

# CERRITOS CONFERENCE 2021

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# UNHCR

## **TOPIC A:**

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS AND  
WELFARE OF PALESTINIAN  
DISPLACED PERSONS

## **TOPIC B:**

THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

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**DIRECTOR: SHIVANI KEDILA**

October 9-10, 2021

To Delegates of CHSMUN Advanced 2021

Dear Delegates,  
Welcome to CHSMUN Advanced 2021!

It is our highest honor and pleasure to welcome you all to our 2021 advanced conference here at Cerritos High School. On behalf of the Cerritos High School Model United Nations program, we are proud to host our second advanced conference, where you will become more knowledgeable on international issues, participate in intellectually stimulating discussions, and create new and everlasting friendships.

The CHSMUN program continues to compete around the world as a nationally ranked MUN program. Our delegates utilize diplomacy in order to create complex solutions towards multilateral issues in the global community. Our head chairs are selected from only the best seniors of our program, undergoing a rigorous training process to ensure the highest quality of moderating and grading of debate. Furthermore, all the topic synopses have been reviewed and edited numerous times. We strongly believe that by providing each and every delegate with the necessary tools and understanding, he or she will have everything they need to thrive in all aspects of the committee. We thoroughly encourage each delegate to engage in all of the facets of their topic, in order to grow in their skills as a delegate and develop a greater knowledge of the world around them.

Although there will be a few changes to our conference due to Covid-19, our advisors and staff have put in countless hours to ensure delegates have an amazing experience. Our greatest hope is that from attending CHSMUN 2021, students are encouraged to continue on in Model United Nations and nevertheless, inspired to spark change in their surrounding communities. With this strong circuit consisting of over 500 delegates, CHSMUN Advanced 2021 will provide a quality experience for intermediate delegates to enhance their speaking and delegating skills.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us! We look forward to seeing you at CHSMUN Advanced 2021!

Sincerely,

Anushka Panjwani & Naima Dellawar

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Secretary-Generals

**Position Papers are due on October 1st by 11:59pm to the committee email.**

### **A Note From the Director**

Delegates,

My name is Shivani and I would like to welcome you all to our Fall Conference! I am currently a senior at Cerritos High School and this is my sixth year in Model UN. I have been to many conferences in the past six years but there is always something new that we can learn, especially when it comes to MUN! This program has played a tremendous role in my growth throughout high school and I feel so much more confident in my public speaking and world knowledge, so I hope the experience is the same for all of you! On a different note, here is a little about me personally. Since I was seven years old, I have learned classical Hindustani music and I also do bollywood dance. I enjoy watching pretty much anything, but my favorite dramas are Save Me, Fight for My Way, and Meteor Garden. I also love reading webtoons—I am currently reading dozens of different ones but I recommend Killstagram and Cursed Princess Club! I also have a huge sweet tooth and some of my favorites are Oreos, red velvet cake, and taro milk tea. Some of my favorite time-passers are drawing, reading (fiction of course), in-line skating, and singing! At school, I am a part of several clubs including Glee, Maza, and Octagon. I am also in my fourth year on the badminton team at Cerritos High School. Finally, I am in MUN (of course) and I am so excited to meet all of you, so feel free to contact me if you have any questions!

Sincerely,

Shivani Kedila

Director, UNHCR

Committee Email: [UNHCR.CHSMUN@gmail.com](mailto:UNHCR.CHSMUN@gmail.com)

### **Committee Introduction:**

In 1950, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established to address the influx of European displaced persons as a result of World War II. The UNHCR worked to provide asylum and resources for these displaced people, and was meant to be disbanded after three years; however, the work of the UNHCR still continues today. In 2018, the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) was established as a framework to create sustainable solutions for both refugees and host countries. The UNHCR has been working to follow the GCR while running periodic reviews of its effect on displaced persons and the regions hosting them. The GCR has also linked the refugee crisis to UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as ending poverty, ending hunger, increasing access to quality education, etc. The current, eleventh, UN High Commissioner for Refugees is Filippo Grandi who previously worked for the UNRWA, was Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Afghanistan, and worked with the UNHCR and other non-governmental organizations across the

glose. Since its founding, the UNHCR has worked in 135 countries and has helped over 50 million refugees start a new life.

