

I-HMUN

**United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees
(UNHCR)
Chair Report**

**Agenda: The Responsibility for Accepting
Refugees**

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Committee Director: Ga Eun Choi**

[About UN]

The United Nations (UN) is the largest intergovernmental organization that aims to maintain international peace and security, protect human rights, deliver humanitarian aid, promote sustainable development, and uphold international law. It consists of 193 member states, with the latest addition of South Sudan in 2011.

The United Nations took its first step in April 1945, when 50 governments met in San Francisco to start drafting the UN Charter. As it was adopted on 25 June 1945 and took effect on 24 October 1945, the UN began its operations. It has been the center of discussion for multilateral issues such as general disarmament, international security, multilateral cooperation, international economy, human rights affairs and sustainable development. The United Nations is operated under six major organs and has also assigned other specialized agencies in reach for international peace and security.

Sessions of committees pertaining to the United Nations carry heavy responsibilities of perpetuating peace and humanitarian rights. Delegates of member states represent their designated nation and form an international consensus on numerous agendas.

[About Committee]

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was founded in January, 1951. It is a subsidiary of the United Nations that provides protection, relief, and voluntary return to refugees from domestic and international disputes or disasters. Its headquarter is in Geneva, Switzerland. The UNHCR is funded by the refugee emergency fund, donated by each country.

Since the spring of 1979, the Indochina refugee outflow has boosted the office's activities. In Korea, four Iranian weightlifters who left the Seoul Asian Games in October 1986 departed to Norway under the mediation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In 1954, four years after its establishment, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees received the first Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of its efforts to protect refugees residing in Europe after World War II.

Since, UNHCR has grown in the field of conflict taking place in Asia and South America, not to mention Austria and Africa. It has been leading refugee protection activities based on their expertise. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was credited for this achievement and therefore was honored with a second Nobel Peace Prize. The UNHCR will continue to work with partner organizations to resolve problems originating from refugees.

[Agenda Introduction]

Until now, there have been lots of worldwide problems such as war, famine, poverty and so on. Many people have been suffering because of these and many people fled from their country to another country to live in. Basically, countries which are so dangerous that people living there cannot

live any longer are usually poor and weak. Also, those countries in civil war might be on bad terms with surrounding countries, which makes the refugee problem worse. Also, not all countries accepting refugees give enough support to them, saying their citizens are more important to themselves. Refugees also have human rights and it should be protected like everyone else. In this light, UNHCR was installed after World War II and has been working until now. As UNHCR is an organization under the UN, an international organization which deals with some problems in various countries, political and religious problems always go along with it. And there are countries which are on bad terms with others and due to this, our support is not enough.

The United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees aims to protect refugees through many other countries' health and support infrastructure prevailing in all corners of the world. In I-HMUN 2021, delegates will debate about responsibilities of each country on refugees and its validity.

[Key Terms]

Refugee

Refugees, usually referred to as a group, generally address displaced people who have been forced to cross national boundaries and cannot return home safely. Following World War II, and in response to the large numbers of people fleeing Eastern Europe, the UN 1951 Refugee Convention defined “Refugee” as any person who owes to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. And they are outside the country of his nationality and are unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.

