

PRESS STATEMENT

UNAIDS welcomes the appointment of Filippo Grandi as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

GENEVA, 5 January 2015 — UNAIDS welcomes Filippo Grandi as the new United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Mr Grandi took over as head of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on 1 January 2016, succeeding António Guterres, who left last week after more than 10 years in office.

Mr Grandi is from Italy and has worked in international affairs for the United Nations for close to 30 years. He is a former Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and was Deputy Special Representative for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. He began his career in the nongovernmental organization sector and later worked with UNHCR in Africa, Asia and the Middle East and at the organization's Geneva headquarters.

“High Commissioner Grandi is taking up the helm at UNHCR at a particularly challenging time,” said Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS. “The global refugee crisis remains front page news due to long-term conflicts and ongoing persecution. The number of forcibly displaced persons has reached the highest level, 59.5 million people, since the Second World War. Mr Grandi brings a wealth of experience to this position. We look forward to close collaboration with him to promote the rights of refugees around the world and ensure equitable access to HIV and other essential health services.”

UNHCR works worldwide to protect, assist and find solutions for refugees, internally displaced people and stateless populations. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. It strives to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another state, with the option to return home voluntarily, integrate locally or to resettle in a third country. It also has a mandate to help stateless people. Since 1950, the agency has helped tens of millions of people restart their lives.

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UNAIDS

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. UNAIDS unites the efforts of 11 UN organizations—UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank—and works closely with global and national partners towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. Learn more at unaids.org and connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).