



NOVICE 43

HUNTINGTON BEACH HIGH SCHOOL



UNHCR
Yemeni IDPs

Velmar Amador-Lankster
Jaiden Co
Danielle Ito

Welcome Letter

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of the Huntington Beach High School Model United Nations Program, we would like to welcome you to our Novice 43 conference!

Our annual Novice conference upholds the principles and intended purpose of the United Nations. Delegates can expect to partake in a professional, well-run debate that simulates the very issues that those at the United Nations discuss every day. Both novel and traditional ideas will be shared, challenged, and improved.

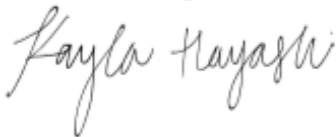
It is our hope that all delegates will receive the opportunity to enhance their research, public speaking, and communication skills as they explore the intricacies of global concerns through various perspectives, some of which may be very different from their own. We hope their experiences here give them new insight and values that they can apply outside of the realm of Model UN for the betterment of the world community.

Although we will be entertaining a new style of a virtual conference, we hope all delegates will experience a fruitful and enhancing debate. Please do not hesitate to approach our Secretariat or Staff Members with any questions or concerns that you may have throughout the day. We wish the best to all our participants and hope that they may share a fulfilling experience with us! Enjoy the conference.

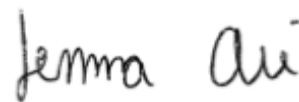
Sincerely,



Summer Balentine
Secretary-General



Kayla Hayashi
Secretary-General



Jenna Ali
Secretary-General



Hailey Holcomb
Secretary-General

Meet the Dias

Velmar Amador-Lankster

Hi Delegates! My name is Velmar Amador-Lankster, and I will be one of your chairs at Novice 2021. I am currently a junior at Huntington Beach High School, and I have been a part of the MUN program since my freshman year. I am looking forward to meeting you all in committee and facilitating an engaging debate with all of your innovative ideas! Outside of MUN, I am a part of the National Honors Society, the California Scholarship Federation, as well as the Bridges program. In my free time, I like to spend time with my family and friends, travel to new places, go on hikes and explore, listen to music, and volunteer at the Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy. I am so excited for Novice 43, and I hope you are as well! I wish you all the best of luck, and I look forward to seeing you in committee!

Jaiden Co

Hey Delegates! My name is Jaiden Co, and I am so excited to be one of your UNHCR chairs for Novice 43! I am currently a junior at Huntington Beach High School and have been a part of the MUN program since freshman year. MUN has been a crucial part of my high school career, as it has taught me critical problem solving and leadership skills. A few other on-campus programs I am currently involved in include the Varsity Track and Field team, president of the Activism Club, head director of Community Caretakers, the Executive Board for ProjectX and Bridges, as well as National Honors Society, Link Crew, and Juniorology! In my free time, I like to listen to Grammy-award-winning artist Harry Styles, blast 5 Seconds of Summer down PCH, and mourn over the fact that One Direction has been on an “18-month hiatus” for almost 6 years. I look forward to meeting you all and can not wait to chair Novice 43. Good luck, Delegates!

Danielle Ito

Hi everyone! My name is Danielle Ito, and I am a junior at Huntington Beach High School as well as one of your chairs for UNHCR. Since freshman year, I have participated in Huntington’s MUN program and loved exploring international issues, while simultaneously discovering intrinsic solutions. At school, I am on the Executive Board for the National Honor Society, Make-A-Wish Club and Link Crew, a member of the California Scholarship Federation, and a part of the track and field team. This year, I had the incredible opportunity to be a co-candidate in the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society’s Students of the Year campaign in which my team and I raised over \$58,000 to help cure blood cancer. I did gymnastics for 13 years and competed for 9, which sparked my interest in sports medicine. I can’t wait to meet all of you at Novice 43! Good luck and have fun!

