

Forum: International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Issue: The issue of refugees as resources in armed conflicts

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Position: Deputy-President



Personal Introduction

Dear delegates,

It is my greatest pleasure to welcome you all to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) of the 8th ACGMUN. My name is Despoina Fragkia, I am a sixteen-year-old and I am an independent delegate. I am extremely excited and honored to be serving as one of your Deputy Presidents. I joined my previous school's MUN club 4 years ago, and I consider it the best decision I have ever made as it has given me the opportunity to familiarize myself with diplomacy, politics, and global issues that both our world and smaller communities encounter.

The purpose of this study guide is to introduce you to the issue of "Refugees as resources in armed conflicts". Apart from studying this guide, I would highly encourage you to further your research on the topic on your own. It is also advisable that you fully understand the stance of the country you represent and prepare some clauses to be added to the resolutions drafted during the lobbying procedure.

Should you have any questions or need some clarification, I am more than willing to help. You can contact me via email at despoinainfragkia@gmail.com

I look forward to seeing you all soon!

Kind Regards,

Despoina

Topic Introduction

The strategic employment of refugees during conflicts is a deliberate tactic used by both governmental and non-governmental entities to force the movement of large groups, leading to instability in adjacent areas or sparking international crises. This form of exploitation exerts pressure on opposing nations, as they are compelled to manage the humanitarian consequences and confront potential security risks, thereby stretching their resources and political frameworks.¹

Refugee camps, frequently characterized by deprivation and insecurity, become prime targets for the recruitment of individuals into militias, insurgent factions, or terrorist groups. These organizations take advantage of the despair and hopelessness prevalent in such camps, providing a sense of purpose or safety in return for loyalty. This recruitment not only strengthens the ranks of these groups but also continues the cycle of violence and turmoil within the region.²

On the flip side, host nations might leverage the existence of sizable refugee populations to enhance their diplomatic position. By emphasizing the humanitarian challenges, they face, these countries can sway the foreign policy choices of other nations, gain political advantages, or draw more international aid. This kind of political maneuvering keeps the refugee crisis at the forefront of global relations, often resulting in a complicated mix of humanitarian needs and strategic motivations.³

Children, who are among the most at-risk individuals within refugee populations, face a substantial threat of being forcibly recruited by armed groups. This exploitation intensifies the cycle of violence, as these minors frequently endure abuse and are stripped of a typical childhood, leading to long-lasting psychological and societal harm.⁴

Humanitarian assistance, essential for the survival of refugees, can also be exploited by armed factions. These factions might divert, steal, or control the distribution of aid to strengthen their power

¹ "Weaponized Migration." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 28 Feb. 2025, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weaponized_migration. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

² "Refugee Children." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 15 Oct. 2024, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Refugee_children. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

³ "Great Lakes Refugee Crisis." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 17 Feb. 2025, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Lakes_refugee_crisis. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

⁴ "Children Recruited by Armed Forces or Armed Groups." UNICEF, www.unicef.org/protection/children-recruited-by-armed-forces. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

and influence within refugee communities. Such manipulation not only denies aid to those it is meant for but also enhances the grip of armed groups, using humanitarian support as a means of coercion or recruitment.

In conclusion, the interaction between warfare, strategic exploitation, and humanitarian emergencies in refugee settings poses intricate challenges that necessitate comprehensive and coordinated responses from the global community. The militarization of refugee camps poses another critical issue, where such camps can become battlegrounds or serve as stockpiles for arms and supplies. Armed factions might utilize these camps as tactical locations for orchestrating and executing assaults, further jeopardizing the safety of refugees and making the delivery of humanitarian aid more difficult.

Definition of Key Terms

Refugee

A person who has been forced to leave their country to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster, as defined by the 1951 Refugee Convention⁵.

Armed Conflict

A contest involving organized armed forces between two or more parties, which may occur between states (international) or within a state (non-international)⁶.

