



BIOGRAPHY

UNRWA DEPUTY COMMISSIONER- GENERAL FILIPPO GRANDI

Mr. Filippo Grandi was appointed Deputy Commissioner-General for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East on 25 September 2005.

Mr. Grandi, an Italian national, is one of the United Nations' most seasoned experts on refugee affairs and came to this position following previous postings in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Karen AbuZayd, UNRWA's Commissioner-General, commented at the time of Mr. Grandi's appointment that he "brings a wide range of experience to his new position as Deputy Commissioner-General. His superb managerial and operational skills make him a valuable addition to UNRWA, as we and the Palestine refugees face the challenges ahead together."

From May 2004, Mr. Grandi served as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General responsible for political affairs at the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), where he took responsibility for the electoral process, disarmament, demobilisation and integration, as well as the verification of the exercise of political rights relating to elections and human rights.

Prior to that, Mr. Grandi was Chief of Mission of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Afghanistan, a position he held for almost three years. From 1997 to 2001, Mr. Grandi worked in the Executive Office of UNHCR in Geneva, as Special Assistant of the High Commissioner and then Chief of Staff.

Mr. Grandi joined UNHCR in 1988 and subsequently worked on refugee programmes in Sudan, Syria, Turkey and Iraq. Following the first Gulf War, as an Emergency Officer, he led emergency operations in Kenya, Benin, Ghana, Liberia, the Great Lakes of Central Africa (including the Goma operation in the summer of 1994), Yemen and Afghanistan, among others. After a two-year assignment dealing with some of UNHCR's main donors, especially the European Commission, Mr. Grandi was Field Coordinator for UN humanitarian activities in the Democratic Republic of Congo during its 1996 - 1997 civil war.

Prior to joining UNHCR, he worked with non-governmental organisations carrying out refugee programmes in Thailand and Italy.

Mr. Grandi graduated from the State University of Milan with a degree in modern history and from the Gregorian University in Rome with a BA in philosophy.

About UNRWA:

Some 4.6 million Palestine refugees in UNRWA's five fields of operations - Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem - are eligible for Agency services, including education, healthcare, social services, shelter, microcredit loans and emergency aid. UNRWA employs nearly 30,000 staff, the vast majority of whom are Palestine refugees. UNRWA's operations are financed almost entirely by voluntary contributions from donors. The Agency's regular budget for 2008-2009 is \$1.1 billion, which covers the recurrent costs of the Agency's education, health and relief and social services activities. UNRWA's headquarters are in Gaza City and Amman.

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