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The Future of U.S.-Czech Relations on Refugee Resettlement

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Introduction:

As the world becomes more interconnected through economic interdependence, technology, and global conflicts, regional issues are becoming increasingly globalized. Conflict in one region can precipitate in humanitarian crises worldwide. New, equitable solutions to emerging global issues will require transatlantic cooperation. The international stage came to a halt on February 24, 2022, as Russia launched an unprovoked, unwarranted invasion of Ukrainian sovereignty.¹ The Czech Republic and the United States have taken unprecedented measures to disavow Russian aggression and support the Ukraine. The Czech Republic has provided significant humanitarian assistance by accepting over 300,000 Ukrainian refugees within its borders.² The situation in Ukraine, and subsequently the Czech Republic and United States, is rapidly evolving. As new information emerges and more Ukrainians are forced to flee their homeland, refugee resettlement in these two countries may become more essential. Intelligence officials in both the United States and United Kingdom recently announced that a Russian declaration of war on Ukraine could be imminent.³ This is likely to fuel even more displacement and make bilateral solutions more necessary.

The Czech Republic and United States both have a significant Ukrainian communities and economic migrants within their borders, making them popular destinations for refugee resettlement. Currently, the Czech Republic has experienced a massive influx of Ukrainian refugees. The Czech Republic and the United States could begin to develop an international plan to better prepare for coming refugee crises. This paper will explore recommendations for the Czech Republic and the United States to adopt a bilateral resettlement policy for Ukrainian refugees. This paper seeks to address emergency preparedness plans and recommends new options given current capacity and resource constraints in the Czech Republic. This paper will also consider how this bilateral refugee policy could result in a long-term refugee cooperation between the two countries and could create a new international model.

Czech Republic History of Immigration:

Given the Czech Republic's relative economic and industrial success in the region, it has long been a destination country for Eastern European migrants- from Ukraine to Bulgaria.⁴ This has led to large communities of Eastern Europeans and has fueled further migration into the Czech Republic. In 2005, the Czech government committed to participating in emergency

¹ David L. Stern et al., "War in Ukraine," Washington Post, May 5, 2022,

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/05/05/russia-ukraine-war-news-putin-live-updates/>

² Council of Europe Development Bank, "Czech Republic and CEB sign a grant of almost 400,000 euros to facilitate early integration of refugees from Ukraine," United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, April 21, 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/czechia/czech-republic-and-ceb-sign-grant-almost-400000-facilitate-early-integration-refugees>

³ Xander Landen, "Putin May Declare War Against 'World's Nazis' on 'Victory Day'," Newsweek. April 29, 2022, <https://www.newsweek.com/putin-may-declare-war-against-worlds-nazis-victory-day-1702276>

⁴ Dusan Drbohlav & Kristyna Janurova, "Migration and Integration in Czechia," Migration Policy Institute. June 6, 2019. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/migration-and-integration-czechia-policy-advances-and-hand-brake-populism>

resettlement programs, beginning with the resettlement of Burmese refugees from Malaysia who faced persecution.⁵ The Czech Ministry of Interior pledged to fast-tracking emergency procedures to allow refugees into the country. This led to the creation of an emergency preparedness plan in the Czech Republic for refugee admittance and resettlement, which has been expanded on in the face of the Ukrainian refugee crisis. Between 2005 and 2008, the Czech Republic participated in numerous resettlement projects, namely with refugees from Uzbekistan and Cuba.⁶ The Czech government initially pledged to resettle numerous Syrian families, but only accepted twenty Syrian refugees at the height of the crisis. This led to a setback in the Czech refugee admittance and resettlement programs.⁷ The country became split on questions of humanitarian assistance to distant crises. This led to tension between the European Union and the Czech Republic on its refugee resettlement commitments.⁸

Ukrainian Refugee Crisis and International Support:

