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Hi everyone! My name is Hassan Ejaz Chaudhry and I am a rising sophomore from Lahore, Pakistan studying Electrical Engineering. I cannot tell you all how excited I am to be chairing at this year's PMUNC. I have a long history with Model UNs. I started my Model UN career in the freshman year of my high school and since then, have developed a liking for them (so rest assured that you are in safe hands). Apart from IR stuff, I am the Secretary of Engineers without Borders Princeton and a member of the Club Cricket team. I love to watch soccer and so you can always discuss the latest ins and out of the Premier League (hint: I am a Manchester United fan). In between all these activities, I try to find time to watch Suits!

The first topic that I have chosen for my committee is the issue of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and their repatriation. Afghanistan is a country that has been marred by conflict for over three decades now, and as its neighboring country, Pakistan has felt the spillover effects. The refugees face a sort of Catch-22 situation. On one hand, they face significant hostility from the Pakistani government and sectors of the population, as they are considered both an economic and security threat. On the other hand, Afghanistan remains politically and economically unstable, especially following the withdrawal of US troops. The committee will therefore have to answer some important questions—how will the refugees be repatriated? How can the refugees and terrorists be distinguished from each other?

The second topic is the Humanitarian Crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The refugee crisis in DRC is unlike other refugee crises. Refugees are driven from one place to another and many of them live in hosting houses rather than refugee camps. There are plenty of non-governmental military armed groups that operate in the eastern part of the DRC. These militant groups are involved in systematic crimes that include but are not limited to rape, genocide, village raids, pillages etc. The situation in the east is not an internal problem but also has a long history of external effects and involvement with Rwanda and Uganda the major role players in the area. All in all, the conflict has taken its toll on the refugees and thus, it is up to this committee to decide how to entangle this complicated situation.

I'm looking forward to meeting you all in November!

Hassan Ejaz Chaudhry
Afghan Refugee Crisis in Pakistan

Introduction

Afghanistan is a country that has been marred by conflict for over three decades now. As its neighboring country, Pakistan has felt the spillover effect; it currently hosts three million Afghan refugees (both registered and unregistered). The Government of Pakistan has repeatedly called for their repatriation, citing the economic constraints that it faces in providing food and shelter to these refugees. It has also announced that many of the refugee camps act as breeding grounds for the terrorists. Having experienced a rise in terrorist incidents in Pakistan, with the biggest one being the attack on a school in Peshawar on December 16th 2014, the Government of Pakistan gave a final deadline to the refugees to repatriate by 31st December 2015. On the other hand, the situation in Afghanistan remains volatile. The threat of Taliban attacks continues to grow as foreign troops leave Afghanistan. The refugees are thus reluctant to go back to their homes. They cite a number of reasons for this hesitation: the coldness of local government officials, a lack of social amenities, loss of their homes and lands, and increased personal ties to Pakistan.

The Afghan government has asked the Pakistani government for more time as it is not willing to take the refugees back. The situation calls for the UNHCR to discuss the future of the Afghan refugees.

Definitions:

**Refugee:** The Convention on Refugees in 1951 defined refugee as someone who "owing to 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 to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."\(^1\)

**Taliban:** The word Taliban stems from the word ‘Talib’ meaning student. However, it is more commonly known as a terrorist organization that was formed in the 1990s and seeks to impose its own rule in Afghanistan. The Taliban has since its inception also expanded to Pakistan where these terrorists target security agencies and civilian places.

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History of the Topic:

Afghanistan has been a turbulent area for many years now. Almost two centuries ago, from 1839 to 1842, the British went to Afghanistan to stabilize the region. In what is known as the first Anglo-Afghan war, the British lost thousands of soldiers. Out of 4,500 British soldiers, only one army officer—Dr. William Brydon—returned home safely.2

One and a half centuries later, in 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. The Soviet invasion during the peak of the Cold War meant that the United States was apprehensive about the spread of hostile influence in this country and feared the spread of communism to the subcontinent using Afghanistan as a starting point. The Americans therefore devised a policy of opposing Communist rule in Afghanistan using Islam. The Arab countries joined in this war against Communism and hundreds of training schools for freedom fighters sprung up in Pakistan. These freedom fighters, known as ‘mujahideen,’ saw Communism as incompatible with Islam. This was further supplanting by the fact that the Arab countries announced millions of dollars in aid to the mujahideen. On the other hand, Soviet forces had already entered Kabul and installed a pro-USSR ruler in Afghanistan. These mujahideen employed all forms of guerilla warfare and were provoked both by monetary gains and also by religious gains. The clerics receiving millions of dollars declared that it was justified to fight for one’s Muslim brothers. As a result of the ensuing violence, a crisis emerged as millions of people fled the areas of conflict.

