UNITED AMBASSADORS
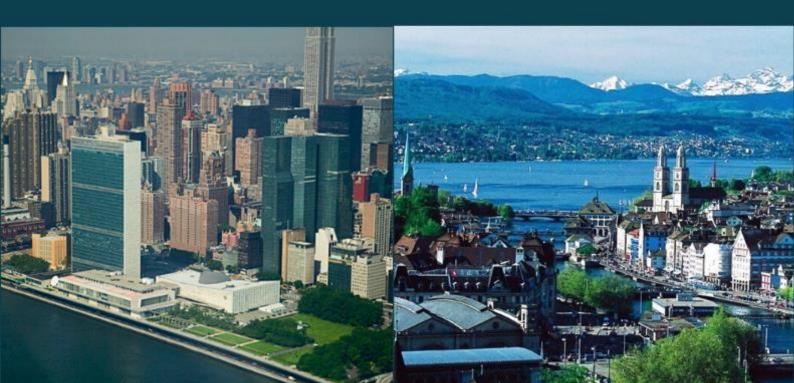# MODEL UN CONFERENCE (UA-MUNC)
UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN GENEVA, 2019

SECRETARY-GENERAL REPORTS

United Ambassadors Model United Nations Conference

General Assembly Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural)

Distr: General
Date: 29 November 2019
Original: English

First Session
Agenda Item 3

Immediate measures to address xenophobia and religious intolerance on a global level as a prerequisite to building peaceful, inclusive societies.

Report of the UA-MUNC Secretary-General
Prepared by: Pratham Manchanda

Committee Introduction

The General Assembly allocates to the Third Committee, agenda items relating to a range of social, humanitarian affairs and human rights issues that affect people all over the world.

As in previous sessions, an important part of the work of the Committee will focus on the examination of human rights questions, including reports of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council which was established in 2006. In October 2018, the Committee will hear and interact with special rapporteurs, independent experts, and chairs of working groups as mandated by the Human Rights Council.

The Committee also discusses questions relating to the advancement of women, the protection of children, indigenous issues, the treatment of refugees, the promotion of fundamental freedoms through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and the right to self-determination. The Committee also addresses important social development questions such as issues related to youth, family, ageing, persons with disabilities, crime prevention, criminal justice, and international drug control.

The Third Committee is expected to consider a similar number of draft resolutions during the present session of the General Assembly.

The mandate of the third committee of the General Assembly stands to focus upon the human rights, humanitarian and social issues, to be specific[1]:
- The advancement of women
- The protection of children
- the protection of indigenous populations, and related issues
- The treatment of refugees, and related issues such as racism and discrimination
- The promotion of fundamental freedoms

---

[1] https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/mission-new-york/en/documents/UN_GA__Final.pdf

- The right to self-determination
- Youth, family and ageing
- The rights of persons with disabilities
- Crime prevention and criminal justice
- The international drug trade, and related issues.

Unlike most other bodies of the General Assembly, the work of the Third Committee does not begin with a general debate between its members. Instead, its agenda items are debated individually from the beginning of the session.

The Third Committee hosts interactive dialogue with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the High Commissioner for Refugees each year.

Previous Documents by the UN General Assembly on Xenophobia

1. Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons, based on religion or belief: Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

2. A global call for concrete action for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action : resolution / adopted by the General Assembly

3. Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance: Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

4. Global efforts for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action: Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

5. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

Background: Introduction to the Topic

Originally the word xenophobia comes from the Greek words xénos, meaning 'the stranger' and 'the guest' and phóbos, meaning 'fear'. Thus, xenophobia stands for 'fear of the stranger', but usually the term is taken to mean 'hatred of strangers'[2]. Xenophobia can be understood as "an attitudinal orientation of hostility against non-natives in a given population"[3].

