

UNHCR IN TURKEY

FACTS & FIGURES

January 2011, Issue 03

 **UNHCR**
The UN Refugee Agency
Birleşmiş Milletler Mülteci Örgütü
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60
YEARS • YIL



Special Commemorative Edition

UNHCR 60th Anniversary

Sixty years after its founding, UNHCR continues to promote international protection for refugees.

Mr. António Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, meets the Turkish President Mr. Abdullah Gül in Ankara.

Photo: Office of the Presidency Of The Republic Of Turkey

Contents

CHAPTER ONE:

- Historic Visit to Turkey
Mr. Guterres Thanks Turkey for Extending Protection 2
- UNHCR Worldwide
2011- COMMEMORATIONS 5

CHAPTER TWO:

- UNHCR in Turkey
Local Operation of the UN Refugee Agency 15
- Legal Framework
Turkey's Asylum System in Transition 18
- Persons of Concern
Seventeen Thousand Registered with UNHCR in 2010 22
- Quality of Asylum
Positive Steps Taken in the Reform Process 27
- Asylum Capacity-Building
UNHCR Works with the Government and Civil Society to Strengthen
the Asylum System in Turkey 32
- Public Awareness
Media, Events, Advocacy and Public Information 35
- Assistance
Philanthropic Community at Workf 39

MAPS:

- ✦ Turkey, Refugees by Country of Origin 30
- ✦ Turkey, Refugees and Asylum-Seekers 31



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UNHCR Turkey

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CHAPTER ONE

UNHCR COMMEMORATES ANNIVERSARIES IN 2010 & 2011...

- 60th anniversary of the UN Refugee Agency
- 60th anniversary of the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
- 50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness
- 150th anniversary of the birth of Fridtjof Nansen the first League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Refugees in Europe after World War II

As World War II ended, millions of people were homeless, including these refugees from Eastern Europe in a camp in Germany. At the time of UNHCR's creation in 1950, it was estimated that there were 1,250,000 refugees under its mandate, of whom some 300,000 to 400,000 were without a home and in need of assistance. Photo: UNHCR / 1953

Mr. Guterres Thanks Turkey for Extending Protection

“I look forward to pursuing this collaboration in order to achieve our common goal to protect and find solutions for those most in need” High Commissioner said.



United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. António Guterres and Turkish President Mr. Abdullah Gül reaffirmed their common goals of protecting refugees. 22 November, 2010.
Photo: Office of the Presidency Of The Republic Of Turkey

Mr. António Guterres, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, thanked Turkey for the protection extended to so many refugees over the years.

Mr. Guterres paid an official visit from 22 to 24 November 2010 to Ankara, amid the ongoing intensified efforts by Turkey to improve the protection environment of asylum-seekers and refugees. During this first ever official visit to Turkey by a High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Guterres held meetings with President Abdullah Gül, the Minister of Interior, Mr. Beşir Atalay and the Minister for EU Affairs, Mr. Egemen Bağış. High Commissioner Guterres expressed his appreciation of

the collaboration between his Office and the Turkish Government. “I look forward to pursuing this collaboration in order to achieve our common goal to protect and find solutions for those most in need” Mr. Guterres said, when he met with President Mr. Abdullah Gül.

The Turkish Government has drafted its first asylum law and is in the process of establishing a civilian asylum and migration institution.

In his meeting with Mr. Beşir Atalay, the Turkish Minister of the Interior, the High Commissioner commended the consultative approach the Ministry had adopted in finalization of the draft asylum law. He noted that while Turkey has provided protection

Mr. António Guterres and the Turkish Minister of Interior Mr. Beşir Atalay discussed the current asylum issues in Turkey and around the world during the High Commissioner's historic visit to Turkey. The High Commissioner underlined the need for more institutionalization of UNHCR's presence in Turkey. He also praised the Government's efforts in reforming its asylum system. Mr. Atalay reaffirmed Turkey's commitment to international asylum and humanitarian principles. The Ministry of Interior has completed drafting Turkey's first asylum law after two years of intensive work in cooperation with UNHCR and the Turkish civil society. 23 November, 2010. Photo: Ministry of Interior.



for hundreds of thousands of persons over the years, that adoption of a legal framework would provide consistency, and further demonstrate the importance Turkey attaches to humanitarianism in a world where the asylum space is at risk. Turkey has undertaken emergency relief operations even in the remotest corners of the world hit by natural or other disasters. The High Commissioner elaborated during his discussions with Turkish counterparts the possibilities for enhancing cooperation between Turkey and his Office in global humanitarian relief work.

The issues related to Turkey's accession talks with the European Union had been elaborated during the High Commissioner's visit to Mr. Egemen Bağış, the Deputy Prime Minister and Turkey's Chief Negotiator for EU.

High Commissioner in the Parliament

At the Turkish Grand National Assembly, Mr. Guterres addressed a large group of parliamentarians representing various sub-commissions such as the Parliamentary Group on Population and Development, the Parliamentary Commission on Home Affairs, the Parliamentary Commission of Foreign Affairs, the Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights and the Parliamentary Commission on EU Harmonization. At this historic meeting, jointly organized by Mrs. Öznur Çalık, Chairperson of the Demography and Development Group and Mr. Yaşar Yakış, President of the Commission of EU Harmonization, Mr. Guterres recalled the global character of international population movements and called for more international collaboration. He

noted the challenges faced by Turkey with regard to large-scale migration, including substantial numbers of asylum seekers and refugees, and encouraged European states in particular to admit on resettlement more refugees from Turkey as a contribution to global international responsibility sharing as well as an indication of solidarity with Turkey in adoption of an asylum law.



Mr. Guterres stated that international cooperation is essential to address today's forced population movements, in his speech in the Parliament. He addressed more than 50 Turkish parliamentarians representing all political parties. 24 November, 2010. Photo: Grand National Assembly of Turkey.

Turkey continues to implement a geographic limitation to the 1951 Refugee Convention, thereby taking responsibility for granting asylum only to refugees who come from European countries. Most asylum-seekers in Turkey originate from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia.

Claims of asylum seekers of non-European origin in Turkey are assessed by UNHCR. Turkey permits those found to be refugees to remain pending resettlement to a third country. However, the number of resettlement places falls short of the needs and there are increasing

numbers awaiting a durable solution. UNHCR is encouraging more countries, and in particular EU Member States, to show solidarity with Turkey by participating in the resettlement effort.

During his stay in Turkey, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees also visited Anıtkabir - the Mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey.

With the Turkish Civil Society

Mr. Guterres came together with a large group of Turkish NGO representatives including the members of UNHCR's implementing partners. At a reception for the NGOs, the High Commissioner talked about global challenges that his Office faces. The President of Turkish Red Crescent Society, Mr. Tekin Küçükali informed Mr. Guterres about 'Mevlana' emergency houses, developed by his agency, as an alternative shelter to tents.



High Commissioner Mr. António Guterres was graced with a rosette presented by the President of Turkish Red Crescent Society, Mr. Tekin Küçükali, at the reception held for the media, NGOs and academicians in Ankara. 23 November, 2010. Photo: UNHCR Turkey

The Turkish media had shown great interest in the visit of Mr. Guterres to Turkey. The High Commissioner was interviewed by several dailies and TV stations.



United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Mr. António Guterres and UNHCR delegation paid tribute at Anıtkabir - the Mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey. 23 November, 2010. Photo: UNHCR Turkey

High Commissioner at a Glance...

Born on April 30, 1949, in Lisbon and educated at the Instituto Superior Técnico, António Guterres is married and the father of two children.

1981 - 1983 *Member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and Chairman of the Committee on Demography, Migration and Refugees*

1991 *Founder of the Portuguese Refugee Council*

1991 - 2002 *Part of the Council of State of Portugal*

1992 - 1999 *Vice-President of Socialist International, a worldwide organization of social democratic political parties*

1995 - 2002 *Portuguese Prime Minister: heavily involved in the international effort to resolve the crisis in East Timor*

1999 - 2005 *President of Socialist International*

2000 *Led the adoption of the Lisbon Agenda as President of the European Council and co-chaired the first European Union-Africa summit.*

António Guterres was elected the 10th UN High Commissioner for Refugees by the UN General Assembly on June 15, 2005 and in April 2010 re-elected for another five-year term.

2011- COMMEMORATIONS

Since its establishment on 14th December 1950, UN Refugee Agency has helped millions

These are the times for anniversaries... 2010 and 2011 mark cornerstones for the establishment of the contemporary, international refugee regime. What are these cornerstones?

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established in 1950. UNHCR commemorated its 60th Anniversary on 14 December 2010 with events being organized at Head Quarters and at country and regional levels. One year after the establishment of UNHCR, the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons held in Geneva from 2 to 25 July 1951, adopted the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Together with the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees as well as the Statute of The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Convention is the main international instrument regulating the current asylum regime. Yet another anniversary of 2011 marks the adoption of the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. This important Convention was done 50 years ago, on 30 August 1961 at New York.

The year 2011 also marks the 150th birthday of Fridtjof Nansen, widely considered to be the founder of the contemporary international refugee regime. This regime was established after long years of intensive efforts and as a response to the unprecedented large numbers of refugees in Europe in the early 20th cen-

ture. With the end of the First World War, millions in Europe found themselves as refugees. The League of Nations, the predecessor of United Nations acted quickly to address the problems of these millions. In 1920, shortly after the end of World War I, Fridtjof Nansen, a Norwegian scientist, polar explorer, diplomat, statesman and humanist, with a deep compassion for his fellow human beings, was put in charge of the League's first large-scale humanitarian task – the repatriation of 450,000 prisoners of war. He succeeded by enlisting the support of governments and voluntary agencies.

In 1921, Nansen was appointed the first High Commissioner for Refugees by the League of Nations. He immediately undertook the formidable task of helping repatriate hundreds of thousands of refugees as well as helping them to acquire a legal status and to attain economic independence.

During his tenure as High Commissioner, Nansen set a high standard for action on behalf of refugees and was an example to all those working for humanitarian causes. In recognition of his work and of his humanitarianism, UNHCR established the Nansen Refugee Award many years ago and each year issues a call for nominations so that someone following Fridtjof Nansen's example can be acknowledged for their contribution in this field. This year the award giving ceremony will mark the 150th Anniversary of the birth of Fridtjof Nansen on 10 October 2011.

UNHCR believes that commemorating these important anniversaries will have a significant impact: on reaffirming international protection fundamentals; exploring new protection dynamics where there may be gaps; preventing and resolving statelessness; promoting public awareness of the plight of the people of concern; attracting new sources of funding; and, first and foremost, giving a voice to the displaced and the stateless through their active participation in commemorations activities and events.

The key event in the UN Refugee Agency's commemorations calendar is a Ministerial Meeting of States Parties to the 1951 Refugee Convention and/or 1967 Protocol, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status



This group of returnees is about to leave Lubango, in southern Angola, on a UNHCR-chartered plane.
Photo: UNHCR / 1989 / L. Aström



In March 1999, huge numbers of refugees from Kosovo began to arrive in neighboring Albania and Macedonia. Photo: UNHCR / R. LeMoyné

of Stateless Persons, or the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. States that are not party to these instruments will also be invited as observers. The meeting will be held in Geneva on 7 and 8 December 2011, and will also be a treaty signing event during which States may formalize their accession to the relevant conventions. The Ministerial Meeting will also enable States to make concrete pledges of commitment to address specific forced displacement and/or statelessness issues, as well as to consider broader, forward-looking recommendations.

The World Refugee Day on 20 June 2011, will also gain special importance during this year of anniversaries.

60th Anniversary of UNHCR

The agency appeals for renewed international commitment to helping the world's forcibly displaced.

The Head of the UN Refugee Agency, Mr. António Guterres, marked the 60th anniversary of the organization by appealing for strengthened global impetus in tackling the world's new and fast-evolving displacement and statelessness problems.

Speaking at the agency's headquarters in Geneva, High Commissioner Guterres warned of multiple new factors that are causing displacement. He said many of these did not exist at the time of UNHCR's founding or when the major international refugee and statelessness conventions were created.

"UNHCR traditionally was supporting refugees, people who would cross a border because of a conflict or persecution," he said. "But now we see that more and more people are crossing borders because of extreme poverty, because of the impact of climate change, [and] because of their interrelation with conflict. So there are new patterns of forced displacement and the international community needs to be able to tackle those challenges."

The UN Refugee Agency was created on 14th December 1950 by the United Nations General Assem-

UNHCR COMMEMORATES ANNIVERSARIES IN 2010 & 2011...

- 14 December 2010
60th anniversary of the UN Refugee Agency.
- 28 July 2011
60th anniversary of the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.
- 30 August 2011
50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.
- 10 October 2011
150th anniversary of the birth of Fridtjof Nansen the first League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

bly. Its original purpose was to address the situation of more than one million refugees in Europe in the aftermath of the First World War, but its work quickly expanded. By 1956 it was facing its first major international emergency with the outpouring of refugees following the Hungarian Revolution.

In the 1960s, the decolonization of Africa produced the first of that continent's numerous refugee crises needing UNHCR intervention. Over the following two decades, UNHCR had to help with displacement crises in Asia and Latin America. Its mandate, originally granted for three years, has continuously been extended every five years since 1953. In December 2003, the UN General Assembly decided to remove the time limitation on UNHCR's mandate. Today it deals with major displacement situations around the world. The global population of refugees, internally displaced people, and asylum seekers stands at 43 million people – most of them under UNHCR's duty of care.

Iraq has one of the largest populations displaced in the world, including several million refugees as well as 1.5 million internally displaced persons. One third of those displaced persons are homeless, living in precarious conditions in settlements and public buildings. At the same time, Iraq has seen one of the largest return movements in the past three years with some 500,000 people returning to their areas of origin from other parts of Iraq or from abroad. UNHCR processes asylum applications for Iraqis, or helps governments perform this function. The Office also collaborates with the Government of Iraq in supporting vulnerable IDPs and returnees.

In addition to its own internally displaced, Iraq is also hosting some 40,000 refugees mainly from neighbouring countries.

In Geneva, Mr. António Guterres pointed to major displacement from Somalia and Afghanistan, as examples of 21st century refugee problems that extend across multiple borders and require new and global approaches to finding solutions. He also highlighted the phenomenon of statelessness as requiring particular attention.

