

## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dear Delegates,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) simulated at CMR College of Engineering and Technology Model United Nations (CMRCET MUN) 2023. By representing different Member States, you will analyse the Russia-Ukraine War and provide recommendations to address the human rights concerns arising from the same. While in committee and participating in discourse, all of you must keep in mind the interests of the Member State you represent, the mandate of the committee, and how practical its implementation will be.

Though this may only be a simulation, all of you will be expected to behave like diplomats representing your respective States, and adequately researched so that you may receive the best of this experience. Those of you who are first timers, we as Executive Board members hope to give you a holistic, unforgettable experience to take back after the conference. To those of you who are experienced debaters in the Model United Nations circuit, we hope to give you another illustrious experience.

We wish you a great conference and the best of luck for your preparation for CMRCET MUN 2023. Do feel free to contact us regarding any queries you have or any clarifications you require. Please note that the Background Guide is not exhaustive and is merely a foundation for you to begin your research. You are expected to conduct your research beyond the contours of this Background Guide and come to the conference in complete preparation for the sessions. Wishing you the best of luck!

Regards,

Anandita Rajesh

Chairperson

UNHRC

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE – UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and make recommendations on them. It has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year. It meets at the UN Office at Geneva.

The Council is made up of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly. The Human Rights Council replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

The Council was created by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 March 2006 by resolution 60/251. Its first session took place from 19 to 30 June 2006. One year later, the Council adopted its "Institution-building package" to guide its work and set up its procedures and mechanisms.

Among them were the Universal Periodic Review mechanism which serves to assess the human rights situations in all United Nations Member States, the Advisory Committee which serves as the Council's "think tank" providing it with expertise and advice on thematic human rights issues and the Complaint Procedure which allows individuals and organizations to bring human rights violations to the attention of the Council.

The Human Rights Council also works with the UN Special Procedures established by the former Commission on Human Rights and now assumed by the Council. These are made up of special rapporteurs, special representatives, independent experts and working groups that monitor, examine, advise and publicly report on thematic issues or human rights situations in specific countries.

## **MANDATE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN Human Rights) is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote and protect the enjoyment and full realization, by all people, of all human rights. The Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and international human rights laws and treaties established those rights.

UN Human Rights was created by the General Assembly in 1993 through its resolution 48/141 which also details its mandate.

UN Human Rights is mandated:

- Promote and protect all human rights for all
- Recommend that bodies of the UN system improve the promotion and protection of all human rights
- Promote and protect the right to development
- Provide technical assistance to States for human rights activities
- Coordinate UN human rights education and public information programmes
- Work actively to remove obstacles to the realization of human rights and to prevent the continuation of human rights violations
- Engage in dialogue with Governments in order to secure respect for all human rights
- Enhance international cooperation for the promotion and protection of all human rights
- Coordinate human rights promotion and protection activities throughout the United Nations system
- Rationalize, adapt, strengthen and streamline the UN human rights machinery

For the purposes of this conference, we shall be adopting the abovementioned mandate for the Human Rights Council.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS – RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR**

Numerous changes to the international system have resulted from the Russia-Ukraine war, most of which are the result of issues that already exist and are difficult to resolve.

Once again, it appears that the refugee problem is one of the top political concerns in Europe. It is challenging to estimate the number of refugees accurately during wars and even afterward, and it is nearly impossible to determine their objectives or even their authenticity.

Such a degree of vagueness has frequently resulted in the violation of fundamental human rights and the loss of life in the past.

In particular, it is crucial that the Council of Ministers analyses each member state's international and domestic policies and comes to a consensus as a single voice in order to find a solution to the issue. The Members must keep in mind that, from a humanitarian perspective, the refugee crisis affects both their nation's domestic and foreign policies. The protection of the refugees during their escape (for example, protected refugee roads), their accommodation (for example, being accepted by a country), and their stay need to be extensively discussed (ex. being fairly treated by a country).

The Members will also need to think more carefully about the capacities of their respective countries (size, geography, economics, society, politics, culture, history, infrastructure), as well as their prior political judgements regarding this issue.

