

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

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UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

USA

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A Chin child peers out the doorway of the refugee-run school she attends in Malaysia, January 2009. © UNHCR/Ted Adnan

In response to the worsening security situation in southern Chin State in Myanmar, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has affirmed that Chin refugees may still have ongoing international protection needs. As a result, the Agency will be maintaining their refugee status.

There are currently more than 18,000 Chin refugees registered with UNHCR, the vast majority (more than 15,000) living in Malaysia, with smaller numbers in India, Thailand and Nepal.

In mid-2018, based on an analysis of conditions inside Chin State and Sagaing Region of Myanmar, UNHCR began a review process of Chin refugees to re-evaluate their continued protection needs.

Since then, UNHCR received a number of new reports and assessments, which did not support its original conclusion of fundamental and durable changes in Chin State and Sagaing Region. The agency had also noted specific concerns raised by the Chin community and civil society organizations.

UNHCR has been particularly concerned by the worsening security situation in southern Chin State. The agency issued a public statement expressing its deep concern about the humanitarian impact of continuing violence and the displacement of people.

As a result of these deteriorating conditions, UNHCR has decided to halt the individual review process for Chin refugees.

“We recognize that Chin refugees may still require international protection due to the worsening security situation in southern Chin State in Myanmar, which has resulted in new displacement”, said Volker Türk, Assistant High Commissioner (Protection) for UNHCR.

“The decision to reassess our overall approach is in line with our stated commitment at the very start of the review process – that UNHCR would continue to monitor developments and revisit our position if warranted.”

Although UNHCR offices in countries hosting Chin refugees began counselling and individual reviews of Chin refugees last year, no final decisions on status were made. No Chin refugee had lost their refugee status as a result of the revised processing approach, which is now being halted.

As with all refugees, UNHCR will continue to work towards maximizing solutions for the Chin, including voluntary repatriation when conditions for sustainable return in safety and dignity allow. UNHCR remains grateful to countries hosting Chin refugees for their continued generosity in extending protection to this and other groups of refugees from Myanmar.