In contrast to sociobiologists who consider xenophobia to be a universal phenomenon, social scientists describe it as one among several possible forms of reactions generated by anomic situations in the societies of modern states. Furthermore, it is growing out of the existence of essentialist symbolic and normative systems that legitimate processes of integration or exclusion. Thus, xenophobic behaviour is based on existing racist, ethnic, religious, cultural, or national prejudice. Xenophobia can be defined as the "attitudes, prejudices and behaviour that reject, exclude and often vilify persons, based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity." [4]

Xenophobia and racism often overlap, but are distinct phenomena. Whereas racism usually entails distinction based on physical characteristic differences, such as skin colour, hair type, facial features, etc, xenophobia implies behaviour based on the idea that the other is foreign to or originates from outside the community or nation.[5]

Because differences in physical characteristics are often taken to distinguish the 'other' from the common community, it is often difficult to differentiate between racism and xenophobia as motivations for behaviour. At the same time, expression of xenophobia may occur against people of identical physical characteristics when such people arrive, return or migrate to States or areas where occupants consider them outsiders.[6]

In the 90s, xenophobic outbursts were followed by an increase in acts of racist violence in several societies in the world. This rise of xenophobia can be distinguished from the old form of racism leading to Nazism and Fascism in terms of its ideological roots and causes. Accordingly, it is possible to talk about a 'new racism' that developed in the post-war era since racism no longer was based on biological but rather on cultural differences.

---

[2] Smelser, N. J. and Baltes, P. B. (eds.) 2001. International Encyclopaedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences. Elsevier. Oxford Science Ltd.

[3] Boehnke, Klaude in NGO Working Group on Migration and Xenophobia for the World Conference (in International Migration, Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia, 2001. A publication jointly produced by ILO, IOM, OHCHR, in consultation with UNHCR. Page 2.

[4] Declaration on Racism, discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance against Migrants and Trafficked Persons. Asia-Pacific NGO Meeting for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Teheran, Iran. 18 February 2001.

[5] NGO Working Group on Migration and Xenophobia for the World Conference (in International Migration, Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia, 2001. A publication jointly produced by ILO, IOM, OHCHR, in consultation with UNHCR.

[6] Declaration on Racism, discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance against Migrants and Trafficked Persons. Asia-Pacific NGO Meeting for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Teheran, Iran. 18 February 2001.

Two causes are put forward to explain the resurgence of xenophobic and racist movements towards the end of the twentieth century. The first cause is new migration patterns that have developed as an effect of the gradual internationalisation of the labour market during the postcolonial era. In the receiving countries, social groups in unfavourable position considered newcomers as competitors for jobs and public services. This cultivated a social and political climate that generated xenophobia [7]and racism (i.e. defensive reactions against migrants), as well as nationalism (i.e. demands that the state provide better protection against foreigners for its own population).

The second cause believed to reinforce xenophobia and racism is globalisation. Increased competition between states has led states to reduce their services in areas of social welfare, education and healthcare. This reduction influenced in particular segments of the population living on the margins of society. These groups are often in direct competition with migrants for welfare service and are the main breeding ground for xenophobic and racist ideologies. Research has shown that severe economic inequalities and the marginalization of persons from access to basic economic and social conditions give rise to tensions and manifestations of racism and xenophobia . Those perceived to be outsiders or foreigners, often migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, displaced persons, and non-nationals, are the main targets.

At the same time, xenophobic or racist reactions are not necessarily aggravated by the presence of a large number of immigrants. There are examples showing that social decline of specific groups and right-wing political organisations are sufficient preconditions for the emergence of xenophobia.

---

[7] NGO Working Group on Migration and Xenophobia for the World Conference (in International Migration, Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia, 2001. A publication jointly produced by ILO, IOM, OHCHR, in consultation with UNHCR.

Previous Trends/ Historic Conflicts

1. US/ CHINA

Chinese workers began to arrive in the USA in large numbers in the late 1840s and were employed in construction projects for many of the railroads being established as the U.S. economy was emerging. But by 1880 there were some 110,000 Chinese Americans in the country, and some white Americans didn't like the growing ethnic diversity.

Congress responded with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which stated that Chinese immigration "endangers the good order of certain localities" and would no longer be tolerated. Other responses ranged from bizarre local laws (such as California's tax on the hiring of Chinese-American laborers) to outright violence (such as Oregon's Chinese Massacre of 1887, in which 31 Chinese Americans were murdered by an angry white mob).

