

COMMISSION GUIDE

UNHCR



CCB MUN XVIII

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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1. Presidents' Letter

Dear delegates,

It is an enormous pleasure to have you all in the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at CCBMUN XVIII. We are Mariantonia Botero and Juan Andrés Quintero, and we are currently studying in 12th grade at Colegio Colombo Británico. It is a great honour to be leading this commission, as we have been both part of the Model United Nations for a long time now, and we can surely say that it has been by far one of the best experiences we have lived in our high school years.

We believe that this commission is very important because the topics discussed are based on one of the most marginalized societies throughout history, refugees. By ensuring the correct development of the commission, we are taking care of today's world and we are creating a better future.

As a mixed school commission, it is clear to us that many of the delegates participating will be rookies, while others will be more experienced. However, whatever your level of experience, being a delegate is not easy. Don't worry! It might be overwhelming at first, but don't be afraid to speak out - we want to encourage you to do your best. Nevertheless, we have really high expectations of every single one of you. If you have any questions or worries, feel free to contact us at any moment. We will be happy to help everyone. If you have any questions regarding the commission guide or the topics, please ask us through the commission's email: unhcr@ccbcali.edu.co

The Model United Nations is a very unique programme, which will help you to develop important skills such as communication and critical thinking. But most importantly, you will be informed about local and global issues that affect our society every day.

In order to be an outstanding member of the committee, it is very important to establish a solid position about your nation's point of view, leaving aside your personal opinion and beliefs. Our recommendations are for you to come ready for the debate, by doing previous research and keeping informed about the most important aspects of the topic, and to raise your placards to participate as many times as you can. Remember that adopting the correct attitude can turn anything into a positive situation. We look forward to meeting you all, and we wish the best of luck during the model!

Last but not least, welcome to our committee, and we hope you will enjoy this experience as much as we have done so far.

Yours sincerely,
Mariantonia and Juan Andrés
UNHCR presidents

2. Commission Information

i. History

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is one of the many commissions which conform the United Nations; each commission is in charge of addressing different international issues affecting our society. The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was founded in December 1950, after the Second World War. Its purpose was to help millions of Europeans who had been forced to flee their countries of birth, or who had lost their homes as a result of the conflict. Governments all around the world, but especially in Europe, needed help, and this is why the UNHCR was established. Originally, the organization was created in order to complete a three-year task and then be dissolved. However, sixty-eight years later, they continue operating worldwide and helping refugees in need.

In the year 1951, a very important convention relating to the status of refugees was adopted. It is a legal document that states the basis of the tasks allocated to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. It was ratified by 145 state parties, in which they defined the term *refugee*, and it gave important information about the rights and obligations of the displaced, as well as of the States that are protecting them. The principal statement of the convention was the following, “A refugee is someone outside his/her own country who is unable to return as a result of a well-founded fear of persecution on grounds of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a social group.” (UNHCR). It is the basic core principle meaning that refugees cannot be returned to a country where they are facing threats to their life and/or freedom. Additionally, it is important to emphasize that the UNHCR works as a “guardian” of the 1951 Convention and its protocols; all nations are expected to work in conjunction with the committee in order to ensure the rights of refugees.

Since its inception, the Commissioner for Refugees has had many outstanding recognitions. The first was just four years after its creation, in 1954, when it was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for all the work that had been done in Europe. A year later, the Commissioner had to face another crisis, the Hungarian Revolution. It started in 1956, when Hungarians decided to rebel against Soviet occupation, but things didn't turn out as expected. About 200,000 Hungarians were forced to leave their country and fled to Austria. This was UNHCR's first real emergency, and it served as a model for other humanitarian organizations that would have to deal with refugee crises in the future.

Four years later, in 1960, the decolonization of Africa produced one of the biggest refugee crises known. As a result, thousands of Africans were forced to leave their homes. After this event, refugees were seen not just in Europe, but in many countries around the world. Given this episode, the UNHCR's 1951 foundation guide convention was modified in the 1967 protocol, which stated that the UNHCR would take on the responsibility of worldwide refugees. Later on, in 1970, the centre of the stage was

focused on Asia and Latin America. As new conflicts sparked in Southern Europe, the Middle East and Africa, millions of new refugees sought international aid. Consequently, due to the UNHCR's hard work and refugee assistance they were awarded their second Nobel Peace Prize in 1981.

Subsequently, in the late 20th century, the United Nations (UN) identified a new group of people in need, who were those that were internally displaced. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are people or groups of people who have been obligated to leave their homes or usual place of residence to protect themselves from violence, conflict or civil rights abuses, but who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.

