

Jordan and Syrian Refugees

By Kamel Dorai

While the spotlight is focused on the arrival of Syrian refugees in Europe, researcher Kamel Dorai reminds us that the main countries concerned are primarily those in the region. Jordan is among the countries that has received the highest number of Syrians, sharpening economic and social tensions in a country already gripped by the presence of Palestinian and Iraqi refugees.

The conflict in Syria is of exceptional violence and intensity¹, giving rise to one of the largest movements of refugees and internally displaced people in the Middle East since the Second World War. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that nearly five million Syrians have fled their country since the beginning of the crisis, in addition to millions of internally displaced people. Jordan is one of the leading host countries, with more than 630,000 refugees registered with UNHCR. Since gaining independence in 1946, the country has seen hundreds of thousands of refugees settle on its soil. The arrival of the Syrians, although unusual in its scale, is therefore in keeping with the conflicts that have shaken the Middle East in recent decades, bringing hundreds of thousands of refugees in their wake, from the forced exile of the Palestinians following the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 to that of the Iraqis since the 1990s. While the majority of Syrian refugees are still living in neighbouring countries, several hundred thousand of them have no choice but to continue their journey to Europe. Entire sectors of Syrian society are being re-established in exile, and the question of their place in their respective

¹ Leïla Vignal, "Syrie : la stratégie de la destruction", *laviedesidees.fr*, 29 March 2016.

host countries is now being raised, as is the question of whether or not they should continue their journey to third countries, either towards the European Union or North America.

The main victims of the Syrian conflict are still Syrian civilians who are continuing to flee the fighting in a context that is increasingly marked by violence and restrictions on mobility, both within Syria's borders and towards neighbouring countries and Europe. Difficult living conditions in countries bordering Syria are driving many people to risk their own lives in an effort to reach more distant countries. However, it is primarily the increasing complexity of the conflict in Syria and the lack of prospects of return that are motivating these new departures. The "refugee crisis" in Europe² has tended to overshadow the reality experienced by the majority of these refugees, which consists of long-term exile in Syria's neighbouring countries. At the beginning of the uprising those countries opened their borders, but as the conflict dragged on the Lebanese, Jordanian and Turkish governments gradually imposed restrictions on the entry of new refugees to their territories. According to UNHCR, Jordan now has 87 refugees for every 1000 inhabitants, excluding Palestinian refugees who settled there after 1948 and make up almost half the population of the Hashemite Kingdom. For example, Sweden – whose asylum policy is one of the most generous in the European Union – has just 15 refugees per 1000 inhabitants.

The Middle East, a space of transit and settlement

Syrian migration as it currently stands is thus producing profound changes in the Middle East migration system and determining the migration policies that are taking shape across Europe. The European Union's desire to outsource asylum applications to third countries is placing the eastern and southern shores of the Mediterranean at the forefront and forcing them to adopt increasingly restrictive migratory policies. The agreement between Turkey and the European Union signed in March 2016 seeks to stabilise Syrian refugees outside Europe but overlooks the overall issue of refugees at regional level. It aims to limit new arrivals, while the causes of people's departure are not properly taken into account, both for those who continue to leave Syria and those abandoning their initial country of reception. An understanding of the long-term nature of the Syrian crisis must be accompanied by a reflection on the multiplicity of factors that are now compelling an increasing number of refugees to try to exile themselves ever further away. The permanence of the conflict, violence and destruction is always the most decisive factor. At the same time, the length of their exile in neighbouring countries is leading to the increasing impoverishment of the most disadvantaged refugees who have limited access to the legal employment market. Syrians are therefore usually confined to the informal sector, enduring low pay and high exposure

² Karen Akoka, "Crise des réfugiés, ou des politiques d'asile ?", *laviedesidées.fr*, 31 May 2016.

to competition from other migrant groups. The precariousness of their legal status is also a source of instability. It is the combination of all these factors that explains why they continue their journey to Europe. In Jordan, the situation for refugees attempting to flee to Europe is somewhat complex given that the country does not have a land or maritime border with any European country. The journeys are long, complex and costly via Syria then Turkey, or through Egypt and North Africa. This is helping to stabilise the population in the Hashemite Kingdom.

