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The UN Refugee Agency

PRESS RELEASE

New UNHCR Representative presents credentials to Foreign Adviser

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Bangladesh – Ivo Freijsen, new Representative for UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, presented his credentials to Md Touhid Hossain, Adviser for Foreign Affairs of the Interim Government of Bangladesh, in Dhaka today.

During the meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Freijsen and Mr. Hossain reiterated their shared commitment to providing protection and finding a sustainable solution for the more than 1.1 million Rohingya refugees from Myanmar currently living in Bangladesh.

"It is both an honour and a privilege to represent UNHCR in Bangladesh—a country that has so generously hosted people forced to flee for many years. I look forward to working closely with national and international partners to support Bangladesh in its ongoing response to the Rohingya refugee crisis," said Mr. Freijsen.

Mr. Freijsen, a national of the Netherlands, was most recently UNHCR representative in Lebanon (2023-2025) and prior to that in the Islamic Republic of Iran (2018-2022). His humanitarian career spans over three decades and includes senior roles in UNHCR, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the European Commission and various international NGOs. Over the years, he held positions in various countries including Iraq, Sudan, Egypt and Switzerland, working extensively on humanitarian affairs, refugee protection and emergency response.

"UNHCR remains committed to protecting and assisting refugees until conditions allow for their safe, voluntary and sustainable return to Rakhine State. Amid growing global aid constraints, I will work closely with humanitarian and development partners to sustain international engagement and advocate for lasting solutions to this protracted crisis," added Mr. Freijsen.

Bangladesh has generously hosted the Rohingya refugees, most of whom arrived in 2017 when widespread violence and persecution in Myanmar's Rakhine state forced nearly 740,000 people to flee and seek safety across the border. UNHCR works together with the Government of Bangladesh and other humanitarian actors to provide protection, shelter and essential services to the refugees, who have been unable to safely return until now.

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