# Topic A: Protecting the Rights and Welfare of Palestinian Displaced Persons

## Background:

Palestinian displaced persons have had a long history, dating back to the partition of Israel and Palestine in 1948; however, the recent attempts at ethnic cleansing in Palestine have raised concerns for the welfare of these displaced persons. The conflict between Palestine and Israel began after World War II, when Mandatory Palestine was partitioned into Palestine and Israel due to the demand for an independent Jewish state. Both, the Jewish Israelis and Muslim Palestinians thought of Jerusalem as a holy land and made the city their capital. Thus, the Arab-Israeli war broke out between Israel and other Arab states and resulted in Israel's victory and independence; this would lead to 750,000 Palestinian Arabs fleeing the region. Later in 1967, the Six-Day War ended with Israel holding military occupation over the occupied Palestinian territories (oPts): the Gaza Strip, West Bank, and East Jerusalem. The war and the new Israeli occupation took thousands of Palestinians out of their homes. For decades now, Palestinian and Israeli forces have been fighting for control over oPts, with more Palestinians becoming displaced each day as a result of the warfare.

In early 2021, sporadic fighting had been going on between Israeli security forces and the Hamas militant group from the Gaza Strip. However, it escalated on April 30, 2021, when Israeli police desecrated the Al-Aqsa mosque, a sacred religious site for Muslim Palestinians. The police forces fired stun grenades and rubber-coated bullets into the worshippers, injuring over 200 Muslim Palestinians. In East Jerusalem, the Israeli court has been ordering the eviction of Palestinian families from Shiekh Jarrah as Jewish civilians have been claiming those properties. The UN has urged Israel to halt these evictions and attacks—what is being called by the public as an *ethnic cleansing*. These attempts at ethnic cleansing have only led to a greater rate of displaced persons seeking shelter and aid.

Currently, there are 5 million registered Palestinian displaced persons living in the UNRWA's (UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) refugee camps in the oPt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria; and an estimated 1.5 million unregistered displaced Palestinians. Of these displaced persons there are three major groups: Palestinian refugees who left during the Palestinian Exodus of 1948, internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Israeli territory, and refugees displaced in the West Bank and Gaza Strip after the war in 1967.

For the first group, Palestinian refugees, the main concern is over their *right to return* to their ancestral homes in Israel. The state of Israel claims that there are three reasons why they cannot grant the right of return to Palestinian refugees: (1) the refugees will have no safe homes to return to, (2) the reintegration of refugees would be a threat to the security of the state, and (3) the mostly Muslim refugees would threaten Israel's identity as a Zionist state. The second group of Palestinian IDPs in Israel are threatened by Israeli security forces, housing demolition, and arbitrary night raids and arrests. In 2020 alone, 848 Palestinian residencies were demolished, with the justification that the homeowners did not have Israeli-issued permits—these permits are virtually impossible for Palestinians to obtain. Almost one thousand new IDPs were evicted due to these housing demolitions. The IDPs also fear the security forces who stroll the streets and often conduct night raids in which they arrest innocent Palestinian civilians. These raids and arrests are also a key concern for the third group of displaced persons: Palestinians in the oPt. Moreover, a decade-long economic blockade of the Gaza Strip has restricted movement in the oPt ever since the militant takeover by Hamas in 2007. This blockade has made access to water, electricity, sanitation products, and food difficult for Gazan residents. Medical facilities also lack proper medical resources and staff to support injured or sick individuals as well as pregnant women. In the Northern West Bank and Southern West Bank access to medical aid, education, and employment is extremely difficult due to security checkpoints throughout the region. These checkpoints were designed to divide the people and Palestinians have frequently reported that the Israeli officers deny passage even for education, birth, or dire medical situations. All in all, these Palestinian displaced persons face a multitude of issues due to the Israeli occupation, which endangers their livelihoods and health.

