



Welcome to Europe!

A Comparative Guide to Resettlement



International Catholic
Migration Commission
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Endurbúsata áttlepprés Resettlement Reinslallan Hervestiging Resensamíento Reinsdíameto
Umstedlling Reinslallagðo Undleensjofitannin Gjenbsettning Genbsettning Vidarebsettning
Presfílování Genbsettning Hervestiging Endurbúsata Resettlement Vidarebsettning Áttlepprés

Chapter 1—UNHCR -Framework for Resettlement, Updated in 2009

States have the primary responsibility for protecting refugees. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) works to ensure that governments take all actions necessary to protect refugees, asylum-seekers and other persons of concern who are on their territory or who are seeking admission to their territory. UNHCR, the sole international organisation mandated to protect refugees globally, also strives to secure durable solutions for refugees so that they can resume their normal lives. Statistical information and figures in this chapter were gathered from UNHCR sources and are listed in the references section.

1.1 International Protection

The international protection of refugees begins with securing admission to a country of asylum, the granting of asylum and ensuring respect for their fundamental human rights. The latter includes the right not to be forcibly returned to a country where one's safety or survival is threatened also known as the principle of *non-refoulement*.

International protection can be defined as:

All actions aimed at ensuring the equal access to and enjoyment of the rights of women, men, girls and boys of concern to UNHCR, in accordance with the relevant bodies of law, including international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law.

(An Introduction to International Protection. UNHCR, August 2005. p. 7)

The core of international refugee law is the *1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* and its *1967 Protocol*; it is the only universal treaty that defines a specific regime for those in need of international protection. The universal definition of a refugee and the principle of **non-refoulement** are fundamental components of the 1951 Convention.

The 1951 definition of a refugee (*art.1 A(2) 1951 Convention*)

- Someone who is outside his/her country of origin
- and has a well-founded fear of persecution
- because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion
- and is unable or unwilling to avail him/herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution

It requires States to cooperate with UNHCR and lists the rights and obligations of refugees; for example, protection must be extended to all refugees without discrimination and minimum standards of treatment must be observed in relation to refugees. The 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol do not, however, stipulate the method by which refugee status determination and the identification of refugees should be conducted. The determination process, therefore, varies greatly between countries. It is the primary responsibility of States to determine within their jurisdiction who is a refugee. UNHCR may conduct refugee status determination under its mandate when a State is unable or unwilling to do so. This is often the case when States are not parties to the 1951 Convention or other key refugee instruments. In 2008, the total population of concern to UNHCR was some 34,4 million people. The number of refugees under the UNHCR's direct responsibility was 10,5 million at the year's end. In addition, some 4,7 million Palestinian refugees are not included in this number as Palestinian refugees generally fall under the UNRWA Mandate.¹ The majority of refugees of concern and of people in refugee-like situations (10,5 million)² can be found in Asia and Africa.

¹ Approximately 13,000 Palestinians refugees in Iraq fall under the UNHCR Mandate.

² As of 2007, the methodology for estimating the number of refugees of concern in industrialised countries was modified so that those refugees arriving through resettlement programmes are no longer included in the figures. In addition, where figures are based on UNHCR estimates, a cut-off period of 10 years is implemented for refugees in industrialised countries. Finally, those who are considered to be in a refugee-like situation are now included in a sub-group under the general refugee population of concern. See FICSS, UNHCR, 2007 Global Trends, Geneva, June 2008.

Voluntary repatriation: refugees return voluntarily, with dignity and under secure conditions to their country of origin.

Local integration: the country of asylum provides residency with the prospect of becoming a naturalized citizen.

Resettlement: refugees are transferred from the country of asylum to a third State willing to admit them on a permanent basis with the prospect of becoming a naturalized citizen.

Comprehensive Approach to Durable Solutions

The second part of UNHCR's mandate is to promote **durable solutions** to refugees' problems. These solutions seek to end the cycle of displacement by resolving their plight so refugees can lead normal lives with basic fundamental rights ensured. Durable solutions take the form of voluntary repatriation, local integration, and resettlement.

