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United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Background Guide 2023

Written by Gamaliel Perez, Johanna Günkel, Sebastian Heike, and Pauline Bischoff



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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2023 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The topics under discussion are:

1. Protecting Refugees from Human Trafficking
2. Preventing the Increase of Internally Displaced Persons

Members of our dais this year include:



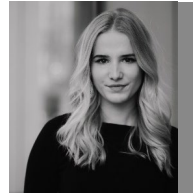
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Pauline Bischoff, Assistant Director, holds a Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences from the University of Magdeburg and is currently pursuing a degree in Choral and Ensemble Conducting in the department of Musical Theatre in Bavaria, Germany.

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern Time) on 1 March 2023 in accordance with the guidelines in the [Position Paper Guide](#) and the NMUN•NY [Position Papers website](#).

Two resources, available to download from the [NMUN website](#), serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions:

1. [NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide](#) - explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not start discussion on the topics with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) - include the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory [NMUN Conduct Expectations](#) on the NMUN website. They include the conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for this committee, please contact the Development & Human Rights Department, Tiffany Dao (Conference A) and Danielle Curtis BL (Conference B), at usg.dhr@nmun.org.

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Gamaliel Perez, Director
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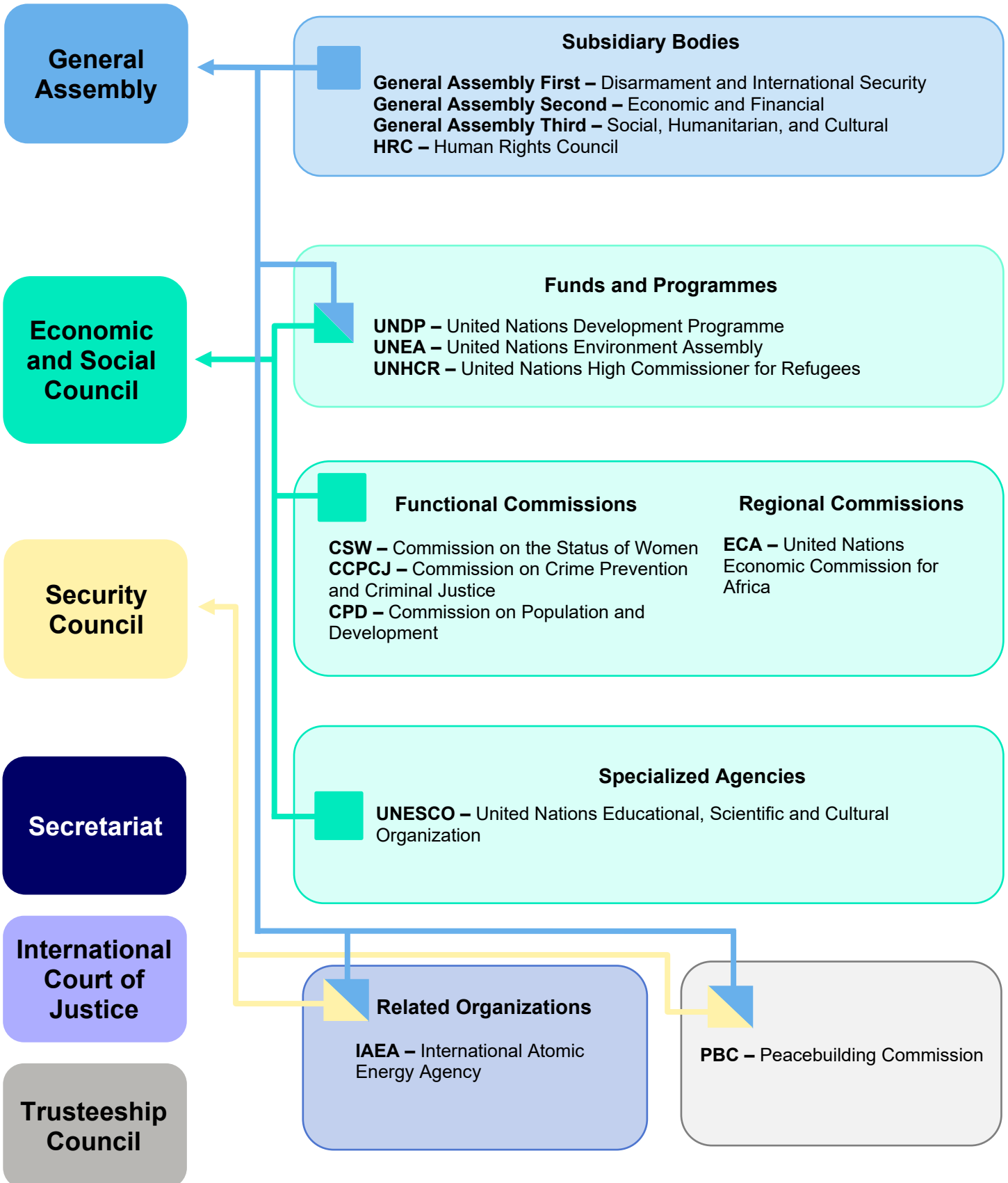


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United Nations System at NMUN•NY

This diagram illustrates the UN system simulated at NMUN•NY. It shows where each committee “sits” within the system to demonstrate the reportage and relationships between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee’s position, purpose, and powers within the UN system.



Committee Overview

Introduction

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is the United Nations (UN) agency whose primary purpose is the protection of the welfare and rights of refugees.¹ The UN General Assembly established the body in 1950 to address the high number of displaced Europeans after World War II and initially gave the body a three-year mandate.² After extending the mandate every five years until 2003, the General Assembly then decided to prolong UNHCR's mandate indefinitely.³

Most of UNHCR's resources are dedicated to field operations that address the needs of forcibly displaced persons, including 27.1 million refugees, 53.2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), and 4.6 million asylum seekers.⁴ In addition, about 10 million people are estimated to be stateless.⁵ UNHCR's work is now more pertinent than ever considering one in every 88 people has been forcibly displaced.⁶ UNHCR provides a variety of humanitarian aid, including food and nutritional supplements, basic and long-term shelter and housing, cash assistance, and legal services.⁷ While immediate assistance in crises constitutes a large portion of the body's work, UNHCR's larger goal is to help refugees find durable solutions to rebuild their lives.⁸

Mandate, Function, and Powers

UNHCR's mandate is to provide international protection and humanitarian assistance, and to seek permanent solutions for refugees, forcibly displaced communities, and stateless people.⁹ UNHCR falls under the UN Programmes and Funds and reports annually to both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).¹⁰ In 2016, the General Assembly adopted the *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* (New York Declaration), committing global support in dealing with the large numbers of forcibly displaced persons.¹¹ It established the *Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework* (CRRF), a global-scale plan to guarantee refugees their rights and the predominant framing tool for UNHCR's *Global Compact for Refugees* (Global Compact).¹² The Global Compact, which was drafted in 2018 and affirmed by the UN General Assembly in 2019, is the UN's current major agreement detailing an international approach to aiding refugees.¹³

Whilst the following list is not exhaustive, the mandate of UNHCR can be summarized as:

- **UNHCR will generally:** provide international protection and humanitarian assistance in partnership with governments, other UN bodies, NGOs and civil society organizations; supervise the implementation of refugee instruments and assist Member States to enact or revise national refugee legislation, including administrative procedures and

¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *About Us*. 2022.

² United Nations, General Assembly. *Refugees and Stateless Persons (A/RES/319 (IV))*. 1949; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *History of UNHCR*. 2022.

³ United Nations, General Assembly. *Implementing actions proposed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to strengthen the capacity of his Office to carry out its mandate (A/RES/58/153)*. 2003.

⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Figures at a Glance*. 2022.

⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Statelessness around the world*. 2022.

⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Figures at a Glance*. 2022.

⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Protection*. 2022.

⁸ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Solutions*. 2022.

⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*. 2010. p. 2; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *About Us*. 2022.

¹⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Governance and Oversight*. 2022.

¹¹ United Nations, General Assembly. *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/RES/71/1)*. 2016. pp. 1-2.

¹² Ibid. pp. 16-24; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *The global compact on refugees: UNHCR Quick Guide*. 2018. p. 2.