## United Nations Involvement:

The United Nations has attempted to aid Palestinians through its numerous programs and UN agencies. On November 19th, 1948 the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 212 to aid Palestinian refugees. This resolution provided almost thirty million dollars to provide relief to the refugees for nine months. In the following month, Resolution 194 was adopted to establish the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine (UNCCP); the resolution would ensure the refugees' right of return to their homeland and the UNCCP would facilitate the reintegration of the refugees into their homeland. In the following years, dozens of resolutions would be adopted by the UN to address the integration, health, and rights of the Palestinian refugees.

As of September 2014, the UNRWA has hosted Palestinian IDPs in 41 of its school buildings. These Designated Emergency Shelters (DEs) held over fifty-thousand Palestinians who had uninhabitable homes or no home to return to. The UNRWA has also continued to provide food rations from its Food Distribution Centers (DCs) and a stable water supply from water wells in eleven of its camps. The Infrastructure and Camp Improvement Programme and Job Creation Programme (JCP) were some of the UN's more successful projects for the maintenance of UNRWA camps. Hundreds of Palestinians were employed to aid in the removal of debris and waste from Gaza camps, providing them with employment while keeping the camps sanitary.

To address the recent increase in violence between Palestine and Israel, the UN has worked to ease tensions and provide humanitarian assistance to Palestinians. In May 2021, the

UNRWA released a flash appeal to address the sudden increase in hostilities in Gaza and the West Bank. This appeal covers the humanitarian needs of each of the oPts: the Gaza Strip requires shelters in schools to protect children from airstrikes; protection and treatment for Gender-Based Violence, psychological trauma, and other health issues in Designated Emergency Shelters (DES); attention to unemployment and other effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The West Bank requires protection against Israeli ammunition and essential services. The UNRWA has drafted its plan to provide food, non-food items, financial and cash assistance, health resources, COVID-19 protection measures, and mental and psychosocial support. This flash appeal ensures the support of Palestinians in the first 30 days of conflict, and the UNRWA is working on supplying continued assistance to the affected peoples.

## Case Study: COVID-19 in the Gaza Strip

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, concern over the employment, health, and shelter of Palestinian displaced persons has increased. Currently, Gaza is in its second wave of the pandemic and is experiencing around one thousand reported cases of the virus each day. Due to Israel's economic blockade of the Gaza Strip, the region was slowly introduced pandemic, but now Gaza accounts for over 60% of COVID-19 cases in all oPts. The lack of medical facilities, supplies, and skilled staff has rendered Gaza to be incapable of coping with such a severe outbreak. Moreover, the vaccination rate has been extremely low, as only 5% of Palestinians were fully vaccinated by the end of May and many healthcare workers remain unvaccinated. On the contrary, the majority of Israeli citizens have been reported to be fully vaccinated with lower concerns over the pandemic in the state.

Like all other health concerns in Gaza, the COVID-19 pandemic has been “politicized,” leaving the state of Gazans in the hands of negotiations between Israeli, Palestinian, and foreign officials. Under President Donald Trump’s administration of the United States, all funding for the UNRWA was ended, leaving the organization in major deficit and cutting off support for thousands of Palestinians. In November 2020, during the first wave of the pandemic in Gaza, the UNRWA lost much of its budget to pay its workers and fund its shelters and programs in the oPts, due to the lack of funding outside of the UN General Assembly. Moreover, the Hamas have focused on the isolation of COVID-19 cases through movement restrictions and public health guidelines. While these guidelines have been ignored for the most part due to the importance of religious and cultural rites, Hamas’ actions have provided short-term relief to the Gazan population. Thus, the lack of political and financial support from UN member states has left Gazan citizens without sufficient aid during COVID-19.

The UNRWA has taken action to address the health concerns during the pandemic in Gaza. In order to protect refugee communities within Palestine, the UNRWA created a flash appeal for the pandemic response. One million refugees and displaced persons in Gaza were being aided by the UNRWA at the beginning of 2020. These refugees already faced socio-economic and health hardships, so the agency focused its initial efforts on sanitation and waste collection in camps, food aid and delivery, cash distributions, and services for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS). However, the lack of proper funding has been a key

concern for the COVID-19 response, and it is a continuing factor contributing to insufficient medical health services and vaccination in the Gaza Strip.