All Papers are due on April 18th, 2021 by 11:59pm to
hcrnovice@gmail.com

Yemeni IDPs

BACKGROUND

Located on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, the Republic of Yemen's civil war has ensued since March 2015, evolving into an internationally invested conflict and the world's worst humanitarian crisis, according to the United Nations Humanitarian Office.¹ Following the reunification of South Yemen with a Shiite majority and North Yemen with a Sunni majority in May 1990, President Ali Abdullah Saleh led Yemen with corrupt, manipulative tactics that plummeted Yemeni citizens into poverty; among the 31 million population, 40 percent of the citizens were living off of \$2 a day.² Disgusted by Saleh's leadership, protests erupted in the capital of Sana'a and other Yemeni cities as the Arab Spring, a pro-democracy movement, permeated North Africa and the Middle East.³ While the protestors demanded an improved economy, lower unemployment rates, and the end of political corruption, Saleh's weakening authority allowed terrorist groups to rise to power, including Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) who dominated Yemen's eastern territories in February 2011.⁴ After 10 months of protests, Saleh resigned and transferred his presidential responsibilities to Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi in February 2012. Although Hadi proposed democratic reform and solutions to improve national conditions, poverty, food insecurity, unemployment, jihadist revolts, and the Southern Separatist Movement hindered his political efforts.⁵

After two years of persistent governmental instability, the Houthis, a Shia Muslim group, took militaristic action against the government in order to obtain political power.⁶ With the support of citizens, forces loyal to former President Saleh, and Iran, the Houthis conquered Sana'a in September 2014 and seized the Presidential Palace, forcing Hadi to flee to Aden and then Saudi Arabia.⁷ After the Gulf Cooperation Council, a union among six Arab nations along the Persian Gulf, declared the rebellion to be a coup, Saudi Arabia launched Operation Decisive Storm, a campaign with support from the United States, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and 11 other nations, to deter Iran, restore Hadi's authority, and prevent terrorists from controlling the Bab El Mandeb Strait.⁸ Because of the air strikes initiated by Operation Decisive Storm and the US, 60 percent of Yemeni civilian deaths are a result of Saudi Arabia's attacks.⁹ Gulf Cooperation Council's naval and air blockade prevents humanitarian aid from entering Yemen in an effort to stop Iran's weapon smuggling to the Houthis.¹⁰ In 2015, Hadi and southern Yemenis reconquered Aden from the Houthis and established it as the temporary capital; however, when Hadi fired Aden's governor, Aidarous al-Zubaidi, the Southern Separatist Movement evolved into the Southern Transitional Council (STC), whose objective is independence from the Houthi's capital of Sana'a and northern Yemen.¹¹ After being a member of Operation Decisive Storm and an ally of Saudi Arabia, the UAE withdrew their 10,000 soldiers from Yemen and supported the STC, who currently self-govern Aden.¹²

Because of this ensuing violence, there are currently 4,002,012 internally displaced persons (IDPs) across Yemen.¹³ According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and their *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, IDPs are defined as "persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual

residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.”¹⁴ While refugees flee to other nations in search of safety and asylum, IDPs remain in their native country and therefore, receive legal protection from the national government, but are denied protection by international law.¹⁵ 75 percent of these IDPs are women and children since many men died fighting in the war or during civilian attacks.¹⁶ As of February 2021, 61,028 Yemeni IDPs reside in Aden with large IDP populations in Amanat Al Asimah, Hadramaut, Lahj, Al Maharah, and Taizz.¹⁷ Due to the persistent violence throughout the past 6 years, 80 percent (24 million) of the 31 million national population are in dire need of humanitarian aid.¹⁸

Across Yemen, 64 percent of displaced families have no income while others survive off of \$50 a month, therefore, plummeting them further into famine and poverty.¹⁹ As of December 2020, every 1 in 4 displaced families is headed by a woman, while every 1 in 5 families are led by a girl younger than 18 years old; however, due to sexist cultural and social standards, women struggle to find employment, leaving 57 percent unemployed.²⁰ In order to survive, many families sell their daughters into child marriage, remove children from school, and skip meals since 17 million Yemeni IDPs do not know where to find their next meal.²¹ UNICEF estimates that 2 million IDP children are malnourished, and between April 2015 to October 2018, about 85,000 children died due to severe acute malnutrition.²²

With only 1,250 hospitals functioning in Yemen, over 20 million people do not have accessible healthcare and treatment options and 18 million are deprived of proper sanitation and a clean water supply due to infrastructure destruction.²³ Under these circumstances, Yemen witnessed the largest recorded cholera outbreak, which infected 2.2 million people and killed 3,895 individuals with over half of them being registered IDPs.²⁴ Diphtheria, although preventable, infected 333 people, 79 percent of the cases being among toddlers younger than 5 years-old, and killed 35 people.²⁵ Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, there are currently 3,217 cases and 733 deaths; however, the UN predicts the numbers are higher due to the lack of testing equipment and Houthis’ refusal to confirm how many COVID-19 cases are in the northern areas they control.²⁶ As conflict continues and insufficient medical attention persists, the UN fears that the number of COVID-19 related deaths, especially among IDPs and vulnerable populations, will exceed Yemen’s combined death toll from the last five years.²⁷