2. RWANADA

About 85% of Rwandans are Hutus, but the Tutsi minority has long dominated the country. In 1959, the Hutus overthrew the Tutsi monarchy and tens of thousands of Tutsis fled to neighbouring countries, including Uganda group of Tutsi exiles formed a rebel group, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), which invaded Rwanda in 1990 and fighting continued until a 1993 peace deal was agreed.
A group of Tutsi exiles formed a rebel group, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), which invaded Rwanda in 1990 and fighting continued until a 1993 peace deal was agreed.

 3.SOUTH AFRICA

2019 Durban riots

On the 25 March 2019 xenophobic riots targeting African immigrants broke out in Sydenham, Jadhu Place and Overport areas of Durban. Around one hundred people attacked businesses owned by foreign nationals resulting in around 50 people seeking shelter in a local police station and mosque.Three people were killed in the riot. A speech given by President Cyril Ramaphosa at the ANC's election manifesto for the 2019 South African general election was blamed for contributing to xenophobic feeling wherein Ramaphosa committed to cracking down on undocumented foreigners involved in criminal activities.The attacks on foreigners was criticised by both the South African government and political parties amidst calls to ensure that xenophobic sentiment was not exploited for electoral purposes.

2019 Johannesburg riots

On 1 September 2019 riots and looting targeting shops owned by foreign nationals broke out in Jeppestown and Johannesburg CBD following the death of a taxi driver. By the 3 September police had made 189 arrests for looting. Around 50 businesses predominantly owned by African from the rest of the continent were reportedly destroyed or damaged during the incident.The riots coincided with a nation-wide truck driver strike protesting against the employment of non-South African truckers.In September 2019, 640 Nigerians signed up to take free flights to Nigeria amidst attacks on foreigners.

4. SOUTH KOREA

Hundreds of desperate Yemenis fleeing civil war — more than 550 — arrived on the South Korean island of Jeju and applied for asylum between January and May. In response, more than half a million South Koreans have petitioned President Moon Jae-in to turn away all refugees. Online platforms have become grounds for refugee-bashing. An actual anti-refugee demonstration took place on Saturday in downtown Seoul.

South Korea has long been intolerant of outsiders, but the outrage triggered by this small number of Yemenis arriving on our shores shows how deep xenophobia runs here. For all of South Korea's success as a democracy and as a thriving economy, compassion and humanitarian instincts are in short supply. And the government bears much of the blame for fostering this selfish mind-set.

As of 2016, slightly more than two million foreigners were living legally in this country. Even when an estimated 210,000 undocumented migrants are counted, foreigners account for only around 4 percent of the total population of about 51 million.

And the number of refugees is negligible. South Korea has accepted only 2.5 percent of all asylum seekers it has screened since 1994 (not counting North Korean defectors), according to Human Rights Watch.[8]

5. LEBANON/ REFUGEES

For more than a year, a xenophobic campaign has aimed to villify refugees and place the blame for Lebanon's ills on their shoulders. According to analysts, this tactic serves to deflect attention from the failure of politicians to address Lebanon's economic crisis, which stems from a lack of vision, inadequate public policies and rampant corruption.

In Lebanon, the rise in refugees has in some cases been attributed to economic issues and ecological problems, as well security threats and an increase in crime rates. These accusations are pushed in some parts of the media, which often depicts refugees as a "heavy burden" that Lebanon "can no longer withstand".

This narrative is unfounded and discriminatory, but has unfortunately begun to gain traction at the grassroots level. As a result, tensions between host communities and refugees have risen, and there is a risk that the situation could spill over into conflict in the short or medium term.[9]

---

[8] https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/01/opinion/south-korea-racism.html

[9] https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1176545/syrian-refugees-in-lebanon-fighting-xenophobia-with-the-help-of-data-and-statistics.html

Possible Solutions

Before creating new legal standards, States must honor their obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) and implement the recommendations on xenophobia and xenophobic violence put forth by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. I also highlighted the need to address xenophobic violence alongside other forms of bias-motivated violence rather than in isolation, given that forms of bias may overlap or that people may face discrimination or violence due to more than one aspect of their identity.

