

REFUGEES BY numbers

2001 EDITION

Cover:

Refugees from Kosovo arrive at the Blace frontier post in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.



UNHCR / R. LEMOYNE

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An early Kosovar refugee family in northern Albania in 1998.

Annual totals worldwide of persons of concern to UNHCR

[AS AT 1st JANUARY]

1990	14, 916, 498
1991	17, 209, 722
1992	17, 007, 483
1993	18,998, 777
1994	23, 033, 000
1995	27, 437, 000
1996	26, 103, 200
1997	22, 729, 000
1998	22, 376, 300
1999	21, 459, 620
2000	22, 257, 340
2001	21, 793, 300

TABLE 1

AT THE START OF 2001 the number of people 'of concern' to UNHCR was 21.8 million, or one out of every 275 persons on Earth. This compared with a January 1, 2000 figure of 22.3 million.

There were several significant changes during the 12-month reporting period. The largest refugee population increase was in Pakistan where the number of Afghan refugees rose by an estimated 800,000 persons, including civilians living outside established camps. Afghans constitute the

largest single refugee population in the world of concern to UNHCR with an estimated 3.6 million people or 30 percent of the global refugee population. Civilians from the central African state of Burundi constitute the second largest group with 568,000 refugees living mainly in Tanzania and Iraqis comprise the third largest population, 512,800 people living mainly in Iran. Asia as a whole has the greatest number of persons 'of concern', with nearly 8.5 million followed by Africa with 6.1 million and Europe with 5.6 million people.

The main host countries remained unchanged with Pakistan sheltering two million persons, Iran 1.9 million and Germany 976,000.

In addition to bona fide refugees, UNHCR cares for other groups, particularly internally displaced persons (IDPs). The agency assists some 6.4 million civilians in this category out of a global population of between 20-25 million and during the reporting year

helped large 'new' displaced populations in Eritrea, Colombia and Angola totalling nearly 1.9 million people.

The overall decrease of almost half a million people 'of concern' to UNHCR was largely the result of a change in the counting

method. Until the last reporting period, the number of refugees and IDPs going home, so-called 'returnees', was counted over a two-year time span because of the lengthy time it often takes civilians to resettle. The current statistics reflect the number of persons going home during a 12-month period.

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PERSONS OF CONCERN WHO FALL UNDER THE MANDATE OF UNHCR [BY REGION]

REGION	TOTAL OF CONCERN	
	1 JAN. 2000	1 JAN. 2001
Asia	7,308,860	8,450,000
Africa	6,250,540	6,072,900
Europe	7,285,800	5,571,700
North America	1,241,930	1,047,100
Latin America & Caribbean	90,170	575,600
Oceania	80,040	76,000
Total	22,257,340	21,793,300

TABLE 2

WHO DOES UNHCR HELP AND HOW?

UNHCR PROVIDES PROTECTION AND assistance not only to refugees, but also to other categories of displaced or needy persons. These include asylum seekers, refugees who have returned home but still need help in rebuilding their lives, local civilian communities which are directly affected by the movements of refugees and, perhaps most importantly, growing numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

These are people who have been forced to flee their homes, but who have not reached a neighboring country and therefore, unlike

