Kingdom of Morocco

Positions for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees

**I. Ensuring the Rights and Safety of Refugee Children**

The Kingdom of Morocco (Morocco) calls upon other states to unite in effort to improve the conditions of child refugees. While Turkey and the European Union (EU) engage in tense and often failed negotiations, thousands of children remain neglected. This issue is especially important to Morocco given the Kingdom’s geographical location in North Africa. Morocco’s close proximity to Spain via the Strait of Gibraltar makes it a key voice within the region on the topic of refugees.

According to the UNHCR, 1,279 people have approached them to apply for asylum in Morocco so far in 2016.[[1]](#footnote-1) Morocco has not encountered Afghan refugees because the vast majority have sought safety in states like Iran and Iraq. However, the Kingdom of Morocco is no stranger to refugee crises, and the unrest in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Syrian Arab Republic has forced many to flee their homes and seek safety in neighboring countries. Morocco does not deport any illegal immigrants that come into our country seeking asylum; this makes the journey to the Kingdom easier. This is crucial because of the population that qualifies as being a refugee or asylee, 12 million of them are children (roughly 46%). Due to underreporting and lack of border enforcement, the actual number of refugees living within Morocco’s borders is likely significantly higher than that. Refugees are a vulnerable population that have endured much adversity. The majority of child refugees do not travel with family members; this leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and vulnerable to influence from outside, negative forces.

The Kingdom of Morocco believes that by expanding the program to allow for government agencies to aid in the registration process. It is imperative to develop a precise demographic of the refugees in order to address their needs. Furthermore, Morocco and other countries could allocate funds more appropriately to refugee camps and programs like the CEI (The International Aid Committee), which gives direct aid to refugees, adult and children alike.

Morocco proposes the creations of programs which deal exclusively with child refugees. These programs would assist member states to obtain more funds to assist child refugees, and advise them on how to apply funds in an efficient manner. This would be a joint effort between the UNHCR and the member state affected. Utilizing the spirit of diplomacy and cooperation will ensure that child refugees receive the rights and opportunities accorded to any citizen of Morocco. In the face of humanitarian crises, the international community must take responsibility and care for refugee children as they represent the future of the all Member States in this committee and the rest of the world.

**II. Protection and Proper Repatriation of Refugees**

 In 2007, the Kingdom of Morocco signed an agreement with the UNHCR to strengthen ties in order to deal with the refugee crisis in Africa more effectively. Morocco believes that it is time to take further action upon this agreement and expand it, especially given the escalation of conflict in Syria and the growing amount of refugees seeking safety within our borders. Morocco already provides a form of protection to incoming refugees by allowing them to stay without risk of deportation. However, this alone is not enough. In order for repatriation to occur, the needs of refugees should be addressed and they must be adequately protected so that they can make the journey back to their home countries. The ultimate goal of any refugee is to reintegrate back into the state from which they fled from. Given the humanitarian issues in many states that that refugees flee, this goal may seem impossible. Morocco believes that they are potential solutions can be solutions to this critical issue that the UNHCR, or the UN, can work together to solve.

 Any solution to effectively deal with this issue in the short term must begin with the refugees themselves. As previously mentioned in Topic I, understanding the extent of the refugee issues would help Morocco and other states plan to accommodate them. Providing for the health and wellness of refugees will ensure that they do leave the state which has sheltered them when it is safe to return home. The majority of the refugees in Morocco are only passing through, but if the international community affected by this crisis were to work toward that common goal, then a larger amount of the refugees in all of those states would be able to leave. A possible long term solution could take the form of the post-war/conflict rebuilding process that would help refugees transition back into their home states. Giving refugees a safe, civilized area to move back to they will be more inclined to move back. With that being said, Morocco does not think that it would take much to convince Syrian refugees in particular to move back to Syria once the fighting ceases. Arabs are very nationalistic, and have deep rooted cultural ties to their country of origin than can be seen in current residents and diaspora. This fact, combined with the short term and long-term goals stated previously will be an effective solution and allow for a seamless repatriation effort by the UNHCR.

1. "Morocco Fact Sheet". 2016. UNHCR. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)