Forced displacement of the refugees started in 1978 after the Soviet-sponsored coup of the Afghan government. The Soviets employed a policy of brute force to squash any resistance. They adopted campaigns that were meant to target the mujahideen forces. These included measures like rocket bombings of civilian gatherings, attacks on irrigation and infrastructure used by both the mujahideen and the civilians, widespread land mining, killing

of farmers involved in harvesting of crops, destruction of livestock, chemical warfare and lastly retaliatory attacks for Soviet casualties that generally involved depopulating the city.

The mujahideen pooled their resources to fight to Soviet threat. Using the huge inflows that were being made available to them, they started using hand grenades and rockets and engaged in guerilla warfare techniques. As a result, the conflict devastated the country and caused many civilians to leave the country, many of whom came to Pakistan. Pakistan had to deal with a gargantuan task of administering the relief and livelihood of over 3 million refugees. The refugee crisis in Pakistan was the largest number of refugees that the UNHCR had to face in the 1980s.³

During this time, the US-led coalition, including the Arab governments of Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar, channeled millions of dollars to support the mujahideen who would lead resistance against the Soviets. The U.S government channeled 120 million dollars in aid to the mujahideen, with an equal amount being donated by the Saudi government as well. On the other hand, aid for refugees displaced by the conflict was neglected. Many were housed in refugee camps in northwest Pakistan, namely in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and in Balochistan, with sizeable numbers going to live on the outskirts of urban centers like Lahore and Islamabad.

The funding for housing the refugees was channeled through the seven Afghan political parties that were recognized by the Government of Pakistan. The refugees therefore had to join one of the seven parties in order to get the aid that the world community and the UNHCR were giving. These parties all ran on theocratic agendas and served to fuel an ideology that Communism was against the tenets of Islam. As a result, these camps would provide the numbers for the mujahideen soldiers who would go on to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan. The mujahideen were supplied with the latest weapons available by the US-led alliance. The widespread supply of weapons led to the kalashnikov culture, meaning that almost every tribesman living in the FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) kept a gun with him at all times. Poor living conditions also meant that the refugees would go on to be embroiled in a variety of other issues that ranged from drug trafficking and opium trade to the spread of hunger and diseases.

The association of the Afghan refugees with the mujahideen meant that the Soviets began attacks against the guerilla fighters. This involved targeting of the mujahideen caravans as well as airstrikes in civilian villages, all of which resulted in a further increase in the number of refugees.

In Pakistan, the UNHCR and Pakistani government made arrangements for providing basic amenities to the refugees; these included schools that were run in tents as well as makeshift housing and food. The conditions in the camp were worsened by the fact that the refugees brought about 2.5 million livestock with them. The trend saw a marked change with the ending of the Afghan war and the fall of the Soviets in 1989. This would in turn result in a lack of interest by the US-led allies. The dropping of funding led to another crisis. The number of refugees continued to swell but the Pakistani government lacked the incentive and the UNHCR the funding to address the crisis.

On the other hand, the weaponization of the refugees contributed to an increase in sectarianism and violence. This along with moral issues like the widespread use of opium and heroin meant that the refugees were seen as responsible for all of these problems. The problem was further exacerbated by the rise of the Taliban rule and then the U.S led allied forces invasion of Afghanistan. 4

During the volatile era of the 1990s, the aftereffects of the guerilla warfare came to be seen. In this period, many of the former mujahideen fighters formed their own groups and had their own areas of influence. Regionalism and sectarianism reached a peak and the Afghan refugees in Pakistan did not want to go back. The ascension of the Taliban to power aggravated the issue. The Taliban were extremists who enacted ultraconservative laws. These ranged from the ban on women working to the bar on girls’ education. Lawlessness prevailed and even increased during this time. Many fled the oppressive rule, joining their countrymen in the refugee camps in Pakistan. The Pakistani government, however, was not that congenial to the idea of facilitating the refugees in the absence of foreign support and saw them as a burden on the country’s already-weak economy.