PERSONS OF CONCERN TO UNHCR

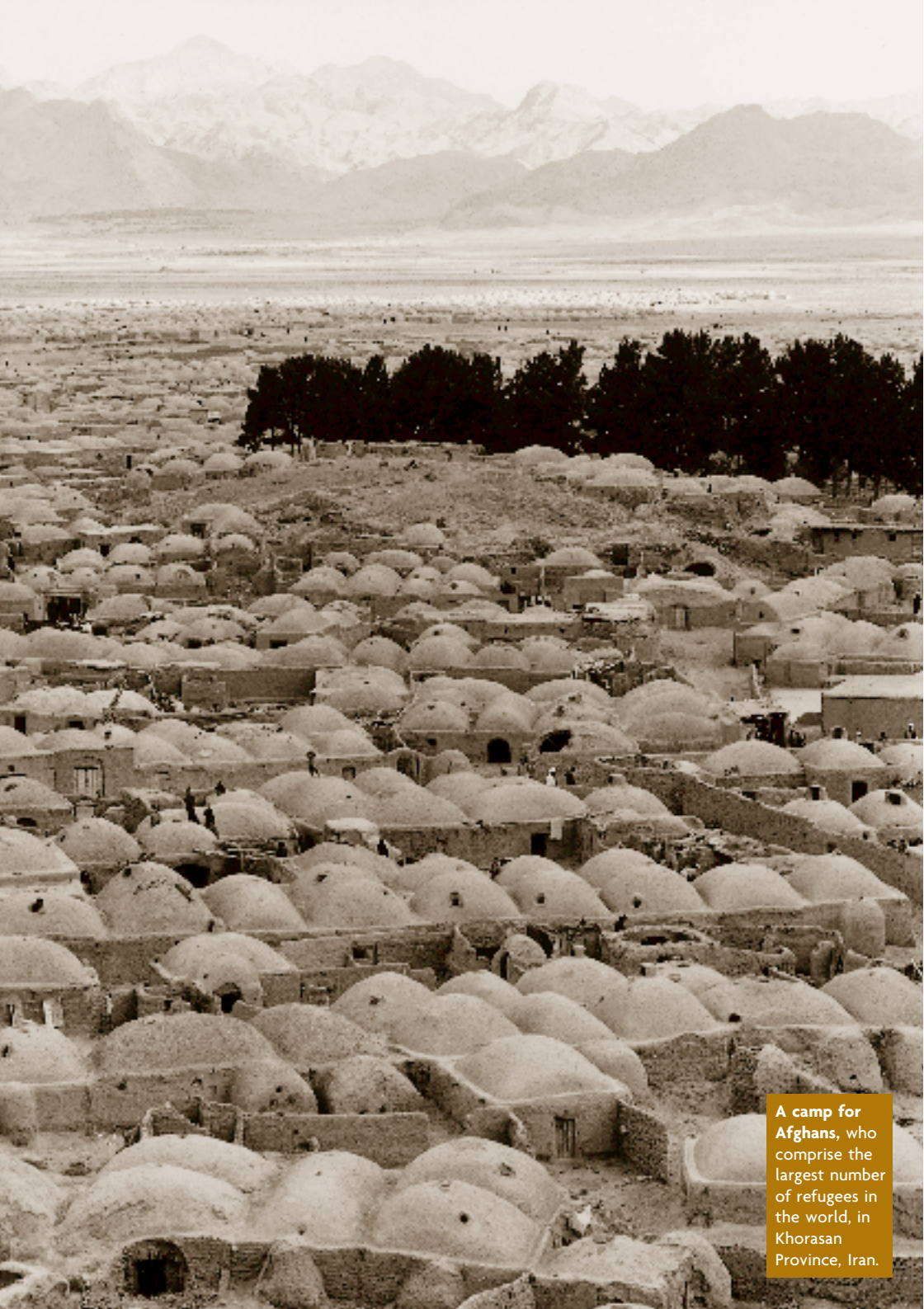
[1st JANUARY 2001, BY CATEGORY]

REGION	REFUGEES	ASYLUM SEEKERS	RETURNED REFUGEES ¹	IDPs AND OTHERS OF CONCERN	TOTAL
Asia	5,383,400	45,700	350,500	2,670,400	8,450,000
Africa	3,626,300	87,300	270,500	2,088,800	6,072,900
Europe	2,325,100	354,000	164,300	2,728,300	5,571,700
North America	630,600	416,500	—	—	1,047,100
Latin America & Caribbean	37,900	3,400	700	533,600	575,600
Oceania	68,400	7,200	—	400	76,000
Total	12,071,700	914,100	786,000	8,021,500	21,793,300

TABLE 3

¹ Returned refugees: refugees who have returned to their place of origin during the year.

refugees, are not protected by international law or eligible to receive many types of aid. As the nature of war has changed in the last few decades, with more and more internal conflicts replacing inter-state wars, the number of IDPs has increased significantly and are now the second largest group of concern to UNHCR. The special U.N. Representative for Internally Displaced Persons estimates there are between 20-25 million IDPs worldwide, with major concentrations in Sudan, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and countries of the former Soviet Union. UNHCR helps an estimated 6.4 million of these people. In the latest 12-month reporting period, it began assistance to 1,100,000 Eritreans, 525,000 Colombians and 258,000 Angolans.



