Jerrold W. Huguet
Consultant on Population and Development

Jerry Huguet was formerly the Chief of the Population and Development Section of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in Bangkok. He is currently an independent consultant on population and development, with a particular interest in international migration. He is an international advisor to the Asian Research Center for Migration.

Abstract
Current Trends in Global Refugee Flows
18 December 2015

In 2014 there were 14 million persons categorized as refugees or people in refugee-like situations but 32 million people who were internally displaced and being assisted by UNHCR. Refugee flows have increased dramatically in 2015 and it is expected that more than one million asylum-seekers will arrive in Europe. Those migrants are moving primarily from the war-torn countries of Afghanistan, Syria and Sudan. Many may not meet the Convention definition of having a “well-founded fear of persecution” but, nonetheless, cannot be returned to their home countries. The scale of the migration flow in 2015 has overwhelmed the political capability to manage it and has created a political backlash in several European countries.
Current Trends in Global Refugee Flows

Jerrold W. Huguet
Consultant on Population and Development

Conference on “New Paradigms for a Changing Migration Landscape”
Bangkok, 17 – 18 December 2015
### Number of refugees and internally displaced persons, end-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Refugees</th>
<th>People in refugee-like situations</th>
<th>Total refugees and people in refugee-like situations</th>
<th>IDPs protected or assisted by UNHCR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13,685,607</td>
<td>694,487</td>
<td>14,380,094</td>
<td>32,274,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>3,619,797</td>
<td>71,048</td>
<td>3,690,845</td>
<td>9,557,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia-Pacific</td>
<td>3,568,538</td>
<td>280,133</td>
<td>3,848,671</td>
<td>2,731,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East &amp; North Africa</td>
<td>2,898,533</td>
<td>65,413</td>
<td>2,963,946</td>
<td>11,926,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>3,089,398</td>
<td>18,181</td>
<td>3,107,579</td>
<td>2,016,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americas</td>
<td>509,341</td>
<td>259,712</td>
<td>769,053</td>
<td>6,044,151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 1 Displacement in the 21st century
| 2000-2014 (end-year)

(in millions)

Refugees and asylum-seekers
Internally displaced persons
People newly displaced during the year*

Paradigm change

“We are witnessing a paradigm change, an unchecked slide into an era in which the scale of global forced displacement as well as the response required is now clearly dwarfing anything seen before.”

António Guterres
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNHCR Global Trends 2014
Refugee crisis in Middle East and Europe, 2015

- More than 4 million Syrians in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey
- Peak arrivals to Europe = 10,000 per day
- Arrivals in Greece = 5,000 per day
- Mediterranean crossing = 218,000 in October
- Total arrivals in Europe may equal one million in 2015
- 3,400 persons dead or missing from Mediterranean crossing
- Varied routes: Mediterranean, Greece, Eastern Europe, Russia to Norway
Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951

- Designed for post-WWII Europe
- Current flows are from on-going conflict
- Scope and volume in 1951 were smaller and known, and not increasing
- Current mixed flows, most not fleeing individual persecution
- Only 43% of Afghans screened in Germany are determined to be refugees but the others cannot be returned
Reluctance by third countries to accept resettlement

- European Union has set target of resettling 160,000 refugees in 2015 who were already in Europe, and not all members want to cooperate.
- Poland and Slovakia do not intend to accept their allocations.
- Germany has promised to accept 800,000 but political strains are showing.
- Paris attacks (13.11.15) might strengthen resistance.
- In May 2015, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand agreed to provide shelter to “irregular migrants” for one year pending their resettlement.
Protracted refugee situations

- At least 25,000 in exile for more than five years
  - 400,000 Somalis in Kenya
  - 982,000 refugees in Iran
  - 1.5 million in Pakistan
  - 3.6 million Palestinians
  - 130,000 displaced persons from Myanmar in Thailand
- Refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Thailand and Turkey are not permitted to work.
Political paralysis

- Numbers in short time period have overwhelmed Governments.
- 1951 Convention not adequate for “survival migrants”.
- Migration a contentious issue in Europe and United States – left and right cannot agree.
- Is culture an issue?
Fundamental changes to European Union

• “Europe’s states cannot afford the crises they have on their hands”, especially as Eurozone rules limit budget deficits to 3 percent of GDP.

  Ben Judah, INYT, 4 December 2015.

• Europe agreed in late November to provide 3 billion Euros and other inducements to Turkey in return for that country’s help in reducing the flow of migrants through Turkey to Europe.

  INYT, 1 December 2015
Regarding mass influx of refugees to Europe:

“This is Europe’s biggest crisis in a generation. If integration once seemed inexorable, the pressing question now is how to stop the EU from fraying.”

_The Economist, 7 November 2015_

The Euro crisis did not destroy Europe; the migration crisis did.

_Umberto Eco, Italian novelist_