

GAPLEN

Georgia Tech Model of United Nations

Committee
General Assembly Plenary



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technology
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#GTMUN2024



Letter from the Secretary General

Dear esteemed delegates,

Welcome to the twentyfifth edition of the Georgia Model of United Nations. I am incredibly excited to be your Secretary General for GTMUN 2024!

My first Model UN conference was GTMUN, six years ago, and it's given me a joy and passion for diplomacy that has lasted since. This year, the secretariat team has worked extraordinarily hard for months to assemble an incredible array of committees and topics to test your abilities and push you to grow as a delegate and as a future leader. As a person who was in your position six years ago, reading the GTMUN background guides, I know how it feels to prepare for a committee. Though this resource is invaluable, I encourage you to go beyond in terms of studying about your topic(s) and your country's diplomatic position. I firmly believe that the greatest moments in Model UN happen when you have resiliently prepared through different resources to bring your member state's view into the committee. It is a sincere hope of mine that you enjoy the conference, and take the fullest advantage of what GTMUN has to offer, from public speaking skills, to critical thinking and policy creation. It is opportunities like these when you can connect with fellow, like-minded delegates to bring ideas into the table and construct the progress that people across the globe need, and that only the United Nations can deliver.

GTMUN is an amazing chance to brainstorm to solve current issues creatively and practicing being the leader of tomorrow. I wish you the best in preparing for and participating at the upcoming conference!



GTMUN XXV Secretary General
Jonah Isaza





Introduction to the Committee

The United Nations General Assembly Plenary (GA Plen) is the primary policy making body of the United Nations, embodying the principle of international collaboration and fostering discourse between countries of varying levels of development. Comprising all 193 member states, GA Plen facilitates the discussion of issues ranging from international law and economic development to humanitarian aid and disaster relief.¹ Under the guiding principles outlined in the UN Charter, GA Plen provides a platform for member states to collaborate on solutions to global problems, including the increasingly urgent matter of displaced persons.

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Disclaimer

While there are many ongoing humanitarian and cultural conflicts that do have merit to the discussion of topics within this committee, these issues –regardless of position on the matter— are a sensitive matter and should be treated as such. Delegates should represent the nation that they have been assigned, whilst ensuring that they act in accordance with the GTMUN XXV delegate handbook, the values of the GTMUN program and Georgia Tech as a whole. We ask that when collaborating with the other delegates in this room that you are respectful of their personal experiences and beliefs and focus on creating productive, meaningful and constructive debate.

Position Papers

A position paper is a document which expresses a member state's policy or position regarding the topic(s) that will be discussed in the committee. It can also help as a forefront to ideas, perspectives, solutions, or approaches that a delegate expects to prioritize in committee. It is recommended that a position paper includes the following: **a) member state's view on the topic(s), b) information on how the nation has addressed (or not) the issue in the past, c) proposed solutions based on research and policy.**

Sample Position Paper

The United Mexican States

Committee: Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Topic Area: Heroin Trafficking

"My sole ambition is to rid Mexico of the class that has oppressed her and giving the people a chance to know what real liberty means. And if I could bring that about today by giving up my life, I would do it gladly"

Although "El Centauro del Norte" spoke these words during the Mexican Revolution more than a century ago, the Mexican people are far from knowing the meaning of "real liberty". Mexico is suffering the consequences of being a key player and a large contributor in a growing illicit drug market, which each year seems to be more diversified and more difficult to trace. Mexico's protagonic and problematic stance provoked former president, Felipe Calderón, to declare open a new theater of the War against Drugs in 2006, as a strategy to counter the violence of the cartels. The low-intensity conflict has left a toll of more than 150.000 deaths and 23.000 disappearances. These painful numbers have placed Mexico as the second most dangerous country in the world.

Currently, drug trafficking and organized crime industry in Mexico is like energy: it is not destroyed, but transformed from one form to another, since each cartel dismantled by the Mexican Government gives way to more small and irrepressible groups. The strategy of the war on drugs, which was based on punctual operations to eliminate the highest branches of the cartels, has not had the desired results.