Refugee Camp

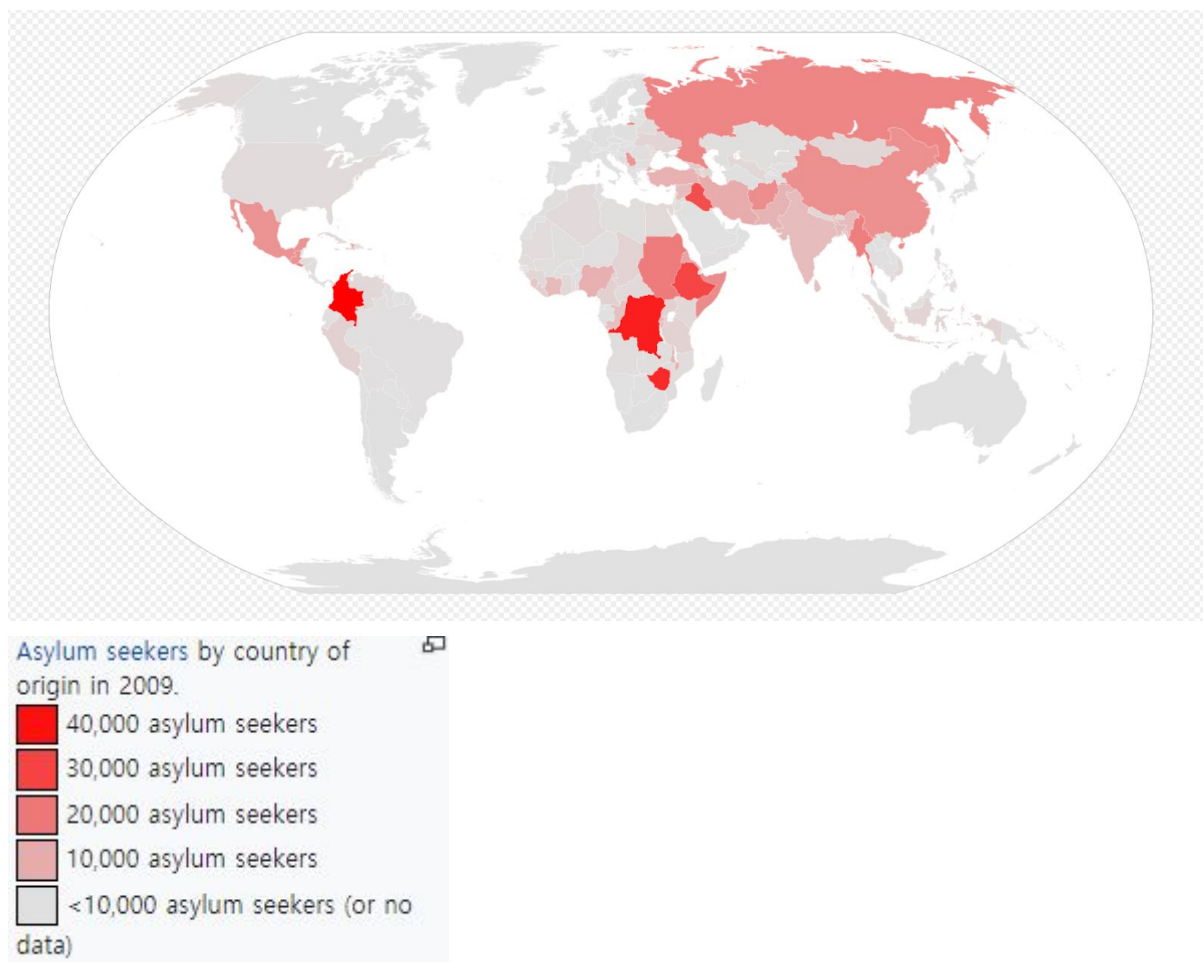
A refugee camp is a temporary settlement built to receive refugees and people in refugee-like situations. But unlike its definition, too many people stay in certain camps, and some refugee camps grew to be a completely autonomous place – as if it were a single city. At Kakuma refugee camp in northern Kenya live almost 185,000 people, which is comparable to Knoxville, Tennessee state, and their governing is becoming more and more important. Refugee camps usually accommodate displaced persons who fled their home country, but camps are also made for internally displaced people. Usually, refugees seek asylum after they have escaped war in their home countries, but some camps also house environmental and economic migrants.

Asylum Seeker

Asylum is defined by the dictionary as ‘protection or safety, especially that given by a government to people who have been forced to leave their own countries for their safety or because of war.’ Asylum seekers are people trying to receive a place of asylum in a foreign country. Right now, there are more asylum seekers than any other time in history, and their rights grow more and more important. The EU received over 1.3 million applications from asylum seekers in 2015 alone and not all asylum seekers are eventually classed as refugees for a variety of reasons.

Right of Asylum

The right of asylum (sometimes called right of political asylum) is an ancient juridical concept, under which a person persecuted by one's own country may be protected by another sovereign authority, such as another country or church official, who in medieval times could offer sanctuary. This right was recognized by the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Hebrews, from whom it was adopted into Western tradition.



