

59th meeting of the Standing Committee

4-6 March 2014

Agenda item 3 (v)

Update on the High-Level Segment on Solidarity and Burden-Sharing with Countries Hosting Syrian Refugees

I. Introduction

This document is provided as background to agenda item 3(v). Specifically, it updates on developments since the convening of the High-Level Segment on Solidarity and Burden-Sharing with Countries Hosting Syrian Refugees (HLS) on 30 September – 1 October 2013.

II. Overview

The High-Level Segment on Solidarity and Burden-Sharing with Countries Hosting Syrian Refugees was held as an integral part of the 64th plenary session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme. Participation included 149 United Nations Member States, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the World Bank. At the conclusion of the HLS, the Executive Committee adopted a Statement¹ acknowledging the profound impact of the Syria situation on host communities, economies, services, infrastructure, the environment and security, and reaffirming its commitment to the principles of international solidarity and burden-sharing.

Since then, an additional 500,000 Syrian refugees have been registered in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, with host governments estimating that a comparable number of Syrians may be present on their territory but not yet registered. As of end of February 2014, the number of registered refugees in neighbouring countries stood at close to 2.5 million.

Host governments, with the support of UNHCR and its Executive Committee, have been active in advocating and developing strategies for support where it is most needed in their respective countries. In January, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, and the High Commissioner co-chaired the Ministerial Coordination Meeting of Major Host Countries for Syrian Refugees, in Şanlıurfa. Participants noted the continuing need for massive international support and burden-sharing measures and appealed to development actors and financial institutions to increase support to refugee-hosting countries.

The Second International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria, hosted by the Emir of Kuwait and chaired by the UN Secretary-General, was held in Kuwait City on 15 January 2014. Donors pledged approximately US\$ 2.3 billion to support the humanitarian response through the appeals of the United Nations and NGOs for the Syrian situation, the 2014 Syria Regional Response Plan (RRP6)² and the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan.³ The Conference included an event entitled "How neighbouring countries are responding to the Syria crisis: resilience, stabilization and solidarity," during which Lebanon and Jordan presented their existing national plans and priorities in relation to the Syria crisis. UNDP and the World Bank participated in the discussion.

The RRP6 contains an increased focus on early recovery and social cohesion interventions. Humanitarian agencies have already delivered support to government counterparts, local municipalities and communities in critical sectors such as water and sanitation, health, education, small-scale infrastructure, solid waste management, equipment and budget support. UNHCR and

¹ Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/524a87659.html>

² Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/syriarrp6/>

³ Available at: <http://www.unocha.org/cap/appeals/syria-crisis-humanitarian-response-2014>

UNDP are working to implement a recently concluded regional memorandum of understanding on collaboration between the two agencies.

Despite progress made, critical needs remain for the international community to provide even greater assistance in support of the Syrian refugee population and host communities, notably through:

- direct bilateral support;
- durable solutions, including increased reception of Syrian refugees in countries beyond the Middle East; and
- longer-term development interventions for countries affected by the refugee influx.

III. Resettlement and Humanitarian Admissions

Last year, UNHCR called upon States to provide 30,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees with resettlement or other forms of humanitarian admission by the end of 2014. To date, 18,929 places, plus an open-ended number offered by the United States of America, have been pledged towards this goal.⁴ UNHCR remains confident that the target of 30,000 will be met by the end of the year through a significant number of submissions to the United States of America.