But on UNHCR's anniversary and its achievements over 60 years – which include twice being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize – High Commissioner Guterres said the focus should be on coming challenges which would equal anything the agency has faced in its past.

"I think it is very important to recognize that the action of UNHCR has represented for many people life instead of death, home instead of total deprivation, health instead of a disease that can even represent the risk to die, protection against the most dramatic violations of human rights..." he said. "We have many reasons to be proud, but we also have much more reason to be concerned with the challenges we face at the present moment, and recognizing that unfortunately the root causes of conflict and displacement are

not being eliminated and the next few years will be as challenging as the past."

UNHCR's 60th anniversary year led into several related anniversaries, including the 60th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (28 July 2011), the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (30th August 2011), and the 150th anniversary of the birth of Fridtjof Nansen, the first League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (10th October 2011).

Over the coming months UNHCR will be using the occasion of these anniversaries to advocate for a strengthening of the international legal frameworks for dealing with the world's stateless and displaced, including through increased state accessions to the key refugee and statelessness conventions.

Acceding to the Statelessness Conventions



Some 10 million Bengali refugees, who fled to India in 1971, were accommodated in one of the 800 camps. Photo: WFP / Trevor Page

Stateless people are the overlooked millions who are not recognized as nationals of any State. Statelessness is a global issue, with an estimated 12 million persons affected worldwide. While some regions have larger stateless populations than others, every continent is confronted with statelessness. Stateless persons often fall through a protection gap because too few governments have adopted concrete measures to ensure they receive a nationality often assuming they are nationals elsewhere and failing to harmonize global approaches to the grant of nationality to ensure statelessness is avoided. Pursuant to its mandate from the UN General Assembly and guidance from the Executive Committee, UNHCR is committed to changing this.

In anticipation of the 50th Anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has launched the Statelessness Conventions Campaign, encouraging States to accede to both the 1961 Convention as well as to the 1954 Convention relating

to the Status of Stateless Persons. These conventions provide a legal framework to prevent statelessness from occurring and to protect people who are already stateless. For more information please consult the following two brochures published by UNHCR in 2010:

“Protecting the Rights of Stateless Persons: The 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons,” and “Preventing and Reducing Statelessness: The 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Stateless Persons,” available on: www.unhcr.org/statelessness.

Reasons to accede to the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions:

1. The statelessness conventions set global standards.

The two conventions provide the international legal foundations for addressing the causes and consequences of statelessness, which are not addressed in any other treaties.

The 1961 Convention is about preventing statelessness from occurring and thereby reducing it over time. It sets clear rules according to which States must grant nationality to children so that they do not become stateless at birth. It also prevents statelessness later in life, for example, when people become stateless as a result of failed attempts to become naturalized.

The 1954 Convention recognizes that statelessness continues to occur. It therefore seeks to ensure that stateless persons have a status and enjoy minimum standards of treatment until such time as their predicament can be resolved. The 1954 Convention sets the internationally recognized definition of who is a stateless person.

2. Help to resolve conflict of law issues.

With increased global migration and the rise of intermarriages between citizens of different States, more and more individuals are confronted with complex legal and procedural requirements to establish their citizenship. Accession to both statelessness instruments ensures increased legal transparency and predictability with respect to other States, as more States accept the baseline global rules enshrined in these treaties.

3. Contributing to international peace.

Citizenship provides people with a sense of identity and is fundamental to full participation in society. Because they are not citizens of any State, stateless persons often comprise the most disenfranchised segments of society.

In acceding to the statelessness conventions, States can help prevent forced displacement by addressing one of its causes. The more States accede to the statelessness conventions, the stronger the international framework will be to prevent statelessness and therefore address a potential cause of instability.

4. Improving social and economic development.

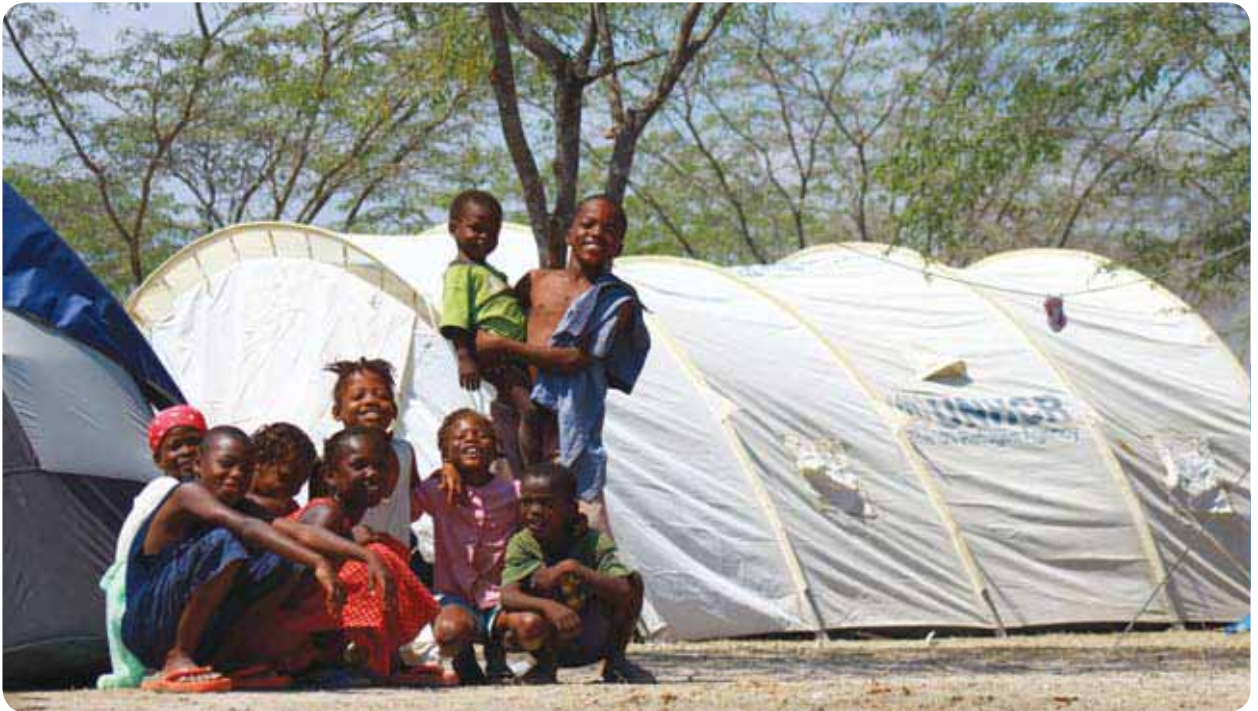
In acceding to the statelessness conventions, States undertake to identify potential stateless populations and take measures to prevent and reduce statelessness within their borders. States thereby obtain a more accurate picture of not only the populations who are in need of State protection and services, but also those who can contribute to the economic and social development of States.

5. Promoting the rule of law.

Reducing statelessness and identifying and regularizing the status of stateless persons contribute not only to economic and social development, but also to the broader respect for the rule of law in all societies. In today's age of widespread global migration, all States benefit from efforts to resolve statelessness, as reciprocal acceptance of minimum rules on citizenship contributes to better regulation of international migration flows.

6. Commitment to human rights.

Several international human rights instruments affirm the right to a nationality. However, the United Nations Statelessness Conventions are the only treaties that provide practical steps that assist States in realizing this right. By acceding to the statelessness conventions, States demonstrate their commitment to human rights and their cooperation with the international community to reduce and eliminate statelessness and respect the dignity of all individuals in need of protection.



Shelter materials count among the initial support United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and its partners provide for refugees, 2010. Photo: UNHCR

UNHCR Today

An Overview

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is mandated to lead and coordinate international action to protect refugees and to seek solutions for the problems of refugees worldwide. UNHCR was created by the United Nations General Assembly in 1950 and began to work in 1951, initially aiding more than one million European refugees in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Over the following decades, as the number of uprooted people grew around the globe, UNHCR's activities and operations expanded. Its mandate, originally granted for three years, has continuously been extended every five years since 1953. In December 2003, the United Nations General Assembly decided to remove the time limitation on UNHCR's mandate. There are 43 million people of concern to UNHCR including not only refugees, but related groups such as asylum-seekers, refugees who have returned home (returnees), stateless people and people who are displaced within their own countries — usually referred to as internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Since its inception, UNHCR has helped well over 50 million men, women, and children, successfully restart their lives and has been twice awarded the Nobel Peace Prize - in 1954 and 1981 respectively.

A refugee is a person who “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his [or her] nationality, and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself [or herself] of the protection of that country.”

Article 1, The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees

The Importance of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees

The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees form the cornerstone of modern refugee protection and the legal principles they enshrine have permeated into countless other international, regional and national laws and practices governing the way refugees are treated. The 1951 Refugee Convention mandates to UNHCR the responsibility to supervise its implementation by States. The Refugee Convention

also requires States to cooperate with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the exercise of its functions.

Regional instruments, such as the 1969 Organization of African Union Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa and the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees in Latin America, expanded the definition of refugee to include persons who are outside their country of origin or habitual residence and are unable or unwilling to return there owing to serious and indiscriminate threats to life, physical integrity or freedom resulting from conflict, generalized violence or events seriously disturbing public order.

The refugee definition contained in UNHCR's Statute has been similarly expanded by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

UNHCR's most important humanitarian responsibility, known as "international protection," is to ensure respect for the basic human rights of refugees, including the possibility for them to seek asylum and to ensure that no one is returned involuntarily to a country where he or she has reasons to fear persecution. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees promotes international refugee agreements, monitors government compliance with international refugee law and in less developed countries, provides as far as possible material assistance such as food, water, shelter and medical care to refugees and other persons of concern.

Table 1.

Top 5 Countries of Resettlement in 2010

Country	Refugees
United States of America	42.025
Canada	4.752
Australia	4.410
Sweden	1.244
Norway	812

Finding Durable Solutions

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees also seeks in cooperation with governments one of three durable solutions for refugees: voluntary repatriation, local integration, and resettlement.

When conditions prevail that allow a return in safety and with dignity, voluntary repatriation to their original homes is the most preferred solution for most refugees. For millions of refugees around the world, going home remains the strongest hope of finding an end to exile. It also needs the continuing support of the international community through the crucial post-conflict phase to ensure that those who make the brave decision to go home can rebuild their lives in a stable environment.

However, this is not always possible, and in such cases UNHCR helps people to try to rebuild their lives elsewhere – either by integrating in the countries where they first sought asylum (local integration) or in a third country willing to accept them for resettlement.

Successful local integration requires the agreement and willingness of both the respective host country and the refugees. It is a gradual process comprising legal, economic and social/cultural aspects, three distinct but inter-related dimensions.

Resettlement is considered when refugees cannot repatriate and are at risk or have a protracted or problematic stay in the country of refuge. In the context of international refugee law and policy, resettlement is a tool for refugee protection and for international responsibility sharing. Self-reliance opportunities play an important role in preparing refugees for any of the durable solutions.

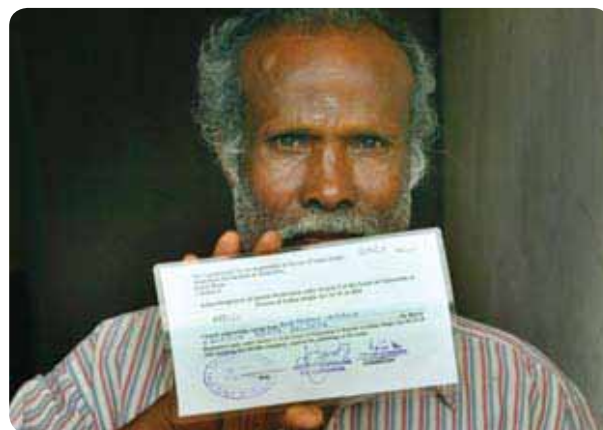
Stateless Persons

To be stateless is to be without the legal bond of a nationality or citizenship in any State. Stateless persons often do not have access to the rights that citizens take for granted. Statelessness means living without a legal identity and the rights that go with this – such as access to health care, education, property rights, and the ability to move freely.

Births and deaths may not be registered with the result that stateless persons legally can be invisible in states: their existence experienced, yet never legally recognized.

Sixty years ago the Universal Declaration of Human Rights confirmed the right of everyone to a nationality. Two additional international instruments have since been promulgated to enhance protection and reduce statelessness: the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

Shortly after the 1961 Convention was ratified, the UN General Assembly asked UNHCR to take



2003, Plantation worker shows an acknowledgement paper of his wife's application for citizenship in Sri Lanka. Photo: UNHCR

on specific responsibilities in the application of this instrument. In the 1990s, through a series of resolutions, the UN General Assembly gave UNHCR the formal mandate to advocate with States steps they can take to prevent and reduce statelessness. The General Assembly requested UNHCR: to promote state accession to the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions; to provide technical and advisory services to interested states pertaining to nationality law and practice; to provide appropriate training to its staff and to government officials; to disseminate relevant information and to enhance cooperation with other interested organizations.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees governing Executive Committee has provided guidance on how to implement this mandate and requires the agency to work with governments, other United Nations agencies and civil society to address the problem.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

UNHCR has been asked periodically by the United Nations Secretary-General to help some groups of internally displaced people. The number of internally displaced persons has risen dramatically in recent years because of the increase in the number of civil wars taking place around the world.

Internally displaced persons have not crossed international frontiers and are not protected by the same

international conventions as refugees. But the plight of the two groups often overlap and a single coordinated operation is sometimes the most obvious and sensible approach. This is especially true during repatriation operations when internally displaced persons are often in the same geographical locations as returning refugees and face many of the same needs.

In 2005, UNHCR and other specialized agencies agreed to a more coordinated and cohesive approach to tackle the problem of internally displaced civilians. Under this new 'collaborative' approach, UNHCR takes a lead role in overseeing the protection and emergency shelter needs of IDPs as well as in the coordination and management of camps.

UNHCR will sometimes also act as the lead agency for the entire operation. UNHCR has participated in more than 30 operations to help internally displaced people since the 1970s including in Sri Lanka, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Colombia, and Afghanistan and, more recently, in Darfur, Sudan. The agency currently helps an estimated 15.6 million (IDPs) internally displaced persons worldwide.