Mass exodus of refugees since the start of the crisis

UNHCR has now registered more than 4.7 million Syrian refugees, making it the largest refugee population, ahead of Afghans, Rwandans and Iraqis. Only Palestinians with more than 5 million refugees registered by UNRWA³ – whose exile stretches back to 1948 and includes their descendants – outnumber Syrians. As well as refugees who have crossed an international border, more than 7 million internally displaced people have repeatedly been forced to flee fighting, precariousness and destruction⁴.

Beyond the data and the debates it often sparks in host countries⁵, it is the meaning of this exodus that must be understood. The scale of the exodus and its long-term nature have reshaped every level of Syrian society. Exile is by no means confined to any particular categories of population, such as active opponents to Bashar Al Assad's regime. Whole sections of Syrian society have found themselves forced to leave their country following the mass destruction and continuing insecurity. The multiplication of actors in the conflict is resulting in the growing fragmentation of Syrian territory. The majority of refugees initially try to seek refuge inside Syria, but this is becoming ever more complex as the violence is so widespread. The number of internally displaced people concentrated in the safest areas is rising, making access to housing and basic services more difficult in many Syrian cities. In this case, the only option is to leave Syria to seek asylum

³ The UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) was created in 1949 by the United Nations General Assembly.

⁴ Source: <http://www.internal-displacement.org/middle-east-and-north-africa/syria/figures-analysis> (IDMC - Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre)

⁵ The preliminary results of the last census conducted in Jordan in January 2016 establishes the number of Syrians living in Jordan at 1.2 million. There are usually frequent debates over the figures in situations of mass arrivals of refugees. For example, the 2007 study carried out by the Norwegian Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research clearly shows the difficulty involved in producing statistical data on refugees in Jordan (*Iraqis in Jordan 2007. Their Number and Characteristics*, FAFO, UNFPA, Department of Statistics in Jordan: www.faf.no/ais/middeast/jordan/IJ.pdf). With regard to refugees entering Europe, the numbers produced by Frontex should also be subject to criticism since they include border crossings (which runs the risk of counting the same people several times) rather than the asylum applications actually filed in each EU Member State.

elsewhere. The long-term nature of the conflict causes refugees to seek more sustainable settlements where they can try to rebuild a more stable life.

Jordan: coping with the arrival of Syrian refugees

If European countries are finding it difficult to cope with the arrival of several hundred thousand refugees, then what about Syria's border countries, which receive the overwhelming majority of refugees? In the very composition of its population, Jordan embodies all the conflicts in the region. As a country of refuge for Palestinians, Iraqis and now Syrians, Jordanian society is now strongly characterised by the presence of forced migrants.

Paradoxically, Jordan has welcomed refugees from across the region ever since its independence, yet does not have its own national asylum system. Jordan, like other Middle Eastern countries, is not a signatory to the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees (Zaiotti, 2006)⁶. Only Palestinians are recognised as refugees by the authorities in the state where they habitually reside, and when registered with UNRWA. In the absence of any specific legislation to guarantee the registration and protection of refugees, UNHCR establishes asylum procedures and collaborates with the authorities of the countries involved through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding that clarifies UNHCR's mandate (Kagan, 2011: 9). These agreements are usually signed in specific contexts in response to particular crises, such as the post-2003 Iraq crisis, and are difficult to apply in new situations. Syrian refugees thus find themselves in a rather precarious legal situation. They must register with UNHCR in order to obtain refugee status while simultaneously fulfilling the conditions of residence as defined by their host state, which regards them as temporary migrants.

In Jordan, the Residence and Border Administration of the Ministry of the Interior issues Syrians with a special service card for the Syrian community, which is valid for one year and may be renewed. The lack of a specific legal status for refugees places them in a temporary situation that conflicts with the de facto prolongation of their exile. While refugee status in the industrialised countries that are signatories to the Geneva Convention provides long-term protection (a permanent residence permit and access to nationality), it only gives temporary protection in Jordan. It is similar to the forms of subsidiary protection that have been developed in Europe in recent years. This temporary status makes it difficult for Syrian refugees to make any medium- or long-term plans, knowing that they have little guarantee that their status will be renewed.

⁶ Israel, Egypt and Turkey are signatories to the convention but with reservations, which limits the scope of application of the convention.

