

SOCHUM STUDY GUIDE



Topic Area A- Examining Child Rights in Conflict Areas

"The global security landscape continued to change, one grim reality remained the same. children still paid the highest price in wartime. Young boys and girls were directly targeted, conscripted, tortured, maimed, imprisoned, starved, sexually abused and killed. "In places such as Iraq, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen, children suffer through a living hell," he said, adding that, in many cases, the situation was getting even worse. Thousands of Syrian children had been killed since the start of the conflict and in 2015 Afghanistan had recorded its highest rate of child casualties since 2009. In South Sudan, children continued to pay the heaviest price for leaders' failure to commit to peace. Twenty years after a ground-breaking report on the impact of armed conflict on children brought the issue into focus at the United Nations, young people in hotspots around the globe were still being tortured, maimed and killed, recruited by armed groups and exposed to numerous threats as a result of massive displacement, stressed delegates today as the Security Council held an open debate on the matter. Many of the more than 70 speakers noted that, despite limited progress – including the conclusion of a number of national action plans to end violations against children – many of the grim realities outlined in the 1996 Graça Machel report continued unabated or had even worsened in the face of a deteriorating global security landscape. "In places such as Iraq, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen, children suffer through a living hell," said United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon as he briefed the Council. Referring to the findings of his latest annual report on the issue (document S/2016/360), he said thousands of Syrian children had been killed since the start of the conflict, and in 2015, Afghanistan had recorded its highest rate of child casualties since 2009. In South Sudan, children continued to pay the heaviest price for leaders' failure to commit to peace. Noting that more than half of the world's refugees were children, he stressed the urgent need to address the root causes of displacement and for an effective response to the violent extremism that often targeted children. "Even wars have rules," he said in that regard, adding that hospitals and schools must be protected, civilians must be spared and children should not be used to fight. Leila Zerrougui, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, said many of the impacts of conflicts on young people could not be captured by statistics. Children lost parents, were disabled due to curable illnesses and suffered long-term psychological trauma. In April, in Iraq, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) had executed a 15-year-old by tying him between two cars that were driven in opposite directions. While States faced challenges in tackling violent extremism, security responses that did not comply with international law only inflicted further harm. Noting that more than 115,000 children associated with parties to conflict had been released as a result of dialogue and actions plans since the Secretary-General's first report, she nevertheless emphasized that considerable challenges remained. The ability to work together to untangle the most difficult situations would have a decisive impact on millions of children. Anthony Lake, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), agreed that preventing and ending the recruitment of children was not enough. The United Nations Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism mandated by Council resolution 1612 (2005) continued to help define the full scale of the crisis by providing vital information on the unspeakable atrocities facing children. Using that information, the international community must work with parties to conflict to prevent violations of children's rights and help shape programmes that could brighten their futures. In particular, he emphasized the need for focused action in three key areas: explosive weapons and remnants of war, health care, and education. "Our progress to date has shown that the children trapped by conflicts are not beyond our reach," he said. The representative of Malaysia, whose country holds the Council presidency for August, said that the international community had

developed a number of tools to protect children and give them a voice. While some heartening examples included the progress of the “Children, Not Soldiers” campaign and the deployment of child protection advisers in peacekeeping missions, he stressed that the children and armed conflict agenda must continue to be strengthened and enhanced, adding that “our work is far from over”. The representative of the United States, noting that Member States might not agree with everything pointed out in the Secretary-General’s report, stressed that they should nevertheless maintain their support for the United Nations work to protect children. This year’s report provided a “bleak but unsurprising” picture of the worsening situation of children affected by armed conflict, she said, noting in particular the massive recruitment of children by ISIL and the use of siege tactics in Syria by the Assad regime. While Syria is involved in alleged recruiting, torture and killing of children by ISIL and Al-Nusrah over the past five years, the suffering of children in refugee camps in countries neighbouring Syria, economic measures imposed on Syrian people and their children or the suffering of children in the occupied Syrian Golan is a main reason for violence against children in a conflict zone. The horror of child soldiers used as combatants by non-State armed groups in Sri Lanka are called the “Baby Brigade”, 50 per cent of its members were girls, many of them forcibly taken from their schools. However United Nations did delist Sri Lanka from Annex II of the Secretary-General’s report on child combatants in 2012 after its concentrated efforts to reintegrate child combatants when the conflict ended in May 2009. In a similar vein, many speakers welcomed the recent announcement by Colombia’s Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) group in which it had agreed to end child recruitment. Welcoming the move – which was part of the peace deal ending Colombia’s decades-long conflict – the representative of Colombia said the FARC had released around 6,000 children. Leila Zerrougui, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, said that, in 2015, armed groups and Government forces had killed, maimed, recruited, used and inflicted sexual violence upon tens of thousands of boys and girls, with more than 2,000 attacks on schools and hospitals documented in 19 of 20 situations in the report. There had been more than 4,000 abductions. Indeed, conflict had impacted children in ways not captured by the statistics: they lost parents, were disabled due to curable illnesses and suffered long-term psychological trauma. In April in Iraq, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da’esh) had executed a 15-year-old by tying him between two cars that were driven in opposite directions. While States faced challenges in tackling violent extremism, security responses that did not comply with international law only inflicted further harm. Airstrikes and explosive weapons’ use in populated areas by international coalitions or individual States had contributed to the highest number of documented child casualties. Moreover, terrorism legislation had been broadly applied in many situations without appropriate checks and balances. Children were being apprehended based on alleged links to non-State armed groups or on expansive interpretations of protecting national security. “Juvenile justice is inexistent,” she said, and children could be held for months – even years – by military or intelligence actors. Last month, she had met boys condemned to death in Somalia for an alleged association with Al-Shabaab. “This cannot be an acceptable outcome for children when they are rescued from armed groups,” she insisted, also decrying detention intended to use children for intelligence gathering. Beyond conflict zones, children were being displaced in increasing numbers and she urged more support for those conflict-affected States that hosted 90 per cent of the refugees. Anthony Lake, Executive Director of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), said that nearly 250 million children were living in countries and areas affected by war. Over 30 million had been displaced by conflict, and millions more had been scarred by violence, witnessing the worst of humanity. Millions of children were at terrible risk of attack on their schools and of trafficking, abduction and sexual violence. “We are not human if we are not outraged by all this,” he said. “Outrage and anger must be matched by action.” Turning to recent developments, he said that, in 2015 alone, nearly 10,000 girls and boys had been released from armed forces or groups, and 7,000

