
UN AGENCY: IRAQ HOME TO NEARLY 300,000 REFUGEES, MOSTLY FROM SYRIA

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by Mohammed Ebraheem

Baghdad (Iraqinews.com) □ The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) said on Wednesday that Iraq is home to nearly 300,000 refugees, mostly from Syria.

The Kurdistan Region of Iraq houses 97 per cent of the Syrian refugees in Iraq, a statement by Mr. Bruno Geddo, the UNHCR Representative in Iraq, said on the World Refugee Day.

He added that most of these refugees are generously receiving and affording equal access with locals to employment, education and social services.

For the 250,000 Syrian refugees sheltering in Iraq, return is not a sustainable option at present, the statement read. Syrian refugees in Iraq and the communities that host them will continue to need support for some time to come.

Geddo added that as forced displacement worldwide increases year on year, helping refugees rebuild their lives must be a shared responsibility.

Hand in hand with partners, the Iraqi and Kurdish people, and refugee communities themselves, we at UNHCR work tirelessly to try and find sustainable solutions for refugees in Iraq, he concluded.

Local and international rights agencies have repeatedly highlighted poor living conditions both at refugee camps and at Islamic State-held areas.

IS militants had regularly executed civilians attempting to flee their havens. Officials have also occasionally pointed out that refugees were reluctant to return home due to the severe damage to infrastructure.

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