Militarization of Refugee Camps

⁵"Children Recruited by Armed Forces or Armed Groups." UNICEF, www.unicef.org/protection/children-recruited-by-armed-forces. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

⁶"We Take Action, Not Sides." ICRC, 27 Feb. 2025, www.icrc.org/en. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

⁷ UNHCR - Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, www.unhcr.org/en-us/publications/legal/3d58e13b4/handbook-procedures-criteria-determining-refugee-status-under-1951-convention.html. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

The process by which refugee camps are used for military purposes, such as recruitment, harboring combatants, or storing weapons⁷.

Human Shield

The use of civilians, including refugees, to deter attacks on combatants or military assets by exploiting their protected status under international law⁸.

Forced Recruitment

The involuntary enlistment of individuals, including children, into armed forces or groups, often under threat of violence⁹.

Conflict Economy

An economic system where the main drivers of production and distribution are controlled or heavily influenced by armed groups or conflict dynamics¹⁰.

Humanitarian Aid

Assistance provided to meet the immediate needs of individuals affected by crises, including refugees, often in the form of food, shelter, and medical care¹¹.

⁸ "The Geneva Conventions and Their Commentaries." International Committee of the Red Cross, 28 June 2024, www.icrc.org/en/law-and-policy/geneva-conventions-and-their-commentaries. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

⁹ Christopher.bayne. "UNOV." The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, www.unov.org/unov/en/unodc.html. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

¹⁰ International Alert, conflict and development literature.

¹¹ "OCHA." United Nations, www.un.org/en/cco/ocha-united-nations-office-coordination-humanitarian-affairs. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

Destabilization Strategy

The intentional use of refugees or forced displacement to create instability in neighboring regions or countries¹².

Child Soldier

Any person under the age of 18 who is recruited or used by armed forces or groups in any capacity, including as fighters or support roles¹³.

Regional Security

The stability and safety of a geographic region, often influenced by political, social, and military factors, including refugee movements and cross-border conflicts¹⁴.

Refugee Warriors

The term describes refugee groups mobilized into armed factions, such as Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon serving as bases for militant organizations. These dynamics often dragged host countries into broader conflicts¹⁵.

Background Information

Historical Displacement during Wars

Historically, refugee crises have been frequent occurrences, typically stemming from major conflicts and acts of persecution. These displacements not only demonstrate the immediate

¹² *Strategic Studies Institute, conflict analysis frameworks.*

¹³ *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R40484/25. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.*

¹⁴ *Nzau, Mumo. "The European Union and the African Regional Security Outlook in the Twenty-First Century: Gains, Challenges, and Future Prospects." SpringerLink, Springer International Publishing, 1 Jan. 1970, link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-77481-3_38. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.*

¹⁵ *UNT discussion on refugees and conflict externalities*

humanitarian consequences of warfare but also highlight the strategic exploitation of refugees within geopolitical and military frameworks.

In the Armenian Genocide (1915-1923), more than a million Armenians were either brutally displaced or killed by the Ottoman Empire. Many who escaped became refugees in surrounding countries, enduring harsh conditions in camps and in exile¹⁶. The genocide is a prime example of how widespread displacement can result from wartime crimes and be used as a means of ethnic cleansing, leaving behind dispersed communities and unsolved political issues.

Millions of people were uprooted throughout Europe and the Middle East during World War I, which also saw widespread displacement. As a result of the war's extensive devastation and shifting boundaries, waves of refugees sought stability in a post-conflict environment characterised by political unrest and economic hardship¹⁷.

Millions of Jews and other oppressed groups were systematically wiped out and displaced by Nazi Germany during the Holocaust during World War II. After escaping Nazi-occupied areas, survivors faced obstacles to relocation and endured cruel camp conditions as stateless refugees. When displaced Jewish communities sought a homeland in the midst of continued conflict, these refugee populations were crucial to the creation of new states like Israel after the war¹⁸.

Refugees have often been lured into later battles or used for political ends. For instance, refugee populations from different conflicts were frequently included into proxy warfare during the Cold War, either as political leverage points or troops. This trend emphasises how refugees serve as both tools in continuing power conflicts and victims of violence¹⁹.

