

2023

Sowing Seeds of
Stability to Harvest
the Solutions of
Tomorrow

Dear Reader,

We are delighted for you to now be holding the third edition of the EuroMUN x Maastricht Diplomat x UNSA Marketing collaboration in your hands, and as the old adage goes, third time's the charm! But, how are we to sow the seeds of tomorrow if not by looking back at our fruitful past?

The first collaboration is a product of the COVID years, a time when in person conferences had been replaced with tedious online sessions, the MD was forced out of the comfort of students trying to get their hands on our printed editions and Marketing had nothing but our Social Media to design for. Thus, in the spirit of the UNSA family, and to provide all EuroMUN delegates with a tangible memento whilst putting the MD and UNSA Marketing staff to work on an actual print, this collaboration was born. And within the blink of an eye, or rather the wait for a negative rapid test result, after two years of cancelled or online gatherings we finally got to reunite in our beautiful Maastricht. Last year's team crafted a beautiful

printed edition and we got to cherish seeing first-hand how our hard work was consumed by delegates all around the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Alas, let us no longer dwell on the pandemic, an era hopefully only to be remembered by a scares mask every now and again and take joy in wandering the cobblestone streets of Maastricht on your way to debate united under one theme:

"Sowing Seeds of Stability to Harvest the Solutions of Tomorrow"

Much like your committee sessions, this magazine hopes to sow seeds, perhaps not in stability, but instead curiosity, passion and desire for knowledge and even to affect lasting change. Delightfully, the pages of the printed edition are not confined to your committee and topic, but give you the full range of EuroMUN 2023 and thus may pique your inte-

rest more than once. However you may choose to pursue the seedlings EuroMUN, UNSA Marketing and the Maastricht Diplomat have planted within you, we look forward to witness how you will ensure a democratic European Union – with or without the physical Euro, protect the rights of the stateless, reproductive organs and detainees, or tackle long standing international tensions such as the militarization in the Arctic or the conflict surrounding Taiwan.

We would like to extend our personal thanks to the hard-working teams of the EuroMUN, the Marketing Team of UNSA as well as the writers of the Maastricht Diplomat, as without any of these people and their tireless effort and commitment this printed edition would not be in your hands right now. The Maastricht Diplomat writers team would like to bring attention to the fact that given the constraints of this print the articles have been shortened, but the extended versions will be available digitally. Happy reading! ★



Krithik Medwin Rock
Secretary General of
EurMUN 2023



Juliane Hilgert
Editor in Chief of the
Maastricht Diplomat



Helena Eckstein
Art Director &
Head of Marketing

Special Committee on Decolonization	4
European Parliament	6
UN Human Rights Council	8
Historical Crisis	10
European Council	12
League of Arab States	14
European Coal and Steel Community	16
European Central Bank	18
UNSC	20
NATO	22
ICC	24
UN Women	26
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	28
Meet the team!	30
Points and motions	32
Listen to the Maastricht Diplomat's podcast!	33
About UNSA & its sponsors	34
EuroMUN schedule	35

A Forgotten Crisis: Human Rights Violations in Western Sahara

by Esther Neville

Throughout history, borders have perpetually changed, relocated and alternated depending on which state was in power. A location may belong to one state one year, another the next year, and then be split in half so that both countries may claim what they regard as their lawful territory. Often, the citizens who actually live in those territories are simply overlooked by the great machinery. The conflict in Western Sahara is a prime illustration of this.

In 2005, the corpses of 43 Sahrawi men who had allegedly vanished were exhumed from Moroccan secret prisons. These „disappearances“ of Sahrawis began in 1975 and lasted until the late 1980s. The latest big wave of „disappearances“ in Western Sahara was reported to have occurred in 1987, during the presence of a UN delegation. The same year, construction workers discovered a mass grave including roughly 15 bones in former military barracks constructed in the 1970s, when many Sahrawis disappeared or were killed by Moroccan authorities.

Morocco has never been transparent about these disappearances, and the allegations of human rights breaches in Western Sahara have never been resolved. This raises the question of what makes the western Sahara so valuable and why 50 years later, it is still an ongoing conflict. To answer

this, we must go back to the origin of the conflict.

In 1973, the Polisario Front, a movement seeking territorial independence, started rebelling against Spanish colonial forces. After three years of conflict, the Spanish military withdrew from the territory in 1975, in compliance with the Madrid Accords, which granted Morocco and Mauritania administrative control but not sovereignty over the region. This led to the start of the Western Sahara conflict: Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)/Polisario Front against the Kingdom of Morocco. The war lasted until 1991 when they finally agreed to a cease-fire.

During this period, the United Nations-led attempts to end the war and hold a vote on self-determination, however, up to this day never succeeded. In November 2020, the Polisario Front announced an end to the 1991 UN ceasefire agreement and resumed armed combat with Moroccan troops. In order to maintain the balance of power in the region, Algeria has continued to support the Polisario Front. On the contrary, significant nations like the U.S. have prioritised their own needs over neutrality or fair mediation. In 2020, President Donald Trump reversed years of American policy by recognising Morocco's claim to

the Western Sahara territory. Joe Biden, his successor, has stated that he is considering the recognition but has not yet made a final statement. To this day, the conflict remains open: Morocco still considers the region to be part of its sovereign territory and has only provided limited autonomy, while Algeria, the primary supporter of the Polisario separatists organization, demands complete independence. The latter wishes to hold a referendum so that the people that are actually concerned may decide on the fate of their territory. Several atrocities and violations of human rights have occurred during this period. Both sides in the conflict have accused the other of these crimes. The Moroccan government has been accused of various breaches, including torture, arbitrary incarceration, restrictions on free expression and assembly, and disproportionate use of force against peaceful protestors. The government has also been criticized for its treatment of Sahrawi political detainees and for restricting access to Western Sahara to journalists, human rights monitors, and other independent observers; they have denied all accusations. On the other hand, The Polisario Front has also been charged with



violating human rights, including limiting the freedom of expression and assembly and abusing detainees. Additionally, there have been reports of human rights violations committed by armed groups affiliated with the Polisario Front, such as the use of child soldiers and landmines. Human rights organisations and the international community are still worried about the situation. The UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) was given a one-year extension in 2020 to continue monitoring and documenting the region's human rights condition. Moreover, the UN has recommended the formation of a human rights monitoring institution in Western Sahara to independently investigate and document all opposing parties' allegations of human rights breaches.

The extent of the atrocities perpetrated against human rights is up to this day unknown; one recent example, aside from those already mentioned, is the Oxford case. This case refers to a group of six human rights activists who were arrested and detained in Western Sahara in 2010. The activists were members of a delegation organized by the British organization, „Sandblast,“ which was visiting Western Sahara to observe the human rights situation on location. The six Sahrawi students were supposed to travel to Oxford,

UK, to participate in a conflict resolution workshop sponsored by the British NGO Speak Together, the EU Youth Together Program and the British Council. The students were stopped at the gate and their access to the flight departing Agadir Inezgane Airport. They checked in, had their tickets and visas in order, but Moroccan officials refused to let them board the plane. They received no explanations and were all detained later that night, which is when their nightmare began. The students were accused of unlawfully entering the area and engaging in a demonstration without authorization. In addition, the activists were accused of instigating violence and endangering state security. The Oxford Six, as they then came to be known, were held without charge for more than a month and were subjected to physical and psychological abuse. During that time they were not only detained but did not have access to legal representation or medical care. These students were assaulted and tortured, and one, Ali Salem Tamek, was kept in solitary detention for several weeks. The Oxford Six were released on bail pending trial in November of the same year. They were later prosecuted and convicted of incitement to violence and endangering state security. The ensuing prison sentences

ranged from two to six years. The case of the Oxford Six exemplifies the difficulties that human rights advocates and observers experience in Western Sahara, where the government frequently limits freedom of expression and assembly. The case also underlines the territory's ongoing conflict and the necessity for a peaceful and just conclusion that respects the Sahrawi people's rights. Human rights organisations, particularly Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, have condemned the Oxford Six's arrest. The case highlighted the state of human rights in Western Sahara, as well as the ongoing conflict between Morocco and the Polisario Front. The Western Sahara conflict is one of the world's oldest and one of its most overlooked. Despite large-scale displacement and a ceasefire in 1991 that froze military positions, the conflict's resolution remains elusive more than 50 years after it began. This is primarily due to the fact that the existing scenario advantages the majority of parties, including Morocco, Algeria, the Polisario Front, as well as Western powers. Despite this, the conflict has personal, political, and economic consequences, as well as true victims: for the countries immediately engaged, the region, and the international community as a whole. ★



by Jonathan Wijayaratne

Brussels, 15 May 2019. Public television networks in all 28 Member States of the European Union are broadcasting the Eurovision Debate between the candidates for the Presidency of the European Commission — also called ‘*Spitzenkandidaten*’, which is German for ‘lead candidate’. It is the last debate before the European Parliament election, held a week later throughout Europe to elect the 751 Members of the European Parliament. But none of the candidates in the television studio will end up with “Europe’s top job”. Instead, Ursula von der Leyen is designated and then voted in as President of the Commission, becoming the first woman to lead Europe’s executive branch. The European heads of State and governments, gathered in the European Council, are behind this change of plans. As per the European treaties, they are not doing anything wrong:

Taking into account the elections to the European Parliament and after having held the appropriate consultations, the

European Council, acting by a qualified majority, shall propose to the European Parliament a candidate for President of the Commission. This candidate shall be elected by the European Parliament by a majority of its component members. (Article 17(7) of the Treaty on European Union).

Von der Leyen belongs to the party with the most seats in the European Parliament (the centre-right European People’s Party, EPP) so one could say she and her Commission mirror the results of the 2019 elections. But her nomination tolled the death knell of the *Spitzenkandidat* system, in what was described as a “betrayal of democracy”. This showed that the process to decide who should lead Europe was not as well-oiled as expected, and was in the end quite dubious.

“Who do I call if I want to call Europe?” former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger once asked. Europe replied, “call the High-Representative for Foreign af-

airs!”. But if the US President were to call Europe, the answer is less clear. Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, and Charles Michel, President of the European Council, are two people Joe Biden could call. Speaking of councils, the EU has the European Council and the Council of the European Union (gathering national ministers holding a portfolio relevant to the bill discussed, Jacques Delors wanted it to function as a Senate). And no, the Council of Europe is not part of the EU, it is a separate entity with other competences.

This web of institutions with twinning names is easily confusing. The average European surely would not be able to tell them apart, they might also not be able to name the President of the Commission or of the European Council. In a Union that emphasises on the fact it is not a federation, rather a gathering of States, one still looks up more to the national leaders. This does raise the question of the legitimacy of pan-European leaders. When people go to the polls in national elections, they know who the candidates for the leading positions are: President, Prime Minister, Chancellor. These automatically become the face of the nation, the person to praise or blame depending on the country’s fortunes. The European electoral system does not allow such a clear mechanism.

Re-thinking the electoral system

Rules for the European election change from state to state, but there is a common condition for all of them: proportional representation. This means that the

share of seats a party gets mirrors the share of votes it won.