The Russian invasion of Ukraine spurred a massive influx of refugees to the Czech Republic. Over 5.5 million refugees have fled Ukraine,⁹ with over 300,000 of them seeking asylum in the Czech Republic.¹⁰ On March 4, 2022, the European Union instituted a temporary protection status for Ukrainian refugees to seek shelter within European Union member-states.¹¹ The United Nations estimates approximately 12 million Ukrainian citizens in need of humanitarian relief and protection, both within and outside of Ukrainian borders.¹² Given the scope and international attention of the refugee crisis, the international response by state and non-state actors has been immense. The United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees released a report stating that over 200 million dollars had been raised for refugee assistance by private sector donors.¹³ The Governor of the Council of Europe Development Bank issued a 399,899 euro grant to assist the Czech Republic in its integration of Ukrainian refugees. The United States has pledged more than a billion dollars toward humanitarian assistance efforts.¹⁴ This demonstrates the large outpouring of international, monetary support for Ukrainian refugees. The United States has also pledged to materially support neighboring countries which border Ukraine because of the significant population of Ukrainian refugees who have fled to those countries. However, the United States has failed to include the Czech Republic in these

⁵ UNHCR, “Czech Republic Resettlement Handbook,” UNHCR, January 1, 2018, <https://www.unhcr.org/4e2d65a79.pdf>

⁶ UNHCR, “Czech Republic Resettlement Handbook.”

⁷ UNHCR, “Czech Republic Resettlement Handbook.”

⁸ Jennifer Rankin, “EU court rules three member states broke law over refugee quotas,” *The Guardian*, April 2, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2020/apr/02/eu-court-rules-three-countries-czech-republic-hungary-poland-broke-law-over-refugee-quotas>

⁹ UNHCR, “Ukraine emergency,” UNHCR, May 5, 2022, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/ukraine-emergency.html>

¹⁰ Council of Europe Development Bank, “Czech Republic and CEB sign a grant.”

¹¹ European Commission, “Information for people fleeing the war in Ukraine,” European Commission, May 5, 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/stronger-europe-world/eu-solidarity-ukraine/eu-assistance-ukraine/information-people-fleeing-war-ukraine_en

¹² UNHCR, “Ukraine emergency.”

¹³ UNHCR, “Private sector donates over 200 million dollars to UNHCR’S Ukraine emergency response,” UNHCR, March 14, 2022, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/press/2022/3/622f7d1f4/private-sector-donates-us200-million-unhcrs-ukraine-emergency-response.html>

¹⁴ Council of Europe Development Bank, “Czech Republic and CEB sign a grant.”

neighboring countries, excluding it from receiving necessary funds, resources, and personnel to assist in the admittance and resettlement of hundreds of thousands of refugees.¹⁵ This creates an economic constraint on the Czech Republic.

Analysis of Similarities between the Czech Republic and the United States:

Emergency Responses to Ukrainian Refugee Crisis:

“I just cried... it was some kind of shock. I didn’t want to feel like a refugee at all” stated a Ukrainian refugee upon safe arrival to the Czech Republic.¹⁶ The Czech Republic has unwaveringly accepted significant responsibility over Ukrainian refugees. By admitting over 300,000 Ukrainian refugees and recognizing that over 200,000 may reside within the Czech Republic permanently, the country has committed to support Ukraine and its people. This figure represents approximately two percent of the Czech Republic’s total populations.¹⁷ The Czech government has outlined an emergency preparedness plan, which has been instrumental in creating an equitable and efficient response to incoming Ukrainian refugees. It places housing, food, and material assistance first to ensure that all refugees receive basic assistance upon arrival. On March 4th, President Zeman declared a national state of emergency in an attempt to expedite refugee claims and issue residence permits.¹⁸ The Czech government requires all refugees to possess residence permits upon arrival to the country. Once refugees are issued these residence permits, they are able to access necessary welfare programs, like healthcare, childcare, and other social services. The Czech government has established reception centers to process Ukrainian refugee applications. One of the most efficient provisions in the emergency preparedness plan was the establishment of regional assistance centers throughout the Czech Republic which helps refugees register with the foreign police, process special long-term visas, and provide material and economic assistance.¹⁹ This allows the government to funnel refugees out to smaller processing centers rather than stalling one national center.

