

#Lily4Refugees

MY "THE RIGHTS OF REFUGEES ONLINE COURSE" SUMMARY

*"No-one expects to become a refugee.
And yet anyone can become a refugee. Even you!"
Lily Amis*

Over the past millennia, people have moved vast distances for all kinds of reasons. From persecution to war; from earthquakes and floods to famine.

There is no such thing as a typical refugee. People of any age, race, gender or religion can be forced to leave their homes. In the past few years, record numbers of people worldwide have been forced to flee their homes. Instead of providing protection to them, many countries are slamming their doors shut. The wealthiest nations are leaving other, poorer countries to cope alone with nearly all the world's 21 million refugees, while politicians and powerful media portray people running for their lives as "illegal" or faceless "invaders" who are "a security threat".

You might wonder if we require new laws to protect the rights of refugees. We don't. International refugee law and human rights law provide a sophisticated and balanced system to allow people in need to escape war and persecution to access protection in a third country. Just like anyone else, refugees have rights and States have a duty to protect them.

The basis of these rights is found in the 1951 Geneva Convention and its Protocol. Within the UN system, the key agency involved in protecting refugees is the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, or UNHCR. The core principle of the 1951 Convention is: no refugee should be returned to a country where they could face serious threats to their life or freedom. Because of this, State agents – such as border guards and other officials– are under an obligation to inform people crossing their borders of their right to seek international protection as refugees. And, when someone does seek that protection, States are under a duty to ensure the asylum procedure is fair and effective.

This sounds good in theory, but we have experienced it first hand and even though our country was a bloody war zone, we were sent back! Security and protection were denied to a mother and daughter!

In theory all refugees have the right to be treated equally and States must not discriminate between them, whether in deciding to grant them asylum or after asylum has been granted.

Again this sounds good in theory. But reality is that every right to a normal and independent life for us was denied just because of our nationality and religion!

Claiming refugee status doesn't mean giving up universal human rights. Refugees still have rights to education, to access to the courts, to employment and other fundamental freedoms, including the rights to freedom of movement, to security of the person, to family life and to liberty.

Again nothing but theory! We have experienced the reality and it was anything but fair! The truth is with claiming refugee status we gave up on our identity, human rights, freedom and dignity! Why else would a young girl with only twenty see a forced and loveless marriage as the ONLY solution for a life with chances for education and employment?

Once refugees receive a residency status it should ensure protection and allow them to rebuild their lives. Resettlement may also carry with the opportunity to eventually become a naturalized citizen of the receiving country.

Easier said than done! It took us almost three decades to finally be accepted and naturalized in Switzerland!

The present 'refugee crisis' is partly a crisis of leadership. The number of individuals seeking international protection is large but not impossible to manage if there is political will to do so and to co-operate with each other.

Let's face it! Nobody cares about the right of Refugees! Especially not world leaders, who create war to make more money and gain more power!

The truth is this crisis will not go away until world leaders confront it directly with proper recognition of the responsibility they bear, and the imperative for co-operation and meaningful sharing of responsibility. The international community must do a lot more than it has done so far and so can you!

Since I don't trust and believe in the governments and world leaders, I encourage individuals to be the voice for the voice less and make a change!

Speaking up, demanding that the system changes; Education – teaching others about the problems being faced each day by refugees and people seeking asylum is the first step in the right direction! Raise awareness with friends, family and your local community! Get others involved – locally or even internationally! Problem solving means replacing what does not work with something that does. Do not pay attention to people who try to tell you that the problem cannot be solved. Stay focused and keep going!

This is our moment to defend the things that unite us as human beings, and refuse to let fear and prejudice win.

Solving the global refugee crisis starts with each and every one of us making one simple, personal commitment to help – simply by saying: “I welcome refugees”.

ENROLL FOR THE FREE ONLINE COURSE [HERE!](#)

SUPPORT REFUGEES ACTION UK

Support the #LiftTheBan campaign in UK. The Lift the Ban coalition is calling for the right to work for people seeking asylum, and their adult dependants, unconstrained by the shortage occupation list after six months of having lodged an asylum claim or further submission.

Everyone wants the opportunity to provide for themselves and their families. It is simply unfair that those who have risked everything to find safety in the UK and have had to wait longer than the Government’s target of six months for a decision on their claim are not allowed to do this most basic of things (currently, almost 50% of all asylum claims take longer than six months).

I had no education and work permission for over ten years!

People seeking asylum in UK are given just £5.39 per day to meet all their essential living costs, such as food, clothing, toiletries and transport and the cost of their asylum application. Forcing people to live in poverty for months, or even YEARS at a time, while they seek safety from persecution is inhumane and has a detrimental impact on their physical and mental health.

Enabling people to work provides them with the human dignity of being able to provide for themselves and their families, if they are able.

People seeking asylum who are able to work would not need to be supported for extended periods and could contribute to the economy through increased tax revenues and consumer spending. Moreover, considerable savings could be made to the costs of keeping people on asylum support if the ban was lifted.

SIGN UP AND SUPPORT THE UK PETITION [HERE!](#)

Join the movement of people uniting to welcome refugees in their own ways.

GREAT THINGS HAPPEN WHEN PEOPLE GET TOGETHER

JOIN