

BLUE BELLA MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2022

BACKGROUND GUIDE:

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (UN HRC)

Agenda:

Deliberation on challenges faced in implementation of human rights of refugees and stateless persons

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Greetings!!

We take pleasure in welcoming all of you to the UN Human Rights Council (UN HRC) being simulated at BBMUN 2022. This letter from the Executive Board will help you get a clear direction about the committee, the agenda that is supposed to be discussed and the method of researching that has to be followed. It is, however, important that you read the entire background guide very carefully and after reading it, focus on the topics that have been suggested for research and the links to the articles that have been attached herewith. The way of approaching things and concepts in this background guide will be slightly different and it is preferred that you respect the way that has been suggested and then research in the manner so told in order to gain the maximum knowledge and also to get a clear direction of how UN HRC at BBMUN 2022 will function this year.

This background guide like other background guides in MUNs and other conferences will not run into a number of pages but will be brief document consisting less of matter to learn about things but research links, sorted topic wise for you, which you are supposed to read, which most people generally do not do in MUN Conferences and/or simulations of the same sort. By reading these articles/news reports/documents attached with the research links you will be able to gain around 80% of the knowledge about the committee and the agenda and the only thing you would be required to do after reading the matter provided in this background guide is to work on the remaining 20% matter for your research from as many sources as you can find on the internet.

Here are certain Rules for Researching that you must follow:

Rule Number 1:

Read from as many sources as possible so as to get a wider angle of researching over things. Read a topic from at least 2-3 articles or sources and then prepare points on the same and not speeches.

Rule Number 2:

Read from more and more authentic documents of sources for getting genuine perspective about things. For example: Since this committee is the UN HRC, sources like the official website of the United Nations and that of its agencies, or articles published on the official sources like new agencies including Reuters and the like shall be preferred over sources like Wikipedia and Quora. However, these sources like Wikipedia can be used to read about things but cannot be relied upon as definitive proof or source for your research. Expand the horizons of your research by reading from at least 2-3 sources about a particular topic and then make notes.

Kindly feel free to write to me or contact me for queries or clarifications, if any at the contact details provided below.

All the best!

Warm Regards,

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ABOUT THE AGENDA

"Human rights violations are a major factor in causing the flight of refugees as well as an obstacle to their safety and voluntary return home. Safeguarding human rights in countries of origin is therefore critical both for the prevention and for the solution of refugee problems. Respect for human rights is also essential for the protection of refugees in countries of asylum"

-United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Who are Refugees and what are their human rights?

People who are forced to flee their homes due to persecution, whether on an individual basis or as part of a mass exodus due to political, religious, military or other problems, are known as *refugees*.

The definition of a refugee has varied according to time and place, but increased international concern for the plight of refugees has led to a general consensus. As defined in the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (the Refugee Convention), a refugee is defined as a person 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 or return there because there is a fear of persecution..."

While the definition in the Refugee Convention has been used by international organizations such as the United Nations, the term continues to be misunderstood and is often used inconsistently in everyday language. Media stories, for example, often confuse refugees with people migrating for economic reasons (economic migrants) and persecuted groups who remain within their own country and don't cross an international border (internally displaced persons).

Who are the Stateless and What is Statelessness?

In simple words, a stateless person is someone who is not having the nationality or the citizenship of a country. Many refugees are stateless but still one must not confuse a stateless person with a refugee as not all refugees are stateless and not all stateless people are refugees.

The rights of the people who are stateless and are also a refugee are covered in the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees 1951. This convention also defines a refugee.

Link:

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/statusofrefugees.aspx>

The Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons 1954 defines a stateless as well as seeks to regulate and improve the situation of the stateless. The following is the link for the convention:

https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.24_convention%20stateless.pdf

Internally Displaced people (IDPs) are the ones who are forced to flee their homes but they remain within the borders of their own country. There is no single agency or organization that has been established to protect or assist internally displaced persons and hence reliable data for IDPs are scarce. Though there are certain guiding principles formulated in 1998 to help the IDPs which are mentioned in the "Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement". The link for the same:

<https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/GPEnglish.pdf>

Some other articles that ought to be referred in order to understand the topic:

- **Asylum and Refugees:**

<https://ijrcenter.org/refugee-law/>

- **Refugees and their human rights:**

<http://www.worldlii.org/int/journals/ISILYBIHRL/2001/6.html>

- **Refugee crisis overview:**

<https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/refugees/>

- **History and Facts about Refugees:**

<https://www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/what-is-a-refugeefacts>

- **Question and answers about IDPs:**

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IDPersons/Pages/Issues.aspx>

- **Basic information about stateless persons:**

<http://www.humanrights.is/en/human-rights-educationproject/human-rights-concepts-ideas-and-fora/the-human-rights-protection-of-vulnerable-groups/statelesspersons>

- **Overview of some statistics:**

<https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

What causes a Person to become Stateless?

There are many reasons why people end up becoming stateless. These include religious/political/social/racial persecution, war or armed conflicts, climate change, financial hardships etc.