Internally Displaced People (IDPs)

IDPs are refugees still living in their own country. Many of them fled for similar reasons, but some of them stay in their home countries due to various uncontrollable situations. Because of the definition about refugees, to be a refugee, they have to be outside of their country and the reason they are suffering should be persecution of their country. But in many cases, asylum seekers are rising because of their country's lack of ability to protect them, not because the country persecutes them. Due to this stern requirement to be a refugee, IDPs are the most marginalized, vulnerable and poor people on Earth. Of the world's 65.3 million forcibly displaced people, over 60% of them are IDPs. Syria alone had 6.6 million IDPs in 2015, and the UNHCR predicts the number may rise as high as 8.7 million within this year.

Refoulement

Refoulement is referred to in the principle of non refoulement, the expulsion of people who have a right to refugee status. The term comes from the French verb *refouler*, which means ‘to force back’. This can be a problem due to some rules forbidding refoulement of refugees. According to Convention relating to the Status of Refugees Article no. 33, “No Contracting State shall expel or return (*refouler*) a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.”

Global Compact

UNGC(United Nations Global Compact) is a non-binding United Nations agreement to encourage businesses worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies, and to report on their implementation. The UN Global Compact is a principle-based framework for businesses, stating ten principles in the areas of human rights, labor, the environment and anti-corruption. Under the Global Compact, companies are brought together with UN agencies, labor groups and civil society. Cities can join the Global Compact through the Cities Program.

[Historical Background]

From Russian Revolution(1917~)

The Russian Revolution was a period of political and social revolution across the territory of the Russian Empire, commencing with the abolition of the monarchy in 1917 and concluding in 1923 with the Bolshevik establishment of the Soviet Union at the end of the Civil War. Before the revolution, the public supported World War I with enormous patriotism and almost 15 million people went to the front line on their own initiative. However, the inability of commanders caused self-destructive losses at the Battle of Tannenberg and as a lot of young people served in the army, Russia's workforce declined significantly. Additionally, budgets that should have been used to promote the welfare of the public were used for warfare and thus the standards of living that the public appreciated plummeted, even lacking basic necessities such as food. These situations show how inefficient the Russian Government was and its inability to provide its subjects with daily necessities became the main cause of the Russian revolution in 1917. After another civil war came numerous refugees due to the new government's socialist policies.

The Holocaust(1941~1945)

The Holocaust, also known as the Shoah, was the genocide of European Jews during World War II across German-occupied Europe, Nazi Germany and its collaborators. They systematically murdered some six million Jews, around two-thirds of the Jewish population of Europe. The number of victims was around 11 million people. The numbers include 1 million Jewish children, 2 million women and 3 million men. Jews and other victims were captured in around 40,000 facilities that were built in order to lock those people up and kill them in terrible ways.

The Holocaust is the very persecution that can agonize certain groups of people and due to this incredible incident, it generated unprecedented refugees. Also, as known widely, in a Jewish history scholar Michael Berenbaum's book says, "the nation's elaborate bureaucracy's entire department was involved in the process of massacre. German church and the Ministry of Home Affairs provided Jews' birth records, the post office delivered a command of deportation and deprivation of their civil rights, the Ministry of Finance confiscated Jews' property, and German enterprises fired Jews and forfeited Jewish stakeholders' rights".

These actions can be definitely viewed as persecution and due to this incident, some Jewish and minorities escaped Germany and others were expelled, which made more refugees.

The World War II(1939~1945)

World War II was a global war that lasted from 1939 to 1945. Total military death exceeded 16,000,000 and civilian death 45,000,000 only in the Allies. Also, before the WW II, Japan went through the Nanking Massacre, killing a million people and arsoning and raping habitually. During the war, Japan committed various war crimes, one example being the massacre of war captives.

After the war, America was relatively peaceful, but except for the continent, the entire world was ruined. Imperialism was defeated, the forces of Western Europe waned, and the U.S. and the Soviet Union filled up their vacancy. Between the two rising superpowers, a new bipolar competition system started and the cold war began to reveal itself. Liberalism camp which the U.S. was at the head of and communism camp which the Soviet Union was at the head of brought a lot of countries in on their own camp and based on this the two countries fought in many different ways quietly.