This particular status imposes restrictions on them with regard to the location in which they reside in Jordan. Refugees who want to settle outside the three camps that have been open since mid-2012 must have a Jordanian guarantor (*kafil*) who qualifies them for a residence permit. However, this does not give them access to the labour market. Up to now, Syrians have had to get a paid work permit, as have other immigrant populations residing in the Kingdom. At the beginning of April 2016, UNHCR and the Jordanian government announced new conditions to facilitate Syrian refugees' access to the labour market. They are exempt for a period of three months from the costs involved in obtaining a work permit. They are no longer required to have a valid passport because the residence card issued to them by the Jordanian authorities is sufficient. The primary sectors of activity are agriculture, construction and the food industry, where the majority of migrant workers are concentrated. The government also plans to promote the employment of Syrians in skilled industrial areas. Jordan has also announced a three-month suspension of legal proceedings against refugees working without a permit in order to give their employer time to regularise their situation.

The geography of Jordan has also been profoundly transformed by the long-term settlement of forced migrants on its soil. Whole neighbourhoods in Amman have built up around the Palestinian refugee camps which are now an integral part of the Jordanian capital. It is in the light of the Palestinian experience that the arrival of new refugee groups is interpreted. Local authorities fear a repeat of this situation which could result in the permanent settlement of a large number of refugees in the Kingdom. The political and social effects of the long-term presence of hundreds of thousands of Syrians are difficult to assess in a context in which Jordan is facing economic difficulties in an unstable regional environment.

The role of camps in reception policy

The failure to resolve the Palestinian question, resulting in the continued presence of the camps since their creation in the early 1950s, thus strongly determines the current processing of new refugee flows both regionally and within Jordan. The reluctance of authorities in host states to open refugee camps is partly due to their fear that the refugees will settle on their land in the long term, as has been the case with Palestinian refugees⁷.

⁷ To give an example, following the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003, the main host states in the region – which included Jordan – did not open refugee camps in their territories. The Iraqi crisis of 1990-1991 and then post-2003 were proof for Jordan, Syria and Lebanon that the lack of camps combined with less restrictive forms of entry and residence (although this varied by country and period in question), as well as a relatively easy access to public services and employment on the informal market, increased the chances of refugees moving and therefore migrating on towards third countries (Chatelard, Dorai, 2009).

Unlike Lebanon, which takes in a higher number of refugees, Jordan has opened refugee camps in the north of the country in an effort to channel incoming flows⁸. While the three main Syrian refugee camps in Jordan comprise only 20 per cent of the total number of Syrians, most of the refugees have passed through transit camps on the border with Syria. These camps were established along with the gradual closure of the western border between Syria and Jordan. They enable the Jordanian authorities to carry out security checks before allowing the refugees to enter their territory. Waiting times in these camps vary according to refugee profiles. If accepted, they are then sent to one of the three settlements. If they have a Jordanian *kafil* they can settle elsewhere on the territory.

The tightening of policies for entry into Jordan has transformed border posts into de facto camps. In May 2016, nearly 60,000 Syrians were stranded in the two transit camps of Rukban and Hadalat to the east of the Syrian-Jordanian border, in a no-man's land between the two countries⁹. As crossing points to enter Jordan, these spaces have changed from transit camps where refugees initially spent between one and ten days into settlements where their temporary stay lasts several weeks. Despite the intervention of the International Committee of the Red Cross, humanitarian conditions are extremely challenging.

In Jordan, Syrian refugees, like other refugee groups in the Middle East, continue to gather in urban areas whenever possible, mostly on the outskirts of urban peripheries. For example, the Azraq camp opened in April 2013 to accommodate up to 130,000 people, when the number of refugees arriving in Jordan was very high. Today it is mostly empty. According to UNHCR, in May 2016 there were 47,000 refugees living in the camp. The majority of Syrian refugees, therefore, settle in urban areas whenever they have the chance, where employment opportunities are better and it is easier to resume a “normal” life.

