

UPF Lisbon, Portugal co-sponsors a commemoration of World Refugee Day 2021

Sergio Vieira
June 26, 2021

The poster features a central illustration of diverse people walking across a globe. Text on the poster includes: 'Diálogo Mundial do Refugiado' at the top; 'Together Without Borders' on the left; 'Federação da Paz Universal' on the right; 'Diálogos' in large blue letters in the center; 'Evento online – Zoom' and 'Sábado 26 de junho, 2021' below it; '17:00 – 18:30' at the bottom center; and a Zoom link on the bottom right. Logos for 'Together Without Borders' and 'Federação da Paz Universal' are also present.

Reunião Zoom agendada
ID da reunião: 241 390 5192
Senha de acesso: fpu

Link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2413905192?pwd=SUNkelFVdUFrc1RxWnBDeFAzTFpzd09>

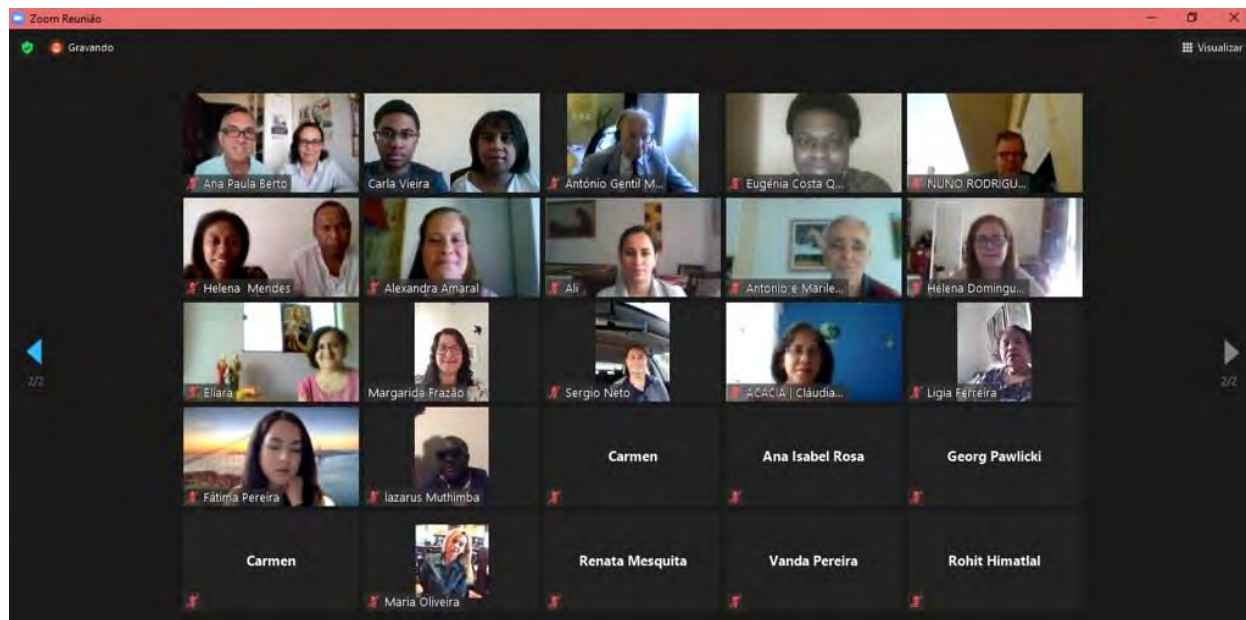
Lisbon, Portugal -- UPF co-sponsored a significant event to commemorate World Refugee Day 2021.

Working in partnership with the association Together Without Borders, UPF-Portugal organized an online conference on June 26 with the theme "World Refugee Day -- Dialogues."

World Refugee Day, which is observed on June 20, was established by the United Nations in 2001.

The topic of refugees has become one of the most discussed in the world media in recent years, especially as the topic touches on humanitarian concerns.

