



SEZMUN
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SEZMUN II. HRD SYMPOSIUM

ISSUE OF: PROTECTING HUMANITARIAN
CORRIDORS IN ACTIVE WAR ZONES

CHAIR:
ZEHRİ SAVAŞKAN

CO-CHAIR:
DEMİR ÇAYNAK

Dear Delegates,

We are delighted to welcome you to the Security Council Committee of SEZMUN25. Having you join us as we explore and debate critical issues shaping our world is an honour. We, Zehra Savaşkan and Demir Çaynak, prepared this chair report as guidance to our topic. Our agenda focuses on " Issue of Protecting Humanitarian Corridors in Active War Zones ". This topic addresses the urgent need to ensure the safe passage of civilians and the delivery of essential aid in areas affected by armed conflicts. Humanitarian corridors play a critical role in providing food, medical supplies, and safe evacuation routes, yet their effectiveness is often threatened by violations, political obstacles, and security risks. As delegates, your role will be pivotal in proposing solutions to protect civilians, uphold international humanitarian law, and ensure the neutrality and safety of humanitarian operations. As your student officers, we look forward to a productive, engaging, respectful committee session. We are eager to see your creativity, collaboration, and diplomatic skills in action as we work together toward meaningful solutions for a safer future.

Best Regards.

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Topic Introduction

In modern conflicts, civilians often become the primary victims, trapped without access to food, water, or medical assistance. To address this, humanitarian corridors are established as temporary safe routes allowing the evacuation of civilians and the delivery of vital aid. These corridors, grounded in international humanitarian law, are intended to uphold the principles of neutrality and humanity during wartime. Yet, in practice, ensuring their safety and effectiveness remains a major challenge. In conflicts such as those in Syria, Ukraine, Gaza, and Sudan, humanitarian corridors have been repeatedly targeted, obstructed, or manipulated for political and military purposes. Warring parties often disregard international law, and humanitarian workers face growing risks while providing assistance. This report aims to shed light on the issue by highlighting current issues, key concerns and potential solutions.

Definition of Key Terms

- **Humanitarian Corridor**

A designated route or zone established during armed conflicts to allow civilians, refugees, or aid convoys to move safely in and out of conflict areas. These corridors are usually agreed upon by conflicting parties under UN or ICRC supervision.

- **International Humanitarian Law**

International Humanitarian Law is a set of rules and principles aimed at limiting the effects of armed conflicts. IHL seeks to protect individuals who are not participating in hostilities and restricts the means and methods of warfare, emphasizing the need for oversight on new technology weapons to ensure compliance with humanitarian standards.

- **Demilitarized Zone**

An area where military forces and equipment are prohibited, often established to ensure safety for civilians or aid operations.

- **Humanitarian Access**

The ability of humanitarian actors to reach people affected by crises and deliver aid without obstruction.

- **Ceasefire Agreement**

A formal or informal agreement between conflicting parties to stop hostilities for a specific period, often to allow humanitarian operations or negotiations.

- **Violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL)**

Despite the legal protection offered under the Geneva Conventions, many warring parties continue to attack humanitarian convoys, hospitals, and evacuation routes. Such actions directly violate international humanitarian law, which mandates the protection of civilians and aid operations.

- **Political Barriers and Denial of Humanitarian Access**

One of the most persistent obstacles in protecting humanitarian corridors is the political resistance from governments or de facto authorities. Some states deny access to international humanitarian organizations, claiming that such operations violate national sovereignty or threaten their political legitimacy. This denial often traps civilians in conflict zones without assistance.

- **Security and Protection of Aid Workers**

Humanitarian personnel and medical staff are increasingly targeted in conflict zones. They face kidnappings, bombings, and intimidation from both state and non-state actors. The lack of protection not only endangers lives but also discourages humanitarian organizations from operating in high-risk areas.

- **Lack of Coordination and Monitoring**

Humanitarian corridors often suffer from weak coordination between conflict parties, aid organizations, and international actors. The lack of neutral supervision and clear communication channels can cause delays, unsafe conditions, or exploitation. Effective monitoring and streamlined operational procedures are critical to maintaining safe passage.

- **Accountability and Enforcement Gaps**

Even when violations occur, perpetrators are rarely punished. The International Criminal Court (ICC) and ad-hoc tribunals have limited jurisdiction and depend on state cooperation. Many powerful states are not parties to the ICC, which allows them to avoid accountability. Without credible enforcement, humanitarian laws lose their deterrent power. Victims of attacks on aid operations rarely see justice. The absence of a global enforcement mechanism for humanitarian violations remains a major obstacle to protecting civilians and ensuring respect for humanitarian corridors.

Historical Background

The First Large Scale Use of Human Corridors

Yugoslavia/Bosnia: During the bosnian war negotiated safe passages, relief convoys and the UN-endorsed “Statement of Principles” and Security Council resolutions (e.g., SCR 776/1992) operationalized corridors but it was here that humanitarian corridors were not able to function as effectively as hoped under urban siege conditions such as in the siege of Sarajevo. These events would transform Humanitarian Corridors and More Generally UN Humanitarian Coordination

Syria(2014-2016):

Syrian Humanitarian Corridors were in 2014 done without the Host-Governments Consent this action would bypass the Syrian government and would lead to Un humanitarian Corridors helping the Syrians on a large scale. In 2016 large negotiated evacuations from Aleppo as thousands of civilians were evacuated in a week under arrangements involving local parties and neutral intermediaries.

