

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
FALK AUDITORIUM

THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS:
CHALLENGES FOR SYRIA'S NEIGHBORS AND
THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Washington, D.C.
Tuesday, September 29, 2015

PARTICIPANTS:

Introduction and Moderator:

ELIZABETH FERRIS
Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy
The Brookings Institution

Featured Speaker:

KEMAL KIRIŞCI
TUSIAD Senior Fellow and Turkey Project Director
The Brookings Institution

Discussants:

SIMON HENSHAW
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
U.S. Department of State

GREGORY MANIATIS
Senior European Policy Fellow
Migration Policy Institute

ALAR OLLJUM
EU Visiting Fellow, Center on the United States and Europe
The Brookings Institution

* * * * *

P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. FERRIS: Okay, good morning, everyone, and welcome to Brookings. My name is Elizabeth Ferris. I'm a senior fellow in foreign policy here at Brookings and have been working on issues of displacement in humanitarian crises for a long, long time. In a word, we're delighted to have this program today focusing particularly on Syrian refugees, looking at the regional dimensions both in the neighboring countries; broader Europe and the United Nations as well as the U.S. It's organized by the Center on U.S. and Europe which Kemal Kirişci, my colleague, directs the Turkey Project there.

Syrian refugees have suddenly become front-page news. You can't turn on the television or open a news magazine without seeing a report, and yet some four million people have been displaced in the region, and we are looking now at the beginning of the fifth year of this displacement.

Kemal and I have been working on Syrian displacement for several years. I went back and looked at the title of the report we issued two years ago and it was called "Syrian Crisis: Massive Displacement, Dire Needs and a Shortage of Solutions." At that time there were two million Syrian refugees. Today that number has doubled, but the title we chose in 2013 certainly applies to the situation today.

Kemal and I are working on a larger study which will be published later this year looking at all the dimensions or as many dimensions as we can fit in of the Syrian displacement crisis; issues around safe zones and cross border assistance, what's happening in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and other countries.

Just to make a few general remarks, first of all I think you all know that although we talk about this as a humanitarian crisis there are no humanitarian solutions, and in the absence of a political solution humanitarians can only do so much. It's kind of like the Band-Aid approach to dealing with people who are hurting without addressing the cause of the crisis. Only a political solution inside Syria will reverse or has the possibility of reversing this humanitarian crisis.

Secondly, if you look at this from a global perspective, Syrian displacement has been massive, it has been rapid, and it is a dynamic process. We're not talking today about people who are displaced inside Syria, although the numbers are almost twice as many as refugees who have crossed international borders.

SYRIA-2015/09/29

People who are displaced inside the country, almost eight million, we think although we really don't know, but people who are displaced within the borders of their country are likely more vulnerable to violence. They're closer to the conflicts. Accessing them has been a nightmare for humanitarians working either cross-border or from Damascus.

And internal displacement is related to refugee flows. I remember a couple of years ago talking with an official of the Jordanian foreign ministry who said, "Jordan is thought number four for the refugees we're seeing." Most of them have been displaced two or three times inside the country before they make it to our borders.

The impact on host countries and host communities has been tremendous. Kemal will talk about some of the impact on Turkey, but I would say that certainly the impact on countries such as Jordan and Lebanon have been monumental, and many of the governments of these countries, as we heard yesterday at the U.N. General Assembly, feel that their needs and concerns have been ignored until suddenly it becomes an issue when the refugees begin to arrive in large numbers in Europe.

I just want to highlight the important role of education. Education is often seen a kind of a soft issue, kind of a social service approach, and yet when you look at prolonged displacement of Syrians in the region, if education isn't taken seriously their long-term consequences for the eventual development of Syria, for the host countries, for the refugees themselves, the loss of human capital is enormous when you see thousands and thousands and hundreds of thousands of school-age children who are sitting and waiting for something to happen.

The format this morning will be that Kemal will do the amazing task of presenting our research in 10 to 12 minutes. Kemal Kirişçi is a senior fellow here at Brookings who has worked on issues of Turkey and Turkish foreign policy, and Turkish asylum policy earlier at Boğaziçi University at Istanbul.

He'll be followed by Simon Henshaw who is the principal deputy assistant secretary of state for population, refugees, and migration, PRM as it's often known. Simon is a career foreign service officer who's worked in many different parts of the world. You have the bios. I'm just giving you a few high points.

This will be followed by Greg Maniatis who works for the Migration Policy Institute in New

SYRIA-2015/09/29

York, particularly on European migration issues, and he's an advisor to Peter Sutherland, a special representative on migration.

And finally we'll hear from Alar Olljum who is a visiting fellow here at Brookings. He's long years of experience working with the European Union and some of its institutions. He'll be speaking in his personal capacities today so that he can be a little bit more frank.

Anyway, thank you very much. We'll start with Kemal and then we'll have a chance for questions from the audience. Thank you.

MR. KIRIŞCI: Thank you, Beth. And thank you to my panelists, too, for joining us today, as well as thank you to you all. As Beth has pointed out we've been working on this topic for some time. Actually we were on field trips in October 2013 in Turkey, but Beth had also visited Lebanon, and we were back there in June 2015. Beth has been to Lebanon and I will shortly be traveling to Jordan.

What we've been aiming to do is to examine how the Syrian displacement crisis has impacting on the major hosting countries in the neighborhood but also examine and discuss with people in the region what are the challenges and the weaknesses that the humanitarian system is facing as a result of this.

When we first visited some of these countries in October 2013 there only two million refugees and by now the numbers have increased to four million. In the case of Turkey it was just 600,000 refugees, a third of them in refugee camps. Today is more than two million registered refugees, while one-fifth of them are actually in refugee camps.

At the time most of the displacement overwhelmingly was provoked by the regime in Damascus, but today there's a lot of displacement that is taking place as a function of the fighting among the opposition groups, but especially the brutality of the Islamic State in large parts of Syria.

Maybe most importantly, I would argue that there is despair, and today it would be very difficult to understand this sudden influx of the growing number of Syrian refugees into the European Union. I would argue that it's being driven by despair, the despair resulting from not having a solution to the root cause of this displacement.

What I would like to do is make just a few remarks on comparing 2013-15 from the perspective of Turkey; the impact that they have had on Turkey, the question of international solidarity

SYRIA-2015/09/29

and burden-sharing, and finally a couple of concluding remarks.

One big difference between then and today is that the composition of the Syrian refugee population has changed significantly. Back in October 2013 it was mostly Sunni Arabs with small numbers of Alawites and Turkmen. Today there's a big diversity. There's large numbers of Kurd, some of them coming from Syria; others from Iraq, as well as Yazidis, Christians, and Syrians, in many ways complicating the management of the refugee crisis.

Turkey, today like in 2013, continues to maintain an open-door policy in principle with some challenges and complications, difficulties, but the cost of managing this refugee crisis which has now reached, according to the Turkish government sources, \$7 billion is beginning to strain the country's resources.

Public opinion pressures are increasing even though officials are saying maybe this is very important in terms of the United States' growing willingness to take an increasing number of Syrian refugees.

Even though officials are underlining that there's very little criminality amongst Syrian refugees, the perceptions are not along those lines; that the society thinks that they are heavily involved in criminology, and political developments are being effected too.

Thirdly, compared to October 2013 this issue of safe zones is coming up much more frequently. It was first highlighted in July 2012 when the government had unilaterally put red line saying that if it goes beyond 100,000 we will start seeking a safe zone in Syria for refugees. Luckily so far this has not happened.

