Navigating New Geopolitical Conflicts As A Global Mobility Manager

Over the last 30 years in HR, I have seen a fair share of globally traumatic events, disruptions to our everyday lives that we already found busy and overwhelming in Global Mobility. Over the years, I have compiled resources and best practices to share with Global Mobility Leaders worldwide in such situations, because we typically don't train for a crisis. I also find that having the three principles in mind can help you navigate this terrain.

The world has shifted once again. As headlines report on the escalation of conflict involving the US and new geopolitical fronts, we find our hearts heavy. In times of war, the role of a Global Mobility Manager shifts to that of a "First Responder".

Here is how you can help - and lead - right now.

MAINTAIN THREE PRINCIPLES

1. From Policy To People

Standard relocation policies do not apply in war zones. You must be prepared to "break" policy to save lives, whether that means approving emergency housing, cash advances (if ATMs are down), or immediate repatriation.

2. The Neutrality Of Humanity

In your role, you may have employees from both sides of a conflict. Maintain a "Human-First" approach. We support people, regardless of their passports. Focus on safety and empathy rather than political debate.

3. Digital Media Literacy

Remind your employees that their social media activity can have security implications. In some regions, a "like" or a "share" can endanger a local employee. Provide clear guidance on digital safety.

"We are not just managing moves; we are protecting human potential in its most vulnerable state".

Remember Four Immediate Actions

1. **Verify Before You Share:** In a high-tech conflict, disinformation is a weapon. Follow the SHARE checklist (Source, Headline, Analyse, Retouched, Error)
2. **Mental Readiness:** You cannot support your expats if you are running on empty. Check your own "Energy Battery" before stepping into a crisis meeting
3. **Strategic Giving:** Financial aid remains the fastest way to help. Support the ICRC, UNHCR, and Doctors Without Borders. Avoid sending physical goods (clothing/food) unless specifically requested by a local agency, as it clogs logistics corridors
4. **The "Human Touch":** Reach out to your colleagues in affected areas. Sometimes, a simple "I see you" is the most powerful tool in your kit.

Follow The Global Mobility Manager Security Protocol

If you have an international population in an affected or neighbouring area, use this checklist to stabilise your operations.

Use and Share my Global Mobility Manager Toolkit for Crisis Events

1. High-Level Strategy For Managers

As a Global Mobility Manager, your role transitions into a "First Responder" capacity during geopolitical conflicts.

- Establish Presence: Secure a seat on the company's Emergency Crisis Committee
- Define Scope: Clarify your specific responsibilities for life-and-death situations regarding expats and business travellers
- Security Infrastructure: Verify membership and coverage details with International SOS. Ensure all local staff in affected regions have access
- Health Alerts: Follow official health alerts (e.g., WHO WhatsApp channel) to monitor ground-level conditions
- Legal Compliance: Inform yourself on Refugee Status and work authorisation (e.g., the Swiss "S Status") for staff who may become displaced.

2. Verified Humanitarian Resources And Donations

When donating or organising workplace fundraisers, prioritize established organisations with existing infrastructure in conflict zones.

Phase	Action Item	Responsibility
Triage	Identify "Red Zone" Staff: Run a report of all expats, international business travellers, and local staff in the conflict zone.	GMM / Security Provider
Access	Crisis Committee: Ensure Global Mobility has a seat at the company's Emergency Crisis Table. You are the link between policy and people.	GM Leader and HR Leader
Safety	Security Provider: Verify membership coverage. Are dependents included? Is evacuation (non-medical) covered?	GMM / Security Provider
Comm.	The "Safe and Well" Check: Implement a mandatory check-in protocol (WhatsApp, SMS, or Security App). Educate all staff about security and safety protocols.	GMM / Local HR
Legal	Immigration: Prepare for displaced staff. Can they work remotely from a third country? Check refugee status updates.	GMM / Immigration
Support	EAP Activation: Ensure the Employee Assistance Program offers trauma-specialized counselling in the local language.	GMM / Benefits

Organisation	Best For...
ICRC (Red Cross)	Neutral humanitarian aid, family tracing, and medical support.
UNHCR	Support and legal protection for displaced persons and refugees.
Doctors Without Borders	Immediate emergency medical intervention in active zones.
UNICEF / WFP	Focused aid for children and food security in impacted areas.

Charity Vetting Checklist:
- Does the charity meet Better Business Bureau standards?
- Do they have a pre-existing presence in the specific impact area (e.g., Middle East, Eastern Europe)?
- Note: Avoid sending physical goods like clothing or food unless requested; they often create logistical bottlenecks. Financial aid is faster.

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> "Do they have a pre-existing presence in the specific impact area (e.g., Middle East, Eastern Europe)?"

3. Digital Media Literacy And Social Responsibility

In a 2026 conflict environment, information is a battlefield. Use the S.H.A.R.E. checklist before posting:
- S - Source: Is this a verified, trustworthy outlet?
- H - Headline: Is it sensationalist or clickbait?
- A - Analyse: Does the content show clear propaganda bias?
- R - Retouched: Do the photos or videos look manipulated?
- E - Error: Are there factual or grammatical inconsistencies?

Principles to Remember:
- Avoid Echo Chambers: Algorithms reinforce your existing bias. Seek out diverse, objective reporting
- Observe Before Posting: Sometimes silence is more respectful than uninformed noise
- Grief Space: Give people space to mourn without encountering hate or debate.

4. Grass-Roots And Immediate Personal Action

If you are in a position to help individuals directly:
- Accommodation: Use verified platforms to offer temporary housing or a shower for refugees
- Employment: Actively look into hiring refugees from affected areas.
- Direct Logistics: Support trusted non-profits like Human-Plus for refugee transportation
- Visibility: Share emergency phone numbers (from the ICRC or UNHCR) on your social channels to help confused refugees find official help.

> "Employment: Actively look into hiring refugees from affected areas"

Resources:

This overview also contains the most common security providers.
- https://globalpeopletransitions.com/helpful-websites-and-linkedin-groups-in-global-mobility/

Upcoming E-book:
- Connolly, J., Weinberger, A. (2026), "Global Mobility: The Taxation and Management of Internationally Mobile Employees."

If you'd like to stay updated on this publication, you can sign up here: http://eepurl.com/dpfrrf.

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