



BALKH MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2019

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Background Guide



Dear Delegates,

On behalf of Youth Empowered Society & Secretariat of BMUN 2019, it's my distinct pleasure to welcome you to the Balkh Model United Nations 2019, to be held in Mazar-i-Sharif, Balkh on 25th, 26th & 27th April 2019.

Balkh Model United Nations provides delegate to express their opinions regarding a very large scale of issues and gives the unique opportunity to tackle those issues with innovative ideas. It's expected from you to do an attentive research in order to come up with innovative and applicable solutions to the issues you have been given. This is a tremendous event to hone your MUN skills, meet lifelong friends and have unforgettable experiences.

In this background guide, you are going to find some general information regarding your committee's topics. However, it's impossible to know everything, so please do not limit yourself with this background guide. Always remember, that there is so much to discover and so much to learn.

Lastly, I must say that I am very excited to be working with you and I am looking forward to seeing the passionate and resolution –driven debate, diplomatic cooperation and inventive solutions that will come out of this conference. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any question or concern you may have regarding this committee or Balkh MUN. Hope to see you all in near future.

Sayed Murtaza Hashimi
Founder & President
Balkh Model United Nations 2019

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Committee Overview

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), also known as the UN Refugee Agency, is a United Nations Agency mandated to protect and support refugees at the request of a government or the UN itself and assists in their voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement to a third country.

History

The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was created in 1950, during the aftermath of the Second World War, to help millions of Europeans who had fled or lost their homes. Today, over 69 years later, the organization is still hard at work, protecting and assisting refugees around the world.

Mandate:

The founding document of UNHCR is General Assembly resolution 428 (V), known as the Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (1950). This document clearly states the organization's mandate as: "providing international protection, under the auspices of the United Nations, to refugees who fall within the scope of the present Statute and of seeking permanent solutions for the problem of refugees by assisting Governments and...private organizations to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of such refugees, or their assimilation within new national communities." The basis for UNHCR's mandate lies in article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which specifically recognizes the right of all individuals to seek asylum in another country. In addition, other fundamental documents have shaped UNHCR, including the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, which defines the term "refugee" as well as the rights and obligations of refugees, and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, which expanded the 1951 Convention and UNHCR's mandate to include refugees from conflicts occurring post-1951. UNHCR's mandate also includes other groups, such as stateless people, as defined in the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

Topic A: Designing a Fair and Economically Feasible Refugee Resettlement System for Global Application

Many refugees are unable to go home because of continued conflict, wars and persecution. They are often forced to live in perilous situations and have specific needs that cannot be addressed in the country where they have sought protection due to a lack of a definitive set of national or international norms. Resettlement is the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to another state that has agreed to admit them and ultimately grant them permanent settlement. UNHCR is mandated by its Statute and the UN General Assembly Resolutions to undertake resettlement as one of the three durable solutions, along with voluntary repatriation and local integration. Unlike the latter two, Resettlement is unique in that it is the only solution that involves the relocation of refugees from an asylum country to a third country. There were 16.1 million refugees of concern to UNHCR around the world at the end of 2015, but less than 1% were resettled that year.

Some of the world's top resettlement countries include the United States, Canada, Australia and the Nordic countries, providing the refugees with legal and physical protection, including access to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights similar to those enjoyed by nationals. Providing for their effective reception and transition is beneficial for both the resettled refugee and the receiving country. Currently, governments and non-governmental organization partners provide services to facilitate integration, such as cultural orientation and vocational training, as well as programs to promote access to education and employment. However, it is crucial to establish a conclusive list of international standards that can facilitate their resettlement in any state around the world, which is financially feasible and ensures an equal standard of integration to all refugees.

There would be more than 40 million refugees in Europe alone. The scale of the disaster was such that international law and international organizations tasked to deal with refugees were urgently created and quickly evolved to become the foundation that is still relied upon today. The International Refugee Organization, after its creation in 1946, resettled over 1 million refugees between 1947 and 1951.

