

# Making a Difference in the Lives of Refugees Today

The U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) defends the rights of refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) worldwide. USCRI's core mandate is to ensure that: 1) first asylum must be preserved; 2) asylum must be safe and secure; 3) IDPs must be protected and assisted; 4) safe and dignified durable solutions must be sought; and 5) the horrors that cause refugee flows must be stopped. We base our mandate on the following principles:

- Refugees have rights under the UN Refugee Convention not only to *nonrefoulement* (no forcible return to persecution) but also to the freedom necessary to live in dignity pending durable solutions.
- Asylum seekers have the right to a fair and impartial hearing to determine their refugee status.
- All uprooted victims of human conflict, regardless of whether they cross a border, have the right to humane treatment, as well as adequate protection and assistance.

USCRI is a private, nonprofit organization which has been advocating on behalf of uprooted people regardless of their nationality, race, religion, ideology, or social group for 94 years.

In 2004, USCRI gathered on-site documentation in Chad, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Tanzania, Thailand, Syria, and Zambia.

Following a site visit, USCRI works to mobilize an effective response to the refugee situation from the international community. USCRI makes refugee needs known to world governments, U.S. policy makers, humanitarian organizations, and the general public. USCRI holds public briefings, updates government officials, and testifies before the U.S. Congress. To mobilize the public, USCRI ensures that refugees are in the news through staff appearances on television and radio, as well as in newspapers and magazines and on the internet. We speak directly to the American public in schools, places of worship, and community meetings. We distribute our analysis through USCRI publications such as the *World Refugee Survey*, *Refugee Reports*, *Refugee Voices™* topic-specific issue papers, regular updates, and our website, [www.refugees.org](http://www.refugees.org).

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