedure, which include but are not limited to:the requirement that the prosecution prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, the applicable rules of evidence, the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses, and the presumption of innocence. Although the CRC in general provides a context for child protection in this case, it is not applicable in place of domestic criminal law that was applicable at trial. The Rome Statute does not apply in this case.

Key Challenges

Often, high-profile trials become victim to mass media coverage, merging the public judgment with actual admissible evidence. While people may have opinions, testimonies are to be weighed within the context of the case, and neither the notoriety nor the public suspicion of a case cannot replace hard evidence. A fair simulation must avoid sensationalism, protect minors' identities, and distinguish between the case at hand and other allegations or civil litigations. The committee must be aware of the title's impact not to suggest in any way that California v. Jackson constituted an ICC prosecution.

Potential Solutions

The elements of the charged offenses: Look at the charges and the legal requirements.

Evidence and witnesses: Consider corroboration, discrepancies, cross-examination and the unreliability of memory without resorting to stereotypes about witnesses.

Presumption of innocence: Apply the burden of proof in a consistent manner and distinguish between suspicion and adequate evidence for conviction.

Media and fair-trial rights: Join conversations on jury taint, publicity, and how to protect people from outside influence.

Think about dignity, asking questions in a considerate way and safeguards for minors involved in the justice process.

MASMUN'27

UNFOLDING THE DAWN

Guiding Questions

1. What is the difference between an allegation, evidence admitted at trial and a proven fact?
2. How should a jury evaluate testimony alongside other evidence?
3. Why is the burden of proof higher in criminal cases than in many civil proceedings?
4. How can courts protect child witnesses while preserving the accused's right to a fair trial?

\

5. How can media coverage influence public understanding without determining a verdict?
6. Why must this case be distinguished from proceedings before the International Criminal Court?

Resources

California v. Jackson Verdict Coverage, Los Angeles Times — https://www.latimes.com/la-me-jacksontimeline-verdict-story.html

California v. Jackson Verdict Coverage, The Washington Post — https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2005/06/14/jury-acquits-jackson-on-all-charges/42db5b7c-f6ec-40aa-a0ce-31192c684c83/

California Courts: Criminal Cases Overview — https://www.courts.ca.gov/criminal.htm

UN: Convention on the Rights of the Child — https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child