This issue of urban settlement has been a subject of reflection for some years at UNHCR. In September 2009, the UN agency adopted an Urban Refugee Policy¹⁰, designed to provide urban refugees with the same kind of protection and assistance as refugees in camps. The experience of Iraqi refugees in the Middle East served in part as a model for the development of UNHCR's priority-setting strategy: refugee registration, protection, assistance, access to services and development of permanent solutions. Syrian refugees in Jordan today benefit from that experience.

⁸ Turkey has also opened camps along its border with Syria. Across the region, less than one fifth of refugees live in the camps.

⁹ “Around 2,000 Daesh agents estimated to have mingled with refugees — army” (2016) *Jordan Times*. <http://jordantimes.com/news/local/around-2000-daesh-agents-estimated-have-mingled-refugees-%E2%80%94-army>

¹⁰ *The Implementation of UNHCR's Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas*, Global Survey – 2012: www.unhcr.org/516d658c9.pdf

Refugees who have settled mainly outside the camps

In Jordan, the physiognomy of the northern villages and towns was profoundly disrupted by the long-term settlement of refugees. The coexistence between Jordanians and Syrians, although made easier by the historical ties between the Syrian south and the north of the kingdom, is also marked by difficulties common to both populations.

Refugees play a relatively important role in urban development, particularly in informal settlements. They also develop specific relationships with host societies, based on the supposedly temporary nature of their settlement. The massive influx of forced migrants into certain areas (such as towns and villages in northern Jordan) brings about significant changes for the host societies at local level. The settlement of refugees sparks a number of debates regarding the pressure placed on the rental market, the overall rise in prices, the loss of safety in certain areas, labour market competition, and so on. In the case of Jordan, the region has not escaped a more global phenomenon that usually stigmatises the large-scale influx of refugees (Hyndman, 2000). In some border areas, such as the north-west of Jordan, the effects of the settlement of a very large number of refugees have in fact had important consequences for local populations, even if it is the poorest and most marginalised populations that are paying the price of increased pressure on the rental market. In some neighbourhoods, rents have risen significantly and are difficult to access for the poorest households, while some services such as schools and medical care have also been affected.

According to UNHCR¹¹, 145,000 Syrian school children were enrolled in public schools in Jordan in 2015. In municipalities with a high number of Syrians, the schools have had to transition to a system in which classes are held in two shifts. Jordanian pupils usually attend school in the morning and Syrian refugee children in the afternoon. There is also increased competition in certain sectors of the labour market (day workers employed in construction or agriculture). Unemployment rates among Jordanians, for example, rose significantly between 2011 and 2014, increasing from 14% to 22%, with young men particularly affected¹². However, it is difficult to determine what part the refugees' presence has played in this increase¹³. It should also be noted that many of the jobs in question were taken by other migrant groups such as Egyptians, who were affected by the Syrian crisis. Moreover, the presence of refugees has had positive effects for the host country thanks to investments made by Syrian entrepreneurs who have relocated part of their activities to the industrial areas of Jordan. International aid, while it does not cover the full

¹¹ <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/3RP-2015-Annual-Report.pdf>

¹² http://www.ilo.org/beirut/publications/WCMS_364162/lang--en/index.htm

¹³ <http://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/resource-file/IRC%20Policy%20Brief%20Economic%20Impacts%20of%20Syrian%20Refugees%20.pdf>

costs of the refugee presence, also helps to develop certain sectors of activity (such as NGOs) and stimulates demand for consumer goods and equipment.

For Syrians who were working in Jordan before 2011, the situation has also deeply deteriorated. They have gone from having the status of migrant workers, some of whom had a recognised professional qualification, to being refugees in competition with an increasing number of their co-religionists. They have had to face a significant increase in the standard of living (the cost of renting their accommodation), which has often been accompanied by a drop in their wages. A young Syrian I met in the Zaatari camp in November 2014 had become a refugee in 2011 even though he had been settled for several years in Irbid, in Jordan. He was working as a carpenter for a Jordanian employer and earned 400 dinars a month. He was renting an apartment in Irbid for 100 dinars a month. The arrival of a high number of refugees from 2012 resulted in increased competition on the labour market. In some regions, the presence of a workforce seeking employment, with no other resources to fall back on, has driven down wages. His employer offered to give him permanent work in exchange for a cut in wages. At the same time, his rent rose sharply. No longer able to cope with the rising cost of living combined with a considerable loss of income, he decided to settle in the Zaatari refugee camp where the accommodation was free and where he received humanitarian aid. Although this is merely an example, it illustrates the fact that the effects of the Syrian crisis have been felt among migrant populations already present in Jordan.

