



Forced Displacement in a Global Context

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3rd July 2021

SMA Summer School



School of Law
Scoil an Dlí

CCJHR

**CENTRE FOR CRIMINAL
JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

Overview

- What is forced displacement?
 - Global trends
- Different types of forced displacement:
 - Armed conflict – Syria
 - Human rights abuses – Rohingya
 - Climate change – Horn of Africa
 - Disasters – Mozambique



Displacement due to flooding, Pakistan (Oct 2011)

“We are witnessing a changed reality in that forced displacement nowadays is not only vastly more widespread but is simply no longer a short-term and temporary phenomenon.”

Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (June 2020)





Venezuela

Syria

Afghanistan

Yemen

South Sudan

DR Congo

Myanmar

Terminology & Sources

International Displacement

- 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees & 1967 Protocol
- OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969)
- Cartagena Declaration on Refugees (1984)
- Protection Agenda for Disaster- & Climate-Induced Cross-Border Displacement (2015)
- Global Compact on Refugees (2018)

Internal Displacement

- UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (2004)
- AU Kampala Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (2009)

Continuum of Displacement



Graeme Hugo, 'Environmental Concerns and International Migration' (Spring 1996) 30(1) *International Migration Review* 105

Forced Displacement in 2020

82.4 MILLION

FORCIBLY DISPLACED WORLDWIDE
at the end of 2020 as a result of persecution, conflict,
violence, human rights violations or events seriously
disturbing public order.



26.4 million refugees

20.7 million refugees
under UNHCR's mandate

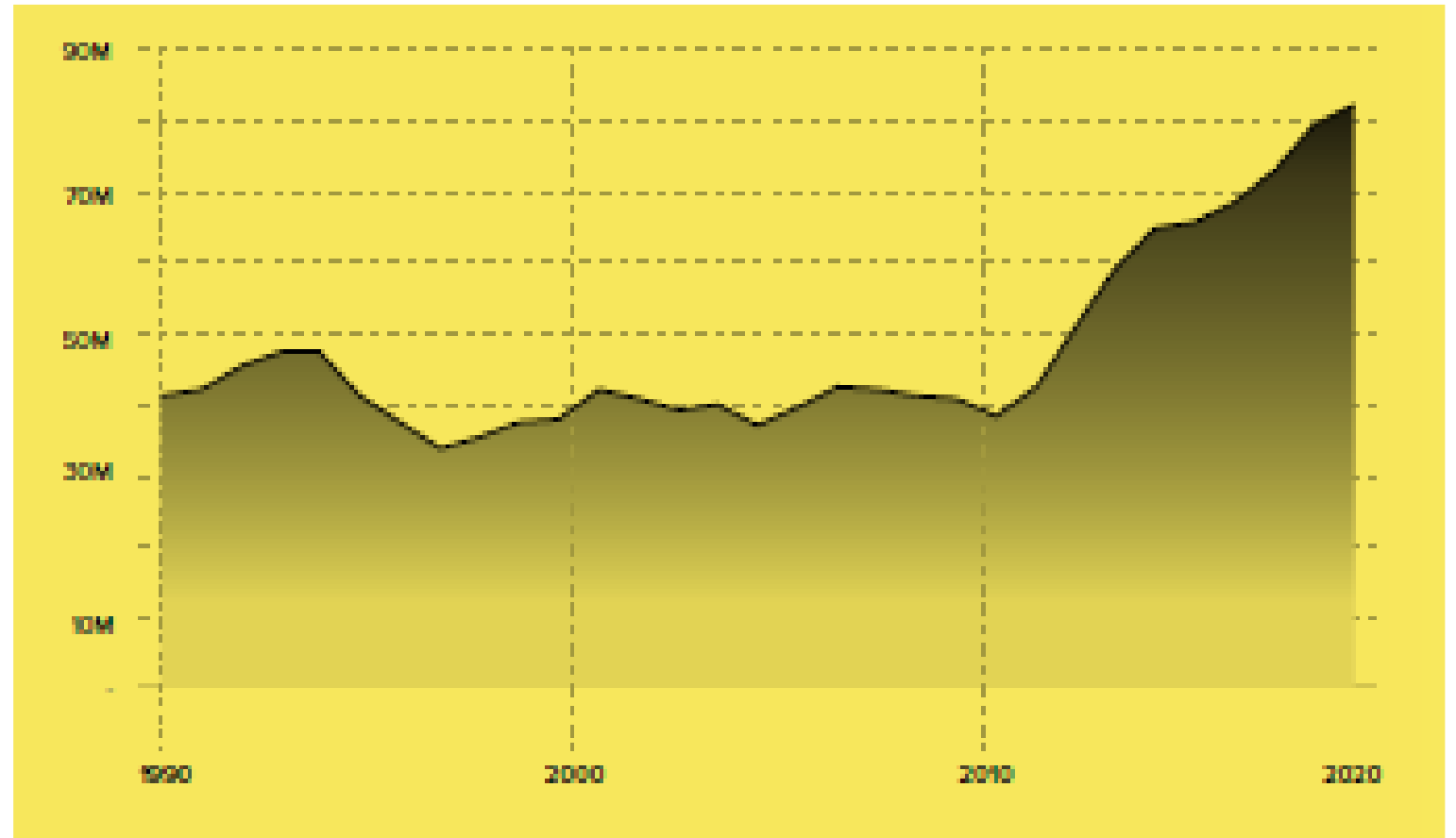
5.7 million Palestine refugees
under UNRWA's mandate

