

**Opening Statement of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at the  
Sixty-Sixth Session of the Executive Committee of the  
High Commissioner's Programme**

*(Geneva, 5 October 2015)*

**Elements**

In his Opening Statement to the sixty-sixth session of the Executive Committee, the High Commissioner will set out the key displacement challenges facing UNHCR and the international community today and his vision for the efforts required to address them.

- Operating environment: rising numbers of forcibly displaced people due to new and ongoing emergencies, protracted refugee situations and diminishing availability of durable solutions; response to the European refugee and migration crisis; highlights of UNHCR's work in emergency response, protection and solutions during the past year;
- Funding and burden-sharing: despite strong donor support, humanitarian budgets insufficient to meet sharply increased global humanitarian needs; consequences of funding shortfalls facing humanitarian actors; more support needed for countries hosting large refugee populations;
- Importance of displacement for international agenda: need to account for conflict and displacement in international development and climate change agendas;
- World Humanitarian Summit: importance of closer humanitarian-development connections; broader humanitarian partnerships and innovation;
- Values of tolerance and respect for diversity: criticality of efforts to counter racism, intolerance and xenophobia;
- Root causes: need to address root causes of forced displacement (theme of this year's Dialogue on Protection Challenges); need for greater political will and international collaboration to prevent and resolve conflicts and displacement;
- Future of UNHCR: crucial role played by UNHCR staff and partners; continued importance of UNHCR's strong protection mandate in preserving asylum space for refugees.