UN High Commissioner for Refugees

- Somalia's Refugee Crisis
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Introduction to the Committee

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was founded in 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly in order to help the people displaced by World War II. The following year 1951 the "United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees" was adopted in Geneva[1]. This convention was the first and is until today one of the most important international frameworks for refugee rights. It defines a refugee as:

> *A person who is outside his or her country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail him or herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution.[2]*

Another key element of the convention was the principal of non-refoulment, which is stated in article 33 of the convention. It prohibits to expel or return a refugee to territories where he might be in danger as long as the refugee is not a danger to his hosting country or has been convicted of a particularly serious crime. Though the office was originally established for a term of three years and the convention applied only to refugees of crisis from before 1951 it soon got clear that both would have to become permanent. The statue under which the UNHCR works until today gives the following core mandate to the office:

> *The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, acting under the authority of the General Assembly, shall assume the function of providing international protection, under the auspices of the United Nations, to refugees who fall within the scope of the present Statute and of seeking permanent solutions for the problem of refugees by assisting Governments and, subject to the approval of the Governments concerned, private organizations to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of such refugees, or their assimilation within new national communities.*

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[1] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 'UNHCR - History of UNHCR'
[2] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 'Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees'

The UNHCR is governed by the UNHCR Executive committee, which is elected by the ECOSOC on the "widest possible geographical basis from those states with a demonstrated interest in, and devotion to, the solution of the refugee problem." This committee simulates the UNHCR Executive Committee (ExCom) and shall fulfill the ExComs function to review programs of the UNHCR[3].

References

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 'Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees' <http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.pdf>, accessed 24 May 2014.

'Statue of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' <http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c39e1.pdf>, accessed 24 May 2014.

'UNHCR – ExCom Mandate and Statute' <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c86.html>, accessed 24 May 2014.

'UNHCR - History of UNHCR' <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cbc.html>, accessed 24 May 2014.

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[3] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 'UNHCR - ExCom Mandate and Statute'

Topic 1: Somalia's Refugee Crisis

Introduction

The Somali Civil War is a conflict between the Somali Armed forces and various armed rebel groups that has being ongoing since January 1991. Following the outbreak of the civil war, many Somalis fled the country in order to seek shelter and security. At the end of 2009, about 678,000 were under the protection of the [UNHCR](#), constituting the third largest refugee group after war-afflicted [Iraq](#) and [Afghanistan](#), respectively. Later on and due to the renewed fighting in the southern half of the country, an estimated 132,000 people left in 2009, and another 300,000 were displaced internally. The large-scale killing of Somali civilians during the Civil War was referred to as an act of "genocide", by former UN Secretary General [Boutros Ghali](#) and [Ahmedou Ould Abdallah](#), UN special envoy to Somalia.

Throughout 2011, millions of Somalis were displaced due to famine and drought. UNHCR started then to work with NGOs and internal partners in Somalia to aid internally displaced people (IDPs) by providing water, food, tents, medical care and other basic needs. These figures are estimated to be worth up to few millions of dollars. As of September 2013, there were more than 1.1 million Somalis displaced internally and nearly one million refugees living in neighboring countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia, and Yemen. While famine conditions no longer exist, the UN estimates that there are 870,000 people in need of live-saving humanitarian assistance.

Cities are coming back to life in areas where the jihadist group Al Shabab has given up territorial control, particularly the capital Mogadishu, where approximately 369,000 IDPs reside. However, the displaced population is not benefitting from this revival, since they did not obtain security or better life quality. With relatively greater stability anticipated in the country, some IDPs and refugees in neighboring countries are spontaneously returning to their areas of origin.

The UNHCR is still trying to find solutions for this complex problem. On one hand, there is definitely a vast need to keep providing the refugees with the humanitarian aid and helping to find refuge to those in need. On the other hand, it is time now for the UNHCR and other concerned bodies to build a better plan and conclusive strategies to match the needs and end the refugee crisis as soon as possible. It is our mission as a committee to work

together to build this plan, but as for now it is significant to draw attention on what the UNHCR did, and is still doing, regarding this issue to know how our debate in the committee shall proceed. UNHCR has formed **the Return Consortium**, consisting of UN agencies and international NGOs in Somalia. The consortium will set standards, ensure operational synergies, jointly fundraise, and facilitate voluntary return, with the aim of ensuring the safe and sustainable reintegration of returnees in Somalia. In 2014-2015, in addition to the refugees who will be assisted with reintegration in their areas of origin, where return is possible, other IDPs in Somalia will mostly continue to live in urban areas, and the Federal and sub-regional Governments are expected to continue to allocate land for IDP settlements. Unfortunately, only few countries try to help Somali refugees during their conflict, such as: Kenya, Ethiopia and United Kingdom while other countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Yemen, only pledged help but did not deliver.

Background

The Federal Republic of Somalia is an African country, located in the Horn of Africa. Its population is approximately around 10 million, while 85% of it is ethnic Somali. The crisis followed a civil war, which started back in the 1980s. The main reason for the disharmony in the country was the regime of Mohamed Siad Barre, the President of the

Federal Republic of Somalia then. When protesters started to show their disagreement with the regime and to resist the unjust laws of the regime, an inner conflict rose. As a result, various armed rebel groups in the south and north of country were engaged with the Somali Armed Force and their actions were legalized. The coalition of rebel groups finally succeeded in toppling Siad Barre's regime in 1991.

The war did not end after 1991, even as the regime collapsed. There were a number of attempts from European and African countries to help Somalia and put an end to this war, but all attempts failed. The UN has also taken a great part in finding a peaceful solution between the government and the different groups of Somali residents but with little success. External responses to Somalia's collapse were belated because other wars in the Gulf and the Balkans commanded international attention. The Djibouti government tried unsuccessfully to broker a deal in June and July 1991. UN diplomatic engagement began only in early 1992, when a ceasefire was negotiated between the two main belligerents in Mogadishu, Ali Mahdi Mohamed and General Mohamed Farah Aideed. A situation of practical anarchy followed, as the central government had no control over the country. A limited UN peacekeeping mission – the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) – was unable to stem the violence or address the famine. Spikes in violence and drought conditions have caused multiple waves of displacement over the years, and most recently the 2011-12 famine claimed over 260,000 lives. Some political progress has been made since 2011, with the formation of a new government. The government installed in 2012 controls only a fraction of the country around Mogadishu, and even those areas remain fragile in the face of tension between competing warlords and frequent attacks from the Al Shabab jihadist group.

The logo of the Al Shabab terrorist group

This group, designated as terrorist by Canada, Australia, Norway and the United States, claims to be doing everything it does in the name of Allah and to be following only the orders of the Qur'an. There are vast arguments between them and other Islamist groups, as each one claims to be the correct form of Islam and the one who obeys the commandments of Allah.