The Zaatari camp: a symbol of the Syrian presence in Jordan

The Zaatari camp opened at the end of July 2012. It now accommodates almost 80,000 people and is the best-known Syrian refugee settlement. The camp is located in a semi-arid area about ten kilometres southeast of the town of Mafraq in northern Jordan, close to the Syrian border. Originally consisting of tents erected side by side, the camp expanded dramatically following the influx of Syrian refugees, with up to 200,000 inhabitants registered by UNHCR in April 2013. This figure decreased as people moved on either to urban areas in Jordan or back to Syria.

A real city in which prefabricated structures and a few remaining tents lie side by side, this space encompasses all the paradoxes of the Syrian presence in Jordan. Humanitarian organisations are ubiquitous here, a symbol of the vulnerability of an exiled population deprived of all resources. Unlike Iraqi refugees, who were mostly urban middle-classes who settled in the Jordanian capital, a large proportion of Syrian refugees today are from rural areas and are therefore more vulnerable. At the same time, despite the limitations placed on them by the humanitarian government, the refugees have managed to create a space in which to develop their social and

economic life. The camps today are dotted with small businesses and other small-scale activities that generate meagre incomes. The refugees have tried their best to create a semblance of normal life in a context of almost total deprivation and severe constraints. Indeed, Syrian refugees have limited access to the labour market and those who live in the camps must obtain a permit to leave, valid for a fixed period of time.

In a landscape without vegetation, a city has emerged out of the dynamism of its inhabitants. As soon as the camp opened, an informal economy developed and then took on a structure throughout the different areas of the camp. At the entrance, a shopping street, the Souk Street – referred to as “Champs Elysées” by the inhabitants of the camp – has emerged. It is lined with shops of all kinds: mobile phone shops, groceries, bakeries, small restaurants, hairdressers and so on. Street vendors stroll around the camp selling all kinds of products or sandwiches. Close to many facilities established by NGOs, this shopping street is frequented by a large number of refugees. It has become a central living space symbolizing the economic dynamism of the refugees.

In other areas of the camp, small grocery shops and hairdressing salons have sprung up. These businesses provide an income for the refugees who have opened them and serve as places for Syrians to socialise. The camp is by no means a mere waiting area; rather, it has become a place where Syrians are getting on with their lives and rebuilding their society in exile. UNHCR estimates that a total of almost 3000 stalls have opened in the camp.

The refugees have partly regrouped by family and village of origin. Prefabricated structures and tents have been reorganised to create living areas which, although precarious, have enabled people to have their own private living space. The camp has therefore changed a great deal in three years. Today, there are almost no tents left, except as an extension to a prefabricated living structure or to cover the inner courtyard of the accommodation. The materials distributed by the humanitarian agencies are reused and transformed by the residents.

The camp is not merely a juxtaposition of standardised settlements. Instead, it recreates forms of housing that are fairly similar to those in southern Syria or in the informal neighbourhoods in the outskirts of large Syrian cities. In these living spaces, the room where guests are received (*madhafé* in Arabic) plays an important role. People from outside the family are seated in this room, where mattresses are arranged on the floor, thus serving as a meeting room for men. The women, meanwhile, gather in the courtyard to cook together, or in adjoining rooms where they talk.

The camp therefore fulfils a dual function: that of a closed space where the most disadvantaged refugees are forced to reside in most cases, but also that of a city in the making, which is developing with limited means but trying to recreate a semblance of social and economic life in exile.

