

**41st Meeting of the Standing Committee
4–6 March 2008**

**Agenda Item 6(b)
Outline for the oral update on
Protracted situations which would benefit from international support**

*Presented by the Assistant High Commissioner (Operations) and
the Assistant High Commissioner (Protection)*

Context and definition

- At the end of 2006,¹ over half of the 9.9 million refugees worldwide² were living in exile in protracted situations.
- The 10 largest populations living in protracted situations were:
 1. Over 1 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan
 2. Nearly 1 million Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran
 3. 350,000 Burundians in the United Republic of Tanzania
 4. 215,000 Sudanese in Uganda
 5. 174,000 Somalis in Kenya
 6. 157,000 Eritreans in Sudan
 7. 132,000 Angolans in the Democratic Republic of Congo
 8. 132,000 refugees from Myanmar in Thailand
 9. 128,000 Congolese (DRC) in the United Republic of Tanzania
 10. 107,000 Bhutanese in Nepal
- UNHCR currently characterizes a protracted refugee situation (PRS) as “one in which refugees find themselves in a long-lasting and intractable state of limbo. Their lives may not be at risk, but their basic rights and essential economic, social and psychological needs remain unfulfilled after years in exile.”³
- For statistical purposes, UNHCR defines a PRS as a refugee population of 25,000 persons or more who have been in exile for at least five consecutive years. Figures do not cover industrialized countries and exclude Palestinian refugees who fall under the mandate of UNRWA.

Recent Trends

- Although the number of situations has declined in the past decade: from 39 in 1998 to 30 today, and the overall number of refugees affected from some 8 million to just over 5 million, the numbers could rise again if large refugee populations are left without durable solutions, for example in Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan.
- The substantial decrease in the number of refugees in protracted situations can be attributed to a handful of major repatriation operations in recent years. In 2005 and 2006, more than 1.8 million long-term refugees returned to their country of origin, more than a million of them to Afghanistan alone. Substantial numbers were also repatriated in Africa, particularly Angola, Burundi, Liberia and Sudan.

*UNHCR
3 March 2008*

¹ UNHCR figures as of February 2008 (See Annex)

² UNHCR Statistical Yearbook 2006

³ *Protracted refugee situations* (EC/54/SC/CRP.14), June 2004

Annex
Protracted Refugee Situations (UNHCR Statistics, February 2008)

			End-Year	End-Year	End-Year	End-Year	End-Year	End-Year	End-Year	End-Year	End-Year
Country of Asylum	Note	Origin	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Algeria	¹	Western Sahara	165,000	165,000	165,000	165,000	165,000	165,000	165,000	90,000	90,000
Armenia		Azerbaijan	310,000	296,200	280,600	264,300	247,500	239,300	235,100	219,300	113,200
Azerbaijan		Armenia	188,400	188,400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Burundi		Dem. Rep. of the Congo	23,100	20,800	25,800	26,700	39,800	40,600	48,400	20,400	12,600
Cameroon		Chad	44,600	44,600	42,300	39,300	39,300	39,300	39,300	39,300	7,100
Central African Rep.		Sudan	34,000	35,500	36,200	36,300	37,400	36,500	19,500	20,000	7,900
China		Viet Nam	292,300	293,200	294,100	295,300	297,200	299,300	299,300	300,900	300,900
Congo		Dem. Rep. of the Congo	300	12,400	97,600	92,800	83,500	81,000	58,800	56,400	46,300
Côte d'Ivoire		Liberia	148,900	135,600	117,700	122,800	43,000	74,200	70,400	39,900	25,600
Croatia		Bosnia and Herzegovina	28,700	25,000	20,900	20,400	7,700	3,900	3,200	2,500	2,100
Dem. Rep. of the Congo		Angola	137,000	150,000	175,400	186,900	184,200	123,700	98,400	106,800	132,300
Dem. Rep. of the Congo		Rwanda	35,000	33,000	46,300	30,400	20,500	19,700	11,800	42,400	37,300
Dem. Rep. of the Congo		Sudan	31,100	68,000	72,900	75,000	75,800	45,100	45,200	11,700	6,200
Egypt	²	Occupied Palestinian Territory	-	-	-	100	70,200	70,200	70,200	70,300	70,200
Ethiopia		Somalia	195,300	180,900	121,100	67,100	37,500	28,300	16,500	15,900	16,600
Ethiopia		Sudan	58,600	70,300	71,700	80,900	90,000	94,900	90,500	73,900	67,000
Ghana		Liberia	12,600	10,400	9,500	8,900	28,300	42,500	40,900	38,700	35,700
Guinea		Liberia	183,000	129,100	117,100	82,800	119,300	149,600	127,300	54,800	21,800
Guinea		Sierra Leone	297,200	370,600	310,000	95,500	60,600	25,000	7,200	5,400	5,300
India		China	98,000	98,000	92,300	92,300	92,300	92,300	94,300	77,200	77,200
India		Sri Lanka	70,300	66,400	64,700	64,100	63,800	60,900	57,300	50,700	69,600
Iraq		Islamic Rep. of Iran	29,000	26,500	23,900	23,700	20,300	10,200	9,500	13,400	11,800
Iraq		Occupied Palestinian Territory	62,600	90,000	90,000	90,000	100,000	22,700	22,700	22,700	15,000
Islamic Rep. of Iran		Afghanistan	1,400,700	1,325,700	1,482,000	1,482,000	1,104,900	834,700	952,800	920,200	914,300
Islamic Rep. of Iran		Iraq	530,600	510,000	386,000	386,000	201,700	150,200	93,200	54,000	54,000
Kenya		Somalia	164,700	141,100	137,400	144,300	155,800	154,300	153,600	150,500	173,700
Kenya		Sudan	48,200	64,300	55,600	69,800	57,800	63,200	67,600	76,600	73,000
Liberia		Sierra Leone	96,300	96,300	69,300	54,700	45,700	13,900	2,700	3,500	3,600
Malaysia	³	Philippines	45,100	45,100	45,100	45,100	45,100	-	-	-	-
Mexico		Guatemala	26,600	22,100	16,000	13,000	10,600	4,100	2,400	1,200	1,200
Nepal		Bhutan	105,700	107,600	108,900	110,800	112,300	103,700	104,900	106,200	107,800
Pakistan	⁴	Afghanistan	1,200,000	1,200,000	2,000,000	2,197,800	1,226,600	1,123,600	1,290,400	1,084,200	1,044,000
Rwanda		Dem. Rep. of the Congo	32,000	33,000	27,400	33,100	29,300	34,700	45,500	41,400	46,300
Saudi Arabia	⁵	Occupied Palestinian Territory	-	-	-	240,000	240,000	240,000	240,000	240,000	240,000
Senegal		Mauritania	55,100	20,000	19,800	19,800	19,800	19,800	19,800	19,700	19,600

