

Directors Letter:

Greetings Delegates,

It gives me immense pleasure to be welcoming you all to BCMUN 2023 As the director of your committee, I am all looking forward to having a fruitful debate in the committee. Along with your Assistant Director Apollin Lu, we will be your dias team. This topic is a very spicy one, and I look forward to what points everyone will be bringing to the table. We will be discussing the Displacement of Afghanistan citizens.

If this is your first or first few times delegating, I'd like to welcome you to MUN with a gloved handshake! I remember how it was when I was first starting out—I was terrified and very shy, probably much more than you're feeling now. But trust me: every time you put yourself out there, it gets a little easier the next time. Try to start on research early (if you need any pointers, just hit me up) so you don't feel blurry during debates, and consider reaching out to your country's allies to form a bloc. Blocs are great for debate support and even emotional support. As for you seasoned MUNers, a reminder to do your best to be accommodating and encourage the quiet ones in your bloc to speak up: provide them with some suggestions on what they can speak about if you would be so kind, and always be a listening ear.

I look forward to meeting you all at the conference. If you have any questions about the conference or need help with preparation, I would be happy to respond to any questions through my email amiridsan@gmail.com

Good luck delegates! Ridhima Sharma Director of UNHCR - BCMUN 2023

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Displacement of Afghan Citizens

Committee Overview

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is an international organization that provides protection and assistance to refugees. The UNHCR has a presence in over 120 countries and works to ensure that refugees and stateless people receive protection and assistance. In 2020, the UNHCR established a committee, South Korea. The UNHCR is responsible for providing protection and assistance to refugees and stateless persons in the Mun region. The Committee also advocates for the rights of refugees and stateless persons, provides humanitarian aid and works to promote refugee self-reliance. The Committee works with local partners to ensure that refugees and stateless persons are able to access health care, education, livelihoods and other essential services. The UNHCR also works with the local government to ensure that refugees and stateless persons are able to access legal protection.

Structure:

A subsidiary body of the General Assembly is the UNHCR. Although it has numerous branches in nations that offer asylum, including Turkey, Canada, the United States of America, and Great Britain, the headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland.

They operate as one of the most important humanitarian organisations in the world. - 8,000 employees spread across 449 sites in 123 different nations and received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1954 and 1981 for their assistance to approximately 50 million refugees. The high commissioner office is made up of the deputy high commissioner, assistant high commissioner (protection), and assistant high commissioner (operation).

Six separate divisions exist; Division of External Relations (DER), Division of Financial and Administrative Management (DFAM) Division of Human Resources Management (DHRM) Division of Information Systems and Telecommunications (DIST) Division of Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS), Division of Programme Support and Management (DPSM). The committee consisting of 94 different states meets annually in Geneva. UNHCR is allowed to intervene with governments to ensure minimal rights such as; freedom from arbitrary expulsion, access to the courts, work and educational opportunities, possession of identity and travel documents.

Function:

The UNHCR's first responsibility was to assist those who had been impacted by World War II in finding a solution. Millions of people depended on this mission, thus it was granted a three-year mandate. The refugee issue persisted there even though the mission was extended until it was deemed permanent in 2003.

Since the 1960s, the UNHCR has dealt with a wide range of cases involving refugees fleeing conflict, political unrest, and natural disasters in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Program (WFP), and numerous other non-governmental organizations (NGO) that offer housing, food, material aid, and primarily "reparation and resettlement" collaborate with UNHCR on a variety of UN projects.

There are several goals of the UNHCR:

- 1. The favorable security environment: By safeguarding access to territorial protection and asylum procedures; protection against refoulement; and the adoption of nationality laws that prevent and/or reduce statelessness.
- 2. The fair protection process and documentation: Securing birth registration, profiling, and individual documentation based on registration.
- 3. Security from violence and exploitation: Reducing protection risks faced by people of concern, in particular, discrimination, sexual and gender-based violence, and specific risks faced by children.
- 4. Coverage of basic needs and services: Reducing mortality, morbidity, and malnutrition through multi sectoral interventions, meeting International Standards concerning shelter, domestic energy, water, sanitation, and hygiene.