¹³ United Nations, General Assembly. *Part II: Global Compact on Refugees (A/73/12(Part II))*. 2018; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Global Refugee Forum*. 2022.

operational guidelines; advocate for the creation of new avenues out of displacements and statelessness.¹⁴

- **UNHCR will not generally:** unilaterally direct Member States, NGOs and other UN bodies to implement actions; nor will they enforce the implementation of refugee instruments in Member States.¹⁵

To achieve its work, UNHCR collaborates with national governments, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, universities, and the private sector.¹⁶ UNHCR also partners with other UN organizations such as World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).¹⁷

The *UNHCR Strategic Directions 2022 – 2026* (2022) guides the current work of UNHCR.¹⁸ Within this document, UNHCR reaffirms its commitment to achieving its five strategic directions – protect, respond, include, empower and solve – and further identifies eight areas for additional, accelerated, and targeted action in its pursuit to develop the comprehensive approaches in the CRRF and the Global Compact.¹⁹

Governance, Funding and Structure

UNHCR is governed by the Member States that make up its Executive Committee (ExCom).²⁰ The ExCom approves the agency’s annual program priorities and budget.²¹ Member States are elected by ECOSOC as members of the ExCom according to equitable geographical allocations and now comprises of 106 Member States.²² The committee reports directly to the General Assembly Third Committee, and follows directives issued by either the General Assembly or ECOSOC.²³ The ExCom meets every October to review financial matters for the coming year, advise the High Commissioner, authorize appeals for funds, and approve upcoming targets for UNHCR.²⁴

UNHCR’s budget stems almost entirely from voluntary donations by Member States, intergovernmental institutions, corporations, foundations, and individuals worldwide.²⁵ To acquire these donations, UNHCR releases an annual Global Appeal that provides detailed information regarding the major areas of concern for UNHCR, as well as supplementary appeals that address specific situations.²⁶ The budget also includes contributions from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund for situations requiring immediate response, such as a natural disaster or violent conflict.²⁷

¹⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *UNHCR’s Mandate for Refugees, Stateless Persons and IDPs*. 2022.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Additional Partnerships*. 2022.

¹⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *UN and International Institutions*. 2022.

¹⁸ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *UNHCR Strategic Directions 2022-2026*. 2022.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 4.

²⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Governance and Oversight*. 2022.

²¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*. 2010. p. 2.

²² Ibid. p. 3.

²³ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *ExCom membership by date of admission of members*. 2021.

²⁴ Ibid.; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Executive Committee*. 2022.

²⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Budget and Expenditure*. 2022; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Donor ranking*. n.d.; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Additional Partnerships*. 2022.

²⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Global Appeal 2022*. 2022; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *The Global Appeal and Supplementary Appeals*. 2022.

²⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *UN and International Institutions*. 2022.

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Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *UNHCR Global Appeal 2022*. 2022. Retrieved 5 September 2022 from: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/globalappeal2022>

UNHCR regularly produces its Global Appeal, and this document is the latest for the year 2022. As a document geared primarily towards donors, it outlines the financial requirements of the body's work for the upcoming year. It also more specifically underlines the hurdles UNHCR and its partners face in their efforts to address humanitarian crises. Delegates should use this document to bolster their understanding of current UNHCR financial priorities and the challenges it faces in carrying out programs.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *UNHCR Strategic Directions 2022-2026*. 2022. Retrieved 5 September 2022 from: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/strategic-directions-2022-2026>

This publication breaks down UNHCR's agenda between 2022 and 2026. After laying out the statistics and challenges currently facing refugees, the document outlines the body's declarations of work within its five core directions: protect, respond, include, empower, and solve. The document builds upon the last Strategic Plan by identifying eight areas for additional and targeted action. The section, "Realizing the Strategic Directions 2022 - 2026," provides details on the logistical and technological components needed in all five conceptual areas of focus. Delegates should use this source for a more concrete understanding of UNHCR's goals and its plans to achieve them.

United Nations, General Assembly. *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/RES/71/1)*. 2016. Retrieved 5 September 2022 from: <http://undocs.org/en/A/RES/71/1>

This General Assembly resolution provides the New York Declaration, calling for the implementation of the CRRF and the development of a Global Compact on Refugees to be headed by UNHCR. Delegates should use this document to understand the UN's position on refugee and migration issues, as well as a reference for the commitments to solidify a global approach to the growing numbers of refugees made by the General Assembly, and how UNHCR will be instrumental in executing them. More specifically, it places the topic of refugee and migration populations within the context of the 2030 Agenda. Delegates can find details regarding the CRRF and the global compact in Annex 1 of the resolution.

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1. Protecting Refugees from Human Trafficking

Introduction

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), as of September 2022 an estimated 49.6 million people are in modern slavery either through forced labor or in forced marriages, many of whom are victims of human trafficking.²⁸ Refugees are at increased risk of becoming victims of trafficking as they often encounter unemployment and economic needs.²⁹ The lack of access to safe and legal migration pathways forces many refugees to use the services of illegal traffickers, making them prone to trafficking.³⁰ Moreover, refugees with irregular migration status are often vulnerable to traffickers who threaten to expose them as undocumented migrants.³¹

The United Nations (UN) *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons* (2000) defines human trafficking as the “recruitment, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.”³² Traffickers typically operate as organized groups to abduct individuals within the country or across national borders in order to exploit or resell them.³³ This process needs to be distinguished from human smuggling, as this is usually conducted with the consent of the individuals.³⁴ In addition, while human trafficking can happen either within countries or across borders, smuggling always has a transnational character.³⁵ Trafficking can take various forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labor, forced criminal activities, forced begging, forced marriages, mixed forms, baby selling, or organ harvesting.³⁶

Given the increased vulnerability of refugees to trafficking, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is committed to combating trafficking in refugees, and cooperates with actors within and outside the UN system to protect refugees from becoming victims of human trafficking.³⁷ To this end, UNHCR follows a three-pillar approach that includes prevention, protection of victims, and punishment of traffickers.³⁸

International and Regional Framework

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) serves as the first framework to set out fundamental human rights at the international level, including the rights to life, liberty, and security of person (Article 3) and the right to be free from slavery or servitude (Article 4).³⁹ The *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* (1951) and the *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees* (1967) set out the

²⁸ International Labour Organization et al. *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage*. 2022. pp. 1-2.

²⁹ McAuliffe et al. International Organization for Migration. *World Migration Report 2022*. 2021. pp. 255-256; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020*. 2021. p. 9.

³⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Trafficking in conflict and humanitarian crises*. 2022.

³¹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020*. 2021. p. 10.

³² United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (A/RES/55/25)*. 2000; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *The Crime*. n.d.

³³ International Centre for Migration Policy Development. *New research: How are the war in Syria and the refugee crisis affecting human trafficking?* 2016; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020*. 2021. p. 13.

³⁴ Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons. *Issue Brief: What is the Difference between Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants?* 2016.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020*. 2021. p. 10.

³⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Trafficking in Persons*. 2022.

³⁸ Dearnley. United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Prevention, Prosecution and Protection - Human Trafficking*. n.d.

³⁹ United Nations, General Assembly. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*. 1948.

basic rights to be accorded to refugees by all states, including the rights to non-refoulement, equality and non-discrimination, life and personal security, and to seek asylum.⁴⁰ The *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (1966) and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (1966) prohibit activities that are related to human trafficking, including slavery, servitude, forced labor, and child labor.⁴¹ Furthermore, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW) (1979), the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC) (1989), the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (Beijing Declaration) (1995), and the *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action* (Vienna Declaration) (2003) establish that Member States should take measures to combat trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children.⁴² Measures highlighted in both the Vienna Declaration and the Beijing Declaration include maternity and health care, prevention campaigns, victim support and reintegration, and legislative action to hold traffickers accountable.⁴³

The *UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, adopted by General Assembly resolution 55/25 in 2000, highlights the need for cooperation in combating transnational criminal activities and thus serves as an important framework for the fight against transnational crimes, including human trafficking.⁴⁴ The Convention was supplemented by the *UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* (Palermo Protocol) (2000), which provides the first internationally agreed upon legal definition of human trafficking.⁴⁵ The *Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons*, adopted in 2010 by General Assembly resolution 64/293, serves as a guiding document for coordinated action at the international level to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and prosecute perpetrators.⁴⁶ UNHCR's work is also guided by the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda) (2015), containing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).⁴⁷ SDG 5 (gender equality) points to human trafficking as a form of discrimination and violence against women, while SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) focuses on the right of all people to decent and stable work, with SDG target 8.7 aiming to eradicate forced labor, modern slavery, and human trafficking by 2025.⁴⁸

In 2016, the UN General Assembly adopted the *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* with resolution 71/1, which outlined the *Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework* (2016) and laid the foundation for the *Global Compact on Refugees* (GCR) (2018) as well as the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration* (GCM) (2018).⁴⁹ Both the GCR and the GCM address the issue of

⁴⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*. 2010.