Due to the size of the Ukrainian community within the Czech Republic, a sizeable number of refugees already had some sort of private accommodation upon arrival to the country. Therefore, the Czech government has been able to alleviate some housing and economic constraints through private resettlement.²⁰ However, increasing numbers of refugees have led to more capacity and

¹⁵ Congressional Research Service, “Humanitarian and Refugee Crisis in Ukraine,” Congressional Research Service, March 18, 2022, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IN/IN11882>

¹⁶ Jason Hovet and Jiri Skacel, “Ukrainian Family Finds Refuge in Prague’s Russian Community,” Reuters, April 5, 2022, <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2022-04-05/ukrainian-family-finds-refuge-in-pragues-russian-community>

¹⁷ Aneta Zachova, “Two-thirds of Ukrainian refugees welcome to stay indefinitely,” Euractiv, March 29, 2022, https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/short_news/two-thirds-of-ukrainian-refugees-welcome-to-stay-indefinitely/

¹⁸ Czech Ministry of Interior, “Information for Ukrainian citizens in the Czech Republic in connection with the Russian aggression in Ukraine,” Czech Ministry of Interior, May 5, 2022, https://www.mvcr.cz/docDetail.aspx?docid=22368652&doctype=ART&chnum=1#Informace_pro_obcany_Ukrajiny_-_otazky_a_odpovedi

¹⁹ Czech Ministry of Interior, “Information for Ukrainian citizens.”

²⁰ Czech Ministry of Interior, “Information for Ukrainian citizens.”

resource shortages.²¹ The Ministry of Interior established a Registration Center to support Ukrainian refugees who lacked any sort of accommodation. The Registration Center provides medical assistance, food, and clothes to refugees before transferring them to regional housing centers throughout the country.²² In cooperation with the Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of Interior, the Czech Fire and Rescue Service launched an online program in an attempt to coordinate and streamline any requests for assistance throughout the country. This creates a more efficient response system to dispatch emergency personnel to necessary areas to aid refugee admittance and resettlement. Furthermore, the Ministry of Interior has set up a website for Ukrainian refugees which provides important information, like where to acquire a residence permit and how to register for assistance. This emergency preparedness plan exceeds expectations. It provides multiple different centers for refugees to access which helps streamline the process.²³ Furthermore, it includes a triage-like system where refugees most in need of assistance have greater access to programs. This emergency response is efficient because it recognizes the intersecting needs of Ukrainian refugees and attempts to streamline administrative processes in order to best provide material assistance.

“I have to be strong for my son, but often I want to cry,” said a Ukrainian woman seeking asylum in Brooklyn upon learning that the house where her husband still resides in had been looted.²⁴ The United States has primarily provided economic assistance to Ukrainian refugees.²⁵ The government issued temporary protected status to Ukrainians currently residing in the United States.²⁶ This allows Ukrainian migrants in the United States on visas to stay indefinitely. President Biden recently announced that the United States would accept up to 100,000 refugees fleeing from Ukraine.²⁷ This announcement came after significant international backlash against the delayed response to admit and resettle Ukrainian refugees. The United States has yet to fully outline the procedures of this process. However, the aim is to relocate refugees who have family residing in the United States. It has received broad, bipartisan support.

Public sentiment:

The international community watched in shock and horror as news began to flood out of Bucha, Ukraine. Reports of murder, rape, and torture escaped from this small Ukrainian town.

²¹ CTK, “Czech Republic on the verge of its capacity to handle more refugees,” Czech Republic Expats, March 17, 2022, <https://www.expats.cz/czech-news/article/czech-republic-unable-to-absorb-more-ukrainian-refugees>

²² Czech Ministry of Interior, “Information for Ukrainian citizens.”

