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Strategies to counter the surge of intolerance and xenophobia against migrants and refugees around the globe

Report of the UA-MUNC Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared to present information and observations received from Member States and other relevant observers, on the agenda of the rights of refugees and migrants. In particular, the report focuses on strategies to counter the surge of intolerance and xenophobia against migrants and refugees globally. The report begins with a brief introduction and an overview of the causes and current trends in migration and the status of refugees. The report also briefly reviews past actions and related recent initiatives. It concludes with some questions to consider for further discussions and debate during the UA-MUNC High Level Summit

Introduction

1. A record-breaking number of refugees and migrants are moving across international borders - fleeing conflict, persecution, poverty, and other life-threatening situations. Refugees and migrants may also be responding to labor and skill shortages and demographic changes. Such actions and responses highlight the underlying aspiration of all refugees and migrants: to seek better opportunities elsewhere, and to improve their quality of life. In 2014, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that there were 14.4 million refugees. An additional 5.2 million Palestine refugees are registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. There are 244 million international migrants – meaning more than 3 per cent of the global population have left their homes in search of a better life abroad.¹ In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States have recognized the many positive benefits of migration. The headlining motto, «Leave no-one behind» provides a powerful basis for the inclusion of refugees, migrants and internally displaced and stateless people in economic development planning, as well as in other measures taken by States to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Following the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a UN High-level Summit for Refugees and Migrants was held on 19th September 2016, where the world came together around one plan: to protect the human rights of all people on the move, including refugees and migrants, and counter intolerance and the social exclusion of migrants.

¹ 71/1 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants



Background of the topic

REFUGEES

2. In 1950, in the aftermath of the Second World War, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was created. The legal foundation for helping refugees and the basic statute guiding UNHCR's work is the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Ratified by 145 State parties, it defines the term 'refugee' and outlines the rights of the displaced, as well as the legal obligations of States to protect them. A refugee, according to the 1951 Convention, is someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.² The core principle is *non-refoulement*, which asserts that a refugee should not be returned to a country where they face serious threats to their life or freedom. This is now considered a rule of customary international law. UNHCR serves as the 'guardian' of the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol.³ According to the legislation, States are expected to cooperate with UNHCR in ensuring that the rights of refugees are respected and protected.

3. The purpose of UNHCR is to safe-guard the rights and well-being of people, and to help millions of people restart their lives. This includes not only refugees but also:

a. Asylum-seekers: this term describes individuals who have sought international protection and whose claim of refugee status has not yet been determined. In accordance with internationally recognized obligations to protect refugees on their territories, countries are responsible for determining whether an asylum-seeker is a refugee or not. There are approximately 1.8 million people around the world waiting for a decision on their asylum claims.⁴

b. Internally displaced people (IDPs): individuals who are forced to flee, but remain within their country's borders. By the end of 2014, over 38 million people were displaced within their own countries as a result of violence.⁵ The main reason for such an increase in new displacement during 2014 was the result of protracted crises in Iraq, Nigeria, South Sudan, Syria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

c. Stateless people: individuals who are not considered nationals by any state under the operation of its law. Statelessness can occur for several reasons, including discrimination on the basis of ethnic and religious background and gender, the emergence of new States, transfer of territory between existing States, and discrepancies in nationality law. Today, 10 million people worldwide are denied citizenship.⁶

d. Returnees: for many of the millions forced to flee, returning back to their homeland concludes a period of exile, a time of trauma and suffering. The UNHCR has managed to implement numerous voluntary repatriation programs that have brought millions of displaced people home. In Afghanistan alone, the UNHCR has helped 5 million refugees return since 2002.

4. Recently, the UNHCR has been challenged by an unprecedented refugee crisis that has impacted both Europe and the Middle East. As of mid-March 2016, 2.1 million Syrians were registered by UNHCR in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon, 1.9 million Syrians were registered by the Government of Turkey, and more than 28,000 were registered in North Africa. After 6 years of war in Syria, more than 5 million people have been displaced. In early 2017, with Syria's war heading into its seventh year, the UNHCR and other UN agencies collaborated to appeal for US\$8 billion.⁷ Such vital new funding is purposed to help millions

