



JUNIOR ACADEMY MODEL UN X

**SOCHUM**

TOPIC GUIDE

**Guy Goren**  
**Nathan Averboukh**

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# JUNIOR ACADEMY MODEL UNITED NATIONS

- Tenth Annual Conference -

## JAMUN X SECRETARIAT

Anna Ekmecki  
**Director of  
Internal Affairs**

Brooke Foley  
**Director of  
Internal Affairs**

Claire Jiang  
**Director of  
Internal Affairs**

Katie Cho  
**Director of  
External Affairs**

Suzu Hirai  
**Director of  
External Affairs**

Mia Subrahmanyam  
**Director of  
External Affairs**

Wilber Callejas  
**Director of  
Operations**

Michael Haskell  
**Director of  
Operations**

Kiki Perez Grovas  
**Director of  
Operations**

## FACULTY ADVISORS

Mark Kramer  
**Faculty Advisor**

Christine Wallace  
**Faculty Advisor**

**Guy Goren**  
**guygor27@bergen.org**

Hi everyone, I'm one of your chairs, Guy Goren (yes, that's really my name). I love MUN because it's a great way for everyone, experienced or not, to come into contact with different people, places, and opinions. It truly fascinates me that an organization within schools exists that allows people from around the state, country, and world to meet up and interact with each other, learning and growing in a way that doesn't feel like a chore. Outside of MUN I do stuff like HOSA , playing piano (and also kind of the saxophone), and fencing. I'm really excited to see all of the great things you guys come up with regarding this topic, and although nothing you do here will be implemented, the ideas that will be born here might truly change the world one day, so take it seriously and don't be afraid to speak. The most important thing is to make sure that your voice is heard. I strongly encourage all of you to not rely only on the topic guide, but to do your own research as well. Good luck to all of you!

Guy Goren  
SOCHUM Co-Chair  
guygor@bergen.org

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**Nathan Averboukh**  
nataver27@bergen.org

Hello, my name is Nathan Averboukh, I'm a freshman in the AVPA academy at BCA, and I'm going to be one of the chairs for this committee. Ever since my first trimester at BCA, when I took the Model UN elective, I have been obsessed with it. I am really interested in global politics, and MUN is something that helps me learn about that in a really fun and interesting way. Model UN has also let me go on amazing trips, and through MUN, I have made really amazing friends. When I'm not doing MUN, I like to read, sing, and read about random historical events that I somehow find interesting. I have never been on the chair side of a Model UN committee, and I think it will be really interesting to see how you guys tackle problems and find solutions to the Afghan Refugee crisis. This was a topic that I really enjoyed researching, and I hope that you will have a lot of fun debating it. Also, I really want to tell all of you not to stress. Model UN can seem scary, but at the end of the day, it's just a bunch of kids in suits. It doesn't get sillier than that. So, with no further ado, best of luck to each and every one of you and have fun.

SOCHUM Co-Chair  
nataver@bergen.org



**TOPIC:  
Afghan Refugee  
Crisis**



## INTRODUCTION

On August 15, 2021, the militant terrorist group, the Taliban, who had been in hiding for the better part of the last two decades, seized the city of Kabul from the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, solidifying their power over the country. After this, millions of Afghans had been displaced, primarily to neighboring Islamic Asian countries and Middle Eastern Nations, especially to Pakistan and Iran. Countries all over the world are struggling with various issues regarding this refugee crisis, such as how to deal with the influx of refugees in neighboring countries, how aid can be administered to refugees within Afghanistan, what countries should they be admitted to, and more. Refugee crisis has been plaguing not only the region, but the world as a whole for as long as organized society has been present, but what makes this region so different now is the regime in present, the Taliban, that make not only administering aid, but any foreign intervention incredibly difficult. Delegates will thus have to find creative solutions in working around this to ensure the safety and security of refugees.