On the good side, compared to 2013 there's much more cooperation with international agencies, but also international non-governmental or organizations. Last comparative observation there is recognition that these refugees in Turkey have to be integrated and integration has already started. The Turkish prime minister has just spoken in New York, part and parcel of the General Assembly meeting there. He has not put the accent on this aspect of a reality we thought we observed, and that reality was highlighted -- flagged out to us by officials, not just by NGO activists and experts.

What are the impacts that the Syrian refugees are having on Turkey? The most visible one you could say is the economic one, particularly in the regions close to the border area. Prices have

SYRIA-2015/09/29

been increasing, especially rent for accommodation, but also wages have been coming down particularly in the informal sector of the economy. That is driving some of the resentment and the kind of public opinion survey results that I alluded to earlier on.

Yet there is the other side of the medallion that rarely gets recognized and mentioned, especially in government circles, is that the presence of refugees now entering their fifth year in Turkey is also generating economic activity. As international agencies arrive into the area together with non-governmental organizations and sort of set up shops, they are employing Turkish people in the region.

Then some of the Syrian business people that have come over have brought over their capital setting up businesses, restaurants, but also getting involved in foreign trade. Amazingly, Turkish foreign trade, especially exports to Syria, not surprisingly collapsed as the crisis erupted, but recently that export has picked up because these businessmen continue to trade, if I understand correctly, not only just with the areas that are controlled by opposition groups but also a proper Syria in the sense of under the control of Assad. That needs to be born in mind.

Social impact is very critical and that's where there are some disappointing challenges, especially for example, child marriages, religious marriages which are not registered, and in those cases women are not well protected under the law, and the most disappointing aspect of this impact is child labor and prostitution.

Lastly we go into some detail in the report. We must also take into consideration the political impact that the presence of Syrians are having in Turkey. Some of you may be following that there's been a lot of violence recently in Turkey between the Kurdish separatist group; a terrorist group called the PKK, and the security forces. I won't go into the details of it. I wouldn't want to overwhelm you and scare you away, but it would not be possible to understand the eruption of that violence without factoring into the equation the presence of these refugees.

Questions of international solidarity on burden-sharing. Protection of refugees is recognized as an international responsibility, not solely the responsibility of hosting countries, and burden-sharing is very critical to it, and often it is seen as the resettlement of some of the refugees particularly the vulnerable ones and the extension of humanitarian assistance, not to mention, of course, trying hard to find a political solution.

Today's European refugee crisis, I think, cannot be understood without recognizing how poor that international solidarity and burden-sharing has been. The United Nations high commissioner or the high commissioner for refugees, António Guterres has been running around the world, especially the West, literally pleading with the leadership of member countries of the European Union and Western countries asking for resettlement quotas and also for humanitarian for meeting the budget for humanitarian assistance. That's where the picture has been very disappointing. He's asked for 130,000 places. These countries have come forward with 100,000 places, but as the crisis erupted and reached its peak by August there were only 9,000 resettlements that had actually occurred since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, and the way I see it, wrongly or rightly, is that the despair I have made references to has kicked in and refugees have started to seek the services of human smugglers, unscrupulous human smugglers, rather than look forward to a mechanism run by governments and international agencies to resettle them.

Very quickly concluding remarks, as highlighted, the root cause of this displacement is a political one. In the last couple of days it looks like there is some movement taking place in that respect. Time will tell whether there will actually be a diplomatically negotiated solution that will emerge; however, we have been told in the area by officials, by experts, by NGO activists, that they don't see these people being able to return in 15-20 years. There is that reality that needs to be born in mind.

The second point as far as conclusions go, yesterday the idea of safe zones have again been brought up. Actually today some of you might have seen it in the *Washington Post* that there were references to retired general David Petraeus at a Senate testimony making references to safe zones, but we together with Beth and together with many other experts in the area of humanitarian assistance and refugee protection, we feel that the idea of a safe zone in the light of at least what happened in Srebrenica is not particularly wise one, and may make refugees and displaced people even more vulnerable.

A third quick observation is that although there is a recognition, a widely-shared recognition, including among bureaucrats and officials in Turkey that Syrian refugees are there to stay, there is still not a comprehensive policy to address the challenges of integrating them.

Beth made references to education. There are some very positive and promising steps

SYRIA-2015/09/29

that are being taken, but there is also the issue of access to the labor market. Before the elections in June in Turkey there was on the floor of the Parliament a law that might have made this possible, but with the political developments in Turkey this is on a stand-by right now.

My final observation is that the international community will need to come forward with greater support, and I just read the United Nation Secretary General's speech yesterday. There's a lot that is promising there, and I understand on the 30th of September there's going to be a major meeting at the United Nations to try to address not just the Syrian displacement crisis but also the broader migration challenges, and I will be keeping my fingers crossed that that solidarity can be mobilized out of that meeting. Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. HENSHAW: Thank you. Good morning. Let me start by thanking Brookings for hosting us today and Kemal and Elizabeth for your thoughtful remarks, your excellent report. My co-panelists, a pleasure to be here with you but most especially let me thank all of you for being here today. It's a great turnout. Hope you have some great questions to ask us.

The new *Brookings Report*, "Not Likely to Go Home" discusses the need for burden-sharing, more support for education, and the importance of expanding legal work opportunities for Syrians in Turkey. These are issues that are priorities for both the United States and Turkey.

The report also deals with a challenging concept of integration; one that asks the countries that host so many Syrians, particularly Turkey, go even further to move beyond providing protection to providing an enduring home. The authors helpfully point towards a way of viewing integration as a solution; a mechanism that might serve to help refugees cope, adjust, and even thrive in Turkey. The report notes that ensuring the integration of the refugees would be a win-win for all involved; Syria, Turkey, and the international community. Refugees are dynamic, motivated, passionate people and would give more back to countries hosting them than many would have ever imagined.

The recent outpouring of interests and support for Syrian refugees all over our country and globally has been incredibly moving. This interest has translated into increased pledges and contributions toward humanitarian appeals by countries and private donors worldwide. More is needed, but this is an important start. According to UNHCR it is also resulted in 11 new European member states

SYRIA-2015/09/29

participating in the refugee resettlement process for the first time.

In addition to the horror of war in Syria we now observe daily the plight of refugees fleeing to European countries and are reminded of the need to redouble our effort to provide humanitarian assistance in regional countries of first asylum and inside Syria. This new funding which includes assistance for migrants and refugees in Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, and in Europe brings the total U.S. humanitarian assistance in response to this conflict to more than \$1.6 billion this fiscal year, fiscal year 2015, and over \$4.5 billion since the start of the crisis.

The funding supports the operations of the United Nations including UNHCR, UNICEF, and other international non-governmental organizations which also includes local organizations. It provides shelter, water, medical care, food, legal assistance, mental health services, vaccinations, spaces for children to play, protection, and other necessary goods and services to millions of people suffering inside Syria and nearly four million refugees from Syria in the region.

Education remains a top priority for the United States throughout the region. In Turkey we're supporting Syrian refugees through second-shift classes, new schools housed in mobile facilities, community-run schools, and language classes. In less than two weeks U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, John Bass, will join our Assistant Secretary for Population Refugees and Migration and Richard to open a new school in Adana that U.S. funds support through UNICEF. The school will educate more than 200,000 kids returning to study, allow Syrian teachers to return to their profession, and help ease the burden on the host community. The school will also provide an opportunity for Syrian children to study Turkish, helping them to interact with their peers and preparing them to better integrate in the community that may be their home for the foreseeable future. This is a model we have supported all over Turkey. UNICEF has already set up 13 of these schools with our funding.