The UNHCR is responsible to make sure that everyone can find safe refuge in other states, has the right to seek asylum and has options whether to return home, integrate, or resettle. In order to do so, their functions include providing emergency assistance and guaranteeing protection to each their final goal which is finding a solution for refugees to rebuild and live their lives.

Topic Introduction

The displacement of Afghan citizens is due to a variety of factors, including the ongoing conflict in the country, poverty, and natural disasters. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), more than two million Afghans were internally displaced within the country in 2020, and more than two million Afghan refugees were hosted in neighboring countries, primarily Pakistan and Iran. The UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations are providing assistance to Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) with food, shelter, education, and other essential services. Essay on Displacement of Afghanistan citizens

The displacement of Afghanistan citizens has been an ongoing issue for years, and it has had a large impact on the nation. Afghanistan is a country that has been subject to decades of war, political unrest, and economic hardship. This has resulted in an extremely high rate of displacement, with thousands of people fleeing their homes in search of safety and security.

The displacement of Afghanistan citizens can be attributed to a number of factors. The war in Afghanistan has caused widespread destruction and chaos, leading to an increase in displacement. The political instability in the country has also caused many to flee, as the government has been unable to provide the necessary security and stability for citizens to live peacefully. Additionally, a lack of economic opportunities has caused many to leave in search of a better life elsewhere.

The consequences of displacement have been severe. Many families have been forced to flee their homes with little more than the clothes on their back, leaving behind their possessions, homes, and livelihoods. This has caused widespread poverty and suffering, as many of those who have been displaced have found it difficult to find work and provide for their families. Additionally, many of those who have been displaced have become refugees, facing harsh conditions in unfamiliar countries.

The displacement of Afghanistan citizens has had a profound effect on the nation as a whole. It has resulted in a decrease in economic activity, as many of those who have been displaced have been unable to find work or contribute to the economy. Additionally, it has led to an increase in crime and violence, as those who have been displaced often turn to criminal activities in order to survive. Furthermore, it has had a significant impact on the nation's education system, as many of those who have been displaced have been unable to attend school due to their circumstances.

Ultimately, the displacement of Afghanistan citizens has had a disastrous effect on the nation. It has caused widespread poverty, suffering, and instability, and it has had a profound impact on the nation as a whole. In order to address this issue, it is important that the government takes steps to

provide security, stability, and economic opportunities for those who have been displaced. Additionally, international aid organizations should continue to provide assistance to those who have been forced to flee their homes.

Topic History

In the early 1980s, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, many of the citizens of the country were displaced. This displacement was the result of a complex set of factors, including the Soviet Union's military intervention, the civil war that ensued, and the Afghan refugee crisis.

The Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan began in December 1979 when the Soviet Union dispatched more than 100,000 troops to the country and established a puppet government. This military intervention was intended to secure the Soviet Union's strategic interests in the region, and to prevent the spread of Islamic fundamentalism. The invasion resulted in a civil war, and in the ensuing chaos, millions of Afghans fled their homes to seek refuge in neighboring countries.

The civil war in Afghanistan led to both internal and external displacement of the Afghan population. The internal displacement of Afghans was caused by a number of factors, including the destruction of property and infrastructure, the disruption of social and economic activities, and the increasingly oppressive security measures imposed by the Soviet-backed government. The external displacement of Afghans was largely a result of the war-torn conditions in the country and the lack of security. As a result of the civil war, millions of Afghans fled to Pakistan and Iran, or sought asylum in Europe, the United States and other countries.

The Afghan refugee crisis was one of the most serious refugee crises of the 20th century. By the mid-1990s, more than 5 million Afghans had been forcibly displaced from their homes, making them one of the largest refugee populations in the world. The displacement of Afghans had a devastating impact on their lives, as they were denied basic rights such as access to education and health care, and were often subjected to discrimination and exploitation. This displacement also had a significant impact on the development of Afghanistan, as the displacement of Afghans led to a significant loss of human capital and resources.