Current Situation

In this section, we will shed the light on the situation in Somalia regarding the refugees and the intervention of the countries that provides shelter to Somali refugees. It will demonstrate the situation from late 2013.

In November 2013, Kenya, Somalia, and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) signed a Tripartite Agreement to establish a framework for supporting voluntary returns to Somalia. The principle of voluntariness must be upheld, and Kenya, along with UNHCR, must continue to provide protection and support for those refugees who feel that Somalia is not yet safe enough to return and find home there. While famine conditions no longer exist, the UN estimates that there are 870,000 people in need of live-saving humanitarian assistance. Cities are coming back to life in areas where Al Shabab has given up territorial control, particularly the capital Mogadishu, where approximately 369,000 IDPs reside. However, the displaced population is not fully benefitting from this revival. This creates another dangerous case that the UNHCR has to deal with.

In January 2014, at an African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud requested an extension of the UN Security Council's weapons purchasing mandate for Somalia after it was expired in March. Mohamud, the 8th Somali president, indicated that the Somali defense forces required better military equipment and arms to more effectively combat militants. He claims this to be a significant obstacle for his government to end the current conflict in his country.

In February 2014, a delegation led by Prime Minister of Somalia Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed met in Addis Ababa with Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn to discuss strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries. The results of this meeting were important and played a role in enhancing the international relations of the country. Ahmed commended on Ethiopia's role in the ongoing peace and stabilization process in Somalia as well as its support against Al-Shabaab, and welcomed the Ethiopian military's decision to join AMISOM. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is an active, regional peacekeeping mission operated by the African Union with the approval of the United Nations. It was created back in 2007.

Back in early March 2014, Somali security forces and AMISOM groups launched an intensified military operation to remove Al-Shabaab from the remaining areas in southern

Somalia under its control. Somali security forces, AMISOM, and many other African states suggest that Al Shabaab is the most dangerous group that shakes the stability and general security of the Somalia. By March 26, the allied forces had liberated ten towns within the month, including [Qoryoley](#) and [El Buur](#). [Nicholas Kay](#), UN Special Representative for Somalia described the military advance as the most significant and geographically extensive offensive since AU troops began operations in 2007. However, he manifested that the results are not yet final or obvious for the recent actions. Undoubtedly, there is a clear progress but it is too early to sum things up and claim resolution or any conclusion.

Finally and most recently, on the 16th of April President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud said the Somali Federal Government will be ready to assist both sides of Puntland and Somaliland in resolving the conflict over the ownership of the northern region of Sool. The U.S and the UN also called both sides to refrain from armed conflict in Sool region and to allow to resolve the differences through the table of negotiations. Meanwhile, Somaliland troops reportedly vacated Taleh town, despite signs of sustained tention in the region.

Future Plans

The UNHCR has already come up with a [2014 and 2015 plan](#) to aid the Somali refugees. The planning figure demonstrates the hard work that UNHCR is making to provide shelter, food, water and other basic needs to the Somali refugees around the world – especially in countries where they are not treated appropriately or accepted as other refugees. UNHCR's strategy in Somalia for 2014 will continue to shift from providing care and maintenance to searching for durable solutions for people of concern. The implementation of planned activities in 2014 is not yet final, since it will only be possible if the security situation is conducive and resources are available. Activities will focus on the return of IDPs and refugees to their areas of origin, while taking advantage of further local integration potential in the identified regions. In addition, the Office is planning for the implementation of reintegration activities through community-based projects benefiting both returnees and host communities, and the provision of shelter and livelihood opportunities in coordination with cluster leads in the areas of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) prevention and

response, as well as education. Here is the planning figure that the UNHCR has published recently in its website:

UNHCR 2014 planning figures for Somalia							
		Dec 2013		Dec 2014		Dec 2015	
TYPE OF POPULATION	ORIGIN	Total in country	of whom assisted by UNHCR	Total in country	of whom assisted by UNHCR	Total in country	of whom assisted by UNHCR
Refugees	Eritrea	50	50	60	60	60	60
	Ethiopia	2,550	2,550	2,940	2,940	3,340	3,340
	United Rep. of Tanzania	70	70	70	70	80	80
	Various	20	20	30	30	30	30
Asylum-seekers	Eritrea	60	60	70	70	80	80
	Ethiopia	14,170	14,170	15,880	15,880	16,750	16,750
	United Rep. of Tanzania	10	10	10	10	10	10
	Various	30	30	40	40	40	40
Returnee arrivals during year (ex-refugees)	Somalia	10,000	10,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
Internally displaced	Somalia	1,040,000	440,000	920,000	380,000	800,000	380,000
Returnee arrivals during year (ex-IDPs)	Somalia	60,000	60,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
Total		1,126,960	526,960	1,099,100	559,100	980,390	560,390

The Refugee Situation in Relevant Countries

As of May 2014, UNHCR estimates the total registered Somali refugees in the hosting-states to be 949,735 individuals and 170,442 households. The division into hosting-states is as following:

Kenya: 423,377 individuals, 117,955 households.

Ethiopia: 244,263 individuals, 51,848 households.

Yemen: 231,244 individuals, N/A households.

Djibouti: 19,169 individuals, N/A households.

Uganda: 18,534 individuals, N/A households.

Egypt: 7,957 individuals, N/A households.

Eritrea: 3,055 individuals, 639 households.

Tanzania: 2.136 individuals, N/A households.

Conclusion

To conclude, the UNHCR's most recent plan accepts that their current approach will not solve the problem of refugees in Somalia in the plan's timeframe. A new approach must recognize the connection between a solution to the refugee situation and the security situation, international cooperation, host nations for refugees, and internally displaced Somalis. The civil war, now over twenty years old, continues to cost people their lives.

The number of refugees is at risk of increasing and the number of failed attempts to solve the problem is also increasing. According to Necrometrics, around 500,000 people are estimated to have been killed in Somalia since the start of the civil war in 1991. The Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset estimates that 3,300 people were killed during the conflict in 2012, with the number of fatalities dropping slightly in 2013 to 3,150. It is definitely the appropriate time to end the civil war and help the Somali people have a peaceful and secure normal life. This goal cannot be achieved until the relevant countries and international committees provide their help. The union of different countries and inner Somali groups to solve the conflict is required in this stage. The terrorism will not stop until the people unite and declare their goals.

Our expectation from you dear delegates is to come fully prepared to the conference and negotiate with each other to suggest beneficial and effective solutions. Bear in mind these few suggestions to be addressed in your resolution: ensuring cooperation and joint action between the counties of the Horn of Africa, seeking win-win gain, enabling refugees to go back to their homes if they wish to, targeting poverty eradication and promote economic integration and stopping the rebellious terrorist groups from taking actions inside the countries. Remember that our ultimate as being members of UNHCR is providing security and keeping humanitarian rights of the refugees.