² 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees

³ UN Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees

⁴ UNHCR Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries, 2014

⁵ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre Global Overview 2015

⁶ UNHCR Global Action Plan to End Statelessness, 2014-2024

⁷ UNHCR Syria Mid-Year 2016: Helping to Save Lives and Rebuild Communities



of people in Syria and across the region. The first component of the appeal is the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), led by the UNHCR, which calls for \$4.63 billion to support 4.8 million refugees in neighboring countries and 4 million in the communities hosting them. The second component is the 2017 Syria Humanitarian Response Plan, which seeks nearly \$3.2 billion to provide humanitarian support and protection to 13.5 million people within Syria.⁸

5. In December 2013, hundreds of thousands of people were forced to flee their homes as violence spread in the Central African Republic (CAR), with militants brutally killing civilians, looting homes and burning villages. Today, over 450,000 CAR refugees are being sheltered in Cameroon, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo. However, despite peaceful elections in February 2016, over 415,000 people are still internally displaced inside the CAR. The situation in the CAR is one of the most poorly funded emergency situations in the world, and many people lack even basic survival assistance.⁹

6. Another serious refugee crisis began four years ago, when religious and ethnic tensions between the Rohingya Muslims and the Rakhine Buddhists (who make up the majority of the population in Myanmar) escalated into widespread, deadly rioting. Hundreds of thousands were forced to flee. Since then, ongoing violent attacks have forced even more people to leave their homes – but Rohingya people are rejected almost everywhere they seek safety. Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya people are now living in limbo as refugees across Southeast Asia. The Myanmar Government have stated that the Rohingya people are not Burmese citizens – however, the Rohingya have been living in Myanmar for generations. Today, they are a people with no home or citizenship. The Rohingya are being widely abused and exploited. They are one of the most persecuted minorities in the world, and face constant xenophobia, racism, and intolerance.

7. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein has condemned the international community's inaction during the Rohingya crisis. Mr. Zeid said –“The gravity and scale of these allegations begs the robust reaction of the international community”.¹⁰ In March 2017, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a strong resolution which condemned the human rights violations in Myanmar, and authorized an international fact-finding mission, to thoroughly examine allegations of serious human rights abuses, and ensure full accountability for perpetrators and justice for the victims.¹¹

8. In addition to persecution and conflict, in the 21st century, natural disasters –largely due to climate change - have also forced people to seek refuge in other countries. Such disasters, including floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, and mudslides, are increasing in frequency and intensity. While most of the displacement caused by these events is internal, they can also cause people to cross borders. None of the existing international and regional refugee law instruments, however, specifically addresses the plight of such people. Displacement caused by the slow-onset effects of climate change is largely internal as well. Through its acceleration of drought, desertification, rising sea levels, and the salinization of ground water and soil, climate change can also contribute to the displacement of people across international frontiers.

9. In January 2017, the UNHCR launched a strategic direction plan for a five-year period (2017- 2021), which was prompted by the ongoing global humanitarian crisis. Due to armed conflicts, violence, insecurity and human rights abuses, over 65 million people are displaced

⁸ Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2016

⁹ CAR Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Report

¹⁰ UN News report: UN report details 'devastating cruelty' against Rohingya population in Myanmar's Rakhine province (http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56103#.WPJ_BRheNbV)

¹¹ Human Rights Watch News: Burma: UN takes key step for justice (<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/03/24/burma-un-takes-key-step-justice>)



from their homes. The document elaborates on five core directions on which the UNHCR will focus: protection, response to emergencies, promotion of inclusion and self-reliance, inclusion through the engagement with development actors, empowerment of the people the UNHCR serves, and the pursuit of solutions to the aforementioned problems.¹² Moreover, the document describes the institutional changes the UNHCR will undertake in order to pursue these directions of work, and to optimize its responsiveness, effectiveness and institutional accountability.

MIGRATION

10. Another challenge the world faces today is migration. Over 1 billion people in the world are migrants, or more than 1 in 7 people globally. The figure includes the stock of international migrants – people residing in a country other than their country of birth – whose number reached 244 million in 2015, up by 41 per cent since 2000. This also includes approximately 740 million internal migrants of whom, according to 2009 UNDP estimates, over 150 million are rural-urban migrants in China.

11. In the 1950s, a special organ of the UN, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), also called the UN Migration Agency, was established. The IOM works to ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, promote international cooperation on migration issues, assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and IDPs.