Post-World War Responses

In the wake of World War I and World War II, the global community faced extraordinary refugee crises, leading to the establishment of international frameworks and organizations aimed at managing displaced individuals. These initiatives aimed to meet immediate humanitarian needs while also striving to reduce the political exploitation of refugees.

¹⁶ Taner Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime Against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton University Press, 2012).

¹⁷ John Horne, *A Companion to World War I* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2012).

¹⁸ Yehuda Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust* (Franklin Watts, 2001).

¹⁹ Gil Loescher, *Beyond Charity: International Cooperation and the Global Refugee Crisis* (Oxford University Press, 1993).

After World War I, the movement of millions throughout Europe and the Middle East resulted in the creation of early refugee assistance programs. In 1921, the League of Nations established the High Commissioner for Refugees, responsible for coordinating support and resettlement for those displaced, especially due to the Russian Civil War and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. However, these initiatives frequently encountered limitations due to political agendas and the absence of binding international agreements²⁰. The refugee crisis that emerged after World War II was even more widespread, resulting in millions of individuals being uprooted throughout Europe because of the destruction caused by the war and the Holocaust. Consequently, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was founded in 1943 to deliver urgent assistance and facilitate the return of displaced individuals²¹. The establishment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 1950 represented a crucial advancement in coordinating an international reaction aimed at safeguarding and assisting refugees, as well as seeking long-term solutions like resettlement or repatriation²². Throughout the Cold War, both the Western and Eastern blocs often utilized refugees as instruments of political leverage. The Vietnam War, along with conflicts in Afghanistan and Latin America, led to substantial movements of refugees, which were frequently manipulated by global powers for propaganda or as potential recruits for their ideological and military agendas. The politicization of refugees during this era highlighted the complex challenges of delivering humanitarian support while dealing with the geopolitical conflicts of the time²³.

During the Cold War, Refugee Dynamics

During the Cold War, major powers often exploited refugee movements as part of their wider geopolitical strategies. Refugees were not merely regarded as humanitarian issues but were utilized as instruments to weaken rival governments and conduct proxy conflicts. A significant illustration of this is the way the United States and its allies utilized Afghan refugees to resist the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Afghan refugees in Pakistani camps became a source from which the Mujahideen were recruited, trained, and equipped to combat Soviet troops. These refugees, motivated by common ethnic connections and anti-Soviet feelings, played an essential role in the ideological and military

²⁰ League of Nations. *Report of the High Commissioner for Refugees*. Geneva, 1922.

²¹ United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). *Activities of UNRRA: An Overview*. United Nations, 1943.

²² United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). *The State of the World's Refugees: Fifty Years of Humanitarian Action*. Oxford University Press, 2000.

²³ Loescher, Gil. *Beyond Charity: International Cooperation and the Global Refugee Crisis*. Oxford University Press, 1993.

confrontations of the Cold War, transforming refugee camps into vital arenas of indirect conflict²⁴

Camps for Refugees as Sources of Recruitment

Historically, refugee camps have acted as recruitment centers for armed groups, particularly in areas marked by profound ethnic or political disputes. A notable instance is the recruitment of fighters from Rwandan refugee camps during the 1990s. After the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, many Hutu refugees escaped to adjacent nations, such as Zaire (currently the Democratic Republic of Congo). These camps transformed into hubs for Hutu militias, including those from the Interahamwe, who utilized them to reorganize, recruit, and strategize cross-border assaults into Rwanda. The common grievances and ethnic bonds within these camps aided the recruitment process, sustaining cycles of violence and turmoil in the Great Lakes region²⁵

Effects on the Host Countries

The arrival of refugees can have a significant effect on host nations, frequently resulting in changes to ethnic demographics, pressures on resources, and escalated cross-border tensions. These factors can contribute to instability within host communities. For example, Jordan faced notable internal conflicts due to militant activities in Palestinian refugee camps, especially after the Arab-Israeli conflict. The presence of militant organizations within refugee groups resulted in increased tensions and violent confrontations, such as the events of Black September in 1970, when the Jordanian government carried out a severe crackdown on Palestinian factions²⁶.