Guiding Questions

1. What are some of the realities an individual may face when living in a conflict zone? Why do people leave their homes and become refugees?
2. What is the main approach of your country towards this topic? Did your country go through civil war? Does your country accept refugees, especially Somali ones?

3. What can the UNHCR do to more efficiently deal with countries during and after war? Are the relevant UNHCR actions toward the Somali refugees' crisis sufficient?

4. Did you country intervene in inner conflicts of other countries? What is your country's position toward the Somali Civil War and Refugee Crisis?

5. What are the international consequences of internal conflict such a civil war? What are the possible solutions for terrorists groups? How do these suggestions provide humanitarian aid and security to the victims?

References

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"Endless war: a brief history of the Somali conflict" by Mark Bradbury and Sally Healy.

http://www.c-r.org/accord-article/endless-war-brief-history-somali-conflict

AMISOM Website: http://amisom-au.org/

Topic 2: The Syrian Refugee Crisis

Introduction

According to the UNHCR, 1.7 million Syrian refugees have been registered in 2013, an increase of over 340 per cent compared to the previous year. Adding up to about 2.5 million refugees in December 2013, the UNHCR's Regional Response Plan 6 estimates up to 4.1 million people with refugee status by the end of 2014.[4] This makes the Syrian civil war the biggest refugee Crisis since Rwanda in 1994[5]. As it is UNHCR's core mandate to protect refugees all over the world and find durable solutions for refugee issues, the Syrian crisis is highly relevant for this committee.

Fleeing Syria, the refugees cross borders to Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey. For these countries, the rising numbers of people seeking asylum represent a major economic and social problem. In Lebanon and Jordan refugees account for 18 per cent and 10 per cent of the overall population respectively.[6] These numbers of refugees stretch the capacities and financial resources to a limit. Representatives of major refugee hosting states call upon the United Nations to support these Syrian bordering nations. [7]
Due to problematic living conditions in refugee camps and host communities, many refugees try to cross the Mediterranean Sea in an attempt to reach Europe. In 2013, some 40.000 people arrived irregularly by boat in Italy, Malta, and Greece.[8] UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres expressed his concern about gaps in the protection of Syrians arriving in Europe.[9]

The Regional Reaction Plan for 2014 of the UNHCR states "A fundamental tenet of protection is that refugees are able to secure entry to safe territory, and the key protection response remains preservation of access for those fleeing conflict, and protection from refoulement. "[10] To ensure this, key protection strategies have to be developed, in order to

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[4] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *2014 Syria Regional Response Plan*
[5] BBC News, 'Syria crisis 'worst since Rwanda''
[6] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *2014 Syria Regional Response Plan*, 16
[7] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *High Level Segment of the Executive Committee - Final Statement*
[8] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 'UNHCR - Statement on boat incident off Greece coast', *UNHCR - Statement on boat incident off Greece coast*
[9] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 'Syrians, risking everything to flee war, find chilly reception in Europe', *Syrians, risking everything to flee war, find chilly reception in Europe*
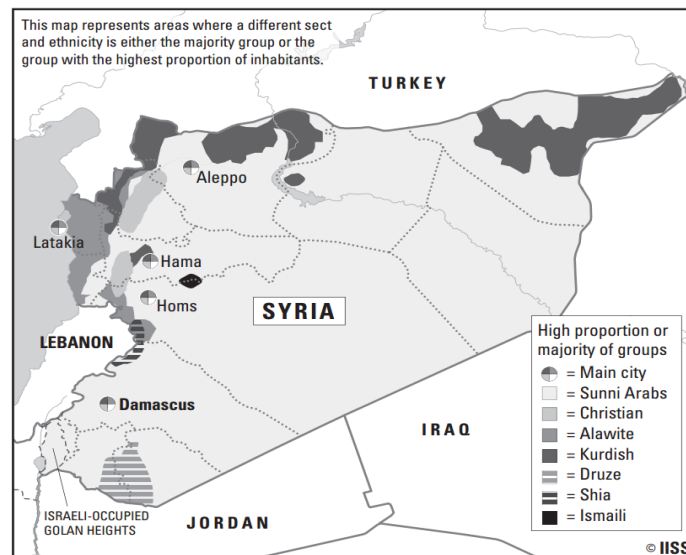[10] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *2014 Syria Regional Response Plan*, 17

support hosting states and improve the situation of refugees in the Middle East and Mediterranean Region.

History of the Syrian Refugee Crisis
An Introduction to Syria

Syria's ethnic and sectarian distribution

This map represents areas where a different sect and ethnicity is either the majority group or the group with the highest proportion of inhabitants.

High proportion or majority of groups
- ◑ = Main city
- ☐ = Sunni Arabs
- ▨ = Christian
- ▦ = Alawite
- ■ = Kurdish
- ▤ = Druze
- ▬ = Shia
- ■ = Ismaili

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Syria, like all the Levant countries, used to be under Ottoman rule until the early 20th century. A multi-ethnic area containing Sunni Muslims, Alawites, Christians, Jews, and Druze, after being under Arab control shortly from 1918-1920, the region was split into Palestine under British control and Syria-Lebanon at the San Remo conference. In 1922, Syria was divided into three autonomous regions by the French, with separate areas for the Alawites on the coast and the Druze in the south. During World War II, Syria was occupied by German forces and reoccupied by French troops in 1941, which finally left Syria as an independent, but still multi-ethnic state in 1946. While the biggest part of Syria's population is Sunni Arabs, the Assad family and most government members are Alawites, which is one of the minorities in the country alongside the groups mentioned above[11] (see map[12] and below). After the founding of the state of Israel in 1948, Syria participated in the Israeli Independence War and has been under the rule of several military governments until 1966. In the same year, an internal coup against the civilian Baath leadership brought in a new military regime under the Alawite military officer and defense minister Hafez al-Assad. In 1971, he was been elected president for a seven-year term. He remained in the presidency position for 29 years, a period in which Syria has been part of several conflicts with Israel, Lebanon, Iraq and Iran. Syria officially remained a Ba'athist state, like Iraq, with which it had a

[11] Almond, 'Syria explained: What you need to know'
[12] Hokayem, *Syria's uprising and the fracturing of the Levant*, 438

temporary union. In reality, over this time, Hafez consolidated his power over the state apparatus and secured top military and civil positions for those from his tribe, the Alawites, and other minorities at the cost of the majority Sunni population. In 2000, after Hafez al-Assad died in a car accident, his younger son Bashar unexpectedly took the presidency after the death of his older brother who was originally being prepared to rule.[13]

Emil Hokayem, from the International Institute for Strategic Studies, stated that "the circumstances of his accession to the presidency bore the hallmarks of a standard authoritarian succession: a constitutional change was rushed through to allow him to run despite being younger than the minimum age; the ruling Ba'ath Party nominated him as its only candidate; and he was confirmed as president in a hastily organized national referendum with 97% of the vote. In 2007, having weathered powerful regional storms, he was confirmed as president for another term in a referendum in which he garnered, once again, 97% of the vote and was the only candidate running." [14] Nevertheless, western politicians set some hope into Bashar al-Assad being more moderate than his father, although Bashar soon turned away from the liberalizing and inclusive path that he began with[15]. Until 2010, diplomatic contacts remained in place despite were repeated accusations of the United States and Israel that Syria was seeking weapons of mass destruction and was supporting terrorist groups like Lebanon's Hezbollah[16].