The scale of proportionality can be either regional (Ireland, Belgium, Italy, Poland) or national (all the other states). In each state, you vote for a national party, which is required to display their affiliation to a European party. In countries with first-past-the-post (also known as ‘winner takes it all’) systems such as France, having proportional representation for the European Parliament is a great opportunity for smaller parties to stand out, and thus to open up new conversations. Nevertheless, the European election is among the least popular ones. 1 in 2 Europeans went to vote in the 2019 election; the viewership of the Eurovision debate was very low (72% of respondents in five Member States said they did not watch it); and the voting system made national topics more salient than European stakes. In France, for example, the European election was a rematch of the 2017 Presidential election between Emmanuel Macron’s *En Marche/Renew* and Marine Le Pen’s far-right National Rally/ID.

Macron has been a fond supporter of transnational lists for European elections. This means that instead of voting for lists representing national parties, voters could choose between lists including representatives from several or all Member States, under the banner of a pan-European party. This would put more emphasis on the leaders of such lists and give them more legitimacy to claim the EU’s top job, eventually reinforcing the *Spitzenkandidat* system. It would mean that the President of the

Commission would have a true mandate stemming from the will of Europeans — and the overturning of this will by the European Council like it was the case in 2019 would be a lot more controversial. A proposal to this effect was rejected in 2018, on the grounds that it was “elite-driven” and would make France and Germany, the two most populous states, even more powerful. Another reason that is not mentioned as often is the effect it would have on the European integration process. Transnational lists would provide less space for the political subcultures of each state to flourish in the European Parliament. Making the one truly democratic institution of the EU, the European Parliament, more supranational could have a significant impact on the federalisation of the Union. And that is a step not many in Europe are ready to take.

Less say to the governments, more to the citizens

The EU currently has a rather top-down democratic approach: only the Commission can make legal proposals, to be voted by Parliament and the Council, and the latter often uses qualified majority voting. This system requires that a draft bill be approved by a number of members representing 55% of the EU’s population and 65% of the Member States. It has blocked some initiatives, because of alliances between governments (such as Hungary and Poland). Generalising simple majorities could lift such blockades.

The 2018-19 Yellow Vest movement in France has highlighted that democracy is not only representative. A government

elected every four or five years cannot always accurately mirror the changing dynamics amongst an evermore volatile population. Involving citizens in a more direct manner is thus crucial, as was done at the 2021-2022 Conference of the Future of Europe. More than 700.000 participants from all 27 Member States, selected in a demoscopic manner, discussed topics such as climate change, European democracy, health — the panel that gathered in Maastricht in February 2022 discussed the EU’s place in the world and migration policy. They rendered hundreds of recommendations for the Commission to examine. The Conference can be easily seen as the largest instance of participative democracy in history, in terms of scale and ambition. But one year later, it has left a bitter taste. Some recommendations require treaty changes, which the Council does not agree upon. In a petition, the citizen’s panel denounce this silent and stalling behaviour of the Council which is damaging the potential of the Conference. In their efforts to preserve the status quo of the EU as an inter-governmental entity, European governments are prolonging a democratic standstill. ★





There is a heart beat. Good, strong, steady. A chest rises as air fills the lungs. Blood is being pumped through the veins. And not only does this person's body fulfill all necessary functions to be considered living, the brain is fully functional. If given a stimulus, the body responds, if given food, it metabolizes, if the skin is cut, it will bleed. Unmistakably, this is a human being that is alive, a person - someone's child, someone's sibling, someone's partner. A person that has laughed, grieved, envied, enjoyed, persisted. And yet, this person does not exist.

Not because they are fictitious, not because for the purposes of this piece a conceptualized personification was needed to really tug at the reader's heart strings, but because this person does not exist in any legal system in the world. This person does not have a nationality, they are considered stateless. For decades now, the international community has regarded statelessness not as the all encompassing human rights issue that it is but merely as a bureaucratic, at best technical, issue which does not require the attention or effort of global governance. Per definition, na-

tionality falls within the sovereignty of each nation. So why should the United Nations or the Human Rights Council dictate which individual will receive citizenship with all encompassing legal rights by a nation? Who made them the judge of each nation's decision to grant (or deny) someone their nationality? Isn't that a vast overreach of these international and regional bodies that have little to no binding power upon a state anyway? Why does this state matter have any relevance for these bodies at all?

To find answers to any of these questions, first, understand that statelessness does not solely affect individuals. Whilst yes, the existence of Mehran Karimi Nasserin, or as you probably know him, the Terminal Man in Charles de Gaulle airport is (almost) universal knowledge at this point, and there is no overstating how tragic the story of a man trapped in an airport for eighteen years up to his death is, statelessness must be seen holistically and as the oppressor it is.

Shamima Begum was 15 years old when she left, or perhaps

was made to leave, the United Kingdom, and alongside 550 other women from other western countries traveled to Syria to marry fighters of the Islamic State. This particular ISIS bride was once again heard of in 2019, when she told reports in a refugee camp in Syria that she wishes to come home. The UK government decided to revoke her British citizenship on the grounds of her being a national security risk due to her ties to the terror group and she lost the appeal in February of this year, making her effectively stateless. And whereas her lawyers are gearing up for yet another appeal, the currently held ruling may endanger not solely Shamima's citizenship but may set a precedent that could cause many British citizens to have their nationality stripped from them. The particular group affected, according to UK immigration lawyer Bhangal, would be all British citizens born to parents that have immigrated to the UK that may commit a crime, as they may be seen as a threat to national security. Meanwhile, a British offender whose parents were also born in the United

Kingdom, may retain their citizenship when committing the same crimes. Statelessness is a threat being held over only those with family history of migration in the United Kingdom, should there be no overruling of the Begum case.

But people do not merely lose citizenship as a punishment for their crimes, some are born as a legal impossibility, with no room in the letter of the law to spell out their names, rights and citizenships. For instance, up until 2015, all second born children in China had no rights to exist and if found out, the parents were heavily fined, oftentimes at rates that would far supersede the annual income of the parents. But that is not where the punishment ends: the one child policy has caused individuals born in China to Chinese parents to be born into statelessness in their own country, solely because their mother had given birth previously. In 2015, when the law was amended to allow for two children, an estimated 6.5 million individuals did not receive any recognition as Chinese citizens as they were born outside of the governmental family planning rules, even though they should be eligible for citizenship as they are born in China with not just the required one, but in fact two Chinese parents. Whereas de jure the second born children are still entitled to their hukou, akin to a residence permit, de facto most of them do not have papers as government officials withhold them to punish the non-abiding families or families do not apply to circumvent the heavy fines. But statelessness is not exclusive to a group within a state, it may even affect what one

may call the state itself: The largest stateless population is that of the Rohingya people, which have been stripped of their nationality since 1982. Despite the Rohingya never having left Myanmar, the then introduced law made citizenship dependent on being part of a Myanmar national race to which they did not count the Rohingya. The government of Myanmar has shown no intention of remedying this issue, but instead have sought to further discriminate against, and even persecute, the Rohingya in their own motherland. And even attempts at refuge often do not result in any official recognition of the legal existence of a Rohingya. Many have fled to Bangladesh, a refugee crisis that was informed by the consistent persecution and was triggered in 2016, when Myanmar's persecution of the Rohingya took on what the United Nations has called "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing". However, Bangladesh is not stable enough to receive all these refugees and furthermore does not have an adequate immigration system, as one is solely entitled to Bangladeshi citizenship through marriage or with one Bangladeshi parent. This leaves the children born to the Rohingya in Bangladesh yet again stateless, as there are no citizenship rights to be derived by being born in Bangladesh.

All of the stateless mentioned are suffering for the same reason: they are not citizens, meaning they are not entitled to education, healthcare, they may not marry, work, travel or in any other way enjoy the rights and duties any person should receive. There is no state to protect

them, to ensure that they may live a life that adheres to fundamental human rights, they are forced to live without anyone acknowledging their existence, without any possibility to help themselves, their families, or their children. Thus, the international community must step up, as without bodies such as the Human Rights Council, their life will continue to be one of limbo: of being every bit as alive and human as you or me and yet completely deprived of what that should mean. Their parents can never register them for school, they can never give a health insurance card to the reception at the doctor's office, they can never have a license, they can never vote or buy things that may be age restricted as there is no ID to check, they can never hand over passports at flight check-in. They will never rummage through a wallet or bag and have the privilege of all the rights and liberties attached to hearing: "Papers, please." ★



THE LONG SHADOW OF LEX OPPIA

by Lee-Ann Lichtenberger &
Sofia van Trooijen



«She passes a hand through her many stolas, indecisive about what to wear. The woman almost settles for a purple garment, and hesitates as she palms the fabric. Knowing that it is unacceptable to wear such a colour, she chooses another stola and shuts the door. Tullia turns to the vanity mirror, attempting to conceal the frustration in her countenance.»

We are writing in 195 BCE. It has been seven years since the Second Punic War ended, a bloody conflict between Rome and the notorious sea-farer nation Carthage throughout present-day Italy, Spain and Tunisia.

The First Punic War was fought over which of these two powers would control the Western Mediterranean. After Carthage lost in 241 BCE, both sides lacked resources such as funding and weaponry. Yet, compared to the Carthaginians, crippled by paying reparations and ceding Sicily to Rome, the Romans quickly started rebuilding their strength. It was in 219 BCE that Carthage's famous military leader Hannibal captured the Roman ally Saguntum, in present-day Spain, with a desire to further expand Cartha-

ginian territory. Rome declared war in 218, the Second Punic War, which featured Hannibal's legendary passage across the Alps. After the bloodbath at Cannae in Southern Italy in 216, which saw the deaths of approximately one-fifth of all Roman men of fighting age, Rome encountered a major financial crisis. This crisis motivated the implementation of several "sumptuary laws" in 215 to help the Roman State finance the ongoing war. One of these laws was Lex Oppia.

«As a wealthy noblewoman, Tullia is impacted by Lex Oppia, restricted from expressing her status through lavish attire. she fondly remembers the days when she could wear extravagant clothing and jewellery. She sighs, and plucks simple gold pieces from her jewellery dish to despondently set on the scale. Half an ounce, and no more, is the law she must abide by now. Her cascading thoughts are interrupted as a soft knock sounds at the door. "Intra." Tullia says, as she adds more gold and dejectedly watches the scale tip over. The door creaks open as her ornatrix, hairdresser, enters the room to prepare an elaborate hairstyle for Tul-

lia's day out. Flanking are the ladies-in-waiting who will take care in dressing her.

Tullia decides to spend this day visiting a shop for new single-coloured garments, and perhaps a ride in her carriage; a common activity for wealthy women in Rome. However, according to the Lex Oppia rule, she must ride a mile outside the city to conceal her extravagance. Despite her wealthy status, Tullia's situation is not unique: all women in Rome are subject to strict laws and societal expectations.»

