



NorthMUNC IX

United Nations High Commissioner for
Refugees



NORTHMUNC IX

Agamyia Singh
Secretary-General

Vidhi Shah
Director-General

Shreya Kumar
Director-General

Ronit Kapur
USG of Finances

Nihira Pathak
USG of
Communication

Dylan Gurram
Head Delegate

Johnson Lin
Head Delegate

West-Windsor Plainsboro
High School North
90 Grovers Mill Road
Plainsboro, NJ 08536
Email:
northmun@gmail.com
<https://www.northmunc.com/>

North Model United Nations Conference 2024

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Hi everyone,

My name is Shreya Kumar and I am honored to be serving as your chair for NorthMUNC IX's Social, Cultural, & Humanitarian Committee - The Belarus Migrant Crisis. To start with a bit about me, I am a current senior at WWP High School North and currently serve as NorthMUN's Director General of General Assemblies. Outside of debating in MUN, I enjoy singing in North's acapella groups, dancing in SAASA (our South Asian dance team), and getting ice cream a little too often.

With that, I also want to take a moment and introduce our staffers for this year's GA.

Vibhav Kumar is a sophomore at High School North, and is currently serving as NorthMUN's USG of External Affairs! In his time outside of MUN, he enjoys racing for the school Track & Field team, participating in an acapella singing group after school, and spending time with his dog. He is looking forward to seeing the intricate research you all have been preparing, the phenomenal debate, as well as your diplomacy and collaboration with one another!

Kaashi Bansal is a sophomore at High School North and is honored to be serving as a USG of External Affairs this year. When she's not grinding for MUN conferences, she participates in clubs like HOSA and Model Congress, while also dancing and rewatching La La Land whenever she can. Kaashi is extremely enthusiastic to see innovative solutions and spirited debate throughout this conference with all of your hard work.

Arjun Agarwal is a sophomore at High School North and is super excited to both staff the NorthMUNC GA committee and experience some of the hard work that you all have put in! Outside of MUN, he participates in our school's JSA club, computing competitions, volunteers at animal shelters and leads operations with local startups! In terms of committee, he's looking forward to seeing some passionate speeches, along with some nuanced and interesting solutions.

Armed with a group of wonderful staffers, I am more than ready to hear from you guys about the Belarusian migrant crisis. From international tensions, political mayhem, and hostile action that has left innocent migrants in limbo, delegates should hope to address the many nuanced aspects of this crisis. As April 6th rapidly approaches, I wish you all the best of luck as you research this topic, and I can't wait to hear your ideas during debate.

If you have any further questions or just want to say hi, feel free to email me at shreya2006kumar@gmail.com!

Best,

Shreya Kumar

Chair, UNHCR



NORTHMUNC IX

Agamyia Singh
Secretary-General

Vidhi Shah
Director-General

Shreya Kumar
Director-General

Ronit Kapur
USG of Finances

Nihira Pathak
USG of
Communication

Dylan Gurram
Head Delegate

Johnson Lin
Head Delegate

West-Windsor Plainsboro
High School North
90 Grovers Mill Road
Plainsboro, NJ 08536
Email:
northmun@gmail.com
<https://www.northmunc.com/>

North Model United Nations Conference 2024

A LETTER FROM THE VICE-CHAIR

Hi All,

My name is Ronit Kapur and I am the USG of Financial Affairs for NorthMUNC IX. I am proud to announce that I will be serving as one of your Vice-Chairs for our General Assembly Committee, The Belarus Migrant Crisis.

This year, delegates will tackle the Belarus Migrant Crisis from different social, political, and economic viewpoints. Since the election of a corrupt political president, delegates are expected to solve a multitude of problems since numerous immigrants have left the scenes of Belarus, as well as numerous humanitarian concerns.

When I joined Model UN during my freshmen year, I was interested because of the debate on controversial, international issues. Although that has continued to be a passion of mine, solving ongoing issues from critical perspectives and developing close bonds with strangers in committees have made MUN a much more impactful experience than I first expected. Outside of MUN, you can find me watching sports, raving about the new Dune movie, or sleeping all day long.

I can't wait to meet all of you and I look forward to spirited and diplomatic debate!

