



MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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DIRECTORS WELCOME LETTER:



Dear Delegates and Faculty Advisors,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the American University of Sharjah Model United Nations (AUSMUN) 2020. This conference has been the home of fruitful debate, practical resolutions, dedicated moderators, spectacular delegates, and diligent advisory and executive boards for the past twelve years and is continuing to do so for its thirteenth year. With 1000 delegates registered from more than 45 national and international educational institutions, this conference will be the biggest one yet!

This year's theme 'Embracing Diversity, Shaping the Future' has been designed to capture the essence of issues that surround our globalized society. Even though we have come this far in time, there has been little to no improvement in accepting diversity as portrayed by the latest atrocities in several countries around the world. However, the future can be successfully shaped for us, the youth, only by embracing diversity in every sector of life and we hope to draw attention to this.

This background guide has been formulated by our hard-working chairs and the research team to provide delegates with the starting point of their preparation for this three-day conference. The guide is initially divided into two sections based on the two topics and is further split into logical components. Firstly, the Summary and History section acts as an introduction to the issue by highlighting important events, terms, history, and global implications. Secondly, the Discourse on the Issue section establishes a link between the issue, its implications, significance, and the United Nations Charter. Lastly, the Past International Organization (IO) Actions and Latest Developments section elaborates on the previous action that has been taken and latest development in terms of the last actions taken with regards to the issue. At the end of each issue, delegates will find sections of Questions the Discussions and Resolutions Should Address and Suggestions for Further Research that aim to streamline the process of delegate's research. However, in order to grab a better understanding of the topic and be able to position yourself better to participate during the conference, it is advised to go beyond the background guide since this guide does not encapsulate enough information to be sufficient for every country and is only a brief introduction to the issues at hand. It is highly encouraged for delegates to view the 'Delegate Handbook' on the AUSMUN website and the 'How to Research' video on YouTube created by AUSMUN.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to all the contributors to this background guide. It is the collaborative work of the Moderators, AUSMUN Research Team, and the AUSMUN Media Team. On behalf of them all, I truly hope that this guide will be of great help to you.

All the very best for the conference and if you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at research@ausmun.com.

Sincerely,
Manaswi Madichetty
Director of Research
AUSMUN 2020

MODERATORS WELCOME LETTER:

MODERATORS WELCOME LETTER:

Abdullah Malek

Noon Khair

Fareha Khan

Tala Otaibi

Dear delegates!

It is with immense pleasure that we welcome you all to the 2020 American University of Sharjah Model United Nations (AUSMUN). As chairs for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), we look forward to meeting you all and hearing your ideas and resolutions for solving international conflicts and promoting what this committee stands for: protecting refugees, displaced communities and stateless people, along with assisting in their local integration and resettlement. The United Nations (UN) was founded upon the cooperation of its 193-member states, despite differing interests and personal concerns.

The UNHCR was established in 1950, during the aftermath of World War II. The committee collaborates with several programs and agencies to ensure resettlement of refugees and increase public awareness of the issues faced by refugees across the globe. Several challenges hinder its work such as the recent sharp rise in the numbers of refugees and increased inter-state tensions. The UNHCR recognizes the necessity of global cooperation to solve refugee crises and aims to bring countries to ensure better conditions for refugees around the world.

We hope to further continue the vision of AUSMUN to inspire the youth and ensure that each delegate has an equal chance to express themselves within and out of the committee rooms. Whether you are an MUN veteran or simply a newcomer, we hope you have a great and memorable experience with AUSMUN 2020. Should you have any concerns or enquiries, please do not hesitate to reach us on the contact email below.

Sincerely,
UNHCR Chairs (UNHCRAUSMUN2020@gmail.com)



UNHCR

**The United Nations High Commissioner for
Refugees**

Topic I

Addressing Issues at Detention Facilities and Improving the Conditions

1. Summary & History

Simply put, a detention facility is a facility where people are detained and kept in custody. Immigrant detention centers are, as the name implies, facilities that detain non-citizens for a time period that lasts until they can be deported or until their case is assessed (Flynn, 2011). The scale under which immigrants are detained, a pattern we find mostly in developed nations, has grown enormously in the last few decades (Wilsher, 2011). In history, a foreigner was free to move across borders as he/she pleased, except in the cases of war. However, since new forms of economic independence began to rise in the end of the nineteenth century, freedom of movement began to become more restricted (Wilsher, 2011). Since then, the freedom of movement of foreigners began to be seen as a threat.