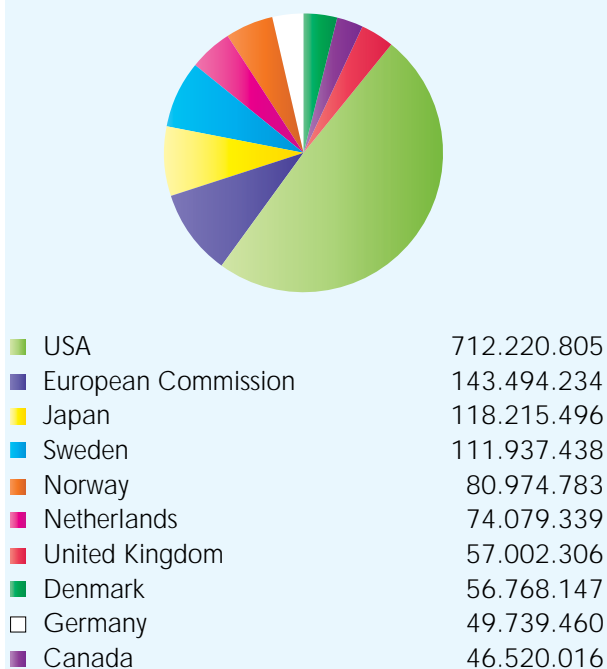
In October 2009, the African Union (AU) adopted the Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention) that obliges member states to protect and help millions of people uprooted within their own countries because of conflict and natural disasters. This Convention - the first legal framework of this nature - integrates the main aspects of international humanitarian law and obliges states to try to prevent displacement,



A UNHCR staff member monitors the border at Blacé as Macedonians flee into Kosovo, 2001 Photo: UNHCR / J. Austin

Figure 1.

Top Ten Government Donors in 2010



to find solutions to the causes of displacement and to provide IDPs with basic rights including social and economic rights.

Under the 2009 Kampala Convention, states that are unable to assist IDPs can seek help from humanitarian organizations.

Voluntary Contributions

UNHCR's programmes are financed by voluntary contributions, mainly from governments, but also from other groups, including private citizens and organizations. It receives a limited contribution from the United Nations regular budget to cover some of its administrative costs.

The annual budget is a record US\$3.32 billion in 2011 and that figure could continue to rise as the agency bases its appeals on the real needs of people of concern. In 2010, the major contributors included the United States (\$712,220,805), the European Commission (\$143,494,234), Japan (\$118,215,496), Sweden (\$111,937,438) and Norway (\$80,974,783).

Assisting Displaced Persons

Protection and material help are interrelated. UNHCR can best provide effective legal protection if a person's basic needs - shelter, food, water, sanitation and medical care- are also met. UNHCR therefore

coordinates the provision and delivery of such items, manages individual camps and has designed specific projects for vulnerable women, children and the elderly who comprise 80 % of a 'normal' refugee population.

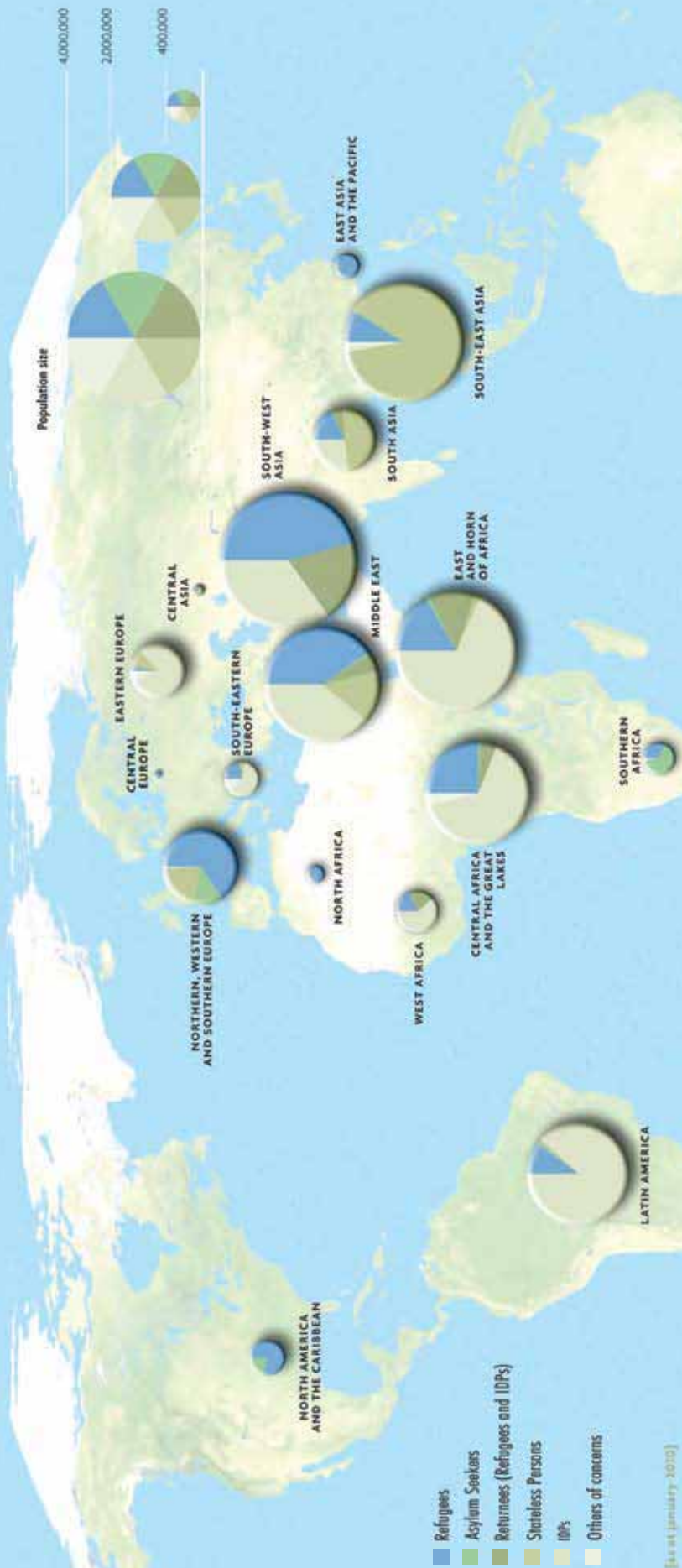
Staffing

As of December 2010, UNHCR had a total of 7,190 staff members - regular as well as temporary - in 396 offices located in 123 countries. About 80 percent of them work in the field, often in remote and dangerous locations. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is also involved in issues related to mixed movements of refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants, some of them across land borders, but also across the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Aden, the Mediterranean Sea and other stretches of water. As humanitarian crises have become more complex, UNHCR has expanded both the number and types of organizations it works with, including UN sister agencies and more than 600 non-governmental organizations. In recent years, the refugee agency has been cutting back staff in headquarters and allocating more resources to field operations.



UNHCR staff works with highest effort worldwide, in order to facilitate the lives of persons of concern to UNHCR. 21 July 2004. Photo: UNHCR

POPULATIONS OF CONCERN TO UNHCR



as of January 2010

Subregion	Refugees	Persons in refugee-like situations	Total refugees	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Asylum-seekers	Returned refugees	IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR	Returned IDPs	Stateless Persons	Various ¹	Total population of concern
Central Africa and Great Lakes ²	945,180	24,300	969,280	626,820	19,980	99,180	2,520,210	99,630	83,010	1,863,280	
East and Horn of Africa ³	779,220	33,920	813,100	783,600	64,020	33,720	3,029,440	379,600	5,000,570	5,000,570	
West Africa	149,020	10	149,030	139,660	9,320	2,010	39,340	166,820	4,660	850,980	
Southern Africa ⁴	143,000	-	143,000	62,380	325,690	2,500	-	-	14,180	486,090	
North Africa ⁵	304,800	26,000	330,800	92,220	3,340	12,010	-	161,740	-	166,750	
The Middle East ⁶	1,857,620	17,490	1,875,110	522,320	30,240	38,040	1,802,000	4,607,400	-	4,607,400	
South-West Asia ⁷	1,829,920	981,320	2,811,240	2,871,340	4,300	57,590	239,690	1,016,520	-	6,178,440	
Central Asia	8,060	-	8,060	3,850	2,340	10	-	-	46,890	57,300	
South Asia	291,240	2,300	293,540	96,850	6,760	1,490	434,900	94,600	800,000	1,032,270	
South-East Asia ⁸	202,620	200,790	403,410	200,640	22,390	420	67,290	4,770,770	61,600	4,825,690	
East Asia and the Pacific ⁹	394,250	5,000	399,250	3,400	7,030	-	-	-	2,000	348,280	
Eastern Europe	244,020	5,000	249,000	218,000	9,980	60	1,016,600	6,350	122,820	1,270,050	
South-Eastern Europe	89,720	570	90,290	14,640	520	4,290	340,810	1,380	30,540	372,360	
Central Europe	30,860	-	30,860	6,620	6,240	-	-	-	6,220	43,360	
Northern, Western and Southern Europe	1,466,920	-	1,466,920	70	276,590	-	-	-	486,460	17,680	2,247,650
North America and the Caribbean	444,960	-	444,960	70	125,300	10	-	-	-	-	570,170
Latin America	24,195	291,380	315,575	89,920	68,560	60	3,103,980	2,229,540	100	3,340,070	
Total	8,806,880	1,589,680	10,396,560	5,512,950	983,440	231,460	15,628,040	22,297,540	6,539,570	40,170	36,460,330

The data are generally provided by Governments, based on their own definitions and methods of data collection. A dash (-) indicates that the value is zero, not available or not applicable.

¹Persons of concern to UNHCR not included in the previous columns but to whom UNHCR extends protection or assistance.

²Uganda: The IDP figure represents the remaining IDPs in camps and transit sites. They remain of concern to UNHCR together with the 408,000 who have already returned to their villages.

³South Africa: Asylum-seekers refers to an estimated 171,700 undecided cases at first instance at the end of 2009 and 138,100 undecided cases at the end of 2008 (no update available)

⁴According to the Government of Algeria, there are an estimated 165,000 Sahrawi refugees in the Tindouf camps

⁵Refugee figures for Iraqis in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic are Government estimates.

⁶Refugee figures for Pakistan include recognized Afghan refugees (2,800), registered Afghans (756,000), and registered Afghans outside refugee villages who are living in a "refugee-like" situation (81,000).

⁷Malaysia: According to UNHCR, and based on lists provided by refugee communities, there are 20,000 unregistered asylum-seekers in Malaysia who share the same profile as the current population of asylum-seekers and refugees who are being progressively registered and having their refugee status determined.

⁸Figures previously cited for the number of stateless persons in Thailand are being reviewed according to clarified criteria.

⁹China: The 300,000 Vietnamese refugees are well integrated and in practice receive protection from the Government of China.

CHAPTER TWO



A photo from the "Gaziantep Through the Eyes of Refugee Teenagers" exhibition, May 2010 Photo: ASAM

Local Operation of the UN Refugee Agency

In 50 Years UNHCR Has Spent More Than \$215.000.000 Assisting Refugees in Turkey

UNHCR in Turkey operates through its main office in Ankara with a presence in Istanbul and Van. As of 1 January 2011, the total number of staff is 116, including 6 International Professional Officers, two Junior Professional Officers, nine National Professional Officers, 49 General Service Staff members, two International and 26 National United Nations Volunteers (NUNV), 3 consultants, four persons under Special Service Agreement and 15 external interpreters.

UNHCR's comprehensive budget for its country program in Turkey is US\$ 16,942,996 in 2011. The actual budget received however is US\$ 11,153,164 as of April 2011 with the following main priorities:

- Support provided to and partnerships strengthened with the Turkish Government to adopt asylum legislation, establish a national asylum body and build national capacity to respond to asylum claims.
- Efforts continued to address immediate, intermediate and longer-term protection needs, including advocacy to increase international responsibility sharing.
- Rights-based approach promoted and access to protection and assistance improved.
- Resettlement of refugees to third countries pursued, voluntary repatriation facilitated or organized whenever feasible and for long-staying refugees in Turkey solutions are advocated for.
- The Turkish public opinion is sensitized to the needs of asylum-seekers and refugees, and information to the international community provided.

The current funding situation allows UNHCR Turkey to focus on providing limited, exceptional assistance to the most critical cases and staffing for the labor-intensive status determination and resettlement operations. In addition, UNHCR Turkey prioritizes its capacity building and public awareness activities. **EFFORTS, continued on page 17**

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Ms. Carol Batchelor, UNHCR Representative in Turkey

Ms. Carol Batchelor has worked for UNHCR in a number of capacities over the years. Her latest assignment was as the Director of the first Ethics Office, which she opened in 2008. Prior to this, Ms. Batchelor served first as the Deputy, and then as Chief of Mission for UNHCR



operations covering India and the Maldives. Ms. Batchelor has also served as Senior Legal Officer at UNHCR Headquarters in both the Protection Support and Oversight Section, as well as in the Standards and Legal Advice Section. She acted as advisor and focal point in articulating and expanding UNHCR's work on statelessness during the 1990s.

Prior to entering UNHCR, Ms. Batchelor worked in the private sector including as Director of Operations at the U.S.A. firm Media Marketing, as consultant to Terrada Investment a Japan based firm, and as Law Associate in the Los Angeles and London offices of Mayer, Brown and Platt.

Ms. Batchelor holds a B.A. from the University of Washington in Seattle, U.S.A., a J.D. in Private and International Law from Stanford University, U.S.A., and an LL.M. in Public International Law from Cambridge University in the United Kingdom.

Currently Ms. Batchelor has been assigned as the UNHCR Representative to Turkey.

Statement of Vision

Looking ahead to an enhanced partnership with Turkey...

Editorial by Ms. Batchelor, next page

Looking ahead to an enhanced partnership with Turkey...

2011 is a year of commemorations. UNHCR is celebrating the long-standing international legal frameworks which outline protection for refugees and for stateless persons, as well as frameworks which can help avoid and prevent forced displacement and ensure humanitarian support. While initially UNHCR was envisioned to be a temporary agency to address displacement lingering in the aftermath of World War II, the humanitarian needs of hundreds of thousands each year have compelled the international community to ensure the continuation of UNHCR's work to the present day.