⁴¹ United Nations, General Assembly. *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200A (XXI))*. 1966; United Nations, General Assembly. *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (A/RES/2200A (XXI))*. 1966.

⁴² The Fourth World Conference on Women. *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. 1995; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action*. 1993; United Nations, General Assembly. *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*. 1979; United Nations, General Assembly. *Convention on the Rights of the Child (A/RES/44/25)*. 1989.

⁴³ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action*. 1993; The Fourth World Conference on Women. *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. 1995.

⁴⁴ United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (A/RES/55/25)*. 2000.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (A/RES/64/293)*. 2010; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *United Nations launches global plan of action against human trafficking*. 2010.

⁴⁷ United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *The Global Compact on Refugees*. 2022.

trafficking in persons by promoting a participatory approach to preventing and combating trafficking.⁵⁰ The GCR, serving as a comprehensive framework that aims to enhance responsibility sharing between governments to ensure better support of host communities, defines refugee registration as an important factor in detecting and preventing human trafficking and states that UNHCR should assist governments in enhancing their capacities for documentation of refugees.⁵¹ The GCM, which is the first intergovernmental framework that addresses all dimensions of international migration, defines as one of its key objectives the elimination of human trafficking.⁵² It provides a list of specific measures to this end, including strengthening legislation and law enforcement procedures to ensure accountability, monitoring irregular migration routes that can be exploited by trafficking networks to victimize migrants, and preventing the criminalization of victims for trafficking-related offenses.⁵³

Role of the International System

UNHCR does not have a specific mandate on supporting victims of trafficking; despite this, it becomes involved in combating human trafficking when the victims are persons under its concern, such as refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), asylum seekers, or returnees.⁵⁴ As an integral part of its work, UNHCR produces manuals and handbooks to help its staff, partners, and governments identify and respond to trafficking, such as UNHCR's *Guidelines on International Protection relating to the refugee status of trafficking victims* (2006), which provides guidance on how to detect, prevent and respond to trafficking in persons.⁵⁵ To protect refugees from human trafficking, UNHCR partners with several UN bodies, including the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), ILO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).⁵⁶

In order to ensure coherence and cooperation in identifying and protecting victims of trafficking, UNHCR and IOM have developed the *Joint Framework on Developing Standard Operating Procedures for the Identification and Protection of Victims of Trafficking*, which serves as a guideline for both agencies.⁵⁷ UNHCR is also a member of the Global Protection Cluster, a network of UN agencies, non-governmental and international organizations that aims to protect people in humanitarian crises.⁵⁸ Together with IOM and the Heartland Alliance, a non-profit organization that provides refugees with services like healthcare and access to justice, UNHCR co-chairs the anti-trafficking task team within the Global Protection Cluster, which supports organizations in the field through training and capacity building to identify and help trafficking victims.⁵⁹ Among others, the task team has published the guidance document *An Introductory Guide to Anti-Trafficking Action in Internal Displacement Contexts* (2020) that gives an overview of anti-trafficking responses with a focus on the areas of prevention, protection of victims, and prosecution of

⁵⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Global Compact on Refugees*. 2018; United Nations, General Assembly. *Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (A/RES/73/195)*. 2018.

⁵¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Global Compact on Refugees*. 2018.

⁵² International Organization for Migration. *Global Compact for Migration*. 2022; United Nations, General Assembly. *Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (A/RES/73/195)*. 2018.

⁵³ United Nations, General Assembly. *Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (A/RES/73/195)*. 2018.

⁵⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Human Trafficking and Refugee Protection: UNHCR's Perspective*. 2009. p. 2.

⁵⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Policy Development and Evaluation Services. *Review of UNHCR's efforts to prevent and respond to human trafficking*. 2008. pp. 35-36.

⁵⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Trafficking in Persons*. 2022.

⁵⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Developing Standard Operating Procedures to Facilitate the Protection of Trafficked Persons*. 2009.

⁵⁸ Global Protection Cluster. *Who We Are*. 2022.

⁵⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Trafficking in conflict and humanitarian crises*. 2022; Heartland Alliance. *Our History*. 2022.

traffickers.⁶⁰ The document provides operational guidance on how to recognize and respond to cases of trafficking, and on how to support trafficking victims with regards to their special protection needs.⁶¹

UNHCR also partners with OHCHR, which focuses on combating conflict-related human trafficking.⁶² As part of its work, OHCHR appoints the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, who takes action on human rights violations related to human trafficking.⁶³ In June 2022, the current Special Rapporteur, Ms. Siobhán Mullally, compiled the report *Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Trafficking in Persons in the Context of Climate Change, Displacement and Disaster Risk Reduction*, highlighting the need to address climate change-related causes of human trafficking.⁶⁴ In addition, the Special Rapporteur undertakes country visits to examine the situation on the ground and formulate recommendations for specific regional contexts.⁶⁵

Moreover, recognizing the particular vulnerability of female and underage refugees to trafficking, UNHCR cooperates with UN Women and UNICEF to address gender and age-specific protection.⁶⁶ For instance, UNICEF takes action against child trafficking by training child protection actors to provide support to refugee children.⁶⁷ Complementing UNICEF's efforts, UN Women works to protect women and girls from trafficking, primarily through awareness-raising campaigns.⁶⁸ In 2020, UN Women published its report *Addressing emerging human trafficking trends and consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic*, highlighting the increasing risks of human trafficking in the pandemic.⁶⁹ Together with OHCHR, UNICEF, UNODC, ILO, and UN Women, UNHCR has published the commentary *Prevent, Combat, Protect: Human Trafficking* (2011), which offers guidance for Member States on how to adapt transnational agreements into national legislation.⁷⁰ Recommendations include adopting a gender-sensitive approach, ensuring that trafficking victims are not penalized for trafficking-related crimes, and enhancing capacities within national justice systems to ensure accountability.⁷¹

Other actors within the UN system that contribute to the fight against human trafficking are UNODC, whose objective is to combat transnational human trafficking, and ILO, which aims to eradicate forced labor as a form of trafficking.⁷² For instance, ILO initiated the creation of the global partnership Alliance

⁶⁰ Global Protection Cluster. *An Introductory Guide to Anti-Trafficking Action in Internal Displacement Contexts*. 2020.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Trafficking in conflict and humanitarian crises*. 2022.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ United Nations, General Assembly. *Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children (A/77/170)*. 2022.

⁶⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Trafficking in conflict and humanitarian crises*. 2022.

⁶⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights et al. *Prevent, Combat, Protect: Human Trafficking: Joint UN Commentary on the EU Directive – A Human Rights-Based Approach*. 2011; United Nations Children's Fund, Türkiye. *Half a million children have risked exploitation as refugee and migrant crisis turns into big business for smugglers*. 2016; United Nations Children's Fund, United States of America. *Child Trafficking*. 2022; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Asia and the Pacific. *Preventing and Mitigating the Impacts of Human Trafficking and Transnational Crimes*. 2022.

⁶⁷ United Nations Children's Fund, Türkiye. *Half a million children have risked exploitation as refugee and migrant crisis turns into big business for smugglers*. 2016; United Nations Children's Fund, United States of America. *Child Trafficking*. 2022.

⁶⁸ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Asia and the Pacific. *Preventing and Mitigating the Impacts of Human Trafficking and Transnational Crimes*. 2022; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Statement: Crises drive an increase in human trafficking – Here's how we stop it*. 2022.

⁶⁹ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. *Addressing emerging human trafficking trends and consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic*. 2020.

