

Committee: SOCHUM 2

Topic: The question of safe routes for migrants

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Summary

It is estimated that annually, there are 281 million international migrants, which equates to 3.6% of the world's population. Safe routes for migrants are an imperative and a must have in order to protect migrants, while reducing the numbers of illegal immigrations and routes. There are several dangers associated with unregulated migration routes, including: drug trafficking, human trafficking, dangerous conditions on modes of transport during the journey. In recent years, an increase has been seen in migrant boats capsizing, and numerous deaths, reinforcing the need for safe routes. While this remains true, it is also a focus that migration systems in host countries are not overwhelmed by the number of migrants entering the country, in order to prevent the overcrowding of housing and education systems.

Definition of Key Terms

Migrant – A person who moves from one place to another, especially in order to find work or better living conditions

Safe migration Pathway – A regulated route for the safe migration to a country including reunification, scholarships and education programmes

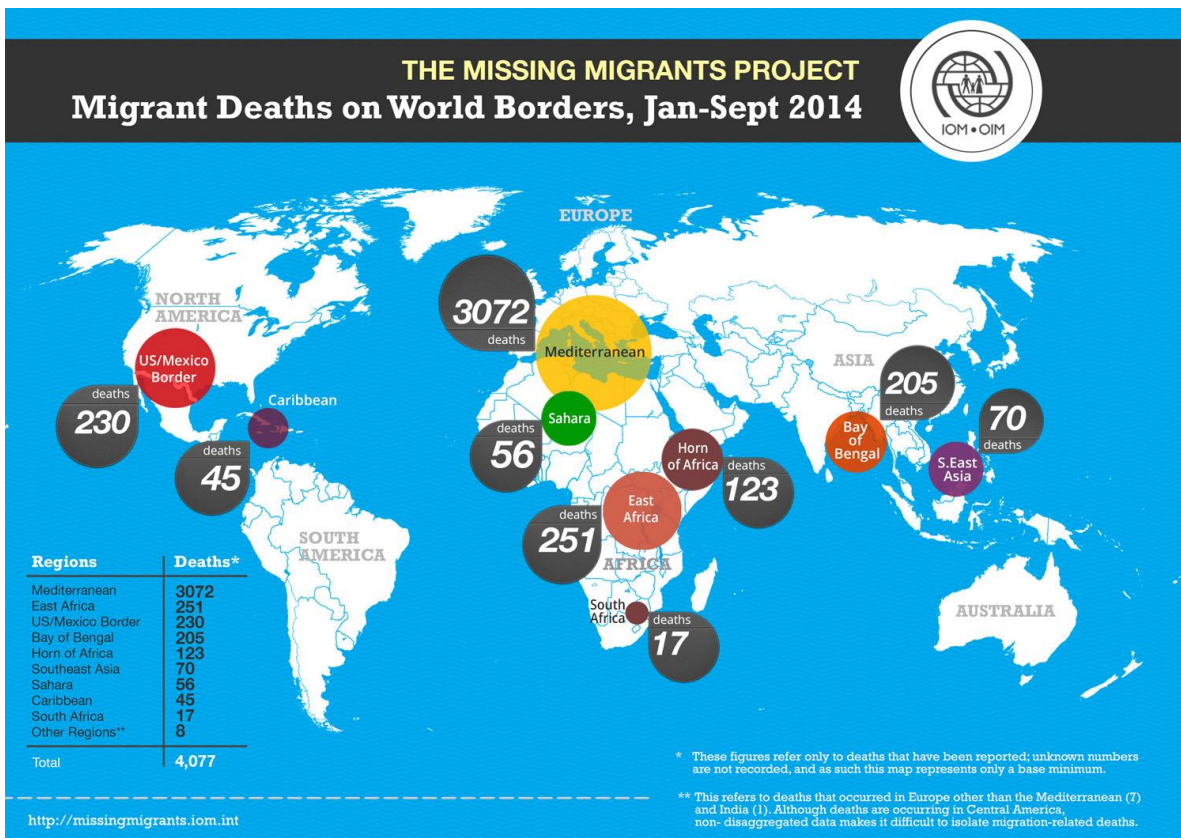
Safe and legal – Formal sanction of journeys to the recipient country

Refugee – A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution or natural disaster

Background Information

(Overview)

Safe routes for migrants provide migrants with a legal way into a recipient country, reducing the risk of dangers such as: human trafficking, drug routes and other dangers associated with illegal and non regulated migrated routes. These routes can allow a migrant to enter a country through a variety of methods. Community Sponsorship and Mandate schemes are available to refugees who have been assessed for re-settlement by the UNHCR. There are other available routes including; on the basis of work and study. Asylum can be applied for when a change in circumstance occurs, and it is not longer safe for a person to return to their country of origin, provided they have come to the recipient country legally as is set out in the 1951 United Nations Convention. As of 2022, 258 million people are moving from countries of origin, are in transit and moving to their destination countries. In 2021, 2048 migrants who were making illegle journeys were counted as dead or missing, highlighting the importance of safe routes. The image below, highlights the number of migrant deaths on borders globally, again highlighting the requirement of safe migration routes, in order to reduce these numbers. The United Nations International Organisation for Migration as well as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees are the main committees dealing with this question.



Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Sweden – Largest recipients of UNHCR referred refugees since 2015

United Kingdom – Offers a safe and legal route to the UK to half a million men, women and children, 2nd only immigrant recipients to Sweden

Syria – country with the highest rate of safe migrant travel

Hungary – Opposed to the global compact on Migration, with the view that the responsibility of more people should not be put onto a country.

Missing Migrants Project – An organisation and project that processes and presents data about migrants who are deemed as missing during their journeys

Timeline of Events

| Date | Description |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1918 | – End of the First World War, first large wave of international migration, with people fleeing homelands and the introduction of the passport regime |
| 1921 | – First set of guidelines, laws and conventions aimed at protecting human rights of people forced to flee conflict was assembled under the League of Nations |
| 1945 | – End of the Second World War, sees millions more people flee their home countries |
| 1949 | – the United Nations Relief and Works agent for Palestine refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) carried out relief work, including migration, of Palestinian refugees |
| 1951 | – United Nations Refugee Convention |
| 1994 | – Cairo Conference on Population and Development takes place, moving population policies and programmes away from a focus on numbers and to a focus on human lives |
| 2022 | – Invasion of Ukraine by Russia, leading to the creation of a safe route for Ukrainian refugees to countries such as the UK through the Ukraine Visa scheme |

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

1951 Refugee Convention, Geneva convention of 28th July 1951

International Convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families

1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees

United Nations Charter, Articles 55 and 56

Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the status of Refugees and Stateless Persons

Marrakech Compact on Migration

United Nations Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration

'Convening of a UN conference for the comprehensive consideration and review of the refugees, returnees, displaced persons and migrants' of 20th December 1993

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Uk illegal Migration Bill- Bill extinguishes the access to asylum in the UK for anyone who has entered the country illegally. While this is an attempt to reduce illegal migration and therefore the dangers that come along with this, the United Nations have warned of the profound negative impact this will have on people in need of international help and protection.

Possible Solutions

Reduce and stop illegal immigration – By reducing the numbers of illegal immigration, migrants will be able to use these safer travel routes, reducing the dangers associated with these routes.

Further creation of specialised visas – A further creation of visas, including more of each visa to be available, will provide further opportunity for migrants to enter a country legally. This may be done in the form of more scholarship, further education, training and work visas.

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