

ACTIVITY 2

HANDOUT 2: Vocabulary Terms

Asylum is a process by which a refugee seeks the right to be recognized as a refugee and to receive legal protection and material assistance.

Displaced person (sometimes abbreviated DP) is a person who has been forced to leave his or her home or place of habitual residence; a phenomenon known as “forced migration.” These people are commonly referred to as “refugees.” Though controversial, the modern usage of the term “refugee” is a legal definition created in 1951 that refers to someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. These people generally cannot return to their home or are afraid to do so, and so they seek asylum in another country.

Ethnoreligious group (or ethno-religious group) is an ethnic group whose members are unified by a common religious background. Ethnoreligious communities define their ethnic identity neither by ancestral heritage nor simply by religious affiliation, but often through a combination of both.

Internally displaced person (IDP) is someone who is forced to flee his or her home but who remains within his or her country’s borders. Civil war or armed conflict often cause internal displacement. IDPs are not protected by international law or eligible to receive many types of aid. Displaced people are different from migrants, who choose to move not because of a direct threat of persecution or death, but mainly to improve their lives by finding work, or in some cases for education, family reunion, or other reasons.

Migrant refers to a person who is working, or will work, for pay in a country of which he or she is not a national.

Non-governmental organization (NGO) is a not-for-profit organization that is independent from states and international governmental organizations. They are usually funded by donations, but some avoid formal funding altogether and are run primarily by volunteers.

Refoulement is the return of an alleged refugee to his state of origin. It is a principle of international law that forbids the rendering of a true victim of persecution to his or her persecutor. Generally, the persecutor in mind is a state actor.

Refugee is a term for someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, violence, or natural disasters.

Resettlement is the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to another state that has agreed to admit them and ultimately grant them permanent settlement.

Stateless person is not considered as a national by any state under the operation of its law. In other words, a person who does not have a nationality of any country.

The **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services** (USCIS) is a component of the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS). It performs many administrative functions formerly carried out by the former United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), which was part of the Department of Justice. The stated priorities of USCIS are to promote national security, to eliminate immigration case backlogs, and to improve customer services. USCIS is charged with processing immigrant visa petitions, naturalization petitions, and asylum and refugee applications, as well as making adjudicative decisions performed at the service centers, and managing all other immigration benefits functions (i.e., not immigration enforcement) performed by the former INS, among other responsibilities.

Well-founded fear is a reasonable possibility that asylum seekers will suffer persecution if returned to their country of nationality or habitual residence. Although well-founded fear refers to a future threat of persecution, individuals who have faced persecution in the past are presumed to have a well-founded fear.