

The State of Qatar

Positions for the General Assembly Third

I. The Right to Seek Asylum

As outlined in Article 14 of the UDHR, “everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.”¹ In the wake of ongoing regional conflict, there is a clear need of resolution for those forced from their homes and countries due to religious, political, or ethnic persecution or conflict. Concerns that surround this right, however, stem from fear of its abuse, tensions with local peoples, and the protection of the national security of the potential host state. In light of the aforementioned concerns and others not explicitly mentioned, not all Member States share the same views on the right to seek asylum. Though the State of Qatar has not ratified the 1951 *Convention on the Status of Refugees* or its 1967 *Protocol*, it maintains that the right to seek asylum is one in need of a better solution.

The State of Qatar finds itself particularly entrenched in the issues of those seeking asylum, as according to the SRMUN Background Guide, the foremost producer of asylum seekers in the year 2013 was their geographic neighbor Syria. Understanding that states fear open-ended stays and abuse of the right to seek asylum, the State of Qatar would see a more standardized course of action with regard to reintegration in home states. While the end of a conflict is not an easy thing to predict, there are precautions and prerequisites that can be set in motion in order to make this inevitable reintegration into home states less painful. An organization within the State of Qatar, named the Qatar Red Crescent Society, has worked in conjunction with the Jordan Red Crescent Society to assist the psychological needs of Internally Displaced Persons from the Syrian conflict.² The State of Qatar has also funded the creation of a school for child-age Syrian refugees in order to continue their education, and make the eventual educational transition back to Syria that much easier.³ Qatar recognizes the need for both psychological and educational support of refugees, and the importance in fostering said needs in order to create a hospitable living environment during the time of conflict. Therefore, the State of Qatar will assist in funding human aid, in an attempt to both assuage some of the financial burdens on host states and better ensure that displaced peoples are better treated, educated, and prepared for their futures. The focus of this initiative will be the psychological, religious, and educational needs of those under the age of eighteen. It will fund and establish local schools, psychological counseling facilities specifically dealing with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and religious counseling facilities within refugee populations. All aspects of this plan are designed to ease the burden as a refugee and continue a child’s academic career in spite of their newfound living situation.

¹ "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," adopted December 10, 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly, available at <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>, (accessed October 23, 2014).

² "Qatar Red Crescent Society Establishes Psychological Services Centre for Syrian Refugees." *Fédération Internationale Des Sociétés De La Croix-Rouge Et Du Croissant-Rouge*. IFRC, 17 Apr. 2013.

³ Dickinson, Elizabeth. "Wealthy Qatar, a Backer of Syria's Armed Rebels, Makes Room for Displaced Students." *The Christian Science Monitor*. The Christian Science Monitor, 13 Apr. 2014.

II. Global Efforts toward the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation

In accordance with the UN Millennium Goals addressing the advancement and support of females worldwide, the Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, and the United Nations Population Fund, among other organizations, the State of Qatar affirms the concept that all women should be entitled to the independent control and autonomy over their body. Joint statements such as the one issued on February 4, 2014 by the organizations and leaders previously mentioned detail the same eventual goal of the State of Qatar. As cited from the SRMUN Background Guide, female genital mutilation or cutting must be ended to promote the "health, empowerment and well being of every girl".⁴ The widespread prevalence of FGM/C, as demonstrated by the statistical data released by the United Nations detailing the approximately 125 million women and girls who have undergone FGM/C, also stands as a cause of concern for the State of Qatar, and prompts the advancement of any initiative ensuring the health and safety of the women and girls at risk.

The State of Qatar feels the issue of female genital mutilation must be addressed in a proactive but sensitive manner. Maintaining cultural sovereignty within many of the areas that practice FGM/C is of the utmost importance in any attempt to change the perspective on the subject, making the process of eliminating the practice incredibly delicate. Therefore, the State of Qatar proposes a two-pronged plan-of-action to both educate the rural communities on the medical and cultural significance of FGM/C, but also to provide a safe and regulated manner of undergoing the procedure until FGM/C is no more. The first branch of this plan is education. The State of Qatar vows to fund the creation of a taskforce under the World Health Organization titled the Female Circumcision Regulation Initiative (FCRI). Twice a year, during the Spring and Fall seasons, this taskforce will make a tour through the rural areas where the practice most commonly occurs. At seminars, females will hear from healthcare professionals sourced from both the WHO, NGO's, and local female advocates for the practice. Furthermore, in an effort to remain neutral and respect the importance of culture and tradition, Qatar would set an age at which young women make a choice for or against the procedure. The second branch of the plan is the funding of medical centers to safely perform the procedure of female circumcision. The State of Qatar vows to fund these medical centers, under strict guidelines of operation: The female going through the procedure must 1) be of at least 16 years of age 2) have documentation that she attended one of the aforementioned seminars between the ages of 10 and 16 3) be interviewed by a female who has undergone female circumcision previously to determine whether any unwanted outside influence was involved in volunteering the patient for the procedure, and 4) if it is determined that the female is not seeking the procedure voluntarily, the procedure will be denied. Until the practice of FGM/C is completely eliminated, the creation of the FCRI offers young women in high-risk zones the proper medical and cultural knowledge about the procedure, as well as the possibility of safe medical conditions should they choose to undergo said procedure. The State of Qatar would see young women and girls educated by those on both sides of this issue and, following the agenda and precedence set by the United Nations, allow them the autonomy to make their own decisions regarding female circumcision.

⁴ "Background Guide for General Assembly Third." *Southern Regional Model United Nations*. Available at http://srmun.org/atlanta/docs/biggs/Atlanta_GATHIRD_2014.pdf, (accessed on October 1, 2014).