As we enter 2011, there are over 43 million people of concern to UNHCR globally. Addressing the needs of so many requires a collective focus on advancing comprehensive solutions through legal frameworks, partnerships and dedication to alleviate human suffering. While we must think globally to address displacement on such a scale, we must act locally and individually. In UNHCR's view, even one person without a 'home', one child without a nationality, or one human without safety or protection is too many. Advocating for just one person's well being, delivering one child, mother, or husband from life threatening circumstances, or protecting one individual from war, strife and devastation is a worthy and humane action. It is individual well being which makes the collective whole and which helps to make our world one with hope for the future. The possibility of global peace and stability can only succeed if a helping hand is extended to each person, to each one in need. UNHCR continues to extend this hand to all those the Office serves.

Turkey has a long tradition of providing this protection, individually and collectively, for those with humanitarian needs. In fact, Turkey advances the humanitarian cause not only at home but also in many locations all over the world. In 2011 and beyond, UNHCR is committed to strengthening its partnership with Turkey in the advancement of addressing the protection needs of asylum seekers and refugees in Turkey and around the world.



Carol Batchelor
UNHCR Representative in Turkey

Turkey has undertaken important steps to advance the protection regime. Early in 2011, a draft law on asylum was forwarded to the Prime Minister's Office. The draft law is a progressive one and a clear indication of Turkey's continued strong commitment to humanitarian concerns. The law, when enacted, will improve even further the living conditions of refugees and asylum-seekers in Turkey. UNHCR is actively engaged in advancing mechanisms to enable even closer

cooperation with the Turkish authorities.

UNHCR's activities in Turkey include refugee status determination, general protection, assistance to refugees, capacity building and technical knowledge transfer, sensitizing the public to the universal principles of asylum, and advocating durable solutions for refugees including by way of resettlement. In the past 25 years, UNHCR has resettled over 70,000 non-European refugees from Turkey with the help and support of third countries. UNHCR continues to call upon all states to support host countries, such as Turkey, in concrete responsibility sharing measures such as resettlement. This demonstrates a clear support for the protection host countries extend to so many in need.

During his historic visit to Ankara in November 2010, the High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. António Guterres, indicated his interest in expanding UNHCR's close relations with Turkey to international emergency operations and other areas in view of Turkey's capacity and ability to deliver aid and to advance diplomacy in the international context. Clearly, 2011 will be a year of growing collaboration beyond even that of the past 50 years UNHCR has been in Turkey.

Our commemorative events and reflections in 2011 will empower us to build constructively on the successes of the past and at the same time to prepare for the greater challenges which lie ahead. My office is aiming at an enhanced partnership with Turkey for the future. Through this collaboration we can meet these challenges with a view to ensuring protection for all, and for each and every one.



On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the UN Refugee Agency, old and new members of UNHCR staff came together to share their memories. During this rare occasion, Ms. Carol Batchelor awarded several "recognition certificates" to staff members. Interpreters, who have been playing key roles for years in the refugee status determination process were among those who were awarded. 14 December, 2010. Photo: UNHCR Turkey

Former and current UNHCR staff in Turkey, gathered to commemorate the Agency's 60th birthday

Old and young, international and national, retired and on duty, regular staff and volunteers, more than 100 humanitarian workers who have been contributing to the asylum system in Turkey gathered at the Conference hall of Çağdaş Sanatlar Art Gallery in Ankara to commemorate the 60th anniversary of UNHCR. They have been working hard to help Turkey as well as tens of thousands of refugees in Turkey for 50 years.



Several hundred international and national staff members, who served UNHCR during different periods in Turkey since 1960 made invaluable contributions to the plight of refugees. 14 December, 2010. Photo: UNHCR Turkey

The UNHCR staff in Turkey have been: protecting refugees; determining if they are genuine refugees; re-settling them to third countries; assisting Turkey to build an asylum system; and sharing the stories of refugees with the Turkish people who have so generously hosted these vulnerable persons over many years. Solutions can also be found, as demonstrated by the fact that the UNHCR office in Turkey has successfully resettled over 70,000 refugees to third countries over the last 30 years.

Many young volunteers, who entered UNHCR as interns over the last few decades, are now contributing to the Agency globally in several problematic corners of the world as international staff members. Many international staff members have been promoted to senior positions in UNHCR after they successfully completed their missions in Turkey thereby enhancing their experiences.

On 14 December 2010, Ms. Carol Batchelor, the UNHCR Representative in Turkey, praised the invaluable contributions of the staff members, past and present, to addressing the plight of refugees. She called for a moment of silence in recognition of the ultimate sacrifice too many colleagues have made in dangerous circumstances around the world. "It is thanks to your tireless and self-sacrificing service", she highlighted, "that so many refugees are alive and looking to the future today". During the commemoration event, many colleagues were identified for their very particular contributions to the agency. The staff members left the ceremony with enhanced dedication to the cause.

Efforts Continue to Meet Protection Needs of Refugees

EFFORTS, continued from Page 15

UNHCR Turkey's resources are increasingly under significant constraint due to a variety of problematic factors, including a significant gap between funds available and total UNHCR programme requirements, an increased number of asylum-seekers, as well as higher number of persons who are lacking durable solutions.

UNHCR has spent more than \$215,000,000 in Turkey, since 1960.

Turkey's Asylum System in Transition

Draft Law on "Foreigners and International Protection" pending submission to the Turkish Parliament

In 1962, Turkey ratified the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and in 1968 also its 1967 Protocol. Furthermore, Turkey is a member of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Executive Committee. However, Turkey maintains the geographical limitation pursuant to Article 1B of the 1951 Convention. Thus the application of the 1951 Convention is limited 'to persons who have become refugees as a result of events occurring in Europe'. In this context, Turkey defines Europe as all members of the Council of Europe, including Russia and ex-Soviet states west of the Urals (including the Caucasus).

In Turkey, the vast majority of asylum seekers originate from non-European states. Turkey has thus created a system for granting them 'temporary asylum' which runs in parallel with UNHCR procedures. Turkey's temporary asylum regime is regulated by the 1994 Asylum Regulation, as amended in 1999, and the 2006 Implementation Directive. Under this framework, non-European asylum seekers may apply to the Turkish government for 'temporary asylum seeker status.' Durable solutions can then be sought in principle with the aid of UNHCR.

Given this context, UNHCR conducts refugee status determination for non-European asylum seekers. Currently, there is no standard mechanism that ensures UNHCR's involvement from the outset of the asylum procedure. While UNHCR is mentioned in the asylum regulation, the relevant articles refer to UNHCR's role in facilitating resettlement only. The absence of a formal role for UNHCR or of a comprehensive national system in relation to receiving and processing asylum claims is of particular concern where persons have entered, stayed or tried to leave Turkey in breach of domestic law. If they then choose to claim asylum while being detained, UNHCR requests the agreement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior in order to be able to visit the individual applicants in the detention facility and to conduct the refugee status determination interview.

In the context of current EU accession negotiations, Turkey has made a commitment to bring its asylum law gradually in line with EU standards. Thus, a fully fledged domestic asylum framework including procedural safeguards has been developed, replacing the current challenging mix of UNHCR and domestic procedures. Currently, the responsibility for the domestic system is assumed by the Ministry of the Interior through its Department of Foreigners, Borders and Asylum which is part of the General Directorate of Security. The Ministry of Interior issued two circulars in March 2010. The Circular on Asylum Seekers and Refugees, among other things, provides for the possibility of exemption from residence permit fees for those who are deemed unable to afford these fees pursuant to investigations of respective authorities. During the course of 2010, the Bureau on Asylum, Migration and Administrative Capacity under the Ministry of Interior has prepared a Draft Law on Asylum. The Draft Law has been prepared in consultation with line ministries, civil society representatives, academicians and international organizations like UNHCR. A consultative process took place through which the Bureau received comments from the Council of Europe and the EU. The Draft Law, which became public in January 2011 through the Ministry of Interior webpage and which is currently in the Prime Ministry's office pending submission to the Turkish Grand National Assembly, provides for significant improvement in the lives of refugees and asylum seekers in Turkey. The Draft Law introduces: standards regarding asylum procedures; subsidiary protection status; safeguards to ensure access to rights of persons of concerns and necessary institutional set-up to plan, implement and improve the asylum regime in Turkey. Being the first asylum law of Turkey, the Draft Law is a landmark development. While the draft asylum law maintains the geographical limitation to the 1951 Convention, Turkey links the geographical limitation with the ongoing EU accession process. Thus, the parallel procedure, with United Nations High Commis-

sioner for Refugees conducting RSD for specific cases is foreseen to continue for the immediate future.

The National Action Plan

The Government successfully concluded a Twinning Project with the Danish and UK governments in 2005 producing a "Turkish National Action Plan for the Adoption of the European Union Acquis in the Field of Asylum and Migration" endorsed by the Prime Ministry in March 2005.

The National Action Plan covers the legal and institutional arrangements needed to harmonize Turkey's procedures and practices for asylum and migration with EU standards, including the investments and external support needed to achieve these goals.

In the Plan, the Government proposes to lift the "geographical limitation" to its obligations under the 1951 Convention in 2012, on the condition that the legal and institutional arrangements for asylum and understandings on "burden sharing" with the EU are in place. Taking into consideration the pace of developments in the area of asylum and migration, as well as the negotiations in other chapters of the EU Acquis, UNHCR believes that the indicative date for lifting of the geographical limitation will be challenging to meet.

UNHCR supports the Plan, which is ambitious in its scope and provides a comprehensive overview of the Government's vision for the new national asylum system in Turkey, encompassing reception, status determination and integration. UNHCR is particularly appreciative of the protection-oriented aspects of the Plan, such as the specific attention paid to the special protection needs of women and children seeking asylum and the care of vulnerable individuals, which reflect the impact of asylum training and capacity-building efforts over the years.

UNHCR welcomes the inclusive approach reflected in the Plan, which foresees that the Turkish Red Crescent

Society, national NGOs, bar associations and other civil society actors will contribute to the new asylum system, as well as Government institutions such as the Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHÇEK).

The Plan also foresees continuing close cooperation with UNHCR in several areas, including developing information materials for refugees and asylum-seekers, organizing traineeships for asylum decision-makers and training programmes for judicial officials and, assisting in the integration of refugees.

UNHCR notes that key aspects of the Plan require further elaboration, including the new institutional structure and staffing for the "specialized unit" for asylum and migration management and the nature of the proposed accelerated procedure. UNHCR is working in close partnership with the Government of Turkey in furtherance of these objectives.

UNHCR welcomes the Implementation Directive issued by the Government in June 2006 as an initial step for materializing the objectives set in the National Action Plan and supports the further development of sectoral implementation plans in its advisory capacity, through a detailed transition support plan and a dedicated unit in its Ankara Representation.

Challenges

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Turkey aims to support the Turkish Government in addressing several key challenges including:

- ⇒ **Establishing** a new legal framework for refugee protection and asylum that draws upon models and "good practices" adopted by EU Member States and other countries, with advice and support from UNHCR and other partners.
- ⇒ **Creating** a national capacity for the humane reception of asylum-seekers that meets EU minimum



Following the issuance of the National Action Plan on Migration and Asylum in 2005, UNHCR and Turkish officials briefed Turkish Parliamentarians in a special meeting on the details of the Plan. Photo: UNHCR Turkey

standards, which will require very significant investments at a time when the social "safety net" for Turkish nationals also needs strengthening.

- ⇒ **Developing** institutional arrangements for refugee status determination by the Turkish authorities, including the continued development of a dedicated, specialised and highly-skilled cadre of asylum decision-makers and other professionals.
- ⇒ **Opening** up the possibility for the full integration of some refugees in Turkey as well as for skill enhancement and self-sustainability in support of durable solutions for others, which will entail legislative reforms, programmes to promote economic self-reliance and social inclusion.
- ⇒ **Building** new partnerships with civil society and promoting the role that national NGOs, foundations, universities, bar associations and other actors can play as service providers for refugees and asylum-seekers and as advocates for their protection.
- ⇒ **Securing** support from the EU and its Member States and other governments for burden and responsibility sharing through continued refugee resettlement and contributions toward meeting the costs associated with the development of a modern asylum system.
- ⇒ **Advocating** the consistent exemption of residence fees. Asylum-seekers and refugees were formerly required to pay for their residence (so called ikamet fees) in Turkey every six months. These residence fees cause significant hardship to most refugees and asylum-seekers residing in Turkey as they do not have the financial means. On 22 March 2010, the Ministry of Interior issued a new circular instructing local authorities to waive the fees for residence permits (ikamet) for asylum-seekers and refugees under certain conditions. This has helped to make access to improved protection possible, and to facilitate early departure for those going on resettlement. UNHCR is pleased to note that under the draft asylum law currently submitted to the office of the Prime Minister, the residence fee requirement for asylum-seekers and refugees is abolished.
- ⇒ **Promoting** enhanced collaboration between UNHCR and the Turkish International Cooperation Development Agency (TIKA), with whom UNHCR has been discussing a "Cooperation Agreement". TIKA contributes to sustainable social and economic development in partner countries through technical cooperation activities and development projects. TIKA and UNHCR believe that their joint cooperation in many countries will result in reciprocal advantages in pursuing their respective objectives.

UNHCR Turkey has a direct and operational role advising the Government on the protection of individual asylum-seekers and refugees. The Office works with the Turkish authorities to ensure that asylum-seekers reach safety, are not detained or refouled, and have access to the asylum procedures. The main challenges for UNHCR are the following:

- ⇒ **Ensuring** a fair and efficient refugee status determination process despite limited resources;
- ⇒ **Advocating** for a better quality of asylum for persons in need of international protection in Turkey;
- ⇒ **The search** for a durable solution for refugees in Turkey as conditions in most of the countries of origin do not allow for voluntary return, there are extremely limited local integration prospects in Turkey, and limited resettlement places worldwide despite the need for international responsibility sharing;
- ⇒ **Securing** consolidated partnerships and strengthening civil society to ensure local capacity to address protection needs, while maintaining international solidarity and responsibility sharing. The new legal framework for asylum, once adopted, will greatly facilitate systematic protection delivery.



A group of refugee children enjoying a recreational activity in a satellite city. Refugee children attend schools in Turkey but still face different problems. 3 September, 2008. Photo: ASAM

Developments at the Turkish-Greek Border



Greek police officers patrol near the northeastern Greek village of Nea Vyssa. 5 November, 2010. Photo: Nikolas Giakoumidis



European Union deployed FRONTEX border officials to the Greek-Turkish borders. 5 November, 2010. Photo: Toby Vogel

As states increase border controls, UNHCR calls for sensitivity for those fleeing persecution.