The commission started with about 34 employees; nowadays, more than 16,000 people work for the organization in 138 countries. UNHCR has now celebrated its 20th anniversary and during its time of operation has helped more than 50 million refugees. UNHCR ensures that everyone has the basic right to seek asylum and to find a safe refuge in another state or nation, with the eventual goal of returning home, integrating or resettling somewhere else. During difficult times of displacement, UNHCR provides critical emergency assistance in the form of basic human rights: supplying clean water; offering healthcare and sanitation; giving shelter; and providing household goods and food.

ii. Structure

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is controlled by the UN General Assembly and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The UNHCR executive committee (ExCom) meets in Geneva every year in order to approve the agency's budget (6.54 US Billion dollars in 2015). During the course of the meetings, they also advise on international protection, and discuss a range of issues within the UNHCR and with their intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.

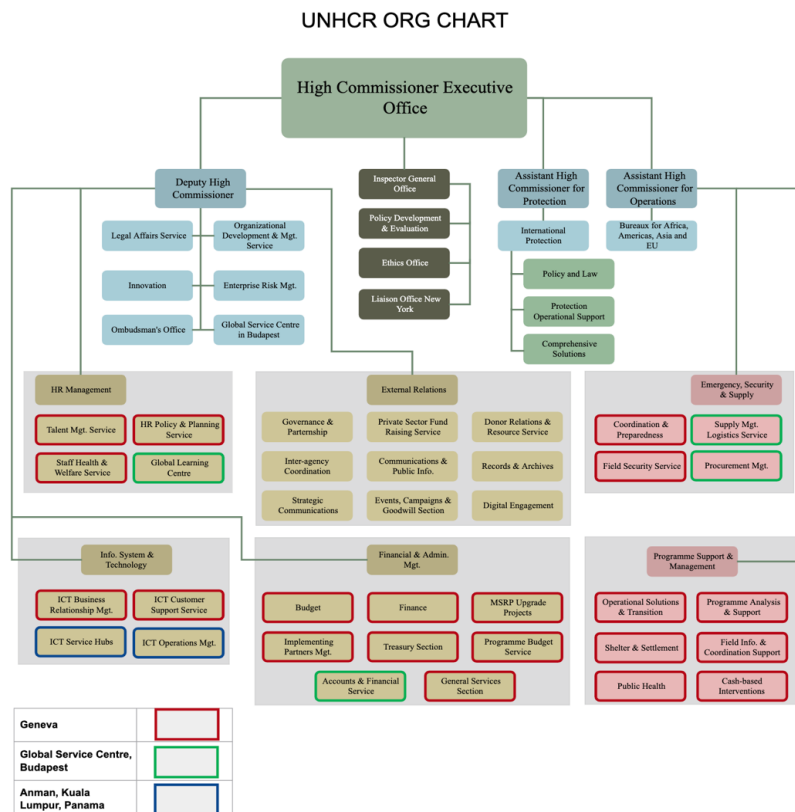
The High Commissioner of the UNHCR is Filippo Grandi, which was appointed by the UN General Assembly for the period January 1st 2016 to December 31st 2020. He is in charge of reporting every year to ECOSOC and to the General Assembly regarding the work of the committee. As the head of the organization, the high commissioner carries the responsibility for the direction and the control of the entire agency. He directs UNHCR's activities alongside the Deputy High Commissioner and the Assistant High Commissioners for protections and operations.

Most of UNHCR's operations carried out are on the field; given the amount of conflict worldwide, the operations have become highly complex, from the recruitment and security of their staff to the procurement of medical supplies. Most specific departments, such as the ones based in the Geneva headquarters, are in charge of overseeing key areas like operations, protections and finances. UNHCR's work is conducted from regional offices, branch offices, sub-offices and field offices.

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The executive office mainly makes policies and improves management and accountability, and they also monitor all the worldwide UNHCR programmes. In the following chart you will be able to see that there are three sub-offices which are the following: the Deputy High Commissioner; the assistant high commissioner for protection; and the assistant high commissioner for operations. The Deputy High Commissioner (DHC) is the one that offers solutions for the administrative issues that they may encounter. Meanwhile, the assistant officers are the ones in charge of watching daily operations.

The chart shows the organizational structure on UNHCR. The Deputy High Commissioner is in charge of the mobilization of political and financial support. Therefore, they need to cooperate with governing agencies, private sector partners and other UN commissions with the purpose of handling all of the humanitarian issues worldwide which relate to refugees. It is very important to understand that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees works alongside many United Nations organizations such as the World Health Organization, the World Food Programme, the UN Children's fund, among others, in order to solve global issues.



