

Overview on Palestinians Resettlement in Brazil¹

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Abstract

From September to October/2007, Brazil Brazilian UNHCR, NGO`s and CONAR received about 22 Palestinian families to settle in Sao Paulo state and 18 families in Rio Grande do Sul Apart from Canada and New Zealand, in recent years Brazil and Chile has been the only countries to offer Resettlement to Palestinian refugees from Iraq.

Since 2003, most of the Palestinian refugees have been living 60 kilometers from the border in Ruweished Iraq, Jordan. The Jordan is not a signatory member of the Convention on Refugees of 1951 and does not have national legislation on refugees there is no legal framework to deal with issues of refugees. Without any prospect of local integration, opportunities, 107 refugees were to be accepted Resettlement in Brazil.

1) The Resettlement of Refugees in Brazil

The resettlement was consolidated as an alternative for protection in the 1970s, during the crisis in Southeast Asia, thousands of people in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos were hurled into the sea fleeing the violence and were intercepted in international waters without a country of asylum to the host and is known as boat people. Also when they reach land, many countries were not signatories to the Convention or the Protocol does not allow the local integration of refugees "(Carneiro, 2005, p. 68). Therefore, the resettlement has become a solution for people who could not remain at sea or in countries where land reached.

Currently, the resettlement is the solution sought by UNHCR, with the collaboration of governments and civil society, to relocate people or groups of refugees whose life is in danger in the country of first asylum. The resettlement is seen as one of the 3 main durable solutions for the refugees, together with local voluntary repatriation and reintegration in the first country of asylum.

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Besides the new Latin American countries, 15 other countries have programs of resettlement, they are: Australia, Benin, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

According to UNHCR, a refugee resettlement is a, they had to seek protection outside their country of origin that can not or chose not to protect him. Specific situations may occur where these people can not remain in the first country of refuge, for different reasons, both because the pursuing officers also crosses the border and the state of first asylum can not protect it, or because the person has difficulty or impossibility of integration by lack of protection and documents. In view of this and the inability to return to their country of origin, UNHCR, based on the search for durable solutions, seeks a third country that welcomes and provides conditions of integration and guarantees of protection.

In Brazil, was initiated in 1999 the Solidarity Resettlement Program, aiming to relocate people in the condition of refugees were settled in other countries and continued suffering harassment, threats or lack of integration in the first country of refuge.

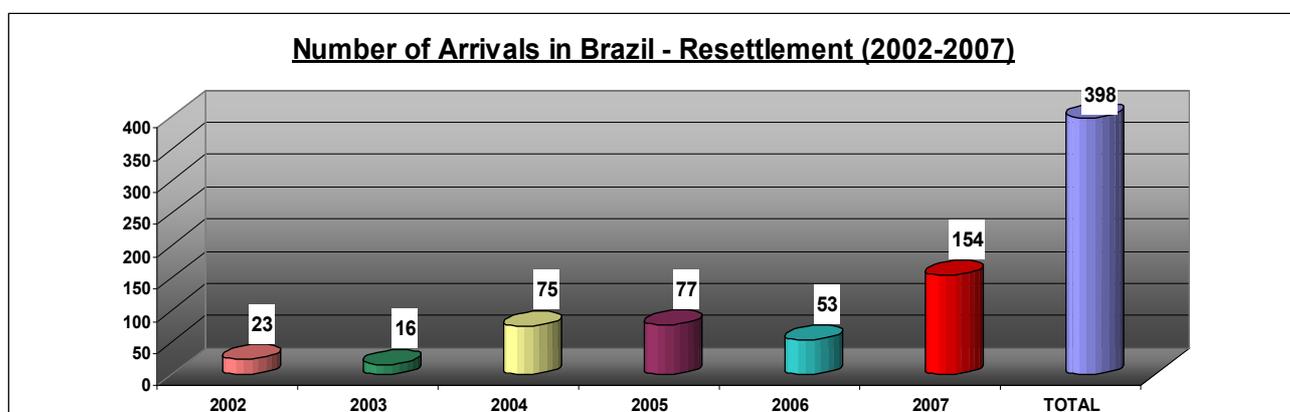
This agreement between the Government of Brazil and the UNHCR is present in Law, 9474/97, Article 46, which is that "the resettlement of refugees in Brazil to make way for planned and coordinated participation of state agencies and, where possible, non-governmental organizations, identifying areas of cooperation and determination of responsibility. " In 2004, twenty years in the Declaration of Cartagena, was prepared the "Mexico Plan of Action to Strengthen International Protection of Refugees in Latin America, currently 20 countries that adopted the Plan proposes the following solutions:

- 1) Self-sufficiency Program Integration and Solidarity cities: more effective integration of refugees in urban areas (pilot study in Latin America);

- 2) Integral Frontiers Program: promoting social and economic development, benefiting people requiring international protection and the local host populations (particularly in Ecuador, Panama and Venezuela, considering the increase in Colombian refugees);

- 3) the Regional Solidarity Resettlement Program: proposed in 2004 by the Brazilian government for Latin American refugees.

**Graphic 1: Number of arrivals in Brazil – Resettlement
2002-2007**



Source: UNHCR Brazil, Annual Statistical Report, 2002-2007

When arriving in Brazil, the Brazilian government recognized by resettlement receive all the documentation legalized their situation, and portfolio of work. The refugees have access to all programs of public health, education and other social programs in the state. UNHCR, through implementing agencies, to assist a limited initial period, is focusing mainly on language learning, training and vocational guidance and access to micro-credit.

Between 2002 and 2007 Brazil received 398 refugees, resettlement and the total 107 Palestinians who were in the field of Ruweishid who arrived between September and October 2007.

