

United Nations Says Nearly 60 Million Displaced Worldwide



Geneva, June 18 (RHC)-- The United Nations refugee agency says almost 60 million people were displaced across the globe in 2014, expressing concern over the international community's "inability" to contain the unprecedented number of refugees.

The world is "witnessing a paradigm change," in which multiple crises have resulted in a worrying spike in refugee numbers, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Antonio Guterres said on Thursday in the southeastern Swiss city of Geneva. He also said that "there is seeming utter inability of the international community to work together to stop wars and build and preserve peace."

According to Guterres' annual report, the number of refugees and internally displaced people stood at 59.5 million combined in a 2014 post-World-War-II report. Some 38 million people were internally displaced, nearly 20 million refugees and 1.8 million asylum seekers. Children accounted for more than half of the refugees, who fled wars, persecution, or oppression across the globe.

The figure suggested that one in every 122 humans was forcibly displaced around the world, most of them Syrians, Afghans and Somalis.

According to a second report, around 13.9 million people became newly displaced in 2014. Over the past few years, 15 conflicts have erupted in the Central African Republic, Iraq, Myanmar, South Sudan, Syria,

Ukraine and Yemen.

Guterres described the rising number of displaced people as “an unchecked slide into an era in which the scale of global forced displacement as well as the response required is now clearly dwarfing anything seen before.”

Guterres said, “An age of unprecedented mass displacement” needs “an unprecedented humanitarian response and a renewed global commitment to tolerance and protection for people fleeing conflict and persecution.” The UNHCR also said that 219,000 people crossed the Mediterranean to Europe last year.

Turkey was reported as the biggest refugee host country due to the conflict in neighboring Syria.

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