Refugee resettlement is another important means of creating durable solutions for some of the most vulnerable. As Secretary Kerry recently announced, the United States is increasing our overall resettlement numbers from 700,000 in fiscal year 2015 to 85,000 in fiscal year 2016, and has committed to raising that number to 100,000 the following year. At least 10,000 of those to be admitted in fiscal year 2016 will be Syrians compared with only 1,700 this year.

In the United States refugee resettlement has been part of our humanitarian assistance

SYRIA-2015/09/29

toolbox since 1975, and the United States has been the leader in refugee resettlement welcoming more than three million refugees for resettlement into our country. Our experience with integrating refugees into our society has been overwhelmingly positive. Refugees enrich our communities, they share our values, and they are a boon to our economy.

The private sector also has a powerful role to play in addressing the needs in the region. Companies such as Google and Trip Advisor have taken the initiative to match individual donor funding, and we are hoping that other businesses, both U.S. owned and regional can offer technology and other services to help students get an education, meet health needs, and connect refugees to available services.

The report raises valid concerns with the idea of establishing a safe zone in northern Syria as a place that could be used for the voluntary repatriation of Syrians living in Turkey. We all want Syrians to have the right to voluntarily return when the time is right and when they're ready, but the practicality of securing the zone is extremely challenging, and providing such protection is crucial to ensuring that any safe zone does not become a magnet for attack by regime or by extremist forces.

I again want to thank Brookings and my fellow participants as well as all of you for being here. I'm heartened by the myriad of academics, practitioners, business people, government officials, and individuals like you who want the same for Syrians. Thank you very much.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you very much, Simon. (Applause) Now Greg Maniatis, the Migration Policy Institute. Greg?

MR. MANIATIS: Hi. Thanks, Beth. Thanks, Kemal, and thanks to all of you. I want to touch on three areas in my six or seven minutes of remarks. One is to give you a brief sense of the European context and its broader setting. The second is to discuss essentially why Europe has failed to act effectively this year, and the third is to see what the international reaction has been to the crisis in Syria in terms of displacement and to look a little bit ahead of what that reaction might be.

So, the first point is that this is the third major crisis for Europe in the past few years. I have been on the front lines of all three for reasons I won't explain. One is the Greek debt crisis.

The other is the Russia-Georgia-Ukraine crisis, and this is now the refugee migration crisis of 2015. Of the three this is by far the most dangerous and divisive that Europe is facing. In part

SYRIA-2015/09/29

that's because it's accumulative effect of the three but there's other reasons which I won't get into, but essentially what is happening now is that the limits of European-shared sovereignty have been reached. We're now touching on issues of financing, foreign policy and identity, and there is not a willingness to share those right now, so it is a very dangerous moment for Europe.

Interstate relations are very tense among the member states, and domestic polarization is increasing, both on the left but especially on the right. In Sweden you have a far-right party which was at 10-12 percent in January. It's now at 25 percent, and it is the leading party in Sweden today. So, all those factors are playing into this crisis right now and making it potentially quite explosive in terms of Europe's future.

In that context you would think that perhaps the EU would mobilize. It hasn't, and it's worth thinking about why that is. So, if there were an earthquake in Pakistan you would have emergency relief. There would be tents set up. There would be facilities. Instead, you spent the summer trekking across Greek islands because there were no reception facilities. The EU and the wealthiest collection of countries in the history of the world could not bring itself to supply Greece and Italy earlier with what is needed to quell the chaos, to reduce this picture of people staggering onto the shore and dragging themselves across islands, and that did a lot of damage in terms of public trust in European governments.

Europe had a relocation policy which it proposed on May 14th. That has been the topic of conversation all summer, and yet this plan to relocate tens of thousands of asylum seekers from Greece and Italy to this day does not have an operational component to it that would be nearly sufficient to launch it in the short term, so five months later the European Union does not have the detailed planning to do what is its signature policy.

So, that inaction which we can go into detail during the discussion has had one other major side effect which is that it's let the rest of the world off the hook, so the Syrian crisis, as Kemal pointed out, the displacement crisis is a global responsibility. There is some geographic factor, but the bottom line is the international community is responsible for those who are refugees all over the world. Europe, because of its proximity, could have taken the leadership and it didn't and allows other countries to sit back.

So, why did the EU avoid action, I think, is relevant also because you're starting to see

SYRIA-2015/09/29

the same reaction's as Kemal described in the frontline countries, though the major -- if you just had to identify one issue -- it's the crippling fear of the poll factor.

So, this is playing out with Oban and others invoking 30-40 million potential migrants and refugees coming to Europe, so you have this kind of incredible ceiling and people just don't want to deal with that, and of course in there it's not just the millions, it's also the fear of the lone wolf, the terrorist who will come across and cause tremendous damage. For a politician, for a civil servant, that is crippling; the idea that you might enable that to happen.

Interestingly Chancellor Merkel did create a poll factor in late August. We should talk about why she did that. It's really interesting. She knew it was going to happen, and as a result we've seen an increased flow of people across the European borders.

Another, I think, reason for the inaction is that Europe has focused on silver-bullet policies, right, so back in April we're going to save everyone at sea, which they should have been doing years ago. That worked, and that was a success for silver-bullet policy at the humanitarian level. The number of people dying in the Mediterranean plunged.

Then there were two other policies. One you might not even remember because it was -- the headlines in May and June which was a military mission in the Mediterranean which was going to throttle its smugglers, disrupt their business model, and it was all going to get better. Well, May and June were spent trying to convince the Security Council to act and what happened? It wasn't because smugglers were using a failed state to get refugees and asylum seekers through to Europe. The crisis had started because in the end they went through Turkey, right? Turkey's not a failed state, so that thesis failed.

The second thesis was that we were going to solve the problem through relocation. We were going to take people arriving in Greece and Italy, and were going to relocate them elsewhere. That is, I think, an important piece of the answer, but it's taken five months and we're still not there, and we're nowhere near the realization of that policy.

One of the thoughts I have about this is that because the other side, the one that opposes, having a generous policy towards asylum seekers has a very simplistic set of arguments. They can just say we're going to put up tents. We're protecting Europe from a Muslim invasion; they're very

SYRIA-2015/09/29

simple ideas. There might be this need from the more progressive side to come up with very simplistic solutions too, so relocation's going to solve that or we're going to have some other big idea, and we're not because the solution to this is more complex and it's going to be a series of actions.

First it's going to be support to frontline states. Second it's going to be a real burden-sharing system in Europe with a single asylum agency. Third it's going to be support to the grassroots because the grassroots are the ones that have provided both the moral and operational leadership in this crisis. The refugees welcome the groups all over Europe that have been welcoming refugees, and in the United States traditionally over the course of decades.

Those groups are the ones that need to be supported, and then there needs to be a global response. All that is very complex. It takes diplomacy. It takes policy planning. It takes a lot of effort which hasn't been made, plus the scale of support, the scale of these policies is way off.

We need to be spending something on the order of \$20 billion on the frontline states. We're spending a tiny fraction of that. We need to be spending probably on the order of \$30 billion in Europe per year to resettle and integrate asylum seekers and refugees at a large scale. We're nowhere near that.

So, right now we have -- and this is my final point -- to generate an international response. Kemal mentioned tomorrow there is a side event; a meeting at the United Nations which will, against all expectations, become the most high-profile event on migration in the U.N.'s history. There are 40-plus heads of state/foreign ministers who will be speaking tomorrow. That wasn't expected but everybody is looking for some focus of international action. That has to happen, but it will be met with a lot of resistance.