## Bloc Positions:

**Western Bloc:** Countries in the Western bloc are less likely to recognize Palestine as an independent and sovereign state, but do recognize the need for the representation and assistance of Palestinians. However, these countries support the end of the conflict between Israel and Palestine, especially through peaceful negotiation for a two-state solution. Originally, Israel has had long-standing relations with many nations in the Western bloc, but support for Israel's military occupancy is reducing. Western countries often provide funding to refugee agencies like the UNRWA to give education, humanitarian relief, healthcare, and other services to Palestinians; Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Ireland are a few of the countries which currently fund the UNRWA. Other countries on the Western block support economic and infrastructural development in oPts to make Palestine self-reliant.

**Latin America and Caribbean Bloc:** Countries in the Latin America and Caribbean bloc are more likely to support negotiations for a peaceful end to the conflict between Palestine and Israel. These countries are not directly involved with the affairs and aid of Palestine, but they urge other nations, with the resources, to provide relief and funding to the Palestinian people. The importance of Palestinian displaced persons' right of return and reintegration to Palestine is also emphasized by these nations. Despite the lack of direct aid to Palestine or agencies, Latin American and Caribbean countries urge the international community to take action in supporting Palestinian displaced persons.

**African Bloc:** Countries in the African bloc support Palestine as an independent state and are more active in condemning the Israeli and Hamas airstrikes which endanger civilians. African nations have larger Muslim populations, leading them to support the Muslim Palestinians over the oppressive Israeli authorities. However, nations with smaller Muslim populations, like South Africa, have supporters of a free Palestine as well as Israel-commiserators. However, the African bloc is more supportive of Palestinians as there have been many recent protests for the independence of Palestine as well as condemnations of Israeli actions by African leaders.

**Asian-Pacific Bloc:** Countries in the Asian-Pacific bloc are likely to support the independence of Palestine and provide direct and indirect support to Palestinians. In the Middle East, countries like Qatar and Turkey have provided monetary donations and aid in Palestinian development projects. Organizations like the Turkish Red Crescent are major contributors to hospitals and medical health centers in oPts. Most countries in the Asian Pacific bloc recognize the independent State of Palestine and urge negotiations for a two-state solution. Although many nations have a neutral stance, they are more active than other blocs in providing relief and aid to Palestine and related agencies like UNRWA.

# Basic Solutions:

To address the plight of Palestinian displaced persons there are a multitude of issues that must be addressed: education, employment, health, safety, right of return, and the protection of rights. Delegates should focus on solutions to address each of these aspects. Basic solutions include legislative action, educational programs, and funding for Palestinians and international aid organizations. Legislative action is necessary to ensure Palestinian refugees' and displaced persons' right of return to their homeland. It is also important to promote the self-sustainability of oPts, especially the Gaza Strip. For example, in 2005, the Israeli government and Palestinian authorities created the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing. This would allow movement at the Rafah crossing between Gaza to Egypt, in order to improve Gaza's economic and humanitarian situation. Furthermore, educational programs for displaced children and vocational training for families would reduce financial strains on the refugee population. In addition to education and legislation, funding is essential to support the UNRWA and local organizations providing all forms of aid to Palestinian displaced persons. While many nations fund these organizations and provide monetary donations, a more reliable form of funding will secure the programs put in place to promote the livelihood of Palestinians. While there are numerous solutions delegates should come up with and discuss during debate, these actions are the foundation to protect the rights and welfare of Palestinian IDPs and refugees.

# Questions to Consider:

1. Does your country recognize Palestine to be a sovereign and independent state? How does this shape your country's policy of aid for Palestinian displaced persons?
2. Does your country currently provide any form of direct or indirect aid to oPts (funding, medical resources, diplomatic relationships, etc.)?
3. How does your country plan on providing aid to Palestinians while being respectful about cultural and religious practices?
4. What can be done to address the lack of job access for Palestinian displaced persons?
5. Should Palestinian refugees be given the right of return to Israel or provided asylum elsewhere? Think about what Palestinian refugees would want as well as the feasibility.
6. What can be done to address the impact of COVID-19 on Palestinian displaced persons, especially in the Gaza Strip?

