



POLICY RESOLUTION 5 – HUMAN RIGHTS FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANT WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Proposed by: Women Graduates-USA
Bangladesh Federation of University Women
Federacion Mexicana de Mujeres Universitarias

Seconded by: The Canadian Federation of University Women

The 33rd GWI General Assembly resolves that:

1. National Federations and Associations (NFAs) advocate for the implementation of the UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration passed by the UN General Assembly in December 2018 especially as it relates to women and children in their respective countries;
2. NFAs advocate for the implementation of the UN Global Compact on Refugees also passed by the UN General Assembly in December 2018 and designed to address the "challenges that face both refugees and their hosts" especially as the situations relate to women and children in their respective countries;
3. NFAs advocate for the ratification and implementation of the International Convention on The Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families; and
4. NFAs will urge their countries where they have not agreed to the two non-binding Compacts and the CEDAW Convention to join the rest of the world in addressing the human rights violations entailed in the movement of people throughout the world.

Suggested Plan of Action:

1. GWI will utilize its consultative role with UN Women, UN Refugee Agency, UN Human Rights Council, and other international bodies to assist in the implementation of this resolution.
2. NFAs should encourage the education of their members about the UN Compact for Migration and the Compact on Refugees and address the implementation in their countries and local communities, especially as it relates to gender issues as reflected by the UN Women Expert Working Group addressing key principles of non-discrimination and gender-responsiveness.
3. NFAs should recognize and advocate that Recommendation #26 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) includes the protection of women migrant workers.
4. NFAs should work with their respective government representatives to urge their governments to implement or agree to these Compacts within their own countries.
5. NFAs should coordinate with human rights and migration/refugee organizations and other NGOs to raise awareness of the issues in their locales.
6. NFAs will encourage local branches to develop outreach programs to women and children refugees and migrants especially as it relates to access to education, health care, abuse and employment, and encourage connections among those agencies providing wrap-around services to these new people in their communities.
7. NFAs should encourage academic research that includes the mapping of populations at risk to examine the causes and the consequences of migration and refugees.



Supporting Statement:

GWI (IFUW) first addressed support for refugees in a resolution in 1939 (#4), and subsequently added refugee and/or human rights resolutions in 1968 (#2, human rights for all), 1992 (#20, refugee women), 1995 (#14, refugee women and girls), and 2001 (#8, refugee women and human rights).

The world is now facing the largest displacement of people since World War II. According to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHRC), the number of refugees and people displaced by conflict and disaster worldwide reached a record high in 2017 of 68.5 million while another 10 million are classified as "stateless" people. Across the globe, nearly 50 million children have been uprooted. Among them are 28 million fleeing brutal wars in Yemen, Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and South Sudan. There are 6.3 million migrant and refugee children in Latin America and the Caribbean fleeing violence and seeking to reunite with family members. In addition, there are another 258 million migrants, of which 120 million are women and girls, living outside of their country of birth. All these numbers continue to grow.

Refugee and migrant women and children are at particular risk for human trafficking and other abuses as a result of their vulnerable status as they are often pawns in larger political games of intractable conflict. Children alone make up half of the "people of concern" according to the UNHRC, as they are often separated from parents or traditional caregivers and even recruited to be child soldiers - both boys and girls. Obtaining an education becomes impossible. Forcibly displaced women face barriers to securing economic livelihoods, discrimination in many forms, sexual violence, limited access to service and negative consequences from some cultural practices. The human rights of women migrant workers

According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), 85% of the world's refugees are hosted in low and middle-income countries while increasingly, the developed countries set up barriers to entry for re-settlement and/or asylum. The burden of providing for this massive movement of people from their home countries has become unfair. Thus, in 2016 the UN General Assembly declared "We commit to a more equitable sharing of the burden and responsibility for hosting and supporting the world's refugees" as they agreed to the two Compacts which " seek to strengthen the international response to large movements of refugees and protracted refugee situations, and to better define cooperation to share responsibilities." The Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, Volker Turk stated, "We want to go beyond what already exists [in international law] and address a very specific gap which is to better define international cooperation to share responsibilities."