



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

14 June 2009

MEDIA RELEASE

World Refugee Day highlights *Real People, Real Needs*

In the lead up to World Refugee Day (20 June 2009), the UNHCR is highlighting the courage and resilience of refugees and the important work being done by the UN Refugee Agency, governments and civil society to protect refugees and help them to restart their lives.

The global theme for World Refugee Day 2009, "*Real People, Real Needs*", highlights the central idea of international refugee protection - that those people who flee their homes because of persecution and conflict need sanctuary and protection from danger.

It also reminds us that refugees have real and pressing needs for education, housing, health care, employment, and empowerment to protect their rights and help rebuild their lives.

On World Refugee Day, we also have the opportunity to involve *Real People* in our communities – the many former refugees who are living, working and making real contributions to our society.

UNHCR, local organisations and community groups have planned celebrations and commemorations all around Australia to highlight the "*Real people, Real Needs*" theme, and some NGOs are also focusing on the mutually reinforcing theme of "*Freedom from Fear*" within the broader refugee protection framework.

UNHCR's Canberra Office is highlighting refugee issues in the heart of the nation by flying flags and lighting up key buildings in the Parliamentary Triangle in the week leading up to World Refugee Day.

It will also next week release the latest global statistics analysing the real and growing needs of refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people and stateless people around the world.

And on the evening of Saturday 20 June, UNHCR is bringing together resettled refugees, government and civil society representatives to share cultural presentations, food, information and experiences at a special event in Canberra to mark World Refugee Day.

A list of key activities being organised or participated in by UNHCR Canberra is attached, and a full listing of events around the country is at:

www.unhcr.org.au

Editors note: file vision and stills of UNHCR's work helping refugees around the world are available.

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Selected UNHCR World Refugee Day 2009 Activities

World Refugee Day flag flying, Canberra

14-20 June 2009

UNHCR and the ACT Government will fly World Refugee Day flags on the approaches to Kings and Commonwealth Avenue Bridges in the week leading up to World Refugee Day.

Lighting of National Icons, Canberra & Sydney

14-20 June 2009

During the week leading up to World Refugee Day, iconic buildings in the heart of the nation's capital will be lit up in "United Nations Blue" lights each night. Participating buildings include Questacon, Old Parliament House, the National Library of Australia, National Archives, and National Gallery. In conjunction with the Refugee Council of Australia, the Maritime Museum in Sydney will also be lighting up in blue.

Angelina Jolie Community Service Announcement, National

15-20 June 2009

UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie has recorded a Community Service Announcement, which television stations across the nation will air to highlight World Refugee Day.

Refugee Scholarship Presentations, Canberra

Monday 15 June 2009

Each year Canberra Refugee Support provides educational scholarships to refugee students, and this year Richard Towle, Regional Representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, will present the scholarships at a special ceremony in Canberra.

Australia for UNHCR World Refugee Day Breakfast, Sydney

Friday 19 June 2009

Australia for UNHCR is hosting a World Refugee Day breakfast to raise funds for UNHCR's vital work around the world. The guest speaker this year will be the Governor General Quentin Bryce.

World Refugee Day Community Evening, Canberra

Saturday 20 June 2009

UNHCR will be celebrating World Refugee Day 2009 with a community evening on Saturday 20 June at the Canberra Multicultural Centre. The evening will bring together resettled refugees, government and civil society representatives to share cultural presentations, food, information and experiences in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

For details contact: Ben Farrell, (02) 6281 9104 or 0407 971 686

For other events around Australia visit: www.unhcr.org.au