## Topic History.

Afghanistan has long been known as the graveyard of empires, and while this status is debatable, what isn't is all of the nations that have invaded it over the centuries. Afghanistan is described as the "Gateway from Europe to Asia," and as a result has suffered many invasions throughout history, notably, Alexander the Great, Mahmud of Ghazni, Genghis Khan, The Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States (1). All of these invasions have resulted in refugee crises, and all share common connections in why they were invaded. Afghanistan has been invaded many times for several reasons, including territorial expansion, ideological crusading, and trade interdiction (2).

Throughout all of human history up until the 20th century, nations would invade and occupy foreign powers for simple territorial gain and the prestige that comes with it. Alexander the Great, Mahmud of Ghazni, and Ghenghis Khan all invaded Afghanistan for this reason, as well as for another: trade interdiction. As the silk road ran directly through the area of modern day Afghanistan, it was a critical location to control for any empire wishing to achieve prosperity (3). Controlling extremely profitable trade routes, especially those between powerful societies like China and the Byzantine empire has been a constant method of achieving power and prosperity.

## Topic History. (continued)

However, land based trade became less and less economically incentive for nations and better methods for transactions developed, so the value of Afghanistan as a trade outpost diminished. However, with the discovery of opium by the British in the 1800's, and Afghanistan's large supply of poppies from which the drug is made, a new opportunity for economic growth emerged, and the British soon invaded to establish a sphere of influence in the region. The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in the years following the second world war to establish another friendly communist state, and to prevent a takeover from Islamic jihadi militant groups (2). The United States invaded Afghanistan to prevent the Taliban, the current group that runs the country after they pulled out, from asserting control over the people. The Taliban, with an extensive history of human rights abuses, have long been a thorn in the side of anyone attempting to bring aid to the nation, and their unethical treatment of their citizens has greatly added to the crisis, as less and less people are able to find stable and adequate housing, food, water, and healthcare.

Every invasion of Afghanistan has resulted in refugees, but a true crisis emerges when high levels of military technology and large invasion forces result in millions of casualties and millions of refugees, and the surrounding nations and existing infrastructure physically cannot contain them all (4). According to the National Library of Medicine, "The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the subsequent brutal military campaign resulted in one of the biggest humanitarian crises of modern history, with over five million refugees fleeing to Pakistan and Iran and another two million displaced internally" (4). These are very similar numbers to what is present currently in Afghanistan because of the US invasions, but the rise of the Taliban has greatly worsened the severity of the crisis, lessened the extent of internal help provided by the government, and made serious foreign intervention all but impossible.



## Topic History

Volunteer aid workers have been killed in Afghanistan by the hundreds, mostly by Taliban-run militant groups, and this makes countries that wish to intervene struggle to find a solution (5). Overall, Afghanistan's geographic location and the resulting trade routes, farming opportunities, and expansion possibilities have resulted in numerous foreign invasions with various justifications and intentions. all causing great quantities of refugees which have put immense strain on the nations bordering the conflicts.

## Current Situation

As a result of the United States invading Afghanistan on October 7th, 2001, millions of people have been injured, killed, or displaced, resulting in one of the biggest refugee crises plaguing the earth in the present. The countries nearby Afghanistan do not have the capability to accept large amounts of refugees, and the existing infrastructure of Afghanistan has been so badly damaged by the war, and it simply cannot accommodate for the crisis. Presently, there are 8.2 million Afghan nationals who have been displaced across the world, with refugees currently residing primarily within neighboring Pakistan and Iran (9). In many countries, refugees have inadequate access to government facilities and healthcare.