The detention of immigrants is assessed using varying levels of analysis. It is assessed on an international level in order to outline state obligations. Secondly, it is assessed on a state level in order to study state policies and law. Lastly, it is assessed on an individual level in order to study individual detainee cases (Flynn, 2011). Detention centers serve as a means to carry out and implement state detention policies. Therefore, the assessment of detention centers is a crucial way to evaluate state policies set for immigrants. Unfortunately, many cases of abuse and mistreatment are reported inside these facilities by human rights agencies. The agencies have to focus on assessing the conditions at the detention facilities and assessing whether they are appropriate enough to live in (Flynn, 2011). Considering there are many types of facilities, we are able to tell a lot about how states perceive immigrants depending on what type of facility they detain and place them in. The three main categories of facilities include: criminal, administrative, and ad hoc (Flynn, 2011). Unfortunately, many countries like the United States and Canada hold immigrants in prison-like criminal facilities alongside convicted criminals. Suspicious immigrants are meant to be held in administrative facilities that are used specifically to detain people charged on non-criminal grounds (Flynn, 2011). In the United States, hundreds of people have died in the immigration detention under ICE (Wong, 2015).

2. Discourse on the Issue

According to UNHCR, cooperation among Member States, and between states and other actors, is a core principle for capacity building, under which improving employment opportunities exists, and a principle on which UNHCR relies upon in order to fulfill its mandate ("Capacity Building - UNHCR Rwanda", 2015). Collaboration between international organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Member States, the private sector, and regional organizations such as the African Union (AU) is a key pillar in improving employment opportunities for refugees and IDPs (United Nations).

Access to employment opportunities may be prohibited or limited by existing legal frameworks, and refugees who manage to attain work do so, in many instances, through the informal economy – the main unregulated labor-sector in many refugee-impacted countries (UNHCR). According to the ILO's 2016 report titled *The Access of Refugees and Other Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market*, a minority of the 17.4 million registered asylum seekers and recognized

refugees manage to attain employment in the formal economy (UNHCR).

According to UNHCR's Education Field Guidelines, completion of the full cycle of education increases the likelihood of sustainable livelihoods for refugees and IDPs, while promoting safer refugee communities and self-reliance (United Nations, "Education Field Guidelines"). However, refugees still face limited access to schooling, as many are unable to complete the full cycle of education (Dryden-Peterson). Furthermore, the enrollment rates for refugee children, globally, remain low, at an estimated 63%, with the global enrollment rate for children at 91% (United Nations, "Stepping up: Refugee education in crisis - 2019 Report").

3. Past International Organization (IO) Actions & Latest Developments

The detention of refugees, also known as asylum-seekers, has occurred in a set number of countries, which affects the lives of many individuals drastically (United Nations, 2014). The UNHCR is concerned about the growing number of the detention of immigrants, specially of children. In June 2014, the UNHCR issued the "Global Strategy — Beyond Detention 2014-2019", a set of policies designed to assist the governments in decreasing the act of detaining refugees by supporting them in implementing alternatives and protecting children. The Global Strategy revolves around working with 12 countries alongside their governments, as mentioned, in addition to national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other countries. These countries are: Canada, Hungary, Indonesia, Israel, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Thailand, the United Kingdom, the United States and Zambia. In December 2016, the UNHCR announced the addition of eight more countries: Belgium, Botswana, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Japan, Macedonia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. This brings the total count of the countries to 20 indicating the success of the 5-year plan. Each focus country is involved in developing a national action plan, researching and reporting on detention, strengthening partnerships in addition to endorsing and raising awareness through the implementation of programs and activities (United Nations, 2018). Two progress reports were published throughout the duration of the strategy. Despite the strategy including 20 focus countries, only 12 countries provided detailed updates about the changes occurred due to their implementations. In January 2017, the position of the UNHCR was published. It discussed the 2012 Detention Guidelines which states that refugee children should be detained despite their migratory statues or that of their guardians.

4. Questions the Discussions and Resolutions Should Address

- How can the prevention of detaining refugee, especially children, be implemented?
- How is it insured that the guidelines are being followed by all countries working alongside the UNHCR?