Indeed, Lex Oppia had a significant impact on women's social status in the Roman Republic. This law was aimed at limiting "female extravagance" by decreasing women's expenses on finery. Roman women's duty was to take care of their households, leaving them with little-to-no means for political participation or entrepreneurship. Therefore, luxurious clothes and jewellery often represented a woman's only gateway to achieving a social identity of her own.

«The shop Tullia visits is owned by a Roman woman, Mirta, which is unusual for a woman of middle-class status.

works strenuous hours weaving thread to craft clothing just to get by. She is also dressed in a single-coloured stola, with no gold; Mirta does not have an extravagant title to flaunt, unlike Tullia, so Lex Oppia does not affect her as much. As her deft hands work with the fabric, Mirta reminds herself again to find a spouse. She is expected to be wed by the age of 20, and after the ceremony, will eventually have to stop working to instead fulfil household duties and give the money she has earned to her husband. Marriage is an important element in Roman society, for both the upper and lower classes.. Tullia, unlike Mirta, was wed during her mid-teens. Even as a noblewoman, she never owned any marriage gifts or inherited assets. Her husband is in control of this, and before her marriage, it was her father.»

Indeed, although dowries represented important financial resources in Ancient Rome, particularly in upper-class marriages, it was the husbands who would administer their wives' dowries. Furthermore, it was not possible for women to legally own any assets. Given the lack of financial control, upper-class women felt outraged when Lex Oppia limited their only economic and social liberty.

«Now, some weeks have passed since Tullia's day out. Her shoes clomp against the terracotta cobblestone roads, and the sounds of chanting grow louder and louder as she nears the Forum: the central marketplace in Rome. As a wealthy woman, Tullia knows that she is expected of proper behaviour in public, yet impatience is also one of her more unattractive traits. She bundles the skirt of her favourite multi-coloured

dress in her fists, and begins to hurry towards the audible commotion within the Forum. The purple tones of Tullia's dress are stark, and the finest gold pieces from her collection shine elegantly in the midday sun. Arriving at the edge of the Forum, she begins to weave her way through the passerbyers dressed in comparatively dull apparel, eager to join the other women protesting against Lex Oppia. Tullia's lilted voice joins the chant as she reaches them, and notices Mirta, her artisan for new garments, amongst the group. Mirta's dress is a simple thing compared to Tullia's striking stola, yet maintains its own colourful charm. They exchange glances, and a knowing smile blooms on Mirta's face. The women continue to chant together, as their determined vexation fills the area.»

Unlike other sumptuary laws implemented at the height of the Second Punic War, Lex Oppia was not immediately revoked after the war ended; the year 195 BCE marked twenty years since Lex Oppia had been implemented. The Roman Republic found prosperity again, a time during which the sumptuary law Lex Oppia lost its "raison d'être". At least this was the view of Roman women who finally demonstrated for the abolishment of Lex Oppia in 195. In the Senate, however, not everyone shared their views. Cato the Elder was most notably opposing, arguing that revoking the law would "give loose rein to [a woman's] uncontrollable nature and to this untamed creature" who would not be able to restrain herself in her expenses. Cato furthermore called the women's protests in the Forum a "madness"; they dared to speak to other women's husbands and meddle in

public affairs. He denoted the failure of men to keep their wives under control.

Yet, as patriarchal as the Roman system was at the time, there were some individuals among the senators who expressed sympathy with the women's cause and criticized Cato's view, as was spoken by Lucius Valerius Flaccus and recorded in Livy's *The History of Rome*:

«*et equus tuus speciosius instratus erit quam uxor vestita?*»
«*and will the strappings of your horse be more splendid than the dress of your wife?*»

These words exemplified his understanding of the impact Lex Oppia had on women. Flaccus pointed out how women already had fewer rights than men and that the "elegance of appearance, adornment, apparel [were] the woman's badges of honour". Under the pressure of the continuous protests in the Forum, the Senate finally ceded to the women's demands and repealed Lex Oppia in 195 BCE, twenty years after its entry into force. ★



Building Walls or Breaking Barriers: The EU's Struggle with Migration Control

by Louise Chanut & Maya Müller-Perron

Two positions on the EU's migration crisis:

A few days ago, on the 28th of March 2023, the committee on budgets of the European Parliament voted against the funding of fences at the borders of the EU at the expense of requests from several member states to the European Commission. Indeed, Europe has been affected by an unprecedented migration crisis in recent years. In 2022, Frontex reported 330,000 irregular entries into the European Union, the highest figure since 2016. More recently, on February 1, 2023, at a plenary session of the European Parliament, Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen spoke of an unprecedented situation "which must be met with a European

Given the unique circumstances, one wonders why the proposal to build a wall financed by the EU was rejected by the European Parliament. Isn't building a wall the easiest solution? Is it not the duty of the European Union to help the countries to cope with the influx of illegal migrants? In any case, this is what the countries in favor of such infrastructures claim. Indeed, in the context of a EU Summit in Brussels on February 9 of this year, several member states, such as Hungary, Bulgaria, Greece, but also Austria, argued that this would be an effective border protection measure that would serve the interests of the EU as a whole, and not just the member states in the frontline. Building a wall in cross-border areas

where there are fewer fences". In this context, only European walls could have a direct effect on migration flows. A wall makes it difficult and expensive to cross a border. Thus, individuals may choose to stay in their countries and not migrate at all. For now, the EU has chosen not to fund the wall project. According to the Union, it is not a conceivable action to address growing migratory pressure at the EU's borders. Member states that are faced with the influx of migrants are thus left alone to protect their borders. There are already 19 walls in the EU/ Schengen Area, which represent more than 2000 km of border across the EU. All of them are the consequence of national anti-migration politics. Nationalist government of

response". According to her, legislation should continue to be drafted with a view to concluding the pact on asylum and migration by spring 2024, while also developing actions to improve the protection of external borders.

would make it a European project rather than a national problem. And a European project would make it more efficient and avoid the flaws present in the national deal. In fact, the current situation in which fences do not cover the

Viktor Orban started to build in 2016 walls between Hungary and Serbia. More recently, Poland built a 180-km fence in early 2022 in less than 180 days when faced with the arrival of migrants at its border

„Fortifying Europe's Borders: the Solution to the EU's Migration Crisis“

whole of the European borders has a "detour effect". In other words, "these walls divert migration flows to other parts of the border

with Belarus. The EU has such disparate and unequal asylum policies that it is unable to establish a common system of migration control. Persistent disagreements

Beyond Walls: The Urgent Need for Effective Climate and Migration Policies in the EU

Between 2014 and 2022, the length of fences at the European Union's external borders increased sixfold. However, for many, that is still not enough. In this context, aggressive voices demanding the "fortress-ification" of the EU's external borders have become increasingly louder. While the longing to keep "the unknown out" has been around for centuries, the sudden resurgence of discriminatory ideologies demanding the funding of enhanced border control poses a severe threat to the future of the EU.

In reality, the idea behind this recently announced demand, namely reducing migration flow by strengthening border control, is based on the wrong premise that building higher walls keeps immigrants out. Only a brief look into the world suffices to see that this has never been true. Instead, the idea of "abolishing" migration is just another way of refusing to acknowledge the EU's responsibility in

higher death rates. Instead of entirely shutting immigration out, alternative ways of crossing the border will unarguably be found. Considering the predominant ethnic backgrounds, maritime routes, which inevitably involve smugglers, have proven to be the favored ones in the past.

The implosion of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent feeling of liberation and peace initiated the idea of a united and peaceful Europe. Consequently, with the coming into force of the Schengen Agreement in 1985, the definite abolition of systematic internal border control was laid down. Thirty years later, the traumatic memory of a once-divided Europe has considerably faded. The once so proudly announced shared values of freedom of movement and solidarity appear to have fallen into oblivion. Alternatively, self-ascribed moral superiority and irrational fear of ethnic degradation have replaced the once proudly announced creation of "a community of shared values". In this context, one may rightfully ask

decade-long ignored responsibility to address the root cause of migration. Whereas research has shown that the leading cause of mass movement has been the direct and indirect consequences of environmental degradation, the effort to attack the problem at its roots has been considerably low - to say the least. Yet, ironically, when it comes to fighting the symptoms of the problem, voices tend to get more demanding.

The growing demand for increased border control in the EU is nothing else than the consequence of the failed harmonization of migration policies in the EU. More precisely, agreeing on implementing the Common European Asylum system has by far not had the wished effects of implementing standardized criteria for granting asylum. In practice, limited cooperation and a lack of solidarity between the member states have severely restrained the aim of creating a fair and efficient asylum system in the EU. Additionally, instead of tackling the obvious causes of

the international community, finally might be the root cause of this phenomenon. In that sense, the declaration of Joseph Borrell, High Representative of the EU Foreign Affairs, "walls

how the increasing fortress-ification of the EU could be reconcilable with the enshrined protection of human rights. As mentioned earlier, the debate about the construction of

the issue, ineffective provisions are not far from being put into practice. Ultimately, the demand for increased border

will never be high enough to keep people out", rightfully summarizes the actual misconception at stake: Constructing walls will have the sole effect of causing even

walls can legitimately be narrowed down to the attempt to conceal the real problem the EU is currently facing: the de-

control is nothing but an overdue alarm to finally agree on harmonized and effective climate and migration policies.

★

LEBANON, CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE

by Leen Mahayni

Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, was once dubbed the „Paris of the Middle East“ and „Middle Eastern Switzerland“. From a financial standpoint, Lebanon was flourishing in the 1950s and 1960s, since the capital Beirut drew so much tourism that flattering nicknames were established. However, Lebanon has been suffering from a financial crash. The crash is considered one of the most severe since the 1800s, leading over half of the population to live in poverty, and the prices of food, fuel, and medication to soar. The question arises, how does a country that was once on a wealth streak, spiral down over the past decades? Let's look at Lebanon's history.

After the civil war in Lebanon ultimately came to an end in 1990, the Lebanese government looked for means to regain the lost capital. The government thus utilized tourism and received sizable donations from Western and Arab gulf states to rebuild the nation. Additionally, remittances from the many millions of Lebanese living abroad were another significant source of revenue. However, over the last decade, political unrest in the MENA has substantially lowered tourism and Arab nation loans to Lebanon. Furthermore, the money that did reach the country was

mismanaged and/or stolen by the ruling elite. Consequently, the country's finances were driven further and further into debt. Sunni and Shia represent different sects in Islam, that are both religiously and politically opposed, slightly comparable to Catholics and Protestants in Christianity. Consequently, as Iran's influence over Lebanon through the Lebanese Shia Islamist political party „Hezbollah“, continued to grow in the 2000s, the Sunni gulf states simultaneously began to reduce their funding.

In 2019, large-scale protests broke out throughout the country, driven by a generation of young adults who were fed up with the political establishment that had repeatedly disappointed them. As if this weren't enough, during the pandemic, the tragic 2020 explosion at the Beirut port occurred, which was the icing on the cake for a nation already headed for financial ruin. It is also noteworthy that the complex tax system in Lebanon was not covering the consistent hemorrhaging of public money caused by the fight over power and wealth among the political parties in the country.