<i>Country</i>	<i>2013/2014 Confirmed/Official Pledges (Persons)</i>
Australia	500 resettlement
Austria	500 humanitarian admission
Belgium	75 resettlement
Canada	200 resettlement 1,100 private sponsorship
Denmark	140 resettlement
Finland	500 resettlement
France	500 humanitarian admission/resettlement
Germany	10,000 humanitarian admission 1,500 individual sponsorship ⁵
Hungary	10 resettlement
Ireland	90 resettlement
Liechtenstein	4 resettlement
Luxembourg	60 resettlement
Republic of Moldova	50 resettlement
Netherlands	250 resettlement
New Zealand	100 resettlement
Norway	1,000 resettlement
Spain	130 resettlement
Sweden	1,200 resettlement
Switzerland	150 resettlement
United States of America	open-ended number on resettlement
TOTAL Official/Confirmed Pledges	18,059 + open-ended number to the United States of America
Unofficial/Unconfirmed Pledges	870
Combined TOTAL	18,929 + open-ended number to the United States of America

⁴ In addition, the United Kingdom has created the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme for Syrian refugees.

⁵ Fifteen federal states in Germany have launched reception programmes for Syrian nationals with relatives in Germany. Approximately 1,500 visas have been issued under this scheme to date.

Given the implications of the worsening humanitarian situation in Syria, there is an ever-growing need to engage in meaningful burden-sharing with host countries in the region. UNHCR has therefore invited States to make multi-year commitments towards a goal of 100,000 additional places for resettlement and other forms of admission of Syrian refugees in 2015 and 2016.

The Core Group on Resettlement of Syrian Refugees, comprised of resettlement and humanitarian admission countries and chaired by Sweden, has been working to: (1) secure increased opportunities for resettlement, improved acceptance rates, and flexible application of criteria; (2) increase cooperation and support for streamlined resettlement processes, from identification to departure; and (3) foster dialogue with host countries to support the resettlement and protection of refugees.

The Host Countries’ Resettlement Working Group (RWG), comprised of the Geneva-based Permanent Missions of neighbouring host States, has been providing feedback on the humanitarian admission and resettlement programmes and discussing key considerations in the expansion of opportunities for resettlement and other forms of admission for Syrian refugees, including (1) balancing the allocation of offers throughout the region so as to discourage dangerous onward movements; (2) managing expectations of refugees; and (3) ensuring continuity of resources for other protection, assistance and development activities.

IV. Egypt

Syrian registered refugee population as of end-February 2014	135,000
Population outside of camps	100%
Total Syrian population in Egypt (Government estimate)	300,000
Palestinian refugees from Syria	6,000
Host communities targeted for support in the RRP6 (individuals)	250,000

- Over 20,000 Syrian refugees have registered with UNHCR in Egypt since the HLS (1 October 2013), bringing the number of refugees to 135,000 as of end-February 2014. The majority live in three urban areas -- Greater Cairo, Alexandria and Damietta – with the rest residing in smaller towns across the country. Syrians have access to the same basic services as Egyptians.
- Civil society and charitable organizations have responded generously to the needs of Syrian refugees; however, due to Egypt’s sensitive transition period, it is becoming increasingly difficult for organizations to reach all vulnerable families and sustain the level of assistance.
- RRP6 partners are looking at further developing Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) in collaboration with Egyptian municipalities, local/international NGOs and refugee and host communities. The QIPs are aimed at addressing the existing gaps in services in communities with a high concentration of refugees. Helping to reduce tensions between refugees and host populations, QIPs involve community participation and generate new, longer-term development opportunities, with the involvement of local authorities.

V. Iraq

Syrian registered refugee population as of end-February 2014	225,000
Population outside of camps	60%
Total Syrian population in Iraq (Government estimate)	300,000
Host communities targeted for support in the RRP6 (individuals)	300,000

- Over 60,000 Syrian refugees have registered with UNHCR in Iraq since the HLS (1 October 2013), bringing the number of refugees to 225,000 as of end-February 2014. The vast majority have entered into the Kurdistan Region of northern Iraq, with the population of Dohuk Governorate

alone having increased more than 10 per cent as a result of the influx. The majority of Syrians - 60 per cent - are living outside camps.