²³ Czech Ministry of Interior, “Information for Ukrainian citizens.”

²⁴ Dexter Filkins, “Fleeing the war, a Ukrainian comes to Brooklyn,” The New Yorker, March 31, 2022, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/fleeing-the-war-a-ukrainian-comes-to-brooklyn>

²⁵ Congressional Research Service, “Humanitarian and Refugee Crisis in Ukraine.”

²⁶ U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. “DHS Announces Registration Process for Temporary Protected Status for Ukraine and Sudan,” U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, April 18, 2022, [https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/news-releases/dhs-announces-registration-process-for-temporary-protected-status-for-ukraine-and-](https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/news-releases/dhs-announces-registration-process-for-temporary-protected-status-for-ukraine-and-sudan#:~:text=Individuals%20applying%20for%20TPS%20under,file%20Form%20I%2D821%20online.)

[sudan#:~:text=Individuals%20applying%20for%20TPS%20under,file%20Form%20I%2D821%20online.](https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/news-releases/dhs-announces-registration-process-for-temporary-protected-status-for-ukraine-and-sudan#:~:text=Individuals%20applying%20for%20TPS%20under,file%20Form%20I%2D821%20online.)

²⁷ The White House. “Fact Sheet: The Biden Administration Announces New Humanitarian, Development, and Democracy Assistance to Ukraine and the Surrounding Region,” The White House, March 24, 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/03/24/fact-sheet-the-biden-administration-announces-new-humanitarian-development-and-democracy-assistance-to-ukraine-and-the-surrounding-region/>

Many countries called for an investigation by the International Criminal Court into Russian war crimes in Ukraine.²⁸ However, countries like the Czech Republic, who had already received hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian refugees, were aware of Russian war crimes. Russian brutality against Ukrainian refugees led to broad national support for resettlement efforts. From opening their homes to finding them employment opportunities, Czech citizens have done immense work in welcoming Ukrainian refugees. Even as the country is forced to confront the growing reality that it lacks adequate resources to provide for more refugees,²⁹ Czech radio stations are broadcasting children's stories in Ukrainian to provide comfort and familiarity to Ukrainian refugees.³⁰ On March 26th, thousands of people joined a movement in Prague to protest the invasion of Ukraine. This demonstrates the solidarity that the Czech people feel toward these refugees.³¹ One Czech citizen, who owns a campsite, opened the camp to accommodate Ukrainian refugees even allowing them to use the facilities to host a Ukrainian kitchen.³² The Czech people have contributed immensely to the efforts to provide for refugees.

The Czech Republic has seen unprecedented levels of public support for the acceptance of Ukrainian refugees. This marks a large shift in public sentiment. During the 2015 Syrian refugee crisis, the Czech Republic faced issues as it was perceived internationally to shrug some of its responsibility as a European Union member-state.³³ According to a 2015 public opinion poll done by the Institute of Public Affairs, approximately 61% of people in the Czech Republic disapproved of the resettlement of war refugees.³⁴ Many European countries saw this decision as discriminatory against Muslims. This sentiment has begun changing with the Ukrainian refugee crisis as Czech citizens seem more receptive to the inclusion of war refugees within society.

The United States has long had a complicated sentiment on refugees. The United States often remains steadfast in its international commitment to refugees fleeing from religious persecution or from regions where the United States was directly involved, namely Iraq and Afghanistan. The current situation in Afghanistan has increased public support for wartime refugees following the United States withdrawal of troops.³⁵ However, the United States often faces international criticism for its refusal to recognize asylum-seekers on its Southern border. Asylum-seekers coming from South and Central America have become a contentious issue in domestic politics. According to a study conducted by the Pew Research Center, approximately

²⁸ Carlotta Gall, "Bucha's Month of Terror," *The New York Times*, April 11, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/04/11/world/europe/bucha-terror.html>

