



Young People's Rights Review

Khaled Emkidh MSYP - Support for Refugees

Fellow delegates, honourable ladies and gentlemen;

First of all, I would like to start by introducing myself. I am Khaled Emkidh MSYP and I represent Glasgow Kelvin. I am very privileged today to be an ambassador for the young people at such a unique event defending young people's rights.

Since the announcement of the Prime Minister in 2015 to take up to 20,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees under the resettlement scheme; the Scottish Government has positively responded by taking almost the third of this number.

Recently, I have been working on a study carried out by the University of Glasgow, and among the 7,300 young Syrian refugees who have resettled in the UK since 2015, around two-thirds of them are either in employment or engaged in study at University or College with 55 per cent saying that their main barrier to the labour market access was language. As the study shows, not being able to speak English is one of the main barriers to integration. In some cases, young refugees can wait up to 3 years to start learning English due to long waiting lists. **So, we are calling on the Scottish government to invest more in English classes to all young refugees, so they can achieve their aspirations.**

Ladies and gentlemen, as young person who came from the same situation, I feel so thankful for Scotland and its people who have provided me with access to a wide range of opportunities and helped me to start a new life here full of dignity. Scotland is a force for good through all the historical work we do for refugees and every one of us should be proud.

Our campaign within the Scottish Youth Parliament is focusing on all issues affecting our young people from all colours and backgrounds, including young refugees. **We have a big commitment to make sure young people's rights are fully protected. We want the UNCRC incorporated into Scots law. We want to empower all young people to lead the way and educate them of what rights they are entitled to.** And we will do everything we can to make sure the voices of young people are heard.