The displacement of Afghans has had a lasting impact on the country, and it continues to be a major challenge for the Afghan government. Despite the end of the Soviet occupation in 1989, millions of Afghans continue to be displaced both inside and outside of Afghanistan. The displacement of Afghans has had a significant impact on the country's social, economic and political development, and has contributed to the ongoing conflict and instability in the country. Afghanistan has a long history of displacement due to war and conflict. During the Soviet invasion in the 1980s, millions of Afghans fled the country. In the 1990s, when the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan, many more Afghans were displaced due to violence and persecution. Since the U.S.-led invasion and the start of the war on terrorism in 2001, displacement has continued to be a major issue in the country. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there were over 3 million registered Afghan

refugees in 2015. In addition, millions more are believed to be internally displaced within Afghanistan.

Past Action

To assist the resettling of thousands of Afghans in North America or Europe, some countries that were a part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) established special programs. As stateless Asylum seekers, the non-refoulement principle and the U.N. Convention Against Torture protect them. They also receive maximum government benefits and protections in countries including Australia, Canada, Germany, the United States, and the United Kingdom. For example, those that receive green cards under 8 U.S.C. § 1159 can immediately become "non-citizen nationals of the United States". They can also be pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1452(b) without needing to meet the requirements of 8 U.S.C. § 1427(a). This allows them to travel with distinct United States Passports. Australia also provides similar benefits.

To facilitate the returns of failed asylum seekers, European countries have made many efforts to negotiate bilateral agreements with Afghanistan. Countries including Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom all concluded returns agreements prior to 2008. Due to continued insecurity in Afghanistan, deportations, when occurred, have been criticized. However, with growing public concerns in Europe about migration management in recent years, facilitating returns for rejected asylum seekers has been a European Union priority.

Since the early 2000s, UNHCR has consistently encouraged a regional approach encompassing local integration and a transition to a legal migration regime for those unwilling to return home but for whom a traditional refugee designation would not necessarily apply. However, in the face of implacable opposition from Iran and Pakistan to such long-term local integration, however, that prospect seems unlikely.

To respond to the urgent humanitarian and protection needs of more than 3.6 million people in the conflict-stricken country, the International Organization for Migration appealed for more than \$589 million. Between August and December 2020 the IOM scaled up its operational capacities to reach more than 600,000 people in Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The UN Agency also was the second largest provider of emergency shelter and non-food items in the country. They also worked to help displaced populations manage freezing winter temperatures. IOM also administered key reception and transit centers along the borders and provided healthcare, such as COVID-19 vaccinations, in 12 provinces.

Further, to help those with acute needs, the UNHCR and its partners have provided the recently displaced Afghans with emergency shelter, food, health, water, sanitation, and cash assistance.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan was created in March 2022 by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2626. Resolution 2626 calls for UNAMA and Special Representative of the Secretary-General, within their mandate, to continue to lead and coordinate international civilian efforts. The UNAMA is a UN Special Political Mission tasked with assisting the people of Afghanistans.

Current Situation

It's been over a year since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan forced thousands of people to flee the country. Some were lucky enough to be airlifted out of the country, yet many more were left behind. The UN estimates that there are still around 3.5 million people who are internally displaced after decades of war. Families have been split up, having to leave their loved ones at risk. Furthermore, refugees state that they are not experiencing the speedy transfer of evacuees they were promised by the United States and European Nations. The Afghan economy has also left many people jobless, and the middle class seems to be evaporating. Street children and beggars, as well as drug users have increased tremendously.

Further, security for activists, journalists, the military, and LGBT community has been proven to be far from guaranteed. Under the new Taliban rule, many fear losing career and education opportunities, primarily amongst women and those who have higher education. Others fear reprisals for their ties with the previous government or their sexual orientation.

Afghan refugees make up the third largest refugee population in the world by nationality, behind Syrians and Venezuelans, as of June 2021. An additional 239,000 Afghan live as asylum seekers worldwide. Currently, More than 6 million Afghans have been driven out of their homes and their country by conflict, violence and poverty. The majority of displaced Afghans either live as internally displaced people (IDPs) or as refugees in Pakistan and Iran. According to UNHCR estimates, there were 3.4 million IDPs as of December 2021, and over 700,000 have been displaced since the start of 2021.