Development of the Humanitarian Crisis

In January 2011, a revolution in Tunisia and unrest throughout Africa and the Middle East marked the start of the Arab-Spring[17]. In March 2011, Syrian Civilians rose protests in the cities of Damascus and Deraa and demanded the release of political prisoners. A number of people were shot by security forces in Deraa. This led to nationwide violent unrests over the following months. Though the Syrian government announced some conciliatory measures, in May 2011 tanks entered Deraa, Banyas, Homs and suburbs of Damascus. The European Union and the US tightened sanctions against Syria. In October,

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[13] BBC News, 'Syria profile'
[14] Hokayem, *Syria's uprising and the fracturing of the Levant*, 438, 21–22
[15] Almond, 'Syria explained: What you need to know'
[16] BBC News, 'Syria profile'
[17] Almond, 'Syria explained: What you need to know'

the Syrian National Council was formed as a first organ of the opposition. By the end of 2011, the Arab League had planned to send military observers to Syria but stepped back from its plans due to worsening violence in Syria.[18] While different media sources already reported first waves of refugees towards neighboring countries, the UNHCR only stated in its Global Report 2011 on Syria: "Events in the region have, over the past year, challenged these assumptions, changing the operational context for refugees, UNHCR and partners … despite the developments in the country and across the region, the majority of refugees continue to enjoy access to Syrian territory and asylum". [19]

The situation worsened dramatically in 2012. The UNHCR states an estimated number of 2,016,500 IDPs in 2012.[20] A total of 583,313 persons registered as refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt.[21] In February 2012 a UN Security Council draft resolution, strongly condemning the violence in Syria and demanding a political transition, failed with the veto of Russia and China[22], whilst the Syrian government intensifies the bombardment of Homs and other cities[23]. The Security Council passed two more resolutions that call upon all relevant parties to end violence[24][25]. Both of these resolutions, as well as another General Assembly Resolution, that call for an end of human rights violations[26] remain widely unheard. As a result of the killing of hundreds of civilians, diplomatic relations between Syria and western countries worsen. France, the UK, Germany, Italy, Spain, Canada and Australia expel senior Syrian diplomats[27]. The National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, which was founded in November 2012 out of several major opposition forces and includes the Syrian National Council, was formally recognized by the US, Britain, France, Turkey and the Gulf states as the legitimate representative of the Syrian People. [28]

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[18] BBC News, 'Syria profile'
[19] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Global Report 2011 - Syrian Arab Republic*, 196
[20] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Global Report 2012 - Syrian Arab Republic*, 2.
[21] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *2014 Syria Regional Response Plan*, 13
[22] United Nations Security Council, *Draft Resolution S/2012/77*
[23] BBC News, 'Syria profile'
[24] United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 2042 (2012)*
[25] United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 2043 (2012)*
[26] United Nations General Assembly, *The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic B*
[27] BBC News, 'Syria profile'
[28] Ibid.

The year of 2013 brought no considerable improvement of the situation. In September 2013, UN weapons inspectors concluded that chemical weapons were used in Syria but could not explicitly allocate responsibility. On the basis of a US-Russian agreement, Assad allows international inspectors to begin destroying Syria's chemical weapons.[29] For the UN General Assembly and the Security Council the only steps left are to urge again for an end of violence, condemn the use of chemical weapons and call for another Geneva peace conference[30, 31].

Current Status

The Geneva II conference failed to produce an agreement in February 2014 and chances for peace in Syria in the near future are considerably low. The Syrian refugee population in the Middle East tripled from 2012 to 2013 and is expected to almost double again until the end of 2014. This will leave the direct neighbors of Syria with an estimated number of 4,100,000 refugees to protect. [32]

REFUGEE PLANNING FIGURES

2014 PLANNING FIGURES (persons – rounded to thousands)						
As of	Lebanon	Jordan	Turkey	Iraq	Egypt	Total
Dec 2012	180,000	168,000	148,000	74,000	13,000	588,000
Dec 2013	905,000	575,000	562,000	216,000	145,000	2,403,000
June 2014	1,277,000	687,000	781,000	308,000	197,500	3,252,000
Dec 2014	1,650,000	800,000	1,000,000	400,000	250,000	4,100,000

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Refugee population in 2012, 2013 and projection 2014
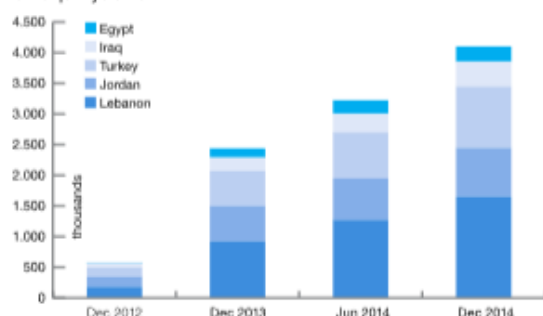
Syrian refugees in the region projected by Dec 2014
4,100,000
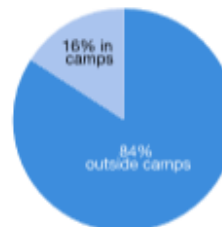
Refugee Response Dashboard[33]

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[29] Ibid.
[30] United Nations General Assembly, *Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic*
[31] United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 2118 (2013)*
[32] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *2014 Syria Regional Response Plan*, 8
[33] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *2014 Syria Regional Response Plan*, 8

These extraordinarily high numbers of refugees lead to an immense economic and demographic shock for the hosting countries. In Lebanon and Jordan, the refugees account for 18 per cent and 10 per cent of overall population respectively.[34]

The main objective of UNHCR is to ensure basic protection for all the refugees in need of it. The first step of course must be to ensure access to safe countries for those fleeing conflict. Though Syria's neighboring countries have been extremely generous during the last years and still are, crossing their borders becomes more difficult for Syrians fleeing conflict due to increased border management. It is from utmost importance that borders are remained open and refugees stay protected from refoulement.