Faced with difficulties in coping with irregular migration, in October 2010 Greece requested the European Commission to facilitate deployment of the Rapid Border Intervention Teams from FRONTEX, the EU's Border Management Agency, to assist at the land border between Turkey and Greece. In early January 2011, Greece announced the possibility of building a 12 km fence along its side of the border with Turkey in the Evros region.

The land border between Turkey and Greece has become the main entry point into the EU for irregular migrants and asylum seekers. According to Greek government sources, several hundred people are now crossing this border on a daily basis. Forty-four persons were reportedly drowned last year when attempting to cross the Evros region. Of those who make it across, some are returned to Turkey under a readmission agreement between Turkey and Greece. The humanitarian situation on Greek side of the border is critical, with large numbers of persons detained in extremely difficult conditions. The UN's Special Rapporteur on Torture, Mr. Manfred Nowak, after a visit to the area highlighted the situation. Shelter, medical care and psycho-social support are all urgent needs.

In response to Greece's comments, UNHCR stated that it is concerned whenever states propose measures that aim at preventing irregular migrants from entering their territory without simultaneously ensuring concrete guarantees are in place for those seeking international protection.

"While every State has the right to control its borders, it is clear that among the many people crossing Turkey towards the European Union, there is a significant number of persons who are fleeing violence and persecution. Establishing border control mechanisms which are sensitive to the needs of people seeking protection is therefore vital" UNHCR said.

A UNHCR press release following the Greek announcement of plans for building fences at the border, stated: "Building fences rarely solves the underlying problem of migratory pressures, including those of persons seeking protection. As with other measures which indis-

criminally block arrivals, there is a risk that those seeking asylum will resort to even riskier routes to safety - a reason why large numbers of asylum-seekers today find themselves in the hands of people-smuggling rings".

Amidst these developments, the European Court of Human Rights has found that the transfer of an asylum-seeker to Greece under the Dublin II Regulation would amount to violation of Article 3 and Article 13 of the European Convention on Human Rights by the transferring state due both to the "deficiencies in the asylum procedure" and to "the detention and living conditions" in Greece.

UNHCR welcomed the acknowledgement in this judgement of the need to ensure that individual asylum-seekers are not sent back to Greece for as long as this would lead to a violation of their human rights and the right to seek asylum.

On the other hand, UNHCR welcomes the commitment by Greece to strengthen and improve its asylum system, and UNHCR will continue to contribute to that effort. However, it is important to underline that recent legislative reforms adopted in Greece are yet to be fully implemented. A significant investment of resources and time will be needed before there is a fully functioning refugee protection system in Greece which ensures respect for the rights of people at risk of persecution or serious harm. UNHCR encourages European governments and institutions to show solidarity with Greece by strongly supporting this reform effort.

At the same time, UNHCR recalled that in Turkey, the Government continues to implement a geographic limitation to the 1951 Refugee Convention, thereby taking responsibility for granting asylum to refugees who come from European countries. However, most asylum-seekers in Turkey originate from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia.

"Claims of asylum seekers of non-European origin in Turkey are assessed by UNHCR. Those who are found to be refugees are permitted to remain, pending resettlement to a third country. UNHCR is encouraging more countries, and in particular EU Member States, to show solidarity with Turkey by participating in the resettlement effort" the UN Refugee Agency said.

Seventeen Thousand Registered with UNHCR in 2010

Turkey receives asylum seekers and refugees from around 50 countries



The majority of asylum seekers and refugees in Turkey are adults between the ages 18 and 59, but there is also a significant number of children and elderly people who need special attention. September, 2005.
Photo: UNHCR Turkey

As of 31 January 2011, 17,271 non-European persons of concern were registered with the office of the United Nations Refugee Agency in Turkey, comprising of 10,391 refugees and 6,880 asylum-seekers waiting for a decision on their applications.

Over the last six years Iraqi, Iranian, Afghan and Somalian citizens were by far the biggest group of newly arrived asylum seekers, making up for around 90% of the overall asylum seeker population. Turkey receives asylum seekers and refugees comprising over 50 nationalities, making the population of concern to UNHCR Turkey very diverse.

Around two out of five asylum seekers and refugees are female, the remaining male. More than two thirds of the population of concern are within the age group of active labour force (18-59). About 10% of the refugees and asylum seekers are between 5-11 and 12-17 years respectively and another 8% are younger than 4 years of age.

According to United Nations Refugee Agency officials, many more will continue to come from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Somalia. Standards of registration and reception will take into account the age, gender, and diversity of these groups. Every effort

continues to be made to reduce the waiting period for the review of asylum claims.

Figure 2.
Persons of Concern to UNHCR Turkey
Breakdown by Nationality - As of 31 December 2010

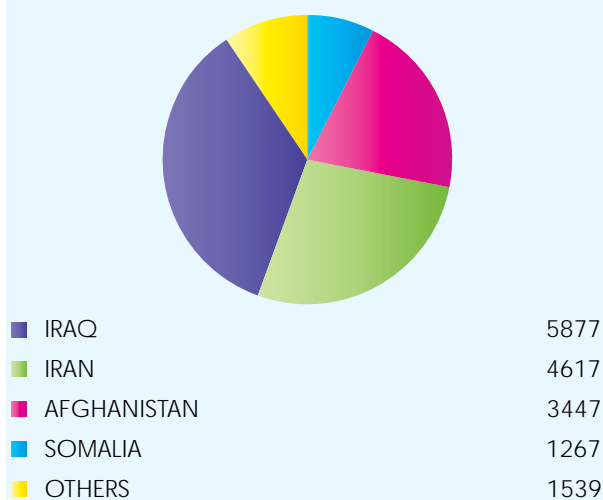


Table 2.

Persons of Concern to UNHCR Turkey
As of 31.12.2010

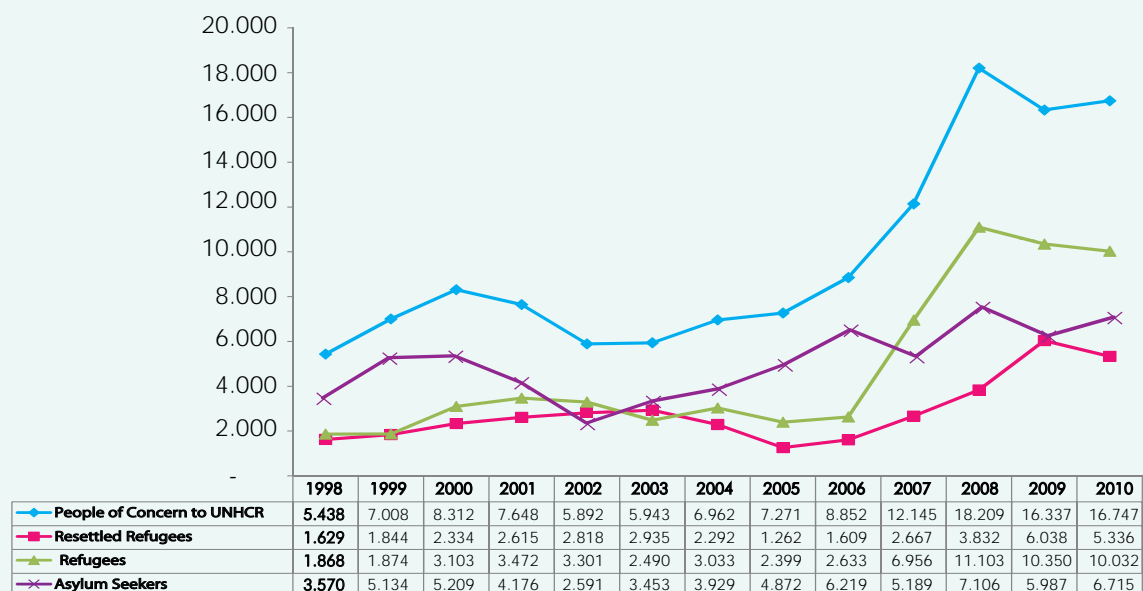


Table 3.

Number of Newly Arrived Asylum Seekers
As of 31.12.2010

YEAR	Total Number of Newly Arrived Asylum Seekers	IRAQI		IRANIAN		AFGHAN		SOMALI	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2005	3914	1047	27%	1716	44%	364	9%	473	12%
2006	4553	724	16%	2297	51%	261	6%	680	15%
2007	7646	3470	45%	1688	22%	705	9%	1125	15%
2008	12981	6899	53%	2113	16%	2642	20%	647	5%
2009	7834	3763	48%	1981	25%	1009	13%	295	4%
2010	9226	3656	40%	2881	31%	1248	14%	448	5%

Table 4.

Asylum Seekers by Age, Gender and Country
As of 31.12.2010

Country	0-4		5-11		12-17		18-59		60+		Total by Country
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	
AFGHANISTAN	77	78	134	179	144	181	446	687	10	20	1956
IRAN	56	85	97	99	89	105	820	1300	33	22	2706
IRAQ	38	34	43	48	28	33	129	239	2	6	600
SOMALIA	13	11	22	22	11	17	104	133	2	-	335
OTHERS	62	73	46	46	31	41	241	559	3	6	1118
TOTAL F/M	246	281	342	394	303	377	1740	2928	50	54	-
GRAND TOTAL	527		736		680		4668		104		6715

F= Female, M= Male

Table 5.

Refugees by Age, Gender and Country - As of 31.12.2010

Country	0-4		5-11		12-17		18-59		60+		Total by Country
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	
AFGHANISTAN	48	53	104	126	121	135	389	494	7	14	1491
IRAN	59	32	75	69	73	88	625	839	22	29	1911
IRAQ	214	274	274	341	234	288	1359	2108	96	89	5277
SOMALIA	37	43	68	66	64	61	302	288	1	2	932
SUDAN	8	7	2	7	-	1	10	95	-	-	130
OTHERS	13	8	8	16	17	17	92	118	8	1	291
TOTAL F/M	379	417	531	625	509	590	2777	3942	127	135	-
GRAND TOTAL	796		1156		1099		6719		262		10032






















Table 6.

Active Caseload Breakdown by Gender and Age - As of 31.12.2010

Country	0-4		5-11		12-17		18-59		60+		Total by Country
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	
AFGHANISTAN	125	131	238	305	265	316	835	1181	17	34	3447
IRAN	115	117	172	168	162	193	1445	2139	55	51	4617
IRAQ	252	308	317	389	262	321	1488	2347	98	95	5877
SOMALIA	50	54	90	88	75	78	406	421	3	2	1267
KIRGIZISTAN	18	26	17	12	12	13	53	92	2	-	245
SUDAN	11	10	6	8	-	2	18	151	-	-	206
PALESTINE	8	9	8	5	9	8	24	68	1	2	142
OTHERS	46	43	25	44	27	36	248	471	1	5	946
TOTAL F/M	625	698	873	1019	812	967	4517	6870	177	189	-
GRAND TOTAL	1323		1892		1779		11387		366		16747

Table 7.

Professions Breakdown of Asylum-Seeker and Refugee Population in Turkey As of 31.12.2010

 Religious professionals	14	 Managers	196
 Travel	12	 Education	288
 Law	10	 Drivers	59
 Police & inspectors	40	 Farmers	301
 Authors, journalists and other writers	73	 Salespersons	239
 Senior government officials	89	 Student	430
 Engineers & architects	115	 Housekeepers & cleaners	1845
 Computer related works	123	 Skilled workers	1789
 Medical	199	 Unknown	1450
 Administrative assistants, clerks & secretaries	255	 No occupation	1822
 Artists & photographers	156	Grand Total	11250

Situation of Chechens

There is a small group of persons of Chechen ethnic origin from the Russian Federation, reportedly around 2,000 persons. Of these, 400 reside in three locations close to Istanbul while an undetermined number of persons live in private accommodation. As Russia is part of the Council of Europe, persons of Chechen origin are considered as Europeans by the Turkish authorities. As such any potential asylum claim will be determined by the Turkish Government.

UNHCR understands that these persons started arriving in Turkey in 2000 with the assistance of Turkish humanitarian organizations. Although those without valid ID documents and passports faced certain difficulties, Chechens were generally able to obtain temporary residence permits, but there have also been reports on delays in the issuance of the residence permits. The lack of a clear legal status has created a feeling of vulnerability within the Chechen community in Turkey.

According to national NGOs, Chechens in Turkey can face severe economic hardship due to lack of formal work permits. Without proper documentation, they are unable to move freely or to find work. Health assistance is ad hoc and does not cover the many chronic diseases faced by the population. Most children are able to attend school or receive informal instruction. However, some Chechens without clear legal status have reported facing obstacles to the formal enrolment of their children in public schools. Consequently, some of the Chechen children do not receive certificates of attendance or completion.

Globally, UNHCR has recommended to States that Chechen asylum-seekers either be given access to national refugee status determination procedures or, if that is not possible, to be granted effective protection on an alternative basis. Effective protection includes protection from forcible return to their country of origin, legal status, registration and documentation, as well as access to basic rights and assistance needed to live with dignity.

Turkish Refugees in Iraq-Voluntary Repatriation

Some 13,000 Turkish refugees of Kurdish ethnicity live in Northern Iraq, the majority in the Makhmour refugee settlement in Ninewah Governorate. In the framework of its global Mandate, UNHCR has offered to all concerned governments its expertise and assistance for finding durable solutions, including organized voluntary repatriation and reintegration of the thousands of refugees in Makhmour camp. As a non-political and neutral UN agency protecting refugees, UNHCR facilitates or organizes voluntary repatriation



After the fall. Children make up a large proportion of the 10000 strong population at the Makhmour Turkish Kurdish refugee camp. October, 2003. Photo: Jake Nowakowski

of refugees from countries of asylum to countries of origin in cooperation with the respective governments. In this context, UNHCR has expressed its willingness to discuss with all concerned governments the finalization of a tripartite voluntary repatriation agreement to allow the refugees from Iraq to return voluntarily in safety and dignity to Turkey as appropriate.

European Refugees

According to Government sources, 44 persons originating from European countries namely Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Azerbaijan and Albania have been granted refugee status in Turkey since its accession to the 1951 Convention. While the current legislative instruments do not fully incorporate specific provisions regulating the rights entailed in refugee status, it is believed that the new asylum law will, as drafted, remove residence fees and in multiple ways reflect standards outlined in international law, making access to rights outlined in the 1951 Convention more accessible.

