


UNHCR

 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
 Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

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24 September 2002

 Notre/Our case: PRL 5.2. KAZ, IRN & PAK
 Votre/Your code: Gev-hum/165/02

 Re: UNHCR's position with regard to
 Kazakhstan, Iran and Pakistan.

Dear Ms Ardi Stois-Braken,

With reference to your letters concerning UNHCR's position with regard to the above-mentioned countries, I am pleased to share with you the following information, courtesy of my colleagues in the CASWANAME Bureau.

KAZAKHSTAN

Q.1 Does UNHCR (still) have a representation in this country? If yes, what is the general nature of the activities undertaken by the representation?

UNHCR is represented in Kazakhstan by a Liaison Office. The operational activities of the Liaison Office are relatively limited although the office is actively involved in strengthening the national refugee protection framework and promoting the reduction of statelessness. In a continued effort to further improve refugee protection, UNHCR is now carrying out various capacity-building activities of national state and non-state actors.

Q.2 Does UNHCR actively promote the return of refugees to this country? If yes, does return take place as a part of an organised collective return of refugees?

UNHCR does not promote the return of refugees to Kazakhstan because of the lack of support from the government and the worsening situation in Kazakhstan following the September 11 attacks. In the event that there is a need to return Kazakhstani refugees to Kazakhstan, it is normally up to the asylum country to negotiate on the return with the Kazakhstan Government and reach a bilateral agreement on the issue. In exceptional circumstances, UNHCR may intervene upon the request of concerned parties.

Q.3 What is the position of UNHCR with regard to the return of unsuccessful asylum seekers from these countries?

Ms Ardi Stois-Braken
 First Secretary
 Permanent Mission of the Netherlands
 31-33, avenue Giuseppe - Motta
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UNHCR has no objection to the return of unsuccessful asylum seekers back to Kazakhstan provided that they have undergone a full and fair asylum eligibility procedure and have been found neither to qualify for refugee status nor to be in need of any other form of humanitarian protection.

IRAN:

Q. Is UNHCR still of the Opinion that they are currently no grounds to object to the return to the Islamic Republic of Iran of Iranian nationals who, after due consideration of their applications in full and fair asylum procedures, have been found neither to qualify for refugee status nor to be in need of international protection?

UNHCR confirms the position of its 1999 guidelines on Iran. Nothing in later documents would warrant a change in UNHCR's position concerning this subject.

PAKISTAN:

Q. What is the position of UNHCR with regard to the return of unsuccessful asylum seekers from Pakistan?

UNHCR does not object to the return to Pakistan of Pakistani nationals, who after due consideration of their applications in full and fair asylum procedures, have been found neither to qualify for refugee status nor to be in need of any other form of humanitarian protection. In addition, UNHCR does not currently see any grounds for making an exception to this position in favour of specific groups.

We hope this information proves useful to your authorities.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roseife Okoro'.

Roseife Okoro
Senior Desk Officer
Bureau for Europe