

8th Annual Conference  
13th-15th February

# UNHRC

## BACKGROUND GUIDE



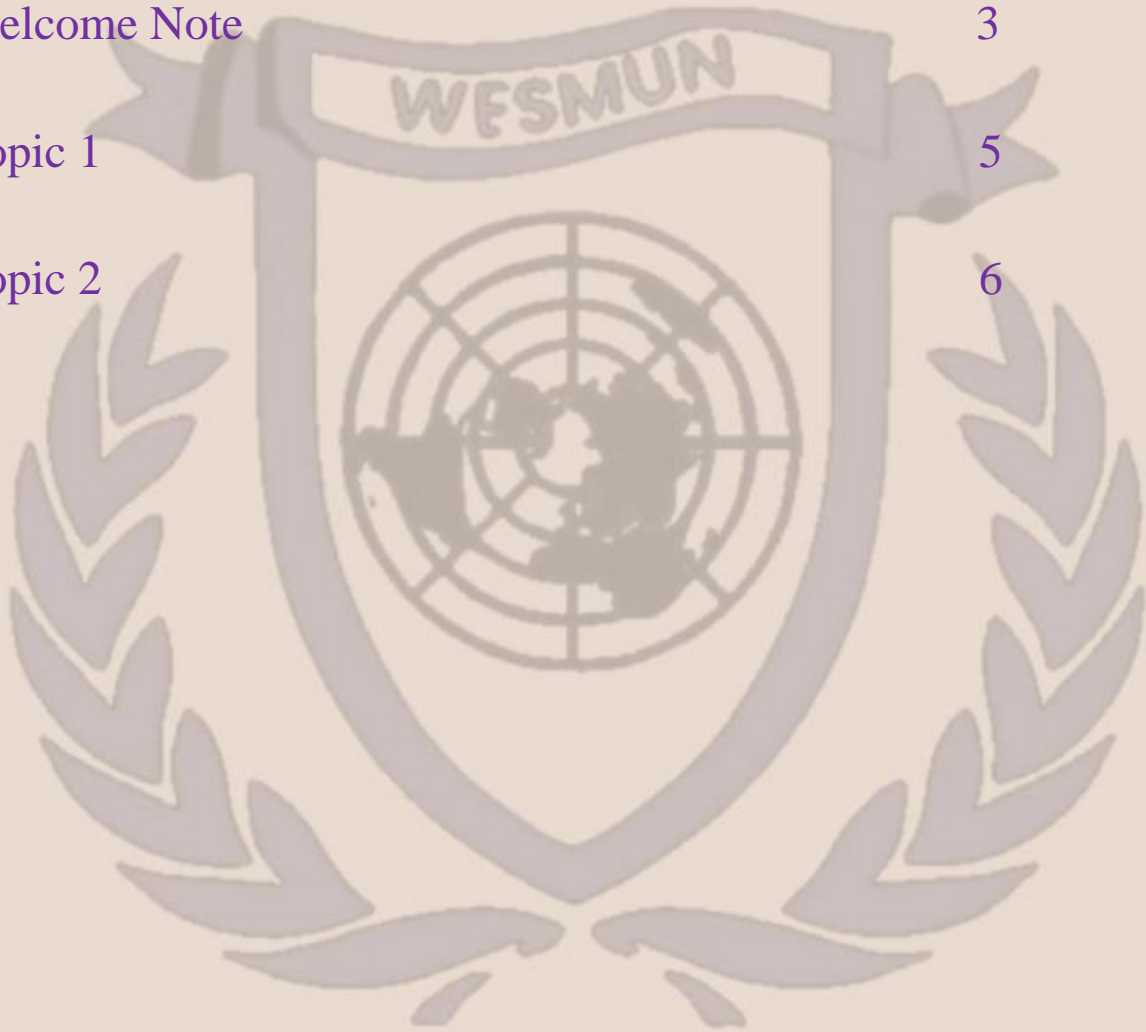
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## **WESMUN 2025**

13, 14, 15 February

Dear Delegates of UNHRC,

On behalf of the entire MUN Secretariat, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you as you join the UNHRC at the WESMUN 2025! We are thrilled to have you as part of what promises to be an exciting and intellectually enriching experience.

As delegates in UNHRC, you will have the unique opportunity to engage in dynamic debate, navigate complex global issues, and collaborate with fellow delegates from all over the world. This committee will challenge you to think critically, hone your diplomatic skills, and work towards finding creative and feasible solutions to some of the most pressing challenges facing our international community today.

This year, we will be discussing refugee rights and migration issues, and tackling the issue of human trafficking in Venezuela. We encourage you to thoroughly research the topics and familiarize yourself with the positions of your assigned country or organization. Your preparation, along with your ability to engage in thoughtful dialogue and compromise, will be key to making the conference a success.