- Beyond having access to public services in the community where they live, some have received residency permits giving them freedom of movement and some access to employment.
- In an effort to mitigate the risk of increased tension between refugees and host communities, the Iraq chapter of the RRP6 considers the needs of the host population. The engagement of development actors and implementation of QIPs benefiting the refugees and their host communities are the main features of the immediate strategy. QIPs are planned for the upgrading of health centres, the expansion of schools and the improvement of water supply.
- Towards the end of 2013, the Government of Iraq agreed with development actors to a “resilience-based development approach” to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the crisis. Discussions have begun with humanitarian agencies on the transition from assistance to development. Under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator and the Kurdistan Regional Government, a task force is being formed to initiate assessments and the overall platform for long-term support to Syrians in Iraq.

VI. Jordan

Syrian registered refugee population as of end-February 2014	580,000
Population outside of camps	82%
Total Syrian population in Jordan (Government estimate)	800,000
Palestinian refugees from Syria	11,100
Host communities targeted for support in the RRP6 (individuals)	700,000

- Some 50,000 Syrian refugees have registered with UNHCR in Jordan since the HLS (1 October 2013), bringing the number of refugees to 580,000 as of end-February 2014. The majority of refugees are living outside camps among host communities in northern and central Jordan.
- Syrians in urban areas access water, electricity and shelter through the Jordanian market and are granted access to public services, including health and education. This has resulted in massive pressure on Jordan’s scarce resources and stretched the ability of local authorities to maintain service delivery, inducing considerable public expenditure. Wages have been affected by increased competition in the labour market, while prices have increased for basic necessities, fuel and rental accommodation.
- An impact analysis conducted by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation estimated that more than US\$ 152.4 million is needed to provide subsidized items to a refugee population of 600,000 (US\$ 19.2 million for water, US\$ 23 million for flour, US\$ 93.6 million for electricity, and US \$16.6 million for household gas). For education, the annual cost of each student enrolled in primary education is US\$ 877, with a cost of US\$ 1,995 for secondary education. The cost of an additional 80,000 students has been estimated at US\$ 81.4 million per year. According to the Ministry of Health, the cost of providing annual primary and tertiary health services stands at US\$ 206 and US\$ 655 per patient, respectively.
- The Jordan chapter of the RRP6 presents urgent and immediate needs of host and refugee communities and of government services in all sectors -- particularly food security, education, health and water and sanitation -- while the longer-term response to these needs requires investments by development actors. Projects aim to promote peaceful coexistence with refugees and host communities, through the expansion of available resources and services, and through community engagement. The RRP6 includes part of UNDP’s programme to sustain social and economic stability and mitigate vulnerability to poverty, focusing on the areas of highest concentration of refugees in Mafraq and Irbid.

- Jordan’s National Resilience Plan is being developed under the leadership of the Government, in close collaboration with donors, UN partners and NGOs. It is coordinated by the Host Community Support Platform, led by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. The requirements of the Plan, spanning 2014-2016, should amount to over US\$ 4 billion, including US\$ 1.2 billion for this year, in addition to the US\$ 413 million in requirements already presented by the Government as part of the RRP6.
- To date the World Bank Group has approved two emergency projects to bolster strained services to Jordanians: US\$ 150 million in emergency aid for Jordan’s health care system, as well as helping households facing rising prices for food and housing; and US\$ 50 million in grants to local municipalities to strengthen service delivery.

VII. Lebanon

Syrian refugee population as of end-February 2014 ⁶	940,000
Population outside of camps	100%
Total Syrian population in Lebanon (Government estimate)	1 million
Palestinian refugees from Syria	51,800
Host communities targeted for support in the RRP6 (individuals)	1.5 million