Mexico recognizes that instead of addressing the problem by the branches, we must change our strategy and attack it from its roots. The first step is understanding that fiercely repressing the violence of the cartels only results in the bloodshed and loss of precious lives of innocent citizens. We invite fellow representatives to consider our modern history, experiences and learnings as a reference.

The United Mexican States notes the necessity to promote the enhancement of international cooperation and exchange of information with the purpose of strengthening the common front in the face of transnational organized crime. For this reason, we must take the responsibility of attending and repairing the social damage of vulnerable communities that are bonded with illicit drug markets. Furthermore, we must develop integral prevention programs against violence, exclusion and weakening of the social tissue, aiming towards the most vulnerable demographics.

TOPIC 1

Addressing the hosting burden created by the global rise of displaced persons



Key Terms and Acronyms

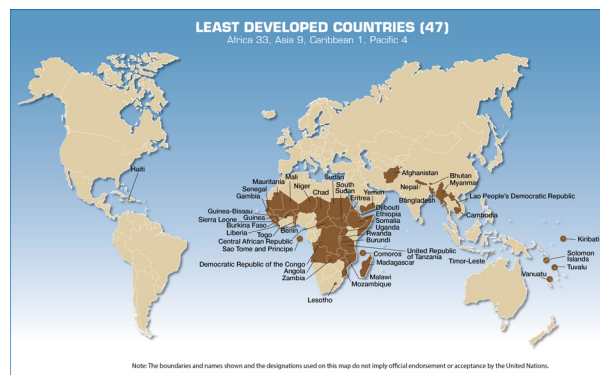
Refugees	<i>Individuals who have fled their home country due to a fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, political opinion.²</i>
Asylum Seekers	<i>People seeking international protection from dangers in their home country, but whose claim for refugee status hasn't been determined legally.³</i>
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)	<i>Individuals forced to leave their homes due to conflict, violence, human rights violations, natural hazards, or other crises within the borders of their country.⁴</i>
Host countries	<i>Countries that receive large numbers of refugees</i>
LDC	<i>Least Developed Countries; low income countries that often host a disproportionate share of refugees and IDPs</i>
UNHCR	<i>Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</i>

Introduction

Escalating conflicts, persecution, and natural disasters are defining elements of our current global landscape. As a result, the world is witnessing an unprecedented rise in the number of individuals fleeing their homes in search of sanctuary. These displaced individuals fall into distinct categories: refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Nonetheless, addressing displacement also requires recognizing the strain these displaced individuals place on host countries, many of which have limited resources and face substantial challenges in accommodating these populations. Understanding the key terms related to displacement is essential to understanding the complexities of this issue:

As of the end of 2022, “108.4 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, or human rights violations.”⁵ This figure includes 35.3 million refugees, 62.5 million internally displaced, 5.4 million asylum seekers, and 5.2 million in need of international protection.⁵ The rising number of displaced persons has exacerbated the hosting burden, especially in developing host countries, which house a disproportionate amount of displaced persons globally. Of the 108.4 million

displaced in 2022, 75% were hosted by low and middle income countries, with LDCs providing asylum to 20% of the total.⁶ These least developed nations often lack sufficient economic and infrastructural resources to effectively provide for their own populations. This strain on resources is intensified by the influx of displaced persons, which increases the demand for housing, healthcare, employment, and education.