12. The IOM's Global Migration Trend shows that the year 2015 was the deadliest year for migrants: an increased level of forced displacement globally was tragically accompanied by record-high numbers of people perishing or going missing while trying to cross international borders. Over 5,400 migrants worldwide are estimated to have died or gone missing in 2015. Also, human trafficking remains one of the biggest problems of migration. An estimated 21 million individuals are victims of forced labor globally – this figure includes, but is not limited to sexual trafficking.¹³

13. Remittances continue to climb globally while remittance-sending costs remain relatively high. The sum of financial remittances sent by international migrants back to their families in the countries of origin amounted to an estimated US\$581 billion in 2015 – over three-quarters of which were sent to low and middle-income economies. For example, in Tajikistan remittances constituted over 40% of the country's GDP. However, average remittance transfer costs were still at 7.5% of the amount sent in the third quarter of 2015, higher than the 3% minimum target set in the Sustainable Development Goal to be met by 2030.¹⁴

14. In adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UN recognized the contribution of migration to inclusive growth. The 2030 Agenda calls on Member States to strengthen international cooperation to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration with full respect for human rights and for the humane treatment of migrants, regardless of their status, as well as of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).¹⁵

¹² UNHCR's Strategic Directions 2017-2021

¹³ IOM's Global Migration Trends Report 2015

¹⁴ World Bank's paper - Migration and Development. A Role for the World Bank Group.

¹⁵ A/RES/70/1 Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



Committee Introduction

15. The United Nations General Assembly hosts a High-Level Summit to address the large movements of refugees and migrants, with the aim of bringing countries together in a more humane and coordinated approach.

16. The UNGA acknowledges the work of the High-Level Summit on Refugees and Migrants, on the 19th September 2016 at the UN in New York, as it has significantly influenced national policies by delivering best-practice examples. The outcome of this summit was the New York Declaration, which stresses the commitment and political will of Member States to implement comprehensive human rights protection for refugees and migrants, and most importantly, strategies to counter the surge of intolerance and xenophobia against migrants and refugees.

17. The UNGA also acknowledges and takes into consideration the report «In safety and dignity: addressing large movements of refugees and migrants» of the 8th Secretary-General. The report includes three pillars: to uphold safety and dignity in large movements, of both refugees and migrants; a global compact on responsibility- sharing for refugees; and a global compact on safe, regular and orderly migration.¹⁶

18. Regarding the strategies to counter the surge of xenophobia and intolerance against migrants and refugees, the GA is convinced that international collaboration and cooperation is of utmost importance to tackle this issue holistically.

Past United Nations Actions

19. One of the key documents is “The New York Declaration” that was adopted in the context of the United Nations Summit for Refugees and Migrants. The New York Declaration reaffirms the importance of the international protection regime and represents a set of commitments by Member States to strengthen and enhance mechanisms to protect people on the move. It paves the way for the adoption of two new global compacts in 2018: the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi stated that - “The Declaration marks a political commitment of unprecedented force and resonance. It fills what has been a perennial gap in the international protection system – that of truly sharing responsibility for refugees”.¹⁷

20. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets of the 2030 Agenda integrate migration and refugees in three ways. At least 10 of the 169 targets include references to issues directly pertaining to international migration, refugees and mobility. First, a migration-specific target (10.7), calls on countries to “facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”.¹⁸ Second, there are several migration-related targets, including those that refer to (i) training and retraining health workers in developing countries, and other measures to mitigate the “brain drain” (3c), (ii) providing scholarships for study abroad (4d), (iii) ending human trafficking (5.2, 8.7, 16.2), and (iv) respecting labor rights of migrant workers, in particular the rights of female workers (8.8). Third, the Agenda argues that disaggregation by migratory status (17.18) will facilitate a comparative assessment of outcomes of relevant SDGs for the foreign-born population, or foreign citizens.

21. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda includes various means to implement the migration and refugee-related SDGs and their targets. The outcome document of the third International

¹⁶ Report of the Secretary-General “In safe and dignity: addressing large movements of refugees and migrants”

¹⁷ New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants

¹⁸ A/RES/70/1 Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa in July 2015, constitutes an integral part of the 2030 Agenda. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) calls on Member States to ensure that migration is governed with full respect for human rights, to combat xenophobia, and to facilitate migrant integration through education of migrant and refugee children and social communication strategies. The Agenda proposes concrete measures to reduce migration costs, including by lowering the costs of recruiting migrant workers, promoting cheaper, faster and safer transfer of remittances, enhancing the productive use of remittances by increasing financial services, inclusion and literacy, and facilitating migrants' access to, and portability of, earned benefits and recognition of qualifications. Further, Member States should mitigate the potentially negative consequences of measures that address anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing related to the flow of remittances and access to financial services by migrants.¹⁹