⁷⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights et al. *Prevent, Combat, Protect: Human Trafficking: Joint UN Commentary on the EU Directive – A Human Rights-Based Approach*. 2011.

⁷¹ Ibid. pp. 10-15.

⁷² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Human Trafficking FAQs*. n.d.

8.7 to bring together relevant partners to ensure coordinated action against forced labor, modern slavery, and human trafficking.⁷³ The partnership comprises members from governments, academia, civil society, the private sector, and international organizations, including UNHCR, UNODC, IOM, OHCHR, UNICEF, and UN Women.⁷⁴ To achieve coordinated action among all partners, the partnership's goals are regularly assessed by the Alliance's Global Coordination Group.⁷⁵ Furthermore, given the multitude of UN agencies that aim to combat trafficking in persons, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT) was established in 2007.⁷⁶ ICAT's work is guided by its *2020 Plan of Action*, which highlights the following priorities for action: to provide accessible and reliable data; address root causes of trafficking; ensure victims' access to justice; discourage demand; and, strengthen multi-stakeholder and inter-agency partnerships.⁷⁷ Having served as chair for ICAT in 2015 and as co-chair in 2021 together with UNODC, UNHCR promotes a more systematic participation of survivors of human trafficking in the development of anti-trafficking interventions.⁷⁸

UNHCR also partners with actors outside the UN system and is a member of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Alliance against Trafficking in Persons.⁷⁹ In this context, UNHCR supported the design and implementation of the OSCE Live Simulation Training on Combating Human Trafficking along Migration Routes.⁸⁰ Since the first simulation in 2016, nine training exercises have been rolled out, which enhanced the participants' capacity to identify and protect victims of trafficking among displaced persons, and to investigate and prosecute their traffickers.⁸¹ Another actor outside the UN system that works to combat human trafficking is the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), which focuses on training officers with effective investigation and victim interview techniques as well as developing tools and systems to share intelligence globally.⁸²

Refugee Children at Risk of Human Trafficking

In 2021, an estimated 41% of the world's refugees were children, even though they only account for one third of the global population.⁸³ The risk of fleeing children becoming victims of human trafficking is even higher compared to adult refugees, as they may lack protection of their guardians while fleeing, crossing borders, or in emergency situations like armed conflict, natural disasters, health crises, or persecution.⁸⁴ Refugee movements, especially those involving large numbers of children, often devolve into humanitarian crises that require the cooperation of the international community to increase assistance, protect asylum seekers, and address root causes.⁸⁵

The General Assembly defines child trafficking as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or

⁷³ Alliance 8.7. *About*. 2018; International Labour Organization. *Forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking*. 2022.

⁷⁴ Alliance 8.7. *About*. 2018.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons. *About Us*. n.d.

⁷⁷ Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons. *Plan of Action: Endorsed at the Principal Level Meeting*. 2020.

⁷⁸ Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons. *Chairs' Annual Report 2021*. 2022. p. 8.

⁷⁹ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons*. 2022.

⁸⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Trafficking in Persons*. 2022.

⁸¹ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. *OSCE simulation-based training in combating human trafficking along migration routes concludes in Vicenza*. 2021.

⁸² International Criminal Police Organization. *Our role in fighting human trafficking*. 2022.

⁸³ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Welcome to UNHCR's Refugee Population Statistics Database*. 2022; United Nations Children's Fund. *Nearly 37 million children displaced worldwide – highest number ever recorded*. 2022.

⁸⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Emergencies*. 2022; United Nations Children's Fund. *Guidance for protecting displaced and refugee children in and outside of Ukraine*. 2022.

⁸⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Ukraine emergency*. 2022; Ireland. Norwegian Refugee Council. *Four steps towards ending the refugee crisis*. 2022.

receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation.”⁸⁶ In addition to the CRC, which establishes the rights of the child, and the Palermo Protocol, which highlights the special protection needs of women and children, UNHCR published *A Framework for the Protection of Children* in 2012, presenting assistance strategies to protect children subjected to “abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation, trafficking, or forced recruitment to armed groups.”⁸⁷ While long-term measures and addressing root causes are important to combat human trafficking, on-site assistance is an important complement in emergency situations, especially for refugee children.⁸⁸ To protect refugee children and ensure their primary care, UNHCR uses cash-based interventions aimed at reducing the risk of vulnerability to economic need.⁸⁹ UNHCR also works with host countries and UN entities such as UNODC to enhance national capacity for assistance in terms of trained staff for registration, the medical care system, and transportation.⁹⁰ In addition, UNICEF advises countries bordering conflict zones in implementing more child protection checks at borders, including the screening for unaccompanied and vulnerable minors.⁹¹ Non-governmental organizations, such as Mecpaths and Safe Horizon, also participate in relief efforts, providing educational support through early awareness in classrooms and online, as well as on-site assistance, incorporating counseling services and legal and judicial support.⁹²

Since 24 February 2022, the war in Ukraine has been ongoing and generated more than 7.5 million refugees across Europe, as of September 2022.⁹³ Approximately 90% of these refugees are women and children, including unaccompanied minors.⁹⁴ With the war creating a disorganized state of emergency, fleeing children are at high risk of becoming victims of human trafficking.⁹⁵ As a reflection of this situation, on 1 March 2022, the General Assembly adopted resolution ES-11/1 “Aggression against Ukraine”, demanding the Russian Federation to immediately end any attacks against Ukraine.⁹⁶ Given the dangerous situation for children, UNHCR and UNICEF published a joint call for action, providing specific recommendations to host countries, in order to protect children from high risk situations and consequently from human trafficking.⁹⁷ This includes the “immediate identification and registration of unaccompanied and separated children,” the provision of safe spaces as soon as unaccompanied minors cross borders, and the access to basic need supplies and social participation.⁹⁸ As an essential body of the European Union (EU), the European Commission reacted with an anti-trafficking plan, specifically adapted to the impact of the Ukraine war.⁹⁹ Here, UNHCR also works with host countries to identify and protect refugees

⁸⁶ United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (A/RES/55/25)*. 2000.

⁸⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *A Framework for the Protection of Children*. 2012.

⁸⁸ International Peace & Security Institute. *Empowering Peacemakers*. 2022; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Human Trafficking and Refugee Protection: UNHCR’s Perspective*. 2009.

⁸⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Guidance on Promoting Child Protection Outcomes Through Cashed-Based Interventions*. n.d.

⁹⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Statement on risks of trafficking and exploitation facing refugees from Ukraine attributed to UNHCR’s Assistant High Commissioner for Protection*. 2022.

⁹¹ United Nations Children’s Fund. *Children fleeing war in Ukraine at heightened risk of trafficking and exploitation*. 2022.

⁹² Mecpaths. *About Us*. 2022; Safe Horizon. *Empowering victims and survivors to find safety, connection, and hope*. 2022.

⁹³ Al Jazeera. *Timeline: The first 100 days of Russia’s war in Ukraine*. 2022; Operational Data Portal. *Ukraine Refugee Situation*. 2022.

⁹⁴ European Parliament. *War in Ukraine: protecting women refugees from violence and sexual exploitation*. 2022; United Nations Children’s Fund. *Unaccompanied and separated children fleeing escalating conflict in Ukraine must be protected*. 2022.

⁹⁵ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes. *Targeted by Traffickers - Ukrainian Refugees at High Risk of Exploitation*. 2022.

⁹⁶ United Nations, General Assembly. *Aggression against Ukraine (ES-11/L.1)*. 2022.

