



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

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Increased Funding & Cooperation for Refugee Protection

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres has today welcomed Australia's restated commitment to, and increased funding for, refugee protection.

Mr Guterres said he was extremely happy to be in Australia as a guest of the Government for the first time in his present capacity, and that he had had constructive discussions with key ministers on cooperative approaches to supporting refugees.

"Australia has a long and proud tradition of resettling refugees, and is a key strategic partner in developing comprehensive approaches to people movements which take into account the need to protect refugees," Mr Guterres said.

"Australia has recently introduced a number of positive changes in its asylum and refugee policies, and I am also pleased that Australia is considering how best to help stateless people, who are often among the most vulnerable people in the world."

Mr Guterres welcomed the announcement of an increase in Australia's core funding to UNHCR of \$4.4 million, as well as \$4.2 million in funding for UNHCR projects to protect and support people who have been displaced by conflict or persecution in their homeland.

"UNHCR will use the funding to find long-term, durable, solutions for displaced persons and strengthen the protection afforded to displaced populations around the world."

In welcoming the funding, Mr Guterres urged all nations to maintain generous humanitarian funding despite the global financial crisis.

"It is more important than ever that we care for the most vulnerable people around the world - by helping displaced people and refugees we will be contributing to regional and global stability."

Mr Guterres will also visit Melbourne and Sydney this week to meet non-government organisations and service providers to see first hand the wonderful work they do with refugees in the Australian community.

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