22. Another important initiative is TOGETHER, which promotes respect, safety and dignity for everyone forced to flee their homes in search of a better life. The campaign was initiated during the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants on September 19th, 2016. TOGETHER engages and mobilizes global citizens to show support for refugees and migrants; creates a strong, persuasive narrative of solidarity toward refugees and migrants and showcases the shared benefits of migration to the economies of nations, while also acknowledging legitimate concerns of host communities.

23. UNHCR Educational Initiatives: In times of displacement, education is crucial. It can foster social cohesion, provide access to life-saving information, address psychosocial needs, and offer a stable and safe environment. It also helps refugees and migrants to rebuild their communities and pursue productive, meaningful lives. UNHCR partners with governments and international organizations to ensure quality and protective education for refugee and migrant children and young people everywhere – thus contributing towards the successful implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4.

24. UNHCR And WASH: Access to water, sanitation and hygiene facilities are often problematic for refugees and migrants, so UNHCR working together with UNICEF created the Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Programme that ensures the delivery of water and sanitation services to millions of people. WASH also has positive effects on: protection and safety (long distances to water points can put young girls and women at risk of sexual violence), nutrition, education (42 per cent of children attending school in one Ugandan refugee camp had their schooling interrupted due to water collection), food security and livelihoods, and the environment (non-sustainable usage of water resources can potentially overexploit groundwater resources).²⁰

25. UNHCR and focus on Children: Children – whether refugees, internally displaced or stateless – are, compared to adults, at greater risk of abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation, trafficking or forced recruitment into armed groups. Children's rights are enshrined in international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). One of the key priorities for the UNHCR is child protection. UNHCR works with national authorities to assist, protect and find solutions for displaced children. The UNHCR ensures that those children who are unaccompanied or separated are cared for and have access to family tracing and reunification services.

¹⁹ Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development

²⁰ UNHCR Strategy for Public Health 2014-18



Past International Actions (Member States, Political groups, NGOs)

26. In 2015 the EU presented the European Agenda on Migration – a combination of immediate actions and long-term solutions to manage immigration flows and alleviate the burden on Southern Member states. Immediate actions include tripling of Frontex’ capacities in order for its main operation Triton (border security) to be effectively led. Frontex, a European agency established in 2004 to secure the external border of the EU, has been constrained because of a lack of financial and operational resources. It is expected to see Triton’s budget more than triple, from 2.9 to 9 million Euros.²¹ The dismantling of smuggling networks is also a core of the agenda. And to further relieve Italy and Greece, the European Commission plans to create a system of “relocation in emergency of mass influxes”. The agenda stresses the need for a coordinated EU migration policy in the long run, which would revolve around four pillars. First of all, it is paramount to reduce the incentive for illegal migration by “addressing its root causes”. Secondly, a more effective border management approach will be necessary to both prevent human disasters and secure maritime frontiers; and third a “strong common asylum policy” has to be decided in order for the European countries’ response to the crisis to be coherent. Last, but not least, the Commission advocates for a “new policy on legal migration”. However, there is another problem that refugees and migrants are facing in today’s Europe. UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, has pointed out that European leaders need to do more to coordinate migration policies and combat negative stereotypes about refugees. Negative public opinion on refugees and migrants creates a climate of xenophobia that is very worrying.²²

27. Recently, the United Kingdom has been facing significant criticism because of the British government’s reluctance to host refugees. In comparison to EU countries, the UK has received far fewer refugees and asylum applications. For instance, last year Germany received 175,000 asylum applications, whereas Britain received 24,000.²³ The situation only got more complicated after the UK voted “yes” to leave the European Union. Immediately people called Brexit an anti-migration vote, which has served as an indicator of actual levels of racism and xenophobia in the UK. Brexit will mean very little for refugees dying in the Mediterranean. Britain has already opted out of various EU directives, which would require it to take part in responding to the refugee crisis and accepting people in need. With regards to migration, the international community is already witnessing destitution and incarceration of hundreds of refused asylum seekers and migrants. Social welfare lawyers have reported a rising number of destitute Eastern European migrants. These trends are contributing to the alarming rise in racist violence and xenophobia against refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.