There is resistance from the frontline states now. There's a kind of jaundiced distrust of the European Union. If you talk to people in Turkey and Jordan, Lebanon, they're like where were you all these years? Now you want us to help you because part of the European plan is to try to send people back to these frontline countries or to have processing centers there, and these countries are saying, you know, we've been here for many years. You haven't picked it up. We're not going to help you now.

Europe blames the United States. You hear that a lot. It's not as public most of the time, but privately European politicians think the U.S. has (a) caused a lot of the problem, and (b) has not

SYRIA-2015/09/29

pulled its weight. The rest of the world blames -- on those same terms -- both Europe and the United States.

And then there are countries; Russia, China, Saudi, which are gaining a strategic advantage out of the situation, so they're also not so keen to see international action, but there has to be international action. I think that you need to have a kind of grand bargain where you have already the frontline states doing what they're doing, Europe finally pulling its weight, and then the international community being the third part of that triangle instead of being this kind of circular firing squad which it is right now.

And collectively they have to significantly increase and massively increase both the resettlement or temporary protection numbers (a) to frontline states. You can't go to war and spend trillions of dollars and then say that -- I'm sorry to say this -- but 4 billion is not a significant amount given the scale of the problem. Those numbers need to be increased, and eventually you need to have that conversation about Syria and the Mediterranean lead to a conversation about the global protection system which is now straining and breaking.

People don't really have the memory of what happened in World War II anymore. There's not, if you speak with politicians and policy makers, loyalty to that system. That system's capacity has to be increased in part because it's a humanitarian issue but also for political reasons. If the burden of protecting refugees is shared globally, you will at least on the margins increase the motivation for countries around the world to help solve conflicts. Absent global burden-sharing it's Europe's problem or it's the U.S.'s problem. Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you, Greg. (Applause) We'll turn now to Alar Olljum from European Union to speak in his personal capacity.

MR. OLLJUM: Thank you very much. Yes, I'm still an employee of the European External Action Service so I cannot avoid answering some of the questions that came up around the EU, but certainly here I'm as a visiting fellow. I'm supposed to be an independent academic, so please take my comments as such as not as an official representative of the EU position.

First let me say that this question is not one that I have dealt with professionally in a very detailed way, so I very much respect the expertise of the other panelists here on the question of

SYRIA-2015/09/29

resettlement and refugees and migration, but as a European and as a European official certainly it has been one of the issues that has been front and center and certainly in my own career in the last four and half years dealing with this region the Syrian crisis and all of the events that have followed and all of the regional impacts of that crisis have certainly been one of the things that has occupied a lot of my bandwidth personally and those of my colleagues.

I'm the child of refugees. My parents fled Estonia when the Soviet Union occupied the country at the end of the Second World War. They were first welcomed by Sweden which is also now with Syrian refugees proving that it's still very open despite the fact that you have rising populist right wing anti-immigration party which you have unfortunately in several European countries nowadays.

After some years there and they saw that the situation would not change, they had hoped that in two years they would be able to go back. They didn't. They saw in four or five years that the cold war division of Europe the iron curtain to come down. They went on to Canada and found a place of refuge there where, like the United States, Canada's also been very welcoming of immigrants.

Europeans have been the source of refugees and migration over hundreds of years. The United States and Canada are evidence of that, but other parts of the world as well, and I think it behooves Europeans when looking at now becoming the recipient of refugees that we in the past have been the source of refugees.

That said, specifically on the topic of Syria, I think that for me it's surprising that we are surprised that now we've been hit by an influx in the surge of refugees from Syria. In fact I was surprised that this didn't happen much earlier. I've seen the huge burden which has been placed not only on Turkey but even more proportionately on Jordan and Lebanon. I think it's a surprise that this didn't happen much earlier, in fact.

And I think what Kemal said in the beginning, despair is really the key here. Like my parents who left Sweden, not because Sweden was not welcoming and a good place to stay, but because they saw that there was no chance to return in the near future. I understand very much that the Syrians would want to come to Europe, and fortunately you're quite correct that Europe has not been shining in its response to this crisis, but I think there are a number of reasons for that, and I would also defend Europe that Europe has actually made some progress in the last five months.

In fact, I think it's quite exceptional that there was a decision taken by qualified majority against the wishes of four member states to effect the relocation, and it did not mean that five months nothing happens since this policy was first proposed by the commission. It was never accepted by member states because there was, like always in your opinion, there's the first impulse is to have a consensus and not to force decisions on a minority by the majority. In this case the situation went so far that the majority did feel finally that it had to set the precedent, and the relocation at least it's beginning now.

There's many more to come, I'm sure, and this is just the start of it, but I think it's a wake-up call for Europe also in other respects that certainly the assistance to Turkey and the other front-line states needs to be redoubled, and that has been recognized; however it's still not going to prevent a continuing inflow to Europe so it's, I think, not only logistical and financial challenge but also a cultural and political challenge because Europe has a history -- never been a recipient for -- it's never been a country of migrants or refugees coming in from outside of Europe, and I think it's really necessary not only to see the negative side of that, but as Kemal mentioned there is a positive side even in Turkey with receiving the refugees from Syria but also with regard to Europe there's been some interesting arguments put forth that Europe should actually have a much more positive agenda here.

Looking at our demographic trends over the next 10 to 20 years, the European population is aging. We need an influx -- if we cannot increase the birth rate we need influx of young people and many of these Syrian refugees are young. They're educated. They're very willing to work, and want to work and to contribute to society. Now the question is do we have the leadership on the European side to make that culture shift happen, to see this paradigm shift happen from being a country or a region that has not -- that has been the source of migrants and not been the receiver of migrants for many years.

This is an open question. I hope that this will happen. I think I see signs of it. Germany was mentioned here; that Germany has taken the initiative, and I think it's very heartening to see that not only on the government level but on the grassroots level. You see a lot of NGOs, communities opening up, even individuals showing by example.

My own country of origin, Estonia -- also there has been a very difficult debate in Estonia like most of the other central and eastern European countries whether or not it's our time also to open up

SYRIA-2015/09/29

and do the right thing, to accept more refugees, and I think that discussion is still ongoing. It's certainly not be completed in any of those countries, but I think it's heartening that Poland and Estonia, the other Baltic countries with the exception of these four who voted against have accepted that there is a need and have taken the lead, have taken hits politically to stand out there and say yes, we have to be part of this burden-sharing.

Sometimes it's not only an idealistic or altruistic policy because from the Estonia perspective, for example, we know that we have also a very potentially unstable situation going on towards our east. Ukraine has not been mentioned here except in the context of this multiple crisis in Europe, but eventually what would happen if there would be a meltdown in Ukraine or God forbid, in Russia, there would be a huge influx of refugees and if Estonia did not stand up now and say we are going to help our southern member-state brothers and sisters now, why would they come and help us in five or ten years if we face a similar influx from the east.

So, I agree there's a real need to set up the infrastructure and put more money there. George Soros has come up with some great ideas, very interesting ideas about putting out bonds and raising money through bonds to finance this 10 or 20 billion that's you're probably very correct to say this is needed both in terms of helping the frontline states and also to help the resettlement policy within Europe.

I think Europe is quite often blamed for things that we are not really worthy of being blamed of, and certainly I don't want to get into the blame game here, but certainly I have not heard any serious accusations towards the United States; that it's the United States fault. Perhaps individual politicians have done so, but I think in terms of Syria it's definitely a global responsibility and a global failure.