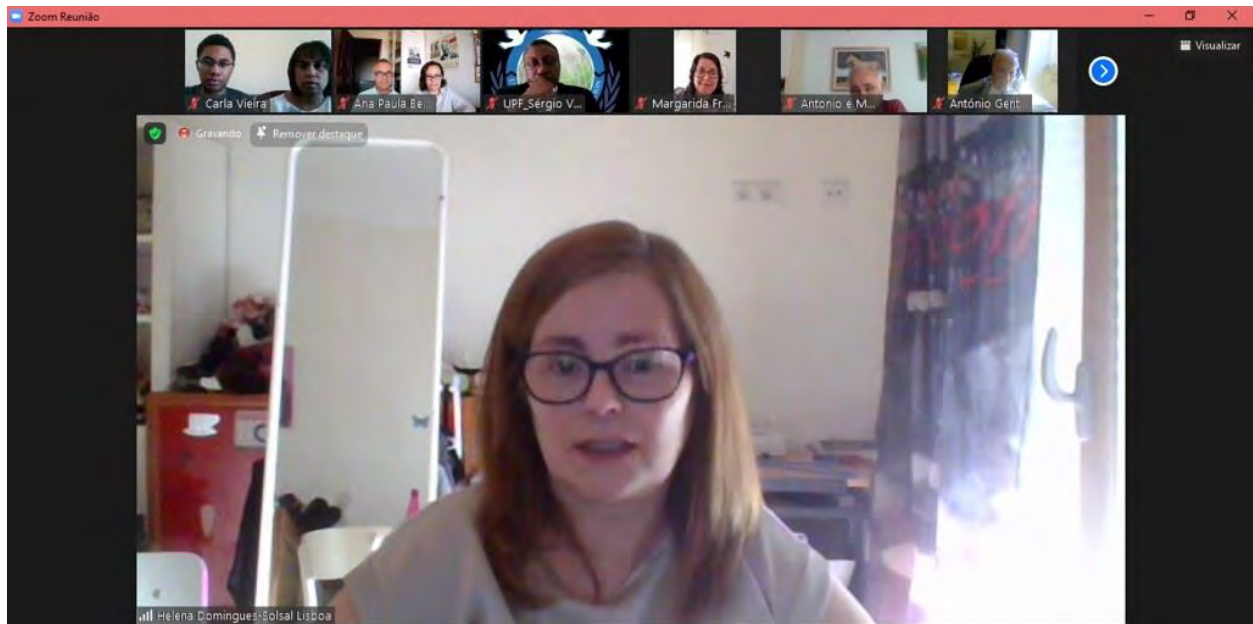
Although wars continue to result in large numbers of refugees, many countries are showing less willingness to receive them, despite the advantages that migrants bring -- especially in many European countries with aging populations and decreasing birth rates.



The session was opened by **Dr. Margarida Frazão**, the founder in 2017 of Together Without Borders, who is also part of the UPF-Portugal team. After graduating with a degree in social education, she founded this association to help migrants and refugees in Portugal -- raising awareness about their human rights and supporting their social inclusion.

Dr. Frazão invited two speakers to this event:

Dr. Helena Domingues, a psychologist at the Catholic Salesian Foundation Service in Lisbon, who is responsible for volunteering with migrants and hosting refugee families, raised her many concerns about the lack of housing to accommodate refugees arriving in Portugal;



Mariam Barghout, a former Syrian refugee and mother of four children, talked about her experience as a refugee. It was a very moving testimony of how she arrived in Portugal in 2016 with her family after a journey of great courage, empowerment and resilience.

Among the issues discussed were the population's ignorance about the legal status of refugees, insensitivity about the state in which these people find themselves, and support for protectionist policies and xenophobic behavior.