Remember, MUN is not just about winning resolutions—it's about learning, growing, and building relationships with others who share your passion for international affairs. We are confident that your participation in this committee will be a rewarding and unforgettable experience.

If you have any questions or need guidance leading up to the conference, do not hesitate to reach out to the UNHRC Chairs. We are here to assist you and ensure that you feel prepared and confident as you step into your role as a delegate.

We look forward to seeing you in the committee and witnessing the insightful debates and innovative solutions that you and your fellow delegates will bring to the table.

Sincerely,  
Chairs of UNHRC.  
[unhrc.wesmun25@gmail.com](mailto:unhrc.wesmun25@gmail.com)

## **Introduction of the committee:**

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is a subsidiary body of the United Nations General Assembly, established in 2006 to promote and protect human rights globally. It serves as a forum for member states to address pressing human rights issues and ensure accountability for violations. Its key functions include assessing human rights situations in member states, making recommendations to improve conditions, and supporting the implementation of international human rights standards. The UNHRC addresses a wide range of issues, including freedom of expression, gender equality, minority rights, and combating racial discrimination.

Historically, the UNHRC succeeded the Commission on Human Rights, which was criticized for its politicization and selective focus. The Council has since taken significant actions, such as initiating the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which evaluates the human rights performance of all UN member states every four years. Additionally, it has established special procedures, including thematic and country-specific mandates, through which independent experts investigate and report on specific issues like torture, child rights, and freedom of religion. Noteworthy resolutions include those addressing the crises in Myanmar, Syria, and South Sudan, underscoring its commitment to confronting severe human rights abuses.

The UNHRC comprises 47 member states elected by the General Assembly based on equitable geographical distribution. These members bear the responsibility of upholding the highest human rights standards and cooperating fully with the Council's mechanisms. Significant stakeholders include countries with leading human rights records, advocacy groups, and UN agencies, all of which play critical roles in shaping the Council's work. Conversely, states accused of human rights violations often draw attention, shaping debates within the Council.

One unique procedural aspect of the UNHRC is its "Universal Periodic Review," a peer-review mechanism involving all UN member states. This process ensures transparency and universality, as even the most powerful nations must submit to evaluation. Unlike other UN bodies, the Council operates without veto power, ensuring equal weight to all members' voices in decisions and resolutions.

In sum, the UNHRC represents a vital pillar of the global human rights framework, striving to address violations while fostering international cooperation for a just and equitable world.

**TOPIC 1:** Refugee rights and migration issues: addressing the challenges faced by migrants and refugees including the asylum integration and the treatment of displaced people.

The global challenge of refugee rights and migration has reached unprecedented levels, with millions fleeing conflict, persecution, and environmental or economic instability. These individuals often face systemic barriers, including inequitable asylum systems, inadequate integration support, and a lack of access to basic rights in host countries. The principle of non-refoulement—a cornerstone of international refugee law—obliges states to ensure that refugees are not returned to places where their lives or freedoms are threatened. However, many host nations, overwhelmed by limited resources and political resistance, struggle to meet their obligations. These issues demand robust international collaboration, strengthened asylum frameworks, and expanded integration programs to ensure displaced individuals are treated with dignity and their rights are upheld. Beyond immediate humanitarian needs, addressing migration challenges is vital for promoting regional stability and fostering socio-economic development.

Historically, the global refugee crisis has been shaped by key geopolitical events, socio-economic disparities, and environmental disasters. From the mass displacement caused by the Syrian civil war to the migration crises in the Sahel region, each example highlights the complex interplay of factors driving migration. Efforts such as the UNHCR's Global Compact on Refugees and the IOM's migration management programs have provided critical frameworks for addressing these challenges. Yet, implementation remains uneven, leaving millions vulnerable to exploitation and marginalization. The lack of equitable burden-sharing among nations further exacerbates the strain on host countries, often leading to heightened tensions and inadequate support for refugees.

Delegates addressing this issue must consider a range of critical questions: How can asylum processes be standardized to ensure fairness and efficiency? What mechanisms can promote international cooperation to equitably distribute the responsibilities of hosting displaced populations? How can long-term integration support be enhanced to foster self-reliance among refugees while minimizing the socio-economic strain on host countries? These discussions should also address the unique vulnerabilities of women, children, and internally displaced persons (IDPs), whose needs are often overlooked. Subtopics for debate could include improving access to education and healthcare for refugees, streamlining legal pathways for asylum, and fostering regional partnerships to mitigate the root causes of forced migration.