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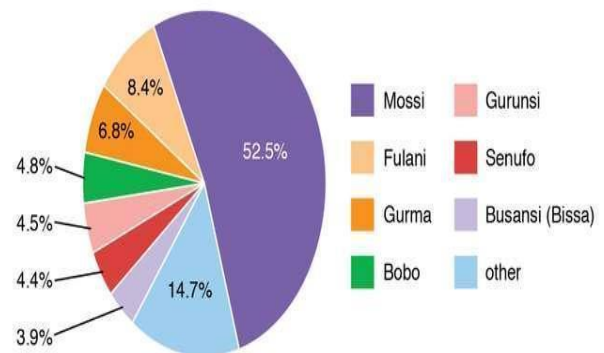
3. Topic 1: *Refugee Crisis in Western Africa as a consequence of the Burkina Faso armed conflict.*

i. History/Context

Burkina Faso is a landlocked country located in Western Africa. It is located on an extensive plateau, with savannah in the north that gradually converts to forest in the south. The nation used to be a French colony and gained independence in 1960, consequently, the name Burkina Faso was given meaning “Land of Incorruptible people” in 1984. This country has borders with countries such as Mali in the north and west, Niger to the northeast and Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo to the south. Burkina Faso has many ethnic groups and languages, the Mossi being the most predominant ethnolinguistic group of the country. Its population of about 19 million people is unevenly distributed among different regions; Eastern and Central regions contain about half of the population whilst in the remaining regions, the society is more scattered. More than two thirds of people are rural and live in villages, with a tendency to be grouped in the middle of the country.



Ethnic composition (2010)



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<https://www.britannica.com/place/Burkina-Faso>

However, this small Western African country has faced many issues since its independence. Due to violence by jihadists, local militias and militants, Burkina Faso became one of the fastest-growing displacement crises in Africa. It all started when the security of the country weakened after the expulsion of the former president, Blaise Compaoré, who had ruled the nation for over three decades (1987-2014). He had risen to power after a coup d'état in which the previous president, Thomas Sankara, was killed. During his government, he introduced a policy of “rectification”, overturning the

policies that were pursued by Sankara. It was said that he won the 1991, 1998, 2005 and 2010 elections in unfair circumstances. After his resignation in 2014, major attacks by Islamist militants took place in 2016 on restaurants and hotels.

Ever since then, violence has continued to escalate. Currently, there are growing fights among rival jihadi groups, whose ultimate goal is to destroy all the present organization of the country including the State, rival political and ethnic militias, and political groups associated with the business community. Since 2018, fatalities caused by violence against civilians and battles between armed groups have increased; over 250 people were killed in 2018 and over 2000 in 2019.

Due to this alarming security situation, many citizens have been forced to leave their homes. More than 838,000 people have been displaced in Burkina Faso since 2019. Militant attacks have also affected about 25,000 Malian refugees who were forced to flee their homes due to conflict, and have been sheltering close to the border with Burkina Faso. However, most of them have chosen to return home, despite still facing insecurity there.

Due to the rise in violence during the last few years, the government decided to declare a state of emergency in some provinces in the north, which are close to the border of Mali. At first, the attacks were directed against the representatives of the State such as security forces. Later, violent groups proceeded to attack schools, leaving thousands of children without an education.

This issue is complicated for the UNHCR given the fact that there are refugees from a range of countries in Burkina Faso, as well as the internally displaced citizens.