**A camp for
Afghans, who
comprise the
largest number
of refugees in
the world, in
Khorasan
Province, Iran.**

■ Refugees: 12 million

ORIGIN OF MAJOR REFUGEE POPULATIONS IN 2000

[TEN LARGEST GROUPS]¹

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN ²	MAIN COUNTRIES OF ASYLUM	REFUGEES
Afghanistan	Pakistan / Iran	3, 580, 400
Burundi	Tanzania	568, 000
Iraq	Iran	512, 800
Sudan	Uganda / D.R. Congo / Ethiopia / Kenya / C.A.R. Chad	490, 400
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Yugoslavia / Croatia / USA / Sweden / Netherlands Denmark	478, 300
Somalia	Kenya / Ethiopia / Yemen / Djibouti	447, 800
Angola	Zambia / D.R. Congo / Namibia	432, 700
Sierra Leone	Guinea / Liberia	400, 800
Eritrea	Sudan	376, 400
Viet Nam	China / USA	370, 300

¹An estimated 3.8 million Palestinians who are covered by a separate mandate of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) are not included in this report. However, Palestinians outside the UNRWA area of operations such as those in Iraq or Libya, are considered to be of concern to UNHCR.

²This table includes UNHCR estimates for nationalities in industrialized countries on the basis of recent refugee arrivals and asylum seeker recognition.

TABLE 4

UNHCR's founding mandate defines refugees as persons who are outside their country and cannot return owing to a well-founded fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group. Regional instruments such as

the 1969 Organization of African Unity Refugee Convention and the 1984 Cartagena Declaration expanded that mandate to include persons who have fled because of war or civil conflict. A total of 140 countries have signed the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol and recognize persons as refugees based on the definitions contained in this and the regional instruments. Figures used by UNHCR are based on these definitions and include persons in Europe and other areas of the world who have been allowed to stay for humanitarian reasons and those who have been granted 'temporary protection' on a group basis. ■

**Refugees
from Sierra
Leone at
Katkama
camp, Guinea.**



UNHCR / B. NEELMAN

■ Returnees: 786,000

The majority of refugees prefer to and do return home as soon as circumstances permit, generally when a conflict has ended, a degree of stability has been restored and basic infrastructure is being rebuilt. UNHCR encourages voluntary repatriation as the best solution for displaced persons. The agency often provides transportation and a start-up package which could include cash grants and practical assistance such as farm tools and seeds. On occasion, it extends this help to include the rebuilding of homes, schools, clinics and roads. Field staff monitor the well-being of 'returnees' in delicate situations. The duration of such activities varies, but rarely lasts longer than two years when longer-term development assistance from other organizations is more appropriate. During 2000,



UNHCR / M. KOBAYASHI

UNHCR helped 786,000 people. The major drop from 2.5 million the previous year was partly the result of the end of the crisis in Kosovo and the new counting method which reflects the number of persons going home during a 12-month period. ■

Some of the tens of thousands of East Timorese who fled during the chaos, return to the capital, Dili, aboard a specially chartered vessel, the Lambelu.

MAJOR VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION MOVEMENTS

[IN 2000, BY DESTINATION]¹

TO (COUNTRY / TERRITORY OF ORIGIN)	FROM (MAIN COUNTRIES OF ASYLUM)	TOTAL
Afghanistan	Iran / Pakistan	292,500
Yugoslavia	Switzerland / FYR Macedonia / Bosnia-Herzegovina	124,700
Eritrea	Sudan	68,000
East Timor	Indonesia	48,500
Somalia	Ethiopia	45,900
Liberia	Côte d'Ivoire / Guinea	42,400
Sierra Leone	Guinea / Liberia	40,900
Rwanda	D.R. Congo	26,300
Croatia	Yugoslavia / Bosnia-Herzegovina	20,700
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Yugoslavia / Croatia	18,700

¹ Ten largest movements.

TABLE 5

■ Asylum seekers: 914,100

When people flee their own country and seek sanctuary in a second state, they apply for 'asylum'—or the right to be recognized as bona fide refugees and the legal protection and material assistance that status implies. In the last five decades, several million people were granted asylum in countries around the world. Currently, there are approximately 914,100 asylum applications pending worldwide compared with 1.2 million a year earlier.

However, as travel and communication became easier and the

number of people seeking asylum increased dramatically, some states, especially leading industrial countries, have toughened their domestic refugee legislation and criteria for granting asylum. This often resulted in a decrease in recognition rates. In

Students from the faculty of Law advising a Russian asylum seeker at Cervený Ujezd refugee camp, Czech Republic.