# Topic B: The Syrian Refugee Crisis

## Background:

For ten years, Syrians have been forced to flee their homes in order to escape violent conflict in the devastated nation. On March 15, 2011, the Syrian Civil War began between the oppressive government and domestic and foreign groups. This war was a result of mass demonstrations by the public aimed at removing Bashar al-Assad from presidency. Assad has ruled with authoritarian practices, following after his father, Hafiz al-Assad, who had installed such practices since 1971. The combination of anti-government sentiment and an economic downturn and mass poverty due to a four-year-long drought from 2006 to 2010 led to the first major protests. These demonstrations began when children were detained and tortured for anti-government graffiti, and after that, the protests escalated. Assad's government responded with violent crackdowns on these protests, and the increasing conflict caused a parallel increase in refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The three major push factors for Syrians leaving their homes are violence, collapsed infrastructure, and safety for children. According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, as of January 2020, almost 600,000 Syrians were killed due to the civil war, 22,000 of whom were children. This violence accounts for the constant increase in displaced persons, along with the lack of sustained infrastructure. Syrian hospitals are major targets for airstrikes, an example being the attack on the Al-Shifaa hospital in June 2021. This was the third attack on the hospital since 2019, and the UN has openly condemned the responsible parties. Al-Shifaa has received financial support from the UN and provided approximately 15,000 monthly services for Syrian patients. As of March 2021, only half of Syria's hospitals and medical facilities are "fully functional" and about 2.4 million children do not attend school. In 2019 alone, there were a recorded 85 attacks on healthcare centers, and 157 schools were attacked. Furthermore, eight million citizens are reliant on alternative water sources, especially IDPs in northern Syria—a majority of these water sources being unsafe to drink. Thus, the lack of such infrastructure for Syrians is a major source of the influx of refugees. In addition to violence and unreliable infrastructure, the danger for Syrian children has led to many women and children attempting to find shelter outside of the country. Children have been reported to face psychological and physical distress because of the conflict. In a survey conducted by the UN, 42 percent of refugee families reported their children's nightmares, prolonged anxiety, and other reports, many being symptoms of major mental health illnesses. The displacement, continuing violence, lack of essential resources, etc. are the predicted causes of the dangerous psychological situation for young Syrians. In addition to mental harm, the crisis has also affected the physical well-being of children. 500,000 children face chronic malnutrition and 137,000 children less than five years of age are acutely malnourished, making them more susceptible to chronic diseases and/or medical conditions. The hope for a better life for children, as well as the unforgiving violence and lack of proper resources and infrastructure, have been the biggest push factors for Syrian refugees.

Currently, there are approximately 6.6 million Syrian refugees and 13.4 million Syrians who require humanitarian assistance. The majority of Syrian refugees seek asylum in Syria's neighboring countries: Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt. Over the decade-long crisis, over a million refugees have also sought asylum in European nations, although that trend has reduced now. Syrian refugees face a multitude of challenges, including economic hardship, violence, health detriments etc. Female refugees particularly are challenged with gender-based violence (GBV), child and forced marriages, familial-role changes, mental health issues, and new complications because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Domestic violence is prevalent throughout many Middle Eastern nations, but many Syrian refugee women have reported an increase in violence by men due to the heightened stress and lowered self-esteem of men not finding jobs and the uprooting of the traditional role of men in households. Girls and women also deal with the expansion of child and forced marriages; for a long time, early and arranged marriages have been a cultural tradition to reduce the economic burden of families while securing the safety and health of daughters. The refugee crisis has only increased this trend as many families marry off their girls to help them escape the violence in Syria and the sexual harassment and assault in refugee camps. Female refugees are also burdened with the shift in traditional familial roles: many women become the breadwinners of their household due to men being detained, killed, or left behind in Syria. This, along with the exposure to violence, is a major cause for the mental health issues like depression, anxiety, and PTSD which plague women and many refugees. The pandemic and lockdown restrictions have also complicated life for Syrian refugees, especially women who cannot find jobs and face an increase in domestic violence due to movement restrictions.

