



**Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration,  
Safety and Security**



**The UN Refugee Agency**

## **2020 World Refugee Day**

### **Joint Statement by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the occasion of World Refugee Day, 20 June 2020**

#### **Everyone Can Make a Difference, Every Action Counts**

Today marks 20 years since the United Nations designated 20 June as “World Refugee Day”, a time to honour refugees around the world for their strength, courage and resilience in rebuilding their lives. UNHCR’s Global Trends report shows that of the **79.5 million** persons displaced at the end of 2019, **4.2 million** were asylum seekers, **29.6 million** were refugees and others were forcibly displaced outside their countries. Over half the total number represents children around the world, conflict, natural disasters and human rights violations increase every day, many have lost their lives and many more continue to live in very difficult conditions. UNHCR estimates that 1 out of every 100 people in the world has been forced to flee their home.

*20 June 2020*, on this day we stand in solidarity with the world and with refugees globally to affirm that everyone can make a difference and every action counts in the efforts towards creating a more just, inclusive, and equal world. We mark this year’s World Refugee Day in the midst of dramatic social change. The COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of xenophobia, racism and discrimination has renewed the fight for a more inclusive and equal world, a world where no one is left behind. It has never been clearer that we all have a role to play in bringing about change. Everyone can make a difference. This is at the heart of this year’s World Refugee Day campaign.

Currently Namibia hosts 9,931 refugees and asylum seekers in Osire Refugee Settlement and in other regions of the country, providing them with assistance in several sectors, in particular health, education, shelter and access to labour markets. Namibia continues to play an active role at the international platform for the improvement of refugee rights. Refugees in Namibia are registered and issued with Refugee Identity Cards for identification and statistical purposes. Moreover, refugees who intend to travel outside the country for the purposes of education, health, seminars and meetings or holidays are issued with refugee travel documents. In this respect, Namibia continues to support the Global Compact on Refugees adopted by the UN General Assembly on 17 December 2018.

As an indication of commitment to improving refugee lives and fostering social cohesion, the Government of Namibia registered five pledges towards the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees in the areas of livelihoods, education, health, sports, documentation and solutions, at the first Global Refugee Forum which took place on 17 and 18 December 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland. This

forum brought together the international community to demonstrate solidarity with the world's refugees and the countries and communities that host them.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) core mandate is to provide international protection to refugees and seek permanent solutions for the problem of refugees. UNHCR's Global Strategic Priorities reflect the core areas in the strategic directions including promoting a favourable protection environment, fair protection processes and documentation, security from violence and exploitation, basic needs and services, community empowerment and self-reliance and durable solutions. These priorities take into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit and under the "grand bargain" in 2016. In line with the Global Compact on Refugees, UNHCR's work and support to the Government of Namibia will continue to be strengthened through a broad range of partnerships within the humanitarian, development and private sector realms.

Refugees have contributed to the socio-economic growth of Namibia by providing goods and services as teachers, doctors, entrepreneurs, farmers, artists and creating job opportunities. In Namibia, refugees with a variety of qualifications are employed both by the Government and Private sectors while those with special skills are permitted to make and sell their products in the Namibian markets. In these COVID-19 times they are volunteering as community health workers, counsellors, producing masks and contributing their time to support the vulnerable. We continue to witness how refugees can contribute within the communities that graciously host them and that everyone can make a difference and every action counts.

Addressing forced displacement requires a global and inclusive partnership where solidarity and responsibility are shared by the entire international community. As long as people continue to flee in search of safety, Namibia will remain a safe haven for those in need of international protection and will contribute to addressing the root causes that lead to displacement of people.

The pandemic has tested our strength and highlighted systematic inequalities. It has also connected us in new ways and renewed our motivation to act for equality. This World Refugee Day, UNHCR is appealing to everyone to join in the global movement of solidarity and action. We celebrate refugees who are living in vulnerable conditions fighting this pandemic, their host communities and the humanitarian workers supporting them.

Everyone has a role to play in promoting inclusion, respect, and dignity for all, including refugees, the internally displaced and stateless people.