Practical steps states can take to strengthen their efforts to prevent and respond to xenophobic violence include:

Senior leaders speak out against xenophobic violence;

1. Develop domestic laws that address xenophobic violence alongside other forms of bias-motivated violence;
2. Strengthen police and justice responses to xenophobic violence;
3. Develop mechanisms to monitor and report on xenophobic violence; and
4. Reach out and build links with communities affected by xenophobic violence[10]

---

[10] https://www.humanrightsfirst.org/press-release/practical-ways-address-xenophobic-violence

Key Points to consider while Researching and Negotiating

General recommendations are provided in this section. They are primarily informed by the findings provided above but also incorporate feedback from internal stakeholders, including senior staff from UNHCR HQ and ROSA. They also draw from and amplify the information already provided throughout this report, in particular the findings and recommendations at the end of each case study. Further justification for the following recommendations can be found in Appendix III, Chain of Evidence Supporting Recommendations. Noting that specific recommendations to IPs have already been provided, the following general recommendations are directed toward UNHCR at the headquarters level and UNHCR ROSA and address the following five broad areas of concern:

1. The need for a revised and more relevant agency wide strategy and guidance to address xenophobia in UNHCR's operational areas;
2. The creation of strategic advocacy platforms at both the headquarters and field level that exploit UNHCR's comparative advantage in social change and attract new partners with a mutual interest in combating xenophobia;
3. Base xenophobia related programming on evidence-based understanding of current political and socio-economic conditions and theoretically sound and empirically supported behavioural change models;
4. Review results based management objectives, indicators, outputs and outcomes to realistically reflect xenophobia programming and enable better monitoring; and
5. Dedicate more oversight, training, and human and financial resources to anti-xenophobia programming. Recognising that xenophobia is an issue that influences all protection activities and that perpetrators, unwittingly or not, will likely fall back on denialism of their xenophobic acts and deeds, the following recommendations and suggestions for implementation have been formulated to equip UNHCR staff with the policy, implementation approaches and partnership models they need to responsibly address xenophobia in their field operations[11]

---

[11] https://www.unhcr.org/55cb153f9.pdf

References and Additional Resources

Additional Resources

https://www.humanrightsfirst.org/press-release/practical-ways-address-xenophobic-violence

THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY -https://www.un.org/en/ga/third/
https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/mission-new-york/en/documents/UN_GA__Final.pdf

https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/01/opinion/south-korea-racism.html

https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1176545/syrian-refugees-in-lebanon-fighting-xenophobia-with-the-help-of-data-and-statistics.html

Bibliography

Smelser, N. J. and Baltes, P. B. (eds.) 2001. International Encyclopaedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences. Elsevier. Oxford Science Ltd.

Boehnke, Klaude in NGO Working Group on Migration and Xenophobia for the World Conference (in International Migration, Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia, 2001. A publication jointly produced by ILO, IOM, OHCHR, in consultation with UNHCR. Page 2.

Declaration on Racism, discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance against Migrants and Trafficked Persons. Asia-Pacific NGO Meeting for the World Conference Against Racism,

Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Teheran, Iran. 18 February 2001.
NGO Working Group on Migration and Xenophobia for the World Conference (in International Migration, Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia, 2001. A publication jointly produced by ILO, IOM, OHCHR, in consultation with UNHCR.

Declaration on Racism, discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance against Migrants and Trafficked Persons. Asia-Pacific NGO Meeting for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Teheran, Iran. 18 February 2001.

NGO Working Group on Migration and Xenophobia for the World Conference (in International Migration, Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia, 2001. A publication jointly produced by ILO, IOM, OHCHR, in consultation with UNHCR.

Isaac, Benjamin H. (2006). *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity*. Princeton University Press. p. 317. ISBN 978-0-691-12598-5.