48.0 million internally displaced people¹

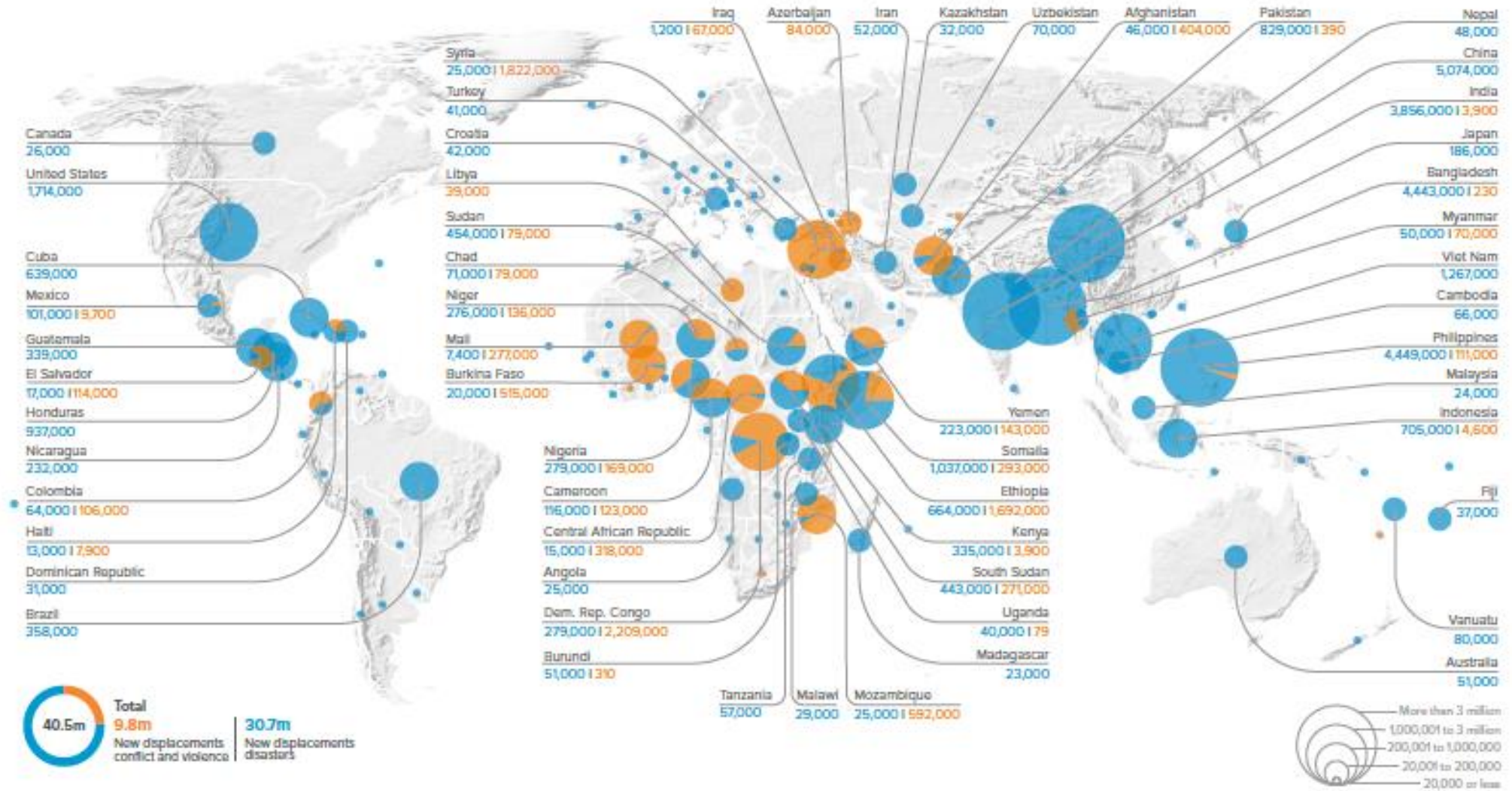
4.1 million asylum-seekers

3.9 million Venezuelans displaced abroad²

Major increase in forced displacement between 2010 and 2020

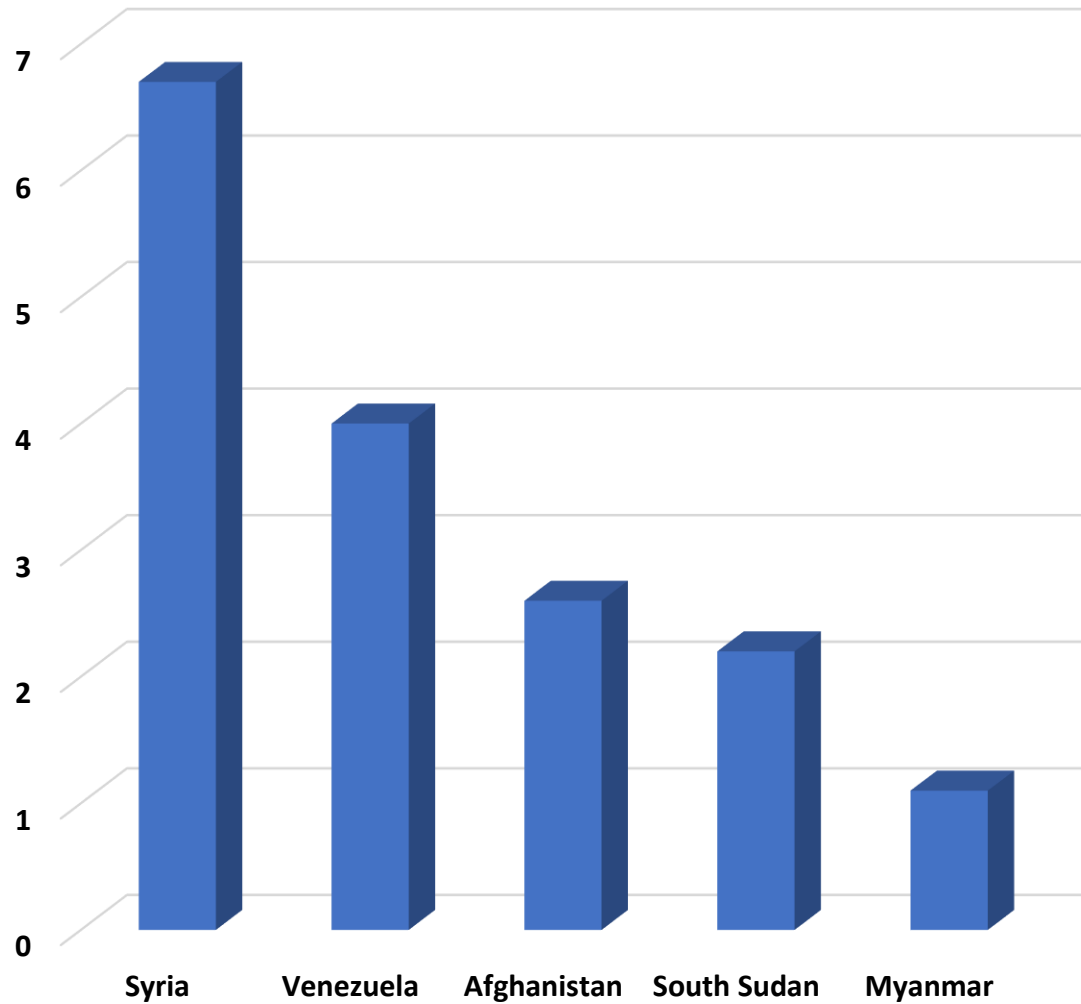


