

General Assembly (GA)

Topic: Addressing the Political, Economic, and Social Effects of Displaced Persons

I. Statement of Problem:

1. A displaced person may fall under two categories: a refugee, or an internally displaced person (IDP). Refugees are defined by the UN as anyone who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."^[1] Internally displaced persons are similar to refugees, but have been displaced within their own country instead of internationally. Both are victims of forced migration.
2. Forced Migration is defined as: "A general term that refers to the movements of refugees and internally displaced people (those displaced by conflicts) as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects."^[2]
3. There are a variety of push factors behind forced migration, including violence, civil war, persecution because of race, social status, political opinion, or religion. Often, forced migrants flee to states or nations that are unable or unwilling to protect them.
4. The number of IDPs has been on the rise, estimated at 28.8 million in 2012. Current conflicts that have contributed majorly include the Syrian Civil War and violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While Sub-Saharan Africa is the region with the greatest number of IDPs, at 10.4 million, Colombia's 5 million IDPs make it the single country with the largest amount.^[3] The number of refugees has also increased in recent years. According to the UNHCR, 45.2 million total were in a situation of displacement in 2012.^[4]
5. Several factors are likely to cause an increase in displaced persons in the near future. Extreme weather, desertification, and rising sea levels due to climate change will inevitably lead to greater numbers of climate related IDPs and refugees.^[5] Additionally, growing populations in conflict-ridden areas of the developing world coupled with unstable political systems will contribute to the likelihood of additional future situations like those currently seen in Syria, Somalia, and the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.
6. An increase of refugees and IDPs has been linked to the spread of conflict. Scholarly analysis has shown that refugee flows increase the risk of further violence in host countries and erode the stability of political systems.^[6] Large volumes of Refugees and IDPs also have damaging economic and environmental effects to both the host and source countries.
7. Thus, international action is required to avoid a potential crisis of displaced persons in the near future.

II. History of the Issue:

8. Forced migration has been a problem for thousands of years. The most prominent example would be the slave trade, in which many Africans were abducted and forcibly migrated to new nations and continents. Another example would be the Holocaust of the early 20th century, in which many European Jews were forced to flee their home nations due to persecution.^[7]

9. The Second World War created a crisis of refugees throughout Europe. In response to this, the UN established its High Commissioner for Refugees on December 14th, 1950. Since then, the UNHCR has evolved as the permanent branch of the UN tasked with attending to displaced peoples.^[8]

10. In recent years the UNHCR has been forced to appeal towards public and private sector donors to fulfill its financial needs. In 2012, its annual budget totaled a record \$4.3 billion.^[9]

III. Potential Solutions:

11. When coming together to write resolutions the delegates should be aware of the following issues:

- Although it is useful to address the root of the climate-refugee problem, the current state of the world climate will inevitably lead to large volumes of displaced persons in the future, no matter what drastic action is taken to combat climate change. Thus, solutions should not place too much emphasis on addressing climate factors.
- Avoid overly-straightforward solutions like simply giving more funding to the UNHCR. The issue of displaced peoples will require a flexible and nuanced response.
- Be authentic in your solutions. If you are a country who is in a major civil war, or there are any reasons that you might have people fleeing your country, think wisely about what resolution you draft

Also, resolutions could potentially involve the tighter restrictions on people leaving areas in which they are unsafe. It is possible that people could negatively be affected by the potential resolutions.

IV. Position and Research Tips:

12. While researching about your country according to this topic, keep in mind...

- What are possible reasons the citizens of my country are fleeing? Or why are citizens of other countries fleeing to my country?
- What can be done to regulate this very important topic?
- Be sure that your research is completely accurate, relevant, up to date, and cited. Although the chairs do not require a printed out position paper, they recommend it, in case you need to state where a fact was cited.
- Please cite in MLA format at the end of your position paper

V. Useful Web Sources:

<http://www.forcedmigration.org>

<http://www.ifrc.org>

<http://www.unhcr.org>

<http://www.forcedmigration.org/research-resources/regions>

References:

[1] UNHCR - Refugees. (n.d.). *UNHCR*. Retrieved July 29, 2013, from <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c125.h>

[1] World Disasters Report 2012 - Focus on forced migration and displacement - IFRC. (n.d.). *IFRC.org* - *IFRC*. Retrieved May 14, 2013, from <http://www.ifrc.org/publications-and-reports/world-disasters-report/wdr2012/world-disasters-report-2012--focus-on-forced-migration-and-displacement/>

[2] Forced Migration. (2011, September 16). *A World of Information on Human Displacement*. Retrieved May 14, 2013, from www.forcedmigration.org/about/whatisfm/what-is-forced-migration

[3] UNHCR - Internally Displaced People Figures. (n.d.). *UNHCR*. Retrieved July 29, 2013, from <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c23.h>

[4] Laughland, O., & Evershed, N. (2013, June 18). World refugee increase is highest since 1999, UNHCR report shows. *The Guardian*. Retrieved July 29, 2013, from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/19/world-refugee-numbers-1999-unhcr>

[5]Myers, N. (2002). Environmental Refugees: A Growing Phenomenon Of The 21st Century. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 357(1420), 609-613.