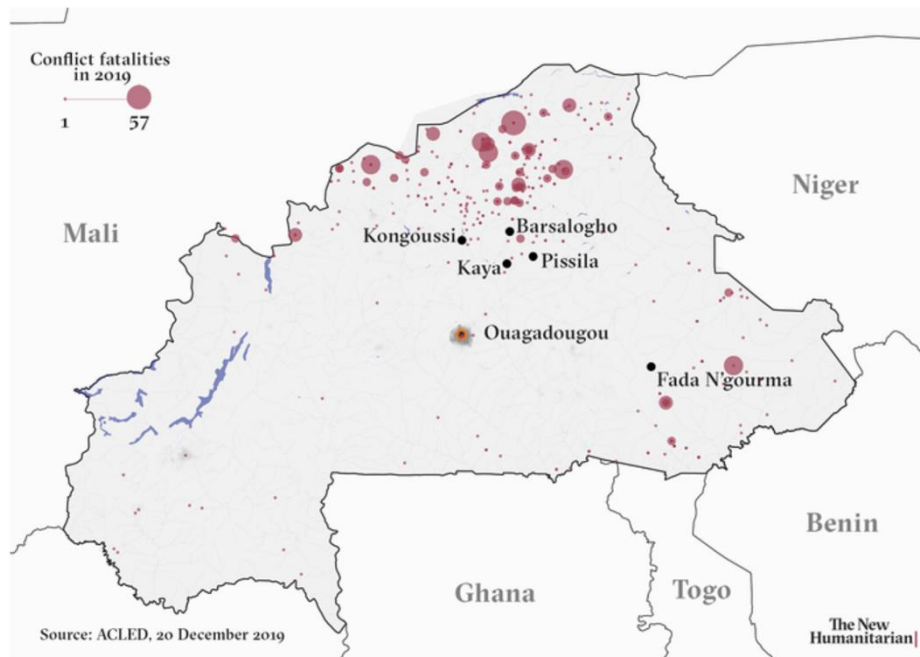
ii. Current Situation

In Burkina Faso, the situation keeps getting worse, as insecurity in the country has caused an ever-growing number to flee their homes. For example, in just 17 days, between February 26th and March 14th about 14,000 people fled their homes, bringing the total internally displaced to 780,000 and about 2,035 people were forced to leave to Mali. With very few internal displacement camps, many of the people that are forced from their homes due to the violence have decided to look for shelter with friends and relatives, whilst others are forced to live in crowded, makeshift sites or public buildings like schools, or even to look for refuge under trees. The number of people in need is critical, and it is very likely that the need for humanitarian aid will continue to rise in 2020.

As mentioned before, at the moment, Burkina Faso is also the home of many refugees from neighbouring countries such as those from Mali, who have been forced to flee their homes because of the violence that terrorises this country. However, the situation for

them has also gotten worse, and many Malian refugees believe that it is safer to return home than to stay in Burkina Faso.

The following map is a representation of the expanding humanitarian emergency and the challenges that are faced by aid workers.



Mednick, S. (2019). Briefing: Burkina Faso's rapid descent. Retrieved 20 July 2020, from <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2019/12/20/Burkina-Faso-displaced-attacks-extremist>

Apart from the refugee crisis, people in Burkina Faso are also facing a humanitarian emergency due to the fact that almost half a million people have been forced from their homes, and about a third of the country is now living in a conflict zone. There has been a great increase in violence in the country; the number of attacks in the first half of 2019 is bigger than the total for the year 2018. Schools have been closed and farmers have abandoned their fields looking for safety; this is a serious problem as about 4 out of 5 people rely on farming to provide for their families.

The impact of the approximately 20 million people living in conflict areas, including refugees from other countries/nations is very alarming. About 486,000 people have been forced to flee their homes in Burkina Faso alone, bringing the total number of internally displaced people between the three Sahelian countries (the Sahel is an arid region of Africa that separates the Sahara Desert to the north and the tropical savannahs to the south) to approximately 860,000 people, meanwhile, about 2.4 million people from across Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger amid jihadi violence are in the need of food and water.

Many organizations such as the World Food Programme (WFP) and humanitarian agencies are also facing a crisis because relief efforts are running low and they are in need of new resources. At the same time, the WFP is facing the challenge of responding to immediate needs, while at the same time trying to protect communities and ensuring that all the gains made in previous years are not lost. The WFP has provided more than 2.6 million people with food and nutrition assistance so far to the three central Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali). The World Food Programme is in charge of delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities in order to improve nutrition. WFP focuses on emergency assistance, relief and rehabilitation, development aid and special operations.