Best,
Ronit Kapur
Vice-Chair, UNHCR



NORTHMUNC IX

Agamyia Singh
Secretary-General

Vidhi Shah
Director-General

Shreya Kumar
Director-General

Ronit Kapur
USG of Finances

Nihira Pathak
USG of
Communication

Dylan Gurram
Head Delegate

Johnson Lin
Head Delegate

West-Windsor Plainsboro
High School North
90 Grovers Mill Road
Plainsboro, NJ 08536
Email:
northmun@gmail.com
<https://www.northmunc.com/>

North Model United Nations Conference 2024

A LETTER FROM THE VICE-CHAIR

Hey everyone,

My name is Nihira Pathak and I am the USG of Communications for NorthMUNC IX! I will be one of your Vice-Chairs for our committee on the Belarus Migrant Crisis.

During this year's conference, delegates will navigate this humanitarian crisis through diplomatic channels. Our primary goals will be to protect the refugees while also maintaining sovereignty regulations and creating prevention tactics for the future. Delegates will be expected to create a comprehensive set of solutions to resolve this conflict's multiple aspects, including social, economic, and political.

Since joining MUN in my freshman year, I've been able to become familiar with global injustices, research a wide variety of conflicts, and meet new people. It is safe to say MUN has become one of my most formative experiences in high school. Outside of MUN, I serve as the Special Operations Officer of Model Congress and can be found trying to find new music or shopping for things I can't afford.

Feel free to email me with any questions at nihirapathak007@gmail.com. I can't wait to meet you all and look forward to nuanced solutions and exciting debates!

Best,
Nihira Pathak
Vice-Chair, UNHCR

Introduction

Dear Delegates,

Since July 2021, the Belarus-European migrant crisis has been at the center of the nation's political, social, and economic issues. From the beginning, political disagreements have been what ignited this conflict. In response to the 2020 Belarusian presidential election, countries have failed to accept this considering the 'fraudulent' or 'undiplomatic' elected president, Alexander Lukashenko.

Lukashenko increased his power as his presidential campaign continued, gaining the power to dismiss Supreme Council rulings. As of November 21, 2021, over 32,000 immigrants have tried fleeing to foreign nations such as Poland due to corruption within the government as well as other issues.. Confrontation among border patrol and security took place rapidly after border patrol forces were notified, leading to tense situations at borders for migrants. The humanitarian situation of these migrants is also a large controversy, with numerous migrants standing in freezing conditions without access to food, water, shelter, and any proper medical care. With corrupt presidential election campaigns and pressing humanitarian concerns posed to migrants, nations around the world are encouraged to do their part in resolving the situation. Countries must be willing to share their unique stances, solutions, and resources to improve the current circumstances in Belarus and neighboring countries, maintain vital political ties, improve domestic humanitarian aid, and establish stronger international relations.

Background/History

The 2021 Belarusian crisis began through a series of geopolitical issues related to migration and refugee asylum. In the past, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko had leveraged migration as a strategic political tool to apply foreign pressures on the European Union (EU), amid domestic challenges

and international isolation. This decision made by the President to allow unrestricted movement of illegal refugee migrants was not to provide refugees with a better life, far from the corrupt justice system, constant attempts at censorship, high unemployment rates, and limited allies that have been attributed to Belarus, but as a political move, has consequently doomed thousands to a dangerous and unstable life on the border. This crisis is not new to the people of Belarus, with migration crises igniting violence left and right. Starting in 2015, there was a sudden influx of immigrants traveling to and escaping violence in the Middle East. For the most part, this was due to the growing number of Syrians, Iraqis, Libyans, Afghans, and Eritreans running from war and religious conflict.



In response to the 2015 migrant crisis, the EU undertook a multifaceted approach to address the unprecedented influx of refugees and migrants. The EU established various measures aimed at managing the crisis and fostering cooperation among member states, such as the European Commission, composed of select members of the EU, who proposed the relocation and resettlement of refugees across the EU, seeking to distribute the burden more evenly among nations. Additionally, the EU entered into agreements with transit countries, such as the EU-Turkey deal, to stem the flow of migrants. Border controls were tightened, and the European Asylum Support Office was reinforced to enhance coordination in processing asylum applications. While these efforts aimed at fostering a united response, the crisis also exposed

divisions among member states, with some advocating for solidarity and burden-sharing, while others implemented stricter border controls. Delegates should learn from these past experiences, and build upon them to construct more stable and modern solutions.