had undergone medical screening, received psychosocial support and counselling and had been reunited with their families. "All to get them back where they belong, with loved ones, in schools, in a safe place where they can begin to heal and build the futures they deserve," he said. Acknowledging Member States' action plans to prevent and end the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, he said that Governments were enacting relevant legislation and procedures. That included age-assessment protocols to keep children from entering the military in Myanmar, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Afghanistan, as well as legislation that criminalized child recruitment in countries where no such laws had existed before. Preventing and ending recruitment was not enough, the scale of violations against children demanded further efforts, he said. The United Nations Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism continued to help define the full scale of the crisis by providing vital information on the unspeakable atrocities they had experienced. Using that information, the international community must work with parties to conflict to prevent violations of children's rights and help shape programmes that could brighten their futures. That included focused action in three key areas: explosive weapons and remnants of war, health care and education. "Our progress to date has shown that the children trapped by conflicts are not beyond our reach," he said, stressing that the international community must help those young lives emerge from the shadows of war."

Today, more countries are involved in conflict than at any other time in the past three decades. Parties to conflicts "have been committing atrocities with near-total impunity, and it is only getting worse," he added. "Much more can and must be done to protect and assist children." A closer examination shows grave human rights abuses in countries at war, including using children as human shields, and recruiting them to fight – two of the six grave violations identified and condemned by the Security Council in 2005. Rape, forced marriage and abduction have become "standard tactics" in Syria, Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Myanmar, UNICEF has said, while the killing and maiming of children due to conflict has continued unabated. The Convention has 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child's life and set out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. It also explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights. Every child has rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status. The Convention must be seen as a whole, all the rights are linked and no right is more important than another. The right to relax and play (Article 31) and the right to freedom of expression (Article 13) have equal importance as the right to be safe from violence (Article 19) and the right to education (Article 28).

"The UNCRC is also the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world – it's even been accepted by non-state entities, such as the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), a rebel movement in South Sudan. All UN member states except for **the United States** have ratified the Convention. The Convention came into force in the UK in 1992. There are four articles in the convention that are seen as special. They're known as the "General Principles" and they help to interpret all the other articles and play a fundamental role in realising all the rights in the Convention for all children. They are:

- Non-discrimination (article 2)
- Best interest of the child (article 3)
- Right to life survival and development (article 6)
- Right to be heard (article 12)

The Convention also contains a number of agreements to add further unique rights for children which are optional for countries – they are called "Optional Protocols". They include:

- **The Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict**

This requires governments to increase the minimum age that children can join the armed forces from 15 years and to ensure that members of their armed forces under the age of 18 do not take a direct part in armed conflict.

- **The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography**

This provides detailed requirements for governments to end the sexual exploitation and abuse of children. It also protects children from being sold for non-sexual purposes, such as other forms of forced labour, illegal adoption and organ donation.

["https://www.crin.org/en/library/legal-database/optional-protocol-unconvention-rights-child-communications-procedure"](https://www.crin.org/en/library/legal-database/optional-protocol-unconvention-rights-child-communications-procedure)

["https://www.crin.org/en/library/legal-database/optional-protocol-un-convention-rights-childcommunications-procedure"](https://www.crin.org/en/library/legal-database/optional-protocol-un-convention-rights-childcommunications-procedure) Optional Protocol on a communications procedure

This allows children to submit a complaint to the United Nations when their rights have been violated and their own country's legal system were not able to offer a solution." "The brutalities routinely committed against children pose a profound challenge to international law. The international community has fashioned impressive instruments to uphold human rights and to prosecute the perpetrators of genocide. However, many countries and armed groups have ignored their responsibilities under these treaties with impunity. In examining global actions taken since 1996 to increase children's protection in armed conflict, this review considers a wide range of important issues. The following major and overarching themes cut across each of these issues.

Ending impunity for crimes against children: ending tolerance for war

Massive and gross violations against children continue unabated. Death, rape, mutilation, forced recruitment, displacement, injury and malnourishment are a few of the grave consequences. These atrocities must not be tolerated as either inevitable or acceptable side-effects of war. Those who wage, legitimise and support wars must be condemned. Impunity for war crimes against children must end.

National sovereignty must never shield those directly and indirectly responsible for committing such heinous crimes. National and international action must be taken to hold accountable all such perpetrators and those who support them.

Ensuring children's centrality to the peace and security agenda

The international community has, in recent years, bestowed unprecedented political legitimacy on the relevance of child rights to international peace and security. The political and operational mandates of peace making, peacekeeping and peace-building operations should always include special provisions to protect and assist children and women. Given the continuing expansion of regional and sub regional arrangements with respect to humanitarian and human rights concerns in armed conflict, continued and improved collaboration between these and the United Nations is recommended, with increased attention to child rights, protection and gender.