The World Bank has rated Lebanon's economic collapse as one of the worst to occur globally since the 1800s and devalued its economy to lower-

valued its economy to lower-middle income. This pessimistic perspective is justified, as the monetary value of the Lebanese Lira has decreased by more than 90% since 2019. But what does this imply for Lebanese citizens? Even though the minimum wage in Lebanon has remained unchanged, food prices have risen by 400% due to hyperinflation caused by the collapse of the Lebanese pound, ranking 3rd globally after Venezuela and Sudan. To put it simply, the class gap grew bigger in Lebanese society and the population is split into two categories; the ones who have access to the US dollar and the ones who don't. Whoever has access to the US dollar - whether through a job in a „fresh-dollar“ salary-paying foreign company based in Lebanon, or through relatives living abroad transferring money to their family - has easier access to utilities, groceries, medicine etc. simply because they can afford them. On the other hand, whoever does not have access to the US dollar, has to struggle through the worst living standards.

One of the biggest challenges and dangers in Lebanon is the severe brain drain across all fields; especially in the medical and educational sectors. According to Vohra „first anger, then hopelessness, now escape“, is the train of thought that has resulted from the severe economic crisis and captures the mass brain drain. This phenomenon can be observed when looking at small and medium enterprises run by independent business owners who decided to close their business, simply because it was unus-

tainable in the current financial climate; illustrating how severely the middle class has been impacted by the circumstances.

The effect of the economic and financial crisis in Lebanon isn't limited to Lebanese citizens. With over 1 million Syrian refugees and more than 270 000 Palestinian refugees, Lebanon has the highest proportion of refugees per resident on the entire globe. It's ironic to think that a country, whose incentives are leading in refugee aid, has become subject to an economic and financial crisis of such catastrophic magnitude. Nevertheless, many countries have expressed their interest in aiding Lebanon. Two crucial actors play a major role in this crisis.

The United States has reacted to the economic and financial crisis in Lebanon by both providing financial aid and imposing sanctions, to steer the Lebanese government into, what the US considers as, the right directions. In addition to the 560 million dollars in humanitarian aid that the US gave Lebanon over 2019 and 2020, US President Joe Biden made a promise of 100 million dollars in aid for Lebanon in 2021, as stated by the US Congress Report. However, as with all foreign aid, this donation came with a warning for Lebanon's political elite. Biden claimed that „no amount of outside assistance will ever be enough if Lebanon's own leaders do not commit to do the hard but necessary work of reforming the economy and combating corruption“. Biden thus made political reform and decrease in

corruption, the condition for Lebanon to receive financial aid from the US.

To further support their ideal of a political reform, the United States has imposed economic sanctions on certain individuals and entities in Lebanon, including Hezbollah. The Lebanese Shia Islamist political party has been charged with participating in illegal activities such as drug trafficking and money laundering. The generated profits are then used to fund its operations, which include supporting the Syrian Regime, and allegedly fighting for the Palestinian's cause.

Consequently, the US government classified Hezbollah as a terrorist organization and both the organization and its supporters are subject to sanctions. These sanctions represent the critical and adverse stance the US takes towards the Lebanese government and its beliefs, in hopes that its pressure will incentivize the Lebanese government to implement political reforms, free from the tolerance of illegal activities and the high degree of corruption.

After WW2, the US established its position as the world's hegemon; in such a position, the US took advantage of its position to implement policies that maintain its dominance in multiple regions, such as the Middle East. But of course, the US is not the only entity fighting for regional power. As an economic and political rival to the US, Iran is also pushing for its interests in the region to counter the West's presence - with Lebanon caught in the

Due to Iran's substantial financial and military support to Hezbollah over the past decades, the party has been able to establish its own infrastructure and social services in Lebanon. This, in turn, means that Iran's influence is mainly characterized by its secondary political influence through the support for Hezbollah. Whether Iran has a positive or negative impact on the Lebanese economy is heavily debated, yet from a western perspective, the US considers Iran to be primarily liable for Lebanon's economic crisis by its support for Hezbollah - hence, the sanctions. In general Iran and the United States' role in the Lebanese economic crisis is complex and multifaceted. As a result, politicians who want to break free from both influences are having difficulties implementing economic changes that do not support Iran's goals to "go East" or the West's goals to "go West."

In conclusion, in the fight over global and regional power, Lebanon is merely a pawn that each entity pushes and pulls as it pleases to support its interests in the region. This is a demonstration of the inherent discrepancy in values and beliefs that clash when there is a mutual field of interest. With the political polarization within the Lebanese government, it may seem like Lebanon has reached an impasse. Will the Lebanese government ever have autonomy and independence from international interference? Will it safely overcome this dreadful crisis? We only hope it will. ★

★ EUROPEAN INTEGRATION ★

THROUGH

ECONOMIC EXPANSION

by Marta
De Grandi
and Chloé
Leplatre

By the end of the Second World War (1939-1945), Europe was left in a state of unprecedented destruction. The continent was a divided and fractured region, with high civilian losses and entire cities completely destroyed. Peace had once again been broken and the war had left an imprint on the future relations of the continent. It was clear that something had to be done to recover the political and economic stability of Europe. New relations, especially between France and Germany, had to be rebuilt from the ashes.

It was against the backdrop of the post-Second World War international order that the European Coal and Steel Community was established in 1952. This was a ground-breaking institution that paved the way for further European integration by bringing political stability and economic reconstruction. Indeed, it was the first building block that inspired European nations to build closer ties in a way that had not yet ever been experimented. This eventually led to the actual European Union.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, reconciliation between Germany and France

was difficult to establish. Discord remained between the two countries due to the importance of the production of coal and steel, essential materials to the economy of both nations and their ability to wage war. The majority of coal mining and steel production was located in a region in the west of Germany, Ruhr Valley, an area that France wanted to control in order to avoid a possible new German attack. In order to allow an agreement between the two, a plan was proposed by Robert Schuman, French Foreign Prime Minister at the time. Titled the Schuman Plan, it was presented for the first time on 9 May 1950. This plan promoted that coal and steel production should be placed in the hands of a supranational High Authority.

Thus, the ECSC was established in 1952, bringing together the coal and mining resources of six different European countries; France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

The ECSC is considered to have been an economic success. Between 1952 and 1960, the treaty helped steel and coal production to increase by about 75% in the member nations

of the community. This greatly enhanced the economic competitiveness of the European mining industry. Indeed, the ECSC has been instrumental in developing the import and export of its resources, thus providing a substantial financial return. The European coal sector evolved and progressed significantly through the development of new mining techniques. The multiplication of production plants reduced the rate of unemployment while guaranteeing the best possible working conditions. The ECSC Treaty allowed a better allocation of coal and steel resources among the member countries of the community, leading to increased efficiency gains. Thus, the creation of the ECSC can be seen as the first step in the construction of the current Economic and Monetary Union (EMU).

Not only aiming to be an economic project, the ECSC also impacted the social and political sectors. The ECSC economic policies had the effect of spilling over to more areas than it was initially intended to. Importantly, the social measures implemented by the Treaty of Paris introduced measures to improve the working and living

conditions of the coal and steel miners. This involved increasing control over the setting of labour's wages, offering financial aid for workers' housing and training, and establishing immigration rules for workers to move from one member country to another. Ultimately, a common welfare policy was established. The social policies of the ECSC have been largely successful. For example, the housing scheme proved to be the most beneficial, ensuring that workers could have access to safe and high-quality housing options. Between 1952 and 1979, one hundred fifty thousand houses were built thanks to the ECSC initiatives.

Politically, the ECSC fostered a culture of cooperation in Europe following a six-year-long period of conflict. Unlike the past, when European nations had interacted through wars, opposing alliances and destruction, nations finally chose the path for peace. Indeed, the ECSC ensured that the signatory countries would be tightly linked in such a way that war would be unthinkable and, to an extent, impossible. This was most significantly perceived in the newfound Franco-German relationship. The two enemies were without a doubt unlikely candidates for a long-term peace-building alliance. Nevertheless, France did turn to Germany, rather than its closer ally Britain, as its future partner and their integration ensured stronger political stability than what might have been thought possible post-Second World War. Additionally, an era of new intergovernmental interaction in Europe was opened up with the ECSC. This was a period

characterized by intensive collaboration, deepening and widening integration. The ECSC was the first modern supranational organization in Europe; with the six founding members willing to cede part of their ultimate nation-state authority: their national sovereignty. The established ECSC High Authority was given the power to monitor and administer the coal and steel markets and ultimately presided over the interests of the community. As a supranational organization, the ECSC was contrastingly different from all the previous integration projects of the time. Although others had indeed existed, such as the Council of Europe and Organisation for European Economic Cooperation, these had not been able to encourage states to give up sovereignty.

The ECSC made the community a European-wide enterprise, such that all eligible countries could willingly embark in the integration project. Therefore, the EU membership increased from the initial six signatories to the 27 countries that now make up the Union. The eagerness of other states to join the Community is clear evidence of the benefits to be gained by economic and political integration. The great expansion of EU members has created a diverse community of nations which share common values and goals.

Lastly, the initial cooperation developed by the ECSC created a momentum that would eventually lead European nations to develop further institutions and integrational agreements. Economic expansion remained at the forefront of the agenda, with the European

Economic Community being established in 1958 to create a common market, not solely based on coal and steel sectors but also for the free movement of a variety of goods and services, as well as people and capital. Political integration followed the economic motives to adapt national policies to fit the recent changes. If nations wanted to reap the benefits of economic integration, they also had to be willing to cooperate on a political level and create further structures for this to happen effectively.

Even though the treaty expired in July 2002, due to it being devised to last for only 50 years, the ECSC did not actually disappear; its activities were integrated into the European Communities. After the ratification of the Economic Community of Steel and Coal, the members of the Union adopted a Protocol on the financial consequences of the expiry of the ECSC treaty and on the research fund for coal and steel, which aims to transfer all the assets and liabilities of the ECSC to the European Community. 2 billion in assets in 2002. The purpose of this transfer was to ensure the completion of the operations started by the ECSC before 2002, which were largely research financing operations in the coal and steel sectors.

