

Silent Heroes – Civil Society and the Refugee Crisis

Thursday 15th October 2015
German Mission to the United Nations

- Panelists -

Ellie Alter first became engaged with asylum seekers through her involvement in urban agriculture at Brooklyn Grange, the leading rooftop farm in the U.S. As a farmer, she bore witness to the asylum seekers that were being trained at the farm and became interested in the way that urban farms and other civic centers can play a role in welcoming and integrating asylum seekers. She began working for the Refugee and Immigrant Fund (RIF) in 2014, and learned the immense power that grassroots civic organizations can have for individuals seeking asylum.

Brett Stark is Legal Director and co-founder of Terra Firma at Catholic Charities New York, where he provides direct representation to unaccompanied immigrant youth in immigration and family court, specializing in asylum law and Special Immigrant Juvenile cases. He has worked in refugee resettlement in Kenya, on human rights in Israel, and was a 2008 Fulbright Scholar in Taiwan. Mr. Stark has presented on unaccompanied immigrant youth issues at Harvard Medical School, Yale Law School, and Duke University and has collaborated with researchers at Columbia University to assess the mental health of unaccompanied immigrant youth. Mr. Stark is the co-author of “Terra Firma: Medical-Legal Care for Unaccompanied Immigrant Garifuna Children,” *Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy* (2015).

Kristèle Younes began her role as Director, UN Humanitarian Affairs with the International Rescue Committee in March 2014. Her responsibilities include between IRC's lead on relationships with UN agencies, member States and UN Security Council in New York on issues of focus for the organization. Prior to her work with the IRC, Kristèle worked with the Norwegian Refugee Council in Turkey, and served for two mandates as the Humanitarian Expert on the UN Security Council established Somalia Eritrea Monitoring Group, based in Nairobi, Kenya. Kristèle also worked for the Center for Civilians in Conflict as field director, traveling to Afghanistan and Libya just after the conflict erupted to advocate for better civilian protection policies. She previously worked as a Regional External Relations Officer for UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency in Jordan, covering the entire Iraq operation. She focused on advocacy with donor governments and countries hosting Iraqi refugees, while coordinating the inter-agency response to the Iraqi refugee crisis. Before UNHCR, Kristèle was a senior advocate with Refugees International, where she was the lead on Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Yemen and conducted over 18 field missions to assess humanitarian and security situation of displaced populations

UN Youth Delegates

Participation in decision-making is one of the key priority areas of the United Nations agenda on youth. One form of youth participation at the United Nations is through the inclusion of youth delegates in a country's official delegation to the United Nations. The youth delegate programme is coordinated by the Focal Point on Youth at the global level, but it is the responsibility of the Member States to establish a youth delegate programme at the national level, and to decide who will represent the young people of their country. The roles of a youth representative varies from country to country, but normally includes providing input to their delegation on issues related to youth and participate in their delegation's general work through attending meetings and informal negotiations.

This event is organized by the Youth Delegates of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria and Germany. For further information please contact the German Youth Delegate carina@jugenddelegierte.de