But, there were some positive influences as well. After the all-out war, the risk of civilians by war stirred up some controversy. Because of this, people all over the world thought that there should be no war any more. This shared perception prevented America and the Soviet Union from waging another war.

However, despite the fact that the world grew more peaceful than before, there are some critics who argue that this is still confined to specific countries in East Europe and America. An unfortunate example appeared in the Korean peninsula. Also, under the logic of the cold war to defend their ideology and peace, all parts of the world are suffering.

After the World War II(~2015)

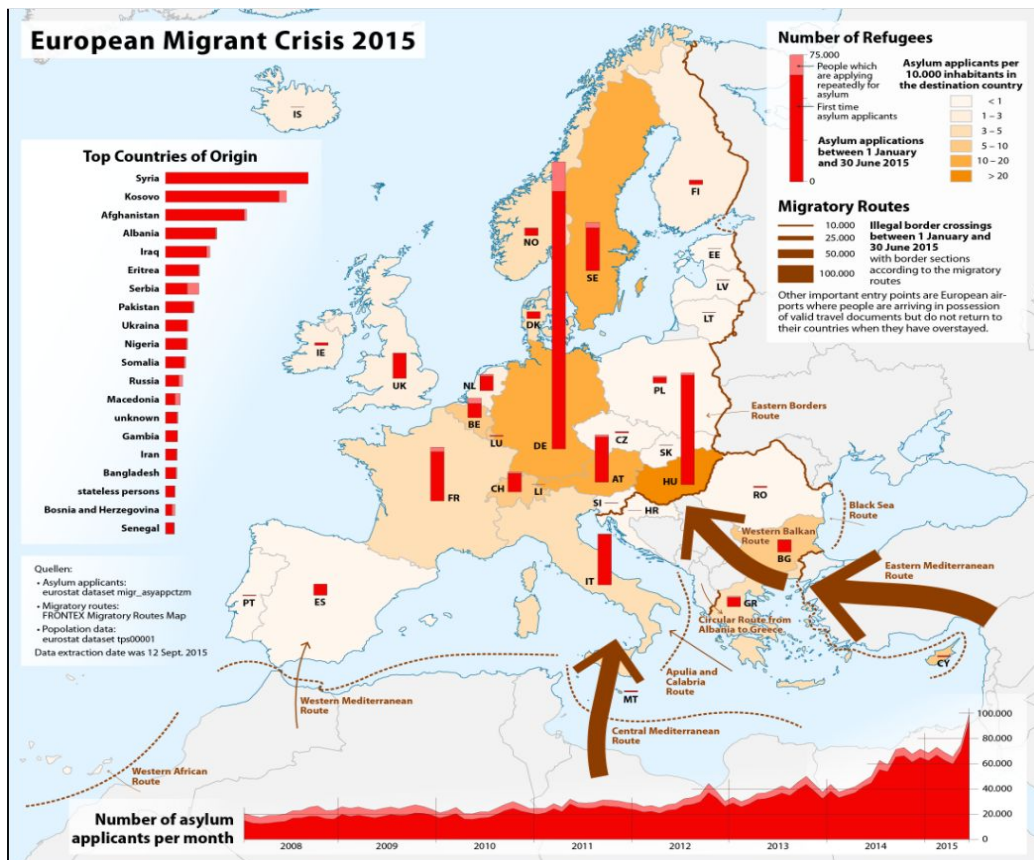
After numerous peace treaties coining many refugees, the League of Nations designated a high commissioner and started to think of the refugee problem as a supranational problem.

In the extension of these efforts, the United Nations installed United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation(UNRRA, 1944) and International Refugee Organization(IRO, 1947) to solve the refugee problem by doing some emergency rescue and legal protection. But due to those days political and ideological problems, IRO can't get enough support from many countries and the UN starts to claim the new organization for this.

In the result, through the UN General Assembly resolution 319(V) the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR, 1949. 12) was established. The core mission of UNHCR was first defined at UNHCR office rule and was expanded by the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations and Economic and Social Council. Due to this definition, people subject to other UN organization protection are out of UNHCR's responsibility. UNHCR's mission had been extended by 3 years at the UN General Assembly until 2003, and the UNHCR gained semi-permanence as long as refugee problems remain to be.