Ultimately, although expired, the mark that the ECSC has left on the European Union is undeniably strong. The peaceful alliance, economic and social integration of 27 European countries can be traced back to this unique institution and its legacy of peaceful cooperation has continued to inspire the European of today. ★

The Digital Euro: Why Europe is Embracing a Cashless Future

by Pauline Keller

It's Wednesday afternoon, you've spent the whole day in the library, and the only thing you want is to go home. But wait, you have nothing in your fridge despite an almost empty bottle of oat milk. So there is no way around it, you have to get groceries. So, you drag yourself to the closest supermarket, get everything you need, and speed run to the only open self-checkout station. This notion has become so unconscious in most students' minds. It's just too simple, scan your items as fast as you can and hold your card against the dataphone, and you're done. I would even go so far as to claim that most students in Maastricht don't even carry enough cash in their wallets to be able to pay for their groceries. Then, if no one uses it, is there even a need for cash anymore? According to the Bank for International Settlements, 9 out of 10 existing central banks have reported that they have launched studies inspecting the objectives and design of their own digital currency. One of these institutions in question is the European Central Bank (hereinafter ECB), which is currently investigating whether introducing a 'digital euro' would benefit society in the euro region. Currently, more than 346 mil-

lion
18

Europeans pay in euros with banknotes, and coins but also digitally. What most people aren't aware of in their daily life, is that the 50 euro banknote you use to pay in a bookstore is not the same as the 50 euros you would pay on Amazon. One is central bank money or public money, whereas the other is private money. When you get a new loan from a commercial bank, that would also be private money because the money was created by your bank and not issued by a public institution like the ECB. Every time you withdraw cash from your bank account your private money gets converted into public central bank money. That's where the digital euro would come in place to bridge the gap as public money in electronic form. The ECB intends to offer the digital euro as another means of digital payment that would not replace banknotes, at least not in the beginning, but complement cash. Yet, paying by card or via an app is no news, so what is the difference between the euro we can use digitally now and the actual digital euro? Currently, the central bank gives cash to banks for consumers and the

private sector (e.g., PayPal or Klarna) provides their customers with payment solutions tied to commercial money. The biggest private companies, whose headquarters are mostly outside Europe, currently provide those solutions. Thereby, these companies have a great influence on our local payments market. As a result, public money could lose its monetary anchor in Europe. If the European payment market becomes dominated by large non-European tech companies, the risk of market-abusive behavior, unregulated payment solutions, and cybercrime would drastically increase.

In such a potential hybrid system, where both currency kinds would coexist, multiple benefits would arise. Firstly, digital payments aligned with ECB money would increase the integrity of the eurozone's financial system. Thereby, the reliability and stability of the euro would increase and through the digital euro, the international use of the currency could rise. Moreover, the digital euro could provide a secure payment opportunity for unbanked or underbanked citizens. Accor-

ding to the World Bank around 12% of adults in Greece do not have access to traditional banking services, 7.5% in Italy, and 5.6% in Portugal. The percentage of underbanked individuals is believed to be even higher. The ECB intends to create the digital euro in such a way that the currency would also be accessible to individuals that do not have a bank account. They would still be able to receive payments, pay bills and access their money via a smartphone app. Without the need to convert public money to private money, users wouldn't need to rely on their banking partner to process a payment. Digital euro payments could reduce the risk of delayed payments and thereby increase the efficiency of cross-border payments. Moreover, fees charged by banks and other intermediaries between transnational payments reduce the cost of trading partners. Overall, the main goals of the digital euro range from increased convenience and security of consumer payments, to the creation of an easily accessible currency for everyone. But obviously, such a system has not been automatically loved by all. As well as questions about the possible needs and benefits of such a technology, discussions about the digital euro have also sparked critiques and concerns about such an endeavor.

Firstly, the design of the digital euro will most likely give users direct access and the euro system would work without the need for a middleman, thereby making

the services of public banks mostly redundant. The central bank would provide basic services related to payment transactions for free and privately owned banks would no longer be able to compete. Aware of such possible repercussions/flaws, the ECB addresses this issue by disabling the ability to make programmed regular payments via their platform. Banks would still be needed for payments like rent and other conditional advanced payments. The resulting need to use multiple payment platforms makes room for confusion, which is feared to increase the risk of money laundering and tax evasion due to monitoring issues. However, those issues would need to be resolved by changes in the EU legislative framework. People fear that the monitoring framework needed to provide secure transactions and reduce illicit activities would violate users' privacy rights. The digital euro will need to be traceable to enable monitoring by the ECB, so unlike cash, transactions would not be anonymous. As cyber-attacks and cybercrime have increased in Europe in the past couple of years, a digital euro could be at risk of cyber-attacks, such as hacking, malware, and phishing. Especially in the early stages of implementation, such new technology is vulnerable to being raided. Lastly, the wide acceptance of digital currency might render the production of physical banknotes obsolete. In case of technological failure and disruption, society would be too

dependent on digi-

tal infrastructures and the financial system could collapse.

Despite its concerns, the global financial market is headed toward digital currencies. The first country to launch a digital currency was the Bahamas, which launched the Sand Dollar in 2020, China followed suit and launched a pilot program for a digital Yuan in 2020 and India expects to launch a digital Rupee this year. The ECB is working hard on designing the currency to limit the adverse effects that could follow the implementation. Looking at the timeline of the digital euro, the ECB plans on preparing an actual decision-making document about the currency design and implementation and potentially launching the realization phase of the project in the autumn of this year. After all, consumer satisfaction comes down to the tradeoff between potential benefits and adversities. Only time will tell if the digital euro will be a valuable or even favorable addition to our everyday lives. Returning to the supermarket counter, the digital euro would not change that much about the experience of paying for your groceries. You could use your phone to pay for your groceries if you wanted to but could also use your usual payment method, and within a couple of minutes, you would be at home preparing yourself a well-deserved dinner! ★





Qigiqtag

A tale of the former Arctic

by Mercure Libbrecht Gourdet

The year is 2045. Osuitok, now an old man, steps out of his truck, puts on his jacket and backpack, and sets off. His destination is the Shifmaref Inlet, a bay on the peak of the western edge of Alaska. To make the long hike less lonely, his trusty companion, an ashen husky aptly called Taktuq (mist in Inuktuk), is following him by the heel.

Greenish almost grey bushes cover the plains in front of him, with leaves folding beneath his step. He still remembers how the earth beneath him was hard under the steps of him and his friends as they used to play catch in those plains. It was such a happy time to be running in the fields, with the only worry being whether you'd get home on time for dinner. Now, the fields of the tundra were muddy and desolate, with life scarce and the ground soft.

Taktuq gets distracted by a mouse burrowing out of the ground and starts running after it. After some back and forth across tiny hills, the pursuit is quickly over. Alas, the rodent quickly finds another refuge in the holy ground and gets out of reach of the dog. If it were

thirty years earlier, the mouse would have had much more difficulty actually burrowing into the ground. Now, with the permafrost almost completely thawed, it is a soft and spongy material, which causes landslides and a full reversal in vegetation. The ground is also much hotter, enabling a fast and easy deterioration of animal corpses. This of course brought in a litany of new insects and other scavengers that would have never survived in the cold before.

Approaching the coast, Osuitok gets lost in his thoughts, remembering his youth in the village. While it wasn't the calm, picket-fenced suburban life some of his colleagues from university would have preferred, he still absolutely loved growing up on the westernmost point of Alaska, well into the arctic circle. When he was younger, he used to play on the coast and the plains, observing the reindeers from afar and seeing seals swim by. Sometimes, even whales would come up close enough to the edge so that he and his friends could just about see a dark mass in the water, coming up for a bre-

ath then disappearing in the icy waters again. Once he became older, he did all he could to learn more about these animals, and others living in this ocean. Naturally, as his passion for the ocean grew he spent hours on his father's fishing boat or in a kayak, just getting lost in the waves. This was heaven for him: just floating in this endless expanse, being rocked by the waves. Following his father's footsteps, he could stay in Shifmaref, correct name: Qigiqtag in the Inupiaq language, and be on the water all day.

Unfortunately, as idyllic as this sounds, his ideal life was robbed from him once he reached the ripe age of 18. Qigiqtag, a charming, crescent shaped island just off the coast was a small patch of rock and frozen earth, with houses sprinkled atop like snowflakes in a dog's fur. Lamentably, the ground especially on the edges was becoming less and less stable, with the foundation of the little houses becoming unstable. With the sea level rising, the ground melting and the icebergs that would normally protect them from large sea storms dwindling away, the vil-

lage decided to relocate to the mainland. Osuitok was pulled from his daydream, as he started to approach the coast. His visions from his childhood of the dark blue sea with the massive ice boulders were replaced by what he saw before him: the sea, still as dark and menacing as before, had a little sense of fatigue within it. Osuitok felt that the sea was much more lacklustre and the usually ominous dark blue felt dull and pale. Besides the colour of the ocean, another crucial missing part were the icebergs: during his childhood, floating off the coast, glistening in the sun. Now though, nothing was left: the sea was completely vast and flat.

The most striking difference though, was that the little piece of land where he grew up was almost completely gone, taken by the waves. Seeing the remains of the red little houses on this desolate rock filled Osuitok's eyes with tears. His heart seemed to break in his chest and his knees gave out. Sensing his despair, Taktuq came to his rescue and snuggled up to him. His owner had adopted him when he moved to the big city: indeed after having to leave his hometown, Osuitok decided to go to the big city and study ecological sciences. Seeing what would be happening to his home inspired him to learn more about global warming and he vowed to do everything in his power to find a solution and raise awareness. And even if all science was against it, Osuitok had a sliver of hope that he would at some point be able to come back to live in his hometown. But seeing this before him, all that was remaining of his life there completely

gone and taken by nature made him feel truly helpless. Helpless and angry.

As to demonstrate a point, a shadow appeared on the horizon. A big, dark vessel started creeping past Osuitok in the distance. In white letters on the black and red hull speckled with rust spots he could see the name Vinjerac, indicating that it was a Russian oil tanker. Indeed, since the ice in the arctic started to melt, more and more exploitation projects had opened, with several different states and powers opening the oil reserves to the highest bidder. And not only is it extremely harmful to nature to pump out all the natural oil, but the tankers carrying their load of heavy oil are one of the most polluting vehicles available. It all seemed so excessive to Osuitok and he just couldn't understand how so many people chose to simply disregard the damage, even though it was clear to everyone and irrefutable signs had been seen all over the world for decades now.

Osuitok decided to stay and sit for some time, reflecting and trying to get his thoughts in order. With his dog now asleep on his legs, he looked around him, his heart aching. Ending this moment of serenity, the sun was slowly setting and giving the sky a beautiful orange tint. Breaking this pleasing almost scenic view a fleet of metal hulls broke the light coming from the south: a fleet of Russian military boats, probably going to the numerous military installations that had been installed in islands all over the arctic circle. The tactical advantage was obvious, it started a

gold rush to control the important choke points of the arctic. With Russia, Canada, Norway, and the USA a lot of new military stations were created for strategy and to protect all those commercial vessels exploiting the oil present there.

The sun now turned the sky red, his eyes filled with tears again. Osuitok looked out one last time at this seemingly endless and vast water. Suddenly, there was movement beneath the waves. He convinced himself that it was actually a whale and took it as a sign that nature was persevering. He smiled as the sun was setting and he turned away to walk back, leaving it all behind him with a broken heart. ★



A NEW FRONT FOR NATO?

by Laura Osterrieth

The Implications of a Chinese Invasion of Taiwan

I get brutally awakened by my mom banging on my bedroom door. The sound of muffled bombing resonates through the city of Taipei. The time had come, the time we all dreaded. I hoped I would wake up soon. Sadly, there was no time to waste, as our darkest nightmare had just become reality. I thought to myself: “Have we been too naïve believing this day would never come? Is this really happening? Have they really crossed the line?”

