



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Q&A on asylum and resettlement UNHCR Iraq

I am an IDP – can the UN / UNHCR help to resettle me to another country?

UNHCR's role is to support governments to find durable solutions for asylum seekers who have been recognized as refugees outside of their own country. UNHCR has no role in the resettlement of Iraqi nationals to other countries and it is not in a position to offer assistance to obtain visas, arrange and cover the costs of flight tickets. If you would like to leave Iraq and travel to a country for which you require a visa, please approach the relevant embassy or consulate in Iraq to seek further information and apply for necessary documentation.

I am an IDP – can I claim asylum in Iraq?

Asylum seekers are persons who have left their country and have applied to the government of another country for protection as refugees. As you are still in Iraq and are an Iraqi national, you cannot claim asylum or apply for refugee status. Unfortunately, there is no system through which UNHCR can assist you to seek asylum outside Iraq.

I am an Iraqi national and I was forced to flee Iraq because of the conflict. How can I seek asylum?

If you are outside Iraq and want to seek asylum, please immediately declare your intention to the authorities of that country or approach UNHCR office in that country to register as an asylum seeker. Registration of asylum seekers is undertaken by country authorities, UNHCR or both, depending on the context. The country of asylum and/or UNHCR will be able to provide information on procedural requirements.

I am an Iraqi national and I have applied for asylum outside Iraq. How can I be recognized as a refugee?

After registering as an asylum seeker, the authorities of the country where you sought asylum or UNHCR will guide you through a process to determine whether you are eligible for refugee status. The process may result in a positive or negative decision. If you are not recognized as a refugee, please be aware that the authorities of the country where you sought asylum may request you to leave the country.

I am an Iraqi national and I was forced to flee Iraq because of the conflict. Can UNHCR help me resettle to a third country?

Generally speaking, resettlement is open only to a limited number of persons who have been officially recognized as refugees and it does not apply to asylum seekers. UNHCR would normally identify only the most vulnerable refugees for resettlement consideration and each case would be considered on its own merits. Please be aware that resettlement is not a right.

Who decides on resettlement?

While UNHCR identifies refugees for resettlement consideration and interviews them to assess their eligibility, the final decision to accept a refugee for resettlement rests with resettlement countries and not UNHCR. In general, each year only 1% of refugees in the world are resettled.

Can I apply directly for resettlement through an embassy (i.e. If I were to go the US embassy or any other embassy, would that help me in resettlement)?

Some countries have their own resettlement schemes, for instance on humanitarian grounds or family reunification. Information in this regard should be sought directly from embassies of these countries.

Can UNHCR facilitate the process of obtaining a private visa to travel to a third country?

UNHCR is not involved in private visa procedures, which are different from resettlement. Some countries such as US, Australia have family reunification immigration procedures. If you have any nuclear family members in these countries you may qualify for family reunification. UNHCR is not involved in such schemes. Please approach the relevant embassy to obtain more information.

I heard there are NGOs in Iraq that are offering assistance with resettlement in collaboration with the UN. They charge a fee for this service. Will this improve my chances for resettlement through UNHCR?

UNHCR and the UN do not work with any NGOs in Iraq to identify cases for resettlement. In addition, all UNHCR services are free of charge. If any organisation charges a fee in order to secure resettlement and purports to represent UNHCR or the UN in the matter this is a fraudulent entity probably operating in contravention of Iraqi laws. You should not access their services but instead report such organisations to the police.

Where can I get general information about support for IDPs?

Should you have any questions, please contact the Call Centre that has been set up by the UN and partners on: 0(750) 814-2487 or 0(750) 967-1268 or via email: opscell.iraq@gmail.com.