



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

Population of concern (in ROK)

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

Country	Total PoC
Pakistan	2,265
China	928
Nigeria	875
Egypt	1,131
Others	7,009
Total	12,208

Ministry of Justice, Republic of Korea

Fundraising in 2015

Government: **USD 13,518,865**

Private: **USD 10,098,571**

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's contribution to UNHCR increased tremendously in 2014, marking USD 15,870,460 compared to USD 5,944,641 in 2013. This includes USD 3,092,275 to UNHCR's annual programs and USD 12,778,185 earmarked for major humanitarian emergencies, the Junior Professional Program as well as the 2014 portions of UNHCR's 3-year project for Sustainable Return of Afghan Refugees (2014-16: USD 18 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 2014, raising over USD 10.6 million as of end-2014, which is almost double the 2013 result of USD 5.36 million. Korea became one of the Top 10 private funding sources for the Agency in 2013 after only five and a half years since the office launched its first private sector fund-raising activities in mid-2009. At present, over 72,500 individual donors are regularly supporting UNHCR's global operations, and if including one-off donors, around 98,800 donors supported UNHCR in 2014 alone.

Contact for details:

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