

YUNMUN XXX

UNHRC

Topic 1: Human Rights Violations at the US-Mexico Border

Due to the dangerous environment in parts of Central America, particularly El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, many people are forced to flee in their search for safety<sup>1</sup>. Many of these migrants come to the US-Mexico border hoping to receive asylum from the US government, but are frequently detained and arrested, or deported. Many children are being detained, including an alarming number of unaccompanied minors.

It is understood that countries require regulations and procedures to control their borders. Sovereign countries have the ability to legislate conditions for entrance into their country, yet countries are expected to maintain fair and humane regulations. Refugees are often very vulnerable and flee at great risk.

While any country is entitled to control over their borders, no country is allowed to violate fundamental human rights, nor may they violate the specific rights granted to refugees. The UN expects nations to act in accordance with the Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, which defines and grants rights to those fleeing persecution and those seeking asylum. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights includes the right of seeking asylum (Article 14). The Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees understands the critical importance of non-refoulement, that is, that the protection from being expelled and sent back to a place of danger, and acknowledges that sometimes refugees must disobey immigration policy and should not be penalized.

With this in mind, events at the US-Mexico border are alarming and in clear violation of human rights. Especially concerning are reports of children being separated from their parents, detainment of children for longer than is allowed, and the conditions in which people are being held. The conditions are overcrowded and dangerous, without enough access to basic sanitary needs or food<sup>2</sup>. Many children are sick and not being treated with proper care<sup>3</sup>. Also troubling is the lack of transparency and ambiguous purpose in government actions.

As delegates, you should be preparing to discuss the legal and humanitarian violations of the US authorities. We will specifically be focussing on the human rights violations of the children being detained. Think about questions on how we define refugees or asylum seekers, and what their rights are. Look at the protocols set out by the UN and try to determine to what extent US

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.amnestyusa.org/fleeing-for-our-lives-central-american-migrant-crisis/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/07/1041991>

<sup>3</sup> <https://time.com/5623148/migrant-detention-centers-conditions/>

actions are in tension with these expectations. What does your country think should be done? What does your country think our responsibility towards refugees is? How do we address the inhumane conditions migrants are being held in at the US border, and what can be done for the children whose rights are being violated? What specific rights do children have, and how can we ensure that they are being protected?

Remember that you are representing the views of your country, so it is important to consider your country's relationship with migrants and refugees. It is also important to research who your country's allies are, and ensure that you consider what your country would do to address these issues, understanding that there are children at risk. Please also keep in mind that all papers will be checked by Turnitin and no plagiarism will be tolerated.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns to me via email at [akelman1@mail.yu.edu](mailto:akelman1@mail.yu.edu).

Best,

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