

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE ON THE OCCASION OF WORLD REFUGEE DAY

20 June 2023

During my decade as UN High Commissioner for Refugees, I witnessed the resilience and contributions of refugees across all walks of life.

Their perseverance in the face of adversity inspires me every day.

Refugees represent the very best of the human spirit.

They need and deserve support and solidarity — not closed borders and pushbacks.

As we mark World Refugee Day, we confront a startling statistic.

More than 100 million people living in countries rocked by conflict, persecution, hunger and climate chaos have been forced to flee their homes.

These are not numbers on a page.

These are individual women, children and men making difficult journeys — often facing violence, exploitation, discrimination and abuse.

This Day reminds us of our duty to protect and support refugees — and our obligation to open more avenues of support.

This includes solutions to resettle refugees and to help them rebuild their lives in dignity.

We need greater international support for host countries, as called for by the Global Compact for Refugees, to boost access to quality education, decent work, health care, housing and social protection.

And we need much stronger political will to make peace, so refugees can return safely to their homes.

This year's theme is "Hope Away from Home."

I call on the world to harness the hope that refugees carry in their hearts.

Let's match their courage with the opportunities they need, every step of the way.