Other than these 44 persons, with legal refugee status, Turkey hosted around 17,000 persons from Bosnia and Kosovo who had arrived in Turkey fleeing the internal conflicts in their countries. Turkey admitted these persons to its territory and provided them with temporary protection in line with its international obligations. During their stay, these groups were settled in a camp established in Kırklareli until its closure in 2000. The majority of Bosnians voluntarily returned to their country of origin in 1997 upon the stabilization of the situation. Following the outset of the crisis in Kosovo in March 1999, Turkey was one of the destination countries for Kosovans looking for shelter and protection. A few months after their arrival, the majority of this group preferred voluntary repatriation as a solution to their situation.

NAZIM HAJIYEV

*... becomes Turkish citizen.
A happy end of a long odyssey.*

In 2006, Mr. Nazım Hajiyev phoned the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Office in Ankara. It was one of many of such calls by him but this time his voice was exceptionally cheerful. He said, "Finally I've been recognized as a refugee... So I will be able to stay in this country". Five years later, Mr. Hajiyev took a further step in his long struggle for independence and a secure future: he became a Turkish citizen and set an example for other refugees in Turkey.



Ongoing tragedies and threats forced Mr. Hajiyev and his wife to leave their home country and come to Turkey, where some of their friends had already found a better life. They settled here and in 1995 their son was born. Mr. Hajiyev worked in the tourism business and could make himself a name as a talented painter whose art works are in high demand especially by hotels in the Antalya-region.

When in 2002 he went to Russia for an international trade fair he was told upon his return that he is not allowed to stay in Turkey any longer and that he and his family have to leave the country. In desperation and hopelessness about losing everything he built up in the last years, he turned to UNHCR for help.

UNHCR helped him present his application to Turkish authorities because he comes from a country which does not fall under the geographical limitation. Turkey accepted his application.

After four years of waiting, the joyful phone call came. The whole family was granted refugee status. Still, Turkey was not well equipped yet on how to deal with such a situation. The joy of being the first European asylum seeker to be recognised by the Turkish authorities as a Convention refugee was overshadowed when only a one-year residence permit was issued with the special notice "the holder is not allowed to work". This especially upset his son who while still attending school saw his future career plans already blocked. "But I told him not to give up. We've had tougher days and we've survived. We will continue to struggle to gain our rights", Hajiyev recalled.

This year the family's struggle for their rights seems to have found the long awaited happy end. They received Turkish citizenship and with it all the rights of a citizen of the Republic of Turkey.

However, it is not only about rights. Hajiyev's family works hard to fulfill their part in integrating into Turkish society. His son is successful at school and became a bright candidate for hotel manager. When he was 15 years old, he was a keen badminton player, having already won Antalya championships and come third in the Turkey Cup.

Nazım Hajiyev believes that his son will one day be a good manager in one of the big touristic hotels of Antalya. He believes that he himself has a lot to contribute in Turkey. Indeed, besides making paintings for newly built five-star hotels in Antalya, he has also demonstrated his artistic talent in many award winning movies such as 'Yaramaz' (English: Good for Nothing). He says that, despite the recent improvements in the Turkish movie industry, there is a long way to go. Therefore he has volunteered to share his knowledge and experience.

They have been doing everything to make Turkey their second home for the past 16 years and finally been successful in not only building up new lives in Turkey, but also in getting an official solution. This case gives hope to others especially as Turkey is a country that is in the process of building a new asylum system, where local integration for both European and non-European refugees might be a durable solution for some.

Positive Steps Taken in the Reform Process

Support systems for asylum seekers and refugees, enhanced through circulars, aim to improve difficult living conditions



Despite tough living conditions during their long stay in Turkey, refugees never lose their hope for the future, courage and dynamism. 8 March, 2008. Photo: ASAM

Asylum-seekers and refugees are required to reside in one of 51 designated cities determined by the Ministry of Interior (See maps pp. 30-31). Their movements to other cities are subject to prior authorization and they have a regular signature duty with the Foreigners Section of the Police.

Asylum-seekers and refugees are also required to legalize their stay in Turkey by registering with the police in the designated city and by obtaining residence permits (ikamet), for which they need to pay every six months. The fee is currently 511,30 TL for an adult and 330,15 TL for each child. Many of the asylum-seekers and refugees cannot afford to pay these high amounts, and the consequence is that they are excluded from access to basic assistance provided by the Government. In March 2010, the Ministry of Interior issued two cir-

culars relevant to the field of asylum. The Circular on Asylum Seekers and Refugees, among other things, provides for the possibility of exemption from residence permit fees for those who are deemed unable to afford these fees pursuant to investigations of respective authorities. In April 2011, the Ministry of Interior issued another circular waiving the single entry visa fee which is normally required given their asylum application. The same circular also underlined the criteria on exemption from ikamet fees by the asylum-seekers and refugees in order to ensure a uniform implementation of the 2010 March circular. The Circular on Combating Illegal Migration, among other things, provides for the possibility of access to UNHCR for those who apply for asylum while being kept in removal centres. Although the implementation varies from city to city, the Circulars

represent decisive and clearly positive steps taken in the asylum reform process.

The 2006 Implementation Directive aims at addressing gaps in assistance and reception conditions and emphasizes access to basic rights for persons of concern. While the directive does not make up for the lack of reception facilities, it clarifies the role of existing governmental institutions in the provision of material support to asylum-seekers. Unfortunately, the assistance provided to persons in need is not regular and implementation differs from province to province. In some cities, reception conditions are more satisfactory due to stronger Non-Governmental Organizations' engagement or exemplary mobilization of local resources by the local branches of the Foreigners Departments of the National Police. However, in other cities these support activities might be weak or almost non-existent. Despite the goodwill in some cities, gaps in the social support/referral mechanisms, financial constraints, and the lack of realistic options to be self-reliant mean that the majority of asylum-seekers and refugees continue to live in very difficult social and economic conditions.



The Afyonkarahisar branch of ASAM, UNHCR's implementing partner, organised a picnic trip for the asylum seekers and refugees residing in Afyon on the occasion of the World Refugee Day on 20 June, 2010 80 persons participated in different activities such as basketball, football, volleyball. Photo: ASAM

Although there is no legal prohibition to work, the administrative procedures involved make it virtually impossible for refugees and asylum seekers to legally enter the work-force. The Law on Work Permits for Foreigners (Law No. 4817 of 2003) theoretically provides an avenue to lawful employment for refugees and asylum-seekers with six months residence permits. However, the Law foresees that only those foreigners who are able to perform work for which a qualified Turkish national cannot be identified, will be granted work permits. In practice, most asylum-seekers have neither the language ability nor the specialised skills that would enable them to obtain a work permit and

therefore are unable to become self-sufficient. In January 2010, an amendment to the Regulation of Law on Work Permits eased access of asylum seekers (non-Europeans granted status by the national authorities) and refugees to the labour market to a certain extent. Accordingly, residence permit duration shall not be asked from foreigners who have been granted "refugee" or "asylum seeker" status by the Ministry of Interior. Necessary measures shall be taken to expedite the work permit procedures of such aliens.

While many of the asylum-seekers and refugees find informal jobs, the constraints of working illegally can cause hardship and for example, may lead asylum-seekers and refugees to decide to leave Turkey by illegal means which can tragically expose them to human traffickers.

One important legislative development in 2008 was the entry into force of Law No. 5510 on Social Insurance and General Health (1 November 2008). The law includes asylum-seekers and stateless persons as potential beneficiaries of the general health insurance, provided that the premiums are paid by the 'relevant national institution'. While welcoming the provision granting health insurance to this group of persons, UNHCR has pointed out the limitation on the application of these benefits due to some shortcomings in the law. The restricted scope of the law and lack of inter-institutional consultations lead to problems in implementation and hinder access to medical services. A circular of the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation (SASF) from May 2009 aims to fill the gaps; however, it does not fully address the problems as the implementation relies on the discretion of decision-makers in each city.

Primary education for children of 6 to 14 years of age is a right for asylum-seeking and refugee children pursuant to the Turkish Constitution, but access to education can be achieved only when some procedural requirements are met. Children of refugees and asylum-seekers, or separated children having applied for asylum, can be enrolled only if they have legalized their stay in Turkey through obtaining a residence permit (ikamet). Once their residence fee is submitted and the residence permit is issued, the children have free access to local schools and needy children can benefit from education assistance provided by the SASF branches in the provinces. Children of refugee and asylum-seeking families attending school are exempted from paying residence fees; however, obtaining a valid ikamet by the children's parents is a prerequisite for enrolment and can undermine the children's access to primary education.

Unaccompanied and separated asylum-seekers and refugee children should be protected by services provided by the Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHÇEK). As a prerequisite to the Social Services and Child Protection Agency involvement, a medical

assessment and bone tests to verify the age are compulsory prior to the admission to any state institution. As the margin of error is not necessarily taken into consideration, some children or young adolescents could be excluded from the required care. Guardians for separated children are not always appointed although this is required according to the Turkish Civil Code.

On March 2010, The Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHÇEK) also issued The Circular on Procedures Concerning Asylum-Seekers and Refugees. The circular provides guidance to the local staff of SHÇEK in handling the procedural steps for the asylum-seeking or refugee separated children, female survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), disabled and elderly by listing a series of issues to address, including the issue of health services and admission of separated children, their right to receive education, etc.

Within its budgetary limitations, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees makes efforts to contribute to fulfill the most urgent basic humanitarian needs of non-European refugees and asylum-seekers in Turkey for the most vulnerable cases. Through implementing partner agreements with the Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM-SGDD) and Human Resources Development Foundation (HRDF-İKGV), UNHCR also tries to establish a presence in satellite cities to facilitate access of asylum-seekers and refugees to services and to reinforce reception conditions.

UNHCR, as well as the Ministry of Interior, prepare information leaflets in all languages of asylum seekers,

explaining the procedures, legal rights and the way to access services in Turkey. The new asylum law has been prepared, with a view to resolving many of the challenges outlined above.

Resettlement in Turkey

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees promotes three distinct durable solutions: local integration, voluntary repatriation and resettlement.

Due to the unique nature of asylum in Turkey, the option of local integration is still being developed.

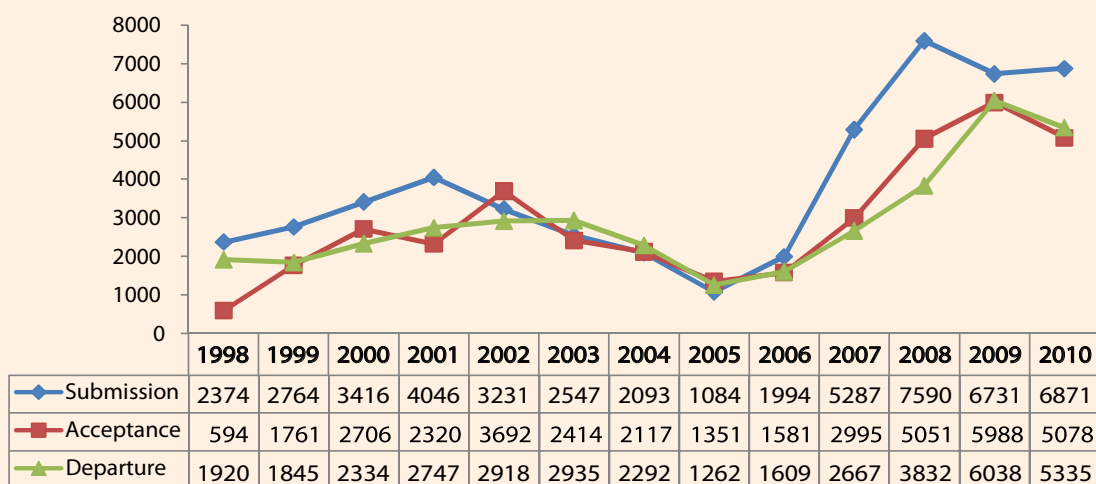
In addition, voluntary return in safety and dignity is not currently a possibility for the majority of the refugees in Turkey given the conditions in their countries of origin. Hence, UNHCR looks at the possibility of resettlement for those fitting one of the eight UNHCR resettlement criteria used worldwide as a standard.

Due to the high number of asylum applicants and refugees in Turkey and the limited number of resettlement places worldwide, resettlement cannot be offered to every refugee in Turkey.

In 2008, 3,832 refugees were resettled and in 2009 the number was 6,038. In 2010, over 6,800 applications were submitted and 5,335 refugees were resettled. Key resettlement countries include the United States of America, Australia, Canada, Norway, Sweden, France and Germany. Resettlement is an important tool of global responsibility sharing of humanitarian needs. UNHCR activity encourages States to support Turkey, a host country for refugees, by providing spaces for more refugees to go on resettlement.