It is estimated that 90 percent of Yemeni citizens rely on imported materials, such as food, medical aid, and fuel, but Saudi Arabia’s blockade currently prevents incoming shipments and therefore, contributes to majority of the issues Yemeni IDPs experience today.²⁸ Although 7 million people rely on food assistance, about half of them have received such services due to the lack of supplies and transportation.²⁹ If the blockade remains, the World Food Program (WFP) projects that another 3.2 million people will starve and 150,000 children will die from malnutrition.³⁰ The restrictions of the blockade also make fuel in Yemen scarce and expensive with an inflation of up to 133 percent, thus inhibiting hospital’s abilities to provide clean water, electricity, and vaccine storage.³¹

UNITED NATIONS ACTION

Acknowledging that the crisis in Yemen remains the most devastating humanitarian crisis in the world, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has taken a

proactive stance in attempting to provide aid to the four million people who have been displaced from their homes and 20 million individuals who are in severe need of assistance.³² Since the war began in 2015, the UNHCR has continuously provided essential humanitarian aid to impacted communities in Yemen, including IDPs and other vulnerable populations. Additionally, the UNHCR personnel have been stationed in Yemen in order to facilitate the allocation of emergency shelter supplies, vital household appliances, and financial assistance to the most at-risk groups, such as IDPs.³³ Keeping in mind that the lives of many innocent civilians have been caught in the crossfire of the armed conflicts, the UNHCR has prioritized the restoration of damaged homes and cities through refurbishing public infrastructure in order to host displaced individuals.³⁴ As a means to psychologically rehabilitate communities that have undergone traumatic experiences, the UNHCR has partnered with health providers such as the Aden National Mental Health Hospital in order to establish the Kharaz refugee camp and Basateen-Aden urban refugee program in Yemen.³⁵ In order to prevent the Somali refugee crisis from exacerbating the already-deteriorating conditions in Yemen, the UNHCR initiated an Assisted Spontaneous Return program in 2017 that expedited the return of over 4,800 Somali refugees back to their home country.³⁶ After a flood demolished the capital city of Sana'a in 2010, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) was established in response to the humanitarian crisis that plagued the country. The OCHA targets de-escalation efforts as a means to effectively conduct humanitarian operations, from ensuring the transport of humanitarian goods to the securing the flow of information between the Yemen Humanitarian Country Team and Yemen government officials.³⁷

In addition to providing humanitarian aid to IDPs, the UN has facilitated peaceful negotiations between the Yemeni government and the opposition, which has promoted dialogue and negotiations as recommended by UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions 2014, 2051, and 2140.³⁸ In 2012, the UN Secretary-General established the Special Mission for Yemen with UN Resolution 2014, with a specific focus on providing support for Yemen as it undergoes a political transition in accordance with the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative.³⁹ In December of 2018, UNSC Resolution 2451 endorsed the Stockholm Agreement, which called on all involved parties to fully abide by the ceasefire in the city of Hudaydah; additionally, it permitted the Secretary-General to station a team in Hudayah to ensure the immediate enforcement of the Stockholm Agreement.⁴⁰ In February of 2021, the UNSC passed S/RES/2564 which renewed the Yemen sanctions regime for another year in order to condemn the endless altercations in Marib, as well as reiterated the Houthis' responsibility for the current state of the FSO Safer.⁴¹ Taking into account that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to aggravate the existing conditions of war-torn nations like Yemen, the UNHCR has supplied medical institutions with financial assistance, distributed hygiene kits to impoverished communities, and raised awareness on the severe consequences of COVID-19.⁴² In 2021, the focus of the UNHCR is to provide one million Yemeni IDPs and 44,500 refugees with multipurpose financial assistance, supply over 420,000

IDPS with emergency shelter, and distribute legal awareness and counseling services to over 75,000 IDPs and 8,700 refugees.⁴³