It is important to note that there is **no hierarchy** among these three durable solutions although there is an order of application. The three solutions are complementary in nature and when applied together can form a viable and comprehensive strategy for resolving a refugee situation within a protection framework, referred to in the *Agenda for Protection (discussed below)*. This means, for example, while voluntary repatriation is ongoing for a certain refugee population, specific individuals or groups of refugees within this population can be considered for resettlement. Although UNHCR has a role in relation to each of the durable solutions, the success of any one of them is dependent on the participation of various actors, primarily concerned states. One **example** that illustrates the three solutions working in a complementary and simultaneous nature is the programme for Afghan refugees in the early 2000s. Once the need for protection ceased, UNHCR promoted voluntary repatriation for the refugee population in general. At the same time, however, a continued need for protection of specific Afghan refugees was acknowledged and UNHCR advocated for local integration and resettlement in third countries for some refugees while repatriation was ongoing.

1.2 Resettlement

Resettlement is geared primarily to the specific needs of refugees whose life, liberty, safety, health or fundamental human rights are at risk in the country where they sought refuge, guided by UNHCR's **resettlement criteria** (see *Chapter 5 in the 2007 edition of this guide*). The decision to resettle a refugee is normally made only in the absence of other options such as voluntary repatriation and local integration, or where resettlement is the only viable solution to the pressing protection problems of a refugee. Resettlement can be used strategically or in concert with other durable solutions, which can lead to an optimal solution for the individual or refugee groups in question. Indeed, resettlement becomes a priority when there is no other way to guarantee the legal or physical security of the person concerned. The whole **process of resettlement** can be defined as:

The selection and transfer of refugees from a State in which they have sought protection to a third State which has agreed to admit them—as refugees—with permanent residence status. The status provided should ensure protection against *refoulement* and provide a resettled refugee and his/her family or dependants with access to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights similar to those enjoyed by nationals. It should also carry with it the opportunity to eventually become a naturalized citizen of the resettlement country.

(UNHCR Resettlement Handbook, 2006)

Very few refugees, less than one percent of the total refugee population, benefit from resettlement. Nevertheless, resettlement fulfils three equally important **objectives**:

- **Tool of refugee protection**—providing individual protection to refugees or refugee families with specific and immediate protection needs.

Extract from the Dutch Council for Refugees (DCFR) 2007 brochure on resettlement in the Netherlands:

Rana has lived in Syria since the age of four. She and her family fled their Iraq, in 1979 because her father feared for his life. Rana's father has always been an active member of the opposition but when Saddam Hussein came to power opposition was not tolerated. During a raid at their grandparents' house looking for opposition members, her father managed to escape through the backdoor. They left Iraq immediately after the raid and finally ended up in Syria. Life in Syria was not easy but they felt safe. Her father continued his political activities, travelling between Syria and Iraq. When during the late 90s relations between the Syrian and the Iraqi Government improved, their situation worsened; the secret

- **Durable solution**—providing a solution for refugees in the absence of or in parallel with other durable solutions.

Gaston fled the ethnic violence in Burundi in 1972 for Tanzania along with thousands of other Hutu Burundians. After more than 30 years, he still is there. He married and he and his wife have had three children in the meantime but nothing else has changed. He still finds himself in the same refugee camp, with no access to proper employment, no proper education opportunities for his children, and without freedom of movement. Building a life in this situation is simply not possible. Returning home to Burundi is not a realistic option either. Gaston has no links anymore with his country. When he fled he was still a child and the few memories that remain are those of war, violence and fear. He lost most of his family members; having been born in Tanzania, his children have no attachment to Burundi. Finally, Gaston and his family have been given the opportunity to resettle to a third country where they can lead normal lives and start thinking about a future.

The situation in Burundi and Tanzania is real and though the story is based refugees' experiences, the characters are fictitious.

