

Forum: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Issue #1: Protecting the rights of refugees seeking safety in armed conflicts

Student Officer: Marian Cajjga

Position: Chair

Introduction

The involvement of refugees seeking safety in armed conflicts has proven to be a concern for the violation of their human rights. Armed conflicts have taken the lives of millions and have led to many civilians being internally displaced and seeking refuge in foreign countries. Refugees are people who have been forced to flee their country frequently due to natural disasters, conflict or war. When civilians seek refuge in other countries due to armed conflict this is a consequence of the violation of their human rights outlined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The United Nations High Commission for Refugees is a United Nations agency that works to ensure the safety of refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people as well as the protection of their human rights. The violations of civilians' human rights have not only resulted in them fleeing but have also led to disputes among nations and in some cases humanitarian crises.



UNHCR Refugee Camps

Definition of Key Terms

Refugees: Are people who are obligated to leave their country due to war, violence, conflict or persecution.

Armed Conflicts: Is a political conflict where armed combat and forces are involved in at least one state.

Human Rights: The rights that all people have, regardless of their race, gender, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, status.

Internationally Displaced: A person or group of people who is forced to leave their home country but remains within the borders of their country.

Humanitarian Crises: A series of events that pose a threat to a community in terms of health, safety or well being.

Asylum Seeker: A person who fled their country and is seeking protection from

another country to avoid persecution and human rights abuses, but has not yet been recognized as refugees.

Foreign Countries: Any country where one is not a resident

General Overview

Refugees Rights

Refugees should be treated as any other human being; like a person who is a legal resident. They should have the freedom of movement, thought, be free from torture and inhuman treatment. They have the right to seek asylum in a secure environment. Social and economic rights apply in the same way meaning that health care, education, and the right to work should all be available to refugees. International organisations such as the UNHCR offer help in situations where sufficient government services are not accessible, such as the arrival of a large quantity of people. Food, equipment, housing, schools, clinics, are all included by the organization. Several refugee laws are implemented in each government state which include; non-refoulement, freedom of movement, right of liberty and security of the person, rights of family life, and so on.

Causes of refugees seeking safety

People make one of the most important decisions in their lives every day, all over the world: to leave their homes in search of a secure, better life. In countries such as Syria, Venezuela, Afganistan, Democtratic Republic of Congo, people are force to escape violence or abuses of human rights, such as torture. Thousands of people flee armed conflict and other forms of violence. For

example, in Syria citizens are urged to flee their homes since there is danger from explosive devices and violence on a daily basis. Many of the times it happens that people no longer feel secure, and they may have been targeted simply for who they are, what they do, or their beliefs. This usually occurs because of their race, faith, sexuality, or political views. The journey these people take can be dangerous and frightening. Sex trafficking and other forms of human exploitation is very common while completing the trip. People even get killed in the way since they're escaping a conflict-armed country. Authorities arrest certain people as soon as they arrive in a foreign country. Overall, refugees flee their countries for their own safety and to have a better life.

Armed Conflicts

According to the ICRC armed conflicts is defined as, "a conflict that arises whenever there is fighting between States or protracted armed violence between government authorities and organized armed groups or just between organized armed groups." Citizens play a major role in countries who suffer from armed conflicts. When they found themselves leaving with daily threats and trapped in the middle of a war, they faced constant threats of violence and death. People receive attacks from sexual abuse, assault and assassination. For the protection from direct attacks, people must also be shielded from the effects of war, such as being forced to flee their homes and thereby losing control of their property. Some may find temporary, but sometimes only relative, protection in camps, while others may be forced to fend for themselves in hostile terrain. Their access to humanitarian aid has been extremely limited in recent years due to the bureaucratic obstacles, prolonged hostilities, or violent attack toward citizens' properties or homes.

Countries Policies

Refugee Status Determination (RSD), is the legal administrative process in which the government or the UNHCR organization determines whether a person seeking international borders is considered a refugee under international, regional or national law (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). This process is used to help refugees to acknowledge their legal rights. Some countries are not part of the UNHCR organization within their country where the RSD wouldn't be mandated within refugees causing issues in borders. The RSD process is mandated in around 50 countries including Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Egypt, Pakistan and others.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Syria

Syria remains the world's largest refugee crisis for around ten years in a row. Around 6.6 million people have been forced to leave their country since 2011 and another 6.7 million people are internationally displaced. This all started due to the Syrian Civil war which forced many people to flee their countries because of the lack of safety. Since 2011 to 2021, numbers of refugees haven't declined and 13 million people are still in need of humanitarian assistance.

Venezuela

Venezuela refugees have increased extremely in the last couple of years where citizens are in need of international protection. Around 4 million people have left Venezuela according to the data from governments. Venezuela has become the world's biggest current displacement crisis. People are leaving their homes in Venezuela due to the violence, insecurity and threats that are preventing

citizens from having peaceful lives. Most of the refugees from Venezuela are families with young children, elderly people, pregnant women, people with disabilities.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan represents one of the world's most long lasting refugee populations. During the past few years, many citizens have been forced from their homes due to the constant conflict and violence occurring. Afghanistan currently has over 2.6 million registered refugees worldwide, making it the second largest number of refugees after Syria. Many more people have not been registered or are currently seeking asylum. In addition, the continuing conflict has forced more than two million people to flee their homes.