Least Developed Countries

The international community’s concern for displaced persons traces back to the League of Nations, predecessor to the UN, when the first High Commissioner for Refugees was appointed. However, attention to the refugee crisis rapidly increased after World War II due to the unprecedented number of displaced individuals following the conflict. Over the past century, international refugee crises and efforts to address displacement have evolved significantly. Key events in this history include:

- **1921:** *First High Commissioner for Refugees appointed*
- **1922:** *The Nansen Passport, an internationally recognized identification paper for refugees, is introduced*
- **1948:** *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights; article 14¹ states: "Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution."*
- **1950:** *UNHCR is established to address WWII displacement over a three year period and then disband*
- **1951:** *The Convention Related to the Status of Refugees offers protection to those who became refugees before 1 January 1951*
- **1956:** *Hungarian Uprising caused over 200,000 people to flee to neighboring countries*
- **1957:** *Algerian War of Independence marks UNHCR's first involvement in Africa*
- **1967:** *The 1967 Protocol extends protection to all refugees regardless of the date they left their homes*
- **1979:** *Height of the Indochina refugee crisis*
- **1994:** *Rwandan genocide and mass exodus to neighboring countries*
- **2003:** *UNHCR's mandate is made permanent "until the refugee problem is solved."*
- **2011:** *Syrian Refugee Crisis begins*
- **2015:** *Mediterranean Refugee Crisis*
- **2016:** *New York Declaration for Refugees*

and Migrants

- **2018:** *Global Compact on Refugees*
- **2022:** *Ukraine war triggers fastest-growing refugee crisis since WWII*
- **2023:** *Global Refugee Forum*

Historically, UNHCR has focused primarily on refugees rather than the burdens faced by host countries. This oversight persisted until the 2010s, when the international community began to develop a more comprehensive approach to this issue. In 2016, The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants classified protecting refugees and supporting host countries as responsibilities that "must be borne more equitably."⁷ This idea of equitable responsibility is also present in the 2018 Global Compact of Refugees, which aims to ease the strain on host countries, enhance refugee self-reliance, expand access to third country solutions, and support countries of origin for the safe return of refugees. Despite these efforts, the Global Refugee Forum Factsheet from 2019 reported that developing and lesser developed countries like Pakistan and Uganda have some of the largest refugee populations globally.⁸



Current Developments

Conflicts, ongoing, escalating, and new, are prevalent across the globe and heavily contribute to the ever-growing number of forcibly displaced persons worldwide. These conflicts produce more internally displaced individuals than refugees as there are around 32 million refugees worldwide and the number of global internally displaced persons has almost doubled to 63 million.¹¹ For example, Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 created, what the UN Refugee Agency calls, "the fastest displacement crisis and one of the largest since the Second World War."¹² The end of 2022 saw 11.6 million displaced Ukrainians with 5.9 million currently within the country and 5.7 million who fled to neighboring countries and beyond.¹³ Displacement within Gaza has risen to extremely high levels at 80% or 1.9 million people were forced to leave their homes.

Conflict and insecurity are also prevalent in places like the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, and Myanmar. The Congo has struggled with violent conflict and humanitarian disasters over 30 years and this reality continues. After violent elections occurred in December 2023, the military and M23, the Allied Democratic

In recent years, the Global Refugee Forum has emerged as a pivotal event for addressing the plight of displaced persons and the socioeconomic challenges these individuals present for host countries. The 2023 Forum was the largest international gathering on refugees and saw over 1600 pledges to support refugees and host countries. Additionally, the Forum received about \$2.2 billion in financial commitments, a beacon of hope to the millions of displaced persons globally.⁹

Furthermore in 2023, the UNDP pledged support to 30 refugee hosting nations, with the goal of unlocking long term financing, investing in access to services, livelihoods, jobs along with strengthening peacebuilding and climate action.¹⁰

By examining the history and scope of the current displacement crisis, it becomes evident that effective solutions must support both the displaced individuals and their host countries. Ensuring the rights and safety of refugees is paramount, but it is equally important to consider the economic and infrastructural capacities of host nations. Currently, developing and least developed nations bear a disproportionate burden of displaced persons, exhausting their already limited resources. As the world witnesses a rise in conflict, disaster, and persecution, it is essential to address displacement from a human rights and economic perspective.