[6]Salehyan, I., & Gleditsch, K. S. (2006). Refugees And The Spread Of Civil War. *International Organization*, 60(02), 1.

[7] Forced Migration. (2011, September 16). *A World of Information on Human Displacement*.

Retrieved May 14, 2013, from <http://www.forcedmigration.org/about/whatisfm/what-is-forced-migration>

[8] UNHCR - History of the UNHCR. (n.d.). *UNHCR*.

Retrieved July 29, 2013, from

<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cbc.html>

[10]UNHCR Figures. (n.d.). *UNHCR* . Retrieved August 1, 2013, from

<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c14.html>

Note to Delegates:

Welcome Delegates,

This topic is very controversial, for all countries. We chose these topics with each country in mind. Although there are many countries in GA, we know each country is affected by this topic. Forced Migration is a very hard topic to debate, because it is a topic so close to Human Rights.

Keep in mind that you need to be authentic throughout the whole conference, and if you have any questions at any time please feel free to email the chairs. Our emails will be available below. We are very confident and excited to see all of you, and we all have complete faith in you.

Sincerely,
GA Chairs

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General Assembly (GA)

Topic: The Effect of Migrant Workers and Remittance on Developing Nations and the Global Economy

I. Statement of Problem:

1. Many developing countries' economies are dependent on More Developed Countries (MDCs). This dependency is most visible in large transfer of money between LDCs and MDCs through remittance, the practice of foreign workers sending a portion of their salary back to their country of origin. According to the World Bank, \$372 billion in remittances was transferred to developing countries in 2011. Overall, the transfer of money to LDCs through remittances is more than double the amount given through the foreign aid programs of developed nations. ^[1]

2. When foreign workers send remittances, they normally do so by employment acquired through Work Visas, a form of legal authorization that allows permission to work in a location without citizenship. A worker can either be invited to gain a worker's permit in a certain country, or apply for one.

3. Many recipients of work visas originate from nations with a relatively low GDP per capita, and when large numbers of highly skilled and educated workers from these less developed countries apply for and gain access to a work visa, the LDC experiences a "brain drain". The skilled workers of a nation immigrate to a more developed nation for better job opportunities, and this causes a lack of skilled workers in the LDC, which has a negative effect on the country's economy. ^[2]

4. Remittances sent home from work visa immigrants can negatively affect the economy of the MDC by causing a trade deficit; money is being sent to another country, but no goods are being sent in return. ^[3] Because the money earned by the worker is not put back into the economy of the MDC, the more developed nation is harmed.

5. Often these foreign workers are subject to inhumane conditions. For example, controversy has surrounded the situation of South Asian guest workers employed by construction firms in countries like the United Arab Emirates. These workers have allegedly faced high rates of injury, unpaid wages, and squalid living conditions. ^[4]

6. When transferring wages back to their home countries, foreign workers are frequently charged with transfer fees and other associated costs. The UN Conference on Trade and Development has urged governments to reduce these fees, as they represent a significant drain on the incomes of those receiving

remittances in LDCs. ^[5]

7. While many see remittance as a positive force for the developing world, concerns have been raised over the sustainability of the current remittance situation. Over-reliance on remittances by developing economies can leave LDCs highly vulnerable to financial downturns in developed nations. Tajikistan, one of the most remittance-dependent developing nations, was devastated by the financial crisis of 2008 because of the rapid decrease in remittances from Russia. [6] Many critics of remittance have also pointed out that it can often leave LDCs subject to the political will of the developed nations they are dependent on.

8. In order to ensure that remittances and migrant labor have a positive effect on international development, a delicate balance must be achieved. Too many restrictions on work visas and remittances can result in worsening poverty and stagnation for LDCs. On the other hand, if too many of a developing nation's citizens are working abroad, issues like over-dependency and brain drain can result. Additionally, it is highly important that the rights and living conditions of foreign workers are respected. The General Assembly should take all these factors into consideration when constructing a framework to address this issue.

II. History of the Issue:

9. Migration according to the availability of work has been a consistent feature of human societies. Under recent globalization, this migration has accelerated and become an international phenomenon.

