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Commentary

Commentary on “The Ukrainian refugee crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe” (Int J Surg 2022;102:106671)

Dear Editor,

We would like to share some ideas on the publication “The Ukrainian refugee crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe” [1]. According to Rahimi et al., reinstalling pandemic restrictions and countermeasures could help to prevent an increase in COVID-19 cases in Europe [1]. They also pointed out that decision-making should be influenced by unity and solidarity, as well as international and independent organizations like the World Health Organization and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees [1].

We feel the current scenario in Ukraine is alarming, and that it has the potential to exacerbate the country’s already dire situation as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Apart from the urgent need for peace, the international community should band together to provide all available help. Infectious illness control is essential, and a pandemic as a result of a conflict is a distinct possibility [2]. The current COVID-19 outbreak is expected to expand across Ukraine and neighboring nations. This will be a major international issue. Collaboration is extremely important.

The authors of this Letter to Editor want to share their personal stories from Indochina, an area where ethnic minorities have long been victims of violence and bloodshed. During the battle, there were no medical facilities or normal surgery. Prehospital care was not an option. The only operating healthcare system was a field hospital that aided refugees on the border of a neighboring country [3].

A major issue is the health of persons who have been evacuated from combat zones. After a conflict, refugee populations may be resettled. It is conceivable they may have contracted an infectious illness. Countries that take in large numbers of refugees may find it challenging to address their health-care demands, which include infectious, chronic, and mental illnesses. The occurrence of a new infectious disease in an Indochina refugee camp (such as hepatitis and tuberculosis) was reported [4], indicating the urgent necessity to restrict the spread of COVID-19 among the present Ukrainian refugees.

The current situation in Ukraine could merely be the start. If the disturbance extends across the country, it will become more serious. The situation in Ukraine has alarmed people all over the world. Expectation of something similar to what has happened in Indochina before should be prepared. COVID-19 must be handled adequately in battle zones, refugee camps, and other similar situations, and it will continue to be an issue in Ukraine and its nearby countries that host the refugees.

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