Improved monitoring and reporting on child rights violations in conflict

When the lives and fundamental rights of children are at stake, there must be no silent witnesses. Protecting human rights is a fundamental, yet overwhelmingly neglected aspect of peacemaking, peacebuilding and humanitarian operations. In conflict situations, increased resources and attention must be given to monitor, verify and report child rights and gender-based violations. To this end, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights should be strengthened to carry out these functions in all conflict situations. In addition, all UN bodies and international and national organisations with field presence should put in place proper channels to report human rights violations witnessed or serious allegations received.

The gender dimensions of conflict and peace-building

The lives of children are jeopardised when the lives of women are not protected and where their efforts and contributions to peace-building are under-reported, marginalized and undermined. Due in large part to the insufficient understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, political, policy and programme approaches continue to neglect attention to the gender dimensions. For these reasons, the gender dimensions of conflict must be better understood. Glaring gaps in the protection of women and girls must be addressed. Humanitarian and development assistance must be better targeted and women's role in peace-building must be supported."

"Adolescents: the greatest resource

Adolescents are at extreme risk during armed conflict. They are targets for recruitment into armed forces and armed groups, they are targets for sexual exploitation and abuse, and they are at great risk of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS. Although adolescents have been neglected in the delivery of health services, education, vocational training and life skills, they continue to be the greatest hope and the greatest resource in rebuilding war-affected communities. Their active participation in community-based relief, recovery and reconstruction programmes will strengthen and sustain these initiatives while increasing adolescents' sense of purpose, self-esteem and identity.

Children under siege from HIV/AIDS

Over the past five years, HIV/AIDS has become the single most powerful new factor compounding the dangers for children in a conflict. The chaotic and brutal circumstances of war aggravate all of the factors that fuel the HIV/AIDS pandemic. HIV/AIDS devastates children by leaving millions orphaned, by killing teachers, health workers and other public servants, and by straining community resources. HIV/AIDS has been recognised as a global threat to peace and security, and urgent solutions are needed to address the compounded effects of HIV/AIDS and armed conflict on children. Emergency humanitarian relief should support HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention, care and treatment while contributing to the establishment of longer-term national policies.

Improving information, data collection and analysis on children in conflict

Effective political, policy and program approaches for children in conflict cannot be put in place without accurate and timely information. While the 1996 Machel report collected base-line data and information on a range of important areas, no systematic approach has since been taken to analyse and collect gender and age disaggregated data in the range of areas relevant to war-affected children. UNICEF is called upon to convene all relevant bodies to devise and recommend a systematic approach to collecting, analysing and making available gender and age disaggregated data on children in conflict situations and to promote the mobilisation of the resources needed for this work.

Training and sensitisation on child rights and gender

The need for specialised training and sensitisation on the child and gender dimensions of conflict are highlighted throughout this review. At political, policy and operational levels, training and sensitisation is needed to ensure children's protection in conflict. Key issues include the gender and child rights aspects of protection, international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law. Current, ad hoc approaches to training have been limited in their impact. To move this agenda forward in a significant way, a plan of action needs to be put in place taking into account three main elements: coordination and cooperation of training initiatives among the United Nations, member States, regional organisations and NGOs; resource mobilisation; and quality, content and standardisation of training initiatives.

Supporting civil society, protecting children

National and international civil society groups play a fundamental role in preventing armed conflicts, protecting children and rebuilding societies in the aftermath of war. This review pays tribute to these important efforts. Special attention is called to the courageous work of national humanitarian personnel whose protection the international community has failed to guarantee, sometimes with fatal consequences. Special measures should be put in place to protect all those on the front lines who take grave risks to protect children and women in need.

Mobilising resources for war-affected children

The vast inconsistency in mobilising resources for war-affected children is one of the most brutal inequalities in the world today. Sierra Leone received less than \$20 per child in 1999 compared to \$216 per child in Kosovo. The shortfalls and disparities in humanitarian relief are repeated in the patterns of official development assistance so vital for post-conflict reconstruction. Appeals for war-affected children do not fit easily within the distinct, often rigid and compartmentalised funding guidelines. Donors are urged to put in place criteria to overcome the disparities in resource mobilisation for waraffected children across conflict situations and to reduce the institutional, budgetary and functional barriers between relief assistance, rehabilitation and development cooperation."

Significant progress has been made since the 1996 Report on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children was introduced. The collective energy and commitment of non-governmental organisations and other civil society groups, regional organizations, the United Nations and governments, has resulted in an impressive glossary of achievements, nationally and internationally. Children are now more central to the peace and security agenda. War crimes against children and women in conflict have been prosecuted and violations are now being documented and reported more systematically. International standards protecting children in conflict have been strengthened. Children are actively working to build peace in their communities. Efforts have been made to better target sanctions. And much more is known about the ways in which small arms and light weapons destroy children's lives. –The focus of humanitarian assistance – whether it's access to food, education, water, or land and housing -- is shifting inexorably towards meeting the rights and needs of children affected by armed conflict. In spite of this progress, the assaults against children continue. An estimated 300,000 children are still participating in armed combat. Children in 87 countries live amid the contamination of more than 60 million landmines. At least 20 million children have been uprooted from their homes. Girls and women continue to be marginalised from mainstream humanitarian assistance and protection. Humanitarian personnel continue to be targeted and killed. Millions of children are abandoned to cope with the multiple and compounded effects of armed conflict and HIV/AIDs. Hundreds of thousands of children continue to die from disease and malnutrition in flight from conflict or in camps for displaced persons. Small arms and light weapons continue to proliferate excessively. Millions of children are scarred, physically and psychologically. In tolerating this scourge of war against children we ourselves become complicit. Power and greed can never be an excuse for sacrificing children. No one -- not the United Nations, not regional organisations, not governments, nor civil society groups –has moved quickly enough or done enough. The international community, in all of its manifestations, must adopt a new sense of urgency. The Security Council must lead the international community with speed to embrace the recommendations in this review and to prevail against Impunity for crimes committed against children. Children's protection should not have to be negotiated. Those who wage, legitimise and support wars must be condemned and held to account. Children must be cherished, nurtured and spared the pernicious effects of war. Children can't afford to wait."