CASE STUDY: IDPS IN COLOMBIA

Similar to the high rates of IDPs in Yemen, the increasing number of IDPs located in Colombia has been detrimental to the economic and social stability of the nation. Both countries have two of the highest rates of IDPs globally, and these numbers continue to increase annually. According to the UNHCR, the Republic of Colombia has approximately 7.7 million registered internally displaced persons. Due to the fact that Colombia is one of the highest IDP-populated countries in the world, the nation has been severely impacted by a humanitarian crisis known as “Colombia’s Invisible Crisis.”⁴⁴ In a 2013 study conducted by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, it was discovered that the IDPs in Colombia account for approximately 19% of the total IDP population worldwide.⁴⁵

The definitions of two types of displacement has been recognized by the UN: displacement due to human-associated dangers and displacement due to armed conflicts. In the case of Colombia, the fight for political power and the violation of human rights are the primary causes for the high rates of IDPs.⁴⁶ While there are multiple extremist groups fighting for political power and redemption from socioeconomic injustices, the most dominant perpetrator of violence is the guerrilla militant rebel group known as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), which has only exacerbated the critical needs of IDPs. Known for their continuous involvement in the Colombian conflict, the FARC has utilized a variety of radical military tactics against the Colombian population, including car bombings and kidnapping for ransom.⁴⁷ Fueled by the motive to establish a communist-agrarian state and the desire to overthrow the Colombian government, the endless attacks conducted by the FARC had resulted in the deaths of approximately 220,000 citizens nationwide.⁴⁸ In 2016, the Colombian government constructed a peace agreement between the government and the FARC, coming to a consensus on resolving the armed conflict through facilitating lasting peace within the nation.⁴⁹ However, despite the promise to uphold amicable relations, the agreement inevitably failed, as illegal armed forces, such as the Gaitanista Self-Defense Groups (AGC), continued to disregard the legal agreement and juxtapose the idea of possible peace, generating higher rates of violence and national conflict.⁵⁰ In addition to the FARC, other groups including the National Liberation Army, a left-wing militant extremist group, and the Medellin Cartel, a powerful Colombian-based drug cartel, which have conducted illegal activities, including money laundering, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and extracting Colombia’s natural resources, such as petroleum and coal, in unauthorized fashions.⁵¹

With a nationwide increase in lethal activities carried out by extremist groups, such as bombings, human trafficking related kidnappings, and mass shootings, the Colombian IDP population has been forced to endure homelessness, severe starvation, and extreme dehydration. In order to combat this issue, in 1997, the Colombian government passed the Law 387, emphasizing its recognition of the critical needs of Colombian IDPs, as well as reiterating its

responsibility to provide shelter and survival necessities to its people in need. However, due to the lack of government enforcement and deficiency in supply of humanitarian resources, this law inevitably failed. While the Colombian government enacted the Law of Peace and Justice in 2005, targeting the demobilization of armed groups and victims' reparations, the right to request restitution was often left unclaimed by the citizens.⁵² In 2008, the Colombian government implemented the Victim's Restitution Bill that has proven to be more successful, as it has provided many IDPs with damage repair and survival necessities through guaranteeing the restitution of land that had been abandoned or transferred while the owners were under duress.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How is your country involved in the Yemeni Civil War? Do they support Hadi's government, the Houthis, the Southern Transitional Council, or neutrality?
2. How has your country responded to the COVID-19 pandemic? Which laws, procedures, and programs were successful in combating COVID-19? How would similar laws and programs be implemented in war-torn countries like Yemen?
3. What solutions designed to improve medical and healthcare accessibility in war-torn areas does your country propose?
4. What would your country propose as a means to effectively distribute humanitarian aid to violence-ridden regions where the government refuses to direct the aid towards the people in need?
5. What programs and mechanisms would your nation propose to combat the high malnutrition rates in Yemen?
6. What can be done to enforce the legal protections granted to IDPs in conflict regions where human rights are not often upheld by the government?
7. What solutions can be implemented to decrease the rate of Yemeni IDP children who lack education? Are there any educational reform programs you would implement?
8. What implementations would you suggest concerning the rapid increase of water-borne diseases that occur due to a lack of available supplies?
9. In order to prevent similar sentiments that resulted in the Houthis military action in 2014, what ways could the voice of marginalized groups be amplified within the political sphere of Yemen?
10. How can marginalized Yemeni communities and their opinions be incorporated and possibly influence the Yemen peace-making process in order to prevent further discrimination?

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