The situation in the host countries becomes more tensed. Health, education and other basic public services reach their limits. In Jordan for example, as of mid-May 2014, 120,000 Syrian pupils are enrolled in Jordanian schools and alone in Mafraq hospital, next to Za'atari refugee camp, more than 3000 children have been born since the beginning of the conflict.[35] Also the protection of Syrian refugees from sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) is difficult in the highly crowded refugee camps and host communities. In Egypt for instance, 25% of Syrian respondents to an UN joint assessment consider the country dangerous for Syrian women due to increased cases of sexual harassment[36].

These are only some of the numerous problems the main hosting countries see themselves confronted with.

The international response of support however is not strong enough. While the UNHCR state funding requirements of 4,264.7 million USD[37], the part of it covered in mid-May is only 25 percent[38]. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees calls upon the international community: "The truth is that the international support to the governments and the host communities has been minimal in relation to the needs. Due to the protracted character of this crisis, this support needs to massively increase in the months to come."[39]

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[34] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *2014 Syria Regional Response Plan*, 16

[35] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 'Refworld | UNHCR and hostvf countries seek more help to cope with Syria refugee crisis'

[36] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *2014 Syria Regional Response Plan*, 18

[37] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *2014 Syria Regional Response Plan*, 9

[38] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 'Refworld | UNHCR and host countries seek more help to cope with Syria refugee crisis'

[39] Ibid.

The European Union and Refugee Politics

Out of Turkey and Lebanon, many refugees try to enter European countries by crossing the border from Turkey to Greece or by crossing the Mediterranean Sea. In 2013, more than 7,550 refugees crossed the Mediterranean Sea, 2,000 of them towards Malta. UNHCR estimates a number of 700 deaths in 2013 alone in Canale de Sicilia[40]. While many of the unseaworthy vessels trying to enter EU coasts come from North Africa, numbers of Syrian refugees and vessels from Turkey rise. Although the member states of the European Union are doing their best to protect as many people in need as possible, there is still need for improvement of the protective system. UNHCR documents suggest strengthening and improving of sea search and rescue operations, as well as reception facilities in Italy and Malta[41].

Other UNHCR documents see need for action in different segments of EU border, migration and refugee policies as well. For example, easier access to territory and asylum procedures and increased family reunion channels need to be established.[42] UNHCR states on its website that it "[...] remains concerned about the fragility of asylum systems in several European countries"[43].

Bloc Analysis

The Middle East

In the Middle East, most of the countries support the Syrian rebels, apart from Iran notably. This became especially clear when the Arab League revoked the seat of Syria and instead granted it to the Syrian National Council. This decision was underlined by 100 million USD aid to Syrian refugees. However, some Arab states are more affected by the humanitarian crisis then others. All the states with direct borders to Syria have a growing refugee population, while other Arab countries have not made significant efforts to even

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[40] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 'UNHCR Central Mediterranean Sea Initiative (CMSI). EU solidarity for rescue-at-sea and protection of Asylum Seekers and Migrants'
[41] Ibid.
[42] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 'Asylum and international protection in the EU. strengthening cooperation the EU: strengthening cooperation and solidarity and solidarity', 5
[43] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 'UNHCR - Europe'

offer refuge, regardless of differences in national wealth and capacity. Therefore, countries with a bigger refugee population call more strongly for international support.

Two outliers in the region are Iran and Israel. Iran supports the Syrian government and sees the opposition as terrorist groups. The refugees are not a large concern to Iran consequently since most of the refugees express pro-rebel sentiment, at least those from areas under the government's control. Israel on the other side did not directly take position in the conflict over the issue of refugees. However, Israel continues to see the Syrian Air Force and the government's possession of chemical weapons as a major security risk to Israel, and it therefore reserves the right to use airstrikes against Syrian government forces.

With the rise of radical Sunni Islamist groups among the opposition, the political and security situation in Syria is likely to alter again. The continued withdrawal of government forces from areas under rebel command serve as strongholds for these groups, who are known for carrying out violent executions and kidnappings as a method of extorting money. If these groups continue to thrive, the refugee crisis in rebel-held areas of Syria may increase yet again. Minority groups such as Christians are particularly at risk in rebel-held areas. Additionally, Arab states and other international powers have already become hesitant to increase their engagement with the opposition. This may give hope to the Assad government that it can win support or at least tacit consent for its cause.

Europe and North America

All European Countries, as well as the North American countries, call for an end of violence and condemn Assad's actions. They have a strong interest in ending the war as soon as possible and show relative strong efforts to tackle the humanitarian crisis. Many of the European and North American countries are member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. This applies also to Turkey. In order to secure Turkey borders against cross border violence, NATO allies worked on anti-rocket systems on the Syrian border. Protecting basic human rights of refugees is a significant part of the policy of all these countries. Major financial support and numerous NGOs concerned with the protection of refugees come from Europe and North America. Regarding the conflict itself, this bloc

tentatively supports most of the opposition groups and supports a diplomatic route to end the war.

The European Union has been reluctant to discuss new ways of resolving the problem of refugees who come from Syria to Europe. Many European governments are reluctant to raise the issue of taking in refugees as domestic opposition to mass immigration spills over into opposition to mass intakes of refugees. Unless a European-wide solution is reached, many Syrian refugees who have entered southern European countries such as Malta may be stuck in asylum centers with little hope of resettling.

Latin America and Asia

While none of these countries are likely to be a major destination for Syrian refugees or to get involved in the conflict most of them have condemned the violence in Syria. China, as the country with the largest influence in the Middle East, vetoed a proposed Security Council resolution but except for this did not intervene much, either. Most of the bloc hopes to see the humanitarian crisis resolved soon but actively oppose to any foreign intervention in Syria.

Voting Behavior

A rough overview on the respective global stances on the issue is given by the voting behavior in the UNGA, for example with regard to resolution A/RES/68/182 that discussed the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. In this resolution, the General Assembly condemns the use of violence in general and of chemical weapons in particular, mainly by Syrian authorities but by all other parties as well. Also the resolution expresses grave concern at the refugee situation and calls upon all member states to host Syrian refugees and cooperate with the UNHCR. The following countries voted against a resolution urging for a solution or abstained their vote: "Against: Belarus, Bolivia, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Iran, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Zimbabwe… Abstaining: Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cabo Verde, Chad, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana, India, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia,

Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Singapore, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Togo, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Zambia… The draft resolution was adopted by 127 votes to 13, with 47 abstentions (resolution 68/182)."[44]

Voting behavior in the UNSC shows that, while the great powers are all keen to see an end to the conflict and a solution to the refugee problem, they cannot agree on a solution. Russia and China are particularly concerned about any resolution that would impinge upon the government as the legitimate central authority with the right to maintain its internal sovereignty. Western governments remain wary of intervention even for humanitarian grounds, although in 2013, it was been proposed that the international community should react to Syria's use of chemical weapons. These governments insist that the rebels must be a partner in any agreement, and that the Assad regime must seek a democratic transition of power.

