

East and Horn Of Africa

Recent Developments

These countries maintained a measure of stability in their relations in 2001 and continued to make significant progress towards the resolution of inter-state conflicts. This enabled most of them to implement their domestic economic, political and social programmes with renewed vigour and commitment. In this context, Eritrea and Ethiopia, having signed a peace agreement in December 2000, made room for the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force. Both countries are working progressively towards the resolution of their differences, albeit with moments of anxiety over certain issues. The restoration of diplomatic relations between Sudan and Uganda towards the end of the year has raised hopes of defusing flash points along their common border. Sudan, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Eritrea also engaged in diplomacy to improve co-operation in various spheres. One of the positive outcomes of these interactions has been the successful voluntary repatriation of Eritrean refugees from Sudan.

However, by contrast with these improvements in inter-State relations, certain internal developments within these various countries give cause for serious concern. In Eritrea and Ethiopia, various segments of society are voicing strong and sometimes violent opposition to their Governments. In both countries, escalating political tensions have led to arrests and the flight of limited numbers of refugees. It is hoped that solutions will be found to appease the voices of dissent and avert more serious crises.

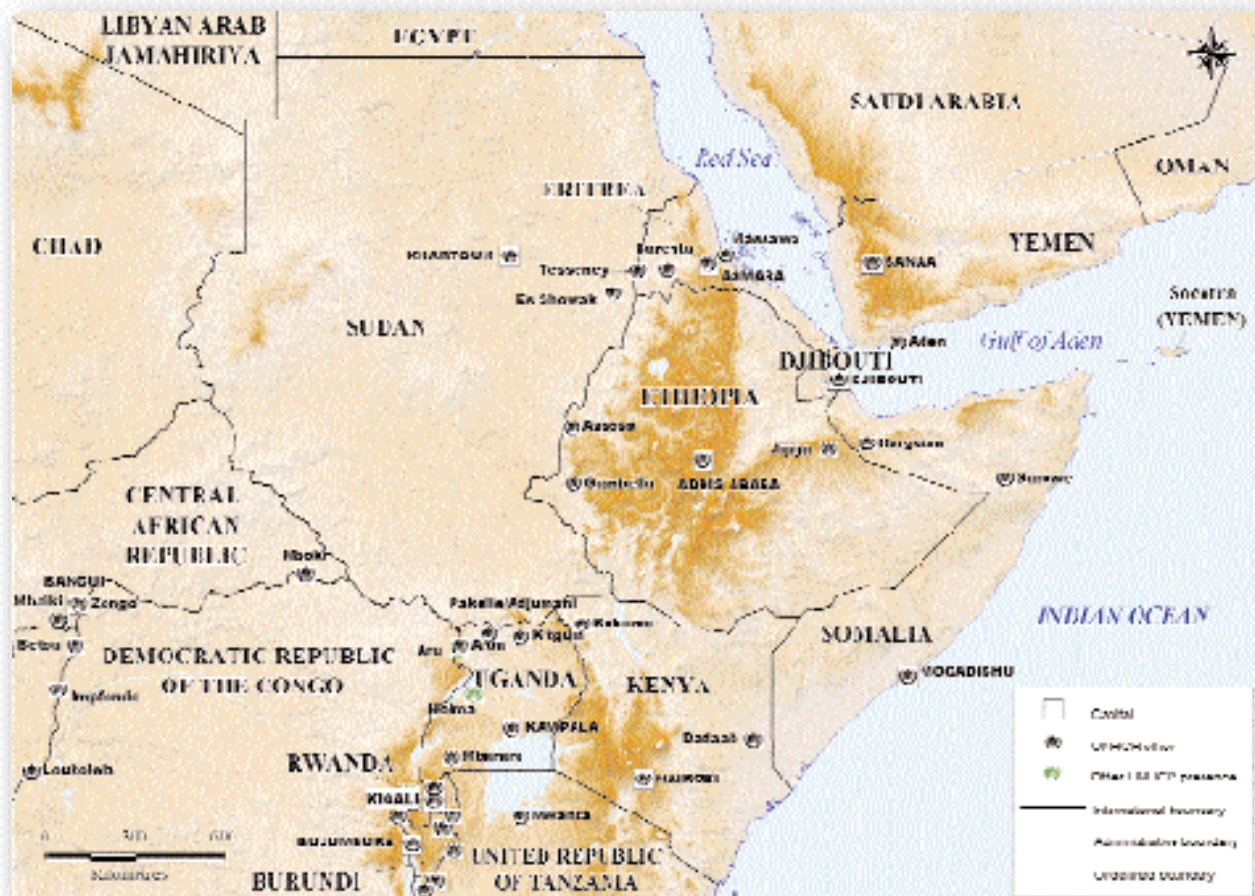
In Somalia, the hopes raised in 2000 by the Arta peace process, with the establishment of a Transitional National Assembly and the election of a President of Somalia, have turned increasingly to frustration. The Transitional National Government (TNG), set up in Mogadishu in October 2000, has failed to achieve further reconciliation due to continuing competition amongst itself, regional administrations based in Hargeisa, «Somaliland» and Garowe, «Puntland», and militia factions grouped together under the umbrella of the Somalia Restoration and Reconciliation Council (SRRC). Furthermore, clan elders, Shari'a Courts, businessmen and organisations within civil society continue to play divergent roles in the reconciliation and rehabilitation process.

