



G20

TOPIC B:

Ensuring equal cooperation and commitment of G20 economies in climate change mitigation.

Undersecretary:

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INTRODUCTION

During their summit at Hamburg, Germany, in 2017, the members of the G20 decided to set goals to work against climate change, these were meant to be developed upon and achieved in the short term. These measures followed the proposals made in The Paris Agreement the year earlier. However, some countries set some rather un-ambitious goals, and two years after the agreements were completed, several of them seem to have returned to their old ways and reduced their focus on their environmental programs once again. By February 2019 Germany announced that despite their efforts they are not going to be able to achieve their goals by their 2030 date. Meanwhile, President Trump of the United States withdrew his country completely from the Paris Agreement and reduced the budget the country had prepared for the environmental cause. Meanwhile, experts around the globe warn that the world faces a new upcoming migration crisis that it just isn't ready to deal with.

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Many factors compose the humanitarian crisis in Somalia, which is considered one of the most significant emergencies of the 21 century. Since the beginning of the year 2019, global warming has had disastrous effects on Somalia's agricultural industry. 4.8 million people currently suffer from food insecurity, and there are approximately 180,000 malnourished children under the age of five. These events have led to enormous migratory movements, since there are currently 2.6 million people displaced within the region in search of food and shelter (Care, 2020).

This infectious virus can spread and affect millions of individuals in these vulnerable situations through the constant movement of persons. Migration in Somalia, however, is very complex and multidimensional. The country is located in one of the most dangerous migration paths in the world, which means millions of refugees in the region escape armed conflicts within their nations and go through Somalia. The U.N Migration Agency reported that 51% of those refugees have never heard of Covid-19, which worsens the situation. Nevertheless, migrants are not the only ones misinformed about the virus. Several rural areas of the country, specifically the ones held by the Muslim extremist group Al-Shabab, overlook concerns about the pandemic (Ritter, 2020).

Violence has also torn apart Somalia's stability, damaging and undermining their ability to adequately respond to the situation. The Somali government, along with some sporadic military operations, has been in constant conflict with the Islamic extremist group Al-Shabab, which carried out several attacks against civilians that resulted in half of the 982 casualties that were reported this year. Additionally, there have been several allegations against the government and allied powers because "...Security forces unlawfully killed and wounded civilians during infighting over land, control of roadblocks, and disarmament operations..." (W.H.R, 2019). With 20% of the country's population being internally displaced, stretching the health system so that it can reach over more than 2,000 settlements is a complicated challenge (Ahmed, 2020).

All of these situations have left the Somalian health system in a very fragile state. When the pandemic began, the country had no ventilators to deal with the health effects caused by Covid-19. More significantly, Somalia only had 2 healthcare workers per 100,000 people. Furthermore, the main

quarantine hospital in the capital of Somalia had about 71 beds for a city of about 2.5 million people. "Early evidence suggests the pandemic is slowing other health services, and we are seeing an alarming rise in hunger and malnutrition levels, particularly among the most vulnerable communities" (Ahmed, 2020). If the situation continues, child mortality in Somalia could increase an estimated 13%, and the virus consequences might be catastrophic. Even though there are around 113 deaths and 4,451 confirmed cases, experts and field operators believe the real number is much higher (Ahmed, 2020). The only way to truly understand the effects the pandemic has brought upon the country and begin to solve the obstacles presented by it is by having quantitative evidence of how big the problem is: which doesn't exist because of the lack of laboratory capacity for testing.

Currently, there are no laboratories within Somalia. The testing done thus far has been made by three main laboratories in neighboring countries: Kenya, Somaliland, and Puntland (WHO, 2020). "Well-equipped, well-functioning laboratories are key building blocks for any health system and disease surveillance system" (WHO, 2020). Unfortunately, these efforts have proven to be impractical and inefficient by not being able to improve Somalia's state. Time is running out for all the people living through the Somalia humanitarian crisis (wClimate change is a reality, and it is also proven to be related to the ever harsher calamities such as hurricanes and droughts that have appeared in recent years. It is also influencing the ice caps in the poles, making them melt more and more each year and resulting in rising sea levels. If the oceans continue to rise at their current pace, it is predicted that by the year 2050, millions of people will be displaced as a result of floods. Droughts and other climatic conditions are already forcing people to move, such was the case in Mozambique in March 2019, after a tropical cyclone forced the country to scramble accommodation for more than 140,000 civilians in 155 temporary sites. A similar situation happened with those affected by the category 5 hurricane that hit the Bahamas in September that same year and resulted in a large number of people seeking shelter in the United States.