The difficulty of the situation, the disparities between the nations, the blurred line between politics and daily life, and the necessity to overcome all of the aforementioned in an effort to put together a resolution, end the crisis, and move forward as a single force will all be revealed by this timely and current crisis.

Ever since Russia invaded Ukraine, at least 12 million people have left their homes, according to the United Nations (UN). While seven million people are believed to be displaced within Ukraine alone, more than five million have fled to neighbouring nations. Thousands of migrants have, meanwhile, made their way back to their nation, particularly to places like Kiev.

According to the UN, more than 5.2 million Ukrainian migrants had been registered across Europe as of July 4. Others have left for other nations, particularly those who entered Poland, Hungary, or Slovakia. With other EU countries, these countries have opened their borders.

According to the UN, there are 141,562 Ukrainians in Italy, over 382,768 in the Czech Republic, and more than 867,000 in Germany.

From the provinces of Luhansk and Donetsk, which are now mostly under the control of pro-Russian rebel troops, several Ukrainians have travelled to Russia. 40,000 residents were reportedly evacuated from Mariupol by President Vladimir Putin's soldiers, although he has asserted that none of them were coerced into entering Russia. Volunteer organisations claim they have nonetheless assisted thousands of Ukrainians in leaving Russia. Ukrainians now have an automatic right to reside and work in any of the EU's 27 members for up to three years. If they are unable to live with friends or family, refugees are placed in receiving centres. They receive food, medical attention, and information about further travel. They also have the right to social assistance benefits as well as access to housing, healthcare, and educational opportunities.

Although there have always been significant migration flows between Ukraine and Russia, throughout the 2000s Russia became one of the key destinations for labour migrants from Ukraine. At the beginning of the Ukraine crisis, on February 2, 2014, there were 1.6 million Ukrainian residents residing in Russia. Two thirds of this amount were labour migrants, primarily of the circular variety. Since Ukrainian labour migrants do not fall under the category of "visible minorities" that are the focus of xenophobic intentions, Russians did not pay them any attention. The inflow of migrants from the east of Ukraine was the only factor that caused the topic of labour migration from Ukraine to come up for discussion in Russian society.

The significant increase in those applying for refuge in Russia started in July 2014, when hostilities were at their peak. The number of Ukrainian residents living on Russian soil rose by more than 0.9 million by the end of 2014 (statistics as of 5 December 2014), reaching 2.5 million people. The number of civilians who left the battle surged as a result of the deteriorating living circumstances on the so-called Novorossiia area and the fierce fighting that broke out in the Debal'tsevo and Mariupol region in January and February 2015. The number of Ukrainian residents living in Russia rose to 2.6 million by March 2015 and thereafter stayed

there.

People who fled Ukraine received the assistance they needed, while immigrants received favourable treatment. There are millions of children that have also been displaced. Conflict, poverty, or climate change force some people to flee their homes, while others do so in search of a better quality of life. Too many people experience danger, incarceration, hardship, and discrimination while travelling, while they are at their destination, and while they are returning. Not only is the pain and marginalisation of migrant and displaced children deplorable, but it should be avoided.

Unfortunately, a little too often, migrant and displaced children encounter numerous difficulties on the way there, once they arrive, and once they get home. This is frequently because they have few, if any, options for travelling along safe and well-established routes, whether they are travelling alone or with their families. They could be subjected to human trafficking, pushed into early marriage, forced into underage labour, exposed to enhanced smuggling, threatened with violence, and exploited. It is difficult for them to feel at home in the towns they enter, and it can be especially difficult for them to learn a new language and integrate into a new culture. They frequently lack access to education and good medical care. These difficulties have lasting physical and psychological effects and can prevent children on the move from reaching their full potential. The challenges have been further compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **FURTHER RESOURCES**

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1127691>

UNHRC Resolution A/HRC/RES/49/1 <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3959073?ln=en>

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/04/03/ukraine-apparent-war-crimes-russia-controlled-areas>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/un-deplores-dire-rights-situation-extrajudicial-killings-ukraine-2022-09-27/>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/03/latest-news-on-russias-war-on-ukraine/>