



**XXII TecMUN Jr.**

**COUNCIL OF  
EUROPE**

COE

Dear delegates:

I could go ahead and lie to you, tell you I have no words to describe what I feel as I see you standing at this menacing threshold of opportunities. Truth is, I do have the words. In fact, I've got too many.

It becomes obnoxiously ominous, this feeling I've got, that things are finally reaching the climax, and naturally, the end. Yet, it is not the time to fall into nostalgia, for the challenge lies in the *present*, not in a not so distant tomorrow, nor in a possible yesterday; the journey... *your* journey, has just begun.

Let me tell you then, dear delegate, not about what you are going to experience during the next three days, but about the rivers we have crossed as humankind. We've been to the most wonderful places across the world, and visited impossible sights; explored the limits of human potential. We've descended into the darkest places of the human heart and fought against many shadows; faced great tasks and rejoiced at the sight of miracles. I wonder, and I do so regularly, how often is it that we ignore the great mass of people that go by, living their lives, existing so separately from us?

Among that mass of unrecognizable faces, betwixt endless streams of unknown memories, hide a thousand and one more stories to be told. Every day a billion new thoughts impregnate the pale blue dot we call our *home*. As the days go by and life takes place inside the simplest things –the sounds of laughter; a hug; a smile–, as the continuous cycle of humanity turns itself anew, I ask you, how ready are we for human unity? Regardless of all the flash floods of pain, the scorching uncertainty of our decisions, humanity is wonderful. Love, music, colors; the most apparently insignificant things can actually be humanity's most appealing trait. We are curious, we share, we adapt, and we build bridges... "For all failings, despite our limitations and fallibilities, we humans are capable of greatness..."(Sagan, 1994).

I could go ahead and lie to you, tell you I have no words to describe what I feel as I see you standing at this menacing threshold of opportunities. Truth is, *no words are needed*. Begin your journey through the immeasurable probabilities of life. Visit the most wonderful places and descend into the deepest darkness of night. Create miracles and enjoy laughter, accept pain and move on. Finally, build, create, believe, and above all, *live*, for only after truly living it is that we can truly understand the intrinsic value of life. Only then, will humans stand as one, and truly realize all the rivers we had to cross before we found our way.

Emilio Rentería González  
Under-secretary for Specialized Agencies and Regional Organisms

Dear Minister,

What do you think is the worth of a soul? I consider, that a soul is worth the experiences it has been through, the immeasurable laughter and the sorrowful tears that have run through your face, the trembling of your hands and the stutter of your voice, the night-sky shine of your smile and every single thought that passes by your mind. Is your soul worth?

Life gives us so many silent opportunities to change, to improve and to be the best version of ourselves that it is sad how many of them are wasted and forgotten. A model of the United Nations seems like a silly opportunity to actually change something in this world, it is just a witty game that we play. But everything starts as an idea, the motivation to change and the spark to start a fiery flame; I believe, that right now because of the simple fact of being here today, for existing and breathing and thinking and laughing, you are changing the world.

Take this opportunity, if you wish, to grow as a person, as a whole. Become the best you can be and the world will follow. If you put a little bit of effort into every day, if you can change the world for one second; then, congratulations minister, you've changed the world for today. Your soul and your mind are of extreme value.

We live in a world in which young people are often perceived as useless members of the society, as a dead weight to this world. Is it true? The voices of the youth that scream in desperation for a change are getting louder. It is your time to make your voice be heard. You've come to the right place for that. Three days seem like nothing if what we want is to change the world, we don't have the possibility nor the power to do so. But then again, Rome wasn't built in one day.

If we pour our efforts together and truly wish for a better world, it will be achieved. There is no such thing as impossible for the human race. All we have to do is that, compile our seconds of effort into an unfathomable mass of the work of hundreds, thousands, millions of young people that constantly want to change the world, to make it a peaceful and worthy place in honor to those great men that have walked it in the past.

Minister, make your voice be heard. Scream if it is necessary. I assure you, someone is listening, a simple idea can be spread like a massive disease; however, this is not a disease, it is a cure. We, as the new generations are the cure for this world. Make sure it is spread through your voice, thoughts and actions. I believe in you, minister. Make our efforts worth something.

Juan Manuel Gómez Portugal Zermeño  
President for the Council of Europe.

### ***Council Overview.***

The Council of Europe -hereinafter referred to as *COE*- is Europe's leading human rights organisation. As of 2014 the Council is formed by 47 member-states of which 28 are members of the European Union. The Council was founded in 1949 by the Treaty of London. The Council advocates and promotes freedom, equality and protection of human rights as it also helps member states fight corruption and terrorism via the Venice Commission that offers legal advice to countries throughout the world.