Committee Mission

The UNHCR is neither entitled to end violence in Syria, nor is it able to. The main objective of UNHCR is to protect refugees and other persons of concern, and to find long-lasting solutions to international humanitarian emergencies. In the Syrian crisis two things are to be done. Innovative solutions in order to directly help the refugees of the Syrian crisis and to support the major hosting countries have to be sought. Measures were developed by the UNHCR and other agencies and published in numerous reports, but more work is clearly needed.

This committee's task will be to discuss these and further measures and develop a resolution, which can be voted on by the General Assembly, in order to show a strong commitment of the international community towards a strong protection for the victims of Syrian violence. This resolution should especially contain commitments to policy measures that have the potential to give a durable protection for the huge amount of Syrian refugees.

- How can countries with an extreme influx of refugees be unburdened?

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[44] United Nations General Assembly, 'A/68/PV.70'

- How can they manage to protect huge numbers of new arrivals in emergency situations like the Syrian crisis?
- Which changes can be made to ensure easy and legal access to safe territory?
- How can the conditions of refugee camps be improved (for instance, safe water, basic education for children)?
- What more can and must international donor countries do?

These and many other questions need to be addressed by the international community in order to protect Syrian refugees and keep up basic human rights.

Further Information

Syria Regional Response Plan 2014: http://www.unhcr.org/syriarrp6/docs/Syria-rrp6-full-report.pdf

UNHCR Central Mediterranean Sea Initiative http://www.unhcr.org/531990199.pdf

An overview on UN documents related to the Syrian civil war:

http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/zsyria/

Timeline of the Syrian civil war: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14703995

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'Syrians, risking everything to flee war, find chilly reception in Europe'
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<http://www.unhcr.org/51b1d63cb.pdf>, accessed 12 May 2014.

High Level Segment of the Executive Committee - Final Statement: *on Solidarity and Burden-
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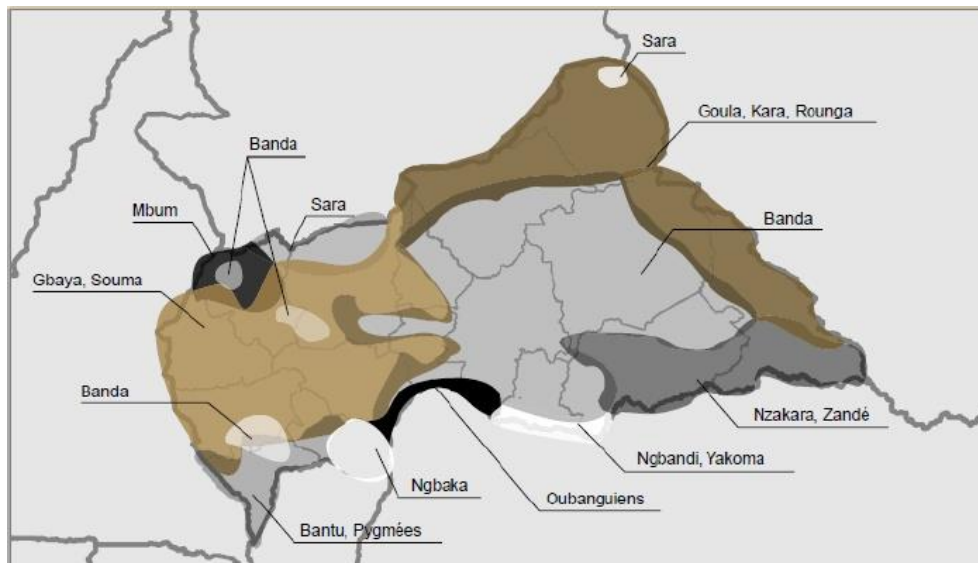   ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N12/305/91/PDF/N1230591.pdf?OpenElement>, accessed
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Topic 3: The Central African Republic's Refugee Crisis
Introduction

Renewed civil war broke out in the Central African Republic, a historically unstable state, in December 2012, leading to a severe refugee crisis and allegations of war crimes committed by both sides. The conflict began when Muslim Seleka rebels seized power in the majority Christian country, which led to retributive fighting by Christian armed groups. Since then, more than a million people have fled their homes - about a quarter of the population. A UN report from a commission appointed by the UN Secretary-General in January 2014 concluded that "If the international community does not react with speed and determination by sending more peace keeping forces to CAR, we may soon face a situation which will rapidly deteriorate and bring about genocide and ethnic cleansing." NGOs such as Amnesty International have been more willing to identify the Muslim population as the target of displacement and ethnic cleansing by Christian militia fighters[45]. 12,000 UN peacekeeping troops are due to enter the region, but not until September 2014. For now, the only international presence is a small number of French and African Union troops, who together account for 8,000 troops. The instability in the country has reached

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[45] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-27727465

such a level that the Sudanese government has encouraged its own refugees from Darfur to evacuate and return to Sudan[46].

The Situation in CAR

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked country located in the heart of the continent. It is endowed with a tropical warm climate and has a rather flat or rolling monotonous plateau terrain, which is mostly covered, by savannah and sparse forests in the south (CIA World Fact Book, 2014). The area size of about 622,000 km² compares to a slightly larger surface than Ukraine. At the same time, it is not a very densely populated country bearing a population of about 5,277,000 people. The population is young, with 40% being minors, and culturally diverse, with as many as about 80 different ethnic groups. The largest are Baya 33%, Banda 27%, Mandjia 13%, Sara 10%, Mboum 7%, M'Baka 4%, Yakoma 4% and others 2% (CIA World Fact Book, 2014). When it comes to religious divisions indigenous beliefs make up 35%, Protestant 25%, Roman Catholic 25% and Muslim 15%. The Muslim population is concentrated in the northern provinces bordering Sudan and Chad, however in other parts of the country smaller enclaves are also populated by people of Islamic creed. After the violent attacks by the predominantly Muslim Seleka Movement on Christian populations throughout the country, the Islamic minority has become a major target by the Christian Anti-Balaka rebels recently in retaliation for the gross human rights violations that had been committed by the former.

The Conflict

The Central African Republic's population consists of a heterogeneous composition of over 60 different ethnic groups (see map 1). According to Countrywatch (2011), this multi-ethnic setup laid the foundation of this conflict. Since its independence in 1960 the CAR saw the better parts of the following time until the late 1980's as an era characterized by high political volatility, military coups and harsh dictatorial rule (UCDP, 2014). In 2001, the ethnic group of the Yakoma attempted an unsuccessful coup d'état (UCDP, 2014). In the aftermath of that coup Francois Bozizé, was one of the high ranking military officers to be

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[46] https://www.radiodabanga.org/node/75486

purged from the military and turned to become one of the government's most dangerous contesters eventually seizing power in 2003. During this successful attempt, the support and involvement of Chad and Chadian soldiers was significant.