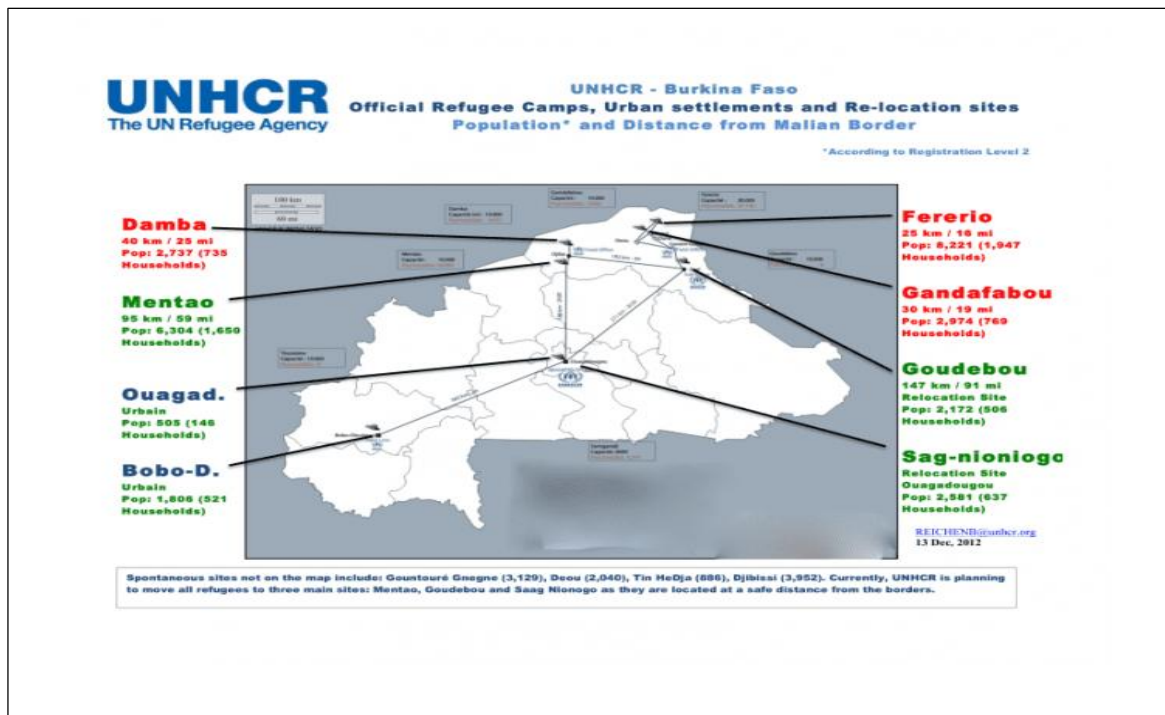
The UNHCR has warned that more lives are at risk in Burkina Faso's centre Nord and Sahel regions, from which thousands of displaced people, including the elderly and small children are being forced to move out. It is estimated that about 350,000 people need access to proper shelter and resources in order to survive in the remote areas of Burkina Faso. Before Covid-19, the UNHCR stated that a significant lack of resources was threatening to cause a major human disaster; now with the pandemic, the situation is aggravated by a mixture of crises.

Nowadays, Burkina Faso has become the fastest-growing displacement crisis with about 840,000 people displaced in the last 16 months. UNHCR is working with local authorities and other humanitarian organizations in order to give appropriate shelter and relief supplies to refugees. However, with the increase in insecurity and the limited supply of resources, it has been difficult. In coordination with the Burkinabe authorities, UNHCR is exploring the option of relocating displaced people to Goudoubo refugee camp in Dori (Sahel Region). This camp is now empty after Malian refugees decided to return to their country following a number of attacks.

The map below is a representation of the location of various refugee camps across Burkina Faso, even though the map is from 2012, it is for delegates to have an idea of where camps are located in the country.



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Burkina Faso: Official Refugee Camps, Urban settlements and Re-location sites - Population* and Distance from Malian Border (13 Dec, 2012) - Burkina Faso. (2012). <https://reliefweb.int/map/burkina-faso/burkina-faso-official-refugee-camps-urban-settlements-and-re-location-sites>

In conclusion, it is inevitable to say that this issue has escalated quickly and there is a desperate need for help, meaning that countries from Western Africa should be doing their best in order to provide the best possible conditions for the community.

iii. Key points of the debate

- People fleeing Burkina Faso to neighbouring countries due to the violent conflict
- Refugees from Mali in Burkina Faso returning to their home countries despite the danger they face
- Strategy implementation of neighbouring countries in order to give refugees shelter and basic necessities
- Diminishing supplies to help refugees in the region
- Possibility of relocating displaced people to Goudoubo refugee camp in Dori

iv. Participating Organisms

- UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)
- FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization)
- International Crisis Group
- African Union
- Campaign against arms trade
- Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
- International Organization for Migration
- UN development programme
- Human Rights Watch
- World Food Programme

v. Guiding Questions

1. Which strategies does your country implement in order to provide refugees their basic human needs? If so, how could these be implemented in Burkina Faso?
2. Has your country been involved with any refugee crisis recently? If so, how was the situation handled?
3. Which politics has your country implemented regarding refugees?
4. What is your country's position regarding refugees? Does it influence this worldwide issue? If so, how?
5. Which possible solutions can your country offer regarding the situation of Burkina Faso's refugees?

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4. Topic 2: Gaza Refugee Situation

i. History/Context

Gaza is a small piece of land which is part of Palestinian territory, located between Egypt and Israel on the Mediterranean coast.



