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**UNITED NATIONS YOUTH AND STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRIA**

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VIENNA INTERNATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS  
03 - 07 August 2014

**Abstract:**

**Human Rights Council (HRC)**

**“Treatment of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum-Seekers”**

The Human Rights Council (HRC) is going to simulate a session on the topic of "Treatment of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum-Seekers". Due to the topic's controversial nature, this year's HRC session will certainly ensure three days of exciting conference, including some heated debates.

### **The Committee**

The Human Rights Council, composed of 47 states elected by the UN General Assembly, is a subsidiary body of the United Nations General Assembly and responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the world. Therefore it can discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year. The Council was established by the UN General Assembly on 15 March 2006 and replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

In 2007 the Council adopted its "Institution-building package" to guide its work and set up its procedures and mechanisms. Among them were the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, which serves to assess the human rights situations in all 193 United Nations Member States, the Advisory Committee, which provides the HRC with expertise and advice on thematic human rights issues and the Complaint Procedure, which allows individuals and organizations to bring human rights violations to the attention of the Council.

Furthermore, the Human Rights Council collaborates with the UN Special Procedures, established by the former Commission on Human Rights and now assumed by the Council. These consist of special rapporteurs, special representatives, independent experts and working groups that monitor, examine, advise and publicly report on thematic issues or human rights situations in specific countries.

### **Topic**

The topic of the HRC at the VIMUN 2014 approaches the general treatment of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers in all parts of the world, for instance Australia, the European Union, U.S. and South Africa. The question that has to be addressed by the delegates is whether the provision of services and their access is adequately provided to these groups of people. Another subject that needs addressing is whether the legal rights of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers are guaranteed in the recipient countries. In addition, the criminalisation and decriminalisation of irregular migration as well as xenophobia and discrimination against migrants will be a relevant topic for discussion.

More precisely the HRC will address the issue of the protection of the right to health, housing, education, water and access to sanitation, as well as the access to legal recourse for migrants, who are victims of human rights violations and the current legislative framework and practice in the context of detention and repatriation (including mechanisms to ensure protection from refoulement and to ensure family unity).

A great variety of questions will have to be discussed and a suitable resolution formulated by the delegates. Among those questions you will have to find answers to the following questions:

- Do the current legal standards that were designed to protect the refugees and migrants suffice? Are those legal frameworks implemented efficiently in all parts of the world?
- Should the non-refoulement provision be revised and redefined (e.g. extended, limited, special rules for situation of mass influx, specific rules for temporary protection)?
- Should there be global or regional quotas that could serve as guidelines for the distribution of refugees and asylum seekers? Can the HRC conceive a suitable recommendation for such a plan?
- What responsibilities should more economically developed countries regarding the situation of economic migrants?