NOTE

IT IS MANDATORY TO READ THE ENTIRE REPORT TITLED

The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children, A Critical Review Of Progress Made And Obstacles Encountered In Increasing Protection For War-Affected Children

By Graça Machel

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WAR-AFFECTED CHILDREN, September 2000

Winnipeg, Canada

Topic Area B: Refugee Displacement from Climate Change and Natural Disasters

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), people may only claim refugee status if they meet the definition of a refugee set by the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. This Convention states that a refugee is a person who has a "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it."

BACKGROUND

In a statement addressed to the United Nations Security Council in 2011, former High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres called climate change "the defining challenge of our times." Guterres continued to explain that climate change "interacts with and reinforces the other global megatrends such as population growth, urbanization, and growing food, water and energy insecurity. It is a challenge which is adding to the scale and complexity of human displacement, and a challenge that has important implications for the maintenance of international peace and security. "Since the 1970s, the likelihood of displacement due to natural disasters has doubled, between 2008 and 2015, a total of 203.4 million people were displaced by natural disasters. Climate change affects the entire global community, and recent figures predict that there will be two billion climate refugees by the end of the century. Those affected most directly by climate change risk loss of social and cultural identity linked to their home, and are increasingly vulnerable to human rights abuses in their transitions. A majority of refugees rely on their environments for the basic resources which they need to survive. High concentrations of people can put pressure on already limited resources and can even induce conflict over resource access. While displaced people are protected by national laws and international human rights frameworks, including the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, there is little legal precedent relating to disasters and climate change. In most cases, these people do not qualify as refugees under international refugee law and human rights law do not address critical issues such as their admission, stay, and basic rights. A disparity in classification or inadequate criteria to distinguish between forced and voluntary movements in the context of disasters and climate change leaves thousands displaced and without classification under refugee status, withholding vital resources and allocations from those who may benefit greatly from them. SOCHUM has a unique opportunity to address this issue through a humanitarian lens, absorbing the wealth of information available on global climate patterns to better equip the global community to support those affected most by climate change.

Description of the Issue Healthcare:

As the effects of climate change are felt around the world, the health concerns of climate refugees also resemble problems that other refugees experience during the beginning stages of movement. People displaced by climate change often end up relocating to areas with poor health infrastructure.

Many of the risks revolve around limited food, water, and housing in addition to poor access to healthcare facilities. For example, climate change places strain on the health of migrants by potentially exposing them to contaminated food and water.



Migrants may be unable to travel due to their health conditions and must either remain in a vulnerable region or relocate to locations that provide other challenges. Further, people displaced by climate related processes and events often have few health care choices due to loss of habitable land, extreme health risks, and deteriorating economic systems. Although understanding the intersection between health, migration, and the environment is crucial, few scientific studies have been carried out to understand the impact that climate change can have on physical well-being. The 2015 Lancet Commission on Health and Climate Change outlines different issues that serve as a starting point for these topics. One observation has to do with broader health risks such as injuries and diseases resulting from extreme weather events such as storms, floods, and drought. Second, there could be more underlying effects coming from differences in water safety, pollution, and other changes to land, which can lead to a host in Refugee Camps and Settlements," Unite for Sight, accessed 7 July 2018, of health problems ranging from cardiovascular issues to the spread of disease. Finally, the Commission highlights that all of this will impact different populations disproportionately, particularly depending on the age, sex, preceding health, and material means of a person. Because of all the potential issues that arise when climate change is involved, migration tends to be the only route for survival for many individuals. Due to a refugee's limited access to resources, it can be more difficult to gauge their physical or mental health status. Refugee mortality rates are particularly high upon arrival in a new country, due to the strenuous physical circumstances many brave to flee their country of origin. Most deaths come from complications of diarrheal diseases, measles, and malnutrition, along with other highly infectious diseases. Climate change 'will create world's biggest refugee crisis' In the days following the disaster, water and food borne disease crises, as well as diseases from overcrowding and vector-induced illnesses, were all common. Women are more

affected by health complications due to climate change and more commonly migrate as a result of climate change. Refugee populations as a whole are especially vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections (STIs), cases like the Indian Ocean earthquake show that STIs spread much more rapidly in compacted and confined refugee camps. Disaster relief and urgent healthcare options will be crucial as climate change creates more extreme weather patterns that threaten human populations. Therefore, delegates should aim to establish humanitarian solutions which improve human health as well as track and monitor health risks and outbreaks. In addition to physical health risks, UNHCR has documented elevated rates of mental health problems in refugee populations and displaced people in a study conducted in 2012. Poor mental health is attributable to the trauma caused by displacement. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety are commonly higher than average in refugee populations, and there are social and relational challenges which result from resettling in an unfamiliar environment and culture. Refugees can face problems ranging from separation from loved ones to discrimination in the home country, which places large amounts of stress on their mental health. As climate change causes more disasters, and sometimes the disappearance of territories that once were inhabitable, unbearable living conditions will continue to force whole populations to relocate permanently, which will cause more consistent culture shock and