Of course, it's on Europe's doorstep and our doorstep, but it's certainly not only Europe's responsibility or Europe's capability, and I think one of the things which has happened now as well, perhaps partly because of the Russian move into Syria, but it's also I think perhaps innocently, naively, I can say this; that it's partly the positive result of the Iran nuclear deal; that Iran can be seen as a responsible partner, a stakeholder, someone to talk to, and the Russians so that the discussion about Syria's future has to include all of the stakeholders, all of those who are rightly or wrongly invested in the

SYRIA-2015/09/29

Syria conflict either in manipulating it or trying to resolve it and find a new way to make an international and politically-agree solution to the crisis because as was said by yourself, Beth, in the beginning there is no humanitarian solution.

There's only political solution to this, and here I think Europe has been very consistent from the beginning. We've been supporting the U.N., the special envoys. Just yesterday and the day before in New York my boss, (inaudible) vice president (inaudible) was meeting with special envoy and bringing him together with some of the European foreign ministers and as well the foreign ministers of EU, U.S., Russia, and China so I'm hopeful that if we see a Geneva III on the horizon, the third time we'll be lucky, and it will produce a political result that would be actually welcome not only by the international community but by the Syrian people who have been too long suffering from this conflict.

Turkey is very special partner of Europe. It is an accession country. Let's remind us it is still officially on the way to becoming a full member of the EU even if the process has been stalled, and as such I think Turkey and Europe have a special responsibility together to make a resolution of this problem. Next week the summit of Turkey and the EU will take place in Brussels, and I'm sure that a number of these issues with regard to helping Turkey but also in terms of the safe zones, in terms of the issue with the PKK and the Kurdish separatists will come up and will not be resolved but certainly will be very difficult matters to discuss.

Certainly I'm from -- my perspective I would hope that we would see not only this culture shift in mindset going on in Europe but also in neighboring countries, and I'm thinking here of the Balkans and Turkey as well as being some of those countries that have been hardest hit by the Syrian refugee crisis. I would have a few other things to say as well, but I'm conscious of the time, and I'd like to see more of the discussion take place. Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Great. Thank you very much, Alar. (Applause) Thanks to all of our panelists, also for your brevity because we do have time for questions from the audience.

But before doing so I'm going to just ask each of you if you would like to gaze into your crystal balls and think what's going to happen? Where are we going to be in a year? Are we still going to see the continued outflow, a hemorrhaging of people from Syria, or will the international community or the Europeans, the Americans, manage a response that somehow promotes the rights of those displaced

SYRIA-2015/09/29

and deals with -- Greg, you want to go first?

MR. MANIATIS: So, I think that you will start to see action even as soon as tomorrow towards a more collective global response on this issue. I think a year from now -- I can't predict what will happen in terms of the peace process or the lack of one. I don't think it will have a material impact, at least in a positive way, on the flows.

I think you will start building a -- what we saw in the '70s and '80s for Vietnam -- more of a comprehensive plan of action for Syrian refugees. The times are different today. It's not going to be as, I think, muscular as that response was back then when the U.S. at the time I think was taking I think 14,000 Vietnamese refugees every month, but I do think that you'll start to see something that is more collective and global in nature, and in part it's going to be a -- I think you're right to say that things have been done. I would just argue too slowly and too small a scale, but I think the world will wait for Europe to act more ambitiously, but I think that that is starting to take place.

MS. FERRIS: Others?

MR. HENSHAW: No crystal ball but what needs to be done is greater global commitment to supporting refugees in the region. I hope we will see some movement that way later this week and more importantly as the year progresses.

MS. FERRIS: I think that's something that Turkey in particular has been emphasizing; spending over \$7 billion and I think less than \$400 million in international assistance. Alar or Kemal, you want to jump in?

MR. KIRIŞCI: Well, I'd like to take up what Alar mentioned; the blame game, and I feel as a citizen of Turkey I feel I have the luxury to take a bit of a critical position on Turkey. It goes without saying that Turkey has taken a very positive approach to it. It gets recognized across the board internationally, but I think Turkey has a very important role to play in the collective effort that Greg has made references to, and what is critical there is for Turkish leadership to stop playing the blame game.

Yes, I agree with Alar that Europe has not come forward and as Greg, you pointed out there is resentment towards (inaudible) where were you, but that's the past and this is an opportunity for Turkey to take a positive step and try to revive that soft-power image it used to have until a few years ago. This is how I would like Turkey to start to act from tomorrow.

SYRIA-2015/09/29

MR. OLLJUM: I don't have a crystal ball but certainly one aspect to this which hasn't been really touched on is that already now this crisis is not just a Syrian crisis. We touched upon the issue of refugees in the neighboring countries but also the spread and conflagration of this conflict toward Iraq, and the fact that Europe has seen this now as a regional conflagration. It doesn't see it purely and simply which is one that is limited to Syria. There was a strategy on dealing with Syria, Iraq, and Diashore Islas you call it here, and that is still being looked at how to implement that, but already the first money has been set aside to deal with it as a regional strategy, so I think we already see that this has become something which is not only limited to Syria, which is not only limited to Syrian actors, but very much has the flavor and the indication of a proxy war, and I think I mentioned that regional stakeholders have to be involved and that is also taking responsibility for not further inflaming for their own political or geopolitical causes and that includes Turkey. That includes Saudi Arabia, Iran, now Russia, the United States, Europe, many different players. Israel is looking very nervously at what is happening in the Golan Heights and what could happen in Syria with regards to its access now with Russia now becoming involved.

There are a number of complications here, and I'm afraid that this crisis could really, unless it's contained and dealt with properly, result in a regional conflagration which would mean not only tens and hundreds of thousands of refugees coming to Europe but millions, and this is really an impetus for us to -- all of us to take a responsibility and to make sure this remains high on the agenda of our own countries and organizations and also the globe as a whole.

MS. FERRIS: Thanks to all of you for somewhat sobering assessments there. Let's take some questions. I think we'll take three or four and then give the panelists an opportunity to respond.

We have microphones. I'll start here -- one, two, three, four, five. If you could please identify yourself, we'll start in the first row here.

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Stand up, please.

QUESTIONER: Sure. Thank you. (Inaudible), Center for the United States and Europe. I work on the European bit, on the European side of this crisis. Now, I have a question and I think this has to do with governance and I would like to first of all make sure that we don't talk about Europe as

such.

There's not such a thing as Europe. There are EU member states and there are European institutions, and I think this is a question of governance because so far we had two (inaudible) EU member states trying to play a role here while these member states are not able to play a role, to handle effectively the immigration crisis. This has been apparent for a number of not even months; a number of years.

Indeed for a number of years since the (inaudible) Commission took over, the commission has been pushing for a number of proposals to handle this on a pan-European super-national level so through the EU institutions as opposed to member states, through the Parliament, the council, the commission, and European External Action Service.

Indeed I think it is extremely interesting to observe that things had started moving when everything got out of control and on the 22nd of September through qualified majority voting, the European Union had to push its own decision onto some member states, and now the commission has come up with a number of proposals that have already presented months ago and were shut down by the member states, and these proposals are being taken up this time strengthening (inaudible) in a number of ways, doing a number of things of a more coherent approach to asylum policy.

So my question there -- I could go on forever -- but is the following. From the U.S. point of view, what do U.S. representatives that deal with these issues -- we have one on the panel, to put him on the spot here. What can they do to strengthen the role of super-national institutions therefore the council, the commission, and so on vis-à-vis the member states? How can you privilege having a relationship with super-national institutions as opposed to the member states? Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you very much. We'll have the next gentleman here.