**Current Situation**

**Post 9/11:**

The calls for the repatriation of the Afghan refugees by the Pakistani public were not heeded by the Pakistani government until the end of 2001. The

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4 Ibid.
involvement of the Taliban-led Afghan government in the 9/11 attacks and the following invasion of Afghanistan by the US-led forces caused this change. The Pakistani government, fearing such attacks in its own cities, called upon the UNHCR to arrange for the repatriation of the refugees. Consequently, in 2002, the UNHCR, the Pakistani and Afghan government inked an agreement deciding the mechanism for the repatriation of the refugees. The agreement, “Return and Reintegration of the Afghan refugees and the internally displaced people” was signed in October 2002 by the three stakeholders and highlighted a formal process for the refugees to return. It was envisaged in this program that 400,000 refugees would go back to Afghanistan in 2002, and the same numbers were expected to go back in 2003 and 2004. This framework was put into place so as to encourage the voluntary return of the refugees. It was also decided that in 2004, the UNHCR would do an analysis of the refugees left in the country and would arrange for the security of those whose lives might be at danger upon their arrival in their home country. The positive change in political security provided opportunities not seen in the past 23 years. The presence of an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and many international actors in Kabul provided a level of security and economic opportunity that contributed to relative stability in the capital. The presence of the peacekeepers and commitments of the international community to assist Afghanistan in reconstruction and reintegration of the displaced population resulted in an increased confidence among the refugees that peace was returning to Afghanistan. Under the program, nearly 1.6 million Afghans returned from Pakistan in spring 2002, followed by some 340,000 in 2003 and more than 380,000 in 2004.

The Census and a Rise in Terrorism

In 2005, a very interesting development took place. Amid calls by some Pakistani voices, the Pakistani government decided to conduct a census of the Afghans in Pakistan. The survey was conducted with the help of the Pakistan Census Organization and delivered shocking results. According to the results, there were about 3 million refugees still in Pakistan even after the repatriation program which had repatriated 2.5 million refugees. This

5 Ibid.
meant that the initial number of the refugees had been 5.5 million, higher than any previous estimate. The country therefore adopted stricter measures which included the closure of more refugee camps and the stoppage of the daily supply of food and water to the 3 million remaining refugees. In 2006, the Pakistani government and the Afghan government signed another memorandum of understanding agreeing upon the gradual repatriation of the refugees, with complete repatriation by 2012. The Pakistani government, with the help of the UNHCR, followed this by issuing POR cards (Proof of Registration) for the Afghan refugees. The Pakistani government issued approximately 2.1 million such cards. These biometric cards served an important function: it was the first time that the Pakistani government had a computerized record of all the Afghan refugees. However, in this registration drive, there were quite a few bottlenecks faced. Many refugees refused to participate in it, concerned that it might in the future lead to their forceful repatriation to Afghanistan by the Pakistani government. However, the UNHCR and the Pakistani government recognized the results to be pretty representative of the number of Afghans present in Pakistan. Following the results, the Pakistani government announced the closure of the refugee camps in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in North Western Pakistan. This was gradually followed by the closure of refugee camps in other cities in the country.

Following the census, there was a strong backlash from some sections of the Pakistani public. The survey had shown that the Pakistani government had underestimated the number of refugees by a very big margin. Thus, there was increased pressure on the government to repatriate the registered refugees. The situation worsened in 2008, which was marked by a sharp increase in terrorist incidents in Pakistan. It was alleged by the Pakistani media that these terrorist elements often had their roots in the refugee camps. The new sentiments gained credence when the identities of certain suicide bombers were revealed: it was discovered that the 2009 bombing in a police training center in the central city of Lahore was carried out by an Afghan. Afghan refugees were also found involved in 2011 bombings in DG Khan, amongst other incidents. Due to the large number of the refugees, the terrorists found it easy to hide amongst them. According to a (not necessarily credible) Pakistani

7http://archives.dawn.com/archives/65473
government assessment, 90% of the terrorist attacks in Pakistan were traced back to the Afghan refugee camps. The UNHCR country director for Pakistan also had to issue a warning to the Afghan refugees in which she clearly highlighted that any refugee found complicit in any terrorist activity would not be entertained by the UNHCR. She also promised the Pakistani government that the UNHCR staff would report all kinds of suspicious activities to the Pakistani government. The Pakistani government therefore cancelled the issuance of visas to any more Afghan refugees.

The dissent within Pakistan reached its peak after the Peshawar attacks in December 2014. This brutal attack by the banned militant outfit Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan targeted school-going students aged 6-15. The savagery of the attack was such that immediately investigations began to identify the mastermind behind the attack. Consequently, it was found that two Afghan refugees were among the attackers. There were calls for forceful repatriation of the refugees. About 30-40,000 refugees left for Afghanistan under the voluntary repatriation program fearing arrests by the Pakistani government.