### ***Topic A: Preventive motions towards the arising discrimination due the anti-LGBT propaganda law in the Russian Federation and other conservative European countries.***

The International People with Different Sexual Preferences Association - hereinafter referred to as *ILGA*- lists 77 countries with criminal laws against sexual activity by members of the LGBT community. On December 11th, 2013, that total increased to 82 countries with anti-LGBT laws; after the Supreme Court of India reversed a lower court ruling that had suspended enforcement of the law. In Europe, countries with anti-LGBT laws are:

**The Russian Federation**, which enacted an anti-LGBT propaganda law in 2013 prohibiting any positive mention of homosexuality in the presence of minors; following the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia liberalized some of its anti-LGBT laws. Despite certain liberalization trends during the immediate post-Soviet period, in recent years, Russian authorities have routinely denied permits for Pride parades, as well as intimidated and arrested LGBT activists and condoned anti-LGBT statements by government officials.

The Federal Law of the Russian Federation no. 436-FZ of 2010-12-23 “On Protection of Children from Information Harmful to their Health and Development” -hereinafter referred to as Russian *anti-LGBT propaganda law*- was established in Russia in 2010. During 2013 the law received a second amendment that determined non-traditional sexual relationships as harmful propaganda. It would amend Article 69 of the Family Code to provide the government with the authority to terminate the parental rights of individuals raising children with same-sex partners, as well as those who are simply suspected of engaging in homosexual behavior. This would add people with different sexual preferences to a list of grounds for termination of parental rights that currently includes alcohol and drug addiction and child abuse.

The strategy used to ban this propaganda is mostly to rely in family values and use the same principles and arguments used in the United States when referring to same-sex marriage. This proposal takes base in the justification for removing children from the “propaganda” that is manifested in the lives and relationships of their parents.

This law, which has been published in the media, has been addressed as the law banning people with different sexual preferences propaganda. First enacted on June 11, 2013 and later approved by the Russian Federation’s Council fifteen days later, on June 26, 2013. A second law, banning promotion of non-traditional sexual relationships among minors was signed by the Federation’s President (Vladimir Putin) on July 30, 2013. It states that any LGBT-related propaganda is automatically considered as a promotion of non-traditional sexual relationships and can be punished by public authorities; authorities also take measures to ‘protect’ children from this promotions or propaganda.

On the other hand, the support this amendment received from the conservative groups and the majority of the Russian population was used as a

justification for the discrimination and violence towards the LGBT groups. This was noticed by the international community mostly during the Olympic Winter Games in 2013 (that were hosted at Sochi) for there were several reports of hate crimes against the LGBT groups.

The LGBT community in the Russian Federation has reported various recent cases of hate crimes towards the community and its individual members. The State Department of the United States of America noted the prevalence of violence and crimes towards the LGBT via their annual Human Rights Report as well as how the Russian federal authorities often fail to respond. Pride parades in both Moscow and St. Petersburg were marked by violence during last year's summer. In May 2013, a young man was sexually and physically assaulted and later brutally murdered as was reported by local and international media, this event occurred in Volgograd and worried the international community as it implies the rising of homophobia at a national level.

Professionals for Ethics, an NGO in Spain, expressed "serious concern about the massive attacks and pressure" on Russia by the advocates of the protection of sexual minorities from the international community ever since the law has been. The organisation stated that this law banning the LGBT propaganda and promotions among children and minors protects both the rights of the children and the parent. With recognition of several international treaties and ILGA-Europe, the European International LGBT Association rated the Russian Federation as the least protective territory in Europe for LGBT citizens and their rights; holding the 49<sup>th</sup> spot out of 49 European countries.

It is to be noted, that the Russian Federation isn't the only territory that has anti-LGBT laws. The Russian anti-LGBT promotion and propaganda law was supported by over 150 organisations from 33 countries all over the world. In 2011,

United Nations Report surveys that same-sex relationships are considered crime in around 85 countries.

**Ukraine** has considered, but so far has not adopted a similar law against people with different sexual preferences propaganda. The Ukrainian Parliament began examining Bill 8711 late in 2011. The draft law would criminalise publicly supporting the rights of LGBT persons with fines and up to five years' imprisonment. The European Commission has now said that Ukraine's proposed anti-LGBT law would jeopardize prospects of liberalisation with the European Union.