- **International responsibility-sharing**—easing the strain on the country of asylum

through responsibility-sharing and solidarity among States by employing a combination of the following approaches:

- Efficient and/or strategic resettlement to third countries (ex. through group resettlement)
- Financial assistance for repatriation and/or local integration
- Aid for the rehabilitation of refugee host countries following return of refugees

Due to their geographical proximity, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon are at the frontline of the Iraqi refugee crisis, having already taken in over two million Iraqi refugees (estimate). By resettling Iraqi refugees from these countries, the responsibility to provide protection and a durable solution can be shared internationally. Although the EU did not promptly respond to the Iraqi Crisis, the November 2008 EU Council Conclusions encouraged Member States to make a commitment to resettle 10 000 refugees from Iraq, prioritising vulnerable cases, minorities and Palestinians. Inciting a momentous response, these Conclusions preceded the decisions of several non-resettlement countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and Italy) to engage in ad-hoc resettlement of Iraqi and Palestinian refugees.³

Resettlement can assist in creating a better understanding of the plight of refugees in general among the citizens of countries away from situations of war and persecution. The important contribution that refugees can make to their new countries is not emphasised enough. Refugees bring important skills and diversity that enrich and benefit the resettlement country when acknowledged and utilised. Recently, integration programmes have been giving attention to the involvement of refugees as active members of society and better use of their contributions, this topic is further discussed in Chapter 5 of the 2007 edition of this guide.

A refugee does not have a right to resettlement and States are not legally obliged to resettle refugees. Today a small number of States, only 21 countries, operate established **resettlement programmes** providing resettlement places on an annual basis. Each of these States sets its own regulations and procedures in respect to the resettlement of refugees, which do not necessarily correspond with the resettlement criteria and related considerations of UNHCR. Even so, UNHCR's guidelines on resettlement are

³ Council Conclusions on the reception of Iraqi refugees, Justice and Home Affairs Council, November 27-28, 2008.

endorsed by the international community and uphold humanitarian principles.

Strategic Use of Resettlement

As already mentioned, when considering the application of durable solutions, only a minority of the world's refugees can be expected to secure a durable solution through third-country resettlement. In order to maximise benefits accrued from resettlement, where possible, it should be planned in the context of a strategic and/or comprehensive solution. The **strategic use of resettlement** has been defined as:

'The strategic use of resettlement is the planned use of resettlement in a manner that maximizes the benefits, directly or indirectly, benefits other than those received by the refugee being resettled. Those benefits may accrue to other refugees, the hosting state, other states or the international protection regime in general.' (Standing Committee Paper, EC/53/SC/CRP.10/Add.1, pg. 2, Executive Committee of the UNHCR's Programme. 2003)

Piloting for a joint EU Resettlement Scheme

The aforementioned EU resettlement effort initiated by the November 2008 Council Conclusions is an example of strategic use of resettlement. By resettling more refugees from Iraq, the EU has acted in solidarity with and has taken some of the burden off of asylum countries Syria and Jordan. In turn, these countries will be able to continue to give access to refugees seeking protection, while avoiding refoulement and guaranteeing access to fundamental human rights for those refugees who will not be resettled.

Three durable solutions, One country—Tanzania

Tanzania is a time-honoured host of one of the largest refugee populations in the world. In early 2000, the number of refugees stood at 700 000. Through the use of all three durable solutions, the UNHCR and the Tanzanian Government have reduced the number of refugee camps from 11 in early 2007 to just four in 2009. Voluntary repatriation has been an answer for more than 350 Burundians and 60 000 Congolese. UNHCR must be sure that conditions are stable for the return of refugees, therefore it has increased its food assistance period and provides a cash grant to help refugees start over in their country of origin. Since 2007, resettlement has been the solution for more than 7 000 Burundians who have begun anew in the United States. As a third solution, the Tanzanian Government has accepted the assistance of the UNHCR in naturalising many Burundians who have lived in Tanzania since fleeing their country in 1972, in addition to a small group of Somali Bantus. Permanent residency, allows these refugees to locally integrate and seek a livelihood that is independent from the camp. Today the efforts at finding solutions for refugees must to continue, however the three-solution approach has certainly been successful: in 2008 less than half (or 322,000) of the total population in 2000 remained in Tanzanian refugee camps.

The strategic use of resettlement does not necessarily mean the simultaneous use of all three durable solutions. There are situations where resettlement could be used as part of a package of durable solutions in order to create a comprehensive solution, which can occur when an entire population of refugees from the same country of origin in a given first asylum country secures a durable solution.