Democratic Republic of Congo

The Democratic Republic of Congo won their independence in 1960, this has caused ongoing fighting within the country. Even though the civil war ended in 2003, violence and conflict within the country has continued causing millions of citizens to flee their homes. Approximately one million people have fled to neighboring countries such as Uganda, Southern Africa, Angola, Tanzania, while millions have been forced to leave their homes but remain within the country. Nearly 400,000 Congolese sought asylum in Uganda at the start of this year.

United Nations

The UN agency which helps refugees is known as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This organization was established on December 12, 1950 by the UN General Assembly. Nowadays there is a staff of around 9,700 people in 126 different countries which provide protection and assistance to almost 59 million refugees. Most of the staff of the UNHCR are

located in Asia and Africa countries. Others are more isolated where staff work in more dangerous conditions. This agency helps create refugee camps, donations, secure health and safety to the most number of refugees they are able to help.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1950	The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee was created during the aftermath of World War II.
1951	UNHCR completed its first task helping around 1 million Europeans after World War II.
1954	The UNHCR won a Nobel prize for the remarkable work that had been done in Europe.
1956	The Hungarian Revolution led to 200,000 people leading to the borders of Austria which helped deal with the refugee crisis in the future.
1971	The flight of 100 million Bengalis to India, was the most dramatic exodus of the 20th century. UNHCR acted as a focal point for a relief operation.
1981	The UNHCR received the second Nobel Peace Prize due to the assistance of refugees.
21st century	The UNHCR helped the major refugee crisis in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

UN involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

The UNHCR recognizes the protection to everyone who has been affected by forced displacement. The organization is willing to coordinate and ensure protection to avoid further displacement. They will also provide life saving aid and engage with displaced populations to find solutions.

In 2019, around 45.7 million people were displaced due to armed conflict violations according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.

The UN has contributed to the UNHCR providing protection in the camps to many refugees. When the organization as a whole is left without the access of daily necessities including water, food, health care and even sanitation, the UN will help provide them.

The support from this comes from the United Nations humanitarian action machinery. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee(IASC) brings together most of the humanitarian agencies, both inside and outside of the UN system.

Past action

The 10 Point Plan is a tool that was developed by the UNHCR organization to assist governments in incorporation refugee protections. In June 2006, the 10 Point Plan Action took place which provided international protection to travelers within borders and migration movements managed in a responsible manner.

This plan invests the main interest and potential role play, on initiatives that could have a positive impact toward refugees. This plan was separated in 10 different areas which include: 1) cooperation among key partners; 2) data collection and analysis; 3) protection-sensitive entry systems; 4) reception arrangements; 5) mechanisms for profiling and referral; 6) differentiated processes and procedures; 7) solutions for refugees; 8) addressing secondary movements; 9)

return arrangements for non-refugees and alternative migration; 10) information strategy. This action helped millions of refugees and migrants gain safety and protection due to the force of leaving their own country because of armed conflicts.

Possible Solutions

Issues around countries with armed conflicts are forgotten very often since these are tragic events that happen on a daily basis. Taking action to prevent these issues is not the easiest task and cannot be taken completely away, but at least prevented. By supporting the peace processes worldwide we can help reduce the wars happening in many countries. Many of the border areas of these countries are very dangerous without supplying them with sufficient resources. The UNHCR will move all these refugees to safer places where they can have a stable life while progress is on the working. Forcing laws in most countries that allow refugees in their countries could help reduce the insecurities for these people and also minimize the amount of refugees suffering worldwide.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)

Goal 16 is essential for the issue of refugees seeking safety due to armed conflicts in their countries. Goal 16 includes everything that has to do with peace, justice and strong institutions. This SDG promotes peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable developments, also motivating justice and inclusion. This goal aims to reduce conflicts within countries such as wars and violent actions. In this specific issue, most of the refugees are forced without any other option to abane their homes and families due to the hard and dangerous circumstances

in their countries. Due to the issue of having wars and violence in the countries. In this debate, we aim to encourage all delegates to come up with solutions including to achieve the goals that this SDG has set up for all citizens.

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Appendix

- I. <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/50474f062.pdf>
 - A. This source is based on refugees specifically in the issue of seeking safety because of armed conflicts. It helps generate general information about the issue, and also provides good ideas that will be useful for the debate.
- II. [The Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, Venezuela and Syria](#)
 - A. These four different sources are based on information about the specific issue in the Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, Venezuela and Syria. By checking out these websites it can help gain knowledge about other countries and how they stand in this issue which will help further on in the debate.
- III. [file:///Users/mariancajiga/Downloads/ book_edcoll_9789004226166_B9789004226166-s008-preview.pdf](file:///Users/mariancajiga/Downloads/book_edcoll_9789004226166_B9789004226166-s008-preview.pdf)
 - A. This source mentions the general information that has to be known about the issue. By reading this information it can help gain knowledge and understanding for the debate in general.

