

World Refugee Day 2015

“More people fled last year than at any other time in our records. Around the world, almost 60 million have been displaced by conflict and persecution. Nearly 20 million of them are refugees, and more than half are children. Their numbers are growing and accelerating, every single day, on every continent. In 2014, an average of 42,500 people became refugees, asylum-seekers or internally displaced persons, every single day – that is four times more than just 4 years ago. These people rely on us for their survival and hope. They will remember what we do. Yet, even as this tragedy unfolds, some of the countries most able to help are shutting their gates to people seeking asylum. Borders are closing, pushbacks are increasing, and hostility is rising. Avenues for legitimate escape are fading away. And humanitarian organizations like UNHCR run on shoestring budgets, unable to meet the spiraling needs of such a massive population of victims”

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres, World Refugee Day 2015



- Computer engineer
- Good reader
- Teacher

Get to know **Shaimaa**



- Physics teacher
- Volunteer
- Passionate about poetry and music

Get to know **Bashar**

**WORLD
REFUGEE
DAY
SPECIAL
EDITION**



Full Statement by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres on **World Refugee Day 2015** available at

<http://www.unhcr.org/558016eb6.html>

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In the past for years, many countries and regions held their own Refugee Days and even Weeks. One of the most widespread was Africa Refugee Day, which was in the past celebrated on 20 June in several countries. However, in recognition of the international significance of Global Displacement and the importance of the issue of Refugees, the UN General Assembly, on 4 December 2000, adopted resolution 55/76 where it noted that 2001 marked the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) had agreed to have International Refugee Day coincide with Africa Refugee Day on 20 June. The General Assembly therefore decided that 20 June would be celebrated as World Refugee Day.

Each year since then on June 20th UNHCR, sister UN agencies, INGOs and countless civic groups around the world host World Refugee Day events in order to draw the public's attention to the millions of refugees and Internally displaced persons worldwide who have been forced to flee their homes due to war, conflict and persecution.

The annual commemoration is marked by a variety of events across the globe, involving government officials, humanitarian aid workers, celebrities, civilians and the forcibly displaced themselves. World Refugee Day 2015 was marked in a number of locations throughout Syria with the theme this year the highlighting of individual refugee stories and bringing them closer to the public and to the media, raising awareness and to gathering support for them. Families forced to flee once lived ordinary lives, working, studying, playing and dreaming of going back to their normal lives.



- Martial arts champion
- Referee
- Hard worker

Get to know **Nermeen**



- Journalist
- Law student
- Volunteer

Get to know **Hassan**

Celebrations Damascus

UNHCR Syria celebrated the World Refugee Day (WRD) in Damascus on the 20th of June.

The celebration in Damascus, brought together journalists, UNHCR partners and UN agencies and refugees. The refugees in their own words told their stories, their plight, their hopes and future dreams. The audience was impressed with the individual stories that reflected resilience, hope and talent. They are ordinary people living through extraordinary times.



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WRD comes just two days after UNHCR launched the Global Trends Report, revealing shocking figures as more conflicts are occurring or renewed making the Middle East region the biggest region to export and to host refugees in the world.

Global Forced Displacement 2015 – The Facts

- 2014 saw the highest Global Forced Displacement on record. By end-2014, 59.5 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or human rights violations. This is 8.3 million persons more than the year before (51.2 million) and the highest annual increase in a single year.
- To put this in context, 59.5 Million is the combined population of Ireland, Singapore, the Netherlands, Lebanon, New Zealand, Cuba, Portugal and Qatar
- Of this, some 19.5 million persons were refugees. The global figure included 38.2 million internally displaced persons and nearly 1.8 million asylum-seekers. If these 59.5 million persons were a nation, they would make up the 24th largest in the world.
- The main acceleration has been since early 2011 when war erupted in Syria, propelling it into becoming the world’s single largest driver of displacement. In 2014, an average of 42,500 people became refugees, asylum seekers, or internally displaced every day, representing a four-fold increase in just four years.
- Syria is the world’s biggest producer of both internally displaced people (7.6 million) and refugees (3.88 million at the end of 2014).
- Syria and Iraq alone have a total of over 15 million refugees and internally displaced persons. Another shocking figure about 2014 was the fact that every single day 42,500 were displaced globally, and that is four times higher than just four years ago.

Celebrations Aleppo

UNHCR Aleppo FO celebrated the World Refugee Day by conducting two recreational events where both refugees and IDP children participated in the same activities. These included interactive theatre at the Al Shahba’a Social Club as well as playtime for refugees and IDP’s at the SARC Centre. Over 200 people participated in these events with many expressing that this celebration was ‘a recognition from the international community that we are here and we still need help till we can stand again on our feet’.



UNHCR Staff and Outreach Volunteers at Al –Shahba’a Social Club



Play time at the SARC Centre

Celebrations Tartous

UNHCR in collaboration with its partners SARC- HSP, GOPA and Al Batoul, celebrated the World Refugee Day at the Cornish in Tartous.

The celebration targeted refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs and was also open to the public to participate in the many activities held. Following the opening speech given by the UNHCR Head of field office there was theatrical performances given by both refugee and IDP children. The performances included singing, acting and comic sketches. As well as this recreational activities were arranged with 250 children participating in 12 different types of games and 200 adults participating in nine different types of games.



In addition, A basketball competition was also organized in the basketball court at Cornish. 75 people participated in this competition with the winners each receiving a small gift.



In Lattakia a celebration was also held in the Al Arouba garden, where 180 children (refugees, IDPS and host community children) enjoyed activities there. The activity was designed to introducing the children to different cultures and traditions which will eventually help integrate them into the community and value the differences they possess.

Refugee Stories – Khairi – Qamishly



Khairi prepares natural remedies at his shop in Qamishly
©UNHCR / E.Khajo

Full of energy and motivation, Khairi, a 65 years old Iraqi refugee from Baghdad, goes every day to his shop in one of the busiest perfumers' markets in the center of Qamishly city. Khairi is an herbalist; He prepares different kinds of natural oils and medicinal herbs that are used as remedies for different diseases.

Khairi has been an herbalist for twenty years. His faith in the power of natural therapy is the result of the cure of his son by a famous elderly herbalist in Baghdad. Khairi says "I lost hope because of my son's medical condition, however, when he recovered I decided to learn herbalism and help in relieving people's illness. I was trained by the old herbalist and I really gained a rich knowledge of all medicinal herbs and their uses."

However, Khairi was forced to flee war in Iraq to Syria in 2006 and upon arrival settled in Aleppo and started practicing herbalism. During his seven years in Aleppo, Khairi was well known for his effective natural remedies which attracted people from all over Aleppo. In 2012, conflict again forced Khairi to leave Aleppo to a safer place inside Syria. Despite his second displacement, Khairi remains optimistic and has become even more determined to continue his life. Upon arriving to Qamishly in mid-2012, Khairi rented a shop and put all his skills, knowledge and experience into practice again. "Work for me has never been only for money. It is an identity which I struggled not to lose despite all the difficulties I have been through" says Khairi. Khairi is now one of the most famous herbal practitioners in Qamishly. "All my customers call me a doctor and I feel tremendous happiness when I help people and gain their trust" Khairi says with eyes full of pleasure.

Despite his success in Syria, Khairi hopes to go back to Iraq to the place where he grew up and acquired his skills and knowledge "Iraq is home for me, my dream will always be return" Khairi concludes.

Thanks to Our Donors



These are the 2013 and 2014 donors for the Syria situation

For more information , please contact:

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