⁹⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees et al. *Ukraine Emergency: Children Fleeing Ukraine – The Advocacy Agenda for Action*. 2022.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ European Commission. *A Common Anti-Trafficking Plan to address the risks of trafficking in human beings and support potential victims among those fleeing the war in Ukraine*. 2022.

at risk for trafficking.¹⁰⁰ Further, shortly after the outbreak of the war, UNHCR distributed printed materials to refugees informing them how to protect themselves and report assaults or crimes.¹⁰¹ Additional assistance is provided by the Blue Dots program, established jointly with UNICEF, which offers information on non-hazardous flight routes across borders, as well as guidance on how to detect false promises made by criminal individuals or organized groups.¹⁰² On site, refugee children are provided with safe spaces where they can receive physical and psychological care, rest, and also find a location where they can reunite with their family.¹⁰³

Protecting Refugees from All Forms of Human Trafficking

According to UNODC's Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (2020), economic need was the main risk factor for human trafficking in 51% of the cases.¹⁰⁴ After a forced flight, refugees are not only psychologically and physically weakened and unaccustomed to their new environment, but they are also at significant risk of economic loss and depletion of savings.¹⁰⁵ This leaves them vulnerable to human trafficking, as the acquisition of potential victims is often linked to the offer of economic stabilizers such as shelter, food, or employment.¹⁰⁶ The *UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* and the Council of Europe *Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings* (2005) emphasize the need for preventive measures such as education and training, the protection of victims through psychological, medical, social, and economic support, strengthening borders, and criminalization of all trafficking-related crimes.¹⁰⁷ The multilateral and multi-layered approach is intended to be applied not only to prevention and law-making, but also to the protection of victims.¹⁰⁸ The foundation for the assistance lies primarily in the provision of education and relevant information to protect those in need.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, international forces, such as INTERPOL, as well as domestic police forces and anti-trafficking units, aim to rescue victims and protect them once they are freed from human trafficking.¹¹⁰ Currently, the two most common forms of exploitation are sexual exploitation, which accounts for one out of every two human trafficking cases, and forced labor, totaling 38%.¹¹¹ Other forms of trafficking include forced criminal activity, forced begging, as well as marriages, mixed forms, baby selling, and removal of organs.¹¹²

¹⁰⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Ukraine crisis creates new trafficking risks*. 2022.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² United Nations Children's Fund. *3 things to know about Blue Dots*. 2022.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020*. 2021. p. 9.

¹⁰⁵ Council of Europe. *Human trafficking experts: States must urgently protect refugees fleeing Ukraine*. 2022; International Centre for Migration Policy Development. *New research: How are the war in Syria and the refugee crisis affecting human trafficking?* 2016.

¹⁰⁶ Adler. British Broadcasting Corporation. *How the sex trade preys on Ukraine's refugees*. 2022; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Ukraine crisis creates new trafficking risks*. 2022.

¹⁰⁷ Council of Europe. *Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings*. 2005; United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (A/RES/55/25)*. 2000; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *A Framework for the Protection of Children*. 2012.

¹⁰⁸ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Coordinated Approach to Human Trafficking Must Feature Cutting-Edge Tools, Outpace Criminals, Delegates Stress as General Assembly Concludes High-Level Meeting*. 2021.

¹⁰⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *To support trafficking victims, UNHCR urges more protection services in Africa*. 2022; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Ukraine crisis creates new trafficking risks*. 2022; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *UNHCR and IOM welcome Government New Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking in Sudan*. 2021.

¹¹⁰ International Criminal Police Organization. *Operation Weka II: Nearly 700 human trafficking victims rescued*. 2022; Police Executive Research Forum. *How Local Police Can Combat the Global Problem of Human Trafficking*. 2020; United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *First Person: 'I helped to rescue over 1,000 trafficking victims'*. 2022.

¹¹¹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020*. 2021. p. 11.

¹¹² *Ibid.* p. 11.

Sexual Exploitation

The *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (2020)* states that 94% of the victims of sexual exploitation are female.¹¹³ Considering that women are 18% more at risk of impoverishment than men due to gender-based social and economic factors, and that sex trafficking is the most profitable form of human trafficking, the correlation with the high percentage of females in this segment becomes apparent.¹¹⁴ Although sex trafficking is criminalized in 158 countries, the sex industry, such as sex work, is widely legal and socially accepted.¹¹⁵ As a result, traffickers can operate within a setting that is both legal and secure.¹¹⁶ The Beijing Declaration, CEDAW, and the Vienna Declaration state that human trafficking represents a form of gender-based violence and identify ending all forms of discrimination and violence against women as a solution.¹¹⁷ CEDAW further emphasizes that sex workers are at significant risk of being trafficked and sexually exploited and calls for protection and specific laws against all forms of violence.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, the same principle applies to refugees, especially female refugees, who require a high degree of protection regarding their rights and whose work in the country of destination has to be legally safeguarded.¹¹⁹ One example where this is implemented is the collaboration between UNHCR, the Makhzoumi Foundation, and the Swedish government to protect women from sexual and gender-based violence when crossing Lebanon through hotlines, temporary safe shelters, free access to psychological, physical, and medical care, and cash assistance for rent and food.¹²⁰

Forced Labor

It is estimated that currently 27.6 million people are in forced labor.¹²¹ Most victims are male adults, while children amount to more than one third of all victims.¹²² The *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (2020)* identifies a total of eleven types of this form of exploitation, including domestic work, construction work, manufacturing, and agriculture.¹²³ Strategies undertaken to eliminate forced labor include adapting labor legislation to facilitate access to legal work, increasing employment opportunities, and combating gender and minority discrimination.¹²⁴ With the adoption of the *Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labor Convention, 1930*, ILO reaffirmed its commitment to combat forced labor and identified measures to this end under the premises of prevention, protection, remedies, and enforcement.¹²⁵ In the context of the protocol, prevention consists primarily of awareness-raising and empowering migrant workers, while protection aims to ensure the rapid identification of victims of forced labor.¹²⁶ Partnering with ILO, UNHCR is implementing specific programs to combat forced labor, such as promoting workplace rights in Syria, training refugees to take up decent work in Jordan, and improving employment opportunities in Mali.¹²⁷

¹¹³ Equality Now. *Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation*. 2021.

¹¹⁴ Bureau of International Information Programs. *Chapter 1: Women and Poverty*. 2012; United Nations Development Programme. *COVID-19 will widen poverty gap between women and men, new UN Women and UNDP data shows*. 2020; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020*. 2021. p. 9.

¹¹⁵ Equality Now. *Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation*. 2021.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights et al. *Prevent, Combat, Protect: Human Trafficking: Joint UN Commentary on the EU Directive – A Human Rights-Based Approach*. 2011. p. 20.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. p. 21.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. p. 21.

¹²⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Sweden empowers refugee women and girls*. 2022.

¹²¹ International Labour Organization et al. *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage*. 2022. p. 1.

¹²² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020*. 2021. p. 95.

¹²³ Ibid. p. 96.

¹²⁴ The International Trade Union Confederation. *How to Combat Forced Labour and Trafficking*. 2009. p. 9.

¹²⁵ International Labour Organization. *The Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention*. n.d.; International Labour Organization. *Ending forced labour by 2030: A review of policies and programmes*. 2018. p. 5; International Labour Organization. *P029 – Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930*. 2014.

¹²⁶ International Labour Organization. *Ending forced labour by 2030: A review of policies and programmes*. 2018. p. 89.

¹²⁷ International Labour Organization et al. *ILO-UNHCR Partnership*. n.d.

Conclusion

Trafficking in persons violates the fundamental human rights set forth in article four of the UDHR to be free from slavery and servitude, yet an estimated 49.6 million people are currently victims of forced labor or forced marriages, many of whom experienced human trafficking.¹²⁸ The two most common forms of trafficking are sexual exploitation and forced labor, with sexual exploitation primarily affecting women and children due to gender inequality, increased economic vulnerability, and lack of protective measures.¹²⁹ Additionally, being forcibly displaced, especially across borders, significantly increases the risk of becoming a victim of human trafficking.¹³⁰ UNHCR therefore works in close partnership with actors within and outside the UN system to protect refugees from human trafficking.¹³¹ Notably, UNHCR assists governments and host communities in strengthening national capacity to ensure the identification of victims and the judicial prosecution of traffickers.¹³² Given the plurality of actors working to eradicate trafficking, multilateral and multi-faceted approaches need to be further strengthened.¹³³

Further Research

When researching this topic, delegates may consider the following questions: What measures are most effective in protecting refugees from human trafficking? What legislative measures can be implemented at the international and national level to restrict and punish traffickers? What conditions lead to children being more vulnerable to trafficking and what measures can be taken to prevent this? What actions can be taken to eliminate gender-based discrimination in any form, particularly sexual exploitation? Which inequalities regarding minorities lead to preconditions making individuals, and especially refugees, vulnerable to human trafficking?