[Map of Israel and Palestine](#)

The territory of Gaza has been one of the places most affected by conflicts for hundreds of years, be it cultural, religious or simply due to territorial dominance. Gaza has been the home of Christians, Muslims, and Jews, and it has been taken over by many empires over the centuries. The Ottoman Empire, which was mainly Muslim, had control of this area until its fall after the First World War. The winners, in this case some European countries, divided this territory equally, which resulted in Gaza being transferred to the United Kingdom. The occupation by the UK lasted approximately 30 years (from 1918 to 1948), and in 1947 this territory was separated into two states between Palestine and the State of Israel. The division of Palestine can be clearly seen on the previous maps, especially the one from 1947.

Arab-Israeli War of 1948

At the end of the Second World War, and with the surrender of Germany, it was decided to grant the Jews a safe territory where they could practice their religion. This was part

of a proposal for a Jewish-only state, where security was guaranteed and another genocide on such a scale would be avoided. Many Jews had been made homeless by the war, and the Jewish people as a whole had not had a homeland of their own since biblical times, but had been living all over the world in what is known as the Jewish diaspora.

After the United Nations had agreed on the partition of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state, conflicts quickly arose. However, the Palestinian part, which was controlled by Egypt at that time, rejected this division, calling it an example of European colonialism. Despite these objections on May 14th, The state of Israel was established.

On the same day that British troops withdrew, neighbouring countries such as Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq attacked this territory, which had been designated only for Jews. During this first conflict, Gaza was taken by Israel by force after defeating Egypt, but, under international pressure, the Jewish troops had to withdraw. Since then, Gaza has been a key player in the political situation between Palestine, neighbouring countries and Israel.

The first conflict caused approximately 200,000 Palestinian refugees to flee from their land after the expansion of Israeli forces into Palestine. They settled in places like the Gaza Strip where eight camps were established; these camps continue to exist today under the mandate and control of the United Nations. To avoid another conflict, an imaginary line was created called the green line to separate the state of Israel from Palestine. The green line worked for several years, but with the tensions between Israel and neighbouring countries, that line never fulfilled its main purpose. Even Jerusalem was split by this line but it was never really respected either by Muslims, Jews, or Christians since there are religious sites in both parts of the city that are significant for each religion.

Egyptian occupation

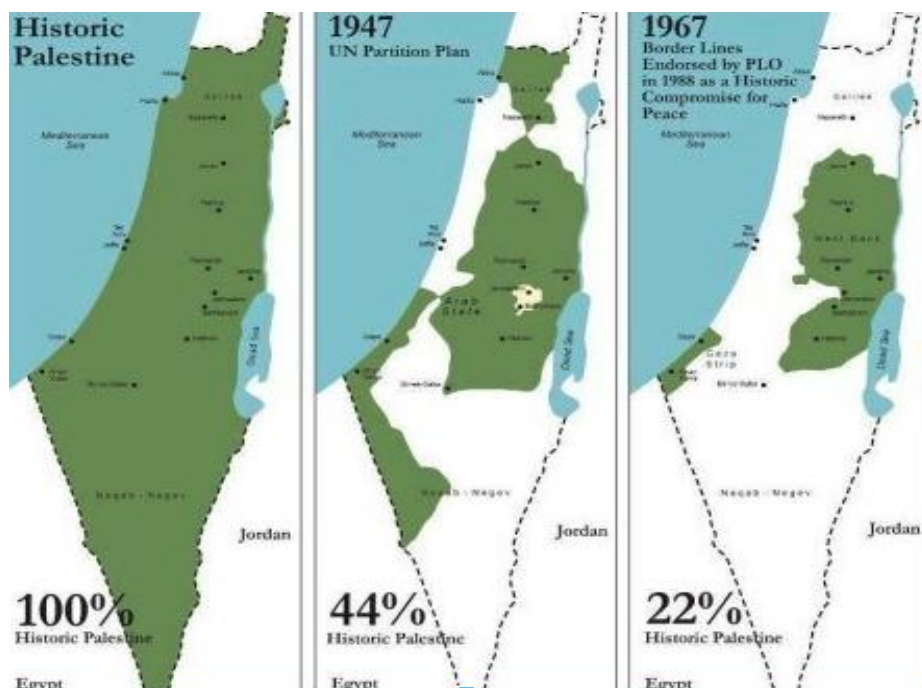
The Gaza strip came into Egypt's control at the end of the Arab-Israeli war, under a military dictatorship that spanned many years. Despite the fact that the Gaza government was believed to be autonomous, Egyptian troops actually controlled the area. From a political point of view, this territory was essential for Egypt, especially as a measure of defence or even attack on Israel.