The tripartite agreement between the UNHCR, the Pakistani government and the Afghan government states that all the Afghan refugees in Pakistan are to leave by December 2015. The tripartite agreement was extended in 2013, with plans for complete repatriation of the refugees. The agreement was initially signed in 2002, but has been subject to many delays and extensions upon the request of the Afghan government. However, there is a strong dissent in the Pakistani public against any further extension especially in the face of comments by President Ashraf Ghani of Afghanistan, in which he accused Pakistan of not taking resolute action against the Afghan Taliban. In a recent meeting between the two sides that was coordinated by the UNHCR, the Afghan government tabled another request for an extension of the deadline to December 2017. The Pakistani government is yet to respond to the request but it could meet stiff resistance from the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, which house many of the refugees, if it entertains the request.

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Problems

Economic Problems

A large number of the Afghans residing in Pakistan are unwilling to move back citing economic concerns. Approximately, according to a study by the UNHCR, 18% cited this as the major issue when asked for the reason they did not want to leave. However, international law regarding refugees, which derives its roots from the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, does not include those merely fleeing economic struggle in the definition of a refugee. The UN Convention of 1951 has served as the main document in determining the eligibility of the refugees and derives its basis from article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.\(^\text{10}\)

The Pakistani government also has accused the refugee businessmen of being tax evaders and therefore a burden on the Pakistani economy. In Peshawar alone, there were about 12,000 Afghan traders that were operating without paying a single rupee in tax. This, along with a general perception in the Pakistani public that the Afghans are taking their jobs, has led to political stress on the Pakistani government.\(^\text{11}\) There is also a direct economic effect, as the refugees form a burden on the country’s already dwarfed tax base. These views gained credence when the Peshawar High Court in northwestern Pakistan formulated a commission to investigate trade along the border. Even though the Commission is yet to give its complete report, one of the members submitted his own findings to the Court. To everyone’s shock, he reported that illicit trade worth 72 billion rupees (about US $720 million) was carried out at the Torkham Border Post alone. He estimated the existence of 5-6 billion rupees (50-60 million USD) in economic activity every single day along the Pakistan- Afghanistan border.\(^\text{12}\)

Resultantly, there has been an increase in the calls for the repatriation of the refugees by the Pakistani public since the refugees are perceived to be behind the trade.

The committee will also have to consider the economic issues that continue to plague Afghanistan and hinder the return of many refugees. In several cases, the Afghan government has tried its part in wooing the refugees and

\(^\text{10}[^{http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.html}]

\(^\text{11}[^{https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33851.pdf}]

building confidence among them that their home country offers a better future.

For instance, one of the policies that was enacted was the land distribution program which was started in 2005 in the provinces of Farah, Logar, Faryab and Parvan. About 13,000 plots of land were distributed, and it was announced that if there were no land for a resident of a province in that province, then that resident would be accommodated in another province. However, this policy was not enacted in the provinces from which the majority of the refugees had originated, and so the program was a failure. Delegates will need to consider ways to alleviate these kind of logistical concerns so that new economic policies can succeed.

Security issues
Perhaps the biggest threat that the refugees face is the security. A large number of the Afghan refugees are afraid of going back to Afghanistan citing the growing threat of Taliban. The threat, they argue, will be much bigger due to the departure of the ISAF (International Security Assistance Forces). Their fears have proven to be true, as the Taliban have reemerged this year. According to a survey, about 46% of the Afghan refugees cited security as the reason they were reluctant to go back to their homes.  

Health and Education
One of the major problems that is faced by the Afghan refugees is the lack of health and educational facilities available for those that return to Afghanistan. The government remains weak, especially in areas far from the capital Kabul where regional irritants continue to operate.

In the case of the refugee camps, healthcare facilities remain rare, underfunded and understaffed. The same is true of public educational facilities. Education in the refugee camps also translates into a security concern, as refugee students often study in madrassas (Islamic mosque-run schools) instead of in public schools. The presence of madrassas is not an issue in itself, but there are concerns that certain madrassas are associated with fundamentalist teachings that give rise to terrorist activity.