Countries that take in large numbers of refugees often encounter social and economic difficulties, such as depletion of resources, overloaded public services, and heightened competition for employment. These challenges can result in social unrest and, in severe situations, escalate regional conflicts. The arrival of refugees may worsen pre-existing ethnic or sectarian divides, creating a precarious situation where grievances are intensified and manipulated by political figures or militant factions²⁷.

²⁴ Coll, Steve. *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*. Penguin Books, 2004.

²⁵ Prunier, Gérard. *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide*. Columbia University Press, 1997.

²⁶ Black September Organization. *Report on the Jordanian Civil War*. Amman, 1970.

²⁷ Jacobsen, Karen. *The Economic Life of Refugees*. Kumarian Press, 2005.

Mass Displacement and Partitioning

The partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 serves as a vivid illustration of how large-scale displacement can be utilized as a social and political tool to shape public policy and social dynamics. This division resulted in one of the largest forced migrations recorded, with approximately 10-15 million individuals uprooted based on their religious affiliations. Such a significant population shift not only inflicted tremendous human suffering but also transformed the social and political landscapes of both nations²⁸.

The populations that were displaced became a crucial element in the formation of the new national identities of India and Pakistan, influencing legislation concerning citizenship, property rights, and religious tolerance. Moreover, the legacy of partition continues to affect relations between the two countries, as unresolved matters surrounding displaced individuals, territorial disputes, and communal strife endure. This partition highlights how mass displacement can engender enduring consequences for both domestic and international politics, often sustaining cycles of conflict and further displacement²⁹.

The function of NGOs and international aid

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international aid entities are essential in delivering humanitarian support to refugees. Their main objective is to safeguard and assist displaced individuals by providing crucial services such as food, shelter, healthcare, and education. Nevertheless, these initiatives have occasionally been misused by competing organizations or armed factions for strategic gain. Gaining control over the distribution of aid can serve as a tactical advantage in areas of conflict, enabling these groups to exert power over at-risk populations. By monopolizing humanitarian resources, they can enhance their authority, recruit adherents, or use the assistance as a bargaining chip against opposing groups or the host government. This exploitation compromises the neutrality and efficiency of humanitarian aid, making the work of NGOs and international agencies more challenging.³⁰

²⁸ Talbot, Ian. *India and Pakistan: Inventing the Nation*. Oxford University Press, 2000.

²⁹ Bose, Sugata. *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*. Routledge, 1998.

³⁰ Weiss, Thomas G., and Leon Gordenker. *NGOs, the UN, and Global Governance*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996.

Regional Refugee Crises

Continued regional conflicts in places like the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa have resulted in enduring refugee situations, where displaced people become caught up in persistent violence. The crisis in Darfur, Sudan, for instance, forced millions to flee, with many seeking safety in neighboring nations such as Chad. These refugee camps turned into critical areas in the conflict, with armed factions utilizing them as recruitment centers or launch points for additional assaults. The existence of large refugee communities frequently worsens regional instability, as host countries find it challenging to cope with the increased population while also addressing their own security issues³¹

Current Issues

The tactical exploitation of refugees as tools in geopolitical maneuvers is a significant concern in current conflicts. An illustrative case is the Syrian refugee crisis, wherein millions of Syrians escaping civil unrest have sought safety in neighboring nations such as Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. Certain countries have capitalized on these migrations to apply pressure on adjacent states or the wider international community. For example, Turkey has utilized the large number of Syrian refugees as leverage during discussions with the European Union, aiming for financial support and political favors. This use of refugees as instruments underscores the ongoing difficulty of meeting humanitarian needs while navigating the intricate geopolitical environments that shape refugee flows³²

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Syria

Syria, where the ongoing civil conflict has led to extensive displacement, has witnessed both state and non-state actors taking advantage of refugee populations. Armed factions, including ISIS and various anti-Assad militias, have utilized refugee camps in neighboring nations such as Jordan and Turkey to recruit combatants, as these camps frequently lack security and host many vulnerable individuals. Consequently, Syrian refugees encounter additional obstacles as they navigate the risks of being manipulated for political and military purposes by these groups. To tackle this issue, countries

³¹ Prunier, Gérard. *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide*. Cornell University Press, 2007.

