



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHT COUNCIL



Ad Astra Per Aspera

DPS R.N. EXTENSION

Agenda: Global Refugee Crisis: Managing the refugee and migrant crises, the role of government, Private sector and technology.



A word from the Executive Board

Dear delegates,

It gives us great pleasure to welcome you all to the academic simulation of the UNHRC committee at IGNITE Model United Nations Conference 2019.

We hope this experience enriches your public speaking skills and that you learn about a pressing world issue that complicates the lives of many people in our country as well as abroad.

The Agenda under discussion for this session of UNHRC committee is **Global Refugee Crisis**.

Before coming for the conference, it is very important to break the larger agenda into smaller subtopics and ask questions to yourself about the agenda. Making chits and moderated caucus topics beforehand would give you an edge in a committee like UNHRC. It is also crucial to enhance your leadership skills and lobbying capacity since we would give equal importance to overall participation in committee. You are called to conduct a thorough research on the very essence and the details of the topic, as well as on your country's specific position upon that. We can assure you that, should you combine the information inside this guide with your own personal research, you will be sufficiently prepared for the days of committee sessions. We highly encourage you to utilize not only the information provided in the guide but also to extensively explore the agenda yourself and not restrict yourself inside the set boundaries of the themes chosen by the Background Guide.

I hope that this guide will be treated as a starting point for your research. Feel free to contact me on the information below, in case of any problems.

Sincerely,

Dr. Abhishek Puri

(CHAIRPERSON)

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Introduction

The international community was caught unprepared for the huge influx of refugees originating from Syria. While significant contributions have been made by many of the member states by providing asylum and humanitarian assistance, the overall response has remained timid and unstructured.

Faced with domestic pressures, several States have taken unilateral action to control their borders, either by erecting fences, other physical obstacles or by re-introducing strict border control checks. The primary effect has been to redirect the flow of refugees and migrants to other borders and countries.

The developing regions continue to receive refugees disproportionately, with most hosted by low- and middle-income countries. For three years in a row, countries in these regions have hosted an average of 86 per cent of all refugees under mandate, compared with about 70 per cent two decades ago. By the end of 2015, countries in developing regions hosted 13.9 million of the world's total refugee population, compared with the 2.2 million hosted by countries in developed regions. In particular, the Least Developed Countries- those least able to meet the development needs of their own citizens, let alone the humanitarian needs often associated with refugee crises – provided asylum to over 4 million refugees.

The fundamental principle of global solidarity and responsibility sharing, as formulated in the preamble of the 1951 Refugee Convention, which recognizes: “that the grant of asylum may place unduly heavy burdens on certain countries, and that a satisfactory solution of a problem of which the United Nations has recognized the international scope and nature cannot therefore be achieved without international co-operation”.

The Current Crisis

Over 12 million people inside Syria are in need of humanitarian assistance and over four million have fled the country, according to the UN. Iraqis too are facing a resurgence of violence and conflict, including in relation to so-called Islamic State. Over four million Iraqis are currently displaced within and outside the country, according to UNHCR. In Afghanistan, Somalia, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Mali, Nigeria and Eritrea, protracted conflicts and crises threaten the lives of millions of civilians, forcing many to leave their home country in search of safety and security in Europe and elsewhere.

In the case of Syrian refugees, for example, host governments in the Middle East are overwhelmed by the volume of arrivals and some are becoming increasingly hostile, tightening borders, increasing visa or residency restrictions and in some cases effectively denying legal access to work. The security situation in some host countries is also deteriorating, as demonstrated by recent bomb attacks in Turkey and prevailing insecurity in Lebanon.

Meanwhile, the international community's response to the situation in these countries has been wholly inadequate. Responses to UNHCR calls for resettlement places have been slow, and only a third of the estimated 400,000 places needed have been pledged. Funding for the refugee response in the Middle East is less than half what is required and emergency programmers have been cut as a result. UNHCR estimates that 86% of Syrian refugees in Jordan and 70% in Lebanon are living below the poverty line.

International Legal framework

Migrant: The United Nations defines a migrant as „an individual who has resided in a foreign country for more than one year irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular, used to migrate“. This definition formally encompasses refugees, asylum- seekers and economic migrants.

Refugee: A refugee is an individual who „owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country“.