New displacements by conflict and disasters in 2020

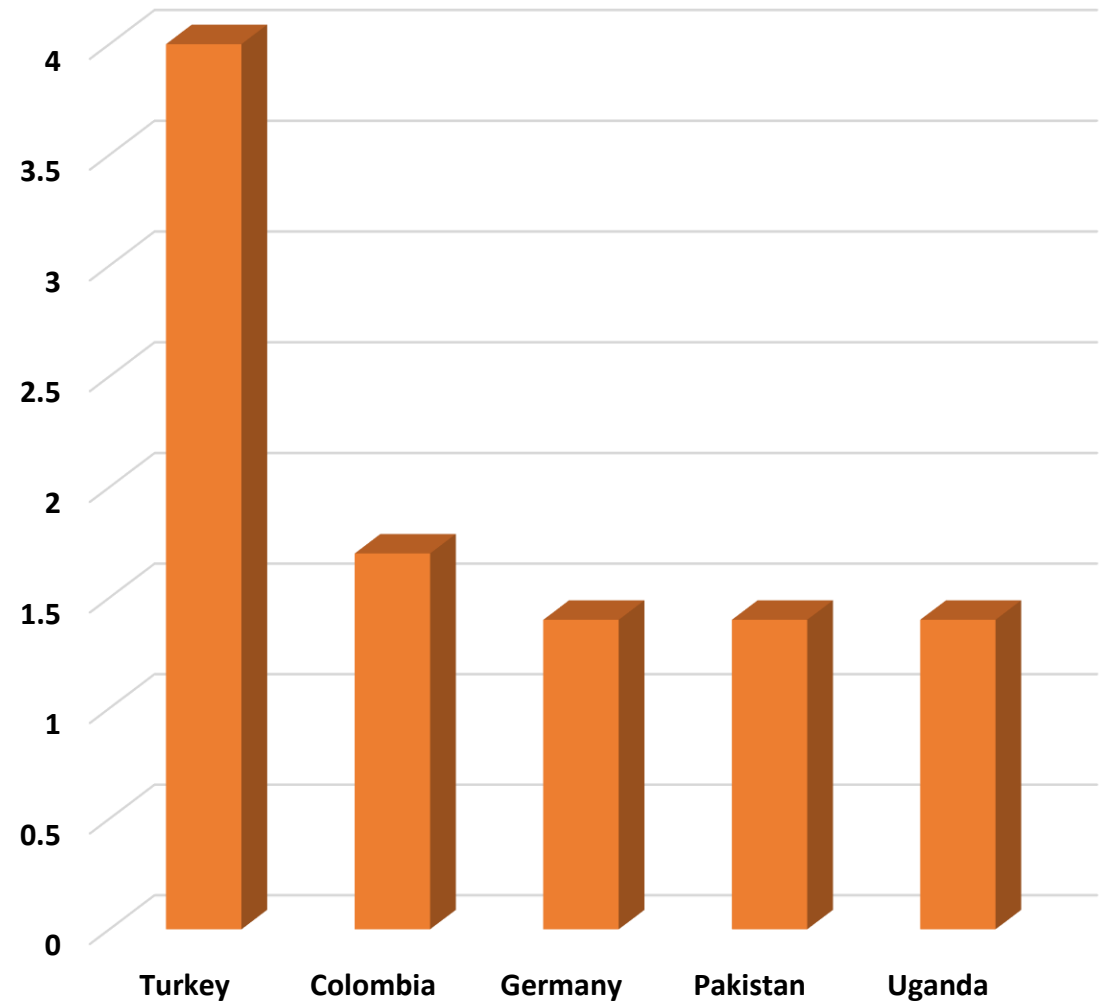


40.5m Total
9.8m New displacements conflict and violence
30.7m New displacements disasters

Countries of origin



Host countries



Causes of Displacement: Armed Conflict Syria

- 6.6 million Syrian refugees – with 5.6 million of these seeking protection in nearby countries
- 6.7 million internally displaced within Syria, including over 1 million new displacements during 2020