Possible Solutions
Here are some recommendations that have been put forward by various think  

tanks in order to address the challenges facing refugees in Pakistan and Afghanistan:

• Create viable career/livelihood opportunities for returning refugees by developing livestock and other agricultural industries
• Reform land allocation schemes for returnees by allowing their use for both agriculture and commercial purposes
• Encourage collaboration between Pakistan and Afghanistan in order to create awareness among the Afghan refugees for repatriation and reintegration in their country of origin
• Enlist the assistance of NGOs like Human Rights Watch to independently monitor the unmet needs of refugees in Pakistani camps
• Develop awareness campaigns among the Pakistani population to facilitate both emotional and financial support for refugees within Pakistan’s borders
• Improve logistical support, including new documentation for refugees, in order to facilitate a more efficient return to Afghanistan

Countries’ Policies

Pakistan: Pakistan’s policy about the Afghan refugees has changed significantly in comparison to its policy in the 1980s. The Pakistani government has called for the abiding of the tripartite agreement between Pakistan, Afghanistan and the UNHCR for the complete repatriation of the Afghan refugees by 2015.

Afghanistan: The Afghan government has concerns over the repatriation of all refugees and has asked the UNHCR to ask the Pakistani government to extend the deadline from December 31st 2015. The Afghan government has also called upon the international community to aid it in its efforts to reintegrate and settle the Afghan refugees.

United States and European Bloc: The United States government is committed to the cause of the Afghan refugees and has been an observer of the agreements between Pakistan and Afghanistan on the refugees. The current interim government led by the Afghan President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah has the confidence of the U.S government and the U.S acts as a mediator between the two countries. Given the role of ISAF forces in Afghanistan, the US and Western Europe have an interest in improving the humanitarian situation of the country, but must balance this with the need for
continued counterterrorism cooperation with Pakistan.

Russia: Russia was an observer to the agreement between Pakistan and Afghanistan that was signed in the 1980s. However, the Russian Federation has adopted a more neutral role now.

India: India has been a staunch ally of Afghanistan and therefore, supports the policy of the Afghan government. Pakistan has accused India of using aid efforts for the refugees as a means of whipping up anti-Pakistan efforts. On the other hand, India refutes these accusations and says that its efforts are purely humanitarian.

Other Countries: Most other members of the international community also support humanitarian efforts for repatriating the Afghan refugees and believe in the respectful reintegration of the refugees in their home country. They also recognize that the large number of refugees pose an economic burden on the Pakistani economy and have appreciated the Pakistani hospitality in hosting the refugees so far. The value that each country holds for national sovereignty will also play a role in the level of intervention that it supports.

Questions to consider:

• What is the exact definition of a refugee? Can a person who migrates for economic reasons be considered a refugee? (Refer to the UN Charter on Refugees for definitions)

• How will the Afghan government ensure the safety of the refugees who go back to their home country?

• What will be the mechanism for the repatriation of refugees?

• How will the UNHCR deal with the refugees who refuse to go back on the pretext of economic reasons?

• What will be the incentives provided to the Afghan refugees in order to promote their voluntary repatriation?
Bibliography

- http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c125.html
Humanitarian Crisis in the DRC:

Introduction:

The crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo is unlike other crises. The DRC is one of the poorest countries in the world. The country is ranked second last in the UN Human Development Index.

The DRC has been facing a complex and multi-factor humanitarian crisis for the past fifteen years. Today, it is characterized by violent armed conflicts in several regions (which often have an ethnic side to them) with various ethnicities trying to gain control of land and capture industrial units. The situation is exacerbated by an increasing number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees in neighboring countries. Due to poor hygienic conditions, this is often accompanied with growing number of epidemics and a rise in poverty in the affected areas.

It is estimated that about 3 million of the 77 million citizens of the DRC are displaced within the country. In addition about 0.5 million people have sought refuge in neighboring countries. The current crisis causes for immediate support from the international community.

Definitions

Humanitarian Crisis:
A humanitarian crisis (or "humanitarian disaster") is defined as a singular event or a series of events that are threatening in terms of health, safety or wellbeing of a community or large group of people. It may be an internal or external conflict and usually occurs throughout a large land area.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):
Internally displaced persons refers to the persons who are displaced in their own country due to a conflict or any other natural or artificial crisis.

History

The Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) has a long history of conflict, but its recent crises can be traced to the aftermath of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. In response to violence carried out by exiled Rwandan Hutu peoples,

Rwandan and Ugandan forces invaded the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 1996. In what came to be known as the First Congo War, Mobutu Sese Seko was overthrown and replaced by Laurent-Desire Kabila. Beginning in 1998, Kabila accused Rwanda of exploiting the DRC’s minerals, and was aided by Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe in a successful effort to push Rwandan and Ugandan forces out of the country. The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement of July 1999 attempted to end hostilities between nations, and was signed by Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, and Uganda, as well as the DRC.

