



1 family torn apart by war
is too many.

PRESS RELEASE

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UNHCR and Indonesia's National Human Rights Commission Join Forces to Protect the Human Rights of Refugees and Others

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) today signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Human Rights Commission of the Republic of Indonesia (Komnas HAM) to step up advocacy and other measures designed to protect the human rights of refugees and others under UNHCR's Mandate in Indonesia. The two agencies agreed to strengthened collaboration for the protection of refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons, and people at risk of statelessness, in various fields including alternatives to immigration detention; protecting and assisting children; increasing birth registration rates; and protecting family unity.

"I am pleased to announce that today UNHCR strengthens its collaboration with Komnas HAM, a group well known for its work in monitoring respect for human rights in Indonesia in ways that work towards eliminating discrimination in the country. Discrimination often arises out of fear and miscommunication." said Thomas Vargas, UNHCR Representative in Indonesia. "An important aspect of our work together with Komnas HAM will focus on improving understanding and trust among refugees and host communities, which can only make their neighborhoods better. If given the opportunity, refugees often make valuable contributions to their host communities." Vargas added.

In Indonesia, as of June 2015, there are 13,188 people of concern to UNHCR, which includes 5,277 refugees and 7,911 asylum-seekers. Most of them fled conflict or human rights abuses they faced in countries like Afghanistan, Myanmar, Somalia, Iran and Iraq. Refugees are people who had no choice but to flee their countries of origin or residence to avoid persecution and to save their lives. They had no options but to seek refuge in other countries like Indonesia, which provides refugees a safe place to stay until an appropriate longer-term solution can be found for them.

A UNHCR report released in June 2015 showed a sharp escalation in the number of people forced to flee their homes worldwide due to wars, conflict, and persecution, with 59.5 million people forcibly displaced at the end of 2014. In Asia alone, the number of refugees and internally displaced people grew by 31 per cent in 2014 to 9 million people. Afghanistan, previously the world's leading producer of refugees, ceded this ranking to Syria. Continuing displacement was seen in and from Myanmar in 2014, including of Rohingya from Rakhine state and in the Kachin and Northern Shan regions. Iran and Pakistan remained two of the world's top four refugee hosting countries.



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