general mental stress for these individuals. Refugee Displacement from Climate Change and Natural Disasters History and Description of the Issue Iraq, another refugee camp, was built on unused desert land. Extreme seasonal temperatures and blowing desert sands are conditions that trouble both camps, threatening loss of food and water sources communities may rely on. Security experts warn that an increasingly drier climate in the Middle East and similar regions will lead to environmental stress. The Arab world continues to face longer period of drought and around 68.4% of the region's climate is chronically dry. Combined with poor management practices and land-depleting agricultural techniques, the Middle East and other surrounding areas are left in critical condition. Furthermore, countries like Iraq have lost many plots of usable farmland to outlying problems like war and conflict, leaving the situation even more dire. The impacts of water scarcity on food security can force people

to migrate to countries with more adequate water resources. In specific areas, and particularly those with economic systems where agriculture and fisheries are the main production, a change in availability and access to water and related refugee-crisiswater- shortage- ecosystem resource directly affects wellbeing and the need for migration. Ecosystems that are very reliant on water are more susceptible to drought. The effects of this can be seen in crises such as 2011 in the Horn of Africa, where drought can limit food accessibility and eventually caused whole communities to migrate in search of better resources. Because many countries with large rural populations run as agrarian societies, any changes in water supply can lead to unemployment. Income also becomes less stable as a result and as a result, compromise the strength of households living at risk or in poverty that do not have the means to keep up with the rising prices of basic necessities while simultaneously receiving lower incomes. These economic impacts come as a result of the changing climate and disaster effects on agriculture, forcing individuals into unfamiliar areas. Since the early weeks of June 2018, people in the south-western cities of Iran have been suffering due to low water quality. The government decided to ban farmers from growing crops like rice and okra, even though the latter does not need an excessive amount of water. Low water levels in Iran stem from a changing climate as well as issues with the management and rationing of water supplies. The country has been redirecting water from the southwestern region to populations living in central Iran, leading to the depletion of water sources as rainfall becomes more scarce. This transfer of water has forced communities from more rural regions to seek access in large cities, further straining the country's water management. Tens of millions of people will be forced from their homes by climate change in the next decade, creating the biggest refugee crisis the world has ever seen, according to a new report. Senior US military and security experts have told the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) study that the number of climate refugees will dwarf those that have fled the Syrian conflict, bringing huge challenges to Europe.

"If Europe thinks they have a problem with migration today ... wait 20 years," said retired US military corps brigadier general Stephen Cheney. "See what happens when climate change drives people out of Africa – the Sahel [sub-Saharan area] especially – and we're talking now not just one or two million, but 10 or 20 [million]. They are not going to south Africa, they are going across the Mediterranean. "Sir David King, the former chief scientific adviser to the UK government, told the EJF. "What we are talking about here is an existential threat to our civilisation in the longer term. In the short term, it carries all sorts risks as well and it requires a human response on a scale that has never been achieved before. "The report argues that climate change played a part in the build up to the Syrian war, with successive droughts causing 1.5 million people to migrate to the country's cities between 2006 and 2011. Many of these people then had no reliable access to food, water or jobs. "Climate change is the the unpredictable ingredient that, when added to existing social, economic and political tensions, has the potential to ignite violence and conflict with disastrous consequences," said EJF executive director, Steve Trent.

"In our rapidly changing world climate change – and its potential to trigger both violent conflict and mass migration – needs to be considered as an urgent priority for policymakers and business leaders alike. "Although the report highlights to growing impact of climate change on people in the Middle East and Africa, it says changing weather patterns – like the hurricanes that devastated parts of the US this year – prove richer nations are not immune from climate change. But Trent said that although climate change undoubtedly posed an "existential threat to our world" it was not too late to take decisive action.

"By taking strong ambitious steps now to phase out greenhouse gas emissions and building an international legal mechanism to protect climate refugees we will protect the poorest and most vulnerable in our global society, build resilience, reap massive economic benefits and build a safe

and secure future for our planet. Climate change will not wait. Neither can we. For climate refugees, tomorrow is too late."

Description of the Issue face challenges at refugee camps.

where they are more distant from the markets where they sell their crops. Recently, South and East Asia have been identified as areas prone to high human vulnerability due to climate change and as a drought risk hotspot. Countries surrounding the Ganges River Basin like Bangladesh and India rely on monsoons for consistent water supply. Changes in weather patterns as a result of climate change will affect the frequency and consistency of monsoons, leading to unpredictable amounts of rainfall. Oppositely, snow from the Himalayas will melt more during the dry season than in the past, resulting in more runoff. Most surrounding countries have economies rooted in agriculture and will suffer from sporadic flooding and droughts. Threats to International Peace and Security Military leaders warn that global warming could increase security threats around the world by provoking conflicts and migration. Chairman of the Global Military Advisory Council on Climate Change, Gen Munir Muniruzzaman, stated that climate change was "the greatest security threat of the 21st century." This former member of the Bangladeshi government emphasized that just a meter rise in sea level would equate to 20% of his country flooding, which could displace tens of millions of people. Change, Displacement and Security in the Lake Chad Basin," about how receding water levels as a result of climate change could create space for a base for the extremist group Boko Haram. This group has been associated with a number of terrorist attacks around Nigeria and has focused primarily on garnering support against education for girls. Multiple African leaders have sought to understand the underlying causes of the ideologies underpinning Boko Haram, and they claim that poverty, underdevelopment, and job insecurity have allowed for successful recruitment. Whatever the motivations behind sponsorship of the group, many in the international community are endangered by the actions of the group, and further sacrifice comfort and inalienable human rights in distancing themselves from such. On an international scale, the Security Council has recognized the "adverse effects of climate change and the ecological changes among other factors on the stability of the region, including through water scarcity, drought, desertification, land degradation, and food insecurity" as factors exacerbating the conflict in West Africa. They have further called on countries to support the climate A refugee camp that is helping people that have been displaced in Rakhine State.