## United Nations Involvement:

The United Nations hopes to put an end to the Syrian Civil War and restore the livelihoods of the people. In 2015, the UN Security Council Resolution 2254 called for a ceasefire throughout the nation. This resolution was the first to suggest a political solution to end the conflict and was adopted unanimously by the council. However, it was only one of the numerous documents since 2012, requesting the cessation of all hostilities in Syria as well as the need for humanitarian assistance. In June 2020, Security Council passed Resolution 2533 to renew the Bab al-Hawa border crossing between Syria and Turkey and to monitor the state of cross-border humanitarian assistance. These documents have proved effective in dealing with the political and humanitarian situation to some extent, but much is needed to be done to improve the conditions of Syrian refugees and IDPs.

In 2020, the UN provided relief to over seven million people per month, although fourteen UN and aid workers were killed as a result. Nonetheless, the UN continues to provide aid to Syrian refugees. This aid has often come in the form of financial assistance (for medicine and basic necessities), appliances for refugee camps, access to sanitation and safe water, psychological support, and more. Furthermore, the UNHCR has worked to support and assist medical facilities in areas with dense refugee populations during the pandemic. The UN agency also provided cash grants to refugees who now face poverty as a result of the pandemic. In addition to supporting refugees, the UNHCR is a co-leader of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP); this plan focuses on coordinating with and supporting host communities

and countries. The main goals of the 3RP are to promote self-reliance and better integration of refugees through education and the inclusion of refugees in national planning systems. Through the 3RP, the UNHCR has aided in meeting the protection, education, food security, health and nutrition, shelter, basic needs, sanitation, and livelihoods of Syrian refugees.

The UN also formulated the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRC) for the Syrian Arab Republic. This plan covered the aforementioned UNHCR focuses as well as logistics, emergency telecommunications, and overall coordination. The 2021 HRC for Syria focuses on the heightened food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic and recent wildfires. The UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) is currently working with partners in food-security to strengthen coordination, promote self-reliance of displaced persons, increase food production and availability, and more. These UN actions have been effective in supporting Syrian refugees, but more action from the international community is necessary to secure their livelihoods.

## Case Study: Nigeria

In 2015, former UN High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, stated that the refugee situation in Nigeria had become comparable to that of Syria's crisis. Refugees began fleeing the escalating terrorist attacks of Boko Haram in 2014 and 2015. The terrorist group is believed to have been founded in Nigeria in 2002, with the goal of spreading Islam and stopping western influence. However, the group's violent actions to make Nigeria an Islamic state caused many conflicts within the nation. Boko Haram is well known for its mass kidnapping of schoolgirls in 2014 as well as bombing the Nigerian capital. Thus, thousands of refugees fled the nation to be safe from the violence and protect their livelihoods. By mid-2015 alone, Cameroon hosted over 75,000 Nigerian refugees, and by mid-2016 Niger hosted 87,000 Nigerian refugees, despite Niger facing its own food crisis. The hospitality of neighboring nations that were dealing with their own crises displays the need for coordination between the refugees' and host communities' needs. Moreover, hundreds of refugees died due to starvation and/or illnesses in the camps, while many children were malnourished. These poor conditions were often due to the shortage of food in camps in addition to the lack of sanitation and water access. Women and children were forced to carry liters of water for several kilometers in order to have any water at all, and, in many cases, free treatment for malnourishment was only provided to very young children. Therefore, Nigerian refugees faced similar difficulties to current Syrian refugees, and internal conflict was the major cause of both refugee crises.