Strategic use of resettlement—India

UNHCR India has, since 1980, supported under its direct care one of the largest and most protracted urban refugee populations globally. In addition to Afghans who have been refugees in India for over 27 years, a continuing population of Myanmar refugees, arriving since 1989, is also present. In 2005, a concerted effort was made to identify realistic durable solutions for these two populations, many of whom had severe protection problems which worsened over the years in a harsh urban environment, and who could not return to Afghanistan or to Myanmar for protection-related reasons. India, which had allowed these populations to stay, was reluctant to provide local integration prospects for all, but in negotiation was willing to consider naturalisation for those refugees who were deemed to be of Indian origin (Hindus and Sikhs). Other refugees needed an alternative solution, and through proactive consultation with resettlement countries, UNHCR was able to negotiate that the majority would locally integrate through naturalisation, and remaining cases would leave India through resettlement to a third country. This arrangement, although not articulated formally, demonstrates responsibility-sharing in the search for durable solutions. The ability to negotiate local integration became possible as resettlement countries agreed to provide solutions for remaining cases. In turn, it addressed a stalemated situation by providing protection and a durable solution to refugees in exile for three decades. In doing so, the protection environment generally has now become more receptive to newly arriving refugees, notably from Myanmar and Iraq, who require full protection support. Both India and partner countries have appreciated the importance of collaboration, and the willingness to offer further protection for new cases is underlined by the understanding that this type of collaboration and responsibility-sharing is available.

In order to attain strategic use of resettlement, with desirable and lasting outcomes, some elements should be taken into consideration:

- The global resettlement capacity needs to increase substantially. This can be done through an increase in the annual resettlement targets of existing resettlement countries but more importantly through the expansion of the number of resettlement countries, in order to diversify the resettlement opportunities

available to refugees.

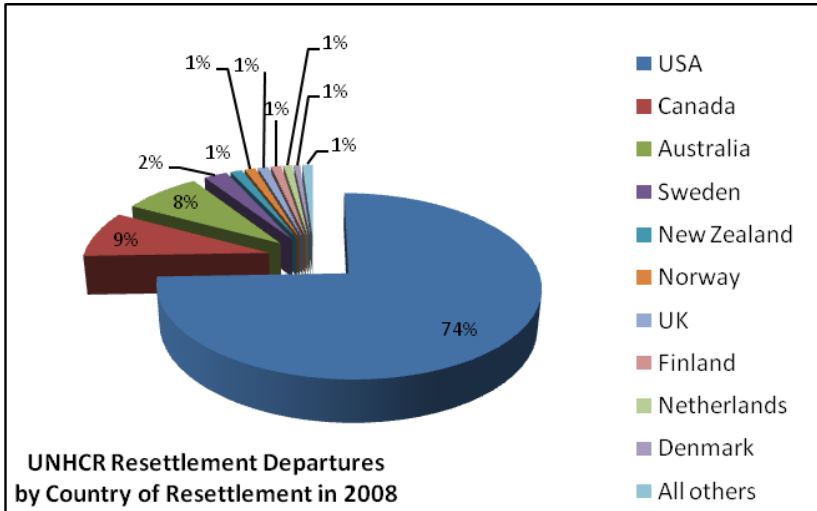
- There will be a greater need for consultation and collective decision-making in determining appropriate response to refugee outflows and the durable solution needs of a refugee situation.
- Different approaches to resettlement countries' selection criteria—if resettlement is going to be used strategically, more focus on group resettlement will be needed and flexibility from resettlement States in terms of admissions and in accordance with the Multilateral Framework of Understandings on Resettlement.
- Through involvement in active partnerships with countries of first asylum, resettlement States may combine undertakings for resettlement with guarantees for additional benefits such as improvements for others in the refugee population.

Global Resettlement Operations

As mentioned previously, there are currently **21 countries**, listed in the table below, that operate a resettlement programme, most of which maintain an annual resettlement quota.

Continent	Resettlement Countries
Asia	Australia and New Zealand (<i>Japan is planning a pilot programme in 2009</i>)
Europe	EU: Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania (<i>pilot</i>), Sweden and the United Kingdom Non-EU: Iceland and Norway
North America	Canada and the United States of America
South America	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay

Refugee departures to 21 resettlement countries through annual programme quotas and to the 9 other countries implementing ad-hoc resettlement (in the form of humanitarian, family reunification and/or private sponsorship programmes), totalled approximately 88 800 persons in 2008. Ninety per cent of departures go to just three countries: Australia, Canada and the United States.