International efforts have been limited, as countries don't want an influx of refugees. For example, Pakistani Authorities publicly announced that they would not extend the validity of Proof of Registration cards issued to Afghan refugees beyond the end of that year, though they eventually relented for a while. As a result however, the internal displacement has been on the rise, with up to 1.5 million people forced from their homes to other locations within Afghanistan. Numerous studies have also shown that those who have been displaced tend to have higher than average rates of food insecurity, indebtedness, illiteracy, unemployment, and that large numbers do not have secure land tenure. European and American politicians have also been hesitant about the new migrants. Almost everywhere, governments have expressed general willingness to accept Afghans who worked alongside American forces or international aid groups but have provided little detail about how that might happen. They are wary of committing to the many thousands more who would seek to leave to avoid life under the Taliban, even though for now the number of migrants over land routes has been relatively low.

Because international support has been suspended and long standing sanctions against the Taliban are affecting the whole country, the long standing economy seems to be on the brink of

collapse. The UN agency has warned that as needs continue to grow, failure to sustain sufficient services and to address the vulnerabilities of the peoples will result in a surge of displacement and migration.

Despite difficult circumstances, the UNHCR is doing what they can to support the displaced Afghans by delivering life support. Since the start of 2021, nearly 1 million Afghans have been protected and supported. Due to the acute needs of those who have had to flee, there has been an increasing demand for food, water, shelter, and medical service. Responding to the most critical priorities, UNHCR has been able to successfully provide food, shelter, cash, hygiene, and sanitary kits, as well as other lifesaving assistance together with partners. The UNHCR has also undertaken protection monitoring covering 34 provinces in 2021. Furthermore, the UNHCR is working with authorities in neighboring countries to plan and prepare for potential future displacement of Afghan refugees.

Case Study #1 - Asylum Seekers in Norway

In desperation to escape Taliban ruled Afghanistan, Mohammad and his family traveled to Iran and then used a smuggler to get to Turkey. During this extremely dangerous journey, the family traveled on both foot and horse. At one point, Mohammad fell off the horse because his father was so tired he couldn't hold him anymore. Once they got to Turkey, Mohammad's family traveled across the country to get to the Aegean Sea, where they were put on a boat made for five people, yet with twenty five people on board. After the two hour boat trip, they continued across Europe and eventually made it to Norway. The same day they arrived in Norway, Mohammad's family formally registered as asylum seekers. Mohammad began a happy life in Norway, going to school where he had many friends and played football. He was popular and enjoyed school. The family saw their future in Norway and always felt safe.

Unfortunately, after four years of living in Norway, Mohammad and his family's refugee application was rejected by the Norwegian government, and they were told they must leave the country. Not long after, the police arrived at the family's apartment and they were arrested, going into detention for 20 days. Soon after, they were flown back to Afghanistan where they were provided with a small amount of money to help with the return process. In Kabul, they set up new lives, as they had sold all their possessions when they fled the country. Amid escalating violence, many families like Mohammad's are desperately seeking safely and are unsure what their futures may hold.

Case Study #2 - Receiving Refugee Status in Germany

Hussain and his wife and two children, are from the Daykundi Province, East of Kabul. Hussain was a university professor in Kabul, and his wife was a nurse. They moved to Germany, where Hussain is looking for a job and his children are already enrolled in school. They all have received refugee status.

The family moved to Germany a few months after arriving in Italy. The decision to move to Germany was made to ensure a better future for their children and better work opportunities for the parents. Getting used to the new environment has been proven to not be so easy. The family faces challenges such as a language they don't understand and a culture that is foreign to them. Communicating with locals isn't easy. Hussain explains that when asking a question, the locals

reply very cautiously. He says they seem very cold, but not impolite. He has had difficulty finding work as they require a certain level of German language fluency that he doesn't have yet.