In 2005, Bozizé stood successfully in elections internationally recognized as free and fair. In the 2011 elections however, Bozizé's renewed victory was viewed as to be substantially rigged (CIA World Fact Book, 2014). His proclaiming to endeavor to reconcile different rebel groups emerging from various religious or ethnic segments of CAR's population ultimately never materialized and he was ousted by the Seleka rebel movement that seized the capital Bangui in early 2013. Since then the Seleka movement split off into various factions, which took over control in various parts of the country, purported accounts of mistreatment of the civilian populations triggered the formation of Christian self-defense groups which formed a military challenge of the Seleka group.

At this point of time Interim President Michel Djotodia assumed office. Not being able properly seize control over the country and to halt collapse of central state and security structures triggering instability, violence and chaos since March 2013, he resigned on January and handed over the office. On January 20, the National Transitional Council elected Catherine Samba-Panza as new interim-president (International Crisis Group, 2014). In the recent months the situation in the CAR has further deteriorated. Muslim minorities in the South are increasingly being targeted by Christian Anti-Balaka militants, whereas two other rebel movements, Front Populaire pour le Redressement (FPR) and Révolution Justice (RJ), entered the scene by committing atrocities against civilians. On March 24th Chadian UN peacekeeping forces (MISCA) opened fire on a large crowd in CAR capital Bangui killing 24 Christian civilians and wounding over a hundred, allegedly out of self-defense. Chad is a predominantly Muslim country. After harsh international criticism and the consequent surge of sectarian violence in the country, Chad withdrew its peacekeeping contingent from (UN-MISCA). On the other hand, the UN and the EU under the leadership of France pledged to increase the peacekeeping contingent called MINUSCA, to up to 11800 troops (International Crisis Group, 2014).

These developments, and especially the Bangui incident of 24 killed Christians by Chadian UN troops, suggest that the UN peacekeeping mission has thus far been,

understaffed, underequipped and potentially biased by the interests of its constituent nations.

Assessment of the Humanitarian Situation

The refugee crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR) has turned gradually worse. An exacerbating intra-state conflict which experienced a seizure of power by force in March 2013, grave human rights violations and the ensuing political and social instability has made the normal course of a life dangerous and threatening for large portions of the population. Massive internal displacements estimated to concern up to 840,000 people have uprooted the habitat and economy of the country and about 246,000 CAR citizens have become refugees in foreign countries (UNHCR, 2014). According to the UNHCR (2014), the outbreak of a humanitarian crisis in the region is imminent as for the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees abroad living in makeshift sites the risk of a cholera epidemic and other menaces to public health and security have turned into a serious issue.
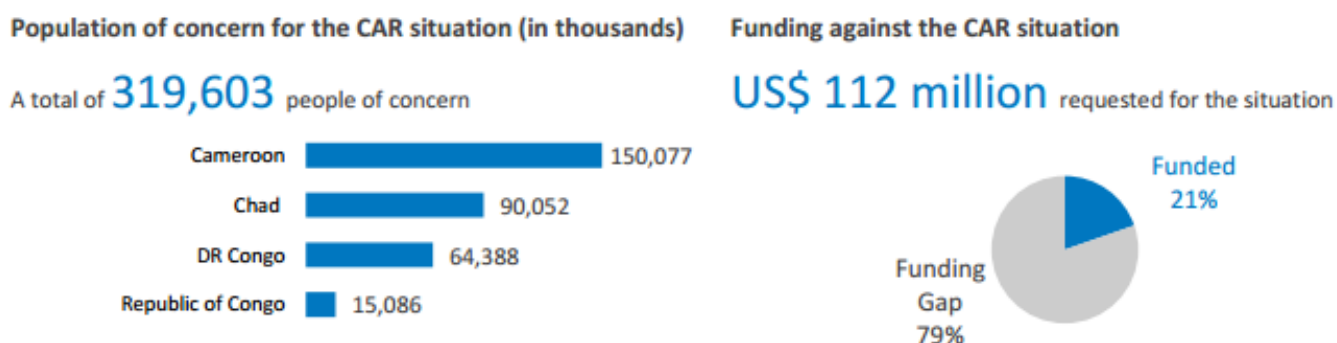
UNHCR Response
Recent Actions

The situation in the CAR situation has urged the High Commissioner to orchestrate the establishment of a relief operation in the region (Lejeune-Kaba, 2013). The mandate of the UNHCR is placed under the authority of the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) to provide international protection and to seek permanent solutions for the problem of refugees until the problem is solved (UNHCR, Note on the Mandate of the High Commissioner For Refugees and his Office, 2013). Until now the UNHCR has made efforts to mobilize available NGO resources in the region to ensure monitoring and protection by presence in communities at risk. (Kabani Kalumiya, Wendy Rappeport, Ulysses Grant, 2014) Especially *protection by presence*, that is the mere presence of NGOs, observers, or even peacekeeping forces for the UN mission MINUSCA, are reportedly having a major influence on the prevention of violence against vulnerable and targeted populations. After having been asked for assistance the UNHCR is coordinating evacuation efforts of threatened Muslim populations in Boda and other small Muslim enclaves by the Christian Anti-Balaka movement. In the neighboring countries Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of

Congo, and the Republic of Congo refugees are being pre-registered and partially transferred to different campsites. There are further coordination facilities established for the reunification of unaccompanied minors with their families or the organization of a place to stay. Child protection networks are being established in major camps and Camp Coordination and Camp Management trainings incorporate child protection measures into their training. (Kabani Kalumiya, Wendy Rappeport, Ulysses Grant, 2014). On a UNSC meeting on January 11, 2013, sexual violence has been decried to be a particularly vibrant issue of this conflict and it thus far failed to be met with the appropriate attention. Special UN Representative Zeinab Bangura reported: "Sexual violence must be included as part of the definition of the ceasefire; and sexual violence crimes should be monitored as part of the subsequent ceasefire monitoring arrangement or mechanism" (UNDPI, 2013). Needs Assessment for basic needs concerning health, education, food security and nutrition, water and sanitation, shelter is being conducted on a permanent basis in CAR, Cameroon, DRC, Republic of Congo. The UNHCR has drafted a total budget of US$112 million of which thus far only 21% has been made available by UN. Accordingly there is a still a funding gap of about US$83 million missing in order to keep the operation running and achieve its objectives.

One of the primary objectives of the UNHCR in the CAR crisis is to secure the necessary funding and to effect UN member states and private sector donors to help closing that gap and more specifically to effect those payments which have already been pledged and earmarked for the operation (ibid).