²⁹ Aneta Zachova, "Czech capacities to host Ukrainian refugees have run out," *Euractiv*, March 14, 2022, https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/short_news/czech-capacities-to-host-ukrainian-refugees-have-run-out/

³⁰ Associated Press, "New Radio Station in Prague Helps Ukrainian Refugees Adapt," *Associated Press*, April 2, 2022, <https://www.voanews.com/a/new-radio-station-in-prague-helps-ukrainian-refugees-adapt/6512645.html>

³¹ Jason Hovet and Jiri Skacel, "Ukrainian Family Finds Refuge in Prague's Russian Community."

³² France 24, "Ukrainian refugees cook up a storm at Czech campsite," *France 24*, March 18, 2022, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20220318-ukrainian-refugees-cook-up-a-storm-at-czech-campsite>

³³ Jennifer Rankin, "EU court rules three member states broke law over refugee quotas."

³⁴ Kristyna Brozova, Adela Jureckova, & Anna Pacovaska, "The Wages of Fear: Attitudes Towards Refugees and Migrants in Czech Republic," *Foundation of the Institute of Public Affairs*, January 1, 2018, https://www.britishcouncil.pl/sites/default/files/czech_pop.pdf

³⁵ Joel Rose, "Support for Resettling Afghan Refugees in the U.S. is Broad- but Has Limits," *NPR*, September 9, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/09/1035240731/support-for-resettling-afghan-refugees-in-the-u-s-is-broad-but-has-limits>

50% of respondents believed not allowing people to seek asylum in the United States was an important issue.³⁶ The United States has long been accused of racism in its refugee policy and national sentiment. The rise of nationalism in retaliation to increased immigration in the United States has further fueled this claim. The United States public, however, has been increasingly supportive of the resettlement of Ukrainian refugees. According to a Gallup poll, over 78% of Americans approve of the resettlement of Ukrainian refugees into the United States.³⁷ Many Czech citizens have expressed their pride and support for the country's ambitious and equitable reception of Ukrainian refugees. The American public has expressed a greater willingness to assume more responsibility on this issue.

General Steps Forward:

The rate of refugee admittance into the Czech Republic is currently unsustainable. In order to best provide for refugees, transatlantic solutions must be explored. First, the United States must include the Czech Republic in its designation of 'frontline' countries. The Czech Republic needs monetary and material support to adequately provide for the influx of Ukrainian refugees. The United States has yet to facilitate appropriate resources to the Czech Republic. This can partly be attributed to the United States' failure to appoint an ambassador to the Czech Republic under the Biden Administration. The appointment of this ambassador would further open political dialogue between the countries, making support and future bilateral policy goals more attainable.

Recommendation for a Bilateral Refugee Resettlement Program:

In order to further U.S.-Czech relations and strengthen transatlantic cooperation on refugee policy, both the United States and Czech governments should explore the creation of a bilateral refugee program for the placement of Ukrainian refugees. While repatriation should be the goal of any refugee admittance or resettlement program, the Czech Republic and United States must first ensure that returning Ukrainian refugees is safe. The Czech government already estimates over sixty percent of Ukrainian refugees will permanently reside in the country and more refugees are arriving in the Czech Republic daily. There is currently no natural end to the Russian invasion or occupation of Ukraine, making it unsafe and irresponsible to return Ukrainian refugees to their homeland. Therefore, resettlement policies must be considered.

