

**Side Event to the 60th Session of  
the Executive Committee**



UNHCR/E Hockstein

# **Update on the Somali Refugee Emergency and Protracted Refugee Situation in Dadaab, Kenya**

**Briefing by**  
**Ms. Liz Ahua, UNHCR Representative in Kenya**  
**Mr. Guillermo Bettocchi, UNHCR Representative for Somalia**

**Tuesday, 29 September**  
**09:00-10:00**  
**Palais des Nations, Room XXIII**

## **BACKGROUND NOTE**

### **“Update on the Somali Refugee Emergency and Protracted Refugee Situation in Dadaab, Kenya”**

Since 2008, there has been a dramatic increase in the forced displacement of Somalis. Over 120,000 persons have entered Kenya as refugees in this period. In 2009 alone, over 50,000 new Somali refugees have arrived in Dadaab, a constellation of three camps in Kenya established in 1991. Dadaab was originally meant to accommodate a maximum of 90,000 refugees but is now teeming with more than three times that number. The influx continues at a monthly average of some 5,000 persons.

Dadaab represents today both a protracted refugee situation and one of the most acute emergencies in the world. Extreme overcrowding and congestion characterize the crisis that is unfolding in the camps, with no space to establish or expand shelter, and sanitation, health and education facilities. The semi-arid conditions, limited resources and general poverty affecting the local host population, have compounded the situation.

UNHCR and its partners have endeavoured to mount a determined emergency response. In August 2009, during his second visit to the country in a year, the High Commissioner proposed to the Government a five-prong strategy, which reiterated the call for the allocation by the authorities of land for the establishment of a fourth camp as pivotal for an effective response. With the land thus far not yet allocated, the situation continues to be critical.

Please join us in hearing an update on the emergency. The main speaker, Ms. Liz Ahua, UNHCR's Representative in Kenya, will provide a comprehensive briefing on the response as a whole, including the measures which have been implemented in Dadaab itself; the relocation of some of the refugees to another camp in the country, Kakuma refugee camp; and where the issue of the allocation of additional land currently stands. Mr. Guillermo Bettochi, UNHCR's Representative for Somalia, will also provide an update on developments in Somalia.

See reverse side for timing and further details.