Despite these challenges, Hussain doesn't regret his choice. The family lives in a community with other Afghans, which has helped with the isolation of being alone in a foreign nation. He says that being amongst other refugees has helped them learn about the asylum process, how to register in a hospital, and how to register their children in school. For the family, the German authorities have proved to be very helpful. In their experience, the migration offices were very informative and gave them necessary information. The family plans to stay in Germany, building a new life and have their children grow up there. Although they have faced many challenges, they do believe Germany is better than Afghanistan for them.

Bloc Positions

The debate over the displacement of Afghanistan citizens has resulted in a variety of divided stances within the UN. While some nations are focused on relocating the afghani citizens to their respective countries, other nations feel an indifference towards the situation throughout all UNHRC member states, it is evident that four distinct groups exist in the coalition against the use of child soldiers: nations that utilize child soldiers in government forces, nations that fund child-soldier-centered militant groups in exchange for certain favors, nations that are completely opposed to the idea of utilizing underage soldiers in combat and are willing to provide aid to mitigate their use, and nations that are currently investing in child soldier-united states. The spectrum of diering ideologies has created an unparalleled divide amongst every nation, and created three separate blocs within UNHRC when discussing this specific issue.

Child Soldiers in Government Forces: South Sudan, Somalia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and others

As mentioned previously, there are still seven nations worldwide that use child soldiers in government forces as of 2017. For example, caught in the middle of South Sudan's devastating civil war are thousands of child soldiers, being used by both government forces and rebel groups such as the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).184 Children as young as eight years old are forced onto the bloody frontlines, where they fight for higher ranked officials and leaders. As of late 2015, UNICEF estimates that there were approximately 15,000-16,000 children that have fought in the South Sudanese Civil War, either for government forces or opposition armies.185 Despite the UN's efforts to create programs aimed to eliminate the recruitment of child soldiers in government forces, it is still extremely prevalent in many parts of Africa. A similar situation is unfolding in Somalia, where the government is resorting to the use of child soldiers to fight al-Shabaab in an attempt to maintain power and regain stability within the country.

The Somali army is notorious for exploiting child soldiers, and recent uprisings from increasingly powerful militant groups, such as al-Shabaab, have prompted the government to resort back to using child soldiers. UNICEF estimates that upwards of 5,000 child soldiers are currently serving in the Somali army, a significant increase from the 2,000-3,000 child soldiers previously believed to be in combat.186 Despite Somalia recently signing the Convention on the Rights of the Child, being the 195th nation to ratify it, the government still seems to express little to no interest in preventing the use of child soldiers. Somalia, along with other nations such as Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, still require substantial action to entirely remove the use of child soldiers within their nations, both in and out of government forces. While ratifying the CRC is an essential first step, these governments must be in accordance with

the majority of the international community to make progress against the use of child soldiers. As such, convincing these nations to take drastic actions such as the deployment of peacekeepers will be nearly impossible; instead, these nations may be more—although still not completely—open to increased education.

Funding Child-Soldier-Centered Militant Groups: Sudan

While some states condone the use of child soldiers within their own military forces, other countries have opted to fund certain militant groups that heavily rely on the presence of underage fighters. In the mid-1990s, the Sudanese government began providing humanitarian and financial assistance to the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), in hopes of getting to the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).187 In exchange for monetary goods and personnel, the LRA would help the Sudanese combat the SPLA, while ensuring that the government retains its power over the state. Most of the time, these transactions are hidden from both the UN and the general public, but the relationship between the Sudanese government and the LRA proves that many nations are willing to assist child-soldier-centered militant groups if their interests align. Therefore, nations like Sudan will be completely against any international action that would affect their foreign and domestic operations, especially more extreme methods like peacekeeping. In most nations where the use of child soldiers is a recurring and pressing concern, that country's current status is often unstable and uncertain, thus prompting many young children to join armed groups. However, in the more developed nations of Africa, most notably Seychelles, which boasts a gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of USD 14,653.30, and Mauritius, with a GDP per capita of \$9,106.20 USD, as of 2021.188 These statistics are extremely high when compared to other nations of the AU; for example, in the same year, war-torn nations such as Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo have a GDP per capita of \$447.00 USD and \$577.20 USD, respectively.189 Young children in more developed African nations are much less likely to join armed combat, mainly due to the resources and education accessible to them. As noted before, a major driving force for children to join militant and government forces is the certainty of basic necessities, which youth in more developed nations already have access to. Furthermore, more stable and wealthy governments have more humanitarian and monetary resources available, thus not having to exploit armed child labour.