In November 1999, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) established the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), which was tasked with supervising and implementing the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. MONUC is the UN’s largest and longest-lasting mission to date. Despite its efforts, however, continued violence in the DRC resulted in the Second Congo War, which lasted until the 2003 peace accords were signed between Uganda and the DRC. Even though these accords officially ended the Second Congo War, a proxy war between Rwanda and Uganda continued until 2008. With UN electoral assistance provided under the auspices of MONUC, the late President Kabila’s son, Joseph Kabila, became the first democratically elected president of the DRC in 2006.

It is estimated that more than 6 million people have been killed from war-induced causes in the DRC. In addition, human rights abuses such as systematic rape have created a humanitarian crisis in the DRC and surrounding region. Much of this continuing conflict has arisen from violence between the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC, the armed forces of the DRC) and several rebel factions, including the Forces démocratiques de liberation du Rwanda (FDLR, Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda), Maï-Maï Sheka, and M23. This persistent violence, coupled with the struggle for control of the DRC’s natural resources, continues to further destabilize an already-fragmented nation.

The International community has been able to make some progress on the issue. On March 14, 2012, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued a ‘guilty’ verdict against Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, who was involved in one of the bloodiest conflicts (known as the Ituri...
conflict) and one of the leading rebels, on charges of rape, murder, and the use of child soldiers. This instance also holds significance as the first Congolese rebel to be arrested by the ICC.

Over the years, the number of refugees has risen exponentially and there have been refugee camps sprouting in the country. Apart from the ongoing tussle in the eastern part of the DRC between Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Angola among other countries, refugees also pour into the country because of deteriorating situation in neighboring countries. In March 2013, the Seleke rebel forces in the Central African Republic (CAR) overthrew the government prompting about 40,000 refugees to cross the border. These refugees settled on the banks of the Ubangi river in the DRC.

**Important UN Documents**

The international community has been involved in various policymaking measures, both short and long term, that have been focused on ending the crisis in the DRC. The UN has passed a number of resolutions that have been used to set policies in the conflict-ridden area. I would like the delegates to focus on the main issues that lead to a refugee crisis as it can help the committee in deciphering the long-term solutions to the humanitarian crisis.

**Resolutions:**

**Resolution 1653 (January 27, 2006)**

The Security Council adopted Resolution 1653 in a ministerial-level debate on regional dimensions of peace and security in the Great Lakes region of Africa. The resolution calls on the Governments of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to disarm and demobilize militias and armed groups, especially northern Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army. The resolution also acknowledges the link between the illegal exploitation of natural resources, the illicit trade of those resources and the proliferation and trafficking of arms as key factors fuelling and exacerbating the conflicts in the Great Lakes. Resolution 1653 urges the countries of the region to promote lawful and transparent use of natural resources among themselves and in the region.\(^{15}\)

**Resolution 1804 (March 13, 2008)**

\(^{15}\) https://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdf/0127greatlakes.pdf
The Security Council adopted Resolution 1804 regarding the continued presence of Rwandan armed groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Groups such as the Forces democratiques de liberation du Rwanda (FDLR) which includes those involved in the Rwandan genocide, perpetuate violence in Eastern Congo to exploit the rich natural resources. The Resolution demands that the Rwandan armed groups lay down their arms, release all child soldiers and put an end to gender-based violence.

Resolution 1856 (December 24, 2008)
The Security Council extended the mandate of the peacekeeping force MONUC in the Democratic Republic of Congo for another year allowing the deployment of 22,000 soldiers in the following months. Citizens of the DRC are critical of the mandate renewal and feel the mission has failed to reform the country's corrupt and parasitical army and police forces.

Resolution 1952 (November 29, 2010)
The UN renewed sanctions on the Democratic Republic of Congo on November 29, 2010. The resolution includes guidelines for importers, processors and consumers buying Congolese minerals, which are the source of funding for many rebel groups. The resolution language is weak and non-binding, but it is the first time the Council has acted so broadly on the role that natural resources play in conflict.