Ukraine (2022)

As Russia would start their invasion of Ukraine Humanitarian Corridors were opened negotiated with the Russian Government implementation of these corridors were fragile at best as several corridors were attacked. As Hundreds of Thousands made their way from especially the eastern city of Mariupul they were regularly disrupted. This example shows that Humanitarian Corridors vulnerable to harassment by military forces and they need to be enforced to have an effect on populations

Historical Background

Sudan: The Sudanese civil war is defined by sieges and access denials to starving areas. The UN still pressures for humanitarian corridors. Some corridors mainly from Chad to Darfur has been opened to relieve the population. But access is still pretty constrained as attacks mainly from the RSF plague the humanitarian operations in these areas.

Ethiopia and the Afar Corridor: In the region of Tigray where the government was using starvation as a means of war to defeat anti-government insurgents there was only one corridor opened to relieve the population. The Afar Corridor was the only humanitarian corridor left to supply and access and usage was severely limited. The Afar corridor is a great example to see how one corridor relief efforts don't work as effectively as other strategies.

All of these examples give us a clear picture of what humanitarian corridors lack enforcement and their not being enough of them it will be up to the delegates for fixing these issues looking at previous examples of their failure

Possible Concerns of Member States

- **United States of America (USA)**

May stress the importance of maintaining humanitarian access while ensuring that aid corridors are not exploited by terrorist or non-state armed groups. It could also advocate for strong verification and monitoring systems.

- **United Kingdom (UK)**

Likely to support resolutions emphasizing adherence to international humanitarian law and cooperation with the UN and NGOs to secure humanitarian routes.

- **Russia (The Russian Federation)**

May express reservations about external interference, emphasizing respect for state sovereignty and the need for host-country consent before establishing corridors.

- **France (The French Republic)**

Expected to call for stronger international oversight and accountability mechanisms to prevent violations against humanitarian operations.

- **China (The People's Republic of China)**

Could highlight non-intervention and the importance of mutual respect among states, while supporting humanitarian assistance under the UN framework.

Possible Concerns of Member States

- **Israel (State of Israel)**

Israel has been poorly conducting human relief efforts and maintaining humanitarian corridors. This has sparked outrage from the wider international community. The reasons for the poor conditions of humanitarian corridors are mainly because of bombardments and drone attacks near these corridors. The state and investment to these humanitarian corridors seem to be improving as convoys that are carrying aid are able to safely enter Gaza. It will be up to the delegate if they can keep the positive momentum going and ensuring the safety of the corridors

- **Palestine**

Palestine's main concern is the politicization and weaponization of humanitarian corridors. The UN estimates that 1 in 3rd of the Gaza population is going days without food. Palestine has said one of the main reasons for this is the frequent closing of the corridors and the Palestinian delegate should emphasize this point. Palestine has also criticised the destruction of medical and humanitarian supplies such as the destruction of a thousand trucks carrying supplies urgently needed to sustain the populace. Palestine has suggested to directly operate humanitarian corridors and their opening's such as the Rafah crossing if not a neutral body operating them such as the corridors being under UN management would also be satisfactory.

Possible Concerns of Member States

- **Ukraine**

As the Ukraine war enters its 4th year, humanitarian corridors for people who live near the frontlines are getting more important each passing day. Humanitarian corridors in Ukraine are subject to a lot of problems especially in the earlier stages of the war when Russian attacks on humanitarian corridors were common and deadly. Ukraine has made several reforms to improve the conditions and effectiveness of humanitarian corridors in its territory such as opening the Central Negotiation and Communication Channel to negotiate the opening of new corridors and their communication to the wider public. Strengthening her logistic capabilities. And finally creating Regional Reception/Evacuation hubs to provide post evacuation assistance. The Ukrainian delegate can suggest the implementation of these reforms in other countries that struggle at maintaining humanitarian corridors. Secondly the Ukrainian delegate can talk with the Russian delegate on talks to make permanent and radical change off the conflicts handling of humanitarian aid and humanitarian corridors.

Possible Solution

- **Establishing a UN Monitoring and Verification Mechanism**

The Security Council could establish a dedicated UN mechanism responsible for observing and verifying humanitarian access in conflict areas. This body would use satellite imagery, local reporting networks, and independent assessments to confirm that aid routes remain secure. Regular updates to the Council would enhance transparency and make it more difficult for parties to violate agreements without consequences.

- **Securing Humanitarian Aid and Convoys:**

The Security Council should authorize UN or neutral escorts to accompany aid convoys in high-risk areas, ensuring their safety and neutrality. Pre-designated humanitarian routes should be established and monitored through GPS tracking to prevent attacks or diversion. Any deliberate obstruction or targeting of aid must be treated as a violation of international humanitarian law, with clear penalties such as sanctions or ICC referral.

Possible Solution

- **Regional and International Cooperation**

Strengthen collaboration among regional organizations (such as the African Union or Arab League) and humanitarian actors to share intelligence and logistical support. Establish regional hubs to coordinate cross-border aid efforts.

- **Legal and Accountability Frameworks**

Strong legal measures are vital to ensure humanitarian corridors truly protect lives. Clear international rules should define the duties of all parties in guaranteeing safe passage for civilians and aid workers. Supporting the ICC and UN investigations into attacks on aid convoys helps bring justice to victims and reinforces global respect for human dignity, even amid conflict.



Conclusion

Safeguarding humanitarian corridors in zones of active conflict remains one of the most urgent tasks before the Security Council. As warfare grows more destructive and unpredictable, civilians are increasingly caught between fighting forces, and aid deliveries often become targets themselves. The Council must therefore act decisively to guarantee that humanitarian access is protected under all circumstances and that any obstruction or misuse of such corridors is met with accountability. Upholding these principles is essential to preserving the core values of international humanitarian law.



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