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Global Protection Cluster. *An Introductory Guide to Anti-Trafficking Action in Internal Displacement Contexts*. 2020. Retrieved 26 June 2022 from: <https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/guidance-anti-trafficking.pdf>

This guide serves as an orientation for practitioners that work to identify and support victims of human trafficking. It includes information on how to detect and respond to cases of human trafficking. Delegates will find this to be a helpful resource as it provides them with a comprehensive overview of the most common contexts in which trafficking in persons occurs, as well as with concrete and practical information on ways to implement anti-trafficking measures.

Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons. *Plan of Action: Endorsed at the Principal Level Meeting*. 2020. Retrieved 26 June 2022 from: https://icat.un.org/sites/g/files/tmzbd1461/files/publications/icat_action_plan_final.pdf

¹²⁸ International Labour Organization et al. *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage*. 2022. p. 1; United Nations, General Assembly. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*. 1948.

¹²⁹ Equality Now. *Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation*. 2021; United Nations Children's Fund. *Guidance for protecting displaced and refugee children in and outside of Ukraine*. 2022; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020*. 2021. pp. 9-11; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Human Trafficking FAQs*. n.d.

¹³⁰ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Trafficking in persons*. 2022.

¹³¹ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Coordinated Approach to Human Trafficking Must Feature Cutting-Edge Tools, Outpace Criminals, Delegates Stress as General Assembly Concludes High-Level Meeting*. 2021.

¹³² Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights et al. *Prevent, Combat, Protect: Human Trafficking: Joint UN Commentary on the EU Directive – A Human Rights-Based Approach*. 2011. pp. 10-15.

¹³³ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Coordinated Approach to Human Trafficking Must Feature Cutting-Edge Tools, Outpace Criminals, Delegates Stress as General Assembly Concludes High-Level Meeting*. 2021.

This document will help delegates understand the main priorities for inter-agency cooperation within the UN system. The 2020 Plan of Action gives an overview of the six key principles that guide ICAT's work. These principles include providing accessible and reliable data; addressing key drivers of human trafficking; ensuring victim-centered approaches and access to justice for victims; discouraging demand for human trafficking, which is particularly important to address sexual exploitation as a form of trafficking; and strengthening partnerships to better coordinate efforts of different UN agencies as well as between UN bodies, governments, and non-governmental organizations.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Policy Development and Evaluation Services. *Review of UNHCR's efforts to prevent and respond to human trafficking*. 2008. Retrieved 26 June 2022 from: <https://www.unhcr.org/research/evalreports/48eb2ff82/review-unhcrs-efforts-prevent-respond-human-trafficking.html>

This document will serve as a good starting point for delegates' research on how to improve current actions in fighting human trafficking. It presents an analysis of actions taken by UNHCR to identify and protect victims of human trafficking. Moreover, it provides recommendations on how UNHCR can improve its work. Although this document was published in 2008, it provides an overview of UNHCR's initial work regarding the protection of refugees from human trafficking.

United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (A/RES/55/25)*. 2000. Retrieved 25 June 2022 from: <http://undocs.org/en/A/RES/55/25>

This resolution can help enhance delegates' understanding of the international legal framework to combat human trafficking. The resolution contains the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto. This document not only serves as a framework document for combating transnational crimes, including trafficking in persons, but also provides the first internationally agreed-upon legal definition of trafficking in persons in article 3 of Annex II. Annex II to the resolution contains the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, which, in addition to the definition of trafficking, includes provisions on cooperation and measures to protect victims and prevent trafficking.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020*. 2021. Retrieved 26 June 2022 from: https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tip/2021/GLOTiP_2020_15jan_web.pdf

This Global Report on Trafficking in Persons will help delegates acquire a thorough understanding of the global and sectoral distribution of human trafficking, the characteristics of victims, and the practices of traffickers. The document provides an overview of human trafficking numbers and trends, as well as information on socio-economic factors that contribute to human trafficking, and on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on human trafficking. It further includes information on the vulnerability of children in this context, forced labor as a form of human trafficking, and digital practices used by traffickers.

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2. Preventing the Increase of Internally Displaced Persons

*“Internal displacement is the great tragedy of our time. The internally displaced people are among the most vulnerable of the human family.”*¹³⁴

Introduction

The Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) carries the main responsibility within the United Nations (UN) to lead international efforts to assist and protect the rights and needs of forcibly displaced persons.¹³⁵ The work of UNHCR focuses on being active in providing humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and coordinating efforts with other UN entities to prevent the increase of IDPs.¹³⁶ While sharing many of the same needs as refugees and asylum seekers, there is a key difference that makes IDPs a complex group of people to protect.¹³⁷ Asylum seekers are displaced persons who seek some sort of legal status of protection from a different country other than their origin, while refugees are those who have been forcibly displaced through violence, armed conflict, or persecution into a different country.¹³⁸ On the other hand, IDPs, who are forced to leave their home, but are still within their country of origin, are especially vulnerable because they are not protected directly by international law, given as there is no regulatory framework for their protection.¹³⁹ Without such protection, many IDPs suffer from family separation, loss of property, loss of documentation such as government identification and legal documents, and further secondary displacement from the host communities where they are relocated to.¹⁴⁰

As of 2021, IDPs make up 60% of all people displaced globally.¹⁴¹ According to UNHCR, the number of IDPs has increased over the past decade, from 17.7 million in 2012 to an estimated 51.3 million people in 2022.¹⁴² However, other centers of data, such as the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), estimates an even higher number of close to 59 million IDPs in 2021.¹⁴³ Many challenges IDPs face also puts them in direct need of humanitarian assistance and aid.¹⁴⁴ For example, a number of IDPs are affected by armed conflict that destroys critical infrastructure and prevents durable solutions from being implemented due to damage to residential areas.¹⁴⁵ These conflicts also make it more difficult to establish humanitarian pathways to deliver aid and assistance.¹⁴⁶

International and Regional Framework

The basis for protection and prevention of IDPs is established in the principles of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) that offers protections to civilian populations facing forcible removal due to conflict and violence.¹⁴⁷ States have a responsibility to assist and protect IDPs under the *Geneva Conventions* of 1949 and their *Additional Protocols*, the *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court* (1998), and Customary International Humanitarian Law, which also defines civilians and combatants.¹⁴⁸

¹³⁴ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. *Internal Displacement*. 2022.

¹³⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Internally Displaced People*. 2022.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. *Internal Displacement*. 2022.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2021*. 2022. pp. 22-24.

¹⁴² Ibid. pp. 22-24.

¹⁴³ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. *2021 Internal Displacement*. 2021.

¹⁴⁴ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2022*. 2022. pp. 34-35.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. pp. 34-35.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. pp. 34-35.

¹⁴⁷ International Committee of the Red Cross. *Internally Displaced Persons and International Humanitarian Law*. 2017. pp. 2-6.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. pp. 2-6.

The conventions require states to apply international humanitarian laws and treaties in the protection of IDPs and ensure their human rights are not being abused.¹⁴⁹

The most fundamental document that serves as a regulatory framework for IDPs is the 1998 *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* adopted by the Human Rights Commission.¹⁵⁰ Since its adoption, the *Guiding Principles of Internal Displacement* have served as the basis for the treatment of IDPs, outlining the rights and protection provided to them under IHL and possible solutions for needs of this group.¹⁵¹ The 30 principles discuss a variety of rights for IDPs, such as protection against displacement, protection during displacement, and protection after displacement, when resettlement or return to homes is possible.¹⁵² According to the principles, IDPs should also be protected against human rights abuses based on their status as well as be granted the same rights as other residents of the country.¹⁵³ It also places the responsibility to uphold and protect these rights of IDPs on their national authorities alongside coordinated efforts by the UN and its subsidiary bodies.¹⁵⁴

Some of these solutions can be further seen in the *Inter-Agency Standing Committee Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons* (IASC Framework).¹⁵⁵ The IASC Framework is action-oriented, and highlights that a durable solution is comprised of long-term safety, access to employment, tools to restore homes, and an adequate standard of living.¹⁵⁶ The IASC Framework also provides three options to implement to achieve these durable indicators.¹⁵⁷ It discusses the potential to reintegrate at place of origin meaning a return to their homes.¹⁵⁸ It also provides options for integration into the host community, which means IDPs settling in the communities that have been temporarily hosting them, as well as a final alternative to settle in an entirely different location from origin or host communities.¹⁵⁹ These solutions have also been supported by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as they follow the guidelines and policy recommendations to uphold the human rights of IDPs in times of conflict in accordance with IHL.¹⁶⁰

Some other regional frameworks have also been established to support IDPs in their respective countries.¹⁶¹ The 2006 International Conference on the Great Lakes Region saw the adoption of the *Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons* and established the objective of protecting and preventing more people in the African Great Lakes Region, located in East Africa, from becoming IDPs.¹⁶² It also enforced the idea that state authorities are responsible for protecting these individuals and upholding their rights in accordance with IHL.¹⁶³ Similarly, in 2009 the African Union followed suit and adopted the *African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally*

¹⁴⁹ Ibid. pp. 2-6.