The Czech Republic has undertaken a significant responsibility to provide for Ukrainian refugees; however, it does not have endless resources to accept and resettle refugees indefinitely. The spokeswoman of the General Directorate of Firefighters, Pavla Jakoubková released a statement saying, "we are slowly getting to a state where we can only provide emergency shelter for refugees to ensure emergency survival in emergency conditions."³⁸ The United States has pledged significant money and support to Ukrainian refugees but has not yet assumed the

³⁶ Pew Research Center, "Most Americans are Critical of Government's Handling of Situation at U.S.-Mexico Border," Pew Research Center, May 3, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/05/03/most-americans-are-critical-of-governments-handling-of-situation-at-u-s-mexico-border/>

³⁷ Lydia Saad, "Americans Widely Favor Welcoming Ukrainian Refugees," Gallup, April 26, 2022, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/392069/americans-widely-favor-welcoming-ukrainian-refugees.aspx>

³⁸ Aneta Zachova, "Czech capacities to host Ukrainian refugees have run out."

responsibility of resettling a significant number of them. Nor has the United States fully included the Czech Republic in its economic support for Ukrainian refugees, despite the significant population of Ukrainian refugees in the country.³⁹

The Czech Republic is a popular destination for Ukrainian refugees because of the sizeable Ukrainian diaspora community. Therefore, a significant number will have a vested interest in staying in the country due to familial, economic, or social ties. However, some populations of these refugees do not have ties to the Czech Republic. These refugees should be given the choice to relocate to the United States through this program, primarily those with similar ties to the United States. Since President Biden has just issued a new objective to accept over 100,000 Ukrainian refugees,⁴⁰ the Czech Republic should recommend a bilateral agreement to send refugees with familial or economic ties to the United States. Since the Czech Republic would receive these refugees first, the Czech Republic would still be responsible for meeting the basic needs like immediate healthcare and food for these refugees. Also, the Czech Republic would assume the risk of coronavirus outbreaks due to the mass influx of people. Therefore, through this program, the United States should provide economic assistance to the Czech Republic. Since the Czech Republic is materially assisting the refugees at the onset and assuming significant risk of coronavirus outbreak, the United States should provide both funding and resources to aid the Czech Republic. This would serve to lessen both economic and capacity concerns in the Czech Republic caused by the mass influx of Ukrainian refugees.

In order to facilitate this program, multiple different agencies from both countries would collaborate to ensure a smooth transition for refugees. The Czech Ministry of Interior, the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United States Department of State, and the United States Office of Refugee Resettlement under the Department of Health and Human Services would be involved.⁴¹ The Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United States Department of State would determine how to facilitate the international aspects of the program, like coronavirus screenings, transportation, and selection for which refugees would migrate to the United States. The Czech Ministry of Interior and the United States Office of Refugee Resettlement could cooperate to ensure that refugee resettlement programs, like healthcare and language or education attainment programs, remain consistent for refugees.

This program could also further the Czech Republic and United States' international credibility on refugee resettlement by taking special precautions to ensure that all refugees are treated equitably. Given both countries past issues with refugee resettlement, the program could offer special assistance to refugees with different ethnicities, religions, races, and genders. This is an important step given inconsistent attempts on the international stage to better account for refugees of color, particularly females. For example, reports have emerged that black and

³⁹ Congressional Research Service, "Humanitarian and Refugee Crisis in Ukraine."

⁴⁰ The White House, "The Biden Administration Announces New Assistance to Ukraine."

⁴¹ Office of Refugee Resettlement, "Office of Refugee Resettlement," Department of Health and Human Services, May 5, 2020, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr>

Muslim refugees have been excluded from assistance as they attempt to flee Ukraine.⁴² The Czech Republic and the United States have not been party to these incidents; however, given its frequency, these countries should take extra measures, like safe spaces, market integration programs, and healthcare initiatives, to ensure that refugees of color and female refugees are resettled given their acute and differing needs.

Given high levels of public support for resettling refugees, as well as the longstanding allyship by both the Czech Republic and the United States, this program would likely receive immense support both internationally and domestically. Through this partnership, the Czech Republic would gain the necessary resources and funding to adequately provide for Ukrainian refugees within their borders. The United States would continue to further its support for these refugees and would strengthen its long-term commitment to the Czech Republic.

