

Side event of the 67th session of the Executive Committee

1956-2016

European solidarity and responsibility sharing

Moderated by Mr. Volker Türk, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection,
UNHCR

Speakers:

Professor of International Refugee Law and Vice Dean,
Amsterdam Law School, University of Amsterdam, Dr. Marjoleine Zieck
Writer and editor, former Hungarian refugee, Mr. Adam Biro
Director of the Bureau for Europe, UNHCR, Mr. Vincent Cochetel



Hungarian refugees taking a train to their new country of asylum / 1956-1957 © United Nations Archives

In 1956 and early 1957, Europe was tested for the first time on its ability to manage a mass influx of refugees with the help of a new legal instrument, the 1951 Refugee Convention. Some 200,000 people fled Hungary over a period of several months – 180,000 to Austria and 20,000 to the former Yugoslavia. Western European States and a number of non-European countries joined forces in an admirable humanitarian effort, and what ensued was the first multilateral resolution of a refugee crisis. Today, Europe is again confronted with the arrival of large numbers of refugees, this time with a whole array of legal standards and instruments at its disposal. What lessons can be drawn from the experience 60 years ago? This side event will be an opportunity to think back to 1956 and look forward, beyond 2016.

Thursday, 6 October 2016

13:15 – 15:00

Palais des Nations – Room XI

A light lunch and refreshments will be served.