Current Situation:

Though EU member states have differing opinions on how to handle this precarious situation, the one action agreed upon is the increasing of sanctions on Belarus, further deteriorating their already poor economy. This lack of financial stability is the result of Belarus' Soviet-era industrial base, which has rendered them virtually useless in terms of production and exportation in the international market. Its main source of export is refined crude oil, which is sourced at a reduced price from Russia, one of Belarus' few supporters. This lack of job availability has led experts to speculate that the rate of unemployment within the country has to be much higher than what has been reported by government officials. The reason for this underreporting could be attributed to the corruption of the government, which spearheads its partial command economy. The government has often been called an outpost of tyranny, displaying its power through the use of widespread propaganda, silent murders of opposed individuals, and armed responses to civil unrest, leading to the downfall of resistance to the Belarusian government or any organization that wishes to better the ongoing migration crisis.

As political tensions rise between the EU and Belarus, the latter is attempting to retaliate through the trafficking of illegal immigrants and

substances. Migrants, mostly from the Middle Eastern region, are indiscriminately funneled through Belarusian borders under the pretense they are legally seeking haven within EU countries such as Poland, Germany, and Lithuania. Belarus advertises this "safe and easy" method for immigrants to gain access to the EU, providing these susceptible individuals, who are 40% ethnic minorities, with information on how to cross after they arrive. Migrants are instructed to destroy their passports to avoid deportation while simultaneously being provided with tools, personnel, and instructions to assist them on their journey. Very few migrants are able to safely traverse the snowy hellscape and cross into EU territory unnoticed. The majority of these individuals are either caught while crossing, face deportation and detainment (even if they are seeking asylum), or are unable to cross at all. If migrants are unable to effectively relocate across the border, Belarusian guards employ anti-retreat troops in order to entrap refugees and force them to live in this borderland, lacking food, shelter, water, and proper clothing to survive the freezing temperatures. Polish convoys carrying humanitarian aid for these individuals are similarly blocked from crossing the border, leaving these people to fend for themselves against the elements and malicious armed guards, their only hope of escape is a second attempt at crossing the border.

In addition to the issues faced by migrants on the border, it has also been noted that these individuals are often forced to carry illicit substances across into the EU, either willingly or under the duress of threats made by Belarusian border guards. The identity of these substances are generally unknown, making it difficult for EU authorities to properly detect the influx of illegal substances within their own countries. However, border officials believe a wide variety of drugs are being employed, such as opioids, cannabis, hallucinogens, and most prolific of all, cigarettes. Though cigarettes are legal in most

areas of the EU, this illicit smuggling makes them extremely dangerous. Cigarettes can be produced or obtained in Belarusian zones that have lower fees, allowing them to be resold in the EU at high profit margins while keeping prices low, ensuring high demand for these cheap alternatives to legal cigarettes while producing large quantities of money for the Belarusian regime. The illegal cigarette smuggling across Belarusian borders can ensure the corrupt government is adequately financed to survive while Belarusian citizens suffer at the hands of economic pressure. Additionally, these illicit cigarettes have been found to contain harmful additives, such as human feces, mold, and an abundance of potentially dangerous materials such as cadmium, lead, and tar, creating a pressing issue for EU citizens as these cigarettes are often indistinguishable from legal ones.

In response to these issues, adjacent countries have begun to increase their border security, creating stronger defenses ranging from weaponry, increased personnel, and the construction of physical borders, such as walls. As security from surrounding countries increases, so does the limit of what Belarusian officials are willing to do to smuggle immigrants into the EU, placing even more innocent migrants into the crossfire. To make matters worse, though Polish humanitarian efforts have been reported, journalists, doctors, and non-governmental organizations have not been allowed on to borders from countries such as Latvia, Poland, and Lithuania, causing an increase in misinformation and a delay in which outside sources are able to receive this information.