Case studies:

- The following article can be referred to in order to get an overview of various reasons and incidents that lead to people becoming stateless in various countries:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-stateless-groups/idUSTRE77M2AS20110823>

- Case studies of people becoming stateless due to religious persecution can include the cases of Myanmar (Rohingya Refugees) and the Central African Republic among others.

Rohingya Refugee Crisis:

a) <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41566561>

b) <https://www.unhcr.org/rohingya-emergency.html>

- **Central African Republic:** 1. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-centralafrican-fighting/violence-in-central-african-republic-displaces-nearly-1-million-u-n-idUSBREA020MT20140103>
2. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ewelinaochab/2018/05/09/the-religious-war-in-central-african-republic-continues/#676fd1813c0d>
- Political persecution is even why many people become stateless. An example of the same could be the **Tibetan Refugees crisis** and their leader **Dalai Lama** who is also a refugee in India.

These links can be used to understand the Tibetan Refugee crisis and the current situation:

1. <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/dalai-lama-begins-exile>
2. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-tibet-india/tibetans-in-exile-struggle-to-see-beyond-dalailama-idUSKCN1R80ZP>
3. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-refugees-tibet/sixty-years-after-fleeing-tibet-refugees-in-india-get-passports-not-property-idUSKBN19D019>
4. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/blogs/the-needles-eye/the-merry-monk-and-his-floundering-flock/>

- The majority of the world's stateless people are a result of war or armed conflict. There are people who have **fled war in Afghanistan** (due to Soviet invasion in 1979) and **Iraq** among others. The **Syrian Refugee Crisis which was a result of**

Civil war in Syria is a very prominent example of people trying to escape war. Except for the fact that Syrian refugees are the largest group of Refugees, there are even more internally displaced people in Syria.

- The following links can be referred to get a background of the **Syrian Refugee Crisis**:

1. <https://edition.cnn.com/2013/08/27/world/meast/syria-civil-war-fast-facts/index.html>
2. <https://www.unhcr.org/syria-emergency.html>

- **Afghanistan's Refugees:**

1. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/06/afghanistan-refugees-forty-years/>
2. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/05/09/for-afghan-refugees-pakistan-is-a-nightmare-but-also-home/> (Highlights the situation of Refugees in the host country)
3. <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/afghan-exile-191215111746377.html> (Contains some personal stories of Afghan Refugees)

- There are innumerable examples of people who have fled their country or have been internally displaced as a result of **hunger, climate change and even sexual orientation**. It is required that one reads in depth about various case studies to formulate an overview of different reasons why people become stateless. Some other articles for reference are:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/26/boko-haram-nigeria-famine-hunger-displacementrefugees-climate-change-lake-chad> (Issue of Hunger- African Refugees)
2. <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/climate-change-refugees/> (Pertaining to climate change)
3. <https://www.thelocal.fr/20170530/france-takes-in-refugee-from-chechnya-as-macron-presses-putin-on-gayrights> (France taking in first gay refugee)

What are the problems faced by Refugees and Stateless Persons?

Refugees live a harsh life and are subject to countless issues. These issues range from lack of sanitation to human rights violations. Some articles and PDFs which can be helpful for further research are given below with the topic.

1. Problems in seeking Asylum or refuge:

The very first problem people encounter is to seek a refuge or asylum. Many people are not able to get citizenship or even any type of legal recognition.

- <https://edition.cnn.com/2015/09/08/world/refugee-obligation/index.html> (**Legal obligations**)
- <https://pakistanhorizon.wordpress.com/2019/02/03/afghan-refugees-born-in-pakistan-are-excluded-from-pakistani-citizenship/> (**Pakistan born Afghan Refugees are also denied citizenship**)
- <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-37607785> (**Why did Europe, Pakistan and Afghanistan wanted to send back Afghan Refugees**)
- <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html> (**Article 14**)

2. Lack of Education and Literacy:

- <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/08/1045281> (**More than half of world's refugee children 'do not get an education**)
- <https://www.unhcr.org/starting-out.html> (**Early childhood and primary education form the foundation of the lifelong learning cycle that is at the heart of UNHCR's Education Strategy**)

3. Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia:

- <https://in.reuters.com/article/idINIndia-57263020110525> (**Racism in Australia towards Refugees**)

- <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-middle-east-26938565/lebanese-activists-call-for-end-to-syriarefugee-racism> (**About Syrian refugees in Lebanon**)
- <https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-49959947> (**Syrian boy killed as a result of racism in Turkey**)

4. Lack of Employment

- <http://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2019-04-25-new-report-explores-barriers-employment-refugees-and-%E2%80%9Dasylum-migrants%E2%80%99> (**outcomes of a report at Oxford University**)
- <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-society/2795856-idps-in-ukraine-complain-about-low-salaries-lack-ofjob-opportunities.html> (**Ukraine- low salaries, difficulty in employment**)
- http://www.un.org.ua/images/documents/4525/wcms_457535.pdf (**Only read the Executive summary from page XI-XV**)