Israeli occupation

A six-day war in 1967 between Israel and Egypt resulted in the expansion of the state of Israel into regions and territories formerly controlled by Egypt, such as Gaza and Sinai. This conflict served as a time bomb between Palestinians and Jews, as it was not until 1994 that all Muslims living in Gaza were guaranteed self-government. Before, the Israeli army commonly invaded this territory in order to dominate it, where they controlled the

entire life of the Palestinians as in the case of the entry of goods such as food and medicine or even electricity and water. The Oslo agreement in 1993 signed by both parties (Israel and Palestine) guarantees control of the regions that each belonged to and forced the Israeli army to leave the territory of Gaza. The Palestinian authority in this case received almost the entire territory (80%).

As seen on the map below, there has been a significant loss of territories from Palestine to Israel due to Israel's victory in the Six Days War and the Arab-Israeli War. New problems began to emerge in the mid-2000s, which led to Israel blockading its border with Gaza using a strong army presence. At this point, walls and fences were created that separated Israel from the Palestinians, and several entrances to the country were sealed as retaliatory measures by Israel. In the year 2000, 30,000 Palestinians from Gaza worked in Israeli industries. However, this figure began decreasing rapidly so that, according to the World Bank, by 2003 it was reduced to only 4,000 jobs.



In 2006, after elections in Palestine, a new political movement called Hamas obtained power in Gaza. This party is notorious for its ties to extremist groups like al-Qaeda. The newly appointed government denied recognizing Israel as a country, and vowed not to renounce violence or to uphold agreements signed by former Israeli and Palestinian political leaders. Hamas is considered by many world powers to be a terrorist organization, and this led Israel to block any contact with Gaza, basically locking people inside. In addition, all funds for humanitarian aid for refugees from past conflicts were frozen, something that was vital for the thousands of displaced people who depend on this aid. Fatah, the political party in charge of central Palestinian government, was expelled from Gaza by Hamas, which caused a significant weakening of Palestine's position overall.

ii. Current Situation

The West Bank "Fatah" government, recognized primarily as the sole and main government of Palestine, has been in conflict with Hamas after its seizure of Gaza. This is because, although it was democratically elected, all the other political parties were expelled from the region, as well as the national security forces. Western countries, including the United States, blame Iran for influencing Gaza and Hamas. Hamas is considered to be a danger by Israel, after it developed a rocket called "Qassam" which is an explosive-filled device that is easy to make and very dangerous. Hamas has launched hundreds of these missiles into Israeli territory. Israel, in return, has responded with bombardments, and despite the fact that most of the shells are very precise, bombs often fall on places where there are civilians. Mass casualties and infrastructure damages have been caused because of these bombardments.

The West Bank government has the full support of most Muslim countries, but Gaza has struggled to find any support. Egypt is one of the key countries in this conflict, since the blockade is not only from Israel but also from Egypt. Egypt considers Hamas to be an organization controlled by Iran, therefore it has decided to close its borders with the Gaza region in order to stop Iranian influence in Africa.

Entry to Gaza can only be by land, which is remarkable considering its long coastline. In addition, there are only 3 entrances, of which only two work and which are on the Israeli side. The Rafah border post in Egypt is completely sealed and only opens on a few occasions for the movement of humanitarian convoys of international organizations, meaning that not everyone can pass. In contrast, Israel's two border points (Erez and Karni) are the more secured and the harder ones to leave or to enter.

The total isolation of this region has left it vulnerable to any terrorist organization. Israel has cut the supply of gasoline, which has led to people only having 12 hours of energy a day. Medical supplies are also scarce and the price of food is becoming more expensive. In other words, the crisis and chaos have generated massive protests against Israel, which has also been condemned for its actions and for the way it has handled the situation, blaming these events as solely acts of Hamas.

Donald Trump and the United States government, has given the Israeli government the green light and the support needed for the annexation of certain places in Palestine, none of them in the Gaza Strip. With this said, Hamas has proved that it can stop Israel in its fight to maintain and reclaim territory, but with a very high cost in lives and to people's well-being. During the past few years there has been an increase in tensions between both sides, and the political instability in Gaza could result in a third unnecessary conflict that could lead to an even bigger refugee crisis.

Poor accessibility to Gaza has resulted in a very vulnerable population that has no future or place to move on to. Weekly Friday protests in Gaza, with hundreds of participants gathering at the security fences bordering Israel, have led to thousands of injuries and hundreds of deaths at the hand of Israeli troops since they started in March 2018.