10. Globalization has catalyzed the flow of remittances by widening the availability of technology used to transfer money. According to the World Bank, in the past 15 years "the inflow of remittances to developing economies has grown sixfold, from \$56 billion in 1995 to \$334 billion in 2010." ^[7]

11. In 2008 the World Bank launched the Remittance Prices Worldwide database, which is used to monitor the fees associated with remittance transfer and create more transparency and accountability. However, the price of remittance transfer remains rather high, averaging at 9.24 percent. ^[8]

12. Despite the growing importance of remittance in the global economy, the UN has yet to address the issue in any broad scale. Remittances are essential to the wealth and livelihood of millions around the globe, and have been identified as a key instrument to financial development. But reliance on them is problematic, as they do little to combat growing socio-economic inequalities and regional asymmetry. In order to ensure that remittances continue to contribute to development while avoiding brain drain, increasing inequality, and dependency, action should be taken.

III. Potential Solutions:

1. Diaspora bonds have been implemented by LDCs as a way to address several of the concerns

associated with foreign workers. These are government-issued bonds marketed to citizens living abroad which allow them to contribute to the development of their home country.

2. Although they are currently viewed with skepticism by much of the international community, alternative currencies like Bitcoin have been used in order to subvert restrictions and transfer fees associated with remittance.

3. Other proposals made in recent literature include government-to-government repayment of the remittance tax of the developed nation, or devoting remittance taxes towards development projects in the LDC of origin. ^[9]

4.. A somewhat contentious position on the topic of remittances and migration is that the root cause of international inequality must be addressed in order to reach a long-term, sustainable solution. Although a broad plan to combat inequality will not be possible within the bounds of this topic, it is important to consider this factor when determining your country's position.

IV. Position and Research Tips:

While researching about your country according to this topic, keep in mind...

- Does my country generally send or receive remittances?
- If the latter is true, is my country's economy dependent on remittances?
-
- Be sure that your research is completely accurate, relevant, up to date, and cited. Although the chairs do not require a printed out position paper, it is recommended in case you need to state where a fact was cited.

V. Useful Web Sources:

<http://www.un.org/en/ga/>

<http://www.workpermit.com/us/>

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1271.html

<http://www.law.berkeley.edu/library/dynamic/guide.php?id=58>

<http://www.ilo.org/global/lang--en/index.htm>

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2007/wp0735.pdf>

References:

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[2] IMF Working Paper. (n.d.). *IMF.org*. Retrieved March 1, 2013, from:
www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2007/wp0735.pdf

[3] Shah, Nasra. "The management of irregular migration and its consequence for development: Gulf Cooperation Council ." *International Labour Organization* . United Nations, 24 Mar. 2009. Web. 24 May 2013. <http://www.ilo.org/asia/whatwedo/publications/WCMS_105105/lang--en/index.htm>.

[4] Building Towers, Cheating Workers | Human Rights Watch. (2006, November 12). *Human Rights Watch* . Retrieved July 28, 2013, from
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[5] Remittance investment and knowledge-sharing can help lift poorest nations – UN report. (2012, November 28). *United Nations*. Retrieved July 28, 2013, from
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<http://globalriskinsights.com/2013/06/13/migration-tensions-threaten-tajik-remittance-dependence/>

[7] Towards Human Resilience: Sustaining MDG Progress In an Age of Economic Uncertainty. (n.d.). *United Nations Development Program*. Retrieved July 28, 2013, from
http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Poverty%20Reduction/Inclusive%20development/Towards%20Human%20Resilience/Towards_SustainingMDGProgress_Ch4.pdf

**[8]Remittance Prices Worldwide: Making Markets More Transparent - The World Bank Group. (n.d.). *World Bank*. Retrieved July 29, 2013, from
<http://remittanceprices.worldbank.org/>**

**[9]Migration and the remittance euphoria. (n.d.). *South African Regional Poverty Network*. Retrieved July 29, 2013, from
http://www.sarpn.org/documents/d0002188/Migration_NEF_Mitchell_2006.pdf**

Note to Delegates:

Welcome Delegates,

We are extremely excited to hear the opinions of the countries you represent on this controversial topic. It is obvious that this problem has been present in the news recently, and we assume you have all heard about this from a family member or a friend. MUNSA GA will be a great room to chair in and an even more enjoyable room to delegate in. This will be an exciting three days!

Keep in mind that you need to be authentic throughout the whole conference, and if you have any

questions at any time please feel free to email the chairs. Our emails will be available below. We are very confident and excited to see all of you, and we all have complete faith in you.

Sincerely,
GA Chairs

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