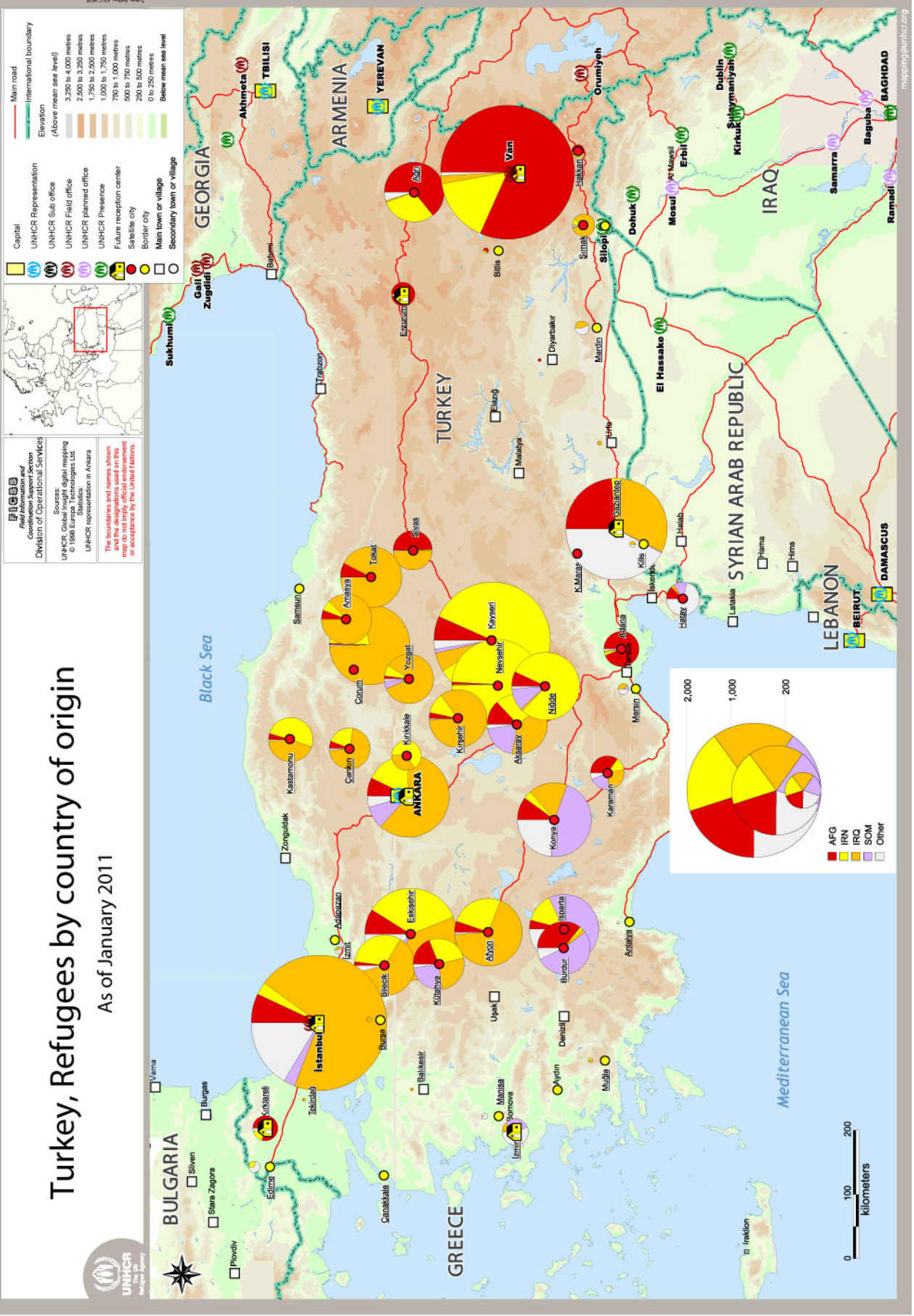
Table 8.

Resettlement Statistics 1998-2010



Turkey, Refugees by country of origin

As of January 2011



Turkey, Refugees and Asylum Seekers

As of January 2011

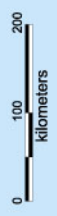
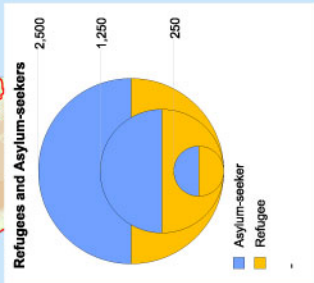
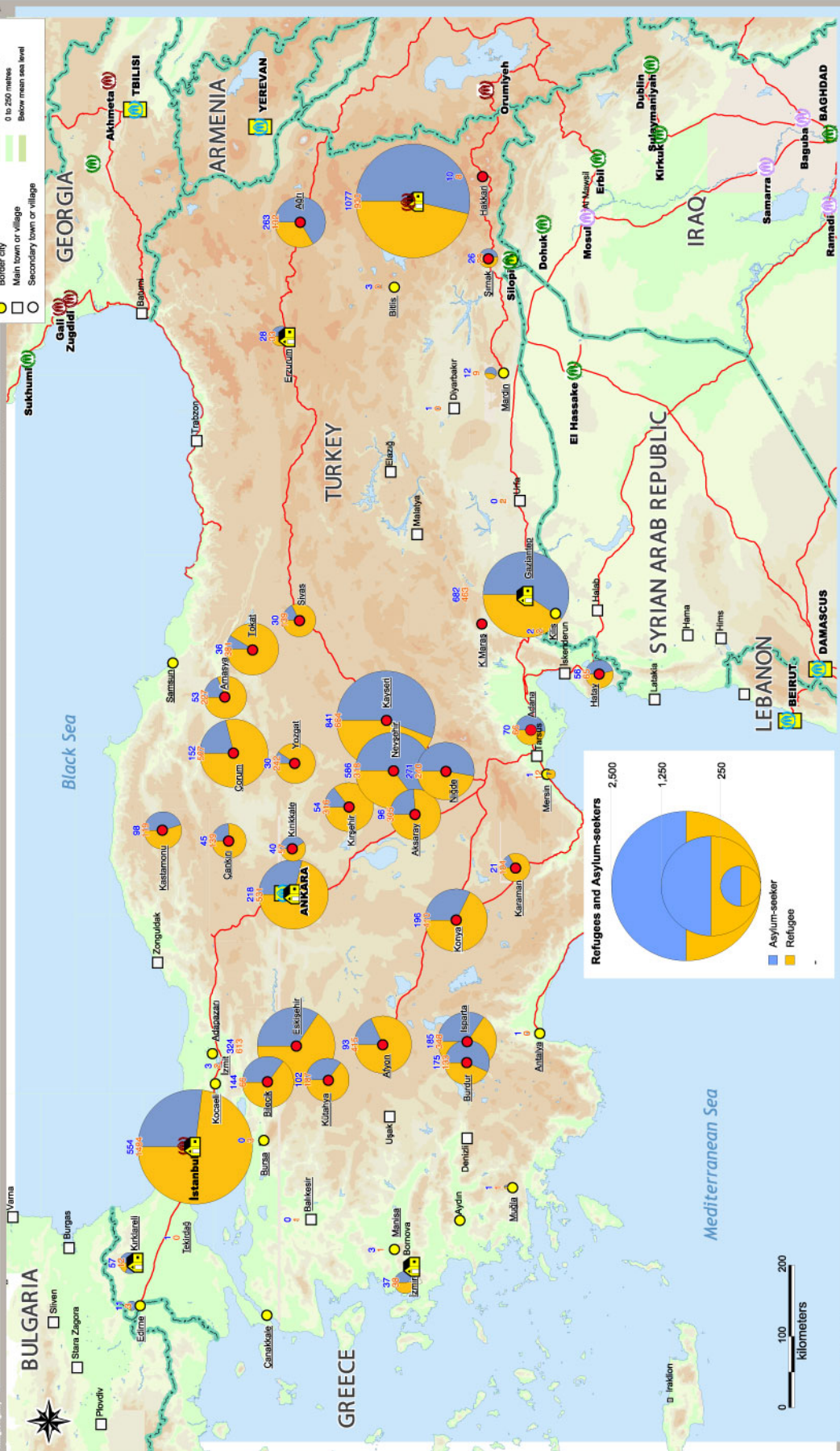


FIGS
 For the Field
 Convulsion Support Section
 Division of Operational Services
 Sources:
 UNHCR Global insight digital mapping
 © 1998 Europa Technologies Ltd.
 UNHCR representation in Ankara
 The boundaries and names shown
 do not imply official endorsement
 or acceptance by the United Nations.

Capitals
 UNHCR Representation
 UNHCR Sub office
 UNHCR Field office
 UNHCR planned office
 UNHCR Presence
 Future reception center
 Satellite city
 Border city
 Main town or village
 Secondary town or village

Elevation
 (Above mean sea level)
 3,250 to 4,000 metres
 2,500 to 3,250 metres
 1,750 to 2,500 metres
 1,000 to 1,750 metres
 750 to 1,000 metres
 500 to 750 metres
 250 to 500 metres
 0 to 250 metres
 Below mean sea level

Main road
International boundary



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ASYLUM CAPACITY-BUILDING



The UN Refugee Agency has been encouraging non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to work in the field of asylum. As the number of NGOs helping refugees has grown to a large extent since 1995, UNHCR hosts regular consultation meetings with these representatives of the civil society. February, 2007. Photo: UNHCR Turkey

UNHCR Works with the Government and Civil Society to Strengthen the Asylum System in Turkey

The Government of Turkey and UNHCR have been collaborating in their efforts to strengthen the national asylum system for many years - prior to Turkey's recognition as a candidate for full EU membership. The key counterpart for UNHCR in Turkey is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with whom the office has regular dialogue on a broad spectrum of policy and procedural matters pertaining to asylum.

UNHCR's support for asylum capacity building activities includes capacity building programmes for Government officials covering the legal and social aspects of refugee protection, international standards and protection mechanisms. These programmes have been complemented with intensive traineeships for Ministry of Interior officials at the UNHCR Offices in Ankara and Van on country of origin information and refugee status determination. Additionally, special focus is devoted to the capacity building of the personnel and infrastructure in the area of reception conditions

of persons of concern in Turkey. Capacity development activities also targeted the introduction of rights-based approaches to provide dignified life conditions to persons of concern in Turkey.

The General Directorate of Security of the Ministry of Interior (MOI/GDS) has traditionally been the counterpart for UNHCR in capacity building activities. In 2009 and throughout 2010, UNHCR continued closely cooperating with the Ministry of Interior, Asylum and Migration Bureau, in the fields of legislative drafting and institution building. Apart from this, UNHCR works in close contact with the Gendarmerie General Command, especially on joint training activities for mixed groups of border officials from the Gendarmerie General Command, the Land Forces Command and the Coast Guard Command. UNHCR also interacts with the Ministry of Justice and Union of Turkish Bars Associations in order to provide refugee law training to judges, public prosecutors and lawyers. In light of close

cooperation with the General Directorate of Security and the support given for their capacity building, in the second half of 2010, UNHCR held three workshops on “Fair and Efficient Refugee Status Determination” aiming to support the Directorate’s training activities especially for the newly assigned officers dealing with the issue. In the context of the same target on capacity building and within the same period, the Office continued to hold seminars on International Refugee Law for the staff of Turkish border control forces.

Under the British Commonwealth Office and Dutch Embassy funded project ‘Strengthening the capacity of border and law enforcement officials to better deal with irregular migration in a protection-sensitive border management system’, UNHCR Turkey continued to deliver seminars on International Refugee Law in coordination with the Gendarmerie General Command targeting officers of Gendarmerie, Land Forces and the Coast Guard. This activity is composed of seven seminars, four of which were already held and the others will be within the first half of 2011. The seminar aims at familiarizing border authorities with the main principles of international refugee law, including the non-refoulement principle and the national asylum system in Turkey and the referral mechanisms between border authorities and authorities in charge of asylum matters in Turkey.

UNHCR's capacity development activities continue to spread out to many actors who can play an important role. UNHCR has intensive cooperation with other stakeholders in the asylum system, such as the Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHÇEK), the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation (SASF), relevant ministries and public entities, and civil society. In the area of legal and social advocacy and lobbying, NGOs and academia are included in the networking.

For instance, throughout 2009 and 2010, capacity networking was intensified with the increase of national efforts to strengthen the national asylum system in Turkey. Given the developments concerning the draft asylum law, UNHCR in Turkey hosted two round table meetings with NGOs and academicians on the main provisions of the draft asylum law. An academic network seminar was organized on 6-7 January 2011, entitled ‘Turkey's Historical Tradition of Asylum’ which offered an invaluable opportunity for academicians from various disciplines to present their papers, studies, and research on forced migration, asylum and statelessness issues. The UN Refugee Agency is working on the process of compiling the seminar papers into a book.

Finally, UNHCR provides technical support to relevant Ministries and Parliament in the form of opinion papers and commentaries on circulars, draft laws and amendments to existing legislation.

Relations with NGOs

UNHCR gives utmost importance to strengthening the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society within the asylum system in Turkey. With their widespread presence throughout Turkey as well as their expertise on miscellaneous aspects of social and legal life, NGOs can play a crucial role in the improvement of conditions of persons of concern in Turkey. In this sense, throughout 2009 and 2010, UNHCR Turkey strengthened its relations with NGOs and supported the expansion of activities of its implementing partners. In October 2010, UNHCR Turkey held a seminar for the NGO’s and Lawyers on “Legal Representation in Asylum Procedures”. Satellite cities are identified by the Ministry of Interior. At the moment the number of satellite cities is 51. Currently, UNHCR maintains presence in satellite cities through its two implementing partners – Association for Solidarity with Asylum-Seekers and Migrants and Human Resources Development Foundation – and with the help of 2 contracted lawyers – having access to nearly 90 percent of the beneficiary population in 25 provinces out of 51. In addition,



NGO meeting, a regular practice of UNHCR in order to exchange information and share best practices. August, 2004. Photo: UNHCR Turkey

UNHCR Turkey has Memoranda of Understanding with NGOs which are operational partners in different sectors.

UNHCR and the non-governmental organizations who deal with refugee and assistance issues meet regularly to discuss the situations of vulnerable cases and upcoming issues. UNHCR has liaised closely with civil society organizations, Bar associations, non-governmental organizations and the academia to increase overall social support for refugees. Many Turkish NGOs have started to participate in UNHCR's annual consultation meetings held in Geneva.

Second Academic Network Seminar:

“Turkey’s Historical Tradition of Asylum: Past Practice and Future Application in the Context of Developing Legal Frameworks”

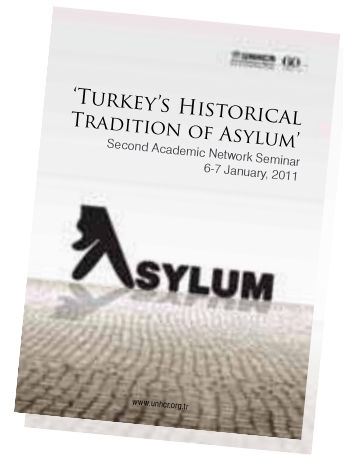
UNHCR Turkey organized a two-day Academic Network Seminar on “Turkey’s Historical Tradition of Asylum: Past Practice and Future Application in the Context of Developing Legal Frameworks” on 6-7 January 2011 at the Hilton Hotel in Ankara. Encouraged by the enthusiasm shown in academic circles for the first seminar in December 2009, UNHCR Turkey organized this second academic network event.

Given the transition period experienced at the present, the second seminar provided an important platform to explore with distinguished academicians from Turkey and abroad. Important historical approaches in Turkey and how they might serve as a reference in advancing a new legal framework were discussed.

Academicians and researchers from both Turkish and several international universities participated in the seminar. The panelists gave presentations on their respective fields of expertise in various thematic panels, followed by lively discussion sessions with important interventions from the participants. The seminar provided a good opportunity to review and consider new approaches on asylum challenges.