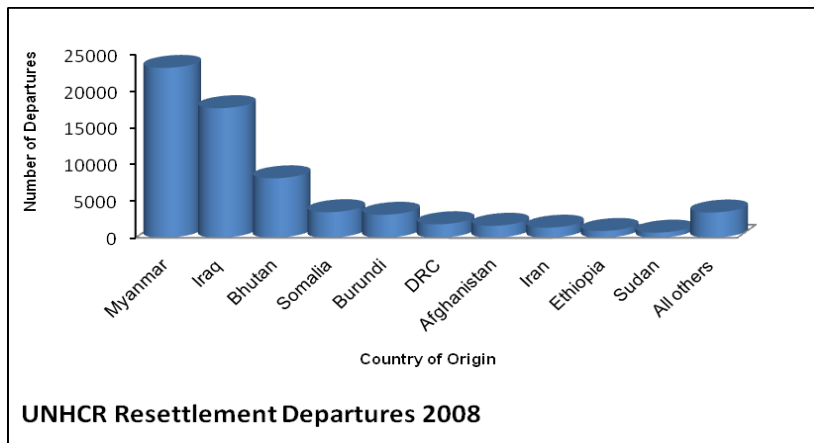
Source: Compiled by ICMC, based on UNHCR figures from 2009

The 'theoretical' resettlement capacity refers to the number of places allocated for resettlement by Governments; this number reached 100 000 places in 2008. Though 76 000 places were allocated for UNHCR submissions, only 67 000 refugees departed in the same year. Insufficient planning, lack of cooperation between actors and security procedures are among the factors that impede timely and complete use of annual quotas.

Some of these 21 countries, such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands and the United States of America, are considered **'traditional' resettlement countries** due to their long-standing programmes. A number of other countries established programmes in the past decade: Iceland, Ireland, and the UK in Europe, and Argentina, Brazil and Chile in Latin America. The most recent official resettlement programmes began in 2007 and

2008 in the Czech Republic, France, Paraguay, Portugal, Romania and Uruguay. Still other states, such as Belgium, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain and Switzerland occasionally accept refugees for resettlement but do not set annual targets, this is also referred to as ‘ad hoc’ resettlement.

In 2008, the majority of the 67 000 UNHCR assisted resettlement departures went to the USA (48 800),⁴ Canada (5 700), Australia (5 100), Sweden (1 500), New Zealand (800) and Norway (700).⁵ The number of departures has increased by 31 per cent when compared with the previous year. The total number of UNHCR submissions for 2008 was 121 500, up from 99 000 refugees submitted for resettlement in 2007. The largest groups according to country of origin submitted for resettlement in 2008 were Iraqis (33 500), Myanmarese (30 400) and Bhutanese (23 500). Following UNHCR submissions, the figure below demonstrates the number of resettlement departures according to country of origin in the same year.



Source: UNHCR Global Resettlement Statistical Report 2008 (provisional as of February 2009).

Submissions in this period came primarily from Asia & the Pacific, MENA (Middle

⁴ Resettlement statistics for the United States, Canada and Australia may also include persons resettled for the purpose of family reunification or under humanitarian programmes (i.e. not at the request of UNHCR).

⁵ Departures figures are displayed here due to the variability between the annual quota established and the actual number of departures. Figures of *accepted* refugees can be inaccurate when estimating the number of refugees benefiting from resettlement because those accepted for resettlement are not certain to arrive in the same year.

East and North Africa) and Africa. In 2008, less than half of the projected need for resettlement (154 701 persons) was met by resettlement countries. UNHCR had the capacity (human resources) to process and register 127 006 refugees for resettlement. To address this shortfall in the future, both the number of places provided by States and the UNHCR field capacity must increase. For 2009, the UNHCR estimated that 561 137 people around the world will be in need of resettlement.