A representative from the Ukrainian Council of LGBT Organisations noted that the attempts of the Ukrainian anti-discrimination laws weren't actually protecting the LGBT community effectively from hate crimes or other types of discrimination. Svoboda, the far-right political party, has been described as a conservative party that actively attempts to limit the LGBT community's rights.

In 2013 Moldova adopted this law on its own territory, however the law was later repealed the same year as it was considered a violation against human rights. During June 2014, Kyrgyzstan was on the verge of implementing this law, however it was cancelled on June 17th; this law included punishments such as fines and jail sentences.

Forms of violence against the LGBT community that reject equality include but are not limited to all forms of hateful speech, including religious extremist arguments, to preempt any form of debate on LGBT people's rights, and even to question LGBT people's freedom of expression. Russia and other conservative European countries are actually expanding protections of members of the LGBT community. On September 20, 2013 the official delegation of the Russian

Federation announced their willingness to take all required measures to prevent homophobic hate crimes and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation.

The Council's first project against discrimination towards the LGBT community took place between September 2011 and December 2013. This campaign focused on taking measures, conferences and activities with the purpose of developing national strategies and action plans to give people in the LGBT community the rights that they deserve and the tools to stand up to defend them in order to be free from any kind of discrimination because of sexual orientation or gender identity.

According to the Council of Europe activities (2014), diplomatic efforts in this area are focused on:

- **Eliminating discriminatory laws and policies, decriminalisation, and ending the death penalty for same-sex relations (currently applicable in 7 countries);** 13 December 2012, Belgrade (Serbia): The Council's conference in Serbia addressing the LGBT Project took place in Belgrade. Later during 15-16 of February 2012 in Rome (Italy), Elsa Fornero, the Minister of Labour in Social Policies and Equal Opportunities, did the official launching conference opening; the conference was attended by several high representatives of State entities, Senate, Ministries, Ombudsperson and NGOs.
- **Promoting equality and non-discrimination at work, in healthcare and in education;** 17 December 2012, Tirana (Albania): The launching of the "Action Plan of Measures for non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity" took place in Tirana, organized by the Albanian Government, as part of the LGBT Project. 29 March 2012, Strasbourg, partner states seminar. The seminar was organised as a

workshop aimed at sharing experiences, progress, obstacles and defining goals and activities for every partner country. This workshop was organised in Strasbourg by the LGBT project team supported by the LGBT expert, Dennis Van der Veur.

- **Combating violence by the state or by individuals against LGBT persons;** 27 September 2012, Oslo, partner states seminar. The seminar was organised as a workshop and aimed at helping partner countries to define their action plans. This workshop was organised in Oslo by the LGBT project team. 18 July 2012, Warsaw (Poland). The startup conference of the Council of Europe LGBT Project in Poland was held in Warsaw and gathered national stakeholders working in the field of LGBT issues.
- **Supporting and protecting human rights defenders;** 6 March 2012, Warsaw (Poland), preliminary meetings with the Polish Government Plenipotentiary and representatives of relevant Ministries, the Human Rights Defenders Office and NGOs.

The Russian Federation's laws establish the following when it comes to homosexuality:

- People that are identified as transgender or transexual may legally change their gender after the corresponding medical measures have been taken, this was first implemented in 1997.
- Homosexuality stopped being considered as a mental illness in 1999.
- Same sex couples are not allowed to adopt children, however, a single homosexual parent may adopt children in Russia.

Homophobia in Russia has been a problem for a long time, what's worrying is the fact that it has been rising since the last decade. In 2003 around 60% of the Russian population stated that they were against homosexuality and that they should be isolated from society, however in 2013 this quantity increased when 74% of the population said that homosexuality should not be accepted by society in Russia. This worries the international community as Russian authorities have proved to support most crimes against human dignity involving hate crimes against homosexual people. The society in the Russian Federation also seems to approve and even encourage this behavior and violence towards people with different sexual preferences.

Same-sex marriage is out of question at the moment in the Russian Federation as the church has clearly implied that all same-sex marriages are a sign of the apocalypse. During a public speech in 2003, Vladimir Putin compared same-sex marriage to Satanism: A policy is being conducted of putting on the same level multi-child families and single-sex partnerships, belief in God and belief in Satan. The excesses of political correctness are leading to the point where people are talking seriously about registering parties whose goal is legalising the propaganda of paedophilia. (qtd. in Buckley)

The president also criticized it as “a direct course to degradation and simplification, to the deep demographic and moral crisis.” (qtd. in Buckley)

Russia allows people with different sexual preferences in the military service as it does not restrain them in any way to accomplish it, however, they do not protect or aid people who may be suffering or being victims of hate crimes inside the army because of their own homosexuality. “We need to respect the rights of minorities to be different, but the rights of the majority should not be in question” (qtd. in Buckley), Vladimir Putin claimed.

