

Press Release

UNHCR opens a new office in Agadez, on the route of the mixed migration flows

Agadez, Niger – Today, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, strengthens its presence on the route of the mixed migration flows crossing West Africa, with the official opening of an office in the town of Agadez.

“300,000 migrants transited through the region of Agadez in 2016. We must get closer to refugees who are amongst the migration flows, in order to support the Nigerien authorities to provide them with the protection they need, which their country of origin cannot provide” stated Ibrahim Traore, UNHCR Representative in Niger. “Few amongst those fleeing persecution and conflict are aware that asylum is possible once they have crossed an international border, and that Niger could also be a host country”, he said. “The first protection measure is to provide them with this information”.

A team of lawyers from UNHCR will be present in Agadez in order to assist those who wish to apply for asylum in Niger.

The new office in Agadez strengthens the presence of UNHCR throughout the country. It's offices in Tillabery, Ouallam, Abala, Diffa and Niamey already provide assistance to a considerable number of *prima facie* refugees from Mali (60,000) and Nigeria (106,000).

As well as the new office, on the 1st of June, a Toll Free confidential telephone number (0 800 12 12) will be put in place for all asylum seekers and refugees in Niger. A UNHCR Adviser will be available to respond to questions and to provide guidance.

According to IOM, 300,000 migrants passed through the region of Agadez in 2016, coming mainly from Nigeria, the Gambia, Guinea and Senegal.

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