

Future Generations
CalsMUN 2022

Research Report

Forum: Third General Assembly

**Issue: The Safety of the Refugee Stream Coming from
Afghanistan and its Surrounding Area**

Chairs: Letty Kim & Demetra Papantoniou



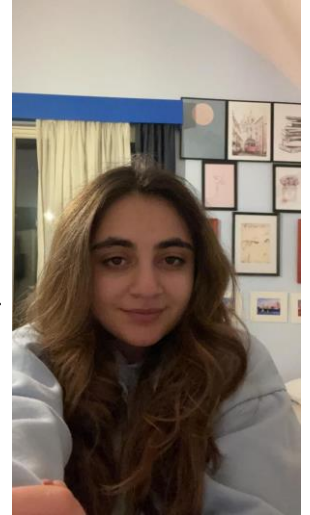
Personal Introduction

Letty Kim

Demetra Papantoniou

Hi everyone,

My name is Demetra and I am Greek Cypriot. It is my honour to serve as the co-chair of GA3 at CalsMUN 2022! I am an individual who is extremely passionate about public speaking, MUNs and debate. Having attended 5 MUN conferences and debated with the Dutch National Debate Selection, I am confident that alongside Letty, our committee at CalsMUN will be a big success and that the debates will be a lot of fun. I am an A level student at the British School in the Netherlands and I study history, politics, economics and Spanish, with the goal of studying law at university. When I'm not debating, you can find me watching Netflix or playing tennis.





Introduction

Afghani citizens have been facing genocide, persecution and warfare since the Saur revolution of 1978. The revolution combined with the Soviet invasion led to the first wave of migration and internal displacement. Historically, Afghan refugees have fled to nearby countries such as Pakistan and Iran however, there is an increase in individuals being rejected for refuge due to the intensity of the mass exodus taking place.

On the 15th of August 2021 the Taliban officially took over Afghanistan resulting in the internal displacement of around 4 million Afghans and internationals and hundreds of thousands more looking to leave the country. The 2nd government formed by the Taliban perpetuated the Afghan Refugee Crisis. As opposed to the orderly departure of the USSR in 1989, the departure of the USA, UK and other members of the international community was frantic and rushed. Mounting numbers of refugees combined with the hiatus of international developmental and environmental aid has resulted in a refugee crisis which is predicted to worsen in the following months. It had been predicted by the UN High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) that between August 2021 and January 2022 half a million could leave Afghanistan.

If this crisis is compared to the Syrian Refugee Crisis in 2015, which saw 1.2 million flee to Europe in the first couple of months, it is clear that although the numbers from Afghanistan are significantly smaller, however, important comparisons can still be drawn. Although it is expected that approximately 300,000 would leave to Pakistan and 150,000 Iran, where many Afghans have been housed for the past 40 years. Due to developments in both human smuggling networks and networks linking Afghan communities, European countries should expect an increase in movements from Afghanistan to Europe.



Definition of Key Terms

Refugee

A displaced individual who has crossed national borders and is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin because of risk to life or fear of persecution.

Resettlement

The transfer of individuals from another state to an asylum country after having received approval from the country to grant them permanent residence.

Asylum

Shelter granted by a state to protect refugees from danger or persecution.

De facto

Practices that exist in the status quo even though they are not recognized by laws. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is an example of a de facto state since it illegally occupies Cyprus and is only recognized by Turkey.

The Taliban

An Islamic fundamentalist Islamic political party which emerged in the mid-1990s. The Taliban currently form the Afghan Government and their extremist ideologies are to blame for the severity of the refugee crisis.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Individuals who are forced to flee their home but still remain within their countries border.



General Overview

War in Afghanistan

The conflict began with a civil war in 1978 between the anti-communist Islamic guerrillas and the Afghan communist government, which was aided between 1979 and 1989 by the USSR. In 1992, the government was overthrown. The Afghan war is also considered to have lasted well into the 21st century and the war includes military action after 1992 as well as the US-led Afghanistan War which began in 2001 and ended in 2014.

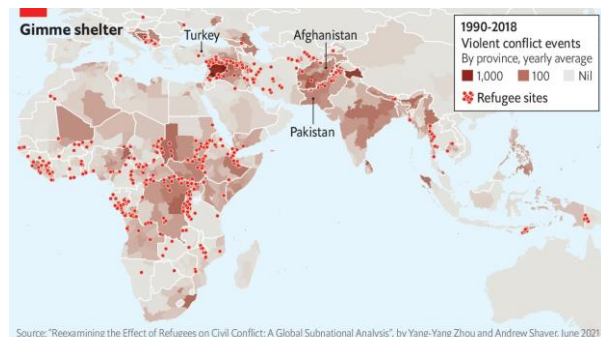
The US-led Afghanistan War

In 2001, US President George W. Bush ordered for the extradition of Osama Bin Laden, the organiser of the 9/11 attacks. Refusal by the Taliban to do so resulted in the invasion of Afghanistan which was led by the USA with help from its allies. US-led forces managed to beat the Taliban and many of their al-Qaeda allies were subsequently rendered powerless. Bin Laden was not found; however, the coalition including the US and over 40 countries formed a security mission to promote peace in the region and ensure the Afghan government's protection.

