



جامعة جورجتاون
كلية الشؤون الدولية في قطر

Model United Nations

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I ABOUT THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE:

The Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOC), under the United Nations charter is the organization's central forum for the discussions of economic, social and cultural issues. It was established by the UN as one of the six principal organs, under the General Assembly, to promote: higher standards of living, full employment, internal cultural and educational cooperation and conditions of economic and social progress and development. The committee also aims to advocate universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinctions to race, sex, language or religion.

The Council consists of 54 government members, elected for three-year terms by the General Assembly. The substantive sessions includes a high-level special meeting, attended by Ministers and other high officials, to discuss major economic and social issues. Members of the ECOSOC Committee have the authority to produce or initiate studies and reports on the issues. They also have the power to assist the preparations and organization of major international conferences in the economic and social and related fields. The ECOSOC Committee is also in charge of coordinating a number of secondary organizations in the UN including the Commission on Social Development, UN Development Program and UNICEF.

II BACKGROUND OF THE ISSUE:

The Syrian uprising initially started on the 26th of January 2011 and escalated to a deadly uprising by the 15th of March 2011. The uprising is influenced by protests in the region and is often referred to as “abnormal.” Protests by different revolting groups who were all determined to overthrow the President of Syria, Bashar Al-Assad. As a result of this civil war, over 2 million Syrians have fled to neighboring cities. In addition to the refugees there are over 4 million internally displaced Syrians. The flow of families across Syria’s border continues to strain the region’ already limited resources. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is working towards solving the problem in order for Syria to be at peace again.

Protestors are demanding that the President, Assad step down and allow for the ruling Baath Party to allow other political parties to rule. They also demand that the Kurds be given equal rights and broader political freedoms such as freedom of press, speech and assembly.¹ Protests initially started when one man set himself on fire. These small protests escalated into large demonstrations, which carry out to the present day. As protests grew the Syrian government used tanks and snipers in an attempt to force people off the streets. Water and electricity were shut off and security forces would confiscate food supplies.

Involvement of other governments

It is speculated that the Iranian government is aiding Assad in foiling the protests, while Iran accuses the United States of initiating the revolution in Syria. During a session the UN’s Security Council held for the issue of Syria, the Russian government vetoed any action the UN wanted to take against the Syrian government. This approach by the Russian government is rather

¹ Kurdi, Leen. "2011 Syrian Uprising" <http://asgnewsroom.blogspot.com/2011/11/2011-syrian-uprising.html>

different to the ones of the neighboring countries. Countries such as Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq have taken in several refugees who managed to escape from the harsh Assad regime.

Jordan has been praised for welcoming tens of thousands of fleeing Syrians. The UN agency has registered over 35,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan, but there are reported to be far more Syrian refugees along the border. However, the latest rounds of violence have forced more Syrians to the Jordanian border. While the Jordanian government agreed to create more camps, they too are straining their resources. Jordan already had high cases of unemployment and scarcity of resources, including water and power. The increased refugees have created an even greater lack of sufficient resources which has led to Jordan appealing for international aid.²

III GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS:

- Shabiha – Refers to the phenomenon that originates in the coastal region of northwest Syria- where the ruling Alawite clan is from. The term refers to gangs working for members of the Assad family, but not in an official capacity.
- Free Syrian Army – The Free Syrian Army (FSA) was formed in 2011 by army deserters that were based in Turkey, led by Col Riad al-Assad. However, the FSA leaders has little or no cooperation control over what is happening in Syria.
- Syrian Emergency Laws – The law suspends the rights of Syrian citizens, in order to maintain the safety and protection of the government and citizens.
- UNHCR – The United Nations for High Commissioner for Refugees is an organization that protects refugees and assists them in the nation in which they seek refuge.

² World Now. "As refugees surge, some Syrians turned away from Jordan."
http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world_now/2012/07/syrian-refugees-jordan.html

Global reaction towards Syrian refugees:

- **International Organization for Migration-** the IOM has provided water filters, rechargeable lights, stoves, blankets and pillows to Syrians in Lebanon and Iraq in June 2012. They have also provided winter kits to refugees in Iraq.
- **Iraqi Kurdistan -** in March 2012, the regional government of Kurdistan announced plans to construct a second refugee campaign for Syrian refugees. The camps were a result of the 2004 Al-Qamishli riots, where the camps were flooded with refugees of the civil war.
- **Israel-** Humanitarian Israeli groups that are present in Jordan are assisting the Syrian refugees fleeing the civil war. Israelis are secretly assisting children and infants who have been injured in the Syrian military's ongoing violent crackdown.
- **Jordan –** Jordan has been constructing a refugee camp in March 2012 which can shelter upto 113,000 people each. With the increased number of refugees present in Jordan, the government has appealed for international aid. The amount awarded to them allowed for the government to build additional camps.
- **Lebanon-** by August 2013, over 670,000 Syrian refugees were present in Lebanon. The increasing number of Syrian refugees has caused the Lebanese Forces Party fear the country's sectarian based political system is being undermined.

- **Turkey-** Since the summer of 2011, Turkey has accommodated Syrian refugees. In comparison to Jordan, the camps in Turkey are of a higher standard as education and health services are usually provided by the Turkish government or Turkish NGOs.
- **United States of America:** The US has provided aid for the Syrian refugees to camps that accommodate them. The government has also agreed to let refugees permanently resettle in America.

Other countries/agencies that aid Syrian refugees:

- Cyprus
- Qatar
- Bahrain
- Saudi Arabia
- European Union
- Sweden
- Brazil
- Germany
- Switzerland
- China
- Canada
- Colombia
- Russia

IV RECENT EVENTS:

After attempts to intervene with the Syrian conflict, the Geneva II conference hopes to resolve the situation. With constant disagreement about which Representative Syrian Party

should be present: US secretary of state, John Kerry stated that Anti-Assad rebels had to make their own decision about joining the negotiating table. One of the main reasons for this conference is to arrive at a mutual consent amongst all the countries so that Assad and his regime would play no role in the future of the government. Obstacles with the sensitive situation arose when Russia and China refused to explicitly call for the Syrian leader's departure.

V CONCLUSION

In order to get the government to listen to and compromise with the revolutionaries, nations need to start, and continue, to place sanctions on the Syrian government. Other nations should help take part in organizing revolts, due to the limited and regulated social networking in Syria. The UN should send in peacekeepers, to support demonstrators, and or assist in the overthrowing of the Syrian government. There also needs to be a way to eliminate the “Emergency Law” currently controlling Syria.

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