³² Betts, Alexander, and Paul Collier. *Refuge: Transforming a Broken Refugee System*. Penguin Books, 2017.

like Turkey have collaborated with international organizations to enhance the monitoring of camps and ensure that aid for refugees is not misappropriated by militant factions³³.

Jordan

Jordan has historically been a significant host nation for refugees, especially from Syria and Palestine. The country has faced challenges due to the continuous influx of refugees over the years, resulting in economic difficulties and social tensions. In the 1970s, Palestinian refugee camps became arenas of violent internal strife, particularly during the Black September conflict, where Palestinian militant groups, including elements of the PLO, engaged in battles with the Jordanian government. In more recent times, Jordan has collaborated closely with international bodies like the UNHCR to address the large influx of Syrian refugees and to deliver humanitarian assistance, although difficulties persist. Additionally, Jordan has called for greater international aid to alleviate the strain on its resources. The kingdom has also implemented measures to enhance security within refugee camps to deter the entry of armed groups³⁴.

South Sudan and Sudan

In South Sudan and Sudan, the enduring civil conflicts and the crisis in Darfur have led to extensive displacement, causing instability in neighboring nations like Chad and enhancing the recruitment of militias. Armed groups have targeted refugee camps in Chad, aiming to recruit fighters, particularly from Darfur refugees escaping ethnic violence. South Sudan has encountered similar issues, with its refugee population being exploited as a source of recruits for militias. To address this, Chad has partnered with the UNHCR and various humanitarian organizations to deliver essential services to refugees while striving to ensure safety within the camps. However, Chad continues to struggle with the challenge of preventing militias from capitalizing on the camps for recruitment. The UNHCR and other global entities have been involved in initiatives to stabilize the area by assisting refugees and thwarting the militarization of refugee camps³⁵.

Bangladesh

³³ Al-Rawi, Ahmad. *The Politics of Refugees and Refugee Camps in the Middle East*. Cambridge University Press, 2016.

³⁴ Huneidi, Sahar. *Understanding the Black September Crisis in Jordan*. Princeton University Press, 2005.

³⁵ Prunier, Gérard. *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide*. Cornell University Press, 2007

Bangladesh, which is home to over a million Rohingya refugees escaping persecution from Myanmar, has also dealt with the issue of militarization in refugee camps. Armed factions have tried to recruit at-risk refugees, further exacerbating the instability. Bangladesh has faced challenges related to overcrowded camps, which have turned into hotspots for exploitation and recruitment by these armed groups. In spite of these difficulties, Bangladesh has collaborated with international aid organizations to enhance security and prevent the manipulation of refugee communities as military assets. The UNHCR and various other agencies have offered humanitarian assistance while working to deter the militarization of the camps by implementing security measures and extending support to at-risk populations³⁶.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

On the global front, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has taken a leading role in tackling the intricate challenge of refugees being exploited in conflict situations. The UNHCR advocates for international refugee rights, champions the safeguarding of refugees under global laws, and strives to avoid the militarization of refugee camps. This encompasses offering legal and material support to refugees, aiding resettlement and repatriation efforts, and ensuring that humanitarian assistance is not used for military purposes. The UNHCR also partners with host nations to establish frameworks that protect refugees and reduce the risk of their recruitment by armed factions³⁷.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) plays a vital role in addressing the exploitation of refugees during armed conflicts. The ICRC delivers humanitarian assistance in war zones and works to promote adherence to International Humanitarian Law (IHL). The organization operates in areas where refugees are at risk of exploitation, offering medical assistance, food, water, and legal support to those who have been displaced. Furthermore, the ICRC endeavors to uphold the protections granted to refugees under IHL, assisting in the prevention of their use as tools of warfare³⁸.