The opening of an Emergency Transit Centre (ETC) in Timisoara, Romania in 2008 was a recent move to respond effectively to emergency cases and prevent *refoulement*. By temporarily evacuating refugees to Romania, a safe haven is provided for a maximum stay of six months for those refugees whose immediate safety or livelihood has been threatened. Emergency resettlement from the ETC will offer logistical benefits for countries. The centre received its first groups of refugees in November 2008. Since then, refugees have arrived from Iraq (Palestinians) and Libya (Eritreans and Sudanese). A total of 38 refugees have been resettled from the ETC with departures to Sweden, the USA and Canada. In July 2009, an additional transit centre was opened in Bratislava, Slovakia that will allow the reception and transfer of 98 Palestinians (who have fled Iraq) coming from the Al-Waleed camp in Syria where they have been stranded for six years. UNHCR discussions are currently being held to install another transit centre in the Philippines. Although the ETCs have only recently opened, several countries have expressed interest in resettlement facilitated through the centres.

Existing Mechanisms for Resettlement Planning

UNHCR launched the **Global Consultations on International Protection** in late 2000 to engage States and other partners in a broad-ranging dialogue on how to best revitalise the existing international refugee protection regime for the 21st century while ensuring flexibility to address new problems. One of the principal outcomes of this process was the **Agenda for Protection** adopted in 2002. The *Agenda for Protection* contains various tools and approaches to bolster and improve protection for refugees worldwide. Two other initiatives are:

- **Convention Plus:** an initiative providing the tools to implement special

agreements, including Comprehensive Plans of Action that will bring together a mix of durable solutions in a strategic manner.

- **Multilateral Framework of Understanding on Resettlement:** prepared by the *Core Group on Resettlement* under the *Convention Plus Forum* to provide a framework that will guide deliberations on the adoption of special agreements with a set of delineated actions for the parties involved.

These initiatives created a new impetus for resettlement and strengthened the concepts of a comprehensive approach to durable solutions and the strategic use of resettlement.

In addition to the aforementioned frameworks, several mechanisms exist for the practical planning of resettlement. Each year UNHCR produces the **Projected Global Resettlement Needs** document to assist resettlement countries, NGO partners and UNHCR in planning their respective activities and the allocation of resettlement places and resources. This assessment is based on a yearly exercise undertaken by UNHCR Country Offices. For 2010, global resettlement needs are estimated at 747 000 persons. On the basis of a prioritisation, UNHCR estimates that out of this number, for 2010 alone, 203 000 persons will be in need of resettlement.

In order to improve, standardise and systematise the identification of refugees in need of resettlement, UNHCR has developed the **Heightened Risk Identification Tool** and baseline **Standard Operating Procedures** for use in Country Offices. The *Heightened Risk Identification Tool* is designed to increase UNHCR's effectiveness in identifying refugees who are at-risk and vulnerable by linking community-based participatory assessments and individual assessment methods. It should be noted that this tool was developed for use in a comprehensive manner and not solely for the purpose of resettlement need identification. The baseline *Standard Operating Procedures* will ensure a level of global standardisation, transparency and predictability in resettlement delivery.

The previously mentioned *Projected Global Resettlement Needs* document is shared with the resettlement countries as a precursor to the **Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR)** that is held each year in June. The ATCR is a conference bringing together the key players in resettlement (resettlement countries, NGO partners and UNHCR) to talk about resettlement issues. During the 2008 ATCR, working groups on certain resettlement-related issues were formed to discuss specific issues of mutual concern. The *Projected Global Resettlement Needs*

document is also the main reference document for the development of the **Indications Chart**, regularly updated throughout the year and used to indicate resettlement places offered by resettlement countries in response to identified needs. In conjunction with the ATCR, an *indications meeting* is held between resettlement countries and UNHCR to discuss specific populations in need of resettlement. The whole ‘indications process’ is designed to strengthen the coordination and management of the global resettlement programme and attempts to match UNHCR’s resettlement needs with the quotas or targets of resettlement countries.

During the year, the **Working Group on Resettlement (WGR)**, invites resettlement countries, to meetings in October and March to follow up on commitments made by States during the preceding ATCR and to revise commitments to respond to eventual new resettlement needs respectively.⁶ In addition, **Regional Planning Meetings** are held annually in Asia, the Middle East and Africa. These meetings are organised in order to gather information on the current situation in each region, prepare for the coming year and allow for the exchange of experiences among staff from different operations. The meetings are attended by relevant resettlement staff from the field, regional offices and headquarters. One day is also set aside for discussions with resettlement countries and NGOs. This mechanism allows for a continuous dialogue between key players and for a systematic revisiting of the resettlement needs and places.