Population of concern for the CAR situation (in thousands)

A total of **319,603** people of concern

Cameroon	150,077
Chad	90,052
DR Congo	64,388
Republic of Congo	15,086

Funding against the CAR situation

US$ 112 million requested for the situation

Funded 21%

Funding Gap 79%

International Involvement

On January 28th 2014, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2134 deploying a contingent of UN Forces directed by France and the EU into the CAR to contain the violent clashes between Christian and Muslim groupings. (Central African Republic: UN Security Council approves EU Force intervention, 2014). In April the UNSC and EU countries announced to send in an extended peacekeeping force (MINUSCA) of 11,800 troops in September 2014 (International Crisis Group, 2014).

As can be seen in the graphic above, the most important destination countries for CAR refugees are by a large margin Cameroon (150,077), Chad (90,052), DR Congo (64,388) and the Republic of Congo (15,086). Migrations of such scale exert pressures on the neighboring countries' societies, as most refugees are often close of being destitute and cannot easily be absorbed by the local job-market.

Currently, the largest shares of CAR IDPs and refugees have settled around the CAR capital Bangui as well as in Cameroon, Chad, and the DR Congo (UNHCR, UNHCR operation in CAR - Fact Sheet, 2013), which have become important stakeholders in this situation as the absorption of large quantities of refugees in such a short time is a challenging process threatening with humanitarian crises and violent clashes spilling into their own countries, if the refugees are not received with the required preparation of housing, public and food security as well as care for health problems.

How to Prepare for this Committee

The Central African Republic's refugee crisis is a humanitarian catastrophe, which unlike its Syrian and Somali counterparts has remained largely under the radar of public interest in the world. Moreover, it is, as most missions of the UNHCR, in desperate need of funding as well as stabilizing support. CAR refugees in the neighboring countries are in need of decent shelter, food, and hygiene and healthcare. Whereas, they irrefutably exert pressures on the local employment, food and supplies markets, which cannot be borne by the receiving countries alone, it is crucial to advocate for the guaranteed right of the refugees of non-refoulement. What is needed is an internationally coordinated effort to steer the exodus of a half a million of refugees into safe havens while reducing their impact

on the societies of their host countries to a minimum without disrespecting human rights and segregating them from normal life.

Each delegation is required to write a short position paper of their government's position on the conflict. The questions that should be answered in it are:

1. What is the impact of the crisis on your own country? What is at stake? Are you a host nation to refugees? Does the crisis have an indirect impact because third countries/parties/people being of interest to your government are concerned?

2. If your country has been represented in the UN Security Council or any other relevant UN body that has addressed the Central African Republic's conflict, what has been its voting behavior? Did lead government representatives or politicians make public statements on the conflict?

3. Do you have committed funding, troops or any other kinds of aid to UNHCR or similar organizations earmarked on the solution of the refugee problem?

4. What other possible solutions would your country proposed to the problem, taking into account the security situation?

Further Reading

> **Addendum: The Collier Model on the nature of Civil wars**
>
> It is not implicated in the mandate of the UNHCR, nor is it expected to resolve ongoing conflicts representing the main cause for strong streams of refugees relocating from their homes to safer places within or beyond national borders. Notwithstanding, in the process of negotiations there should be a general understanding in the political and economic dynamics that influence the course of civil wars and the failure of states and ultimately influence the international community's efforts in easing the suffering of the concerned populations at hand. Knowledge in international relations, political sciences and economics therefore helps to understand conflicts and capacitates to strengthen the bargaining position of the country you represent in the Executive Committee of the UNHCR. Obviously conflict resolution has nowadays evolved from a subject of Political Sciences and International Relations into an own interdisciplinary field of research also encompassing

psychology, sociology and economic aspects of conflicts. In order to provide an impetus into your own research efforts in preparation for IsraMUN find below a synopsis into academic aspects of Civil Wars.

The economic causes of conflict and their implications for policy

According to Collier (2006) a central characteristic to intra-state conflicts is their economically motivated nature, which represents the foundation for all dynamics, which a conflict reaches over time. At some points he even goes as far as characterizing violent insurgencies as "large-scale predation of productive economic activities." (Collier, 2006, p. 3)

Colliers empirically based research suggests that rebellion as such is an economically highly costly enterprise and is only viable of the underlying organization is capable to sustain itself financially throughout the conflict. In consequence, the risk of a conflict to erupt and to persist depends on an array of three objective circumstances:

I: Strong macroeconomic dependence upon primary commodity exports,

II: Low average income

III: Slow economic growth

Among all possible resources, primary commodity exports are the most "lootable" of all economic activities. The reason for this is that primary commodity products heavily rely on assets that are long lasting and immobile (mines, coffee-plantations, oil-fields). It is relatively easy to exert physical control over long-lasting and immobile assets and this makes them very reliable sources of revenue, as long as control can be maintained on them (Collier, 2006).

The second characteristic of a low average income is an important aspect, because the government cannot extract significant amounts of income tax from its population. This makes primary commodity export the chief if not only noteworthy source of governmental revenue. If rebels seize control over primary commodity production and export they can deprive the government of its only stable source of income. In consequence, with the government's political and military resilience substantially weakened its auspices of success are a major incentive for rebels to opt for violent insurgency (Collier, 2006).

The third characteristic of slow economic growth is particularly salient if it is coinciding with a strong population growth as it is the case in many developing countries in the world. In this case the causes are of a micro-economic nature. In order to survive against an equipped and trained standing governmental army, rebellions need to recruit and grow very fast. The best situation this can be accomplished is when there are very little employment or education opportunities for young people (Collier, 2006).

Beside these three main factors there are several minor factors that can fuel intra state conflict, such as certain patterns of ethnic or religious diversity, historical legacies of conflict and powerful diasporas abroad. While extremely homogeneous and extremely diverse societies reveal a very low prevalence of conflict, societies in which the dominant group makes up between 45% to 90 % of the population, the frequency of conflicts increases dramatically. If a certain group makes up more than 45 % it is possible to control a democratically elected government with its demographic weight. If the dominant group uses this power to transfer resources from minority groups, conflicts become a logical consequence. If the dominant group makes up more than 90 %, such exploitation would become economically irrelevant because its gains might be swallowed up by the costs of the transfer system (Collier, 2006).

The reasons why Diasporas abroad are so dangerous for peace is that they are usually richer than their kin left in their country of origin and they can provide them with the resources to finance vengeance. To those living abroad, this support comes at a very low personal cost because they will not suffer from any of the consequences from the renewed conflict and fuelling the cycle of violence from a safe distance (Collier, 2006).

What governments and the international community can do in order to defuse intra-state conflicts is 1) make an effort to diversify the economy to as little dependency to primary commodities as possible, 2) establish economic policies which generate economic growth and use the revenue from primary commodity revenue to improve the infrastructure and social service situation for the population and 3) provide credible guarantees to minorities.

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