QUESTIONER: I'm (inaudible). I'm the (inaudible) senior fellow here at the Center for the United States and Europe at Brookings. My question addresses (inaudible) that the sociological composition of refugees. We tend to make a mix of refugees but they are very different, and I would like to underline in particular the difference between the ways that come from Syria and those who come through -- from Libya or through Libya. It seems to me that this is important because if you do this sociological breakdown, you will see that there are very serious problems related to the problem of

SYRIA-2015/09/29

relocation, integration, education, and so on and so forth, but I would like also to not only sociological but also cultural and religious.

Where we stand on the analysis of this problem? I'm not sure. I've seen this (inaudible). One point of detail: There have been waves of refugees in the past. What is new in this one? I was struck by the pictures. You see these people coming out of these boats starving (inaudible) and they hold a cell phone. Is this relevant? Are we considering this problem? I understand that smugglers do take advantage of communication. Do we? Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you. And we have Maureen and I'm sorry -- one, two. And if you could, please, be brief. We have a number of people who want to ask questions.

MS. MAUROOF: My name is Hanna Mauroof. I'm from Kurdistan, the Kurdish part of Iraq. My question is about the effect of the refugees and non-state actors as a developing country as Kurdistan, so what -- because you have been talking about Europe as a developed country and you're talking about the effect and the consequences of refugees being hosted in such countries, but what about non-states country -- a non-states region, sorry, which is a developing country. What will be the effects of refugees to such places? Thank you so much.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you, Maureen, and then the gentleman here.

QUESTIONER: Thank you. Thank you. My name is (inaudible). I am an (inaudible) and I also teach in Islamic schools in Bangladesh. My mother and two young sisters were refugees, and I volunteered as a worker in the refugee camps in 1971. We had 9.8 million refugees who crossed over to Bangladesh. Ninety-six percent came back to Bangladesh. We control our own refugee camps. We didn't have no administrators there, and the money problem was not there with us. We had very less money to live, but there was discipline in the camps. This could be a case study for all of you gentlemen because we successfully brought the people back to our country, and Indians had no complaint after that that if we just stayed back. How we did it is some of the things that we can discuss with you, and I can share my knowledge with you because I was involved in the situation for nine months.

Further, all asylum seekers are not refugees. I teach in Islamic schools. I hear a lot of whispers. There are young people who have lined up near German border. Are they Taliban? We don't know. How many (inaudible) have gone into those camps? We don't know. What are the systems that

SYRIA-2015/09/29

will prevent violence to erupt? We already had 2005 and 2007 violence in France and 2011 violence in England, and what do you all know about? Your next generation will face the violence again if you don't handle the situation today, and if you want me to suggest to you how we controlled the camps in 1971 we can share it with you. Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you very much. The last question on this round, Maureen, and then we'll take another round.

MS. WHITE: Thank you. Maureen White. I'm a senior fellow at SISE and a former State Department official.

I want to bring up the issue of safe havens and what I call the ghost of Srebrenica. It kind of reminds me of President Clinton reading the book "*Balkan Ghosts*," in deciding those people had always been at war so don't get involved. We talk about safe havens. People mentioned Srebrenica, didn't work, don't do it. The fact of the matter is we know some of the reasons Srebrenica failed, and we know some of the things that we can do better in a safe haven. In Srebrenica the peacekeepers were not armed and had no mandate nor ability to intervene with aggression.

When we talk about safe havens in Syria -- and I was at a conference last week in which David Petraeus made his case and made it strongly, and it was endorsed by amongst others, Bill Burns, Bob Gates, John McCain, and the head of the British intelligence unit.

So safe havens in Syria would include, as they're currently being discussed, some kind of armed prevention group inside of Syria and also a no-fly zone, so with these kinds of additions to the framework of institutionalizing safe havens, isn't there justified reason in giving it more serious consideration?

MS. FERRIS: Okay, Thank you. We have a number of questions here. One on U.S. efforts to strengthen super-national institutions in Europe, one on the sociological composition of the current trend of refugees, one on the impact of Kurdistan and developing countries who are hosting large numbers of displaced people, security issues for refugees, and the always interesting issue of safe havens. Who would like to jump in?

MR. HENSHAW: Well, I guess I have to jump in for the U.S. supporting EU institutions though I'm going to do it a little bit poorly, I afraid. It's not my area of specialty. I just see a piece of that.

Certainly, number one, obviously, the EU is well developed part of the world. It knows how to do things itself. We're not here to sort of steer them or tell them or provide financial support on how to get things done, but we do have very close relations on humanitarian issues. We and the Europeans together, particularly EU institutions, are the largest humanitarian donors in the world. We work very closely on policy issues, so I think where we can help is working with our European counterparts and talking about policies and helping them establish the policies necessary to deal with the problem.

There are a lot of discussions that go on along those lines, and just a little bit on the edges, we do also have some expertise among some of our institutions with law enforcement, Coast Guard and other areas which we can share and do share with the Europeans.

MS. FERRIS: Other responses? Yes, please, Alar.

MR. OLLJUM: Yes, I think there was a very pessimistic view of Europe presented here by my colleague to my left regarding the future of EU integration. I think if you look at the history of EU integration, it has always -- almost always preceded by a crisis. We've had to have a crisis where there was no other alternative but to find a pan-European solution, and now I would say we are in that situation now once again.

To have a common asylum policy that it makes no sense to have 28 different asylum policies. How do you define who is a refugee, who is a migrant, and so on? How do you do the registration and all of this infrastructural part and the legal and technical part that should -- now realize there's a common realization it should be done in a pan-European way.

Also with regard to the guarding of our borders, if we're going to have a (inaudible) where there's continued border-free Europe, the mass majority are members of (inaudible), a couple of (inaudible) but most are in, and those who are not in want to get in. If we're going to have that survive, we're going to need a common guarding also of the borders with a common policy there.

If I may respond just on the sociological aspect that reminded me to actually dispute another claim that you made was that we had this policy towards the refugee influx from Libya and now they went to Syria. Those are completely different questions. The mass of the migrants and the refugees who came via Libya to the sea to Europe and many unfortunately died during, they were from sub-

SYRIA-2015/09/29

Saharan Africa for the most part, and they were brought in through human trafficking, gangs, and I mean that is one aspect that is not connected to the Syria crisis. The only connection is that both are failing states and plagued by conflict, and there's a breakdown of law and order in both territories and Libya and Syria.

Certainly I don't agree that there is this -- I think that is the -- what you said about the danger of not being able to integrate these different cultural -- and you didn't say it but I mean I will say it, the Muslim minority in Europe, the attacks that happened in France this last year, they were not, you know, the fresh refugees and migrants coming from these areas. They, quite often, had been two and three generations and had not been successfully integrated into those societies, and I think if you look at the profile of -- and now the -- two-thirds at least of those who have come through the surge, the seven-fold increase in migrants that have come via Turkey to Greece and Italy are from Syria and most of those are highly educated. They're in the prime of life, and they have a huge positive impact potentially if they are resettled and they're allowed to work, allowed to put their kids in school and to integrate with the society. It's a huge loss for Syria if they remain in Europe, but it's a big gain for Europe, and we have to make that clear to the European electorate.

As regards the -- no I think I'll leave it there. Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Others who would like to respond?

MR. MANIATIS: Sure, so let me just take on a couple things that Alar said and then a couple of comments that were made.

So, I'm a dual citizen of Greece and the United States. I'm a believer in Europe. I'd like to see more Europe, not less Europe. I bridle at this notion that, oh, well, Europe just advances through crisis. Well, it does advance through crisis but with great damage, and the question is why do you need to create that damage in order to get to the next step? Maybe it will work. Maybe it will work. Maybe in five years we'll look back and say, oh, what a relief. We managed to pull it off. It's possible. I think that's what Chancellor Merkel is trying to do.