As for pride events, the Moscow government has proved to be fully against as they have banned these parades stating that it may cause public disorder and there might be a lack of support from Moscow's population. Moscow's City government banned requests for Pride events every year from 2012 to 2015 to avoid further problems and possible crimes.



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### **Topic B: Status of refugees from the Syrian Civil Belligerent Conflict in Europe and improvement of their migration policies.**

The belligerent conflict that is currently taking place in Syria (known as Syrian Civil War or Syrian Uprising), is an armed conflict between the government and rebel groups that has been taking place in Syria since early 2011. The conflict began during March 2011 with simple protests against the current government (President Bashar al-Assad) that were quickly responded with violent sieges from the Syrian army. As time passed, this small conflict turned from protests to a whole armed rebellion as a result of all the military sieges that took place during mid-late 2011. The opposition is formed by various rebel groups such as the Islamic Front and the Free Syrian Army.

The rebel forces have been supported by Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United States while the Syrian government has been upheld by the Russian Federation and Iran. By mid 2013, according to the United Nations, the death toll increased up to 120,000 human beings. On the other hand, thousands of activists, advocates and students have been imprisoned and tortured unfairly.

Human Rights organisations all over the world have accused the Syrian government and the rebel forces for the use of chemical weapons and the violation

of human rights during the conflict; it was later determined by the United Nations alongside several internationally recognized NGOs that most of these abuses were perpetrated by the government instead of the rebel forces. Herein, in 2011 four million Syrians were displaced, three million became refugees in other countries and four million more had everything taken from them, being left with poor living conditions as well as deficit of basic supplies and food.

As of 2014 around nine million have fled the country since 2011, taking refuge in African and Asian countries mostly. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees -hereinafter referred to as *UNHCR*- has stated that around two million fled to immediate neighbor countries (Lebanon, Turkey, and Iraq). About six million of these refugees were displaced in Syria itself while the remaining refugees declared asylum in Europe; mostly in countries like Germany and Sweden.

The international community is preoccupied by the miniscule amount of refugees that have been aided in Europe.(UNHCR) The United Nations refugee agency, UNCR, has expressed its concern about Europe's poor efforts. Syrian refugees that seek asylum in other countries, whose number is expected to exceed three million, are mostly located in Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon and a few more in Iraq and Egypt. UNHCR representative, Melissa Fleming, expressed her concern as it "is obvious now, that the neighboring countries have reached their saturation point" (qtd. in Miles) meaning that refugees will start moving beyond these neighboring countries and start seeking refuge in the European continent, thus, the UN has asked Europe to do more as roughly 100,000 refugees have been taken in. In almost 4 years of conflict, there have been around 200,000 asylum requests, of which almost three million are already in countries neighboring Syria, this numbers are small if not miniscule as the represent less than four percent of the Syrian population.

The UNHCR has pointed out that Europe has a population of 670 million people, while Lebanon has 4.4 million and still has received 1.1 million refugees (one quarter of their population), further proving that Europe's efforts up to this point have been insignificant. Potentially, the 6.5 million refugees that were internally displaced in Syria could also seek to escape the country in a near future, as there is in sight no end to the conflict.

Despite of the European Union being a major donor for humanitarian help in Syria, several of the continent's countries have 'terrible' conditions when receiving Syrians; in some countries they are detained, imprisoned or tortured unfairly while on others (Such as Spain, Greece and Bulgaria) they are rejected before even getting into the country itself. According to Fleming, "there was one case in which survivors claim their boat was being turned around by an official boat and in the process of being turned around it capsized and many of the passengers died. This is unacceptable." (qtd. in Miles) The concern that the UNHCR has is the response in some European countries that include troubling border practices, terrible reception conditions, troubling in asylum procedures, obstacles to family reunification and the lack of mechanisms to assist refugees with specific needs.

It is worrisome to the international community that Russia, an ally of the Syrian government, hasn't taken in any refugees (especially concerning when taking into consideration Russia's territory magnitude) although it did grant temporary asylum to around 1200 Syrians. The Russian Federation broke an international law principle when it sent back twelve Syrian refugees, this principle being the fact that no refugees should be sent back to where their life, freedom or integrity could be compromised.