The Refugee Crisis

Under the de facto authoritarian regime of the Taliban there are no regards to the welfare of the nation and large-scale economic collapse, with the United Nations Food programme predicting that 93% of Afghans are going hungry as of September 2021.

Unfortunately, the regime is returning to its authoritarian nature which was seen during the 1996-2001 period. The oppressive nature of the Taliban regime and danger it poses to millions of lives has led to a refugee crisis which will only exacerbate if no further action is taken.



Despite the fact that, as of the moment, there is no massive armed conflict in the region, the threat of such a conflict emerging in the near future could lead to the exodus of over one million refugees thus, making it imperative for governments to take immediate action. The types of people that are trying to leave the country include those who helped the coalitions, members of the middle class who suffered tremendous losses to their businesses and assets, women who fear the restrictive nature of the regime, those in the collapsed Afghan government including the Afghan security force of 300,000 persons and civilians who cannot



cope with the conditions under the Taliban regime. Methods used by refugees are often expensive, dangerous and take a long time. Journeys taken by refugees often result in casualties, since 2014, 4000 refugees annually have died trying to seek refuge.

Helping Afghans is a difficult task as the dilemmas depend upon variables which the international community may be unable to control. Countries such as Iran and Pakistan who historically housed many Afghan refugees are becoming increasingly reluctant to provide shelter and asylum for refugees as it is expensive to do so, and the COVID19 pandemic is also making it difficult for countries to accept refugees as globally there have been many outbreaks at refugee camps. The current situation of the Taliban's makes way for new incentives for countries such as China, who now have an incentive to intervene in the crisis since the regime is in need of money, is free of American interference and borders China. The closure of Kabul airport is making it even more difficult to accept refugees; however, it is imperative that countries bordering Afghanistan continue to allow people to seek asylum. Failure to grant asylum seekers entry to another country comes with grave consequences.



Major Parties involved

Organisations

European Union (EU)

An economic and political union which consists of 27 states located in Europe. Due to the EU being a final destination for many refugees, the organisation attempts to find more effective and humane ways to aid asylum seekers. Despite a decrease by 90% in irregular arrivals due to policies made in 2015, the development of the European asylum support office (EASO) into a fully-fledged agency in 2020 has led to a large increase in asylum applications.

International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)

A multinational military mission in Afghanistan which aimed to consolidate the power of the Afghani Government. The mission which took place between the years 2001 and 2014 provided training to the Afghan National Security Forces and attempted to rebuild governmental institutions which were deemed necessary for the development of Afghanistan.

Countries

Pakistan and Iran

The majority of refugees fleeing Afghanistan are hosted in Pakistan and Iran since they are neighbouring countries. In total, there are approximately 2 million registered Afghan refugees in bordering countries, primarily in Pakistan and Iran. At the beginning of 2016, it was estimated that one million registered and 1.5 million unregistered Afghan refugees were living in Pakistan. Additionally, there are 780,000 registered Afghan refugees in Iran. Neighbouring countries such as Pakistan and Iran are crucial to this issue since they provide millions of Afghans with safety and refuge since they can continue their journey to their final destination.

United States of America

The USA invaded Afghanistan on the 7th of October 2001, shortly after the tragic 9/11 terrorist attacks, ever since then, the USA has been extremely involved within Afghanistan. It is estimated that since August 15th, the USA has evacuated approximately 117,000 individuals who have been hosted in international and domestic facilities. Although the USA has evacuated many vulnerable people from Afghanistan, very few actually make it to the USA as a result of the visa programmes. Under the 'P-2' programme, at risk individuals such as journalists and activists are able to be relocated and given a visa. However, this is eligible only to those who worked for the US government in Afghanistan, those who are not eligible for a visa under the 'P-2' programme are able to be relocated under the 'P-1' programme, the process of applying to both programmes is extremely lengthy. In order to apply an individual



must first enter a third country to process their application, this may take up to 18 months hence, leaving relocation to the US as an impossible solution for desperate refugees.

Turkey

To many refugees, Turkey is a crucial crossing point which enables entrance to Europe, the destination which many aim to reach. Thus, Turkey faces immense amounts of pressure from refugees at camps, and has overwhelming numbers of individuals in centres. It is estimated that Turkey hosts over 2.5 million refugees, some of whom are eventually shipped by traffickers to countries such as Greece or Bulgaria.