European migrant crisis(2015~ present)

The European migrant crisis, also known as the refugee crisis, was a period characterised by high numbers of people arriving in the European Union (EU) overseas from across the Mediterranean Sea or overland through Southeast Europe. In March 2019, the European commission declared the migrant crisis to be at an end. The migrant crisis was part of a pattern of increased immigration to Europe from other continents since the mid-20th century. UNHCR observed that from January 2015 to March 2016, the top three nationalities among over one million refugees arriving from the Mediterranean Sea were Syrian (46.7%), Afghan (20.9%) and Iraqi (9.4%). According to Eurostat, in 2014 EU countries accepted 626,000 refugees, the highest figure after 672,000 refugees of 1992. Germany, Sweden, France, and Italia 4 countries accommodated and protected over two-thirds of the refugees.



[Past Actions by Nations/NGOs/Organizations]

2019 Global Refugee Forum

The first global refugee forum took place on 16-18 December 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland and brought the international community together to demonstrate bonds between the world's refugees and the countries and communities that host them. States and other stakeholders demonstrated leadership, vision and ambition to share the responsibility of hosting refugees by announcing pledges that vowed to improve the lives of refugees and their host communities alike. Participants also shared good updates that illustrate how the Global Compact is already making a difference around the world. Reflecting the importance of the occasion, the Forum was attended by 3,000 participants, including four Heads of State or Government, more than 90 Officials at the Ministerial level, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, approximately 55 international organizations (including United Nations system entities and specialized agencies), representatives of more than 130 companies and foundations, and approximately 250 civil society organizations and some 70 refugees.

New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants

On September 19, 2016, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. The New York Declaration reaffirms the importance of the international refugee regime and contains a wide range of commitments by Member States to strengthen and enhance mechanisms to protect people on the move. It paved the way for the adoption of two new global compacts in 2018: a global compact on refugees, and a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. In this declaration, a strong and thick stem about refugee problem says, 'Full and equal human rights protection for all migrants and refugees, guarantees to children migrants and refugees the right to education within months, prevention of sexual exploitation, support for large-scale migrants and refugees, and housing for protected persons recognized by UNHCR And resettlement support, and the incorporation of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) into an official UN organization to strengthen global governance on migration issues.'

Ministerial Meeting

The UNHCR organized a highly successful ministerial meeting in Geneva on 7-8 December 2011 to mark the 60th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. The landmark gathering was attended by representatives of 155 UN member states, including 72 ministers. Special guests included United States Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Kenya's Minister of State for Immigration and Registration Gerald Otieno Kajwan'g, Swiss President Micheline Calmy-Rey and Nobel peace laureate and former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari.

At the ministerial meeting, another 20 states pledged to accede to one or both of the statelessness instruments while a further 25 states made pledges related to statelessness. Notable pledges included reinstating nationality laws to bring an end to gender discrimination, thereby enabling women to transmit their nationalities to children. Secretary of State Clinton said the US would launch an initiative to raise global awareness and action on these issues.