Around twenty European countries have offered to take in 31,800 of the most needed refugees, however the United Nations asked the continent to hold

around 100,000 instead, which is barely around 3,000 per country. It is to be pointed out that some refugees have declined the aid that Europe may offer as they prefer to remain closer to their country of origin in Arabic-speaking communities, Fleming stressed her concern as this may also be fault of the media for “awfully distorted headlines claiming floods of Syrians were to arrive Europe” (qtd. in Miles). The UNHCR made it clear that they are looking for any kind of protection or different mechanisms that could allow the admission of more Syrians such as “family reunification, extending student visas or even offering scholarships” (UNHCR).

The increase of Syrian refugees is constantly exposing holes in the European systems referring the protection and asylum of refugees. The support needed should be offered by the EU to state-members that have been constantly receiving refugees or whose reception and asylum systems don't have the necessary equipment to deal with the influx of Syrian population. This will strengthen the mechanisms that are currently being used to provide refuge, and thus it will lead to a better respond to refugee crisis in the future. The UNHCR considers this crisis as an opportunity for the current members of the European Union to show that the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) can provide the protection and aid as supposed to Syrian refugees.

It is required that the new protection systems ensures the protection of the refugees that may arrive to European borders. Currently, several European countries have implemented positive practices that respect and ensure the protection of refugees to arrive. The UNHCR has pointed out the fact that most European countries have not returned or sent back any refugees to countries neighboring Syria such as Lebanon and Turkey. In addition to respecting the international law principle of not returning refugees, this is a concrete gesture of

solidarity with other countries such as Egypt and those who are neighbors to Syria as they are currently holding the biggest amount of Syrian refugees in the world.

Member states of the European Union as well as independent European countries that are located near the region adjacent to Syria are well aware of the increase in the influx of refugees as Syria's neighbors are already saturated. This gives them the opportunity to further improve their detection system of people who need asylum assistance, so that they can be referred to the corresponding authorities in the faster way possible. Eleven countries in the Schengen area continue to impose Airport Transit Visas to Syrian nationals. These visas represent a barrier for refugees that seek protection and aid in the European continent; member-states could further improve their protection systems for Syrian refugees by eliminating transit visas. If people fleeing the Syrian belligerent conflict get to Europe either without any documentation, with false or illegal documentation bought in the black market or without the necessary visa, international protection considerations need to be applied.

During 2013 there were several reports of refugees that were unable to reach the borders because European authorities prevented them from crossing. The United Nations have documented these "pushbacks" in certain countries as they may compromise the lives and integrity of several refugees. Physical barriers such as fences and borders may put Syrian refugees in further danger as they could be put in risk by human traffickers. The United Nations recognize the need of authorities and police force in borders, however, it does not encourage the fact that most of these authorities abuse of their power or prevent people seeking for refuge the right to enter a country.

The UNHCR has exhorted the European continent to assure the following when it comes to its borders' authorities and security systems:

- States should **guarantee protection from *refoulement***.
- UNHCR calls for a **global moratorium on returns** to Syria, the countries neighbouring Syria, and Egypt.
- States should **provide access to territory** for people seeking protection in Europe.
- **Pushbacks** of asylum-seekers to prevent access to territory and to asylum procedures **should cease immediately**.
- States are encouraged to **waive transit visas** for Syrian asylum-seekers. If lifting visa restrictions for Syrians cannot be achieved in the short term, States are encouraged to ensure the **simplification and flexible application** of existing measures.

Ever since the Syrian Belligerent Conflict began, and until May 2014, around 115,000 Syrians have sought and international protection in the European continent of which over 50,000 were only in 2013 alone. During early 2014, over 30,000 refugees applied for asylum in member states of the European Union, which is around 2.5 times of the amount that applied in 2013 during the same time (13,500). In 2013, Syria became the country with the most people looking to apply for asylum in Europe, it's percentage of applications increased by 126% between 2012 and 2013, moving it from third to first place. During 2013, about 30 percent of refugees looking to apply for asylum were children, while almost 50 percent were young adults.

During the last few months, Syria's situation when it comes to human rights has rapidly gotten worse compared to the preceding three years of this

conflict, the humanitarian aid donations that Syria was constantly receiving from countries all over the world have as well been reduced. The UNHCR keeps constantly getting reports of the murder or arbitrarily arrest of Syrian civils as well as detention, disappearance, rape, and torture and ill-treatment, these inhuman conditions and treatments are mostly against children and woman.