Forces, and other insurgents escalated in the Congo's North Kivu province forcing thousands to flee their homes.¹⁴ 6.9 million people remain internally displaced within the Congo, a number the UN announced as a 'record high.'¹⁵

Violent internal conflict involving militia groups is also plaguing Ethiopia. From 2020-2022 Ethiopia was engaged in a war with Tigrayan militants which garnered attention for the occurrence of war crimes, human rights abuses, and ethnic cleansing. Although the war formally ended in 2022, 2023 saw the rise of the current conflict with militia groups from Amhara and Oromia.¹⁶ The number of Myanmar's displaced population has surged by 50% in the last six months also due to escalating conflict between the military and armed groups. These groups are trying to remove Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, a general who seized power from the elected government in a coup in February 2021.¹⁷ The humanitarian crisis continues to intensify as 90% of the 3 million internally displaced people fled as a result of the conflict caused by the coup.¹³

As aforementioned, low and middle-income countries shoulder the burden of hosting these displaced populations. This contributes to a phenomenon unlikely to change, as 70% of these refugees and those in need of international protection live in countries neighboring their countries

of origin or try to stay as close as possible to them.¹⁸ However, this phenomenon can negatively affect countries that are already fragile. This can contribute to concerns that exacerbate the unwillingness of a country to accept more displaced populations such as Egypt. Egypt already hosts 9 million refugees and fears that opening its borders to displaced Palestinians may increase the likelihood of militants, strikes, and the possibility these displaced populations will not be allowed to return to their homes. Furthermore, in some scenarios increased unemployment and costs of living can lead to resentment of refugees within their new nations.

Another nation that has experienced a mass influx of refugees is Turkey. In 2020, Turkey hosted 4 million refugees,¹⁹ thus nearly accounting for 10% of the global refugee population. Of the 4 million, the majority were Syrians fleeing for the Syrian civil war. Hosting 4 million refugees has not only had a substantial impact on the living conditions and status of refugees within Turkey, as they face issues including difficulty getting employed due to a lack of formal education and a language barrier. Therefore out of the 2.16 million Syrians in Turkey who are of working age, approximately 1 million are employed, the vast majority of which work within the manufacturing sector under poor working conditions and low paying jobs.²⁰ However, this has also impacted Turkish access to

public services within the aforementioned hosting environment²¹. However, they prefer supporting localized responses via supporting local institutions and organizations over direct involvement within Turkey.

The Global Refugee Forum discussed these topics before it drew to a close in December 2023.²² By the end of the Forum, it was announced that the UN Refugee Agency expects 130 million people to be forcibly displaced or stateless by the end of 2024. More than \$2.2 billion in financial commitments were pledged to support refugees and refugee-hosting communities. However, these pledges are non-binding and many are concerned with how much action will be done to help in a world of ever-increasing displacement.

Directives

As global leaders, you have an important role to play in the stability, prosperity, and safety of all people. Here are some guiding questions that might help in your discussion around creating resolutions and policies to address these all-important issues.

- ***What is your country's historical and current position on refugees and asylum seekers? As a low-, middle-, or high-income country, how affected is it by this growing number of displaced persons?***
- ***With the world's attention span continuing to grow shorter and shorter, how would your nation propose bringing these issues to the forefront of voters, policymakers, and the world?***
- ***How would your nation address the imbalance in the amount of displaced persons hosted by low- and middle-income countries? How would your nation and its regional partners address the growing number of refugees fleeing to neighboring countries?***



Global refugee forum 2019

- *Many pledged financial support at The Global Refugee Forum, however these pledges are non-binding. How would your country propose substantial work be done to address this substantial work be done to address this ever-growing crisis in 2024 and beyond?*
- *How would your nation address countries, like Egypt, the United States, the United Kingdom, etc., who are unwilling to open their borders for displaced people during times of conflict, enacting stricter border policies, or looking to send displaced persons elsewhere? Would its government support these decisions or advocate for different policies?*
- *How can your nation and the UN best address the hosting burden of nations, whilst respecting their sovereignty?*

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