5. Gender based Violence and sexual Exploitation

- <https://in.reuters.com/article/uk-disasters-somalia/rape-corruption-in-camps-blight-lives-of-somalidisplaced-idUKTRE80P0LV20120126> (**Somali Camps for IDPs**)
- <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya-rape-insight/u-n-medics-see-evidence-of-rape-inmyanmar-army-cleansing-campaign-idUSKCN1BZ06X> (**Rape and sexual offences against Rohingya women**)

Apart from these five issues faced by Stateless people, there are **numerous other problems** that one can research about including **hunger, gender inequality, lack of sanitation and hygiene**. Moreover, these people are **unaware about their rights and basic legal information** and are **not heard** in decision making processes even in decisions involving them.

What are the problems faced by the Host Country?

Apart from the problems faced by refugees, the countries that host them even undergo various issues that are economic, social, legal and political in nature. Here are some articles and PDFs which can help you with your research:

- **Here's a press release/meeting coverage of the General Assembly which talks about the impact of refugees and IDPs on the host country:**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/1995/19951109.gashc33.15r.html>

- **A research paper which evaluates the impact of hosting refugees from various angles:**

<https://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/documents/WRC%20Research%20Paper%20no.4.pdf>

(Specific Emphasis on **pages 01-07**)

- **Refugees are not distributed globally and are concentrated in very few countries eventually increasing the burden on those countries:**

a) <https://in.reuters.com/article/un-refugees/poor-nations-hosting-most-refugees-worldwide-needmore-western-help-un-idINKCN1TK0BZ>

b) <https://in.reuters.com/article/europe-migrants-refugees-response/unfair-refugee-distribution-stokesglobal-crisis-amnesty-idINKCN1232G1>

- **Impact of Syrian refugees on host countries:**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-23813975>

- **Countries should plan to host many people who will get displaced as a result of Climate Change:**

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-davos-meeting-refugees/world-needs-to-prepare-for-millions-ofclimate-refugees-u-n-idUSKBN1ZK1Q2>

The incidents and reports mentioned in this section are not exhaustive and hence, there are various other areas and case studies which can be looked at to understand the ways in which refugees and the IDPs affect the host countries.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Refugees and Stateless Persons

The current COVID-19 pandemic is definitely affecting people all across the globe but refugees and IDPs are at a much higher risk of being infected due to the situations and circumstances they live under. Please refer to the following articles and statements pertaining to this issue.

- **A joint statement by UNHCR, IOM, OHCHR and WHO:**

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25762&LangID=E>

- **COVID-19 outbreak in Rohingya Refugee Camps:**

a) <https://in.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-bangladesh-rohingya/bangladesh-says-coronavirusdetected-in-rohingya-refugee-camp-official-idINKBN22Q2OK> **(First Case Detected)**

b) <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/05/1064152> **(Support at Rohingya camps)**

- **\$2.79 billion raised for Venezuelan refugees:**

<https://in.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-euvenezuela/donors-raise-2-79-billion-for-venezuelan-refugees-amid-covid-19-idUSKBN2322UA>

- **Syrian Refugees:**

a) <https://in.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-lebanon-refugees/without-soap-or-sanitizer-syrianrefugees-face-coronavirus-threat-idINKBN2163BS> **(Lack of sanitation and basic facilities)**

b) <https://in.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-mideast-refugees/lockdowns-pile-job-losses-andhunger-onto-syrian-refugees-plight-idINKBN22M04Z> **(Effects of Lockdown)**

These are stories of very few refugees in the world right now. COVID-19 is adversely affecting refugees and IDPs across the world and there are innumerable other case studies one can go through.

Conclusion: What are International Organizations doing for the Stateless and What is the Way Ahead?

Various organs of the United Nations and many other organizations are working in order to solve the issue of stateless people. Please go through the following articles and PDFs to get an overview of their work.

1. **Role of UNHCR:** <https://www.unhcr.org/509a836e9.pdf>
2. **Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness 1961 deals with cases of statelessness and how can stateless people be given a nationality and hence, reduce the number of stateless people globally:**
https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/6_1_1961.pdf
3. **How UN agencies address the problem of Statelessness? :**
<https://www.unhcr.org/en-in/how-unhcr-helpsstateless-people.html>
4. **Suggestions presented by Amnesty International:**
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2015/10/eight-solutions-world-refugee-crisis/>:
5. **UN response to protect refugees during the COVID-19 pandemic:**
<https://www.un.org/en/uncoronavirus-communications-team/un-scaling-covid-19-response-protect-refugees-and-migrants>
6. **Response of WHO towards Refugees during COVID-19 pandemic:**
<https://www.who.int/newsroom/feature-stories/detail/how-who-is-supporting-refugees-and-migrants-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>

Not just the UN but many other international organizations are trying to help the stateless. For the purpose of research, the works of various NGOs across the globe as well as governments of various countries and many regional organizations who have taken an initiative can be studied.