Serbia	⁶	Bosnia and Herzegovina	200,900	198,200	190,000	143,100	121,400	99,800	95,300	47,000	27,400
Serbia	⁶	Croatia	296,600	298,500	289,900	245,300	228,700	189,700	180,100	100,700	71,100
Sierra Leone		Liberia	9,900	6,600	6,500	10,500	63,500	61,200	65,400	60,000	27,300
Sudan		Eritrea	342,300	342,100	367,700	324,500	305,300	108,300	110,900	116,700	157,200
Sudan		Ethiopia	35,600	35,400	34,100	16,100	14,600	15,300	14,800	14,600	11,000
Thailand		Myanmar	101,700	99,700	104,600	110,300	112,200	118,800	120,800	116,500	132,200
Uganda		Sudan	189,800	200,600	212,200	176,800	188,200	198,300	214,700	212,900	215,700
United Rep. of Tanzania		Burundi	473,800	499,000	538,400	521,200	540,900	494,200	443,700	393,600	352,600
United Rep. of Tanzania		Dem. Rep. of the Congo	58,300	98,500	110,400	117,500	140,300	150,200	153,500	150,100	128,000
Uzbekistan		Tajikistan	-	-	30,000	30,000	39,200	39,200	39,200	39,200	-
Yemen		Somalia	57,400	55,200	56,500	67,500	80,800	59,200	63,500	78,600	91,600
Zambia		Angola	149,800	163,100	198,200	218,200	188,400	158,900	88,800	75,500	42,700
Zambia		Dem. Rep. of the Congo	12,200	36,400	45,100	56,100	49,200	58,400	66,200	61,200	60,900

¹ According to the Government of Algeria, there are an estimated 165,000 Sahrawi refugees in the Tindouf camps.

² Egypt: 70,000 Palestinians recorded first time in 2002. Considered in protracted situation the entire period.

³ Malaysia: The 45,100 refugees from the Philippines were reclassified to Others of Concern in 2003.

⁴ UNHCR figures for Pakistan only include Afghans living in camps who are assisted by UNHCR. According to a 2005 government census of Afghans in Pakistan and subsequent voluntary repatriation during the year, there are an additional 1.3 million Afghans living outside camps, some of whom may be refugees. Those Afghans living outside camps receive no UNHCR assistance except facilitated voluntary repatriation.

⁵ Saudi Arabia: 240,000 Palestinians recorded first time in 2001. Considered in protracted situation the entire period.

⁶ Serbia includes Kosovo. Data for Montenegro is included until 2005.

Source: *FICSS, UNHCR*