- More than 220,000 Syrian refugees have registered with UNHCR in Lebanon since the HLS (1 October 2013), bringing the number of refugees living throughout the country to 940,000 as of end-February 2014. As a result of the influx of Syrian refugees, Lebanon’s population has reached the level originally expected in 2050. Syrians have full access to public services, including healthcare and education.
- Additionally, competition in the informal job market has driven down wages, while prices for basic necessities, fuel and rental accommodation have increased. Shortages in water and electricity, as well as insufficient capacity in solid waste management, have become commonplace. Highly privatized healthcare and education systems make the expansion of these services extremely costly, while capacity in public facilities is already overstretched.
- The World Bank forecasts that Lebanon’s unemployment rate may nearly double this year, to reach 20 percent, putting 220,000 to 324,000 Lebanese out of work and potentially pushing an additional 170,000 Lebanese into poverty. Recent assessments point to an annual reduction in GDP growth by 2.9 per cent each year since the conflict began. The World Bank has estimated that the total economic impact of the crisis, including the response, will reach US\$ 7.5 billion by end-2014.
- The Lebanese Government has established a “Roadmap of priority interventions for stabilisation from the Syrian conflict,” requesting more than US\$ 3 billion over 5 years to address the impact of the crisis, including US\$ 625 million in 2014 alone. The National Stabilisation Roadmap includes four tracks of interventions to bring about: 1) rapid immediate impact; 2) short to medium-term delivery and impact; 3) longer-term delivery and impact; and 4) private sector engagement. A number of immediate measures to provide direct support to government institutions and communities most affected by the refugee influx are included in the RRP6.
- The Lebanon chapter of the RRP6 features enhanced programmes to support the capacity of government institutions most affected by the refugee influx as well as support to hosting communities. The programmes prioritize areas with high concentrations of both impoverished Lebanese and refugees from Syria.

⁶ Including refugees registered with UNHCR and approximately 50,000 Syrians who have approached UNHCR offices to obtain a registration appointment.

- UNDP has developed a Stabilization and Recovery Programme aimed at supporting the resilience of vulnerable host communities, promoting peacebuilding and conflict prevention, while also strengthening the capacity of key national institutions. The programme is partly included in the RRP6.
- It is expected that the new Government of Lebanon will reach an agreement with the World Bank on the establishment of a multi-donor trust fund to support local communities hosting Syrian refugees. The trust fund will be led by a steering committee, including representatives of the Lebanese Government, the World Bank and UN organizations, as well as a technical committee, including delegates from the Ministries of Finance, Education and Higher Education, Public Health and Social Affairs.

VIII. Turkey

Syrian registered refugee population as of end-February 2014	620,000
Population outside of camps	63%
Total Syrian population in Turkey (Government estimate)	700,000
Host communities targeted for support in the RRP6 (individuals)	10,000

- Over 130,000 Syrian refugees have been registered by the Government of Turkey since the HLS (1 October 2013), bringing the number of refugees to 620,000 as of end-February 2014. The majority are now hosted in local communities along the Syrian border, though increasingly beyond. Over 220,000 reside in 22 camps. The overall humanitarian response continues to be led by the Prime Ministry's Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD).
- Given the large numbers in camps and the high standards of assistance provided by Turkey, the Government estimates it has already spent US\$ 2.5 billion on the humanitarian response for Syrian refugees. In addition, Turkish NGOs have contributed approximately US\$ 1 billion and the international community close to US\$ 185 million, mostly through multilateral channels.
- The registration of 400,000 Syrians outside of camps since January 2013 has necessitated the provision of additional healthcare, education support and material assistance, with a significant social and economic impact on Turkish host communities, particularly in the provinces of Hatay, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa and Mardin.
- In January 2014, Turkey hosted the Ministerial Coordination Meeting of Major Host Countries for Syrian Refugees in Harran Container Camp, Şanlıurfa. Turkey's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, co-chaired the meeting with the High Commissioner, in the presence Iraqi Foreign Minister, Hoshyar Zebari; Jordan's Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Dr. Ibrahim Saif; Egyptian Deputy Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs Ms. Randa Labib and Lebanon's Refugee Coordinator at the Ministry of Social Affairs, Mr. Makram Malaeb. Participants reaffirmed the outcomes of the HLS, calling for increased financial assistance and burden-sharing measures, as well as increased support from development and financial institutions.