¹⁵⁰ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*. 2022.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*. 1998.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Inter-Agency Standing Committee. *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced People*. 2010. p. A-1.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. p. A-1.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. p. A-1.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. p. A-1.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. p. A-1.

¹⁶⁰ International Committee of the Red Cross. *Internally Displaced Persons and International Humanitarian Law*. 2017.

¹⁶¹ International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. *Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons*. 2006. pp. 3-5.

¹⁶² Ibid. pp. 3-5.

¹⁶³ Ibid. pp. 19-21.

Displaced Persons In Africa (Kampala Convention).¹⁶⁴ The Kampala Convention made the same goals of protection and upholding of human rights of IDPs an objective for the African continent.¹⁶⁵

Role of the International System

The rise in IDPs has placed increasing pressure on the UN and its subsidiary bodies to address solutions for these vulnerable groups.¹⁶⁶ In 2018, the 20th anniversary of the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, a new action plan was launched to provide support and solutions for IDPs.¹⁶⁷ The plan was led by the combined efforts of UNHCR, the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced People, and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) who together launched the GP20 Initiative, which was a three-year action plan designed to focus on prevention, protection, and solutions for IDPs.¹⁶⁸

The initial focus of the GP20's *Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People 2018-2020* (2018) was to reform and improve four key areas for IDP protection and policies.¹⁶⁹ The first key area was increasing IDP participation in discussions on all phases of displacement in order to have more verified information and data on causes and consequences of internal displacement.¹⁷⁰ Second, the action plan focused on the creation, review and strengthening of national laws and policies for the protection of IDPs as national authorities hold primary responsibility for protection and prevention of IDPs.¹⁷¹ Third, the plan also discussed the importance of data collection and management to be used for informed policy decisions and framework development.¹⁷² Data collection in particular can provide useful insight into the challenges faced by IDPs as well as current efforts and progress being made in improving their situations.¹⁷³ Fourth, the plan discussed the issue of protracted displacement, which the UNHCR defines as displacement that lasts five years or more, often resulting from armed conflicts that have yet to end or reach a ceasefire.¹⁷⁴ The work of this initiative concluded in 2020 but has continued to function as the GP2.0 Initiative, which functions as a platform for experts and the UN to collaborate on joint initiatives and share information as well as updates on numerical trends of IDPs.¹⁷⁵

UNHCR has also implemented further measures to help IDPs through UNHCR's Initiative On Internal Displacement 2020-2021.¹⁷⁶ The initiative has four main objectives that include generating examples of good practices to be used to determine the effectiveness of IDP policies and improve them to achieve desired outcomes.¹⁷⁷ Additionally, the initiative also discusses the need to contribute to the greater visibility of the plight of IDPs and increase a public presence of affected groups to call for greater advocacy and support from local communities.¹⁷⁸ It further discusses the importance of resource management and allocation to ensure all IDPs get equitable care and treatment.¹⁷⁹ Equally important, the

¹⁶⁴ African Union. *African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons In Africa (Kampala Convention)*. 2009. pp. 4-9.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. pp. 4-9.

¹⁶⁶ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *Internal Displacement*. n.d.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Global Protection Cluster. *20th Anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement: A Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People 2018-2020*. 2018. pp. 3-4.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. pp. 3-4.

¹⁷¹ Ibid. pp. 3-4.

¹⁷² Ibid. pp. 3-4.

¹⁷³ Ibid. pp. 3-4.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. pp. 3-4.

¹⁷⁵ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *Internal Displacement*. n.d.

¹⁷⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *UNHCR's Initiative on Internal Displacement 2020-2021*. 2019. p. 3.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. p. 3.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. p. 3.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 3.

initiative emphasizes the need for continuous support in order to ensure the operations and objectives of the initiative are being fulfilled.¹⁸⁰

Armed Conflict and Internal Displacement

Out of the total number of 53 million IDPs worldwide, over 14 million new IDPs in 2021 were due to armed conflict.¹⁸¹ Although internal displacement events in armed conflicts oftentimes take place without a legal basis, IDPs enjoy basic rights in the scope of IHL.¹⁸² In principle, the *Geneva Conventions* of 1949 and their *Additional Protocols* treat IDPs as part of the civilian population and are not to be attacked in combat.¹⁸³ However, when conflicts become more complex and the number of parties to a conflict increases, perpetrators become more difficult to determine.¹⁸⁴ In other words, the lack of oversight and accountability leaves IDPs particularly vulnerable against acts of violence.¹⁸⁵ For example, the Global Protection Cluster reported that sexual and gender-based violence as well as abduction, kidnapping, and forced disappearance are among top protection risks of IDPs in armed conflict.¹⁸⁶

Protecting people in danger of internal displacement events means to identify and take measures to eliminate root causes.¹⁸⁷ The *2021 Internal Displacement Index report* concluded that a lack in socio-economic development as well as political instability in Member States particularly fuels armed conflict.¹⁸⁸ For example, Ethiopia's socio-economic, as well as security and stability ratings in 2021, were both lower than the Sub-Saharan average, translating into IDPs' particularly high exposure of generalized violence in that region.¹⁸⁹ Inter-ethnic tensions are correlated with an increasing numbers of IDPs, and Ethiopia saw armed conflict emerge between the non-state armed forces of the Tigray region and the government in late 2021.¹⁹⁰

Durable solutions take into account measures on the national and regional levels and for people that often are targets of war and conflict.¹⁹¹ Returning to their place of origin is often not a realistic option for IDPs, as violations of IHL by conflict parties often turn places of origin into unsafe regions.¹⁹² For example, recent data from the situation in Ukraine shows that in six months of war, over six million people are internally displaced in regions without long-term safety and sufficient food and livelihoods assistance.¹⁹³ Durable solutions in armed conflicts are realized through sustainable local integration of IDPs or integration in another part of the country.¹⁹⁴ Such measures ensure long-term safety, a suitable standard of living, and freedom of movement.¹⁹⁵ Resettlement of IDPs takes place at local levels with

¹⁸⁰ Ibid. p. 3.

¹⁸¹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre et al. *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2022*. 2022. pp. 11-12.

¹⁸² International Committee of the Red Cross. *How International Humanitarian Law protects in war, and why it matters*. 2019. p. 60.

¹⁸³ International Committee of the Red Cross. *Internally Displaced Persons and International Humanitarian Law*. 2017. p. 4.

¹⁸⁴ United Nations, General Assembly. *Human rights of internally displaced persons: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Cecilia Jimenez-Damary (A/76/169)*. 2021. p. 11.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 11.

¹⁸⁶ Global Protection Cluster. *Protection Issues*. 2022.

¹⁸⁷ United Nations, General Assembly. *Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons (A/RES/76/167)*. 2022. p. 2.

¹⁸⁸ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. *2021 Internal Displacement Index report*. 2021. p. 32.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 71.

¹⁹⁰ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. *10 internal displacement situations to watch in 2022*. n.d.

¹⁹¹ International Committee of the Red Cross. *Displacement in times of armed conflict. How International Humanitarian Law protects in war, and why it matters*. 2019. p. 47.

¹⁹² Ibid. p. 52.

¹⁹³ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *Ukraine Situation Report, 27 July 2022*. 2022.