Current Issues

Conflict on minerals/ criminal activity

Many of the rebel groups in the eastern region of the DRC are effectively financed and fueled by the rich mineral mafia who benefit from the mining of minerals like gold. Resolution 1952 contains a whole list of solutions to the conflict but does not set up rigid guidelines prohibiting mining companies from co-operating with such groups. In the past, the UN has formed panels to address the issue. The UN Expert Panel on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the DRC, in its report in 2001, expressed its frustration that few of those involved

in the Congolese conflict were willing to cooperate with the panel’s investigation.\textsuperscript{19} According to the report, there was illegal exploitation of diamonds, cobalt, coltan, gold and other lucrative resources in the DRC. It recommended to the Security Council a temporary embargo on natural resources imported and exported from Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi.\textsuperscript{20} However, in spite of the report by the experts, there wasn’t much progress on the issue, largely due to the power wielded by the mining companies. Resultantly, any clear-cut ban on such companies became lost in the labyrinth of UN bureaucracy and the international politics.

In 2009, the UN again tasked a team to file a report. The report found out that the conflict in Congo is bound to the control and trade of five key mineral resources: coltan, diamonds, copper, cobalt and gold. The Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources named around 125 companies and individuals whose involvement in the illicit trade contributes to the enduring conflict. The experts called for an immediate embargo on the import and export of all such minerals from and to Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda.\textsuperscript{21}

It has been seen time and time again that these mineral resources often contribute significantly to the creation and strengthening of destabilizing forces in the region. In fact, some of the rebel groups, like the Mai Mai Sheka, were founded by minerals businessmen. This group, founded in 2009, has been involved in mass violations of human rights. In one incident, it was found that the group was involved in the rape of over 240 refugee women. The UNSC has urged the MONUSCO (UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) to carry out swift and fair prosecution of the perpetrators, which involves an investigation of their connection to the mineral industry.

**Political Instability**

The DRC has not been stable politically since it became independent from the Belgians. Till 1996, the country was under the rule of a dictator. After 1996, the world community recognized Laurent

\textsuperscript{19}https://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/0116report.pdf

\textsuperscript{20}https://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/0412report.pdf

\textsuperscript{21}https://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/drcongo.htm
Kabila as the president. However, this stability was short lived and Kabila was assassinated in 2001. His 29 year old son, Joseph Kabila, became the President following the sad incident. In 2006, Joseph was elected as the first democratic President. However, political instability continues to be in the region meaning that the refugees cannot turn to anyone and instead fall prey to the armed rebel groups.

The writ of the Congolese government is not maintained in many areas of the Eastern DRC. This, along with a lack of cooperation between the FIB (Force Intervention Brigade) of the United Nations and increased corruption, has meant that there are more problems than ever for the refugees. The two did carry out a successful operation against one off the leading rebel groups, the M23. The two carried an operation against the group in 2013 and marked the first time that the two were able to defeat an armed group in Eastern DRC.

However, the suggestions by the international community to build upon this landmark achievement have not really been heeded by the DRC government, meaning that many rebel groups continue to operate. To add to a lack of political will and instability, it is reported that the Kabila government will try to delay the elections that are supposed to be held in 2016 to avoid the two-term limit faced by the president. As the elections are not likely to go smoothly, they will likely call into question the legitimacy of the government, which could exacerbate many of the problems already present in the country.

Humanitarian Crisis

Mass Graves:
The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights released a report mapping human rights violations committed in the DRC between 1993 and 2003. The discovery of three mass graves in eastern DRC in 2005 prompted the exercise. The 550-page report contains descriptions of 617 alleged incidents that point to gross violations of human rights and/or international humanitarian law. The report also considers various accountability options to bring the perpetrators to justice and set the foundation for a sustainable peace.22

High Death Rate

A landmark report from the Lancet medical journal in 2006 dubs the 10-year war that has plagued the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) "the world’s deadliest humanitarian crisis." With 38,000 people dying every month - the mortality equivalent of the Southeast Asian tsunami - the report accuses the rich donor countries of "miserably failing the people of Congo."

While most deaths are due to preventable and easily treatable diseases, mortality rates are highest in DRC’s eastern provinces, where the fighting and lawlessness cut off or reduce access to health services.

It is vital for MONUSCO to enhance its cooperation with the Congolese Health ministry in order to tackle this issue. Many suggest that rural and basic health units should be opened in these areas in order to provide for a basic level of services. Help in this regard can be sought from NGOs like Red Cross/Crescent. The map below shows how the refugees are mainly concentrated in the Eastern DRC, an area with little access to health care facilities.