**Table I. Refugees and others of concern to UNHCR –
2007**

Type of population	Begin year(*)	End of year
1. Refugees	3.492	3.783
2. Asylum-seekers	398	427
3. Refugee returnees		
4. Internally displaced persons (IDPs)		
5. Returned IDPs		
6. Stateless persons		
7. Others of concern	17.000	17.000
Total population of concern	20.890	21.210

Source: UNHCR – Statistical Online Population Database.

According to Statistical Annual Report, 3783 on 31/12/2007 were refugees in Brazil (Table 1), the majority of Africans, especially of Angolans.

The group of 107 Palestinians were the first group of refugees from outside Latin America to benefit from the "solidarity resettlement, which were proposed in the Plan of Action of Mexico in 2004.

2) UNHCR and the Palestinian refugees

The Palestinian refugees do not have the international protection to refugees receive all of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). UNHCR was initially established to deal only with European refugees after the 2nd World War.

Before the creation of the UNHCR was created in 1950, the UN agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Middle East (UNRWA). under the sole mandate of providing humanitarian assistance to Palestinian refugees.

The UNRWA defines Palestinian refugees as people whose place of residence was Palestine between June 1946 and May 1948, who lost their homes as a result of the Arab-Israel conflict of 1948. This definition of refugee is also extended to descendants of persons who became refugees in 1948.

Currently more than 4 million Palestinian refugees are registered with UNRWA. It is estimated that the population of Palestinian refugees in the world is more than 8 million. Refugees registered with UNRWA living in 58 official refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Gaza Strip and West Bank.

Under the regime of Saddam Hussein, the Palestinians received protection and assistance of the Iraqi government and enjoyed a relatively high standard of treatment (travel documents and identity, right to work, access to subsidized housing, right to education, etc.). Since the fall of the regime in April 2003, however, the Palestinian refugees had no more access to this protection. Since segments of the Iraqi people believed that the Palestinians were favored by the previous regime, they ended up facing serious consequences such as evictions, threats and assaults. It is claimed that the Palestinians in Baghdad were subjected to arbitrary arrests, threats and assaults that have reached the level of harassment and discriminatory treatment severe. Many Palestinians who were working for the private sector eventually dismissed by their employers without legal justification. After a bomb attack in Baghdad al-Jadida on May 12, 2005, by which the Palestinians have been widely accused in the media, their security conditions have deteriorated significantly.

2.1. – Palestinians refugees in Iraq

With the increase of violence in Iraq many families trying to cross the border and were forced to stay here for years waiting for a solution to their lives living in terrible conditions in refugee camps in Ruweished, No Man's Land, Al and Al-Walled TANF-the last 2 in Iraq on the border with Syria.

Implemented by the Jordanian government, located about 60 kilometers from the border with Iraq in the field Ruweished, located in the middle of the desert since 2003 hosted more than 2,000 people since the beginning of American occupation in Iraq: they were Somali, Kurdish, Iranian and Palestinians who fled the violence in Iraq.

As above, the principle, the right of Palestinian refugees in Arab-Israeli conflicts of 1948 and 1967 and who receive protection or assistance of the United Nations Assistance to Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) are not beneficiaries of the protection of UNHCR. However, even the paragraph 1 of Article 1D is, in fact, an exclusionary clause does not mean that certain groups of Palestinian refugees can not ever benefit from the protection of the Convention of 1951. If a person is outside UNRWA's areas of operation, she could not enjoy the protection and assistance of the agency, it clearly in the paragraph 2 of Article 1D, time when the Articles 1C, 1E and 1F do not apply . Consequently, that person would be automatically included in the benefits of the Convention of 1951 and under the jurisdiction of the UNHCR.

Jordan is one of the areas of operation of UNRWA. However, the UNRWA office in Jordan not registered Palestinian refugees from Iraq in the field of Ruwayshid installed by the fact that refugees had difficulty in meeting the criteria of "Palestinian refugees" under the UNRWA definition. The operational definition of UNRWA for Palestinian refugees "and" any person whose regular place of residence was Palestine during the period of June 1, 1946 to May 15, 1948 who has lost both the home and the way of life due to the conflict of 1948. "

Thus, the Palestinian refugees who were in the field of Ruweishid ipso facto were framed in the benefits under the 1951 Convention, Article 1D, paragraph 2, is therefore the responsibility of UNHCR until the contrary is determined by non - applicability of Articles 1C, E and F.

Over the years many families from Sudan, Iran, Iraq were resettlement in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States. For over 4 years the families of Palestinian refugees have faced the worst conditions of life, having passed through the sand storms, scorpions of infestation, lack of water and total deprivation of liberty.

Since 2006 UNHCR launched an appeal for resettlement of Palestinians coming from Iraq .. According to the monitoring of speech of the UNHCR Spokespersons from the Palais des Nations in Geneva, from 34 thousand Palestinians living in Iraq in 2003, less than 15 thousand Palestinians remained in the country.

2.2. – Palestinians refugees in Brazil

From September to November 2007, the office of the UNHCR-Brazil, in partnership with local NGOs and CONARE received 22 families of Palestinian resettlement in the state of São Paulo and 18 other families resettle in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, totaling 107 refugees (Table 2). Recently, Brazil and Chile, next to Canada and New Zealand were the only countries that were Palestinian refugees from Iraq.

Table 2: Resettled palestinians in Brazil by age
2007

Palestinians by age	Male	Female	Total
<i>0-4 years</i>	2	2	4
<i>5-11 years</i>	4	7	11
<i>12-17 years</i>	3	5	8
<i>18-59 years</i>	51	23	74
<i>>60 years</i>	10	2	12
Total	70	39	109

The purpose of this study was to present some initial data on the resettlement of Palestinian refugees in Brazil. The experience helped to suggest the depth of theoretical and empirical aspects related to the topic.

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