## **TOPIC 2:** Tackling the issue of human trafficking in Venezuela involving neighboring regions

Human trafficking in Venezuela is a pressing humanitarian and regional crisis that has intensified alongside the country's socio-economic collapse and migration emergency. Traffickers exploit the vulnerabilities of displaced individuals, targeting them for forced labor, sexual exploitation, and other forms of coercion. With over seven million Venezuelans fleeing to neighboring countries, such as Colombia, Brazil, and Peru, trafficking networks have expanded, thriving in the absence of robust legal frameworks and regional coordination. Addressing this crisis demands a multifaceted approach, including enhanced anti-trafficking legislation, improved asylum processes, and strengthened international partnerships to dismantle trafficking networks and protect vulnerable populations.

The Venezuelan trafficking crisis is deeply rooted in the country's economic instability and political turmoil, which have created conditions ripe for exploitation. As migration flows surged in the late 2010s, displaced individuals—many lacking legal documentation or access to social services—became prime targets for traffickers. Efforts to combat trafficking have included key initiatives such as UN Security Council Resolution 2331, which focuses on trafficking in conflict zones, and the Lima Declaration, a regional agreement addressing Venezuelan displacement. However, these measures have faced significant implementation challenges, ranging from insufficient funding to the lack of cohesive regional strategies. The limited success of these efforts underscores the urgent need for a comprehensive, collaborative response.

Delegates must address critical questions to develop effective solutions: How can regional coordination be improved to combat trafficking networks? What role can international organizations play in supporting anti-trafficking initiatives and providing resources to affected countries? How can asylum processes be enhanced to protect displaced individuals from falling prey to traffickers? Additionally, discussions should focus on the rehabilitation and reintegration of trafficking survivors, the role of law enforcement in combating trafficking, and the development of public awareness campaigns to prevent exploitation.

Subtopics for debate might include the socio-economic factors driving trafficking in Venezuela, the role of technology in monitoring and disrupting trafficking networks, and strategies for integrating trafficking survivors into host communities. Delegates should also explore the impact of international aid and funding mechanisms in supporting anti-trafficking efforts. Past resolutions, such as the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons and regional agreements like the Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, provide valuable precedents for addressing these challenges. However, their effectiveness depends on robust implementation, tailored to the unique dynamics of the Venezuelan crisis.

Ultimately, combating human trafficking in Venezuela requires a coordinated, holistic approach that balances immediate protection measures with long-term strategies to address the root causes of displacement and exploitation. Delegates must craft solutions that not only mitigate the current crisis but also lay the foundation for sustainable progress, ensuring that displaced populations are protected and their rights upheld.

### **Key Terms**

**Asylum Seeker:** An individual seeking international protection but whose claim has not yet been recognized.

**Human Trafficking:** The recruitment, transportation, and exploitation of individuals through coercion or deceit.

**Internally Displaced Person (IDP):** Individuals forced to flee their homes but remain within their country.

**Non-Refoulement:** A principle prohibiting the return of refugees to a place where they face threats to life or freedom.

### **Major Parties Involved**

#### **Venezuela:**

As the epicenter of the crisis, Venezuela's political and economic instability has driven millions to flee, making them vulnerable to trafficking. The country's inability to address root causes, such as poverty and weak governance, perpetuates the exploitation of displaced individuals.

#### **Colombia:**

As the primary destination for Venezuelan migrants, Colombia faces significant challenges in managing migration flows and combating trafficking networks. Its efforts to grant temporary protected status to migrants and cooperate regionally to address trafficking highlight its critical role in the crisis.

#### **Brazil:**

Brazil serves as both a transit and destination country for Venezuelan migrants. Its relatively stable economy and geographic position make it a key stakeholder in the regional anti-trafficking effort. Brazil's role involves enhancing border security, improving asylum systems, and participating in international initiatives against trafficking.

#### **Peru:**

With one of the highest numbers of Venezuelan migrants, Peru has become a crucial player in

the regional response. It faces challenges in providing services to displaced individuals and tackling trafficking operations that prey on vulnerable populations. Peru's active engagement in regional cooperation forums underscores its commitment to addressing the crisis.

#### **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC):**

The UNODC leads international efforts to combat human trafficking through the development of global frameworks, capacity-building programs, and awareness campaigns. It collaborates with regional actors to dismantle trafficking networks and protect victims.

#### **International Organizations (e.g., IOM, UNHCR):**

These organizations address the intersection of migration and trafficking by providing funding, technical support, and direct assistance to affected populations. They also facilitate cross-border cooperation to combat trafficking and offer protection to survivors.

#### **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):**

NGOs such as Polaris and Refugees International play a vital role in providing direct support to trafficking survivors, conducting advocacy campaigns, and developing localized solutions to prevent exploitation. Their work complements international efforts by focusing on community-level interventions.