Navigating the Indo-Pacific under the NATO mandate

The rise of the Chinese threat, and recent military and economic assertiveness towards Taiwan has not gone unnoticed. The intensification of tensions between both entities has heightened concern about the possibility of a military conflict. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) has formally voiced its concern towards China as a strategic antagonist, claiming that Beijing challenges the alliance’s interest, security, and values. A war of this nature may significantly affect both the regional and global security.

NATO’s mandate is centred on the idea that collective defence for its members must be safe-

guarded at all times. The military partnership between North American and European states is translated by NATO’s Article 5: „an armed assault on one or more of them [...] shall be regarded as an attack against them all.” Although Taiwan is not a member of NATO, it seems that the organisation is not bound to, nor should, actively engage in the conflict. NATO has led foreign operations in the past, and its legitimacy stems from the formal diplomatic ties NATO member states have established with Taiwan, voicing support for its democratic system and territorial integrity. Yet, the peaceful settlement of disputes through dialogue and diplomacy prevails, as upholding a stable and secure Asia-Pacific region remains prioritised.

Although China has not openly challenged any NATO member state, the intensification of tensions raises the question of whether NATO should be better equipped to counteract China as a competitor. The United States (U.S.), being a member of NATO, fears China will invade Taiwan, thereby losing its economic perks, and advanced technologies. Economic globalisation is scaling up the extent

to which the losses of a Chinese invasion will be endured, beyond regional interactions. The lack of interest from European NATO members frustrated the U.S., who tried to emphasise the threat China constitutes to Taiwan and the rest of the world at large. The U.S. was devoted to scaling this issue to the top of NATO’s agenda.

A narrative change can be traced back to the release of the NATO 2030 Report, which expressed NATO’s commitment to improving effort, political resources, and activity towards Chinese security issues. Recent events have lent credibility to the report’s claim that the post-Cold War peace system in the North-Atlantic region is in jeopardy. The Taiwan Strait is becoming more worrisome to the international arena, and concerns about China’s assertive behaviour and coercive policies have been haunting NATO since the Madrid Summit in July 2022.

The Biden administration pledged to preserve Taiwan’s sovereignty in case of a Chinese invasion, which increases the stakes for all the Allies, as conflict between the U.S. and China would grow in probability.

To make matters worse, concerns have amplified ever since China's cooperative efforts with Russia have persisted post-invasion of Ukraine. Ever since the Russian invasion, many observers have compared the war to a possible Taiwan Strait emergency. While there are numerous differences between the

two situations, there are indisputable similarities as well. Eyebrows have raised within NATO as a military confrontation becomes more likely. Consensus has not yet been established among NATO members regarding the Chinese threat to Taiwan, as countries such as the U.S. and Canada have adopted a more combative stance while those in Europe have attempted to compromise their economic connections with China and their security concerns. A few distinct factors have heightened the suspicion that China is organising a supposedly "peaceful" reunification with self-governing Taiwan. Albeit there is no confirmation of these rumours, U.S. military commanders have claimed that the Chinese President ordered the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to be ready to attack the island by 2027.

Sooner rather than later increased military activity, armoured vehicles patrolling roadways, preparation of military personnel, aggressive rhetoric: war drums are being played. Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan last August left a sour taste in Xi Jinping's mouth, and provoked vehement condemnation from Beijing. This at-first-glance act of kindness was met with a great military upheaval. Following perceived American provoca-

tions and violations of Chinese sovereignty and territorial integrity, Beijing launched large-scale military exercises around the island. The U.S. believes this response was disproportionate and claimed that Pelosi's visit did not influence their policy towards Taiwan. The recent drills performed by the PLA

have furthered a vigilant global posture towards China and its supposedly peaceful intentions. One may also wonder how exactly Xi Jinping is organising a non-violent reunification with Taiwan whilst their military budget has increased by roughly 7.2% this year. China's leader spoke at the Communist Party Congress, echoing Beijing's pledge towards reunification, and opposing the independence of the island. Above all, he proclaimed that the use of force will be considered if it may induce the intended outcome of consolidation, a statement that was greeted with loud acclamation. Xi Jinping's exact war strategy remains a mystery, as the use of military force may be blatantly detrimental to China's global and regional position. Henceforth, NATO members must comprehend that there are vast disparities between Western attitudes towards the conflict, and Taiwan's threat perception. China's recurrent military threat has led Taiwan to cultivate a sense of normalcy in response, rather than fear. Depending on how the conflict unfolds, it could have varying effects on both the Asia-Pacific region and the global economy. There are three possible scenarios for a Chinese invasion of Taiwan: a blockade strategy involving economic coercion,

an island occupation strategy focused on symbolic victory, and an air and sea incursion strategy aimed at disabling critical national infrastructure. Of these, the military incursion scenario is of greatest concern to NATO due to its potential to draw in the United States and thereby implicate the alliance. Careful consideration of each

scenario and its impact on the Asia-Pacific region and global security is warranted. We all have a stake in this conflict, not just Taiwan and the U.S. While many believe that the chances of an immediate Chinese attack are low, it cannot be ruled out. Increasingly, other countries and international organisations are recognising the treacherous situation that Taiwan finds itself in. A Chinese invasion of Taiwan could give rise to a wave of panic, affecting countries all around the globe. The ultimate outcome is uncertain, and it remains to be seen whether Taiwan, perhaps along with its diplomatic partners, will be able to avoid its worst nightmare becoming reality.

My mother's hand gently strokes my back as I perspire under my bed sheets. As I jolt awake from a vivid nightmare, it takes me a moment to realise that it wasn't real. My mother's comforting touch brings me back to the present, where I am once again confronted by the uncertain future of China-Taiwan relations. Whether China will actually risk invading Taiwan remains a mystery, but what I do know is that as long as diplomatic efforts remain ineffective, the constant threat of military confrontation will persist, casting a shadow over our daily life. ★

Putting a Stop to Ethnic Cleansing in a Growingly Realist World: The Rohingya and the ICC



by Emre Ensar Küpcük

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has been examining the ongoing situation concerning the livelihoods of Rohingya people in Burma, currently known as Myanmar, since 2018. However, given that almost 6 years later the sanctions have had little to no effect in changing course of the genocide, it is clear that different tools need to be used to achieve efficiency in stopping the genocide and discrimination of the Rohingya people. Making matters worse, the home minister of Myanmar has stated in a press release on September 19, 2022 that Bangladesh is a peaceful country that does not want its peace to be disrupted thus it will not allow any more Rohingya people from Myanmar to enter its territory.

Who are the Rohingya?

The Rohingya are one of the largest ethnic minorities in Myanmar. They are also one of the most discriminated groups of people in the world. Myanmar has a track record of excluding the Rohingya people going as far as refusing to recognise them as people of the country. This is despite their generations long existence

in the region. Instead, Myanmar sees the Rohingya as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.

What is the International Criminal Court doing so far?

In September 2018, the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber I determined that the Court may exercise jurisdiction over the alleged deportation of the Rohingya people from Myanmar to Bangladesh as a crime against humanity. This is possible because Bangladesh, where the Rohingya have sought refuge, is a State Party to the Rome Statute and the deportation may have been part of a broader attack against the Rohingya population.

In November 2019, the ICC was authorized to proceed with an investigation into alleged crimes against humanity committed against the Rohingya people. The investigation covers a range of alleged crimes, including deportation, persecution, and other inhumane acts. Since, the ICC has been conducting its investigation under these scopes into the crimes committed against the Rohingya people. In June 2020, the ICC received a detailed report from a fact-finding mission established by

the United Nations Human Rights Council, which documented the crimes against the Rohingya people in Myanmar. However, despite the crimes against the Rohingya now being recognized as a fact, the ethnic cleansing of these people in Myanmar is still ongoing and has not slowed down.

It is true that The International Criminal Court's investigation and involvement in this situation of the Rohingya people is a significant step. However, it is also clear that the current liberal international system tools lack competence and executive power to achieve progress that is not only on paper. The Rohingya people have faced decades of discrimination before the current situation. Both the ICC and the UN however, only became involved after the genocide began. The current situation as of 2021

Nowadays, Myanmar is controlled by a military coup and groups such as the Human Rights Watch have widely documented the increase of crimes against humanity and war crimes since the coup began.

Based on the current reports, the government is currently

ran in a militia style with little to no democratic value and it is causing the civil pro-democracy actors to essentially wage war on their own government.

The European Union (EU) has been vocal in condemning Myanmar since early 2020s. This condemnation has only gotten more intense since the installation of military rule in the country. Some member states, like France, even set an example by backing EU economic sanctions and travel bans on senior leaders and conglomerates that fund the current Myanmar government and its activities. Some other EU member states have also been very vocal and tried taking action in their own capacities. Germany has provided substantial humanitarian aid to the Rohingya people, both in Myanmar and in refugee camps in Bangladesh. In 2019, Germany also imposed sanctions on several Myanmar officials for human rights abuses. The Netherlands initiated legal proceedings against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), accusing the country of violating the Genocide Convention with its treatment of the Rohingya. Important to disclose that Sweden has provided significant humanitarian aid to the Rohingya people, and in 2018, the country's foreign minister called for the Security Council to refer the situation in Myanmar to the ICC. Yet, as mentioned previously, no progress has been made, and moreover, the current military government of Myanmar made it almost impossible for the Rohingya to receive any of the help being sent.

That said, it seems that to give the Rohingya their home back

would require Bangladesh to have significant leverage over Myanmar and this is unlikely to happen anytime soon. Bangladesh does not recognize the Rohingya as refugees. Instead, Bangladesh sees the Rohingya as displaced Myanmar people. Having said that, an international effort with Bangladesh could be successful. However, regional powers such as China, Japan, and India prioritize their own geo-economic and geostrategic interests over supporting the Rohingya and that already cuts off a lifeline for the Rohingya as China, Japan, and India's geoeconomics interests support indirectly provide financial backing to Myanmar to continue its various crimes. The only other actor left for a more impactful action against Myanmar is the United States of America. However, the Biden administration and the EU are both preoccupied with other geopolitical crises such as the war in Ukraine.

So far, it is clear that diplomatic instruments only fail in this situation. Further, the current government of Myanmar continues the tradition of blocking humanitarian aid to the Rohingya people. Given the lack of enforceable international instruments at hand, it is visible that the situation will continue to worsen. The current bureaucracy and liberal values of the international system thus raise questions about the necessity for a full scale change. The International Criminal Court cannot punish any entities, government or individuals in a scalable and actionable manner, and the UN resolutions and the judgments of the International Criminal

Court have continuously failed throughout history, with geopolitical actors continuously leading driving change. What can be done?

In theory, some components of the international system could provide real solutions to the problem. The only evident way to reverse ethnic cleansing so far has been the use of military force. NATO for example, has successfully reversed ethnic cleansing in 1999 when it launched a unilateral air campaign against Serbia in Kosovo. After three months, Serbia agreed to allow 1.5 million Albanians back to their homes. To this day, NATO troops are still in Kosovo, protecting residents and culture on each side of the dispute. This is something the multilateral instruments of the UN have thus far failed at in Rwanda, Cyprus and most recently the Rohingya. However, it is unrealistic for NATO to intervene in this situation given the lack of geopolitical connection to the area.