Climate change and indigenous peoples

"I am convinced that climate change, and what we do about it, will define us, our era, and ultimately the global legacy we leave for future generations. Today, the time for doubt has passed." Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, 24 September 2007. As the plight of indigenous peoples and the role they may play in combating climate change are rarely considered in public discourses on climate change, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, through its Secretariat and its upcoming seventh session, is well placed to support indigenous peoples in putting a "human face" on this issue. The special theme for the session, which runs from 21 April to 2 May 2008 in New York, is "Climate change, bio-cultural diversity and livelihoods: the stewardship role of indigenous peoples and new challenges". Responding to climate change Climate change poses threats and dangers to the survival of indigenous communities worldwide, even though indigenous peoples contribute little to greenhouse emissions. In fact, indigenous peoples are vital to, and active in, the many ecosystems that inhabit their lands and territories, and may therefore help enhance the resilience of these ecosystems. In addition, indigenous peoples interpret and react to the impacts of climate change in creative ways, drawing on traditional knowledge and other technologies to find solutions which may help society at large to cope with impending changes. Examples include: In Bangladesh, villagers are creating floating vegetable gardens to protect their livelihoods from flooding, while in Vietnam,

communities are helping to plant dense mangroves along the coast to diffuse tropical-storm waves. Indigenous peoples in the Central, South

American and Caribbean regions are shifting their agricultural activities and their settlements to new locations which are less susceptible to adverse climate conditions. For example, indigenous peoples in Guyana are moving from their savannah homes to forest areas during droughts and have started planting cassava, their main staple crop, on moist floodplains which are normally too wet for other crops. In North America, some indigenous groups are striving to cope with climate change by focusing on the economic opportunities that it may create. For example, the increased demand for renewable energy using wind and solar power could make tribal lands an important resource for such energy, replacing fossil fuel-derived energy and limiting greenhouse gas emissions. The Great Plains could provide a tremendous wind resource and its development could help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as well as alleviate the management problem of the Missouri River hydropower, helping to maintain water levels for power generation, navigation, and recreation. In addition, there may be opportunities for carbon sequestration.

Description of the Issue resilience action plans in order to build up stability amongst societies

States have taken numerous approaches to this call to action, including Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan. Over time, climate change has damaged the environment in Ontario through natural disasters such as flooding and drought that have damaged infrastructure and caused internal displacement. Although Ontario's economy is not fully reliant on agriculture, the Canadian province has had to work overtime to create an action plan that mitigates pollution and improves the low-carbon economy. The Lake Chad Climate resilience action plan emphasizes the need for sponsored development and security, rather than complacency with the detrimental effects of a changing global climate and threatening local actors. However, the current situation is defined by fragility and longstanding conflict that leaves any persons residing in this region at risk of violence, malnutrition, and many other threats. Each of these risks is directly tied to the mandate of the Social, Cultural and Humanitarian committee because of the threat they present to the basic human rights guaranteed to all, and the social conditions required to maintain such. The intersection of violence and climate change has forced many to flee from conflict zones, putting additional strain on limited food, shelter, habitable land, and health and sanitation services. Desertification and severe weather fluctuations such as dry seasons and flooding have extreme impacts on a specific population. In Cameroon, Chad, and Niger combined, there are roughly 473,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and over 226,000 refugees; there are an additional millions more IDPs in Nigeria. The violence of Boko Haram caused much of the initial displacement, but climate exacerbated food insecurity and malnutrition have further heightened tensions by threatening natural resources, viable land for agriculture and housing, and the safety and security of thousands of global citizens. Despite international and inter-regional efforts, 4.5 million people lack proper access to food and as a result rely on external assistance. Deteriorating security situations and inconsistency in socioeconomic status only further deteriorate the stability of those living in poverty and difficult climates which put climate refugees in risky situations.

Urbanization and Population Growth Overpopulation

puts a strain on the available space and resources for people to live, therefore forcing people to reside in climate and disaster vulnerable areas. This can lead to substandard buildings that are not properly regulated and susceptible to adverse climate impacts. In many cities in the developing world, the poor live in the most hazardous urban environments, such as on floodplains or other areas at high risk of flooding or unstable slopes. **Overpopulation** is a growing and developing issue, as technological advancements help to increase medical capacity, lower mortality rates, and higher birth rates.

Depending on the topography of the region, cities can be affected in different ways. Developing coastal cities must pay critical attention to indications sea-level rise and subsequent erosion that could force whole populations to migrate. Compact buildings, roads, and other forms of infrastructure are less absorbent than in rural areas, creating an environment at risk of flooding. Urban centers and communities with dense spots of population are disproportionately affected by flooding, and face great risk concerning other natural disasters. Not only are natural hazards becoming more frequent, but rapid urbanization and population growth mean more people. Disasters affect five times as many people now than a few decades before because of these risks. Megacities like Tokyo, which is prone to earthquakes because of its location, or exposed hubs like Shanghai that dot the coast, are at particular risk. In large cities such as Mumbai, Cairo, Mexico City, and Lagos with over ten million residents, the depletion of infrastructure and land put many more people at risk within large cities. Many believe that rapidly urbanizing areas will take the hardest hit, especially because so many countries have large cities on the coast. A study was conducted on Dhaka, Bangladesh to test this theory and to determine local preparedness; it concluded that the population has only "a modest level of resilience." In response, Dhaka's city management and local governance has attempted to build Fast urbanization in Dhaka, Bangladesh causes the city to be known for its traffic jams, to the point at which population growth cannot be accommodated for in terms of infrastructure.

