

CONCEPT NOTE

Leaving No One Behind : The Africa Refugee Crisis: Implementing Africa Agenda 2063 and the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals

“Refugees are a test of our humanity, we must recognize that refugees are a symptom of larger failure – be it war, ethnic tensions, or persecution.”

President Barak Obama

“ Despite the continents own social , economic and security challenges , African governments and people have kept borders , doors and hearts open to millions in need..” Antonio Guterres , The Secretary – General of the United Nations

“One of the sayings in our country is Ubuntu – the essence of being human. Ubuntu speaks particularly about the fact that you can’t exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about our interconnectedness. You can’t be a human all by yourself, and when you have all this quality – Ubuntu – you are known for your generosity.”

Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

“Refugees have skills, ideas, hopes and dreams... They are also tough, resilient and creative, with the energy and drive to shape their own destinies, given the chance.”

Felipe Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

1. The Situation

The year 2019 has been declared by the Africa Union, at its 31st Ordinary session held in Mauritania in July 2018 as the “ Year of Refugees , Returnees and Internally displaced Persons : Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa. The theme was officially launched in Addis Ababa , Ethiopia during its 32nd session in 10-11 February 2019 .

The year 2019 , is a year of celebration for the Africa Union; namely it is celebrating its 50th anniversary of the adoption of the 1969 organization of African Unity Convention, governing the particular dimensions of the refugee dilemma in Africa – OAU Refugee Convention- and the 10th anniversary of the Kampala Convention -the protection of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa ; which is the cornerstone for the protection of IDPs in Africa .

Refugees in African nations are part of the 71.4 million refugees world-wide in 2018. The number world-wide is estimated to increase to 79.8 million by the end of 2018. As the global refugee crisis is playing out in Europe with the influx of refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq and other places is catching the attention of the international community and the media; the African continent is witnessing an unprecedented influx of refugees, IDPs and asylum seekers crossing across borders to neighboring countries.

Africa hosts one-third of the World's forcibly displaced population. By June 2018, the African continent hosted 6.2 million refugees and asylum seekers, thus representing a third of the globe's refugee population and 15.5 million of IDP population.

Conflicts are the primary drivers of displacement in Africa, with insecurity impeding humanitarian access; as a direct result insufficient access to nutritious food compounds the most vulnerable mainly women and children. In 2016, 20 million displaced people were residing in sub-Saharan Africa. 5.6 million were refugees and asylum seekers. Thirteen million IDPs and more than 700,000 stateless persons reside in countries across the African continent. Large scale movements of people continue in 2019 due to conflicts in Burundi, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria and CAR.

In Africa, the concept of UBUNTU, a Zulu word, meaning unity, is fundamental to understanding intergenerational solidarity. In short, it basically states, that I am a person because you are a person. We are all related, interconnected and above all responsible for each other. Sound intergenerational relationships are critical to cohesive healthy families and societies. Generations have always been interdependent in order to survive and thrive. Families and community invest in the next generation convinced that this is how society progresses. The next generation will reciprocate and be better prepared to care for younger and older generations while advancing the well-being of societies.

2. The Solution

The global compact on refugees aims to strengthen the international response to large movements of refugees. It is based on the premise that protecting people who are compelled to flee and above all supporting the countries that shelter them are shared international responsibilities that must be shared predictably and equitably. The key objectives of the global compact on refugees are.:

1. Enhancing refugee self – reliance;
2. Easing pressures on host countries;
3. Expanding access to third country solutions;
4. Supporting conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity;

The global compact recognizes the inextricable link between statelessness and forced displacement. Statelessness can be a fundamental driver of forced displacement and that force displacement, can lead to statelessness.

3 Africa Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030

The aspirations of Africa Agenda 2063 are aspiration #4 speaks in terms of a “peaceful and secure Africa and expands further that Africa should be free of armed conflict, extremism, terrorism, intolerance and gender based violence. It begs the question whether this aspiration is indeed realistic in view of the numerous conflicts raging in Africa resulting in the mass movement of peoples. Aspiration #6 speaks in terms of “An Africa whose is people driven, relying on the potential of the African people, especially its women and children” African children should be empowered through the full implementation of the Africa charter on the rights of the Child. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030 include 17 goals, building on the principle of “leaving no one behind”. SDG #1, 2, 3, 4 and 16 are clearly not attained in conflict zones.

Climate change , environment and natural hazard related has emerged as a primary cause of forced displacement both in Africa and globally . People are on the move .

- 4 Goals:** The African Refugee Crisis event aims to advance the understanding the refugee and internally displaced persons crisis confronting African nations. It aims to point to workable solutions.
1. Exchange best practices and lessons learned in African countries hosting refugees by citing good examples of the education and skills training of refugee children , and the opportunities that will in the long run result in a sustainable , dignified and safe lasting solution, in line with the 1969 OAU Convention ;
 2. Raise the profile of Africans in the diaspora and to highlight their challenges and successes, more particularly in relation to the New York census 2020;
 3. Identify concrete areas for practical and coherent international support from the United Nations, its Member States towards the education of refugee and IDP Children and Youths , thus ensuring that no African refugee or IDP child is “left behind “ ;
 4. Raise the issues of displacements due to climate change , environment and natural disaster.
 5. It will focus on solutions for vulnerable populations – especially women and children forced to flee due to environment and natural disaster - more particularly the housing of such populations ;
 6. Emphasis that climate change adaption, disaster risk reduction, environment management and sustainable development procedures can jointly help the displaced; effectively eradicate displacement ; and that the “ Africa We Want “2063 for the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals , The Paris Agreement on Climate Change and Sendai framework are fundamental frameworks that can be utilized to achieve these goals .
 7. Emphasis will be on Health , education , corporate Social responsibility and public private partnerships .

5 Expected Outcomes.

1. Concrete and action orientated recommendations from Member states and United nations agencies on major issues arising from the discussion ;
2. Increased awareness of the Africa Refugee and IDP crisis in the global community ;
3. Solutions to forced displacement of refugees in Africa ;
4. Showcase of lessons learned and best practices from Member States hosting refugees , especially as regards the education of refugee children and youths ;

5. Voices of refugees – hear from former refugees ;
6. Recommendations for the Global Forum for Refugees to be held in December 2019 .

6 Participation .

Participants to the side event will include :

1. The Organizing partners of the (1) . Ugoji A Eze, Esq ,
2. Member States .
3. The United Nations System Entities .
4. Members of civil society , Private Sector , African Diaspora ,
Media and academia .

8. Date and Venue .

20th June 2019 , United Nations Head quarters , Conference Room .

8 Contact Person.

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