



World Refugee Day

PRESS RELEASE

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International Refugee Rights Association

A part of the world population becomes a refugee every day, every minute, every second because the reasons that cause refugees are increasing.

There is freedom in one part of the world and wars in another part. While there is consumerism in one part of the world, scarcity increases in the other part. While some parts of the world swim in prosperity, the other parts suffer.

Today, in Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, Sudan, Arakan, East Turkestan, and many other regions, at per square meter there are heavy oppressions that consciences are not able to stand. People are exiled from the lands where they were born and raised by force and pressure. It is not only exiled but sometimes they lose their wives, children, mothers, fathers. Over all this pain, due to the refugee status which they have not as a preference but as an obligation, the doors that they would like to take refuge are slammed in their faces.

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) 2020 World Migration Report, the number of immigrants worldwide has increased to 272 million by reaching 3.5 percent of the world's population. The migration estimates for 2050 were that the number of refugees in the world will increase to 230 million and will constitute 2.6 percent of the world population. With the 2020 data, these estimates were exceeded 30 years ago. The number of people who left their country due to violence, conflict, war and natural disasters, regardless of economic reasons, reached a total of 41.3 million. This number was considered a record in the data of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), which has been monitored since 1998. More than half of these refugees consist of children and the majority of the rest is composed of women. Again, according to the report accepted by the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, thousands of unaccompanied children have been lost in Europe and fall into the hands of organs and prostitution mafia.

Despite the pandemic process of the world, armed conflicts, civil wars or inhumane treatments due to political concerns continue to cause millions of people to migrate from their countries, and to go to other countries by leaving all their assets behind.

Considering that many countries that have no connection with the war and are in the top ranks in arms exports are included in the process where these wars happen, it is not a claim to say but unfortunately the truth itself that the civil war is fed by weapons sold by these countries.

According to the report prepared by the Stockholm Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the USA and France were the countries that increased their arms exports the most in the period of 2015-2019. In the report, the USA, Russia, France, Germany, and China are shown on the top countries in arms exports. In the same report, it was stated that 35 percent of the arms sales made in this period were made to the Middle East and arms deliveries to the Middle East increased by 61 percent compared to the previous period.

Considering this situation, it is seen that the regions where the most weapons are sold are somehow conflict regions, and the countries that sell the most weapons are permanent members of the UN Security Council. Nevertheless, genocide, torture, unjust prison, and concentration camps of the People's Republic of China are another dimension of the issue that has applied to East Turkestan because of their religion, language, and culture.

According to the Global Trends Report published by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in 2019, there are approximately 3.5 million people in the world who requested asylum and wait for their asylum application to be finalized.

In just one year, 1.7 million people have applied for the asylum request, and 83 thousand 800 of those asylum requests have been made to Turkey. Turkey has been one of the countries where most asylum requests were made in the last year.

Despite all these, only 92 thousand 400 refugees could be placed in other countries by UNHCR in the last year. This number is less than 7 percent of the number of people who wait to be placed in a third country. However, in terms of applications made from Turkey, the number of refugees has placed by UNHCR in other countries is quite low compared to the number of applicants.

While there are millions of refugees awaiting the finalization of the asylum application, the fact that UNHCR has completed so few applications make the future of refugees even more uncertain.

However, like everyone, those who are forcibly displaced also must live a life that is worthy of human dignity and complies with human rights standards, no matter where they are and under which circumstances. For this reason, firstly, it is essential to notice and understand that access to asylum is not a choice that can be presented as grace, helpfulness, philanthropy or a choice that can be presented within the bounds of possibility and is left to the discretion of the states; in contrast, it is a right just like the right to life and the right to freedom, that is in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Today is June 20, World Refugee Day. Therefore, we would like to convey the following recommendations to those who remembered and will remember today;

- The United Nations, the European Union and the related states should take action to further aid and cooperate in order to end the armed conflicts, civil wars, economic problems that cause refugees,
- Considering that the conflicts are fed by the sale of weapons, the necessary precautions should be taken and sanctions should be applied for the sale of weapons to the relevant regions in order to end the ongoing conflicts,
- In this context, the permanent members of the UN Security Council, whose aim was to punish all forms of aggression that threaten international peace and security, and which had previously imposed various sanctions on Iraq, Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan or Iran, exported their arms to the conflict zones. we invite you to stop.

- We invite all countries of the world to further aid, cooperate, and apply necessary sanctions to responsible countries in order to stop the human rights violations that are exposed by peoples who suffer from torture, genocide and all kinds of ill-treatment due to their religions, languages , and cultures, especially in Arakan and East Turkistan.
- UNHCR should increase cooperation with the countries that have borne the burden of refugees such as Turkey, for finalizing asylum applications in a rapid and efficient manner; other countries also should approach with sincerity to this cooperation under contracts to which are parties.

Our country which has a position that refugees take refuge for centuries, according to the statistic of Directorate General of Migration Management on May 29, 2020; 3 million 579 thousand 318 Syrians living in Turkey. This number reaches 5 million with the number of people coming from other countries informally. Syrians are under Temporary Protection Status since 2011 they came to Turkey.

Because it was thought that the War in Syria is temporary, and citizens came from Syria would return to their country within a short period of time, Turkey didn't give the subsidiary protection, refuge and conditional refugee status to the asylum seekers from Syria, these people were entertained in the Temporary Protection Statute.

But in the last 9 years since the start of the civil war, Syria couldn't stabilize and the number of asylum seekers coming to Turkey from Syria has increased with each passing day.

The number of Syrians in the Temporary Protection Status in Turkey in 2013 reached 500 thousand, in 2014 reached one and a half million, in 2015 reached in two and a half million, in 2017 three and a half million and today reached 4 million.

Currently, about 1 million registered refugees in Turkey are composed of 0-9 years of age children. This number means that about 1 million children were born and grew up in Turkey.

Some of the Syrians have established their own business and some of them have worked consistently, so they acquired an order in Turkey where they live for years. However, the future of Syrians in our country remains uncertain.

Syrians who have been granted temporary protection status cannot apply for refugee, conditional refugee, and subsidiary protection status, which causes uncertainty about their future.

In addition, Temporary Protection Status which is not a residence status, does not give the right to citizenship to Syrian citizens.

While the Syrian civil war, which has been going on for years, has not been stopped, it is not appropriate to continue to look at Syrian citizens with a "temporary" perspective and to subject them to temporary protection status.

- Syrian citizens who live in Turkey and established order by working or establishing a business and whose children born and raised in Turkey, should be ensured from this uncertainty.

- The future of the Syrians should be guaranteed, and accordingly, necessary regulations concerning the legal status in Turkey should be made.

As a result, lawmakers, politicians, bureaucrats, non-governmental organizations, and the media now have to work in full force for the integration of refugees, who have become a reality of our country. It is time for solidarity with refugees who flee from war, persecution, human rights violations.

The whole society needs to understand that migration and asylum are not a crime, but an obligation. All states have an obligation to open their doors to refugees and to implement policies that respect human dignity and human rights. As a state, society, media, and individuals, none of us should be insensitive to this situation, should not put the responsibility on others, and should not calculate costs.

It should not be forgotten that understandings that manage the refugee crises by seeing them as human values, always win.

Respectfully announced to the public.

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General President

International Refugee Rights Association