Description of the Issue up institutional capacity and maximize risk reduction

Additionally, the World Bank has taken note of the particularly dangerous position that most coastal states are in, with regards to the possibility of heavy floods as a result of storms and cyclones. Disasters only continue to be made worse by overall poverty in the region and the displacement it causes puts vulnerable urban populations at further risk. Those implicated by the detriments of a natural disaster face obstacles concerning community reestablishment, economic independence following a crisis, and social structures uprooted in the wake of a disaster coastal regions. The entire populations of low-lying countries such as the Maldives, Tuvalu, Kiribati and the Marshall Islands could be forced to leave their own country as a result of climate change that causes sea levels to rise in the future. If any of these states were to lose territory in the wake of climate change, there stands the risk of stateless imposed on the country's entire population. This should be of grave concern for delegates, as statelessness threatens social liberties required of a functioning modern society. Delegates should consider the ways to account for the personal safety of refugees and provide them with opportunities to thrive and provide for themselves. First order losses in the Pacific are caused by the immediate impact of a disaster, such as stunted agricultural activity due to damaged farmland.



Description of the Issue of climate as whole

The most relevant concerns in the Pacific are increases in temperatures and extremely hot days changes in frequency and intensity of extreme rainfall events, corresponding flash floods or droughts

changes in the frequency, intensity, and trajectories of tropical cyclones, as well as rising sea level and the degradation of marine environments. Cyclones are also a serious threat to the Pacific and predictions suggest a global increase in the damage and displacement due to cyclones. Countries and regions that are unaccustomed to cyclones and are less prepared to respond to them experience the highest rates of mortality, morbidity, and damages. Quality of life is undoubtedly disrupted by the natural disaster risks, and the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized people are those who require the most care and protection. Pacific island states are often used as indicators for the early impacts of climate change. In addition to their location in the Pacific, the geographic characteristics and demographic patterns of these states make them particularly vulnerable to the effects of global warming. The livelihood of citizens in these regions linked to the Pacific Ocean, and rising sea levels and other effects of global warming threaten not only their physical assets and coastal zones, but also their way of life. The impact of climate change and natural disasters causes many islanders to migrate, making them climate refugees. However, these refugees are not legally recognized as such, given that they are not fleeing persecution or conflict. At a regional workshop in Fiji, participants examined and reflected on the implications of natural disasters on the region. The meeting focused particularly on the impact of natural disasters and climate change on the people in the Pacific, the risks of their displacement, and on the guarantee of sustained human rights. The workshop drew attention to the complex linkages between human rights, climate change, natural disasters, migration and involuntary population resettlement, and pointed to the insufficiency of social science research able to help outline which future approaches should be developed.

Case Study: Sudan
Natural disasters such as droughts and flooding have occurred frequently in Sudan, contributing significantly to population displacement and the underdevelopment of the country. Conflict in Sudan is a direct result of desertification, and there are strong indications that desertification is one of the underlying causes of the current war in Darfur. The increased temperatures and desertification have caused Sudan to suffer from a shortage of fresh water. In addition, water distribution is extremely unequal with major regional, seasonal, and annual variations. The two predominant types of floods in the region are flash floods and widespread floods caused by overflow of the Nile and its tributaries. Sudan has one of the world's largest populations of IDPs, with almost two million IDPs in Darfur, and those displaced in Sudan face additional risks as a result of being situated in an area of the world experiencing drought and food insecurity. Conflict, displacement, and food insecurity are some of the most pressing issues facing Sudan and are the primary reasons for the current international humanitarian aid effort. Natural and manmade disasters such as drought, desertification, and floods are major contributing causes to these problems. Addressing these issues will require natural resources management and protection for equal distribution and provisions for the refugees. Assistance by the international community is also needed as a part of the shift from humanitarian relief to sustainable development assistance.¹²² Darfur refugee children displaced from their homes.

UN CASE STUDY FOR –

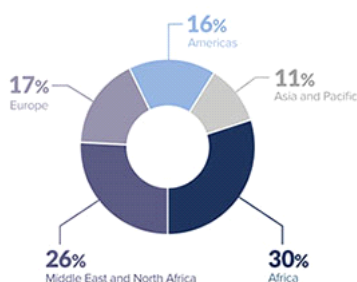
Refugee Displacement from Climate Change and Natural Disasters Current Status

Current Status

Stateless Persons UNHCR indicates that 68.5 million individuals were forcibly displaced in 2018, with 40 million people around the world classified as internally displaced. These figures, however, do not include stateless persons and climate refugees. A stateless person is not considered a citizen by any state under the operation of its law. It is currently estimated that there are at least eleven million stateless people in the world, and many more are unable to prove their nationality through appropriate documentation or registration. Stateless people are forced into temporary or illegal places or in places that are geographically vulnerable to environmental impacts. These groups are susceptible to both environmental displacement and development-induced displacement because