I think there's a bit of shock therapy in her opening up the borders of Germany to try to compel Europe to confront the idea that it is going to be a country of immigration in the future and it has to build the public institutions, the schools, the police, and other institutions to integrate people.

Yes, the Eastern European countries have come a long way from five months ago, but the damage that's done in that process of allowing it to be done chaotically is quite excessive, so I think that's what I'm contesting.

The refugee flows into Europe through Italy. Earlier on in the year had a very significant minority who were Syrians, so yes, you are right that there were sub-Saharan Africans coming through, but there were also many Syrians and those went over to a different route, so I think that that's -- we don't have to get into the details of that.

Safe zones -- I think every possibility has to be on the table at this point because not only is the current situation big, but it is potentially going to be much bigger and you have to have a comprehensive plan that takes into consideration, okay, what about a scenario where there are 10 million people trying to reach Europe? Or 10 million people who are refugees in the region? How are you going to sit down with your various partners and say, "This is what we're going to do." Something that you alluded to; 9.8 million in the '70s.

The question of terrorism comes up. Simon can correct me if I'm wrong, but I think that the U.S. has resettled around 700,000 refugees in the past 10 years.

QUESTIONER: Yes, about.

MR. MANIATIS: Of those 700,000, two have been identified to have links, from a single case in Kentucky, to a terrorist group without having caused any damage to American interests, so absolutely it's a concern and one case of terrorism could upend public opinion, but whether you're from ISIS, Al Qaeda, you don't have to come in through the Greek islands. You're probably not going to. You can probably find other safer ways to do it, but nonetheless it's a sort of parallel and separate issue that we have to be careful not to conflate in order to be able to also have a humanitarian policy. I'll leave it at that.

MR. HENSHAW: If I could just add on the terrorism issue, I think we have to remember that refugees are victims of terrorism, and our job is to protect them from that terrorism. There are really very few cases that I'm aware of of terrorist infiltration and control of Syrian camps. Certainly would be something that we would be concerned of if it was to happen. That's a separate issue than resettlement, and on resettlement we like to say that no group of people entering the United States is more screened

SYRIA-2015/09/29

than Syrian refugees. We take that very seriously, and we look very closely, but again main point here; these are the victims of terrorism.

MR. MANIATIS: And also, I mean just to add to that which is, you know, if you want to prevent terrorism you probably don't want to leave several hundred thousand or a million Syrian children uneducated in Jordan and Lebanon for a few years, angry at the rest of the world because the rest of the world didn't help them. That's probably a much better generator of terrorism than accepting them through resettlement.

MR. HENSHAW: Absolutely. That's why we concentrate on education for children. We didn't talk about the safe haven zone.

MS. FERRIS: Safe havens.

QUESTIONER: Yes, we can --

QUESTIONER: I can't hear you.

MR. MANIATIS: Okay, let me comment on both. Non-state actors -- and also I think what the part of your question I remember is developing countries dealing with refugees. Most refugees in the world are seeking refuge in developing countries. This is common, and the issues are actually much the same; the ability to work, education, and health. And those are all the same questions that are going to be looked at as any country in which refugees flee to. So, I'm not sure.

There are different issues for the country itself and each individual country, but Uganda, Kenya, Malaysia, Thailand, are all countries with large populations of refugees and have dealt with them in different ways.

I think there -- you have to look at camp refugees different than non-camp refugees. More and more of the world's refugee population comes from the non-camp. Urban refugees are often referred to about three-quarters I think of the world's refugee population, and they have certain needs. You know, I was focused on education -- well, protection beyond everything else, but after that education, health, and work. If refugees can work then they can support themselves, and there's a much less burden on the state. If their children are educated they're more likely to stay out of trouble and become productive members of society and health are obviously -- people's health is provided for there (inaudible).

On safe havens, I don't think anyone would argue -- well, very few people would argue against safe havens which had a solid, dependable, ground security force. The problem is that most of the safe haven suggestions that have come forth lately don't even mention ground forces. They mention air power and humanitarian support. That's not a safe haven. If you don't have some sort of legitimate security force on the ground, refugees are not going to want to voluntarily return, and those that do are not going to be safe.

The few proposals I've seen that do mention ground forces are non-specific about where they would come from. With that being said, speaking personally, I'm certainly open to any suggestions and proposals which would show a solid security ground force providing protection.

MS. FERRIS: Thanks. I think we'll take some more questions back here. We're running out of time. This woman right here. One, two, three. Just please if you could stand up and identify yourself.

QUESTIONER: Hello, Emily (inaudible) from New Delegation here in D.C. I would like to ask the practical side of it regarding the selection process. So, we have indeed in European Union the problem of selection. Today not only in Germany but most of the member states area advancing the question how -- there's a need of selecting refugees because of education and relocation resettlement. How could we do that? Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you. You, sir?

QUESTIONER: Thank you. My name is (inaudible) from (inaudible) Turkish Business and Industrial Association. I'm based in Brussels. So, (inaudible) observations (inaudible) question of course so, certainly this flow of refugees are different from those coming from (inaudible) 19th Century or the beginning of the 20th Century from central Europe or Russia (inaudible) to United States or those who enter Australia, but (inaudible) nomadic culture this mobility in the space has always been an engine of progress in societies. This is not only mobility in the space (inaudible) in time because of the demography. These are young people coming to an old continent, so there is this space/time continuum of mobility, and there is also a virtual mobility because for the first time a wave of refugee crisis is happening also on the (inaudible) which is really energized by the mobile technologies and connections and it's a different wave (inaudible). It's a different flow of refugee problem certainly, and is not only

SYRIA-2015/09/29

refugees escaping violence, but also seeking a better social and economic future in Europe. It's about quality also; however, on the quantity side it is still so important because the numbers are so overwhelming that how to tangle between these qualitative part and the quantitative part is certainly a major question.

And second part of the problem, also in relation with your excellent report (inaudible) challenges for Turkey, there are lots of problems in Turkey. There are lots of haters in today's Turkey certainly. However, there are some points of positive (inaudible). One is maybe paradoxically will come from Europe itself as you said Europe can go in a dialectical way out of this crisis with further progress, further reform, better (inaudible) geometry and then getting ready for future enlargements because there will be two different circles; Eurozone and wider Europe, maybe, so two circles, two (inaudible) multiple dimensional Europe.

So that can be for Turkey, but as for Turkey the Cypress problem can be good news, not only for Turkey but for the West in general. The only potential good news in this region if it happens, if there is a (inaudible) solution in Cypress and the Turk point which is potential positive Turkey is going to elections in first of November. There are more than two million refugees and none of the political parties are (inaudible) discuss about the future problem in Turkey. This is very interesting, and it's happening now, so -- and then lastly (inaudible) where he delivered his speech, so-called state of the union speech before the European Parliament. Out of his text, you know, in his speech only, he referred to the problem of the least of unsafe countries of origin and if he said some countries are in that list they will be no longer eligible for EU membership. So, we are a little bit confused because whether Turkey will be a safe country of origin, unsafe country of origin, because the prime minister of (inaudible) said that for them Turkey with all this violence with the PKK it can no longer be considered as safe country.

So my question is how to make sure that once more Turkey's EU process has that transformational force with all conditionalities engaging Turkey in such a way that all these challenges stemming from the refugee crisis are managed according to common European interests including those of Turkey's. Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Last question here.