Protracted Refugee Situations

In 2008, than 5.7 million refugees, or nearly 60 percent of the world’s refugee population, live in such a **state of prolonged limbo**. The UNHCR Standing Committee has defined a **protracted refugee situation** as follows:

⁶ NGOs are invited to participate in the March WGR.

A situation in which refugees find themselves in a long-lasting state of limbo or a refugee camp population of 25,000 persons or more who have been in exile for five or more consecutive years in developing countries. Their lives may not be at risk, but their basic rights and essential economic, social and psychological needs remain unfulfilled after years in exile. A refugee in this situation is often unable to break free from enforced reliance on external assistance.

(2004 Standing Committee Paper (EC/54/SC/CRP14))

A total of 29 protracted refugee situations have been identified in the world, the majority located in very poor and unstable regions. Though the total number of refugee situations has decreased, refugees are spending longer periods in exile: rising from nine years in 1993 to 17 years at the end of 2003. Sub-Saharan Africa has the largest number of protracted refugee situations: 13 situations with a population of 1,4 million refugees. In terms of population, the CASWANAME region (Central Asia, South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East) has the highest number of refugees; 3,7 million refugees in 12 protracted refugee situations. The largest protracted refugee situations under UNHCR's mandate in terms of population are:

Pakistan (1 780 200 Afghans)

Iran (935 600 Afghans)

Chad (268 000 Sudanese)

Kenya (259 100 Somalis)

Tanzania (240 500 Burundians)

Saudi Arabia (240 000 Palestinians)

Venezuela (201 100 Colombians)

If we look at the causes of protracted refugee situations, three issues should be mentioned:

- Protracted refugee situations stem from **political action and inaction**, both in the country of asylum and in the country of origin.
- The traditional **durable solutions** —repatriation, integration and resettlement— are not necessarily viable options to resolve protracted refugee situations.
- Regional and international actors have no interest in getting involved in poor and

unstable areas. Consequently, the number of protracted refugee situations has multiplied in these areas. Linked to this is the issue of the **lack of media attention** that these so-called low-profile regions receive—there is a “chain reaction” between media attention, donor support and refugee livelihood.

The **consequences** of being confined to a refugee camp—often in isolated and insecure areas, with restrictions on movement and therefore with limited or no access to employment and education—are disastrous, creating a culture of dependence and rendering parts of the refugee population vulnerable to exploitation. A comprehensive approach to durable solutions and the strategic use of resettlement have been recognised as valuable tools in resolving protracted refugee situations. In 2008, UNHCR assisted the departure of 22 606 refugees in seven protracted situations where resettlement takes place and where the total number of refugees in 2006 was calculated at 2 290 000.⁷ In addition, tools have been developed in connection with the reintegration of refugees and development assistance for refugees, emphasising in particular refugee self-reliance.

Group Resettlement

UNHCR has expanded its efforts to create more resettlement opportunities for refugees by designing an approach for the identification and processing of groups for resettlement consideration without the submission of individual Resettlement Registration Forms (RRF). The framework for group resettlement is provided in the **UNHCR Methodology for Group Resettlement**. This Group Methodology is intended to assist in integrating and systematising enhanced resettlement efforts into UNHCR office operations and durable solutions planning. It aims to enhance and systematise the identification of refugee populations for whom resettlement may be an appropriate durable solution. The methodology also provides guidance with respect to **general parameters** that may assist in identifying a **potential group** for resettlement. Members of a group should ideally have the same nationality and ideally possess some sort of identification. Groups should also share common characteristics, be clearly delineated and finite, and be located in an area that is recognised and established. A recent example of the utilisation of group resettlement assisted by the UNHCR and negotiated in 2007 by the Core Group of resettlement countries addressed resettlement as a solution for the 107 000 **Bhutanese refugees**

⁷ Numbers of departures were not yet reported for Eritrean refugees coming from Sudan.

living in camps in eastern Nepal since the early 1990s. The agreement involved commitments to resettle Bhutanese refugees to the US (60 000 place), Canada (5 000 places) and Australia (5 000 places). The total number of arrivals to the US of Bhutanese in 2008 was 7 317.