

George Dalaras

Goodwill Ambassador Fact Sheet

George Dalaras has had a long association with the UN refugee agency. The Greek singing star, who was named a UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador in October 2006, first donated his services to the agency during its 50th anniversary celebrations in 2001.

He helped organise a spectacular World Refugee Day concert in the ancient Greek stadium at Delphi. Dalaras and American jazz singer Jocelyn B. Smith, accompanied by the Ossipov Russian Orchestra, performed the songs of acclaimed Greek composer, Mikis Theodorakis.

Later in the year, Dalaras organised two more 50th anniversary concerts in the Herod Atticus Theatre at the foot of the Acropolis. More than 9,000 people packed into the beautiful Athens venue to hear Dalaras and French soprano Emma Shapplin, accompanied by an orchestra and choir. The concerts raised 230,000 euros for UNHCR programmes around the world.

In 2003, Dalaras took part in a UNHCR awareness and fund-raising campaign. He was one of an impressive group of musicians who sang on a complimentary CD released in February with *Ta Nea* newspaper's weekend magazine, *Tahydromos*. The CD and accompanying article directed readers to a special bank account opened by UNHCR to receive donations aimed at helping refugee children. Read the web story [here](#).

Dalaras, whose mother was a Greek refugee from Turkey, implored the Greek public to donate, saying that refugees "live with a pain, which as Euripides said is the greatest on earth: the loss of one's homeland. In this way, being children of refugees ourselves, we are doing nothing more today than remembering all of this with two songs." The campaign raised more than 30,000 euros.

In 2004, Dalaras was invited to perform at the closing ceremony of the Olympic Games in Athens. With a global audience, he sang four songs, including one about the plight of the world's refugees.

The following year, Dalaras again supported World Refugee Day by recording radio and television spots on that year's theme, "Courage." Listen to the spots at www.unhcr.org/wrd.

In 2006, the relationship between UNHCR and Dalaras grew even closer when he was named a Goodwill Ambassador at a high-profile ceremony on October 5 in Greece's old parliament building in Athens. Read the web story [here](#).

In February, Dalaras made his first overseas trip as a UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador. Accompanied by his wife Anna, Dalaras visited refugee camps and UNHCR staff in Sierra Leone before travelling overland to Liberia with a group of returnees. He met top government officials and aid workers in both countries and visited a UNHCR-funded computer training school for returnees in the Liberian capital of Monrovia.

Keep checking back to www.unhcr.org/goodwill for regularly updated information.