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Asylum-seeker

An asylum-seeker is „A person who seeks safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than his or her own and awaits a decision on the application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In case of a negative decision, the person must leave the country and may be expelled, as May any non- national in an irregular or unlawful situation, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other related grounds. “

International and regional instruments relating to refugees include:

1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees

1967 Optional Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (art. 14)

American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man (art. 27)

American Convention on Human Rights (art. 22)

Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, Colloquium on the International Protection of Refugees in Central America, Mexico and Panama (Cartagena Declaration)

African [Banjul] Charter on Human and Peoples“ Rights (art. 12)

OUA Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of the Refugee Problem in Africa

Arab Charter on Human Rights (art. 28)

Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (art. 12)

European Convention on Human Rights (arts. 2, 3, and 5)

Decisions on asylum applications

In 2015, there were 593 thousand first instance decisions in all EU Member States. By far the largest number of decisions was taken in

Germany, constituting more than 40 % of the total first instance decisions in the EU-28 in 2015. In addition, there were 183 thousand final decisions, with again the far largest share (51 %) in Germany.

The Fatal Journeys

The number of refugees originating from the region has placed an undeniable strain on host communities and countries and on their services and facilities. In neighboring countries, hosting the majority of Syrian refugees, living conditions have become more and more difficult. A recent study that we conducted with the World Bank found that 90 per cent of the Syrian refugees live under national poverty lines in Lebanon and Jordan. At least 10 per cent of the refugee population is considered to be extremely vulnerable. More than half of the children are out of school, working often in the informal sector. Many young girls are forced into early marriage by desperate parents who can no longer afford to send them to school. Assistance to refugees has been inadequate, especially in the crucial sectors of education and income generation. Desperation and lack of hope have thus driven large numbers of Syrians to undertake the dangerous journey to Europe, in the expectation to find safety, dignity and a future.

One million refugees and migrants have made the perilous journey across the Mediterranean into Europe in 2015. The majority – or 850,000 – has crossed from Turkey to Greece through the Aegean and Dodecanese seas.

This movement constitutes one of the largest movements of displaced people through European borders since World War Two.

With 3,771 deaths, 2015 was the deadliest year on record for migrants and refugees crossing the Mediterranean trying to reach Europe, reports IOM in a year-end summary. By comparison 3,279 deaths were recorded in the Mediterranean in 2014.

Globally, IOM estimates that over 5,350 migrants died in 2015. IOM also recorded total sea arrivals to Europe in 2015 at 1,004,356 or almost five times the previous year's total of 219,000.

Case Studies

Movements of Syrians

Approximately 6.5 million Syrians are internally displaced within their country. There are 4 million Syrian refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, half of whom are being hosted by the latter. These refugees are benefitting from substantial protection and assistance programmes delivered by governments and over 200 partners. However, with increasing vulnerabilities, limited education and livelihood opportunities, as well as overstretched public services and resources, Syrians will continue to move through Turkey towards Europe.

Movements of Iraqis

Military efforts led by the Iraqi army to regain the full and effective control of its territory have resulted in major internal and external displacement. People fleeing the conflict areas and other parts of Iraq are likely to come mainly to Turkey through land borders or by air.

Movements of Afghans

Afghan asylum-seekers constitute almost a quarter of the new arrivals – the second largest population. Statistics on the protection rate of Afghan asylum-seekers in Europe indicate that the majority are in need of international protection. Many of them belong to ethnic minorities, such as Hazard, facing discrimination in Afghanistan as well as in neighboring countries.

After the end of the winter, which affects the capacity of people to move through the borders with the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey, it is foreseen that a significant number of Afghans will continue to arrive in 2016. This also reflects the deteriorating security situation in the majority of the provinces in Afghanistan and the continuing downward spiral of the economy of the country.

The increased level of poverty among the Afghan community in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in spite of the efforts of the Government, and the large estimated number of undocumented Afghans in the country, are likely to lead to more onward movements towards Europe.

Movements of other nationalities

Movements from other countries are also expected to continue. Ongoing conflicts and insecurity, persistent human rights violations, poverty, and the lack of economic opportunities especially for young people, environmental degradation and climate change, particularly in the Sahel and Eastern Horn of Africa, combined with the lack of regular migration channels, will continue to push individuals to move under dangerous and precarious conditions.

Anti-migrant and refugee sentiment

The current flow and perception that Governments have been unable to cope with the number of refugees and migrants arriving, coupled with the consequences of the terrorist attacks in Paris and the recent terrorist threats in other European capitals have already strengthened the public.