## Bloc Positions:

**Western Bloc:** Countries in the western bloc are more likely to support Syrian opposition to al-Assad's ruling and believe that his regime is not representative of the Syrian peoples' will and beliefs. Countries such as the United States of America have actively provided humanitarian and non-humanitarian support to millions of Syrian refugees and those who are leading the rebellion

against the oppressive regime. The EU also emphasizes the need for accountability and demotion of al-Assad's party and does not recognize his election as a legitimate democratic vote. In efforts to reduce the power and reach of the Syrian government, the EU has placed sanctions on travel, shipment of weapons, oil cargo, and freezes on foreign assets. These nations are taking an active role in aiding the Syrian people in their fight against the authoritarian ruling party.

**Latin America and Caribbean Bloc:** Countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region have taken a less active role in the Syrian crisis with only a few nations speaking out about the conflict and condemning the actions of the government. With little to no voice in the crisis, they have averted their attention to native issues but have expressed their clear negative attitude towards the use of chemical warfare by al-Assad and its clear violation of UN resolutions. Some nations in this bloc such as Venezuela have instead resorted to providing a place of refuge for thousands of Syrian refugees to show their support.

**African Bloc:** Countries in the African bloc are similar to countries of the Latin and Caribbean bloc, where they do not indulge in active efforts against the oppressive regime of al-Assad but do condemn their rule. However, despite their lack of a strong political stance, countries such as Ethiopia have welcomed hundreds of thousands of refugees from Syria and other nations with the help of their open-door policy. Through these humanitarian efforts, they have shown their position in this conflict, even if they lack active intervention in the Middle East. Moreover, many African nations have dealt with, or continue to deal with, their own refugee crises and internal conflicts. An example would be the previously mentioned refugee issue in Nigeria.

**Asian-Pacific Bloc:** Countries in the Asian-Pacific bloc are inconsistent in their support where more of the poorer nations in the Southeast region are more welcoming to Syrian refugees while those in the Eastern regions are less likely to host refugees. For example, Indonesia and the Philippines have both given refuge to asylum seekers from Syria to allow them a temporary residence. On the other hand, countries such as Korea and Japan have given a few hundreds of refugees proper documentation to reside within the nation, only after pressure from the international community. However, these nations still condemn the atrocities towards the Syrian people and generally believe that the government should be elected by and for the people.

## Basic Solutions:

As the conflict in Syria increases, so does the number of Syrian refugees. Thus, it is important that delegates focus on addressing the needs of Syrian refugees as well as solutions to mitigate the conflict in Syria. The needs of refugees include their protection, overall well-being, education and employment, shelter, and livelihoods. These needs can be met through the programs of UN agencies and other groups, funding from organizations and national governments, humanitarian assistance from different organizations, etc. Moreover, the needs of hosting communities and governments must be addressed. Thus, humanitarian programs and

plans are imperative to ensure the safety and security of Syrian refugees living in camps in neighboring countries. Examples of the UN's work include the UNHCR's 3RP which was previously mentioned. This plan focused on the coordination of refugees' and hosts' needs, as well as the representation of refugees in host communities' planning and systems.

It is also necessary for delegates to come up with solutions aimed towards ending the civil war and reducing tensions between the Syrian government, civilians, and other involved groups. As these tensions are the root of the conflict, delegates must consider what can be done to alleviate them. Basic solutions would include agreements for ceasefires and more democratic representation in government. An example of such documents would be the UN Security Council's resolution 2254 which requested a ceasefire in 2015. However, these resolutions have not been completely effective in ending the conflict, so delegates must come up with improved solutions for the civil war. These solutions are the building blocks for the solutions delegates should discuss in committee which can bring an end to the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

## Questions to Consider:

1. What is your country's relationship with the Syrian government and Syrian political groups?
2. Does your country provide any form of direct or indirect aid to Syria (funding, medical resources, diplomatic relationships, etc.)?
3. What can be done to address the lack of job access for Syrian refugees—especially during the COVID-19 pandemic?
4. How can aid be provided to Syrian refugees while ensuring the safety of humanitarian workers?
5. What can be done to ultimately return the Syrian refugees to their homes in Syria?
6. What can be done to address the impact of COVID-19 on Syrian refugees, especially women and young girls?

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