

# **United Nations Relief and Works Agency**

## **(UNRWA)**

**Agenda:** Safeguarding Humanitarian Corridors in Active Conflict Zones While Upholding Neutrality and International Humanitarian Law aimed to address all forms of Violence with a Special Emphasis on the Palestinian refugees in the Near East

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*“No one puts their children in a boat unless the water is safer than land”*

- Warshan Shire

In situations of armed conflict, the United Nations and the international community as a whole carry an obligation to protect civilian populations caught amid hostilities. As wars escalate and conflicts become increasingly urbanised and protracted, innocent civilians are often denied access to basic necessities such as food, medical care, shelter, and safe passage. The need to establish humanitarian corridors is quite clear considering the inability to do so poses a direct threat to civilian survival and represents a significant challenge to the effective application of international humanitarian law.

Owing to ongoing military operations, shifting frontlines, and the increased risk of violence in civilian areas, current conflicts often make it difficult to establish humanitarian corridors. Both displaced people seeking evacuation and humanitarian workers trying to provide life-saving aid face danger owing to these dangerous circumstances. In this regard, the international community bears the responsibility of promoting communication, securing ceasefires, and guaranteeing adherence to the neutrality and security of humanitarian operations conducted by the UN. The agenda therefore examines how the UN can strengthen frameworks to ensure that humanitarian corridors are established, protected, and effectively monitored even during active conflict, including but not limited to improving coordination amongst humanitarian agencies among others.

One such example, which has put the international community at a standstill is the plight of the Palestinian refugees in the Near-east.

The 'Nakba' or ethnic cleansing initiated by the State of Israel in 1948, formed the foundation of the 1948 Palestine war. Consequently, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was established in 1949 by the United Nations General Assembly. Its mandate encompasses Palestinians who fled or were expelled during the 1948 Palestine War and subsequent conflicts, as well as their descendants.

Since October 2023, however, the living conditions of Palestinians have only deteriorated as the Israel-Hamas war caused famine, instability and violence to deepen its hold over the Gaza Strip and surrounding regions, with nearly 5.9 million registered refugees living in registered camps since the start of the conflict. The question of safeguarding humanitarian corridors in these active conflict zones is more pertinent than ever and the decades of violence that the Palestinians have endured have resulted in the crushing of families and futures.

This committee requires you to take up the responsibility to manoeuvre through the narrow lanes of diplomacy, dialogue and cooperation and the very existence of the Palestinian people depends on your ability to handle it. **The question is, delegates, will this community continue to live in darkness and uncertainty, or can the international community come together to act as torchbearers of change and humanity?**



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