In Sudan, there are two peace initiatives (the IGAD and Egypt/Libyan initiatives) that seem to be diametrically opposed in their conceptual approach and are therefore, not likely to resolve the conflict in the foreseeable future. In 2001, these initiatives showed extremely limited progress. The lifting of sanctions against Sudan by the Security Council on 28 September 2001 is too recent to have changed the political landscape of the country, but positive consequences may yet be observed.

There have, nevertheless, been significant operational achievements in 2001. The successful repatriation of refugees from the Sudan to Eritrea, and from Ethiopia to «Somaliland», can be taken as a positive sign for the future. In these countries,

Djibouti
Eritrea
Ethiopia
Kenya
Somalia
Sudan
Uganda





UNHCR was able to assist refugees to go back to their places of origin and subsequently closed some of the refugee camps in the countries of asylum.

Strategic Objectives

UNHCR will seek the implementation of agreed accords, plans and mechanisms with a view to the achievement of durable solutions for refugees and returnees. This will be undertaken in collaboration with regional and bilateral partners such as IGAD and the governments of the region, within a well-articulated humanitarian agenda that emphasises security and support for women and children.

The Office will actively pursue durable solutions for refugees: return in safety and dignity to their homes, effective local integration or resettlement to third countries. This will be achieved through regular review of voluntary repatriation policies, agreements with host countries, the identification of resettlement opportunities and the conclusion of necessary bilateral and multilateral agreements with receiving countries and other relevant agencies.

UNHCR will be able to consolidate its efforts and combine the populations of several camps. It will review the cases of persons

in protracted refugee caseloads to determine their continued need for international protection as well as care and maintenance assistance. It will therefore apply the “ceased circumstances” cessation clause of the 1951 Convention where appropriate, that is withdrawing blanket refugee status from certain groups of Ethiopian refugees, and resume voluntary repatriation operations as soon as circumstances permit. Furthermore, it will review opportunities to regularise the status of refugees, as appropriate, and implement strategies to bring UNHCR’s assistance to a close.

In spite of the changes imposed by Action 2, UNHCR will collaborate closely with UN agencies and other partners to enhance its capacity in the region for emergency preparedness and response in terms of human, material and information resources. This will be done through a proactive and systematic programme of information gathering and sharing on protection and security needs and considerations, together with the maintenance of an effective database of trained personnel and adequate stockpiles of essential emergency supplies.

UNHCR will promote refugee law and respect for humanitarian principles in the exercise of its protection mandate. This will be achieved through the training of personnel and part-

ners, public information and academic programmes, as well as encouragement to governments and regional bodies to put into effect relevant agreements and statutes relating to refugees and other persons of concern.

UNHCR will seek to improve the quality of protection given to refugees and returnees, particularly women, children and adolescents. This will be done by paying close attention to gender issues and the concerns of adolescents and children at all



Somalia. Returnees from Ethiopia in Hargeisa. UNHCR/P. Kessler.

operational levels, identifying and replicating best practices. Special focus will be put on health matters, particularly HIV/AIDS, and increased attention will be paid to peace education and post-conflict recovery.

UNHCR will seek to improve the quality of asylum for refugees in the region through the maintenance of recognised standards of care and the implementation of programmes promoting self-reliance with a view to eventual durable solutions. This will be achieved through a rights-based approach to refugee assistance, especially as concerns women and children and other groups with special needs. UNHCR will collaborate with and mobilise support from donors and other agencies to meet the needs of refugee-hosting populations. In order to ensure both technical integrity and the attainment of acceptable operational standards, UNHCR will also seek to establish community involvement, environmental impact assessments, skills development, and regular inter-agency evaluations of programming and budgeting.

UNHCR will seek to mobilise and efficiently manage the human, financial and material resources needed for cost-effective implementation of programmes in the region. It will therefore exercise creativity and flexibility in resource allocation, the delegation of responsibility, constant liaison and communication with all partners and relevant public audiences, continued training and enhancement of personnel capacities as well as regular internal and external performance monitoring of programmes.

Operations

In addition to the country programmes in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda, which are presented in separate chapters, the following section provides information on planned activities in Djibouti.

The operation in Djibouti, in which UNHCR has been involved for over 20 years, covers a wide range of core mandate activities, including care and maintenance activities in two camps, protection and assistance to urban refugees and

asylum-seekers, and durable solutions through repatriation and resettlement.

The protection focus of UNHCR Djibouti covers four distinct groups: a small number of Eritrean refugees; refugees from Ethiopia who are split between those living in the camps and some living in Djibouti; Somalis mainly registered in the camps; and Ethiopian asylum-seekers. Given the overall socio-economic situation in Djibouti, and its economic difficulties, local settlement is not an option for refugees (other than on an informal basis). Thus, the only two durable solutions available are repatriation or resettlement. Over the past several years repatriation to Somalia and

Ethiopia has been on a very limited scale; however, this remains the main durable solution.

In 2001, repatriation to «Somaliland» did not take off as anticipated, due to the closure of the «international border» between «Somaliland» and Djibouti, and the refusal of the authorities there to accept its nationals. However, in the latter half of the year, the authorities shifted their position and UNHCR has been able to initiate repatriation, which will continue in 2002.

With request to the increased resettlement opportunities made available to the Djibouti operation over the past few years, mainly to the USA, Canada and Australia, in 2002, UNHCR will continue to endeavour to resettle those who are eligible.

BUDGET (USD)

Country	Annual Programme
Regional Office (Nairobi, Kenya)	4,384,907
Djibouti	2,894,340
Eritrea	28,145,330
Ethiopia	21,056,128
Kenya	18,150,731
Somalia	8,377,519
Sudan	11,707,887
Uganda	16,469,530
Total	111,186,372