of their weak legal standing and the ease with which they can be removed without compensation or support. Additionally, they risk illness, injury, prosecution and abuse by fleeing their country of origin, and climate refugees sacrifice the comforts and guaranteed human rights of home for a better, more sustainable future. The international community has attempted to address the humanitarian options for the recognition and protection of stateless persons through birth registration programs and training for lawyers on arbitrary detention. The birth registrations process tends to be complex and lengthy, involving a birth notification issue by hospitals, the recording of the birth in a State's civil registry and the issuance of official birth certificates. Under international law, every child has the right to be registered at birth, and it is a state's duty to register all births that occur in their territory. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child both require states to register people immediately after birth and without discrimination of any kind, regardless of the child's or parents' legal status. This process usually involves paying fees, which proves to be an obstacle for many, and a lack of awareness regarding the significance of birth registration contributes to the high volume of stateless people. The number and severity of extreme weather events such as storms and flooding is expected to increase with an adjacent loss of freshwater and arable land due to contamination. Additionally, erosion is expected to cause destruction of economic bases while rising sea levels threaten fishing grounds. The impact of stateless persons that are affected by the environment is most prevalent for countries within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The ASEAN member countries currently hold the largest volume of stateless people and their role in providing assistance to stateless persons became evident following the cyclone Margins flooding in Myanmar. All ASEAN member countries provided disaster relief materials to the cyclone-affected areas based on the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER). Additionally, an ASEAN Emergency Rapid Assessment Team was deployed, comprising government officials, disaster experts, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) from the member countries. No international agency, including the United Nations, that works with refugees or climate change recognizes any particular definition of refugees displaced due to climate factors. The Refugee Convention states that people must be fleeing persecution for reasons of "race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion," in order to gain refugee status.

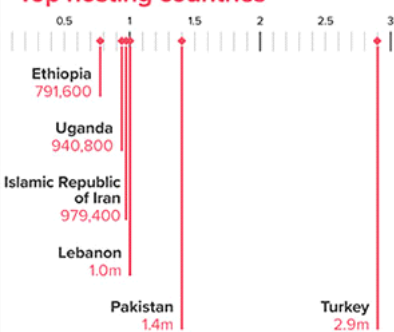
Where the world's displaced people are being hosted



55% of refugees worldwide came from three countries



Top hosting countries



The impacts of climate change are not included on that list, so even if someone may fit the classifications of a climate refugee, they would not be afforded the same rights as other refugees. The term "climate refugee" suggests that people who fit the definition should be entitled to refugee status. Since 2008, approximately 26 million people have been displaced each year due to natural disasters, but this figure does not take into account people displaced by slower catastrophes, like progressive drought and rising sea levels. Fiji counted 55,000 displaced people in 2015, and a fifth of the country's crops this year were destroyed by cyclone Winston in 2017. This is not an isolated case. In South Asia, flooding caused by monsoons has killed thousands of people and displaced two million more. Countries in this bloc will primarily be from Africa, South America, and some regions in Asia.

Although these states have a minimal impact on the deteriorating climate, they will experience the effects of climate change more than most countries. Countries such as Sudan, Gabon, and Haiti are likely to be in this bloc. Additionally, many countries in the EU, which only account for a small portion of emissions, will be present within this bloc. Countries Experiencing Minimal Impacts of Climate Change Basic human needs such as food, water, health, and shelter are affected by climate.¹⁷⁴ Changes in climate may threaten these needs with increased temperatures, rising sea levels, changes in precipitation, and more frequent or intense extreme events.¹⁷⁵ Although climate change is an inherently global issue, the impacts will not be felt equally across borders. Some states will likely experience more adverse effects than others, while some states may even benefit inadvertently from climate changes through economic opportunity or resource allocation.¹⁷⁶ The capacity to adapt to climate change can influence how climate change affects individuals, communities, countries, and the global population. The countries in this bloc typically will not experience the major effects of climate change. These States will primarily be developed countries that are not experiencing mass displacement due to natural disasters and climate change. As many of the states within this bloc are relatively developed, members should consider relative contributions of national resources and funds when addressing climate migration. The countries in this bloc will have a significant impact on a deteriorating climate, but do not feel the effects as strongly as less developed countries because of levels of development and outsourcing of work/labor not suitable for local climates. Countries such as the United States, China, India, and Russia will likely be in this bloc. Countries with Displaced Populations due to Climate Change Countries threatened by the climate change may face the reality of citizen relocation plans should the event of a natural disaster or emergency endanger their regional safety. While it is never the intention of a state to relocate large populations in the wake of an emergency, many have devised plans should such measures be necessary. Countries who may supply a significant number of these climate refugees may consider such preparative measures, but in the context of committee discussion will be primarily concerned with the standardization of expectations for treatment and human rights upholding following the wake of such events. In drafting such, delegates should be aware of past language on the topics of refugee treatment and universal rights, as well as procedure for international action when implementing such works. Policy of this bloc will be determined by geographic location of the state (especially when considering possible relocation efforts), economic ability of a state to sponsor international aid efforts, and the status of human rights and their prominence in the state itself. Small island developing states will be party to this bloc, as will many coastal-bordered states and those in danger of environmental destruction. Those states willing to take in any number of individuals displaced by the effects of a changing climate will likely adopt a policy of transparency and accountability when drafting language on the issue at hand. Clearly defining expectations regarding duration of stay, personnel requirements and resource allocation is key when discussing the prospect of population relocation, and delegates of SOCHUM must be sure to consider each of these logistic aspects when discussing possible solutions. Countries who have historically opened their borders to refugees would likely constitute this bloc, as well as states with close ties to any endangered region. It is also important to consider the hesitancy of some states to allow in such populations, and international attitudes towards refugees when considering relocation in the event on an environmental crisis. While contesters must consider how the social, humanitarian, and cultural impacts shape the issue in the various climate hotspots around the globe. Delegates must analyze current climate conditions and the impact that these have on the various countries in the different regions of the world. Climate refugees currently lack any formal definition, recognition, or protection under international law, even as the scope of their predicament becomes increasingly clear. That difficulty was apparent in June 2018, during the latest round of negotiations on the Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, due to be adopted at the U.N. General Assembly in the Fall of 2018 that would follow up for coming years.