Iran is particularly complacent in the mistreatment of Afghan refugees, as they have had numerous reports of mistreatment against Afghans. Additionally, in countries with large populations of Afghan refugees, particularly in Iran, there is a rise of "Afghanophobia", or sentiment against Afghan nations. This stems from the fact that the Afghan refugees are numerous in the country, and many Iranians view them as outsiders (16). Additionally, since 2021, when the Taliban took the city of Kabul and conquered the country, 1.6 million refugees fled the country (9). This has led to higher than ever levels of agitations in the countries neighboring Afghanistan. Primarily this has affected Pakistan and Iran, as they share the longest borders with Afghanistan, as well as being closer to more populated places, but notably, Tajikistan has also had an influx of refugees, who, similarly to Iran and Afghanistan, are too being mistreated (10). Outside of these countries, some Afghan refugees have been seeking homes in western countries such as the United States, or within the EU. However, in the EU, in 2022, 271 Afghans were resettled in the EU. a staggeringly low number compared to the number of refugees that are in need of aid.



## Current Situation

### (Continued)

Lastly, millions of Afghans, even if not displaced, are in dire need of humanitarian aid. Estimates put the number of individuals who require such aid at approximately 23.7 million individuals, or about 60% of the population (9). To help Afghans with the situations that they are currently in, organizations related to the United Nations are involved in Afghanistan, including, but not limited to, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, among many others (14). Additionally, many countries, particularly the United States, have given large amounts of aid to Afghans both in Afghanistan and outside, helping remedy the situation (7). However, despite this, the situation is still dire, and requires a better and more permanent solution.

## Country Positions

### Iran:

Iran, in the past, has always accepted Afghan refugees, but the country is nearing its capacity. Most countries in the region have very little existing infrastructure due to inefficient governments and poor spending policies and Iran is no different. For every million people, there are only 2,523.81 km. of roads, in comparison to the United States' 13,758.29 km. of roads per million people. Iran simply cannot handle a massive influx of Afghan refugees at the present, and because of all of the ones already admitted to the nation, increasing anti-afghan resentment has grown in the nation over time.



## Country Policies (continued)

In September, 2023, Iranian authorities pledged to deport all Afghan migrants without proper documentation, something not usually held by refugees fleeing conflict. Following this announcement, in 2023 alone over 600,000 Afghan refugees had returned to Afghanistan from Iran (6). According to acaps.org, “Iran hosts one of the largest refugee populations in the world, the majority of whom come from Afghanistan. Around 780,000 registered Afghan refugees and another 2.6 million who are either undocumented or have received a headcount laissez-passer live in Iran.” Iran wishes for more countries to accept these refugees, as the nation simply cannot accept much more without significant protest, not something which Iran’s government has been satisfactory in handling.

### Pakistan:

Pakistan has a similar situation to Iran in the Afghan refugee crisis: it has always been open to accepting Afghan refugees in the past, but the sudden influx of refugees from the end of the war and the rise of the Taliban has resulted in civilian and governmental difficulties in accounting for the increased population of refugees. The UN refugee agency writes, “Pakistan has largely upheld fundamental rights for registered Afghan refugees and granted them access to public health and education facilities. However, its approach to refugee management was challenged from mid-August 2021 as Afghans fled conflict and political turmoil in Afghanistan.”



# Country Policies

## (continued)

The agency also writes, “A noticeable spike in the arrest, detention and deportation of undocumented Afghans in 2023 also contributed to the overall shrinking of protection space for Afghans in need, including women and girls. In October 2023, the Government of Pakistan announced plans to repatriate undocumented Afghan nationals back to Afghanistan.” However, these removals of Afghan refugees have been described as more human than that of Iran. This is still not an overall good situation for Afghan refugees, as they are still returning back to the country and the conflicts that they had fled. Pakistan also has very similar problems with infrastructure as Iran, resulting from inefficient government spending.

### **United States of America:**

The United States of America, unlike other countries previously mentioned, does not struggle with a lack of infrastructure, and so still has plenty of capacity and ability to accept Afghan refugees.

According to the US Department of State, “The Department of State continues to receive and process referrals for Afghans who are eligible for consideration under the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program.” This inherently means that the United States will accept all Afghan refugees that are eligible by the regulations for all refugees as a whole. There is currently no distinct policy for accepting Afghan refugees any differently than others. However, due to the United States actually starting and fighting the war that led to the crisis, many, both in Afghanistan and in the United States, are concerned about the acceptance of an increased quantity of Afghan refugees specifically. Many in Afghanistan hold the United States responsible for the crisis currently unfolding, and so would rather not immigrate there. Some in the United States are still unable to distinguish between members of the Taliban that they fought with and civilians who are victims of the crossfire, and so do not wish for a sudden influx of refugees from Afghanistan to occur.