Possible Solutions

In order to address the specific complexities of this crisis, it is important to understand and emphasize

the additional challenges that refugees face separate from the blaring migrant emergency occurring in these regions. The atrocities of humanitarian violations continue to affect displaced individuals, as those who are unable to achieve success in crossing the border to the European border are forced in between the two lands. Delegates should prioritize the safety and circumstances of migrants forced into these detention centers in order to ensure they return back to their home countries efficiently, harmlessly, and without compromising the lives and unity of them and their families. These safety measures may include a creation of a type of humanitarian corridor, by ensuring safer routes that are used to travel into countries of resettlement across a multitude of regions. Moreover, relief kits and emergency contingency teams that are currently in place can be expanded upon in order to get necessities and goods to these refugees and migrants in their travels without Belarus interference.



In addition to the humanitarian aspects of this dispute, it is important to note the immense control the Belarusian government has occupied over integral inner workings of the country that have led to the progression of this issue, and more complex territorial disputes from other nations. Countries such as Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia are at risk of the migrant crisis spreading into these nations shortly after the EU imposed retaliatory

sanctions on Belarus for their attempts of global assassination. In order to discuss the corruption within their government, delegates may make attempts at creating new methods of transparency and anti-corruption work, such as revamped news outlets connected to monitoring regulations outside of the government, and social media screening techniques creating algorithms tracking propaganda and fake news. It is important to invest in innovative and elevated technologies that can prohibit corruption across Belarus that has not already been considered before.

It is crucial for delegates to compensate for the reasoning of migrants and why they choose to leave their war-torn countries and proceed with this immigration journey, forcing them into dire conflicts and situations, as well as the requests of other nations that are facing consequences from the Belarusian government for the influx of migrants into their own countries. Possible avenues delegates can explore include the political discussions currently between countries such as Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Belarus, and how we negotiate peace treaties and embargos between each of their military. Shuttle diplomacy, as an example, gives action to an outside party in serving as an intermediary between principals in a dispute and land entitlements can be initiated to relinquish some of the land of the EU into Belarusian territory to avoid immigration process. These are just some of the topics that need to be addressed in the multifaceted issue that is the Belarus migrant crisis. How can we ensure the safety of people running from their homes across the world without damaging the infrastructure and populations of countries of the EU?

Bloc Positions:

The Belarus migrant crisis has sharply divided this issue into three main perspectives. For one, supporters of Belarus exist, arguing that the crisis underscores the need for a global approach to tackle the root causes of this migration. Nations such as Russia, claim that Belarus is rightly bringing attention to systemic issues requiring collective international cooperation. In contrast, a second viewpoint consisting of many members of the EU and the United States, condemns Belarus, viewing the crisis as a blatant manipulation of human lives for political gain. This side emphasizes the need to uphold border security and current international norms. Lastly, most affected EU nations, including Poland and Lithuania, argue that unified European action is necessary, as highlighted by the challenges that the illegal immigrants pose. Given that these nations are the ones affected firsthand, such nations desire to focus on the humanitarian needs of migrants, given that conditions at the border are near unlivable. This issue urges delegates to choose a side based on their nation's interests and foreign policy, but continue to delegate with countries who hold other points of view, to hopefully reach a broadly successful consensus.

Questions to Consider

1. Keep these questions in mind as you conduct your research and solutions for this committee:
2. What is the role of sovereignty in this conflict, and how may that affect possible solutions?

3. How can we mitigate Belarusian threats to the European Union and their encouragement of migration?
4. What measures need to be put in place to protect the refugees currently stranded at the border?
5. What technology can be used to provide adequate resources for refugees or keep track of refugee data?
6. How can we ensure the protection of already displaced refugees through housing, financial aid, etc?
8. <https://dspace.cuni.cz/bitstream/handle/20.500.11956/186815/120457961.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
9. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/belarus>
10. <https://notesfrompoland.com/2024/02/07/poland-publishes-data-on-thousands-of-migrant-pushbacks-at-belarus-border-for-first-time/>

Resources

1. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-59215769>
2. <https://globaledege.msu.edu/countries/belarus/memo#:~:text=Belarus%20defines%20the%20economic%20system,production%20and%20distribution%20of%20goods.>
3. <https://www.countryreports.org/country/Belarus/economy.htm>
4. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/07/violence-and-pushbacks-poland-belarus-border>
5. <https://reliefweb.int/report/belarus/out-sight-refugees-and-migrants-belarus-poland-border>
6. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4512675
7. <https://sciendo.com/article/10.15290/bsp.2023.28.01.03>