

WORLD REFUGEE DAY: HIGHLIGHTING A GLOBAL NEED AND AMERICA'S RESPONSE



“For ... refugees, social, economic and legal integration in their country of asylum not only provides opportunities for them to begin rebuilding their lives, but also for the contribution of their knowledge, talents and skills to be fully realized.”

– President Barack Obama

Each year on June 20th, the United Nations, the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and countless governments and civic groups around the world celebrate World Refugee Day to honor the refugees worldwide who have been forced to flee their homes due to war, conflict and persecution.

By the start of 2013, more than 45 million people worldwide had fled their homes due to conflict, persecution, and other abuses.

HISTORY

On December 4, 2000, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 55/76 noting the upcoming 50th Anniversary of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The General Assembly decided at that time to establish the 20th of June as World Refugee Day. The annual commemoration is marked by a variety of events in more than 100 countries involving government officials, humanitarian aid workers, celebrities, civilians and the refugees themselves.

REFUGEES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Refugees fleeing persecution and conflict, internally displaced persons, and stateless persons are the principal recipients of the U.S. humanitarian assistance that is programmed through the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

The United States is the leading provider of humanitarian aid through key partners: UNHCR, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and various non-governmental organizations.

STATE DEPARTMENT BUREAU OF POPULATION, REFUGEES AND MIGRATION

The Bureau works with the international community to develop humane and lasting solutions to their displacement through:

- Repatriation - returning home voluntarily when they are no longer at risk of harm or persecution
- Local Integration - settling permanently in the country to which they have fled
- Resettlement - settling permanently in a third country

The Bureau seeks to provide protection, ease suffering, and resolve the plight of persecuted and uprooted people around the world on behalf of the American people by:

- Providing life-sustaining assistance;
- Working through multilateral systems to build global partnerships, promoting best practices in humanitarian response; and
- Ensuring that humanitarian principles are thoroughly integrated into U.S. foreign and national security policy.

RESETTLEMENT

The United States is the world's leading resettlement country, admitting more refugees each year than all other resettlement countries combined – more than three million since 1975. Communities in every state have been enriched as refugees integrate into their new homes and take advantage of the opportunities this country provides them. The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program turns the promise of America -- as a land that welcomes refugees -- into a reality.

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