High Number of Rape Cases

It is impossible to talk about the Democratic Republic of the Congo without talking about sexual violence. It is one of several areas where rebel groups used sexual assault as a tool to intimidate villagers. There have been instances of an entire village’s women being assaulted. These wide atrocities have forced the world community to adopt newer and stricter measures to the conflict. The UN therefore invested more in this area than ever before and developed a new approach to coordination called the Comprehensive Strategy to Combat Sexual Violence, created a five-pillared system co-led by the UN and the DRC government. After five years, this coordination strategy has largely failed to avoid duplication or generate momentum on addressing sexual violence, instead
bogging humanitarian actors down with bureaucracy.\textsuperscript{23}

In order to mitigate and curb this issue, it is often suggested that the UN should adopt measures that are targeted against GBV (Gender-Based Violence) with the scope being expanded from war zones to other areas. The U.S. Agency for International Development and other organizations with active presences should reinstate funding for stand-alone, multi-sectoral GBV services that include medical, psychosocial, judicial, socio-economic, and prevention activities. This funding must support multi-year program cycles and include community-based organizations in implementation to build sustainability. In the DRC provinces where humanitarian clusters are active, UNICEF and UNFPA should activate GBV sub-clusters. The DRC Ministry of Gender, Family Affairs, and Children should develop a new national strategy to combat GBV that coordinates civil society, humanitarian organizations, and the UN.\textsuperscript{24}

\textit{Child Soldiers}

One of the main issues plaguing the DRC is the use of child soldiers by armed rebel groups. One of the main perpetrators of this crime was the M23 rebel group, which fortunately has been disbanded. However, the FDLR (Federation Democratic for the Liberation of Rwanda) is known to rely on child soldiers. These child soldiers are usually ‘recruited’ from the villages captured by the FDLR. The world community has made some inroads into this issue by defeating the M23 and also pressurizing the Congolese army (the FADRC) in order to make sure that they do not rely on child soldiers.

The ongoing humanitarian crisis has lowered school enrollment rates across the country and resources for books, teaching materials and teachers’ salaries are scarce. The cost of attending school also makes it difficult for students to go to school.

Demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programs attempt to bring children out of the conflict and back to their communities, homes and families but limited resources make it difficult for these children to access education, training, food and shelter.\textsuperscript{25}

\textit{Economic Development}

\textsuperscript{23}https://www.refintl.org/policy/field-report/congolesi-women-what-happened-promise-protect
\textsuperscript{24}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{25}http://www.easterncongo.org/about-drc/key-issues/child-soldiers-vulnerable-children
Poverty is one of the main issues that displaced persons in any country face. In the DRC, however, the situation is a bit different since the individuals are not permanently settled in any one place. Therefore, they need to be provided with economic security in order to prevent a food shortage, a lack of access to clean water and to some extent the issue of child soldiers.

Specifically, investment in agricultural opportunity is crucial for the development of the DRC. According to the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), “in a country where food is still a challenge for most citizens, agriculture employs 70% of the working population. Agriculture must play the leading role in the development of this country, because no other sector can provide as much manpower today.”

Countries’ Stances

Democratic Republic of the Congo: The DRC has been subject to a lot of crises and eventually hopes to achieve peace. However, the reluctance of the DRC to prosecute against its soldiers accused of human rights violations results in a gulf in cooperation. On the humanitarian side, the DRC lacks infrastructural capability to help the refugees on its own and demands international support. The DRC is also only prepared to take action against certain rebel groups.

Rwanda: Rwanda seeks a heavy crackdown on rebel groups and especially on the FDLR, which it claims consists of perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide.

US: The US channeled has large sums of money in aid to the Congolese government. While the US government has taken some measures against the mining companies involved in exploitation of minerals and related crimes, it expects the DRC government to play a more active part. The US also wants the FADRC to rid its ranks of soldiers involved in war crimes, something the DRC is not really willing to do.

European Countries and Asia: The European countries want the DRC government to co-operate with the UN and are willing to fund UN campaigns. Asian countries similarly seek the end to the conflict. China in particular has a stake in a peaceful resolution, as its manufacturing-based economy has a need for many of the minerals produced in the region.

26 http://www.easterncongo.org/about-drc/key-issues/economic-development
Questions to be considered

• The DRC conflict involves a lot of inter-tribal and ethnic conflicts with regional repercussions. How will a changing regional situation affect the DRC’s ability to combat the rebels, and vice versa?
• How will the UNHCR ensure that the refugees that are internally displaced within the country are accounted for and are provided proper amenities given the weak and centralized government?

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