Greece

Due to Greece being on the EU's external border, it is disproportionately burdened by the numbers of refugees which attempt to enter the country, usually through Turkey. It is not feasible for Greece to continue to host approximately 50,000 refugees per the 2015 agreement between Greece and EU partners. There is major dissent from Greek citizens who continue to reiterate the fact that Greece does not have enough resources to provide the necessary humanitarian help to refugees from the Middle East. Afghan refugees arriving in Greece are often not kept in good facilities and the international community has raised concerns over the wellbeing of Afghan refugees in Greece.

United Kingdom

Afghan refugees make up the majority of those entering the UK seeking asylum or resettlement. Since 2000, the UK has offered protection to 29,000 Afghans who claimed asylum. Additionally since the beginning of the crisis, 15,000 Afghans have entered the UK. The government is extremely cautious with allowing large groups to enter and the newly suggested Nationalities and Borders Bill aims to prosecute individuals who enter the country illegally or via a country deemed as 'safe' by the government such as France. The UN has condemned this legislation since it goes against article 17 of the refugee convention which states that governments may not prosecute asylum seekers on the basis of illegal entry. The current UK government does however recognize the need to assist in the crisis and the Afghan Citizens resettlement scheme aims to bring in 5000 Afghans a year up to 20,000. The United Kingdom has announced that it can only cope with up to 5000 Afghan refugees a year.



Timeline of Key Events

Date	Description of Event
27 th September 1996	Taliban take control of Afghanistan (1st government)
9 th September 2001	Al Qaeda attacks the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon
7 th October 2001	The USA invades Afghanistan
2002	Taliban Insurgency begins
15 th August 2021	The Taliban government forms a 2nd government

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Since the formation of the 2nd government, many countries have begun evacuation operations. Most notably, these operations took place as airlifts with major countries sending planes to evacuate refugees. Other than US airlifts, examples that took place during the Kabul Airlifts include: AEGIS led by Canada, Operation Devi Shakti led by India and Operation Miracle led by South Korea. These airlifts proved to be the largest in history and resulted in the airlift of over 122,000 Individuals since August 14th. Additionally, 82,000 US citizens, vulnerable Afghani citizens and asylum applicants were airlifted by the USA.

The International Security Assistance Forces (SSAR) have also played a major role in resolving the issue. The organisation aims to increase cooperation within Afghanistan through the involvement of the international community. Members of the SSAR include but are not limited to: Iran, Pakistan and the United Nations High CR. By providing legal frameworks and policies aimed to develop the situation to aid the return of refugees as well as provide aid to host countries who are unable to provide refuge to all the Afghan refugees. Despite the importance of such a body, the last meeting of the Committee took place in October 2019.



Possible Solutions

1. Dismantling smugglers and migrant trafficking networks

The dangers that Refugees face when crossing borders are usually perpetuated by traffickers who falsely promise safety in exchange for money or other valuable goods such as jewellery which can be sold for money. It is imperative that the problem of migrant trafficking is tackled immediately since displaced individuals are prone to being manipulated by such criminals when faced with the pressure of fleeing danger and persecution. A solution to this may entail numerous points. Strict examination of methods used by refugees to enter is necessary, specifically in cases where deaths have been recorded. Furthermore, an international coordinated response is beneficial when dealing with such crimes, through joint investigations countries may pool resources and information to arrest the criminals trafficking migrants. It is also important for safe and legal alternatives are offered to those seeking refuge so that they do not result in paying traffickers.

2. Relocation and burden sharing

Relocation and burden sharing is an essential part of improving the refugee crisis. Countries such as Pakistan, Iran, Turkey and Greece are becoming reluctant to host large amounts of refugees when other countries are able to show support merely by signing conventions or sending small sums of money.

In order to find a solution, delegates may encourage the relocation of refugees with countries who have more resources to host them so as to decrease the disproportionate sums of refugees in certain countries. An example of this could be taken from the intra-EU Relocation from Malta Project (EUREMA). Moreover, in the case that relocation is not feasible, it is important for member states to provide funds and humanitarian aid to refugee camps in other countries. This could include medical professionals and donations of goods such as food, clothes and toys.



3. Make Afghanistan safer for its citizens

Although rather utopian, another possible solution would be to make Afghanistan safer for its citizens as this would alleviate the current refugee crisis. To achieve this, delegates must call for immediate returns of negotiations between the Taliban and organisations such as the UN. The General Assembly, as the main body of the UN, should ensure that measures and policies are put in place to ensure that Afghanistan does not become a safe haven for terrorists. An attempt should be made to integrate Afghanistan with the international community so that there is a chance that the new regime complies with jus cogens norms.

Relevant UN resolutions and Conventions

[UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime](#)

[The 1951 Refugee convention](#)

[UN Security Council Resolution 2615](#)



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