The problem is that they were only granted temporary refugee status, meaning they could only live and work in the US until authorities deemed it "safe" for them to return; however most of their houses, businesses and others, were destroyed in the storm and therefore they had nothing to return to. Amidst these conditions in different parts of the world, thousands have attempted to seek international asylum in another country, petitions that end up being denied as most countries refuse to recognize climate induced migration as a valid reason to seek refugee status. According to international law, a refugee is "someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of war or persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group." The term, established in 1951, does not extend to climate related motivations and therefore, habitants of the small island countries in the pacific, which for example are the most prone to be severely affected by the rising sea levels, will not be able to lobby for the refugee status if it ever becomes necessary for them to leave their country.

Despite recognizing its existence and effects, the United Nations hadn't recognized climate change as a motivation for migration until December 2018, and therefore, most countries still haven't recognized "climate refugees" as valid in legal terms, and some of them have no intention of doing so. Nina Birkeland, an expert on disaster displacement and climate change at the Norwegian Refugee Council said "We don't think that climate migrants should be made into climate refugees and be part of the refugee convention."

As of 2019 the exact number of people that have been displaced due to environment related reasons is still unknown, mainly due to the fact that international legislation isn't forced to offer help

to those affected. However, statistics from the IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre) show that in 2018 roughly 17 million people were internally displaced (meaning that although they were forced to move it was still possible or necessary for them to stay within their country's borders) in more than 100 countries because of climate reasons such as the increasing droughts in Africa or floods after harsh storms hitting southern Asia and the Pacific more often each time. Evidence currently shows that the country with the second largest number of internally displaced people, is China, with India having the 3th largest amount. With these two countries being accountable for more than 30% of the world's population, experts are worried about the impact, both humanitarian and financial, that could result from sudden mass migration in the region due to natural related disasters. Analyzing migration patterns it would be expected that displaced people might try to seek shelter in the west, and with the United States as well as other nations in Europe currently having controversial migration policies, experts are worried at the possibility of what could be a new migration crisis.

This debate has two objectives for the members of Group of 20 as well as the other invited nations:

UNITED NATIONS INTERVENTION

To work upon rectifying each country's compromise to work against climate change, as well as to take measures in order to convince uncompromised countries like the US and others to fully rectify The Paris Agreement (International agreements can be signed, but they only become binding through ratification, a process done in congress or the country's equivalent.) Once ratified, the agreement commits governments to submit their plans to cut emissions on the international stage. These measures can come off as the ones of the EU, which would prioritize countries in trade negotiations that had backed the Paris deal. By rectifying, nations will have agreed to do their bit to keep global temperatures well below 2C above pre-industrial times and to endeavor to limit them further to 1.5C.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

To establish a common procedure to deal with people that have become displaced from their country because of climate reasons. Define what will be the requirements for a person to qualify to receive the status of "Climate Refugee" and what will countries that receive them do. Work upon incentives to convince other nations to accept refugees. (Take into consideration: the established procedure has to be accepted by every country in the debate, however it isn't mandatory for them to accept refugees right away and can't be punished if they choose not to do so as they are all sovereign entities. That is why it would be most recommendable to define incentives for them to receive refugees.)

QUESTIONNAIRE

- A. What is my country's position?
- B. What are my country's policies?
- C. What can my country do to solve this issue?
- D. Which countries can my delegation work with?

- E. What are three possible solutions?
F. What has been done to solve the problem?

USEFUL LINKS

Global Report on Internal Displacement 2019, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, internal-displacement.org, 2019, retrieved August 11th from: <http://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2019/>

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