Representatives from various public and private institutions active in the asylum field as well as representatives of the diplomatic community also attended this two day seminar.

Opening speeches were delivered by the UNHCR Representative in Turkey, Ms. Carol Batchelor, and the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, Mr. Zekeriya Şarbak. Officials from the Ministry of Interior presented in detail the draft law on foreigners and international protection. The presentations on the Turkish asylum history and the current practices provided a general link between past and present. Many participants were pleased by the fast growth of academic interest in asylum issues.



Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, Mr. Zekeriya Şarbak 6-7 January 2011. Photo: UNHCR Turkey

Media, Events, Advocacy and Public Information

A TOP PRIORITY: RAISING AWARENESS



The Public Information activities of UNHCR aim at establishing and maintaining close working relations with television, radio and news agencies to keep them regularly informed on UNHCR's activities in the country and worldwide promoting media coverage. UNHCR also organises press briefings and conferences as necessary and gives interviews to the media. The PI section acts as spokesperson for UNHCR in Turkey.

Turkey has a rich tradition of asylum. Presently, Turkey in principle allows non-European refugees to stay in the country on a temporary basis. At the cross-roads between East and West and South and North, Turkey is directly impacted by global forced migration movements. A strengthened understanding of asylum issues in the society, in turn leading to greater engagement with all refugee populations, can help to make refugee protection problems better understood. UNHCR seeks to facilitate enhanced awareness of asylum issues, refugee flows, and humanitarian concerns. This can help generate greater understanding of the global challenges which the international community will be facing in the foreseeable future. Given UNHCR's mandate as a humanitarian organization, through public information, public awareness and media relations activities, priority is given to promoting values of tolerance and respect for the basic human rights of asylum-seekers, refugees, and other persons of concern to UNHCR in all of its public awareness activities. UNHCR Turkey's public awareness activi-

ties concentrate on several categories such as *media, events, and advocacy*.

UNHCR is committed to open and transparent representations. The media plays a very important role in shaping public opinion and in highlighting the plight of the many millions of people who are in need of humanitarian support.

The UNHCR Representative and the spokesperson regularly speak with the media and reply to media queries by providing factual information. The national media has published/broadcasted several rights-based stories and articles. There has been an enhanced engagement of the media with regard to quick and accurate information sharing on asylum related matters. UNHCR aims to participate regularly in high-rating talk-shows, TV contests, as well as giving interviews with newspapers, radio stations, and web-based media in its efforts to advance awareness of and interest in the lives of refugees. UNHCR has also developed very good working relations with the Human Rights Presidency of the Office of the Prime Minister.

Events

'UNHCR Fine Arts Project 2009-2010 'Young Artists Talk About Refugees''



UNHCR Representative in Turkey, Ms. Carol Batchelor, addresses artists and visitors at the opening ceremony of the exhibition. Many persons who attended were deeply impressed by the emotional artworks. 14 December, 2010. Photo: UNHCR Turkey.

Young artists from universities talk about the meaning of being a refugee through art. The art pieces, produced by the fine arts faculties of 21 universities from different parts of Turkey were on display to art lovers in an exhibition held between 14 and 26 December 2010 in Ankara at the Contemporary Arts Centre of the Çankaya Municipality. The exhibition was formally opened by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Representative Ms. Carol Batchelor, at a reception where great interest was shown by the media, parliamentarians and the NGO's.

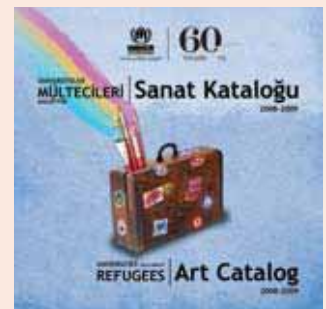
The project, which was first initiated in the academic year 2008-2009, by the UNHCR Turkey Office, has been launched in order to use art as a means to illustrate the theme of asylum and to raise public awareness of refugee issues. The art pieces focus on the needs of vulnerable refugees and their access to protection. UNHCR will use these art pieces to advance an understanding of the plight of refugees and the humanitarian aspects of asylum.

The participating universities were Afyon Kocatepe, Başkent, Cumhuriyet, Çanakkale 18 Mart, Çankırı, Çukurova, Doğuş, 9 Eylül, Erciyes, Gazi, İstanbul Bilgi, İstanbul Kültür, İstanbul Teknik, Kadir Has, Kocaeli, Maltepe, Mersin, Sakarya, Süleyman Demirel, Trakya and Yeditepe. The 21 Fine Arts Faculties, their Fine Arts professors and the students participating in the UNHCR Fine Arts Project in 2009-2010, were awarded a certificate by UNHCR.

Ms. Carol Batchelor, expressed her deepest gratitude and appreciation to the participants for their valuable contributions to the project and stated that they 'have challenged us as viewers to look closely at the human face of suffering.'

Launching the UNHCR Fine Arts Project 2008-2009 'Art Catalog'

T.C İstanbul Aydın University printed free of charge the art catalog of the first Fine Arts Project, launched by UNHCR for the academic year 2008-2009. Fine arts faculties of 10 universities participated to the project that year. The catalog, produced by the generous contributions of T.C İstanbul Aydın University, covers all outstanding art works of about 100 Fine Arts students and provides a lasting evidence of the important works of art. UNHCR plans to publish similar catalogs for the art pieces of the Fine Arts project in the coming years.



"Human Rights, Poverty and Solidarity Photo Exhibition"

On the occasion of Human Rights Day, the 'Human Rights, Poverty and Solidarity Photo Exhibition' was displayed in the Art Gallery of the Ankara Subway on 17 – 22 December 2010. Several thousands of people pass the subway every day and thus had the opportunity to view the displayed photos. The exhibition hosted by the Metropolitan Municipality of Ankara, was organized in cooperation with UNHCR and aims at raising awareness for the human rights dimensions and needs of vulnerable populations, such as asylum seekers and refugees.

Thousands of Visitors click

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In the age of communication, internet and social media, web sites are increasingly becoming most efficient channels for the dissemination of ideas and messages in an interactive way. New media is also gaining importance for UNHCR and its awareness raising activities. UNHCR's English website is visited by millions of persons all over the world.

Electronic media is also a very important channel for UNHCR Turkey, since Turkey is a country with very high internet usage. Believing in its role in contemporary communication, UNHCR Turkey has been successfully running its Turk-



ish website since the late 1990s. The number of visitors continues to increase ever since.

The UNHCR Turkey website posts the latest international news concerning asylum and shares information about asylum-seeker and refugee issues, activities and latest announcements. Furthermore, it provides a platform for asylum-seekers, where they can learn the result of their interviews and access important contact in-

formation of local authorities and support associations.

Throughout 2010, 48,105 people viewed the website for various purposes. In 2011, the website will be updated and relaunched in both Turkish and English to facilitate access to important developments and information.

In line with recent developments in communication technologies, UNHCR Turkey will continue to expand social media outreach.



UN High Commissioner for Refugees Turkey has reached large media coverage with its activities, as in the form of news on asylum seekers and refugees in different Turkish newspapers. The UN Refugee Agency tries to ensure appropriate media coverage of the office's promotional activities such as seminars, workshops, exhibitions and concerts. It disseminates press releases, reports, newspaper articles, and relevant materials.

Population Exchange Museum in Çatalca opens its doors on 150th birthday of Fridtjof Nansen



The Representative of UNHCR in Turkey, Ms. Carol Batchelor welcomes the opening of the Çatalca Population Exchange Museum. 14 December, 2010. Photo: UNHCR Turkey

As “Istanbul 2010, the Capital of Europe” comes to a close, a highly emotional ceremony took place in Çatalca, a small municipality 90 kilometers north of Istanbul, on the occasion of the inauguration of the Population Exchange Museum.

The Population Exchange Museum has been established by the Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants, the local municipality and the Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture Organization. It opened 87 years after the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne on January 30, 1923, that was the starting point for the population exchange between Greece and Turkey. As a result, about 2 million people from Greece and Turkey had to leave their homes.

The museum displays historical documents and objects that belonged to Turks, who had to leave northern Greece. Memorabilia that belonged to Greeks, who left their homes in Turkey will be added to the museum this year.

“This is the first time such a museum has opened in Turkey,” Çatalca Mayor Cem Kara said at the inauguration ceremony which was also attended by some descendants of Greek refugees from Asia Minor, who came especially for the occasion from the city of Ptolemaida, northwest Greece, and the Representative of the UN Refugee Agency in Turkey, Ms. Carol Batchelor. Ms. Batchelor stated that this museum not only symbolized

the agonies of people who had to leave their homes in Turkey and Greece, but revealed the inhuman dimensions of all forced population displacement.

This opening coincides with the 150th birthday of Fridtjof Nansen, a scientist, polar explorer, diplomat, statesman and humanist. Nansen, the first High Commissioner for Refugees of the League of Nations in the 1920s, is widely remembered and praised for his pioneering work on behalf of refugees.



The Museum in Çatalca displays many documents of the human tragedy in the 1920s. 20 December, 2010. Photo: UNHCR Turkey

Philanthropic Community at Work...

If a disinterested person passes by the street where the UNHCR Office in Ankara is located, he or she may assume that it is yet another Embassy building in front of which a crowd of people queue to get travel visas. Yes, the queues are similar at first sight. But the purpose of those who are waiting since the early hours each morning is quite different. Those who are gathering at the gate of UNHCR are there because they are in need of international protection. They are there, in most of the cases, to attend a very important interview, which is a real turning point in their life.

Asylum seekers and refugees usually come to the UNHCR Offices from the cities to which they are assigned to live by the Turkish Government. Generally they travel at night from the distant cities to be able to arrive at UNHCR timely, but exhausted and hungry. Their day in the UNHCR offices lasts long. They spend almost a full day at the reception or interview rooms. Thanks to the great efforts by various groups of volunteers, these hard days for them become more bearable.

Ms. Carol Batchelor, the UNHCR Representative in Turkey appreciated such contributions at a meeting, recently held at the Ankara Office with a delegation of so called Lunch-(or Cookie) ladies by saying that, "the food that you have been distributing to almost a hundred asylum seekers every day is an invaluable contribution to our protection function. It would not be fair to expect an asylum seeker, who is supposed to tell in full detail the terrible experiences he or she suffered, to have the strength for this if that person did not have a breakfast or a lunch". The "Lunch ladies" is a loose, informal association of an increasing number of women, who are motivated by humanitarian concerns and organized themselves to provide food to needy people every day. The group was originally organized by Mrs. Bridget Guerrero, an American expatriate and great



The Ankara Refugee Support Group distributed clothes, toys, and essentials items in solidarity with refugees. 9 January, 2010. Photo: UNHCR Turkey



Clothing and other goods were given away to refugees and asylum-seekers jointly with the Vatican Embassy. 9 January, 2010. Photo: UNHCR Turkey



A refugee child is about to get a loaf of bread 'poğaç' given by Aslı Bşrek Company, which supports UNHCR by providing daily breakfast to refugees and asylum seekers in Ankara. 16 January, 2011. Photo: UNHCR Turkey

philanthropist, in 2008. The reference "Cookie ladies" was adopted since originally the group members, mostly expatriates in Ankara, raised money by selling their homemade, delicious cookies to UNHCR Ankara staff, to buy food that was then distributed among the refugees. The group has grown rapidly during the last three years under the leadership of Mrs. Mine Ekşi. Today, it is such a large group that the members come to the UNHCR Office for food distribution on rotation. As a consequence of their tireless fund-raising efforts, the Lunch ladies are now collecting "free food" from famous restaurants and Kebab houses of Ankara. "Our problem is that most of the members are people affiliated with the Embassies. We would like more members from the Turkish community," Mrs. Eksi said at the meeting in the UNHCR Office.

The calls for a better involvement of the Turkish society were met independently and separately from the private sector. The famous chain of patisserie giant, the Aslı Börek company, has started to provide high protein breads for breakfast.

Meanwhile, another charity group, acting in cooperation with the Cookie ladies, organized in another corner of Ankara to collect non-food items, particularly clothes for asylum seekers and refugees. More than 300 people, said Mrs. Agata Kawicka-Özbayoğlu, the leading figure of this group called the Ankara Refugee Support Group, are benefiting from our assistance distribution. The Ankara Refugee Support Group is so

well organized and the donated clothes are exhibited in such an orderly manner that their warehouse somehow resembles a sophisticated shop. The group organizes charity concerts and balls to increase its capacity. Among other activities, they are also providing Turkish courses for the refugees.

On 25-26 September 2010, a Medical Action Program for asylum seekers and refugees was organized at Kayseri Mevlana Park. Arrangements for this program started in July with the contributions from ASAM Kayseri Office. Under the leadership of Prof. Dr. İlhan Sezgin, 8 volunteer doctors from different branches joined together to freely examine the asylum seekers and refugees and provide the medicines that they need. In August, ASAM got permission for the activity from the governorship. In addition to that, ASAM staff went to the Provincial Directorate of Health and informed them of the mentioned medical action program.

Thereafter, ASAM staff had a meeting at the Municipality of Kocasinan and requested assistance. In mid September, the last meetings were held with the volunteer doctors and the public enterprises and required conditions for the action were prepared. On 24 September 2010, doctors coming from İzmir, İstanbul, Eskişehir and Sivas were welcomed and taken to the place of the activity.



Medical Screening in Kayseri was implemented by ASAM, many asylum seekers in the city had the chance to be examined through the project. 24 September, 2010. Photo: ASAM

Doctors have categorized the large spectrum of medicines they brought themselves. Giving an approximate number, nearly 450 asylum seekers and refugees have attended the medical screening program. Medicines were distributed for free to all the asylum seekers who attended the activity. Besides prescribing medicine, some asylum seekers and refugees suffering from severe health problems were referred to hospitals. Some Turkish citizens have also benefited from this medical screening program.

The Human Resources Development Foundation (HRDF) aims to facilitate the daily lives of asylum seekers and refugees residing in Turkey, by raising public awareness through cooperating with non-governmental organizations and local authorities.

do something for those in need of international protection

UNHCR Turkey thanks all the generous individuals
and associations who try to improve
the lives of hundreds of refugees

If you would also like to help refugees,
please contact our office.

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An artwork by Meral Başaran, Cumhuriyet University, SIVAS. UNHCR Fine Arts Project! 2009-2010.

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