While solidarity has been equally impressive in countries of arrival, transit and destination, it is assumed that continued arrivals will most likely put strain on affected communities and their willingness to accept refugees and migrants.

Hence the urgent need to ensure that, on the one hand, response mechanisms are up to the task of receiving and assisting refugees and migrants in a humane and dignified way and, on the other hand, all efforts are made to promote a more positive (and realistic) image of refugees and migrants and their potential contribution to the societies in which they settle.

Economic Impact of the Refugee Crisis:

The economic costs of housing refugees ranging from the cost of setting up refugee camps, providing social infrastructure, the strain on public services and the lowering of wages is a very important aspect of the crisis and this section shall deal with them in detail.

Europe There has been public outcry in a lot of European countries against the influx of refugees and migrant workers. People who oppose allowing more refugees to seek asylum are of the opinion that refugee influx would dampen the wages in the labor market due to the refugees willing to work for lower pay and also put a severe strain on the public infrastructure. Let us analyse the economic impact that refugees have on a native population since this has been one of the most controversial issues in the crisis. It has galvanized traditionally left-leaning working classes across Europe to go against the open attitude to immigration and refugees that most Left-wing European parties advocate. The campaign to pull Britain out of the EU succeeded in large part due to the fear among the working classes that their jobs and their social security were at stake in event of more refugees coming in. Evidence however suggests that immigration has only a small impact on employment or wages. Unskilled workers and existing migrants are most vulnerable, as they are the closest substitutes for the new arrivals. But the effects are still meagre. For example, a recent paper by Stephen Nickel of Oxford University and Juana Salween of the Bank of England found that a ten-percentage-point rise in the share of migrants working in menial jobs, such as cleaning, depressed wages for such positions by

just 2%. This wage-dampening can even have positive side-effects. Matte Fogged and Giovanni Peril studied refugees arriving in Denmark between 1991 and 2008, and found that they did nudge low-educated natives out of lowly jobs.

But rather than sulking on the dole, the displaced natives switched to jobs that involved less manual labor, sometimes with higher salaries. The evidence on the likely fiscal impact of refugees is murkier, as adding up the tax paid and benefits received by any individual or group is tricky. Those who try tend to find only small differences between immigrants and natives.

The OECD, a club of mostly rich countries, assessed the effect of immigrants on its members' finances in 2007-09. It found they made a net fiscal contribution of around 0.35% of GDP on average, with relatively little variation from country to country.

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Additional Links for Reference:

1. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/syria>
2. <http://syria.unocha.org/>
3. <http://www.dw.de/un-mandates-and-military-intervention/a-17051993>
4. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/10/un-chief-outlines-syria-chemical-weapons-plan-201310801911178169.html>
5. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45790#UIWsadKw3vg>

Evidence or proof is acceptable from sources:

1. News Sources:

- a. REUTERS – Any Reuters article which clearly makes mention of the fact or is in contradiction of the fact being stated by a delegate in council. (<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,
 - i. RIA Novosti (Russia) <http://en.rian.ru/>
 - ii. IRNA (Iran) <http://www.irna.ir/ENIndex.htm>
 - iii. BBC (United Kingdom) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>
 - iv. Xinhua News Agency and CCTV (P.R. China) <http://cctvnews.cntv.cn/>

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.

- a. Government Websites like the State Department of the United States of America (<http://www.state.gov/index.htm>) or the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation (<http://www.eng.mil.ru/en/index.htm>)
- b. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of various nations like India (<http://www.mea.gov.in/>),

People's Republic of China (<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/>),

France (<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/>),

Russian Federation (http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/main_eng)

c. Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Reports

<http://www.un.org/en/members/> (Click on any country to get the website of the Office of its Permanent Representative)

d. Multilateral Organizations like the NATO

(<http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/index.htm>), ASEAN

(<http://www.aseansec.org/>), OPEC (http://www.opec.org/opec_web/en/), etc.

3. UN Reports: All UN Reports are considered are credible information or evidence for the Executive Board of the Security Council.

A. UN Bodies: Like the SC (<http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/>),

GA (<http://www.un.org/en/ga/>),

HRC (<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/HRCIndex.aspx>) etc.

B. 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.htm>), **International Committee of the Red Cross** (<http://www.icrc.org/eng/index.jsp>), etc.

C. Treaty Based Bodies like the Antarctic Treaty System (<http://www.ats.aq/e/ats.htm>), **the International Criminal Court** (<http://www.iccpi.int/Menus/ICC>)