

2011: A Year of

UNHCR will commemorate several significant anniversaries in 2011, in the wake of its own 60th anniversary at the end of 2010. The core international legal instruments on refugee protection and the reduction of statelessness will enter their 60th and 50th years respectively, and 150 years will have passed since the birth of the first League of Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees.

COMMEMORATING THESE MILESTONES will provide an important opportunity for UNHCR to place forced displacement and statelessness issues at the centre of international attention. While considerable progress has been made in the decades since these core instruments were adopted, today's protection environment is becoming more complex and new challenges continue to emerge.

UNHCR has set itself a number of ambitious goals for these commemorations. These include to raise public awareness and build solidarity with forcibly displaced and stateless persons; to attain greater support for, and new accessions to,

the Statelessness Conventions; and ultimately, to reinforce core international protection principles and values, strengthen the existing protection regime and promote a new protection dynamic. If these goals are achieved, the new approaches, recommendations and commitments that emerge in the process could stand as a global compact for protection, to guide the international community for the next decade.

Thematic media campaigns, including television advertisements, will be launched to increase public understanding, build solidarity with refugees, forcibly displaced and stateless persons and promote UNHCR's goals. A strong component of this strategy will be to give a voice to refugees and stateless persons through a new interactive website.

8-9 December 2010

High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges

'Protection Gaps and Responses' is the theme of the fourth High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges, which will be held in Geneva on 8 and 9 December 2010. The main topics for discussion will be: gaps in the international protection framework and in its implementation; international cooperation, burden sharing and comprehensive regional approaches; and the reduction of statelessness and protection of stateless persons.

Commemorations

Going home, rebuilding lives: The end of the century was marked by a refugee exodus from East Timor. After an international force re-established order, many displaced persons went home with the help of UNHCR.

UNHCR / M. KOBAYASHI / 1999

14 December 2010

UNHCR's 60th anniversary

On 14 December 2010, UNHCR will celebrate its staff and their commitment to the goals of the organization. This will be an internal celebration, organized by and for staff worldwide. A global event will take place at UNHCR Headquarters, in addition to other events that will be organized by country and regional offices.

10 October 2011

150th anniversary of the birth of Fridtjof Nansen

The 150th anniversary of the birth of Fridtjof Nansen, the first League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, will be celebrated on 10 October 2011. This will give UNHCR an occasion to recall the fundamental values that underpin humanitarian responses to refugee and other forced displacement challenges.

7-8 December 2011

Ministerial meeting of States Parties

The key event in the commemorations calendar will be a ministerial meeting of States Parties to the 1951 Refugee Convention and/or 1967 Protocol, as well as to 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 event during which States may formalize their accession to the relevant Conventions. This will be an important opportunity for States to make concrete pledges

to address specific displacement or statelessness issues, as well as forward-looking recommendations.

Preparations for the meeting of States Parties will be divided into four 'tracks': meetings and consultations in Geneva; field-based activities and consultations; events at the regional level; and roundtables involving experts. This broad-based consultative process will ensure that governments, non-governmental organizations, experts, refugees and stateless persons will be able to contribute and have their voices heard.