



HIGHLIGHTS

August 1962

Acceded to the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons

December 1992

Acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol

May 2001

First recognized refugee

July 2013

Enforced the Refugee Act of Korea

Refugee Application (in ROK)

By country of origin (as of 31 December, 2015)

Country	Total
Pakistan	2,782
China	1,165
Nigeria	1,021
Egypt	1,501
Others	8,771
Total	15,250

Ministry of Justice, Republic of Korea

2016 Fundraising Results

As of February 2016

Government: **USD 12.7 Million**

Private: **USD 3.7 Million**

UNHCR Presence

Staff:

2 international staff
15 national staff
34 affiliated staff (incl. fundraisers)

Offices:

1 office located in Seoul



WORKING WITH PARTNERS

- The role of UNHCR in the Republic of Korea is primarily of an advocacy nature. UNHCR engages with the government, judiciary, legislative, the National Human Rights Commission, NGOs and civil society to improve the domestic asylum system and treatment of asylum-seekers and refugees, and to ensure respect for their rights, including the principle of *non-refoulement*.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Support to Korea's national asylum system

- The Republic of Korea acceded to the 1951 Convention in 1992 and began registering asylum-seekers in 1994. The numbers of new applications have slowly increased over the years with a total of 1,877 persons applying for asylum in 2013, and 2,896 in 2014.
- A comprehensive Refugee Law, Presidential Decree and Regulations came into force on 1 July 2013. It is the first stand-alone refugee law in the Republic of Korea and represents a significant enhancement of refugee protection. UNHCR monitors the implementation of the Act in line with the 1951 Convention and provides technical assistance.
- UNHCR assists the Ministry of Justice and Immigration Offices, which handle asylum applications in the Republic of Korea, to ensure that decisions are made in accordance with international standards.
- UNHCR establishes and maintains operational and implementing partnerships with a range of NGOs to improve support and services to asylum-seekers and refugees in areas such as accommodation, employment, education and health services.
- UNHCR provides technical assistance to the Government of the Republic of Korea for the preparation of a resettlement programme.
- UNHCR is advocating with the Government of the Republic of Korea to ratify the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and to establish statelessness determination procedures, while at the same time to prevent statelessness by ensuring birth registration of children born to asylum-seekers and refugees.

Fundraising and advocacy activities

- UNHCR raises awareness and understanding on forced displacement issues with the general public. UNHCR attempts to make these issues more personal to Koreans by linking their own history of internal displacement during the Korean War to the plight of refugees. UNHCR promotes the thematic slogan "Protecting refugees with your caring hands" representing the agency's core protection mandate.
- UNHCR Korea appointed renowned South Korean actor Jung Woo-sung as its first celebrity supporter in May 2014. Jung supported the works of UNHCR and helped raise the public-awareness of the plight of refugees around the world by taking part in various activities. He visited the camps in Nepal in November 2014 and South Sudan in May 2015. He was officially named UNHCR National Goodwill Ambassador in June 2015 and will maintain his support for UNHCR through a long-term relationship.
- The Government of Korea has steadily increased its financial contribution to UNHCR since 2004 when RoK contributed a total of USD 1.1 m to reaching USD 15.9 m in 2015. The 2015 contribution includes an unearmarked core contribution of USD 3,087,692 and USD 12,380,000 earmarked for major humanitarian emergencies, the Junior Professional Officers Program as well as the 2015 portions of UNHCR's 3-year project for Sustainable Return of Afghan Refugees (2014-16: USD 18 million), the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees in Iran (2014-2016: USD 5.6 million) and KOICA's contribution to the Transitional Solutions Initiative for IDPs in Colombia (2014-16: USD 1.5 million).
- UNHCR's efforts to mobilize financial support from the private sector continued in 2015, raising over USD 16.3 million as of end-2015. Korea became one of the Top 10 private funding sources for the Agency since 2013 after only five and a half years since the office launched its first private sector fund-raising activities in mid-2009. And over 110,000 individual donors supported UNHCR's global operations in 2015 alone.

Contact for details:

UNHCR Representation in the Republic of Korea **Email:** unhcr@unhcr.or.kr **Tel:** +82 2 773 7011