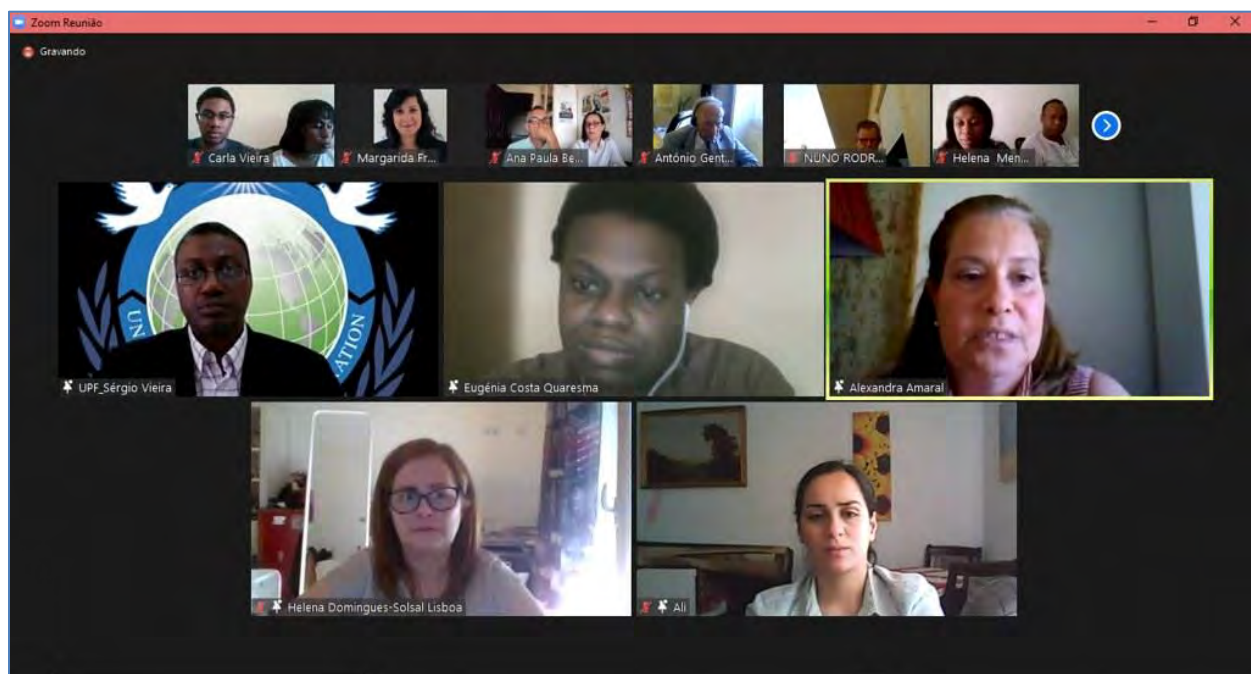


[A video was shown](#) that alluded to the possibility that at any time any of us in any nation could find ourselves in a refugee situation.

Then the head of UPF-Portugal spoke about the UPF mission and its vision of raising awareness of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universally shared values. He described these goals as a way of showing sensitivity and compassion for unprotected and fleeing human beings, especially women and children.

UPF founders Father and Mother Moon themselves were once refugees in their own nation, he said. When Mother Moon was around 6 years old, she fled with her mother and grandmother from North Korea to South Korea in the midst of enormous challenges and dangers that put their lives at risk.

One of two guest speakers invited by UPF, **Dr. Eugénia Quaresma**, has a degree in curative psycho-pedagogy and a post-graduate degree in religions, politics and social doctrines. Dr. Quaresma, the director of the Portuguese Catholic Work for Migration since 2014, spoke about her experiences and difficulties in this area. She then showed a [video with Pope Francis' message](#) and concerns about this topic



The second of the two UPF guest speakers, **Dr. Alexandra Amaral**, graduated in law and founded the organization ACACIA (Association for International Cooperation with Africa). With the mission of promoting the value of the individual, it supports cooperation for project development in Mozambique and Cape Verde (women, education, health, environment and child support). Dr. Amaral also spoke about the association's recent project of helping refugees from Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, who are fleeing from terrorist attacks.

After a moving video, "[The Testimony of Ali](#)," featuring the eldest son of former Syrian refugee Mariam Barghout, each speaker was presented with a question from the audience. Then the organizers closed the event with final thoughts:

Through cooperating with these people of good will and their institutions, UPF hopes to strengthen relations for the sake of future joint work to resolve the serious global concerns of our time.

[Recording of the webinar here.](#)

