



### **U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres**

Mr. António Guterres started as UN High Commissioner for Refugees on June 15, 2005, succeeding Mr. Ruud Lubbers of the Netherlands. A former Portuguese prime minister, Mr. Guterres was elected by the UN General Assembly to a five-year term and is the UN refugee agency's 10th High Commissioner.

As High Commissioner, he heads one of the world's principal humanitarian agencies. UNHCR has twice won the Nobel Peace Prize and its 6,300 staff members currently work in over 110 countries providing protection and assistance to nearly 33 million refugees and others of concern. More than 80 percent of its staff works in the field, often in difficult and dangerous duty stations. The agency's total budget for 2007 is more than \$1 billion.

Before joining UNHCR, Mr. Guterres spent more than 20 years in government and public service. He served as Portuguese prime minister from 1996 to 2002, during which he was strongly involved in the international effort to resolve the crisis in East Timor. As president of the European Council in early 2000, he led the adoption of the so-called Lisbon Agenda and co-chaired the first EU-Africa summit. He also founded the Portuguese Refugee Council in 1991, and was part of the Council of State of Portugal from 1991 to 2002.

From 1981 to 1983, Mr. Guterres was a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, as well as chairman of the Committee on Demography, Migration and Refugees. In addition, he has been active in Socialist International, acting as the organisation's vice-president from 1992 to 1999 before taking over as its president until June 2005.

Mr. Guterres was born on April 30, 1949, in Lisbon and educated at the Instituto Superior Técnico, where he is an invited professor.

He is married and has two children.