Conclusion

Insofar, it is important for the Rohingya and all other displaced persons in the world, that the international system begins to adapt to a more realistic mindset and finally acknowledges that the survival of the current international system depends on its adaptability to the growingly realistic culture we are currently faced with. If this cannot happen, then it is unfortunate but safe to assume that the Rohingya genocide and displacement may not be the first of its kind, but will not at all be the last. ★

LET'S TALK!

FGM and Reproductive Health Rights

by Lisa Feldstein and Federica Broggi



Ever heard of FGM? Whether you have or not, it could be useful to know that this acronym stands for Female Genital Mutilation.

In fact, FGM is the non-medical practice of partially or totally removing the external female genitalia. Besides being painful and medically unjustified, this procedure does not benefit the health of those women and girls who undergo FGM, but instead causes severe issues such as infections, hemorrhages, or even lead to death. Sometimes, it may represent an obstacle during childbirth by increasing the risk of newborn deaths. Reason to bring this issue to light is not only to advocate against this dehumanizing practice, but also to promote the cultural, psychological, health and migration implications it has in our society.

To begin with, in FGM-practising countries like Eritrea, Nigeria, Somalia, Guinea and Ethiopia, it is a commonly-accepted social norm. Aiming to control women's sexuality by

ensuring virginity before marriage and fidelity during, it has the purpose of increasing male sexual pleasure and women's acceptance into society. Yet, the international community calls it a human rights violation. One m for considering FGM a serious human rights violation is its impact on Reproductive Health Rights. Namely, children undergoing FGM are prone to become infertile due to infections. Later on, many victims of FGM may experience a difficult pregnancy due to damaged tissues of the genital organs. Additionally, giving birth after having undergone FGM can cause vaginal tears and severe bleeding .

Besides causing physical issues, FGM can also have serious psychological implications. Anxiety, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and depression are common consequences. Such trauma stems from the event itself, from recalling the episode, or from people's reactions when discovering about it. It emanates from the broken trust and feelings of betrayal towards family members who may have organized or participated in the practice, such as the mothers or other relatives. The girls often do not know what happens to them beforehand, especially because it is practiced on children from 0 to 15 years

old. Most women tend to isolate themselves, avoid relationships or doctor appointments purposefully to not talk about their FGM experience. Many others feel like they are missing out on important sexual experiences because of the stigma surrounding the practice. With this in mind, one might ask why practicing communities do not put an end to FGM. Well, the pressure on families to be accepted by the community and to believe that FGM is a necessary step before adulthood and marriage perpetuates its practice.

Nevertheless, FGM is still an issue many of us consider to be distant from our reality, as it is commonly known for being practiced in non-Western countries. However, FGM is increasingly becoming a reality for many women in Europe.

An estimated 600.000 women in Europe are living with the consequences of FGM and almost 190.000 girls and women are at risk of undergoing it in 17 European countries alone. For the past five years at least 20.000 women and girls from FGM-practising countries have been seeking asylum in Europe annually. As many women and young girls flee their countries to avoid FGM, the practice is considered an impactful driver of migration. However, FGM can perpetuate in the new host country, as families who practice FGM may continue following this "norm", or may pressure others in their community to do so as a way of maintaining cultural traditions.

At an institutional level, FGM may impose obstacles to

meeting the protection needs necessary for the concerned individuals. In fact, many workers in the European asylum systems are not familiar with the practice and it is not uncommon to hear that FGM is not a problem for these women because it is “part of their culture”. Such misconceptions belittle the risks these women face. This leads to an underestimation of the level of help and attention they need, including tailored healthcare support and religio-cultural sensitivity.

What needs to be done?

Well, asylum authorities in the European Union should establish more effective procedures to help address the vulnerabilities caused by FGM. In fact, the asylum process examines whether an applicant has a well-founded fear of persecution based on one or more of the grounds stated in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. As FGM constitutes a form of gender-related persecution, it could grant immediate asylum. Nevertheless, FGM is often a taboo subject refugees avoid talking about, which leads asylum authorities to fail to identify FGM migrants as “persecuted” subjects. Furthermore, this very stigma reinforces existing significant gaps between different vulnerable groups in accessing maternal health care in Europe. Marginalized groups include immigrant populations like asylum seekers and refugees (e.g., from FGM-practicing countries), but also low-income classes, and other socially excluded populations. Supposedly, most countries in Europe have established a universal health care system providing

ante- and postnatal care with wide coverage in terms of capacity and services. In reality, the aforementioned groups often have lower access to it. Factors preventing women’s access to maternal care include fear and social stigma: for refugees, it can take on the form of fear of deportation, and for others, it may be the fear of being reported to authorities like the police (e.g., sex workers, victims of abuse). Health professionals often lack experience in working with patients that do not conform to the norm, which can result in disregarding actual problems and needs of women in their care. This may also stem from discrimination against women of different ethnicities, religions, and cultures.

What has been done in Europe so far?

First, awareness-raising campaigns and legal proceedings banning the execution of FGM have proven to be effective in preventing its practice in EU member countries. Nonetheless, there is an ongoing necessity of educating affected communities in Europe about the risks and consequences of FGM to create long-term change. In addition, the UN has launched a global initiative (#MenEndFGM) to eliminate FGM that aims to address men and boys more actively. The goal is to create change by addressing societal gender norms which have, until now, provided the ideal breeding ground for the oppression of women. Other projects aim to establish model protocols for the medical and psychosocial care of FGM survivors.

New solutions are needed for the future of women’s rights.

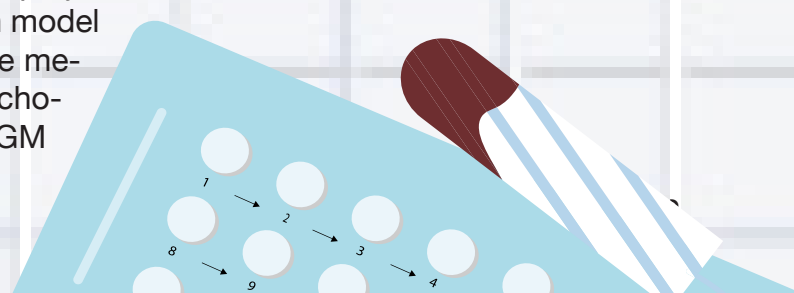
Women have to be actively involved and informed in the decision-making policing their bodies, which holds for women of all kinds of backgrounds. This can concern women who are survivors of trauma that make childbirth especially difficult, as in the case of FGM, but also women from average middle-class communities. Overall, we need systematic policies and a more holistic approach to ensure the goal of fair maternal and reproductive health care.

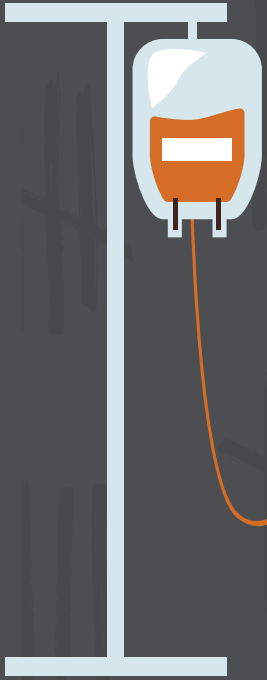
To conclude, besides disregarding the human dignity of the survivors by treating them as less than human, FGM also collides with the right to physical integrity and compromises women’s chances to become biological mothers. Still, FGM should not only be regarded as a women’s issue, but as everyone’s issue. It is a matter of health rights, of oppressive cultural practices which threaten to be passed down through the generations. Your personal bodily autonomy should not be restricted by others, or in the words of a FGM survivor:

“When I was a child I said I don’t want to be a woman. Why?! Because it’s too painful to be a woman!”

„Let us try and change what it means to be a woman.”

Waris Dirie, Desert Flower ★





Is Force-feeding Torture?

by Anthi Likitsakos

When you think of torture, you might think of war criminals, communist states, and violent and gruesome practices. However, some types of torture persist in Democratic countries and may be inflicted on people who have not committed a single crime.

This was the case of Ajay Kumar, an asylum seeker from India who had been detained by the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for more than a year after entering the United States via the California border. After 40 days of a hunger strike, Kumar was tied down and a feeding tube was forced up his nose and into his stomach, making him vomit blood, in a detention facility in El Paso, Texas.

Kumar had fled India because of political persecution. Due to his political activism, Kumar was receiving real threats. During his time spent in ICE detention, where conditions were abysmal and identical to many prisons, Kumar's father was killed back in India.

Kumar began his hunger strike in hopes of being released, and

also to protest the facility's unwillingness to provide him with food that complied with his Hindu beliefs and dietary restrictions.

Force-feeding has been outlawed in international law by the World Medical Association, specifically in the Treaty of Tokyo in 1975. The WMA condemns all force-feeding, stating that it is never justified and that patient autonomy should supersede medical interventions, even in prisons. Other national and international medical organizations also cite this practice as unethical and many human rights organizations go so far as to categorize it as torture.

The right to hunger strikes as a form of protest has been recognized by international organizations such as the Red Cross and the United Nations for decades. Force-feeding, quite violent and intrusive, takes this right of protest and bodily autonomy away from those with few options left in incarceration. Historically, self-starvation is a way for imprisoned people to exercise civil disobedience, such as Gandhi during the battle for Indian independence from Britain or Nelson Mandela protesting the conditions on Robben Island during apartheid. For many behind bars now, hunger strikes are the only way to protest ill care, treatment, solitary confinement, or even imprisonment. However, despite international precedents, the practice of force-feeding has been upheld in

US federal courts. Kumar had not eaten in well over a month when the government sought an order from a judge that allowed them to force-feed him and three other Indian asylum seekers. Global Precision Systems, a security company, was contracted by ICE to perform the force-feedings.

A video taken of the force-feeding of Kumar was released to the Intercept, a news organization after they procured it through the Freedom of Information Act and by filing a lawsuit. The video is almost an hour long and shows guards in riot gear preparing to use "calculated force" on Kumar to force-feed him. ICE blocked out everyone's faces but Kumars. Kumar, weak from his hunger strike, was held down by guards and tied to a chair. The medical staff then explained the process to Kumar, using an online interpreter. They then tried to insert a feeding tube through his nose and into his stomach, succeeding on the second try. Kumar remembers the procedure as painful, that his nose was damaged and bleeding, and that he threw up blood after.

Force feedings have been employed by the US for decades, most notoriously used on prisoners in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Guantanamo Bay is infamous for its housing of Muslim militants and expected terrorists and its alleged violations of human rights and accusations of torture. Many detai-

nees protested their indefinite and arbitrary holdings through hunger strikes, trying to make the public aware of their situations. Guantanamo Bay officials responded by force-feeding, against the recommendations of international rights organizations and medical officials who argued that detainees hunger striking should receive individualized care based on need and not simply be force-fed. In some cases, the C.I.A. would sometimes use rectal feeding and rectal hydration on prisoners, defending the practice as a sound medical procedure. The rectal feeding employed there has been denounced by medical professionals who see it as torture, not founded in science and sexual assault. The force-feedings conducted on Guantanamo were often not up to par with not only ethics but medical standards.

