

***Barcelona, 20th June 2010* - Together with more than 17 millions of refugee children in the world and refugees organisations, the Global Movement for Children observes on June 20th the Day of the Refugee to raise awareness on the challenges faced by this population of concern.**

They include children who are refugees, asylum seekers and stateless as well as returnee and internally displaced children assisted and protected by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

In 2009, some 45 per cent of persons of concern to UNHCR were children under the age of 18, 11 per cent of whom were under the age of five .

Among refugees and people in refugee-like situations, children constituted 41 per cent of the population. Their proportion was significantly higher among those refugees who returned home in 2009 (54%). This poses considerable challenges for reintegration programmes, in particular with respect to education in those locations where schools have been damaged or destroyed.

Children constituted only 27 per cent of asylum-seekers, a population often largely composed of single men particularly in the industrialized world. Moreover, populations in camps were younger (52 per cent children) than in urban areas (43 per cent children).

As a positive note, recent initiatives such as the European Commission's proposed Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors (2010-2014) and the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges (December 2009) for refugees in urban areas, show the increasing attention paid to this population.