5. Suggestions for Further Research

- Developments or degradation of the detention camp situation
- Detention based on religion
- Impact on children, families, and global development

Topic II

Lack and Importance of Economic Inclusion of Refugees

1. Summary & History

As the Cold War continued to intensify, refugee influxes moved from the east to the west. Due to this sudden influx, the UNHCR developed with the purpose of accommodating these refugees and helping them resettle in the host countries (Loescher, 2017). When refugees began to expand beyond Europe and into Africa and Asia, it became very clear that large attention must be devoted to the resettlement of refugees (Loescher, 2017). Those who seek refuge in other countries do so with the sole purpose of improving their living conditions. Normally, refugees vary in their ethnic backgrounds and nationalities. Despite the variance, they all share a common desire to rebuild the parts of their lives that they lost back home (Smith, 1966). Refugees always face an issue with being integrated in their host countries, especially when there seems to be tension building up between them and the locals. In the example of the Syrian refugee crisis, host countries in the Levant made accusations against the refugees saying that they had taken their jobs away from them (Ferris & Kirişci, 2016). Moreover, local citizens were quite furious at the fact that the refugees were not obliged to pay taxes and still had access to public services like health care and schooling (Ferris & Kirişci, 2016). Definitely, this type of problem causes an additional burden to a host government's economy and there must be a solution found. Governments may sometimes prioritize helping refugees make their own money and self-fund in order to avoid the dependency of the refugees on funds from the governments and international assistance. Labor market integration is a strong indicator to the success of refugee integration overall (UNHCR).

2. Discourse on the Issue

It is recorded that the United States has the largest detention regime in the world with 40,000 people detained per day ("Detention Timeline"). As per recent reports, conditions in which migrants and refugees are being held in the United States are appalling and violate the laws of UNHCR such as the international law against detaining migrant children. (Johnson, 2019). High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet stated in her interview that, "children are forced to sleep on the floor in overcrowded facilities, without access to adequate healthcare or food, and with poor sanitation conditions." (Johnson, 2019).

According to UNHCR, immigration detention is never in the best interests of a child, even for a short period of time. Putting children in detention centers can have lasting effects on their mental health and growth. It is suggested from a study conducted by psychologist Charles Nelson that children who stay in detention centers suffer from learning disorders and often have limited memory storing capacity (Santhanam, 2019). Their cognitive functions such as interaction and dealing with emotions may not work as well as children who are raised in a caring home (Santhanam, 2019).

The United States has the world's highest rate of children in detention followed by countries such as Bolivia, Botswana and Sri Lanka (Reuters, 2019). Expert Manfred Nowak stated that worldwide more than 7 million people under age 18 are held in jails and police custody, including 330,000 in immigration detention centers (Reuters, 2019).

3. Past IO Actions and The Latest Developments

After being forced fleeing their country due to several conditions, refugees seek to rebuild their lives from the start. The UNHCR promotes improving the livelihoods (securing the basic needs for life such as food, water, shelter, etc.) through economic inclusions. Economic inclusion is the equal ability of all the members of the society to take part in the economy of the country and retaining the benefits of their participation. In 2014, The UNHCR published "Global Strategy for Livelihoods (2014-2018)". The objectives of this strategy include "promoting the right to work and the right to development, enabling people to preserve and protect their productive assets as well as meet their immediate consumption needs, developing and expand proven and innovative ways of supporting people's economic self-reliance and Improve planning, learning and practice on successful approaches to livelihoods development and their impact on self-reliance." (United Nations, 2014). The interventions done by the UNHCR include entrepreneurial and vocational training, providing access to financial services in addition to agricultural interventions. In 2019, The UNHCR worked alongside WFP to develop a five-year strategy under the name of "Livelihood and Economic Inclusion Strategy 2019 – 2024)". This strategy concept note discusses the importance of economic inclusion for refugees, possible solutions that could be implemented such as the livelihoods and economic inclusion for refugees' programs in addition to the various sectors, agencies and institutions partnering with the UNHCR for the economic inclusion of refugees (United Nations, 2019).

4. Questions The Discussions and The Resolutions Should Address

- What is the correlation between livelihood, economic inclusion, and self-reliance?
- What are further interventions that can be made by the UNHCR in order to insure the livelihoods of refugees?

5. Suggestions For Further Research

- Money lost in maintaining detention centers
- Alternative investments for refugees that can streamline economic growth

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