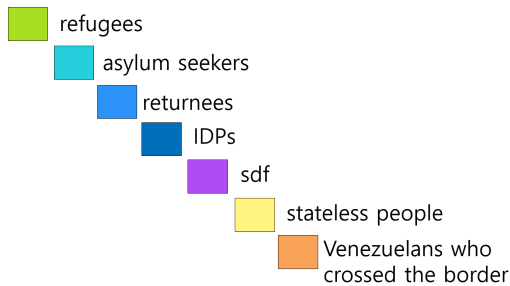
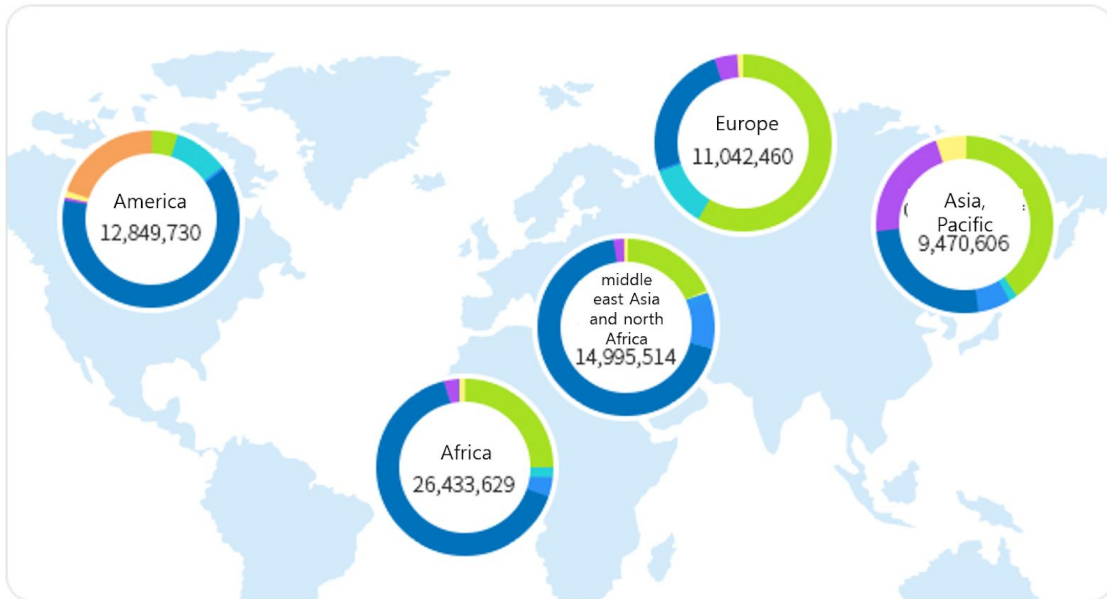
Cash-Based Interventions in UNHCR

Most refugees live in an environment where they have access to markets and services in the same way that local communities do. Providing refugees with cash enables them to fulfill their needs in a dignified manner and contributes to the local economy. UNHCR uses cash-based interventions to provide protection, assistance and services to the most vulnerable. Cash and vouchers help the displaced meet a variety of needs, including access to food, water, healthcare, shelter that allow them to build and support livelihoods, and to facilitate voluntary repatriation.

[Status Quo]

Nowadays objects of protection by UNHCR are like this: 12,849,730 in America, 26,433,629 in Africa, 14,995,514 in middle east Asia and north Africa, 11,042,460 in Europe and 9,470,606 in Asia. It seems like America, Africa, and middle east Asia have a lot of refugees in their country but it is not the real figure. In case of real refugees, which are protected by laws and the protecting country, America only admitted 643,274 refugees in their country in total 12,849,730 objects of protection, which is very low rates compared to Europe: 6,474,562 refugees in total 11,042,460 objects of protection. The number of Europe's refugees is 10 times bigger than that of America. These statistics show how strict America is to people who are vulnerable to external threats.

In Africa, there are 26,433,629 objects of protection, whose numbers are more than 2 times that of Europe's but their number of admitted refugees are lower than that of Europe's. It is evident that there are a lot of problems. Despite every country speaking of human rights, there is practically no nation willing to take the refugees. It can not be argued that no problems will arise that refugees bring. But those partial problems cannot be an indulgence which can excuse powerful countries that do not regard the human rights of refugees. It is desirable that all of the round statistics suggest all of the refugees are being taken care of. Also, ultimately, we should try to eradicate the advent of refugees.



[Stances Major Countries (and NGOs)]

Federal Republic of Germany

Germany is a country famous for receiving refugees. The German government is known to have declared their positive stance of refugee acceptance. However, due to overflowing refugees, even a basic evaluation of refugees was paralyzed and on September 13, Germany announced that they would “stop this excessive refugee inflow situation and restore previous refugee acceptance progress in good order.”, regulating Germany-Austria border migration. According to The Wall Street Journal, this one-way welcoming policy can cause domestic and international resistance.

After Yugoslavian civil war in 1992 and post-2015 middle east, north Africa, and Balkan Peninsula war brought an enormous number of refugees, Germany accommodated those refugees at a humanitarian level, also shouldering social problems such as deterioration of domestic public opinion and terror. As a global refugee country, Germany already made some advanced systems about refugee accommodation such as preparing laws of implementation to fulfill refugee convention as domestic law, enacting refugee adjective law in 1992, which arranged legal foundation for protection of refugees and their accommodation procedure, and making refugee authorities for refugee application.