In the Middle East, refugees have been a humanitarian issue for Iraq since its war with Iran in the 1980s, but the 2003 invasion resulted in a huge increase in their number. The UN estimates that in 2013, 4.7 million Iraqis have left their homes (around 1 in 6 Iraqis), more than 2 million of whom left the country altogether. Most settled in neighboring Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, living without the protection of refugee laws in those countries and, in the case of Syria, facing renewed violence. As a result, some have started to return to Iraq and have been joined by Syrians attempting to escape the same conflict. Today, the Syrian refugee crisis has been further exacerbated by Syria's civil war, with close to 2 million people fleeing the country and perhaps twice that number uprooted and homeless within Syria itself

Some of the short term macroeconomic impact of the resettlement of refugees include as follows:

- The short-term fiscal costs of caring for the asylum seekers could be sizable in some countries. For example, the IMF staff estimated that, on a GDP-weighted basis, average budgetary expenses for asylum seekers in EU countries would increase by 0.05 and 0.1 percent of GDP in 2015 and 2016, respectively, compared to 2014
- Refugee-related fiscal costs are materializing while a number of countries have to consolidate their fiscal positions.
- For countries in the EU, only a small part of the immediate fiscal costs is borne by the EU the long term net fiscal impact of refugees is mostly driven by their success in the labor market. Assessing the fiscal effects of immigration requires a comparison between taxes paid and other fiscal contributions made by migrants, and the costs of services and benefits used by them.

The Resulting net fiscal impact largely depends on how refugees fare in the labor market, which, in turn, is linked to individual characteristics such as skills and age as well as the state of the business cycle, as discussed above. Since all of this is also true for natives, it is often useful to compare the fiscal impact of refugees with that of the rest of the population. Refugee Resettlement can also affect the use of fiscal resources by natives. Fiscal accounts may worsen because of displacement effects— for example, if the inflow of refugees increases natives' unemployment rate (and, thus, the unemployment benefits bill), or lowers their wages (and related taxes).

Further reading and resources:

www.theguardian.com/world/2016/dec/08/eu-met-only-5-of-target-forrelocating-refugees-from-greece-anditaly

<http://www.unhcr.org/uk/resettlement>

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/interactive/2013/jul/25/whathappened-history-refugees#Israelites>

www.migrationpolicy.org/article/refugees-and-asylees-united-states

[www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/what we do/refugee services/resettlement programme/refugee resettlement the facts](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/what_we_do/refugee_services/resettlement_programme/refugee_resettlement_the_facts)

www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/unpraises-canada-for-refugee-resettlementprogram-42029587

Topic B: Meeting the protection needs of refugee women and refugee children

An increasing number of refugees worldwide are women and children. In many cases, they are forced to leave their homes due to armed conflicts, insecurity or generalized violence. For women and girls, their migration experience is shaped by some particular features, the roots of which lie in the gendered forms of violence they may face throughout their journey. Some may leave their country of origin because of experiences of gender-based violence or in fear of such violence, while others may seek to escape the threat of female genital mutilation or forced marriages. Without regular pathways to reach a country where they can seek international protection, women often have to resort to dangerous routes. During their journey, they are exposed to sexual and gender-based violence, including rape, sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, psychological violence, trafficking, early and forced marriage, transactional sex and domestic violence. Women travelling alone and those only accompanied by their children are particularly at risk of abuse, as are pregnant women, adolescent girls, unaccompanied minors and women with disabilities.

Despite their experiences of violence and trauma, refugee women and girls undertake risky journeys to a safer and independent future, showing incredible strength, self-reliance and resilience. However, once they reach their destination, many women and young girls still face risks due to limited access to support services, a lack of effective procedures to identify survivors of gender-based violence and inadequate reception conditions in accommodation facilities. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights highlighted gender-based violence against refugee women and girls as an area of concern in its June 2016 monthly report on the migration situation. In October 2016, the Agency reported that safety and protection of asylum seekers from violence, exploitation and abuse remains an area in need of priority action by the EU Member States.

Obtaining reliable national data which provides prevalence estimates and insights into the causes and consequences of various forms of violence against refugee women and girls remains a challenge. The EU Fundamental Rights Agency reported in June 2016 that no EU Member State collects data on reported incidents of gender-based violence towards female refugees that have just arrived or need international protection. Similarly, the UN Special Rapporteur on

Violence against women, its causes and consequences, noted in her last report that “there is a lack of data on such human rights violations, a fact that prevents authorities from taking the necessary measures to ensure the safety of refugee women and children.”

Further reading and resources:

<https://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/protecting-refugee-women-and-girls-from-violence/>

<https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2019/03/03/refugee-women-and-children-must-be-protected/>

<http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/48aa83220.pdf>

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2018/8/experts-take-iris-bjorg-kristjansdottir-women-refugees>

https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/joomlatools-files/docman-files/refugee_survey_quarterly_refugee_women--twenty_years_on_2010.pdf

https://www.kargah.de/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1693:fluechtlingsfrauen-schuetzen-vor-haerlicher-und-struktureller-gewalt-3&catid=65&Itemid=483&lang=en

https://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/iwd/2003/message_unhcr.html



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