### **Refugee Rights and Migration Issues**

#### **Challenges:**

- 1. Overburdened Asylum Systems:** Many host countries lack the infrastructure and resources to handle the influx of refugees, leading to delayed asylum processing and inadequate shelter and services.
- 2. Integration Barriers:** Refugees face difficulties accessing education, employment, and healthcare, resulting in prolonged economic and social marginalization.
- 3. Political Resistance:** Rising anti-migration sentiments and political opposition in host countries hinder the development of equitable and humane refugee policies.
- 4. Funding Gaps:** Insufficient international funding leaves many refugee programs under-resourced, compromising their effectiveness.
- 5. Exploitation and Abuse:** Refugees, especially women and children, are highly vulnerable to trafficking, exploitation, and violence during their migration journeys.



### **Opportunities:**

- 1. Regional Cooperation:** Strengthening partnerships among neighboring countries can create unified strategies for managing migration and sharing responsibilities.
- 2. Technology Integration:** Digital tools can streamline asylum applications, monitor migration flows, and improve data sharing among stakeholders.
- 3. Private Sector Involvement:** Engaging businesses can provide refugees with employment opportunities, reducing dependence on aid and fostering integration.
- 4. Policy Innovations:** Initiatives like community sponsorship programs can involve local populations in refugee integration, building social cohesion.
- 5. Increased Awareness:** Advocacy campaigns highlighting the contributions of refugees to host societies can counter anti-migration narratives and build public support.

### **Human Trafficking in Venezuela**

#### **Challenges:**

- 1. Weak Governance in Venezuela:** Corruption, poor law enforcement, and political instability limit the government's capacity to combat trafficking.
- 2. Regional Coordination Deficits:** Inconsistent policies and lack of collaboration among neighboring countries hinder effective cross-border anti-trafficking efforts.
- 3. Resource Scarcity:** Insufficient funding and resources constrain the ability of both governments and NGOs to provide support to trafficking victims.
- 4. Victim Identification Challenges:** Many trafficking survivors remain hidden due to fear, stigma, and the clandestine nature of trafficking operations.
- 5. Exploitation of Migrants:** Trafficking networks specifically target Venezuelan migrants and refugees, exploiting their vulnerabilities and lack of legal protections.

#### **Opportunities:**

- 1. Enhanced Regional Frameworks:** Strengthening regional anti-trafficking agreements, such as joint law enforcement operations, can disrupt trafficking networks.

**2. Capacity Building:** Training local law enforcement and judicial officials in identifying and addressing trafficking can improve response rates.

**3. International Support:** Greater involvement of international organizations can provide funding, technical assistance, and advocacy for stronger anti-trafficking measures.

**4. Public Awareness Campaigns:** Educating vulnerable populations about the risks of trafficking can empower individuals to avoid exploitation and seek assistance.

**5. Survivor-Centered Policies:** Developing robust support systems for trafficking survivors, including shelter, legal aid, and psychological services, can aid recovery and reintegration. Questions a Resolution Must Answer

### **Refugee Rights and Migration Issues**

1. How can asylum processes be standardized and streamlined to ensure fair and efficient handling of applications across different regions?
2. What measures can be taken to promote equitable burden-sharing among host countries to reduce strain on overburdened nations?
3. How can international funding and resources be better allocated to support host countries in providing adequate shelter, healthcare, and education for refugees?
4. What strategies can ensure the long-term integration of refugees into host communities, including access to employment, education, and social services?
5. How can vulnerable groups, such as women and children, be protected from exploitation and abuse during migration and resettlement processes?

### **Human Trafficking in Venezuela**

1. What mechanisms can improve cross-border coordination to dismantle trafficking networks and protect vulnerable populations?
2. How can international organizations and governments work together to ensure sufficient funding and resources for anti-trafficking initiatives?

3. What policies can be implemented to ensure trafficking survivors receive adequate legal, medical, and psychological support?
4. How can regional governments strengthen law enforcement and judicial systems to effectively prosecute traffickers and disrupt their operations?
5. What public awareness initiatives can be developed to educate at-risk populations about trafficking dangers and available support services?

### **Subtopics**

- Strengthening regional anti-trafficking legislation.
- Addressing the socio-economic impact of migration on host communities.
- Improving access to asylum and integration resources.
- Protecting vulnerable populations from exploitation.
- Evaluating the role of international funding and aid distribution.

### **Past resolutions:**

UNHCR Resolution 48/12 (2018): Promoted durable solutions for Venezuelan refugees.

UN Security Council Resolution 2331 (2016): Focused on trafficking in conflict zones, applicable to Venezuela's crisis.

Global Compact on Refugees (2018): Strengthened refugee protection frameworks.

UNGA Resolution 73/195 (2018): Adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration.

Lima Declaration (2019): Regional initiative addressing Venezuelan migration.

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