During mid 2013, around 1.5 million Syrian refugees were registered (meaning a significant increase compared to 2011-2012), however, the UNHCR considers that the number may be higher as not every Syrian seeking for refuge was registered. This year, around one million Syrians have been registered since January, meaning that the number may again increase potentially compared to last year's register. As it was expected, most of these asylum seekers were registered in countries with regions adjacent to the Syrian territory; meanwhile, in Europe, the arrival of Syrian refugees is still relatively small compared to that of Lebanon, Turkey and Egypt. The UNHCR has obtained official notice from countries stating that around 37,000 refugees have requested asylum in European Union member-states while only 2,700 have sought aid in other European countries such as Iceland and Liechtenstein. Although, this means that every day, more and more Syrian refugees are getting to Europe aided by the authorities, a massive 58% of these refugees have been mostly registered in asylums by both Germany and Sweden.

Although the situation of the refugees is improving, the situation for those who haven't been able to leave the country worsen as the conflict reaches a larger scale. Considering that host countries, international NGOs and human rights organisations are doing their best efforts to improve the humanitarian aid in Syria, there seems to be no close end to this conflict. The issues that need to be attended range from access to basic supplies and education or health care to protection

against gender-based violence. The protection of children and young adults are also a matter of concern in some refugee camps.

Considering how fast the situation– in both Syria and countries neighboring Syria that are hosting refugees– is deteriorating, the UNHCR calls the European continent for as much support as possible. European Union state-members, alongside other European countries, have been giving Syria constant financial aid in order to improve the humanitarian help, however, as the conflict advances, further funding will be needed. It is required that strong security measures are taken in borders in order to actually help the Syrian refugees. The UNHCR published an official revised document that guided countries in terms of how to handle aid-seekers and the measures that need to be taken when hosting refugees. The UNHCR is constantly looking to improve their systems and to provide the aid refugees may need in obnoxious situations as it is also continuously adapting to eliminate problems as fast as it is possible.

The UNHCR constantly reminds the European continent of the importance of improving the access to the continent to refugees. It has been stressed by the High Commissioner that the applications for refuge should be handled in a timed fashion and that detention of asylum-seekers should only be used under extreme circumstances and as a last resort. According to the UNHCR, most of these Syrian asylum-seekers that search for international protection will fulfil the requirements to be considered refugees according to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees. Where persons are found not to meet the 1951 Convention criteria, complementary forms of protection are likely to apply, including subsidiary or other forms of protection under regional or national law, or situation-based refugee criteria.

The international community is still concerned as there have been several reports stressing issues that heavily impact the whole process of hosting refugees such as: Syrians denied access in some external border States; the arrest and use of detention for Syrians; obstacles preventing access to asylum procedures for those who do need protection; low recognition rates for Syrian applicants, despite the evident risks of persecution and serious harm which prompt people to flee.

Taking into consideration the current situation in the region and the saturation that Syria's neighbor countries are currently experiencing, the UNHCR has proposed itself to start a process of humanitarian admission in order to immediately help around 10,000 Syrian asylum-seekers with special circumstances or extreme need that are currently in Lebanon, Turkey, Egypt, Iraq or other countries in the region adjoint to Syria. This measure bring an opportunity to assure instant international protection to those who need it as the UNHCR up-scales its resettlement programme in this region as well as in Europe.

The UNHCR was extremely pleased when the Federal Republic of Germany stated that as of March 2013 they were starting the Humanitarian Admission Pilot (HAP) project. With this programme running, around 5,000 refugees—mostly from Lebanon— will be admitted in Germany with a 2-year residence permit— extendable if the conflict in Syria continues after the expiration date. The UNHCR has been working closely with Germany ever since, in order to assure the project's success so that it can be implemented in the rest of the continent. Although there have been several problems during the time lapse this project has had, the initiative is still helping thousands of Syrians with international protection as well as asylum. The High Commissioner calls the rest of the European continent to follow Germany's initiative in order to aid as many Syrian refugees that are in extreme necessity as soon as it is possible.

The High Commissioner has been working on an enhanced humanitarian admission program ever since 2013 in order to initially evacuate around 2,000 refugees with extreme medical conditions– such as those who require heavy health care or that have been incapacitated. The UNHCR, also calls for all states in the continent to be more flexible in their selection procedures, especially when it comes to refugees with medical conditions or that may need special care of any kind. This is of extreme relevance considering how challenging it has been until now when it comes to information gathering and profiling refugees as almost every single (Or at least a majority of 70%) asylum-seeker seems to fit the profile to be considered a refugee according to the 1951 Convention.



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