³⁶ Hossain, Shamima. "Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh: A Study of the Impact of Militarization in Camps." *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol. 33, no. 4, 2020, pp. 561-579

³⁷ *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The State of the World's Refugees: Fifty Years of Humanitarian Action. Oxford University Press, 2000.*

³⁸ *International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Annual Report 2018. ICRC, 2018.*

Blocs Expected

Alliance 1

Turkey, the European Union, and nations along migratory routes (such as Tunisia and Libya). The alliance aims to focus on controlling migratory flows through agreements like the EU-Turkey refugee agreement. provides financial support to nations that commit to preventing refugees from entering Europe while also funding initiatives aimed at facilitating their integration.

Alliance 2

Countries dealing with significant refugee influx, including Bangladesh, Kenya, Jordan, and Lebanon. The alliance aims advocate for increased international aid to help refugee populations. Policies that support global burden-sharing initiatives usually place a higher priority on resource-sharing agreements and the establishment of secure camps.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
1894-1896	Armenian Massacres
November 1915	Serbian Refugee Crisis
30 th January 1923	Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey
14-15 August 1947	Partition of India
1970s	Militarization of Palestinian Refugee Camps
By the late 1980s	Afghan Refugee Crisis
April- July 1994	Rwandan Genocide and Refugee Camps
2000s	<u>Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)</u> : The prolonged conflicts in eastern DRC displaced millions, as a result, refugee and IDP (Internally Displaced Person) camps became centers of recruitment for militias like M23 and Mai ³⁹ -Mai while neighboring countries (e.g., Rwanda,

³⁹ Clark, John F. The African Crisis: A Contemporary History of the Congo and the Great Lakes Region. Cambridge University Press, 2009

	Uganda) have been accused of exploiting refugee crises for regional power plays ⁴⁰ .
2003	<u>Iraq</u> : U.S.-led invasion (2003) triggered large-scale displacement. Consequently, refugees became a destabilizing force in neighboring countries (Syria, Jordan, Lebanon) and armed groups exploited displaced populations for recruitment and support (e.g., Al-Qaeda in Iraq, ISIS) ⁴¹ .
2003	<u>Sudan and South Sudan</u> <i>Darfur conflict (2003-2005)</i> : refugee displacement into Chad and Central African Republic (CAR). Refugee camps became militarized as rebel groups recruited fighters ⁴² . <i>South Sudan Civil War (2013)</i> : Refugee displacement into Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya added to regional tensions ⁴³ .
2011	<u>Syrian Civil War</u> caused over 6.8 million refugees (UNHCR data). Refugee camps in Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon became targets for recruitment by armed groups (e.g., ISIS, rebel factions) while regional countries (e.g., Turkey) used refugee flows as leverage in negotiations with the EU (e.g., 2016 Turkey-EU deal) ⁴⁴ .

⁴⁰ International Crisis Group. *The DRC and the International Response to Its Crisis*. ICG, 2016.

⁴¹ "The Iraq War and Its Aftermath: Impact on Refugees and Displacement." *International Refugee Rights*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2005, pp. 105-123.

⁴² Prunier, Gérard. *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide*. Cornell University Press, 2007.

⁴³ "The South Sudan Crisis and Its Regional Impact." *World Refugee Report*, vol. 30, no. 1, 2015, pp. 87-99.

⁴⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2015*. UNHCR, 2016.

Relevant UN Resolutions, Treaties & Events

[UN Security Council Resolution 1674 \(2006\)](#)⁴⁵.

[UN Security Council Resolution 1296 \(2000\)](#)⁴⁶

[1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees](#)⁴⁷

[New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants \(2016\)](#)⁴⁸

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

European Union (EU)

To protect refugees who have been displaced by armed conflicts, the European Union has created legal frameworks(e.g. The Common European Asylum System (CEAS), The Temporary Protection Directive (2001/55/EC) and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)) and provided substantial humanitarian aid⁴⁹. Additionally, temporary protection measures have been implemented for people fleeing wars, including Ukrainians and Syrians. Measures like the 2016 EU-Turkey agreement were intended to lower illegal migration and give Turkey a lot of help in housing refugees⁵⁰.