North American nations, particularly the U.S. and Canada, are some of the main providers of peacekeeping personnel; however, unlike the latter, which is relatively open to providing peacekeeping forces, the U.S.'s current political climate makes it hard for its federal government to directly contribute to international peacekeeping operations with personnel. Member states of the EU dier in their individual opinions on sending aid abroad, but Western European nations such as France and Germany would be more willing to provide peacekeeping forces to conflict zones. Nations such as Hungary, Italy, and Poland, whose governments are currently ruled by hardline conservative to borderline nationalistic parties, are much less willing to provide any

kind of aid. In general, this bloc would be open to solving both short- and long-term issues with a plethora of solutions including peacekeeping, increased education, and improved surveillance. Nevertheless, resolutions that will or will not be supported vary depending on each country. Overall, the more developed and wealthy states of SOCHUM continue to maintain child soldier-free states, and would be open to assisting the developing nations that do not have the same access to various luxuries.

Nations Investing in Child Soldier-Supporting States: People's Republic of China

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has recently been investing heavily in various African nations, some of whom utilize child soldiers in current armed conflicts or fund militias that recruit children. For example, one of the East African nations to enter friendly relations with China is the previously mentioned Somalia, where China has provided invaluable equipment for healthcare services as well as scholarships for students to study in the PRC.190 The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is also a valuable investment for China, as President Felix Tshisekedi expressed a desire to negotiate a deal with China in 2021 that would allow the PRC to invest in future DRC mining and infrastructure projects.191 For nations that outwardly support groups that recruit child soldiers, China is one of Sudan's largest trading partners, with the former investing in the latter's mining and oil industries.192 As is evident, the PRC's economy benefits enormously from the maintaining of the status quo; therefore, China and its allies would vehemently oppose any measures taken by SOCHUM that would disrupt the current social, political, and economic status quo in affected regions.

Guiding Questions

- 1. What are the primary causes of displacement for Afghan citizens?
- 2. What are the impacts of displacement on the affected individuals and communities?
- 3. How is the UNHCR currently responding to the displacement crisis?
- 4. What additional measures can be taken to address the needs of displaced Afghan citizens?
- 5. How can the UNHCR work with local authorities and other organizations to address the root causes of displacement?
- 6. How can the UNHCR support the integration and long-term stability of displaced Afghan citizens?
- 7. How can the UNHCR collaborate with other organizations and governments to promote durable solutions for displaced Afghan citizens, including voluntary return and local integration?

Further Research

and protection.

https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/tei-jp-tracker/tei/afghan-displacement-situation
 Especially useful for European countries, this website goes in-depth while discussing what is being done in Europe to help displaced Afghans.

2. https://www.unrefugees.org/news/afghanistan-refugee-crisis-explained/

- Describes USA for UNHCR helps and protects refugees and people displaced by violence, conflict and persecution. Supporting UNHCR the UN Refugee Agency and its partners, your gift provides lifesaving essentials including shelter, water, food, safety
- 3. https://www.unhcr.org/afghanistan-emergency.html

Depicts the The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is a United Nations agency mandated to aid and protect refugees, forcibly displaced communities, and stateless people, and to assist in their voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement to a third country.

4. https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/10/19/afghanistan-refugees-resettlement-taliban-migratio
n/

Describes the reasons behind the mass displacement of Afghan citizens. Reports the conditions of different refugee settlement organizations across the world, based on the people's experiences.

5. https://www.migrationdataportal.org/afghanistan/internal-displacement
Useful statistics regarding displaced afghans that show the severity of the issue at hand.
Focuses specifically on internally displaced Afghans which is a very important subtopic.

Citations

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