# Country Policies (continued)

The United States, compared to other powers with significant say in the issue, is quite far away, and so this also impacts the policy of the country. While many countries are directly concerned about the illegal influx of refugees such as Pakistan and Iran, this is not an issue with the United States because of the two countries' distance, and so there are not as many harsh measures in place for illegal Afghan refugee immigration. However, the United States in recent years has not been the most open to immigration as a whole, and changing American politics could significantly alter that both ways.



## Europe (EU & The United Kingdom):

The EU and the United Kingdom have very similar stances on the Issue as a whole. Overall, the various nations that make up the EU have high levels of infrastructure and high standards of living, which make them ideal candidates for accepting refugees. The main issue amongst these nations is logistics and national security. It is always a struggle to get an entire nation on board on a single issue, nonetheless 10's of them, and the Afghan refugee crisis remains an extremely controversial and debated issue in these nations today. The logistics of accepting millions of refugees into countries of the EU is also very challenging, as the region is quite far away and the different nations within it have differing immigration policies. Because of this, despite plans from countries such as Germany to start resettling Afghans in the EU, very few Afghans have actually been resettled, even as refugees.



# Country Policies (continued)

## Africa:

African nations in general do not have the existing infrastructure to accept large amounts of refugees, and many African countries already have refugee crises of their own. However, some African countries may be able to accept small amounts of refugees and help coordinate larger logistical efforts.

## Central Asia:

Three central asian countries border Afghanistan. These countries are Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. In Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, there are about 10,000 to 15,000 Afghan refugees per country. While this number is not large, in Tajikistan, there is a notable anti-Afghan public sentiment. This has led Afghans to be deported from Tajikistan back to Afghanistan. Uzbekistan has had a similar situation, but they did not go as far as deportations. However, they have closed their Afghan border to further refugees. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan also have small numbers of Afghan refugees.

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## Country Policies (continued)

### Latin America:

Latin America is a region that is very far from Afghanistan. Because of this, the region is not very heavily involved in the Afghan refugee crisis. Despite this, countries, specifically Brazil, has been issuing visas to Afghan refugees who have to leave Iran. Brazil has granted over 9,000 visas to Afghans in Iran. Despite this, many refugees have found that they want to illegally go to and cross the US border. Because of this, there have been numerous instances of Afghans trying to cross the US–Mexico border after traversing much of Central America to reach that spot.

## Potential Solutions

Solutions to this crisis are incredibly complicated, as many countries have varying immigration and immigration policies that must be accounted for, and an extremely uncooperative government not just in Afghanistan but in other countries that have a large role to play in this issue. The most obvious solution to resolving the uncooperative government issue would be to invade, something that the United States of America had attempted to do, resulting in the crisis in the first place. This suggests that the uncooperative government is something that a solution to the crisis simply must go around. Simply sending aid into the country is not possible, as the Taliban would simply steal it to keep its army supplied. In order to solve the crisis, countries must be found that can accept large quantities of refugees and have the infrastructure to handle it, or a coordinated effort must be made by many countries to accept large amounts of Afghan refugees between them.

## Questions to Consider

- 1.How does the Afghan refugee crisis impact the citizens of your country?
- 2.Does your country have any important relationships with Afghanistan regarding trade and military alliances?
- 3.Do the people of your country share any cultural similarities or differences with Afghanistan that might make an impact in refugee acceptance by the population
- 4.Does your country have enough existing infrastructure to logistically handle a large influx of refugees?
- 5.Does your country have any immigration policies that may hinder the acceptance of large quantities of refugees?
- 6.Does your country have anything to gain from other countries accepting refugees?

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