Though the European Union is a major global contributor, providing substantial financial support and aid to both host countries and refugee camps while its well-structured procedures promote cooperation among participating nations, limiting policies, such as giving non-EU countries responsibility over refugees, have drawn criticism since they can put pressure on refugee-hosting countries like Turkey and Libya and raise concerns about human rights.

⁴⁵ "UN Documents for Protection of Civilians: Security Council Resolutions." Security Council Report, www.securitycouncilreport.org/un_documents_type/security-council-resolutions/?cbtype=protection-of-civilians&ctype=Protection%20of%20Civilians&utm_source=chatgpt.com. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

⁴⁶ "United Nations Security Council Resolution 1296." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 22 Jan. 2025, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Security_Council_Resolution_1296. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

⁴⁷ "The 1951 Refugee Convention." UNHCR US, www.unhcr.org/us/about-unhcr/overview/1951-refugee-convention. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

⁴⁸ "Resolutions | Refugees and Migrants." United Nations, refugeesmigrants.un.org/Compact-resolutions. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

⁴⁹ "Temporary Protection Directive." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 17 Jan. 2025, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temporary_Protection_Directive. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

⁵⁰ European Parliament. "EU-Turkey Statement & Action Plan: Legislative Train Schedule." European Parliament, www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/theme-towards-a-new-policy-on-migration/file-eu-turkey-statement-action-plan. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

Arab League

The Arab League is actively engaged in diplomatic efforts to address regional refugee crises, emphasising local solutions and solidarity for displaced people, especially those impacted by the wars in Yemen, Palestine, and Syria. While on the one hand, cultural and geographic proximity enables easier integration of refugees within member states, the influence of its choices is limited by its lack of financial resources and authority. Cohesion attempts inside the League are also weakened by political disputes⁵¹.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

Maintaining security and stability in regions associated with refugee problems, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, is the primary goal of NATO's involvement. Additionally, it has contributed to marine initiatives to fight human trafficking in the Mediterranean. The NATO's military power assists in maintaining stability in areas and dismantling networks that profit from refugees by using them for resources in conflicts, however, little engagement in refugee protection as a result of giving security measures precedence over humanitarian aid⁵².

UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)

It has established programs to provide shelter, education, and resources to refugees in order to prevent recruitment into armed groups. Additionally, it works collaboratively with governments to secure refugee camps and prevent militarization such as the programs in refugee camps in Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Syria⁵³.

⁵¹ "Strategic Partnership between United Nations, Arab League Vital for Transformation of Region, Senior Official Tells Security Council | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases." United Nations, press.un.org/en/2023/sc15315.doc.htm. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

⁵² Nato. "Assistance for the Refugee and Migrant Crisis in the Aegean Sea." NATO, 22 Apr. 2016, www.nato.int/cps/ua/natohq/topics_128746.htm. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

⁵³ "Refugees." United Nations, www.un.org/en/global-issues/refugees. Accessed 02 Mar. 2025.

Possible Solutions

Strengthen Refugee Camp Security

Enhancing security in refugee camps is crucial for protecting displaced individuals and safeguarding them from the exploitation by armed groups. This can be accomplished by sending peacekeeping troops from entities like the United Nations or regional organizations such as the African Union to secure these camps while also providing training for local security personnel. Nations like Jordan and Turkey, which accommodate a significant number of refugees, can work together with NGOs and international organizations like the UNHCR to foster safe environments. Nevertheless, challenges persist, including a lack of resources, reluctance from host countries to permit international forces, and the potential for camps to become militarized. The political situation in conflict-affected areas can hinder the deployment of peacekeepers, and local armed groups might take advantage of any security weaknesses to recruit from the refugee population. Furthermore, having security personnel present in camps can generate friction with both refugees and local communities, which may lead to additional instability. Enhance Regional and International Cooperation⁵⁴

Enhance Regional and International Cooperation

Strengthening both regional and international collaboration is essential for effectively tackling the refugee crisis. Nations such as Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, which accommodate a significant number of refugees, can partner with international entities like the UNHCR, the European Union, and the United Nations to distribute the responsibilities of refugee support. Collaborative efforts might encompass coordinated strategies to handle refugee movements, sharing information about armed groups that take advantage of refugees, and aligning resettlement plans. Nonetheless, political and cultural variations, along with rivalries among regional powers, may obstruct successful cooperation. Disputes among EU member countries regarding the distribution of refugees and the sovereignty concerns of the host nations pose considerable barriers. Furthermore, the interests of individual nations might take precedence over humanitarian goals, especially in states experiencing internal political turmoil⁵⁵.