Armed Conflict: Syria

Ongoing impacts:

- A decade of conflict has left the country devastated – families separated, long-term physical and mental disabilities resulting from conflict, destruction of homes / schools / hospitals
- Most Syrian refugees and IDPs have been displaced for years – intergenerational trauma of displacement
 - Plus new displacements are still occurring
- Challenge of finding durable solutions: voluntary return, local integration or resettlement

Causes of Displacement: Human Rights Abuses Rohingya (Myanmar)

- **2017:** extreme violence against the Muslim Rohingya community lead to massive internal displacement, then cross-border displacement into Bangladesh
- As of July 2021, over 1 million Rohingya have fled to other countries – largest displacement in Asia since 1970s



Human Rights Abuses: Rohingya (Myanmar)

Ongoing impacts:

- Physical and psychological impact of physical, mental and sexual trauma
- Forcible returns from Bangladesh to Myanmar
- International legal responses:
 - Nov 2019: The Gambia commenced a case against Myanmar in the International Court of Justice on the basis that genocide was being committed against the Rohingya
 - International Criminal Court is also investigating if crimes against humanity or genocide have occurred
- Recent political coup in Myanmar

Causes of Displacement: Climate Change Horn of Africa

- **2020:** 5 million people displaced by disasters and conflict
- Long-term, pre-existing systemic vulnerabilities – exacerbated by climate change
- Causation difficult to attribute – is displacement caused by conflict, economic factors, poor governance, climate change?



Climate Change: Horn of Africa

Ongoing impacts:

- Climate change leads to greater food insecurity, health outcomes and loss of livelihoods
 - Potential for cyclical and secondary displacements
- Forced immobility for pastoralist communities who lost livestock and cattle
 - Need to consider appropriate local integration strategies
- Most climate displacement is over relatively short distances – impacts of displacement primarily felt in the locality and region

Causes of Displacement: Disasters Mozambique

- **2019:** Cyclones Idai and Kenneth hit Mozambique within weeks of each other
- 603 people killed; 1,641 injured
- Over 500,000 people internally displaced as a result of the two cyclones
- 2.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance



Disasters: Mozambique

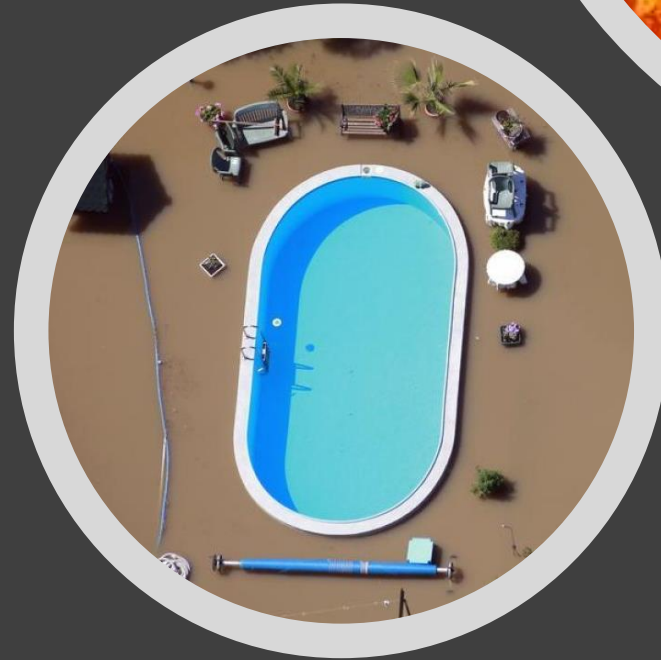
Ongoing impacts:

- The frequency and severity of extreme weather events is increasing:
 - December 2020: Tropical Storm Chalane
 - January 2021: Cyclone Eloise
 - February 2021: Cyclone Gaumbe
- UNICEF has reported serious nutritional impacts on children resulting from repeated displacement
- Combination of conflict and disaster displacement in northern province of Cabo Delgado – more than 669,000 internally displaced in Mozambique by Dec 2020

The Future...

- Forced displacement will continue to increase
- Long-term, cyclical and secondary displacement will become more common
- The global south will continue to host the largest number of displaced people
- All countries are affected by climate change and disasters

BUT





Concerted action is possible!