Some of the key statements the United Nations (UNRWA) made about the refugee crisis were:

“The Gaza Strip is home to a population of approximately 1.9 million people, including some 1.4 million Palestine refugees. Years of conflict and blockade have left 80 per cent of the population dependent on international assistance while the continuing intra-Palestinian divisions serve to exacerbate the humanitarian and service delivery crisis on the ground.

Access to clean water and electricity remains at crisis level and impacts nearly every aspect of life in Gaza. Clean water is unavailable for 95 per cent of the population, and availability of electricity improved only recently, increasing from 4-5 hours per day in the past months to up to 12 hours per day.”

The situation in the refugee camps varies depending on the size and number of people it has. However, in the case of the Gaza region, all are at their maximum capacity, with the result that the services they provide are not enough. Many of these services are basic necessities such as food, water, and medicine. Refugee camps, being so full, can be sites of origin of diseases that can pass quickly through a population, especially because of the hygiene crisis they face, as in the case of cholera, which spreads due to the overcrowding of people around unsafe water sources. A lack of vaccines means that other diseases, such as measles or even respiratory diseases, can be commonly seen in these camps.

It is this situation that is alarming because, as the situation worsens generally in the region, more displaced persons will arrive, causing even more overcrowding. Of these arrivals, very few have been vaccinated and are in good health. In order to stop this problem, many UN convoys have crossed through neighbouring countries, such as Israel and Egypt, to bring aid. However, in many cases it is not enough to cater for the needs of the camps.

There are other essential services that are not being provided in the camps, such as proper education and security. The problem arises, as has already been said, because it has not been possible to establish a peaceful solution to the conflict, locking these people up in the camp and making them dependent on humanitarian aid. As there is not a flow of people leaving, the number of people who need help increases more and more, in some cases causing the closure of services such as education in order to carry out others, such as the treatment of diseases, or even just to make room for people to sleep.

Currently there are 8 refugee camps in Gaza that, instead of decreasing in size, grow more and more. With this said, the presence of the United Nations in this region is vital, since it is one of the only ways for people to receive the most basic services and adequate protection. 73% of the Palestinian population in Gaza is sustained through the United Nations and its aid to refugees.

In the end, it has become increasingly difficult for resources to enter this region, due to the current political situation. Very few countries are willing to help refugees and open their borders to allow humanitarian aid to pass through. One of the most important problems is that these countries consider that the refugees are acting as shields for groups that, according to them, are terrorists, making them a threat. The reality, however, shows that the most affected people are being abandoned without the resources that are necessary to live. With this increase in tension, it is becoming even more difficult to help the refugees.

iii. Key points of the debate

- Palestinians unable to enter or leave their country due to the closure of borders with Israel and Egypt
- All sources of medical supplies, food and other necessities for Gaza under Israeli control
- Refusal of Hamas and the state of Israel to reach an agreement
- The increase in Jewish settlements has caused the displacement of more Palestinians
- The situation is getting out of control which could lead to a humanitarian disaster if Gaza is invaded again.
- Necessity of opening all borders with Gaza for the entrance of more humanitarian aid.
- The increase in refugees causes a deterioration of the infrastructure of the region as well as of the refugee camps in which it is found, resulting in an increase in diseases due to lack of hygiene.
- A viable solution needs to be found for refugees to have a place to settle safely and peacefully with basic services such as water and energy.
- Should countries like Israel and its allies be responsible for helping refugees or instead should be neighbouring Muslim countries.
- How and in what way should the refugees be treated, what are the services they need and which others can be replaced?

Reminder: UNHCR is ONLY in charge of protecting the refugees who, in this case, may be in danger with the escalation of violence between Israel and Gaza. We also have to

promote lasting solutions to such situations, in which neither side wants to negotiate, as well as to promote jobs and a better quality of life.

iv. Participating Organisms

- United Nations (UN)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)
- Israel Defence Force (IDF)
- Fatah
- Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR)
- Human Rights Watch (HRW)
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- Hamas

v. Guiding Questions

1. What is your country's current position towards helping refugees in Gaza?
2. How can we ensure that basic necessities of life are provided to the vulnerable population in Gaza?
3. Which solutions can your country provide to the Gaza refugee crisis?
4. To what extent is humanitarian aid to Gaza sufficient in solving the crisis?
5. How can the refugee situation in Gaza be resolved by the international community without causing political conflict in the region?
6. What should be done to open borders with the Gaza strip?
7. Is the support from the United Nations generally sufficient? What else needs to be done?

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