Force-feeding on Guantanamo Bay has resurfaced in the news recently, as a former prisoner has accused current governor Ron Desantis of being present at his force-feedings. Mansoor Adayfi, a citizen of Yemen who was a prisoner at Guantanamo for fourteen years, recognized Desantis, who is a contender in the 2024 presidential election, after seeing him on television. Adayfi remembers that Desantis was present at least one of the times he was force-fed on Guantanamo. Adayfi said that Desantis watched from behind a chain-linked fence while he was brutally force-fed and was screaming and crying. Desantis being there for these kinds of abuses has been well documented in public records and numerous interviews. As someone with a bid for the presidency, he is surely going to be

facing questions on his time at Guantanamo and how that influences his politics.

Desantis served on the base during a year that was marked by death and hunger strikes, and even after his time there continued to advocate for the base to remain open and the people there imprisoned. Desantis served in the Navy as a prosecutor, and in an interview with a local CBS news station said he advised on the legality of force-feeding at Guantanamo. Desantis said the lawyers at Guantanamo told the staff “Hey, you actually can force-feed,” and advised on its rules. Desantis has recently denied authorizing force-feedings, but not advising on their legality. Almost a decade after the hunger strikes and force-feedings at Guantanamo, the US still utilizes this unethical practice of force-feeding, not only on prisoners but on migrants seeking asylum and a possibility of a new life in the United States. In 2019, the year that Kumar was force-fed, there were another forty hunger strikes in the El Paso facility and thirteen force-feedings. Kumar’s case is not unique, and many detainees are subject to force-feedings and decreased bodily autonomy due to their incarcerated state.

Unfortunately, force-feeding is not only legal in the United States but is utilized around the world. Following the hunger strikes of imprisoned Palestinians seeking individual or collective rights, the Israeli parliament

passed a law allowing the force-feeding of prisoners, despite objections from the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on torture and the right to health.

Force feeding is also sometimes used outside of prisons, for example in Mauritania. Young girls are force fed thousands of calories a day by their mothers or women whose jobs it is to force feed. Being thin is seen as negative in the beauty standards and girls are often sent to “fattening farms” as young as five years old. This is all in the hopes of finding suitable husbands for the girls at young ages and can have serious medical implications as well as dehumanize girls and women.

While force feeding may not be the first thing that comes to mind when talking about torture, it is clear that the spoon can be as harmful and invasive as a club. ★



Meet the Team of EuroMUN 2023!



Krithik Medwin Rock

Secretary-General



Salomé Chemra

Under Secretary-General



Esther Friedmond

Finance & Fundraising



Marketing & Communications

Under Secretary-General: Paulina Moody
Caleb Francesco Stocco, Matilde
Simonetti, Nicole Králová, Alexandra
Diaz Shaparenko, Paulina Moody,
Clara La Rosee, Linnea Hoppé

Under Secretary-General: Lisa Krapp
Elise Alsteens, Lily Hallam, Patrycja
Tobola, Lara Regojo, Klara Wegener

Logistics & Socials



Under Secretary-General:
Katarzyna Kuliberda
Darin Balid, Mayeul Calmejane,
Julian Allnoch, Fée van Cronenburg,
Noa Lehmann
(Not in picture: Niccolo Maggio)

Academics



Under Secretary-General: David Ćurilla
Eléonore Donnén, Tizian Aisenbrey,
Angèle Tellier, Yousra Clemence Achour

Registrations & Conference
Operations



Condensed Points and & Motions

Motions Listed by Order of Disruptiveness

Point of Order

Delegates may, at any moment outside the time allocated to speakers, raise a point of order if they deem that the Praesidium is violating the present Rules.

Point of Personal Privilege

Delegates may, at any moment outside the time allocated to speakers, raise a point of personal privilege if they feel uncomfortable for any material reason, and that discomfort can be addressed by the committee or by the Praesidium.

Right of Reply

Should the sovereignty of the state a delegate is representing be insulted or should a delegate have been personally insulted, that delegate can claim the right of reply. If a delegate raises such a motion the Praesidium can either accept the motion or call for a justification for the request. If the Praesidium finds that the request is unjustified it can reject it at its discretion.

Point of Parliamentary Inquiry

Delegates may, when the floor is open for points and motions, raise a point of parliamentary inquiry. This point shall include a question regarding the present Rules or their application in the session. The Praesidium shall try to address the point to the best of its ability or, failing that, refer the matter to the Secretariat.

Unmoderated Caucus

Delegates may move for an unmoderated caucus. The motion shall include the duration of the proposed caucus, with a maximum of 20 minutes. For the duration of the unmoderated caucus, Delegates shall be allowed to move and speak freely around the room in an orderly manner.

Moderated Caucus

Delegates may move for a moderated caucus on a topic of their choosing. The motion shall specify the topic, the duration of the caucus and the length of the speaker's time and constitutes a period of closed debate with speeches focused on the topic and no yielding of time.

Consultation of the Whole

For the length and on the topic of this motion proposed, the Delegate who raised the motion shall have the floor for an indefinite amount of time. They may then decide

Listen Now.

the MD Podcast

available on



Anchor
by Spotify



**maastricht
diplomat**

About UNSA Maastricht

For 16 years, UNSA has been contributing to enriching student life in Maastricht. It has become a prominent international student association using the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations as a steady guide on pushing forward together for a better future and positive impact.

UNSA Maastricht consists of 300+ students, all from different faculties and study programs. UNSA takes pride in its diversity, as members join us from all different walks of life. This is what makes us truly unique and a safe, inclusive space for all. We allow students to network for their future careers and make lifelong connections with like-minded people. People who all strive for a positive future and believe in their capacity to contribute to global improvement.

UNSA is structured in a way that allows its members to truly reap a range of benefits. Want to join a Model UN debate and learn more not only about international politics but public speaking? You got it! Want to read articles produced by our talented writers? You got it! Want to volunteer both locally and internationally? Once again, you can with UNSA! We have established a total of seven diverse teams, all offering unique experiences in different fields. Members can become active in either Marketing, Events, Journal, Development, Delegations, External Relations, or EuroMUN.

TEAM

Editor in Chief

Juliane Maria Hilgert

Editorial Board

Charelle Abdallah
Lee-Ann Lichtenberger
Anthi Likitsakos
Mercure Libbrecht Gourdet
Ana Navarro

Writers (in alphabetical order)

Federica Broggi
Louise Chanut
Marta De Grandi
Lisa Feldstein
Juliane Maria Hilgert
Pauline Keller
Emre Küpcük
Chloé Leplatre
Lee-Ann Lichtenberger
Anthi Likitsakos
Mercure Libbrecht Gourdet
Leen Mahayni
Maya Müller-Perron
Esther Neville
Laura Osterrieth

Sofia van Trooijen

Jonathan Wijayaratne

Art director and Head of the Marketing Committee of UNSA

Helena Eckstein

Co-heads of the Marketing Committee of UNSA

Jan David Glässner
Ajla Sijercic
Phyllis Spaeh

Graphic designers (in alphabetical order)

Maurane David
Helena Eckstein
Jan David Glässner
Amelie Krüger
Clara Lücke
Asta Porkka
Jakob Seul
Ajla Sijercic
Phyllis Spaeh
Lucia Vernooij

EuroMUN is made possible by

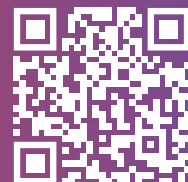


EuroMUN and the Maastricht Diplomat are powered by



Copyright 2023

Do you want to stay up to date with the conference proceedings? Are you interested in what is going on in the other committees? Follow around our press corps and learn all the details during EuroMUN 2023! Visit www.maastrichtdiplomat.org/euromun or scan the QR code.



Schedule

🕒	May 18h		May 19h		May 20h		May 21st	
	Group A	Group B	Group A	Group B	Group A	Group B	Group A	Group B
09:00-09:15			Committee	Committee	Committee	Committee		
09:15-09:30			Session 2	Session 2	Session 6	Session 6		
09:30-09:45							Committee	Committee
09:45-10:00							Session 10	Session 10
10:00-10:15								
10:15-10:30								
10:30-10:45	Registrations		Coffee Break			Coffee Break		
10:45-11:00			Committee			Committee		
11:00-11:15			Session 3	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Session 7	Coffee Break	
11:15-11:30				Committee	Committee		Committee	
11:30-11:45	Beginner Workshops			Session 3	Session 7		Session 11	Coffee Break
11:45-12:00								Committee
12:00-12:15								Session 11
12:15-12:30			Lunch			Lunch		
12:30-12:45								
12:45-13:00								
13:00-13:15								
13:15-13:30			Committee	Lunch	Lunch	Committee	Lunch	Lunch
13:30-13:45	Opening Ceremony		Session 4			Session 8		
13:45-14:00								
14:00-14:15								
14:15-14:30	Panel Discussion			Committee	Committee			
14:30-14:45				Session 4	Session 8			
14:45-15:00								
15:00-15:15								
15:15-15:30			Committee			Committee		
15:30-15:45			Session 5			Session 9		
15:45-16:00	Committee	Committee		Committee	Committee			
16:00-16:15	Session 1	Session 1		Session 5	Session 9			
16:15-16:30							Closing Ceremony	
16:30-16:45								
16:45-17:00								
17:00-17:15								
17:15-17:30								
17:30-17:45								
17:45-18:00								
18:00-18:15								
18:15-18:30								
18:30-18:45	Scavenger Hunt							
18:45-19:00	Begins between							
19:00-19:15	18:30-19:30							
19:15-19:30								
19:30-19:45								
19:45-20:00								
20:00-20:15					Gala Night 20:00 Doors open			
20:15-20:30					Christal Jubilee			
20:30-20:45								
20:45-21:00			Boat Party	20:45				
21:00-21:15	Party begins Basilica		Boat leaves	21:00				
21:15-21:30			No one will be allowed on boat beyond this time					
21:30-21:45					21:30 Doors			
21:45-22:00					Close			
22:00-22:15								
22:15-22:30								
22:30-22:45								
22:45-23:00								
23:00-23:15								
23:15-23:30								
23:30-23:45								
23:45-00:00								
00:00-00:15								
00:15-00:30								
00:30-00:45								
00:45-01:00			1:00 Ending Time		1:00 Ending Time			
01:00-01:15								
01:15-01:30								
01:30-01:45								
01:45-02:00	2:00 Ending Time							



MSc in Public Policy & Human Development (MPP)

Why study Public Policy at UNU-MERIT

- Grants two diplomas (United Nations University-MERIT & UM)
- Intensive, multi-disciplinary one-year programme
- Problem-based learning in small groups
- Students from dozens of countries
- Guest lecturers from international organisations
- Career opportunities in multiple sectors

5 specialisations

- Social Protection Policy
- Governance of Innovation
- Migration Studies
- Risk and Vulnerability
- Global Governance for Development

Application deadline: 15 July 2023 (EU/EEA students)

www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/governance