

Justice for Refugees and Migrants: Jindal Global University Voices at UN Symposium

SONIPAT, India and VIENNA

“Social Acceptance: Stepping Stone to Integration of Refugees and Migrants.” – Dr. S.P. Sahni

O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) received the unique honour to present an invited talk on 'Perspectives on Refugees and Migrants in the Age of Migration and Global Crime' held in Vienna from 14th-18th May, 2018.

It is noteworthy to mention that JGU was the only Indian University to get this invite to present at this global platform.

The event was held under the aegis of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Prof. (Dr.) Sanjeev P. Sahni, Principal Director, Jindal Institute of Behavioural Sciences (JIBS) of JGU presented his talk on '*Educating for Justice for Refugees and Migrants: A Global South Perspective*' in this forum.

In his presentation, Prof. (Dr.) Sahni stressed on the 'social acceptance' being a key stepping stone to integration of refugees and migrants, "The integration is a multi-group responsibility involving the host government, non-governmental organizations, communities and local residents." He also spoke about building a conscious narrative where there is a cohesive social acceptability for immigrants that needs to be instilled among host citizens.

He mooted, "At the governmental level, a robust policy is required to be drafted that could take into account the immigration policies, promote integration policies that acknowledge diversity, provide national realities, recognize local context, providing healthy physical conditions to reside, involve non-governmental organizations and delegation of authority aptly; at community level the non-governmental organizations need to promote social acceptance, mobilize the immigrants to search jobs, educate the immigrants regarding the countries cultural context and language, ensuring that children of immigrants are enrolled in school and at individual level, each citizen of the host country needs to be sensitized of the immigrants."

Immigration is not country specific, it has become a global phenomenon, where human exodus is constantly happening; it is the reality of the times we live in. This takes a load on livelihood, demographic and infrastructure of a nation.

There are about 65.6 million people forcibly displaced worldwide out of which 16.1 million refugees are registered with UNHRC and 5.2 million with UNRWA and many of them are under the age of 18 years. There are about 10 million stateless people who are denied nationality and access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, employment and freedom of movement.

The world is witnessing a huge humanitarian crisis. Every minute, 24 people around the world are forced to flee their homes. That's 34,000 people a day who leave everything behind in the hope of finding safety and a better tomorrow.

Stressing on the role of mental health which plays a crucial role in rehabilitation of displaced people, Dr. Sahni was of the opinion that, "We need an integrative and holistic approach towards it. Mental health of refugees is dependent on a complex web that is governed by bio-psycho-social factors being mediated by government and other agencies at large."

Migration is reported to affect mental health of refugees that is dependent on the biological factors (physical health), psychological health and social acceptance by people of the host country.

Asylum is a human right and no human being is illegal; these are the pertinent narratives that are needed to combat ***all kinds of xenophobia and racial discrimination*** in this unfolding humanitarian crisis.

The 5-day event saw participation of leading global experts on refugee crisis, human right crusaders, health care professionals and legal luminaries.

***Prof. (Dr.) Sanjeev P Sahni is the Principal Director
Jindal Institute of Behavioural Sciences (JIBS)***