Furthermore, this program could lead to increased cooperation between these two countries on refugee resettlement in the future. The Czech Republic and United States could champion a new international refugee program to better support countries that experience swift and overwhelming numbers of refugees within their borders. The Czech Republic and United States could establish a sort of humanitarian ‘swap line’ for the future, where refugees in either country could petition to resettle in the other country through this program. The Czech Republic is a member-state of the European Union, which often adopts a collaborative, multilateral approach to migration policies.⁴³ If the Czech Republic and the United States work toward a resettlement program, the Czech Republic could petition the European Union to adopt similar policies. This could lead to multilateral, sustainable solutions to refugee crises. These countries could seek to establish consistent resettlement infrastructure and policies like market integration to standardize refugee resettlement. Furthermore, this could help the Czech Republic and United States could become global leaders on refugee resettlement. This program could be piloted in the Czech Republic and United States, but ultimately could lead to a realized international framework or the creation of multiple bilateral refugee programs. This would create a more equitable and efficient resettlement process as countries with more capacity could partner with frontline countries to alleviate economic and capacity constraints.

Future of Refugee Crises:

An international plan for refugee resettlement will become increasingly necessary in the future. The 21st century brought with it an interconnected and inextricable worldwide link where volatility in one region can directly impact the economy, society, or politics of another country. National policies on global issues are no longer sufficient. Establishing bilateral cooperation on the topic of refugee resettlement will ensure that both countries are prepared as new crises emerge. First, Russian aggression is unpredictable and unwieldy on the international stage. If Russia invades another Eastern European country, it will create another influx of refugees in

⁴² Vivienne Dovi, “The treatment Africans are facing in Ukraine,” Euronews, April 1, 2022, <https://www.euronews.com/2022/04/01/the-treatment-africans-are-facing-in-ukraine-is-despicable-but-why-are-we-surprised>

⁴³ European Commission, “Migration and Asylum,” European Commission, May 5, 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/migration-and-asylum_en

Eastern Europe, disproportionately impacting countries like the Czech Republic. Conflicts in the Middle East, like the Syrian civil war, are likely to increase as religious tensions heighten and the value of oil remains volatile.⁴⁴ This would create massive influxes of refugees to Europe, as the Syrian Civil War caused millions of refugees to flee to Europe. Furthermore, the World Bank estimates over 216 million people displaced worldwide by 2050 because of climate change.⁴⁵ The Czech Republic and the United States are likely to see vast numbers of both internal and internationally displaced persons during this crisis. Through the establishment of a bilateral refugee program which could lead to a realized international framework for refugee resettlement, the impact of future refugee crises could be mitigated.

Conclusion:

The Czech Republic and United States enjoy a strong alliance on issues like energy security, cyber security, and human rights. This partnership could be deepened through the establishment of a bilateral exchange program for refugees who would like to resettle in the United States. Due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian refugees have arrived in the Czech Republic. While the Czech Republic has accepted all these refugees with food, shelter, and healthcare, the country's resources are currently being outpaced by the number of refugees it is accepting. The United States has committed to increasing its share of Ukrainian refugees. The Czech Republic should seek to establish a bilateral program for refugee resettlement. This program would allow the Czech Republic and the United States to share resources, resettle refugees, and create a more equitable, efficient, and realized refugee policy. It would mitigate some of the capacity and funding constraints currently experienced by the Czech Republic. Furthermore, it would serve as an example to other countries how to create a more equitable and global approach to refugee resettlement.

⁴⁴ Vali Nasr, "The Middle East's Next Conflicts Won't Be Between Arab States and Iran," *Foreign Policy*, March 2, 2021, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/03/02/the-middle-east-s-next-conflicts-wont-be-between-arab-states-and-iran/>

⁴⁵ The World Bank, "Millions on the Move in Their Own Countries: The Human Face of Climate Change," *The World Bank*, September 13, 2021, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2021/09/13/millions-on-the-move-in-their-own-countries-the-human-face-of-climate-change#:~:text=%22Over%20216%20million%20people%20could,Eastern%20Europe%20and%20Central%20Asia>