¹⁹⁴ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *The United Nations Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement: Follow-Up to the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement*. 2022. p. 9; Inter-Agency Standing Committee. *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced People*. 2010. p. A-1.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

integration of local authorities and host communities.¹⁹⁶ UNHCR plays a critical role in these measures and engages in coordinating action with Member States with strategies adjusted to the different protection risks of IDPs.¹⁹⁷

Disasters and Climate Change

Climate change exacerbates existing risk situations, evidenced by the fact that, in 2020, 37 Member States that are already experiencing conflict also underwent extreme weather events and natural disasters.¹⁹⁸ Climate change manifests through different phenomena including increased or unpredictable rainfall, sea level rise, heatwaves, acidification, or extreme periods of drought.¹⁹⁹ Disasters, often resulting from these adverse climate-related conditions, are difficult to predict, and leave human and material damages.²⁰⁰ In 2021, both climate change and disasters resulted in over 23 million new IDPs worldwide.²⁰¹

Due to these situations, one in two IDPs are uprooted in Member States of East Asia and the Pacific as well as South Asia.²⁰² In late August 2022, for example, record monsoon rains in Pakistan claimed the lives of more than one thousand people and displaced 33 million.²⁰³ According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), this monsoon centered around landlocked areas and caught inhabitants off-guard.²⁰⁴ Regions that are not well-prepared for these events experience significant impacts, including where crops are degraded and housing infrastructure is weakened or destroyed, which leads to IDPs who then travel to urban areas.²⁰⁵ Slow-onset environmental risks, such as sea level rise, force IDPs from their place of origin because entire ecosystems and natural barriers against disasters erode over time.²⁰⁶ Such resulting longer periods of displacement prevent IDPs from having stable livelihoods and sustainable living conditions.²⁰⁷

IDMC hosts the Global Internal Displacement Database which has gathered quantitative data about sudden disasters since 2008.²⁰⁸ Member States can retrieve information on IDP development and regional hotspots up until 2021, and forecast possible scales of movement depending on the disaster and income groups.²⁰⁹ Still, the UN Secretary-General emphasizes the importance to scale up Member States' data-gathering capacities and anticipate future displacement risks of slowly emerging climate risks.²¹⁰ The Secretary-General convened a task force of non-governmental stakeholders to identify

¹⁹⁶ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *The United Nations Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement: Follow-Up to the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement*. 2022. p. 10.

¹⁹⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *The IDP-Initiative: Quarterly Update January 2022*. 2022. p. 2.

¹⁹⁸ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *The United Nations Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement: Follow-Up to the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement*. 2022. p. 20.

¹⁹⁹ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Climate and weather-related disasters surge five-fold over 50 years, but early warnings save lives - WMO report*. 2021.

²⁰⁰ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Disaster*. 2022.

²⁰¹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre et al. *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2022*. 2022. p. 16.

²⁰² Ibid. p. 11.

²⁰³ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *Pakistan: WFP working to expand food aid as deadly flooding continues*. 2022.

²⁰⁴ World Meteorological Organization. *Devastating flooding overwhelms Pakistan*. 2022.

²⁰⁵ Huang et al. Center for Global Development. *How Urban are IDPs and What Does that Mean for their Economic Integration?* 2019.

²⁰⁶ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. *Thematic series: No matter of choice: displacement in a changing climate*. 2018. p. 2.

²⁰⁷ Ibid. p. 2.

²⁰⁸ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. *Global Internal Displacement Database: Global Displacement Risk Model*. 2022.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *The United Nations Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement: Follow-Up to the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on*

obstacles to improved data collaboration until the end of September 2022.²¹¹ Detailed statistics about the dimension, demographics, and socio-economic dynamics of displacement can help Member States to make informed decisions about durable solutions.²¹²

Conclusion

The majority of displaced people worldwide are IDPs, yet no regulatory framework exists to legally safeguard them before or during displacement.²¹³ IDPs, more than refugees, are cut off from guarantees of access to basic needs such as safety and security, freedom of movement, and a decent standard of living, when their state authorities either are unable to provide protection or even actively subvert their protection.²¹⁴ The armed conflict in Ukraine alone is responsible for almost seven million IDPs, according to the International Organization for Migration.²¹⁵ Meanwhile, climate-related disasters accumulated the second most IDPs in recent years, especially due to slow-onset environmental risk that are difficult to predict but compound the impact of floods, storms, and droughts.²¹⁶ In providing for community-based coordination mechanisms and cross-cutting solutions together with other UN bodies, UNHCR plays an important role in coordinating durable solutions for IDPs.²¹⁷

Further Research

When researching this topic, delegates should have the following questions in mind: What further efforts can Member States take to ensure accountability for protecting IDPs based on the various instruments that help protect them? What further progress can be made on an official legally binding agreement for IDPs that still lack protection? How does war and armed conflict affect people from being able to resettle and what effect do these conditions create over time? What further measures can be taken environmentally, politically, and economically to further assist IDPs?

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In 2020, the International Committee of the Red Cross presented an in-depth study on the policy-making role of International Humanitarian Law in the context of internal displacement. The ICRC proposes this study as the first part of a series on the topic and discusses the ways enforcement of law can help to safeguard IDPs. It focuses on factors of duration, dimension, and type of displacement. Delegates interested in displacement events and armed conflict will find this study a good primer and profound policy-making analysis at the same time.

Internal Displacement. 2022. p. 14; Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. *Thematic series: No matter of choice: displacement in a changing climate*. 2018. p. 4.

²¹¹ United Nations, Department of Global Communications. *The United Nations Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement: Follow-Up to the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement*. 2022. p. 15.

²¹² Ibid. p. 11.

²¹³ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. *Internal Displacement*. 2022.

²¹⁴ International Committee of the Red Cross. *Displacement in times of armed conflict. How International Humanitarian Law protects in war, and why it matters*. 2019. p. 60.

²¹⁵ International Organization for Migration. *Displacement in Ukraine Again on the Rise, IOM Data Shows*. 2022.

²¹⁶ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. *Thematic series: No matter of choice: displacement in a changing climate*. 2018. p. 4.

²¹⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *The IDP-Initiative: Quarterly Update January 2022*. 2022. p. 2.

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre et al. *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2022*. 2022. Retrieved 25 June 2022 from: https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/IDMC_GRID_2022_LR.pdf

This report sheds light on events of displacement in 2021 and is themed “Children and youth in internal displacement.” The annual publication of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre displays helpful visualizations and gives spotlight on important regional, and national developments. Additional features sum up the compounding effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on internal displacement and discuss the effects of displacement on children and adolescents. This report provides detailed information for delegates looking for case studies on internal displacement in their world region and how it is manifesting in that area.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *UNHCR’s Initiative on Internal Displacement 2020-2021*. 2019. Retrieved 8 August 2022 from: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/UNHCR%20Initiative%20on%20Internal%20Displacement%202020-2021.pdf>

This report discusses the new efforts and target objectives of UNHCR over the years of 2020 and 2021. It provides information on new goals and achievable objectives that will help reduce the number of IDPs globally and regionally. It also provides delegates with figures on the success and shortcomings of projects enacted by UNHCR for assisting IDPs. UNHCR will work alongside other UN entities to ensure the new operational goals for durable solutions are met. Delegates looking on how UNHCR adapts best practices based on on-field needs, will find IDP-Initiative target operations in nine different Member States in this report.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Operational Strategy for Climate Resilience and Environmental Sustainability 2022-2025*. 2021. Retrieved 26 June 2022 from: <https://www.unhcr.org/protection/environment/61b771964/operational-strategy-climate-resilience-environmental-sustainability-2022.html>

A follow-up document to the 2021 UNHCR’s Strategic Framework for Climate Action, this document sketches out the committee’s responses to climate change. It defines three major areas to act in, namely, to prepare and respond, respond and deliver, and supply and deliver. The framework also sets milestones to be reached in each of these areas. The document presents an integrated approach to reduce the carbon footprint of UNHCR’s entire work and to integrate the knowledge of all persons affected. It is useful for delegates looking for operational action to be done towards climate resilience and environmental sustainability and how they contribute to the reduction of the number of IDPs.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2021*. 2022. Retrieved 26 June 2022 from: <https://www.unhcr.org/62a9d1494/global-trends-report-2021>

This document provides the most recent global trends and information on the changes in forced displacement and covers many aspects of causes. Additionally, this resource will provide crucial information of regional changes and driving factors that influence the changes of internal displacement around the globe. It also further discusses the number of returns, which refers to people who were able to return home, the driving factors that allowed for these returns, and where else there has been success.

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