⁵⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). *Refugee Protection and Humanitarian Assistance: Guidelines for Security in Camps*. UNHCR, 2018.

⁵⁵ Betts, Alexander, and Paul Collier. *Refuge: Transforming a Broken Refugee System*. Penguin Books, 2017.

Increase Funding for Host Countries

Enhancing financial support for host nations, particularly those in the Global South, is crucial for adequately assisting refugee populations. The World Bank, UNHCR, and UNDP can work together with donor nations such as the United States, Germany, and Canada to offer financial assistance, infrastructure development, and economic growth initiatives in countries that host refugees. This collaboration would lead to improved living conditions, an expansion of available services, and alleviation of pressure on local resources. Nonetheless, challenges exist, including the political commitment of donor nations to provide ample funding, along with the complexities of ensuring that aid is allocated fairly and utilized effectively. Additionally, host countries might encounter domestic pressures that favor their own priorities over those of refugees, which makes funding efforts even more complicated⁵⁶.

Implement Legal Protections Against Militarization

Establishing legal safeguards against the militarization of refugee camps is essential to inhibit armed factions from taking advantage of displaced individuals. Global regulations, such as the 1951 Refugee Convention, can be upheld by organizations like the UNHCR and ICRC, along with the countries hosting refugees, to maintain the neutrality of these camps. It is crucial that these protections are enforced by both state authorities and non-state entities, with significant penalties for those who choose to militarize these areas. Nevertheless, obstacles exist, including the inadequate political motivation in host nations, which might favor security issues over legal safeguards, and the challenges of implementing international law in areas of conflict. Furthermore, armed groups may attempt to bypass these legal protections by concealing weapons or influencing local officials, complicating effective enforcement⁵⁷.

Develop Comprehensive Anti-Trafficking Measures

Creating effective anti-trafficking strategies is essential to safeguard refugees from traffickers' exploitation. Nations that are major sources of refugees, such as Syria, South Sudan, and Myanmar, can collaborate with international agencies like the UNHCR, Interpol, and Europol to establish and implement laws aimed at preventing human trafficking. This can be realized through awareness

⁵⁶World Bank. *Refugee Economics: Rethinking the Impact of Refugees on Development*. World Bank Group, 2016.

⁵⁷International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). *International Humanitarian Law: Protecting Refugees from Militarization*. ICRC, 2017.

initiatives, improved border security, and support services for victims. Nevertheless, obstacles include the intricate nature of transnational trafficking networks, insufficient resources in conflict areas to enforce legislation, and the limited ability of host nations to protect at-risk refugees. Additionally, the presence of corruption or inadequate legal systems in certain countries can impede the effectiveness of these measures⁵⁸.

Use Technology to Monitor and Support Refugees

Utilizing technology to track and assist refugees presents a promising way to improve the safety and management of refugee groups. Nations and organizations, including the UNHCR, Red Cross, and Google, have created tools such as biometric registration systems and mobile applications to monitor refugees and deliver vital services. These technological advancements can aid in tracking refugee movements, ensuring they receive support, and enhancing security within camps. Nevertheless, challenges arise, such as concerns regarding data privacy, the digital divide, and the risk of technology being misused for surveillance or exploitation. Furthermore, the inadequate technological infrastructure in many host nations, especially in areas like Africa or South Asia, could hinder the effectiveness of these solutions⁵⁹.

⁵⁸ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). *Trafficking in Persons and Refugees: International Collaboration and Action Plans*. UNODC, 2018.

⁵⁹ UNHCR. *The Use of Technology in Refugee Protection: An Overview*. UNHCR, 2020.

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