28. In November 2015, the World Health Organization (WHO) organized a High-level Meeting on Refugee and Migrant Health in November 2015, the outcome of which was a document “Stepping up action on refugee and migrant health”. In this document, the WHO raises awareness about the large number of avoidable deaths associated with forced displacement. The WHO emphasized that short- and long-term public health interventions aimed at protecting the physical and mental health of refugees and migrants, as well as the host community, should be made available. Health systems need to be migrant-sensitive as well as gender sensitive, and take into account cultural diversities and different needs of women and men, girls and boys. The WHO also urged the UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNAIDS to cooperate.²⁴

²¹ Frontex Risk Analysis Network Quarterly Report 2016

²² Statement by UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi on World Refugee Day 2016

²³ Refugee Council UK Asylum Trends and Facts 2014

²⁴ WHO’s document – Stepping up action on refugee and migrant health

29. HIV/AIDS poses an additional challenge: Treatment for HIV and access to comprehensive reproductive health services is limited for refugees and migrants. Particularly for women and girls, access to services such as emergency obstetric and neonatal care can drastically reduce the number of women who die during or after childbirth. International organizations, working in collaboration with host countries, NGOs and communities, must work collaboratively to combat the stereotypical and incorrect belief that refugees bring AIDS with them to local communities, which may lead to discriminatory practices.

Political Groups

30. G-77+China stress that migration is an enabler for development. “The roles and responsibilities of the countries of origin, transit and destination should be appropriately balanced. It is crucial to cooperate internationally to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration involving full respect for human rights and humane treatment of migrants regardless of their migration status, refugees and displaced persons” – Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the G-77+China. The G-77 recognizes that international migration is a multidimensional reality of major relevance for the development of countries that must be addressed in a coherent, comprehensive and balanced manner.²⁵ G-77 countries endeavor to increase cooperation on access to and portability of earned benefits, and enhance the recognition of foreign qualifications and education. G-77 further endeavors to implement effective social communication strategies on the contribution of migrants to sustainable development in all its dimensions, in countries of destination, in order to combat racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia.

31. The Arab League is another regional group particularly focused on finding solutions to the migrant and refugee crisis. The Arab League believes that it is the obligation of States to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of migrants and refugees. The group also notes that the benefit and opportunities for safe, orderly, regular and responsible migration are considerable and are often underestimated, but that additional efforts are needed by States, international organizations, NGOs, and others responding to large movements of refugees and migrants, to protect vulnerable people. The Arab League also notes that children on the move, and victims of trafficking and migrants caught in countries in crisis, have not always received the assistance and protection they needed. During the preparation for the UN Summit on Refugees and Migrants, the Arab League agreed that all actors – states, international and civil society organizations and the private sector – must work together to condemn and combat xenophobia, racism, and discrimination.²⁶

32. For the African Union (AU), poor socio-economic conditions, low wages, high levels of unemployment, poverty and lack of opportunity are the main factors that fuel out-migration from the African continent. The AU also stresses that globalization influences migration as it facilitates the movement of people across the various regions in Africa and to other regions outside the continent. The group believes that although countries (sending, receiving) and migrants may benefit from migration, problems arise due to illegal and uncontrolled migration, jeopardizing the relations between countries and the integration of migrants in the receiving society.²⁷ Recently, the AU expressed concerns about the xenophobic attacks against migrants and refugees in South Africa. The AU urged the South African government to provide humanitarian and other social assistance to those affected by the xenophobic attacks. This represents just one of many cases of racism and discrimination against migrants on the African continent.

²⁵ G77 Ministerial Declaration 2016 (<http://www.g77.org/doc/Declaration2016.htm>)

²⁶ IOM's Press Release – «IOM Supports Arab League Preparation for UN Summit on Refugees and Migrants»

²⁷ The Migration Policy Framework for Africa (UNHCR)



Possible Solutions

33. At the UN High-level Summit for Refugees and Migrants, a few important solutions were proposed.

For refugees, the following solutions were brought to light. The need to:

- Take account of the rights, specific needs, contributions and voices of women and girl refugees;
- Assess and meet the essential needs of refugees, including by providing access to adequate safe drinking water, sanitation, food, nutrition, shelter, psychosocial support and health care, including sexual and reproductive health, and providing assistance to host countries and communities;
- Work to ensure the immediate birth registration for all refugee children born on their territory and provide adequate assistance at the earliest opportunity with obtaining other necessary documents;
- Take measures to maintain the civilian and humanitarian nature of refugee camps and settlements;
- Counter the surge of intolerance and xenophobia against migrants and refugees;

For migrants, the following solutions were brought to light. The need to:

- Review migration policies with a view to examining their possible unintended negative consequences;
- Assist, impartially and based on needs, migrants in countries that are experiencing conflicts or natural disasters, working where applicable, in coordination with the relevant national authorities.

