Safeguarding the Health of Refugee Children and Youth

“I’ve seen ​*terrible*​ things. ​*Terrible*​. I just remember tanks everywhere and I could constantly hear the sounds of rifles.”

These memories are told by a ​*seven-year-old*​ boy named Bassam and describes most of his childhood. After fleeing his country and losing his mother ​*and* ​father, Bassam struggles with hunger, thirst, and a no place to call home. Cases like this are why safeguarding the health of refugee children and youth are so important.

Forced displacement increases the risk of refugee children and youth acquiring diseases - physically and mentally. According to UNICEF, there have been more than 26,000 migrant deaths since 2014, yet the number of children among them is not known. The fact that this number has not been able to be reported is truly disturbing.

Are children the least of our worries?

Honorable Chair and fellow delegates,

In this day and age, the health of children - especially vulnerable children like Bassam - is the *most*​important thing we can do for future generations. They will soon grow up to become members of society, thus it is pertinent that a global body is working towards a safe and prosperous future for these children.

There are many ways in which families, health care providers, and community leaders can build upon the strengths of children and families to help support the healthy adjustment of refugee youth. Together we can help refugee children thrive by choosing to focus on topic 1 first.