From one exile to another

At the same time, although the current conflict has generated new refugees, it has also forced tens of thousands of others already on Syrian soil to seek refuge in a third country. Before becoming one of the countries with the highest number of refugees, Syria was the primary host country for several hundred thousand Iraqi refugees fleeing the chaos and violence that followed the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003, not to mention the presence on its soil of nearly 500,000 Palestinian refugees. Jordan quickly decided to close its borders to this category of refugees. As Jalal Al Hussein wrote, "after a relatively tolerant phase during which some 10,000 Palestinian refugees entered the national territory, Jordan has toughened its reception policy since the end of 2012 on the grounds that it needs to counter the Israeli vision of Jordan as a substitute national homeland for Palestinians."¹⁴

The Syrian conflict, particularly the siege of the Yarmouk Palestinian camp in the outskirts of Damascus from December 2012, recalled the Palestinians' precarious situation in their respective host countries. On 31 January 2014, UNRWA disseminated a photograph¹⁵ showing thousands of Palestinians in a street lined with homes destroyed by bombs, converging at a food aid distribution point following weeks under siege by the Syrian army.

Whereas the camp had accommodated almost 150,000 Palestinian refugees before 2011, it is estimated that only 18,000 were still living there in 2015. Overall, 280,000 Palestinians (of the 520,000 registered with UNRWA in Syria¹⁶) have been forced to flee their place of residence, either to safer areas within Syria or else abroad¹⁷. More than 70,000 of them (that is, 13.5% of the Palestinian population living in Syria registered with UNRWA) have sought refuge in neighbouring countries. Almost 45,000 registered refugees have left Syria for Lebanon, with 15,000 more leaving for Jordan and 9000 for Egypt.

This movement has been largely overshadowed by the scale of the Syrian crisis. The Palestinians from Syria have been therefore returned to their status of stateless persons, deprived of protection, dependent on humanitarian aid and forced to seek asylum in one of the neighbouring countries which, with the exception of Lebanon up to 2013, have closed their borders (Al Hussein,

¹⁴ <http://allegralaboratory.net/dexode-en-exode-le-conflit-syrien-comme-revelateur-de-la-vulnerabilite-des-refugies-palestiniens/>

¹⁵ Source: <http://www.unrwa.org/crisis-in-yarmouk>, consulted on 31 August 2015.

¹⁶ Source: *UNRWA in figures*, Jan. 2015

[http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/in_figures_july_2014_en_06jan2015_1.pdf], consulté le 31 août 2015.

¹⁷ Source: http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/syria_regional_crisis_emergency_appeal_2015_english.pdf, consulted on 14 June 2015

Doraï, 2013). More than half have joined the existing Palestinian refugee camps, placing further pressure on those areas marked by poverty and exclusion, which already included some migrants from more distant countries (Doraï, 2015).

As for Iraqi refugees who had sought refuge in Syria, mostly in the outskirts of Damascus, they were forced to leave their country of first asylum. Most of them returned to Iraq, despite the continued violence. Others were able to continue their journey to Europe, North America or Australia. According to UNHCR, just over 20,000 are still in Syria unable to leave their host country.

These populations, already refugees before the Syrian conflict, are thus restricted to new mobilities in a context in which the countries bordering Syria are reluctant to grant them asylum. Unable to settle, even temporarily in the region, and for some stateless Palestinians who are unable to return to their countries of “origin”¹⁸, an increasing number are seeking longer-lasting solutions outside the region.

Conclusion

While the Middle East has fallen prey to multiple conflicts, Jordan is being forced to cope with the arrival of refugees mostly from Syria but also from Iraq, Yemen, Libya and the Palestinian territories. Today, as the Syrian conflict continues, the question of the future of these refugees remains unresolved. By partially opening up its labour market to Syrian refugees, Jordan has altered its reception policy in favour of better integration of the refugee population in the medium-term. This policy is nonetheless dependent on the receipt of more substantial international aid. The current situation, the result of the multiplication of actors in the Syrian conflict, is marked by a three-fold constraint: first, while Syria’s neighbours have mostly opened their borders to refugees, these host states do not intend to tackle the issue of their long-term integration; second, their swift return to Syria is not an option for the majority of refugees; finally, resettlement in Europe, North America or other third countries will be only possible for a very tiny sector of this population.

¹⁸ This term is debatable in the case of Palestine, with the majority of Palestinian refugees having been born on Syrian soil. The Palestinian Authority holds only limited power in the territories it controls and does not manage its international borders. This refers to the wider issue of negotiations over the exercise of Palestinian refugees’ right of return, even if in the specific context of the Syrian conflict this is not an option for the Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon, who have been forced out of Syria and seek short-term practical solutions that will protect them from the conflict and violence to which they have been exposed.

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