QUESTIONER: Thank you, Kemal, and to the panel and to Brookings for hosting this

SYRIA-2015/09/29

important event. My name is (inaudible). I'm from the (inaudible) Assembly of America. A brief comment and a question for you all. You know, one of the tiny countries that is not -- that is having a big impact on the region that hasn't been mentioned today is Armenia. Many people consider that the last Christian safe haven in the region, and of the 20,000 refugees that Armenia has accepted, the majority of them are the most vulnerable. Religious minorities, Syrians, (inaudible) and Armenians from Aleppo which once housed about 100,000 Armenians, mostly descendants of the 1915 Armenian genocide have now -- seeking refuge in Armenia again. And in fact the Karabakh government has built a whole new city called New Aleppo where over 10,000 of these Syrian-Armenians will have new apartments, shopping malls, et cetera so there are tiny countries in the region that are making a big impact such as Armenia, but I just want to mention that briefly.

My question is Brookings alumnus and White House alumnus Phillip Gordon recently wrote in *Politico* that "The essential problem with U.S./Syria policies since the start of the crisis has been the mismatch between objectives and means. The objective of displacing the Assad regime has proven unachievable with the means we have been willing or able to deploy to achieve it. To correct this mismatch we have two options. Increase the means with whatever costs and consequences might accompany doing to or modify the objectives." Now, I want to get your response to that as we see perhaps a shift in U.S. policy and what impact that would have on refugees in the region. Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Okay, thank you. We've got three very broad-ranging questions; one on the selection process, one particularly on Turkey/EU and so on, and a third on the larger political/strategic interest of dealing with Syria. Anybody want to jump in in perhaps 90 second each?

MR. HENSHAW: I'll just do the selection. I mean clearly for relocation to succeed there needs to be a selection process that's mutual, right, so asylum seekers and refugees have preferences. Countries have preferences. There's absolutely no problem in my view for those preferences to be accommodated to the degree possible.

There's been a lot of fuss about countries in the East saying that they won't accept certain asylum seekers. Part of that might be racist. It might constitute discrimination, but partly it's also out of an instinct that certain countries don't have experience with integration. They have institutions, for instance the church which could be an engine of integration or schools that have language programs that

SYRIA-2015/09/29

would suit some students and not others, so there is absolutely nothing wrong is biasing preferences if you can try to match those two up.

I think part of the problem with the EU's proposal going back to the EU agenda was that it didn't have any of those nuances; that there was this distribution key that was announced that had just hard numbers based on four criteria and didn't seem to take those issues into account, and the obvious sort of concern there as well if you relocate people against their will to places they don't want then they're going to leave. So, I think it's a crucial issue and it is one that's being discussed a lot.

MS. FERRIS: Kemal, do you want to take some of the questions on Turkey?

MR. KIRIŞCI: There were all great comments and questions, and I wish we had time to respond to them all. The EU/Turkey and refugee crisis triangle is a very interesting one, and that's where I'm in total agreement with all that Simon has said but disappointed that when he responded to Mateo's question about EU institutions and the hand that the U.S. could give, I really thought you were going to say you have to make Turkey a member of the European Union (laughter) and then the future would be a very pinkish one.

MR. HENSHAW: I prefer to keep my current state of employment. Thank you.

(Laughter)

MR. KIRIŞCI: But there I personally believe that the ball is in Turkey's court. The current government could use this as an opportunity to take very constructive steps towards working with the European Union on this particular matter, and the rest would naturally flow out of it.

The very good question -- earlier question on sociological aspect of this current crisis and the future, I really think we need to put a lot more thinking into it. I think we're going through a period where identities are becoming very important for societies, countries, and there is a polarization process that is occurring at the same time. We see it right in this country as the debate on the upcoming presidential elections expands, and our identity-immigration issues play a very important role. I think a challenge awaits there.

On Armenia and the Kurdish regional government, I think, yes, there are two little countries out there who have been carrying a burden that is not receiving the recognition they do, but forgive me, I think publicly declaring that refugees from Syria are being settled in Karabakh could trigger

SYRIA-2015/09/29

controversies. I personally would like Armenia to also give a helping hand to Yazidi refugees who have been scattered out in the region given this old tradition of Yazidi communities in Armenia too.

One last point about safe havens. I agree 100 percent with what Simon has said and also Maureen, but I have deep-down fear that safe havens, unless take the shape that Simon has made references to who's likelihood I see as tiny, may become a source of even greater problems in terms of human suffering and humanitarian challenges.

I fear it could get politically abused given that today in the region there are countries who on the one hand are trying to give a helping hand to the humanitarian crisis there through funds and other programs, but at the same time are following political policies that are aggravating the situation there, and I feel safe havens may fall into that trap. Thanks.

MS. FERRIS: Final comment? Yes, please.

MR. HENSHAW: I have two quick points on resettlement in the United States. We pick our cases based on an effort to have the greatest impact on the countries of first refuge, the most we can do to help them, so we look for vulnerable cases. We take cases with medical problems which can't be handled in the country of first refuge. We take cases of female-headed families. We take cases of victims of torture and rape and other abuse, and we take cases of people who are not safe even in the country of first refuge. That's not necessarily -- let me give an example of that outside of the Syrian example.

In Africa where you have some refugees who have fled violence, they're safe from the violence but if they're say LGBT they may not be safe in the camp that they've arrived in, so we'll take cases like that.

And I also want to make one last comment. Two or three people mentioned cell phones and the ability for refugees -- and I think this was also true for migrants -- to communicate. I think that's making a radical change in the way that people move; that the ability for someone to go back to their family and say I've reached X and it's great or this is how you get on this route is really accelerating the ability of people to move and changing the way they communicate.

MS. FERRIS: Alar?

MR. OLLJUM: Very briefly if I may just on three points quickly. On selection, as I said in

SYRIA-2015/09/29

the beginning I'm not an expert on migration and refugee issues, but as I understand there is a difference legally between a refugee who's qualified to be a refugee and who is a migrant who is leaving not because of repression or war but for economic reasons, and I know that's a very contentious issue how to define that but I think as far as I understand a refugee, by international law, you have to accept, and then it's a question of the first country and where to resettle and burden-sharing, et cetera.

But I think in the Syria case, and as I've been understanding, part of the surge into Europe has not only been Syrians. I said about two-thirds, but I listened to an interview the other day with an Afghan family, and they were saying how much it's become more difficult now; that they are jealous of their Syrian brothers who are getting easier access to asylum and they say, well, this is a new way and we're coming from an old war, but it's still a war zone so let's not forget that there are those as well.

On the question of the safe havens, I'm also very uncomfortable with this discussion. Srebrenica, of course, is a warning, but even if it was a warning I still don't see any possibility of doing without a U.N. sanction. I don't see any U.N. sanction coming realistically with members of the Security Council being at odds over the future of Syria and the regime in Syria, so if there is a unilateral move by Turkey and the U.S. or whatever, I mean it's very hypothetical at this point but I think there's a huge danger not only of not achieving the goals of protecting the civilians, but also of in fact spurring the partition and destruction of the Syrian state participating in that, and that we have to see -- you were talking about looking into the future, and I think the danger of a partition of Syria is very real and very dangerous, and the discussion about safe havens have to be seen also in that context. Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Well, thanks to the panelists for an illuminating discussion although it's clear that we could have gone a couple more hours in terms of the complexity of issues here, and thanks to all of you for coming. (Applause)

* * * * *

CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

Carleton J. Anderson, III

(Signature and Seal on File)

Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia

Commission No. 351998

Expires: November 30, 2016