



UNHCR/S. Hopper

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

## António Guterres

The UN refugee agency UNHCR faces a wide range of challenges as it works to care for and protect millions of people around the world who have been forced from their homes by conflict or persecution. Among the difficulties my Office confronts today are rising intolerance in many societies, the task of protecting refugees in population movements where genuine asylum-seekers are mixed in with immigrants, and the need to bridge the gap between emergency relief and development aid to ensure refugee problems are resolved in a durable way.

We believe our strategic partnership with Japan can play an important role in helping UNHCR meet these challenges. Japan has long supported UNHCR as its second largest donor and through generous contributions from private citizens. We expect Japan to participate more actively in organizational policy and decision making, using advocacy and diplomacy to help address global refugee issues while continuing to provide

generous financial support.

This year marks a new era of cooperation between Japan and UNHCR as Mr. Ichiro Fujisaki, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva, will serve as Chairperson of UNHCR Executive Committee during 2006.

UNHCR is also cooperating closely with the Japan International Cooperation Agency, led by former High Commissioner for Refugees Mrs. Sadako Ogata, to make sure that returning refugees are fully incorporated in post-conflict peace and development. UNHCR shares Japan's great concern for human security, an approach which takes a broad view of assistance and puts the emphasis on the protection and empowerment of individuals.

Japan can also play an important role in the struggle against rising global intolerance. It is my hope that it will soon join the ranks of refugee resettlement countries as another contribution to refugee protection.

These are indeed difficult challenges, but UNHCR is better placed to meet them with the solid support and engagement of Japan and its people.



Photograph: Aisawa Office

Secretary General,  
Parliamentary League for UNHCR

## Ichiro Aisawa

### Visiting the Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya

I had the privilege of visiting the Kakuma camp, where I interacted with individuals who are in protracted refugee situations, sometimes held in camps for over 10 years. This experience helped me renew my commitment to refugees. Humanitarian assistance is an important pillar of the Japanese foreign

The Parliamentary League for UNHCR is a cross-party association of politicians, established under the auspices of the former Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori in February 2001. The League has worked to improve the situation for refugees. Mr. Aisawa speaks about his visit to the Kakuma camp in Kenya in November 2005.

policy and I believe Japan has a critical role to play within the international community. Together with other members of Parliament and the Japanese public, I intend to exert my efforts to improve the situation and keep alive the spirit upheld by UNHCR on behalf of the "forgotten" refugees.



Photograph: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ambassador, Director-General,  
Global Issues Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

## Takahiro Shinyo

I would like to extend my cordial welcome on the occasion of publishing UNHCR Magazine, commemorating the 25th Anniversary of Japan's Accession to the Refugee Convention. This first issue will serve as informative reference of the overview of Japan's cooperation with UNHCR since its accession to the UN Refugee Convention in 1981 in order to cope with the world situations of the time.

From the viewpoint of human security that promotes protection and empowerment of individuals aiming at self-reliance, the Government of Japan has placed importance on efforts to deal with global issues and challenges for peace-building as part of our major diplomatic agendas. In this connection, Japan has highly appreciated the work of UNHCR and therefore, continuously supported UNHCR which pro-

vides humanitarian assistance to refugees and to some extent internally displaced persons around the world. Under the framework of Human Security Partnership between Japan and UNHCR which was agreed last year, Japan has also worked closely with UNHCR not only in Africa but also in Asia, in such emergencies as Indian Ocean tsunami crisis and Pakistan earthquake. When High Commissioner, Mr. António Guterres visited Japan for the first time in October 2005, in dialogues with then Foreign Minister, Mr. Nobutaka Machimura and other government officials, we confirmed that we would continue and develop our cooperative relationship between Japan and UNHCR, based on human security partnership.

Today, it is expected that Japan plays a more active role in helping socially vulnerable people in the world such as refugees and victims of natural disasters. Japan's international contribution is based on good understanding of and strong support from individual Japanese citizen. I sincerely hope that this magazine will help us further seek support from the people of Japan.