34. Some possible solutions, which have not been addressed in the past include:

- The development of comprehensive national plans for the inclusion of refugees and those migrants permitted to remain in their countries to encourage their full contributions to societies;
- The initiation of a State-led, consultative process to improve protection and assistance for migrants in vulnerable situations, with the participation of experts and civil society, building on the principles and practical guidance on the protection of migrants in large movements currently being developed by the Global Migration Group.

Current Status

35. The surge of refugees in the last few years has reached levels not seen in decades. And these numbers could increase further in the near future. The immediate priority must be to help the refugees — who bear the heaviest burden, and too often tragically — with better access to shelter, health care and quality education. Many of the countries neighboring conflict zones, which have welcomed most of the refugees, have been facing significant difficulties because of the large numbers of displaced people. To support additional public services for refugees, they will require additional financial resources.



The international community must play its part. Some countries have been willing to receive large flows of refugees and done their utmost to provide them with food and shelter. Others, especially among advanced countries, should look at how they can increase their scope for admitting more refugees. Ultimately, however, one thing is very clear: no country can manage the refugee crisis on their own. Global cooperation is imperative. The key challenge is to facilitate the smooth integration of newcomers — whether economic migrants or refugees. There will be hardship and difficulties at the onset, be it logistical, fiscal, or political, however, these should be weighed against the benefits that accrue over the medium to longer term.

What should a well-designed integration policy include?

1. First, *strengthening the ability of labor markets to absorb migrants and refugees* — by enabling migrants and refugees the immediate ability to seek work and providing better job matching services
2. Second, *enhancing access to education and training* — by providing affordable education, language and job training to migrants and refugees
3. Third, *improving skill recognition* — by adopting simple, affordable and transparent procedures to recognize foreign qualifications
4. Finally, *supporting migrant and refugee entrepreneurs* — by reducing barriers to start-ups and providing support with legal advice, counseling and training

While these points could be included in an integration policy, the problems of xenophobia and intolerance could still remain unresolved. It is crucial for States to recognize that discrimination against refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, and internally displaced persons is a contemporary form of racism. Governments and regional bodies should take steps to reverse policies and practices that discriminate against refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants; reinforce the existing international refugee protection regime; and introduce new protection standards where necessary.

Questions to consider

36. Question delegates should address in their position papers and opening statements include the following:

- What is your country's foreign policy on this specific agenda item (i.e. your country's policies with respect to the integration of refugees and migrants)?
- What is your country's experience with acts of intolerance and xenophobia directed towards migrants and refugees? Is this a problem in your country? How does your country tackle this issue at the national and regional levels?
- What does your country believe is the most critical dimension of this topic that requires immediate resolution by the committee?
- What solutions to the surge of intolerance and xenophobia against refugees and migrants around the world, are you planning to propose during negotiation?
- How would your solutions aid in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?



Further reading

37. For the successful work of our committee, it is important for you read the New York Declaration in order to be fully aware of the commitments that the Member States have already made, and pay close attention to the obligations/measures, which are to be taken in the future. Also, note that Annex I and II include many elements that I would like you to mention in a future resolution.

https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/A_RES_71_1_E.pdf

38. Another important document that contains useful information is the Report of the Secretary-General “In safety and dignity: addressing large movements of refugees and migrants”. The three pillars that are mentioned in this report contain proposals and recommendations for future actions.

http://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/in_safety_and_dignity_-_addressing_large_movements_of_refugees_and_migrants.pdf

39. The UNHCR’s Strategic Directions 2017-2021 is one more document that describes not only the challenges and opportunities that characterize forced displacement today, but also the approach that will shape UNHCR’s work. A key element of this document is the five core directions. (pages 16-26 of the document)

<http://www.unhcr.org/excom/announce/5894558d4/unhcrs-strategic-directions-2017-2021.html>

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