Republic of Turkey

In Turkey, more than 2 million Syrian refugees are in accommodation. This figure is more than that of any other country all over the world. 30% of Syrian refugees live at 22 refugee camps which are supported by the Republic of Turkey, located on the borders of Syria and Turkey. According to the legislation of the Republic of Turkey, they are protected provisionally. As long as they are registered in a temporary protection state, they can receive health and educational benefits by the Turkish government. Yet, one-third of three refugees are not registered, and thus are not protected thoroughly.

Lebanon

The Lebanon government has refused to build refugee camps in Lebanon territory. Due to this policy, about 1.2 million Syrian refugees are scattered all throughout the Lebanon area. Most of them reside in borrowed accommodations. Furthermore, according to Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), half of the refugees have difficulty in receiving enough medical care. Refugees who fled the Syrian civil war can't get humanitarian support and live in very risky environments.

The United Kingdom

Since 2015, the UK has accommodated more than 10,000 Syrian refugees and announced that the UK would accommodate a total of 20,000 refugees by 2020. But according to Oxfam's WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY report, only 4,414 people are actually resettled among the UK's fair share of 25,000 people.

In order to receive a status of a refugee in the UK, refugees should pass two interviews. One is a Screening interview, and the other is an Asylum interview. In Screening interview, refugees should tell their basic information such as birth date or birthplace. An Asylum interview, the step in which most asylum seekers fail, is hosted with a social worker named Caseworker. In this step, applicants should prove their relevance to refugees and its validity. They should narrate their situation and danger concretely, which can be evaluated by its accordance with the first interview. However, even after these processes are successfully taken, most refugees are living in areas that are not good enough.

Saudi Arabia

According to Amnesty International, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain which are all Gulf oil export countries have no refugee camps. It shows they do not accommodate any Syrian refugees. The New York Times pointed out that Qatar, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, where PCI is higher than that of Jordan and Turkey, are passive to admitting Syrian refugees. It also pointed out that Saudi Arabia and Qatar subsidized rebel forces against the Bashar al-Assad regime while turning away from refugees in desperate need. Also, the disparity of religion between Saudi Arabia and Syria is another reason why Saudi Arabia is reluctant towards accepting refugees into their society.

The United States of America

The US once accommodated the most refugees. However, the Trump regime reduced the number of new refugee exceptions dramatically. According to AP, the US decided to cut the refugee accommodation quota in half. American high-ranking officials commented, "American's safety and security is our first interest. Refugee resettlement opportunities should go to people who can meet our protection policies."

[Possible Solutions]

In I-HMUN 2021, it's up to the delegates to devise a solution to solve this refugee problem all over the world. Considering problems that refugees are suffering from, it seems quite apparent that they are in need of every bit of help they can make use of. Refugees are now suffering from famine, racism, trafficking and so on. Governments ought to stop blaming refugees and migrants for economic and social problems. Instead, they should combat xenophobia and racial discrimination.

One of the reasons that many countries are unwilling to take refugees is their phobia of crime. Due to citizens' concern, politicians stop refugees from entering the country. The fact that refugees are likely to commit crime is true but we should consider the reasons they committed those crimes. According to many documents and reports, most refugees live in relatively poor areas and do not get appropriate support from the country. Even when refugees try to live in more affluent areas, they can not settle well due to severe discrimination and unemployment.

To solve these problems, resettlement can be a good solution. If they can resettle, they can get jobs and start economic activity to get out of basic refugee support. As they settle, they can make their own families(if they do not already have their own families) and that change can stop crime from refugees. Discrimination by citizen would not be a problem as they would live in their own communities. Once they resettle in the country successfully, the difference between original citizens and refugees would gradually decrease and one day, they can live in harmony as different races of one community.

[Questions to Consider]

- How effective would a further declaration or treaty be in terms of accommodating more refugees?
- How would the UNHCR help refugees all over the world financially?
- How do we persuade each country to get more refugees than they can?
- If refugees are generated in various areas for various reasons, where and who should UNHCR prioritize and why?
- What criterion should we use to limit the amount of refugees in each country?
- How strict would the refugee evaluation progression be? Should it be strict?

- Should we change the range of defining refugee?

Current definition: A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries.

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