ASYLUM APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED IN SELECTED COUNTRIES

[IN 2000]

COUNTRY OF ASYLUM	ASYLUM APPLICATIONS	MAIN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN
Germany ¹	117,650	Yugoslavia / Turkey / Iraq / Afghanistan / Iran
United States ¹	91,600	China / Haiti / Mexico / El Salvador / Somalia
United Kingdom	75,680	Iraq / Yugoslavia / Sri Lanka / Afghanistan / Iran
Netherlands	43,900	Afghanistan / Yugoslavia / Iraq / Iran / Turkey
Belgium	42,690	Yugoslavia / Russia / Iran / Albania / Kazakhstan
France	39,780	China / Turkey / D.R. Congo / Mali / Sri Lanka
Canada	34,250	Pakistan / Sri Lanka / Hungary / China / Argentina
Switzerland	32,430	Yugoslavia / Turkey / Bosnia-Herzegovina / Iraq / Sri Lanka
Australia	19,400	Iraq / Afghanistan / China / Indonesia / India
Austria	18,280	Afghanistan / Iran / India / Iraq / Yugoslavia

¹ In countries with an appeal procedure, a case (person or family) may have been counted more than once.

TABLE 6

Kosovar refugees who were accepted for permanent resettlement in Chile watch and learn the culture of their newly-adopted country.



Europe, member states of the European Union, have been working for several years to 'harmonize' their asylum procedures. During the 1990s Balkan crises and subsequent emergencies, when millions of people fled their homes, UNHCR recognized the outflow of such large

numbers of people could overwhelm the asylum process in receiving countries. The agency suggested a simpler and faster process of offering the arrivals 'temporary protection.' However, asylum remains the cornerstone of UNHCR's mandate to protect refugees. ■

■ Resettlement:

Some refugees cannot or are unwilling to return home, usually because they would face continued persecution. In such circumstances, UNHCR helps to find them new homes, either in the asylum country where they are living or in third countries where they can be

permanently resettled. Though many nations have agreed to accept refugees on a temporary basis during the early phases of a crisis, only around a dozen countries have regular resettlement programs and accept quotas of refugees on an annual basis. ■

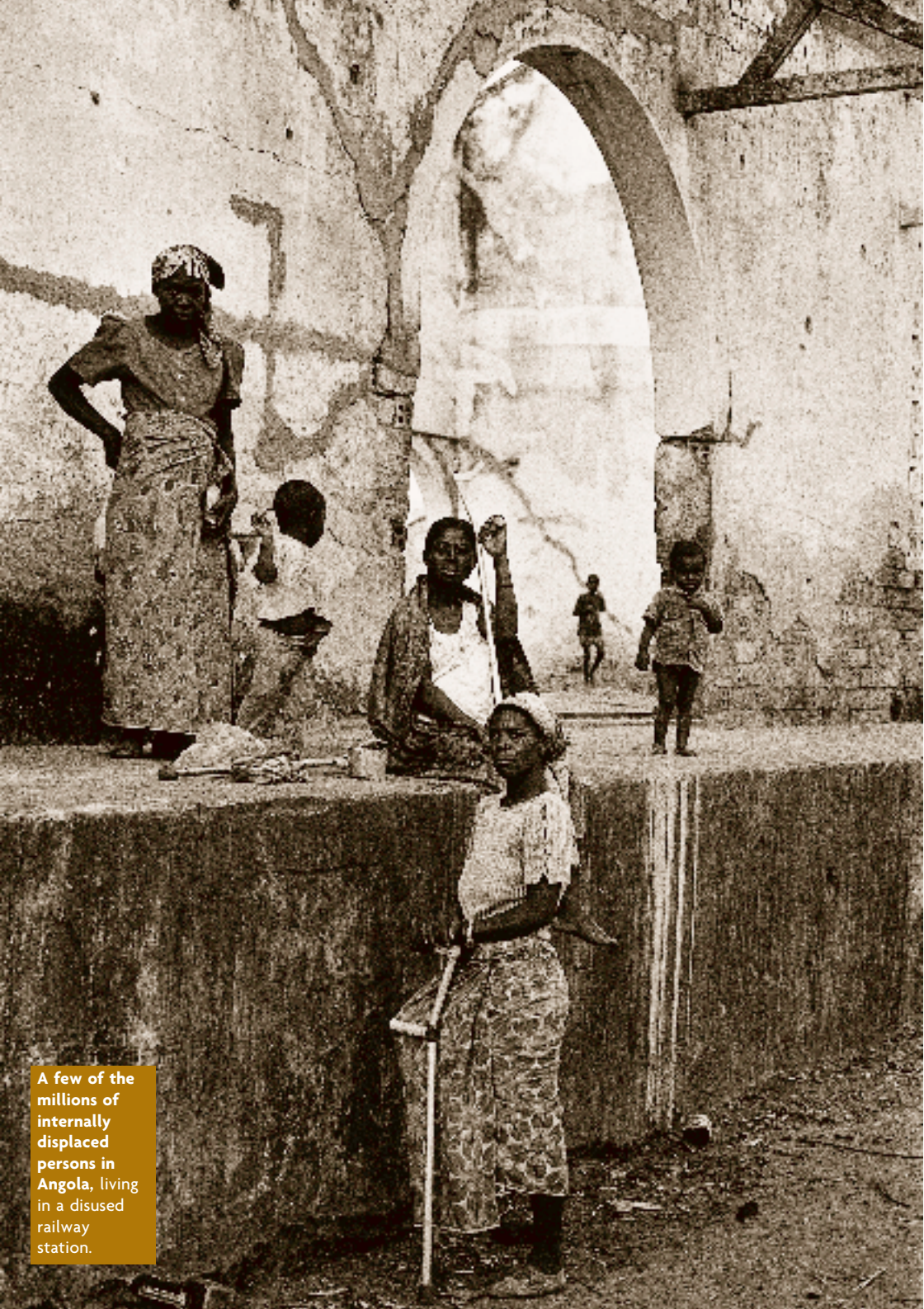
Main countries of resettlement of refugees

