

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi statement for World Refugee Day 2019

Today is World Refugee Day. It is a day to honor you, the people among us who have been forced to flee, to leave your cherished homes in order to survive.

It is a day for us to recognize your courage to escape and your determination to restart your lives.

It is a day when I think of those of you whom I have met during my 35 year career serving refugees. In camps, in towns and in cities where you have found safety. I am continually deeply moved by your stories and inspired by your hope.

So on this World Refugee Day, and also every day, my colleagues and I pledge to do all we can to help you.

Not just to get by, but also to thrive.

Even though there are more people like you who have been forcibly displaced than ever before – over 70 million – we have developed better ways to mobilize the world to support you.

Is it enough? No.

There are still far too few resettlement places for refugees who need them. Funding levels are too low. Some countries are introducing restrictions that are hurting your access to asylum. Boats are hindered from rescuing drowning refugees. Peace talks are slow to bear fruit.

But many generous countries and communities are still welcoming places. And new partners from development and the private sector are offering investment and expertise. Ordinary people are donating and volunteering. Voices of humanity are holding their ground.

And so, on this World Refugee Day, we must have hope.