[IN 2000]

United States	72,500
Canada	13,500
Australia (est.)	6,600
Sweden	1,500
Norway	1,500
Finland	760
New Zealand	700
Denmark	460
Japan	140

TABLE 7





A few of the millions of internally displaced persons in Angola, living in a disused railway station.

■ IDPs and Others of Concern: 8 million

UNHCR extends protection or assistance to certain groups who were not included in the Office's original mandate, but whom the U.N. Secretary-General or the U.N. General Assembly have requested UNHCR to assist. They include certain groups of war-affected populations, 'stateless' citizens of the former Soviet Union who have not been able to obtain the nationality of any of the new countries which emerged after the dissolution of the USSR, and an estimated 6.4 million internally

displaced persons. These so-called IDPs are the fastest growing group of uprooted persons in the world. Because they, in effect, 'fall between the cracks' of current humanitarian law and assistance, a widespread international debate has been launched on how best to help all IDPs and who should be responsible for their well-being. There were major changes in this group for the reporting period 2000. UNHCR assisted 1,100,000 Eritreans, 525,000 Colombians and 257,500 Angolans. ■

Estimates of major populations of IDPs of concern to UNHCR

[AT 1ST JANUARY 2001]¹

Country	IDPs	Returned IDPs ²
Eritrea	1,100, 000	—
Afghanistan	758, 600	—
Sri Lanka	706, 500	—
Azerbaijan	572, 500	—
Colombia	525, 000	—
Bosnia-Herzegovina	518, 300	59, 300
Russian Federation	490, 700	70,000
Sierra Leone	300, 000	200,000
Georgia	272, 100	300
Yugoslavia	267, 500	—
Angola	257, 500	—
Liberia	110, 700	13, 400

¹ Groups over 100,000.

² Returned to place of origin during the year.

Note: The figures included here do not necessarily represent the total number of IDPs in the countries concerned.

TABLE 8

Basic Facts

[AS OF 1ST JULY 2001]

- Number of UNHCR offices worldwide including Headquarters: **289 in 123 countries**
- UNHCR staff members, including short-term staff: **5,192**
- Staff members in the field: **4,272 (82% of total)**
- Ratio of staff members to people of concern to UNHCR: **1 per 4,197**
- Total UNHCR budget for 2001: **US\$ 881.2 million**
- Total budget for 2000: **US\$ 801.4 million**
- Number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as implementing partners: **454**
- Total number of NGOs as implementing partners in 2000: **528**
- States party to the 1951 Convention and/or to the 1967 Protocol: **140**

TABLE 9

