

Remarks for the 73rd Standing Committee meeting
Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme
Kelly T. Clements, Deputy High Commissioner
Room XVI, Palais des Nations
19-20 Septembre 2018

Madam Chairperson,
Excellencies,

In the interest of time, I will limit these remarks to the broader management of the organization. My colleagues will introduce the specifics of each agenda item.

You are all familiar with the context in which UNHCR operates so little needs to be said about this. Suffice it to say that we continue to provide protection and aim to find solutions for 71.4 million forcibly displaced people, with the overwhelming majority of the close to 20 million refugees under our mandate hosted in low and middle income countries.

Most of our teams operate in multifaceted and often complex situations, as illustrated by the fact that, over the course of 2017, UNHCR recorded over 400 security incidents. What is remarkable however is not the number of incidents faced but the fact that our colleagues in the field are able to continue to provide protection and assistance to people of concern in spite of direct and indirect threats faced. This speaks to the professionalism and dedication of our workforce globally but particularly to that of our security professionals who work closely with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and whose work and impact will be reviewed under item 2c of the agenda.

Operating in such environments has a range of implications for UNHCR, not least the need for the organisation to provide the necessary care to personnel. That is why UNHCR has led the UN cross-functional task force on duty of care in high risk situations since 2017 and has spearheaded work within the system to understand the risks to which our workforce is exposed, assess and design instruments and strategies to allow for better management of such risks.

This work ultimately led to decisions of the UN's Chief Executive Board's High Level Committee on Management, in May of this year, to emphasize that duty of care constitutes a non-waivable duty on the part of organisations to mitigate or otherwise address foreseeable risks to their personnel and eligible family members. The Committee adopted a risk management approach to duty of care, together with a set of measures and tools which advances duty of care for all personnel, including those locally recruited.

UNHCR's work on duty of care in the inter-agency realm was done concomitantly with work to review our own policies and how they assist us to meet our duty of care towards all members of our workforce. As a result of this work, led by both the Division of Human Resources and Division of Emergency, Security and Supply, UNHCR was able to issue new Administrative Instructions on Measures in Support of Personnel in High Risk Duty Stations. These Administrative Instructions are designed to assist personnel throughout the different phases of their assignment to a High Risk Duty Station.

This is but one important change to the manner in which we care for personnel deployed to high risk duty stations and is one aspect of the transformation that the organisation is undergoing. I have spoken at length in previous Standing Committee meetings about the genesis and main elements of the change process which was initiated by the headquarters review in late 2016 and seeks to ensure

UNHCR: 1) adapts the way it works to engage the world in a more comprehensive and coherent manner, as envisioned by the New York Declaration; 2) engages with the broad spectrum of partners necessary to foster self-reliance and viable solutions for people of concern, and; 3) aligns itself with system-wide reforms in the United Nations and its development system to ensure maximum efficiency, transparency and accountability to affected populations.

Over the year, this change process has led to the creation of a Division for Resilience and Solutions, drawing in functions previously carried by a number of other Divisions and in-house entities and focussed on operationalising and mainstreaming the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, which fosters development partnerships, strategy, advocacy and resource mobilisation.

We reconfigured our Partnership Service to strengthen this service and create a single entry point for UNHCR's partners, working together with other entities in the new Division as well as the Private Sector Partnerships Service. A new Integrated Programme Service has been established within the Division of Programme Support and Management to strengthen UNHCR's programme management functions.

We have also used the 2019 Annual Programme Review to review headquarters Divisions supporting operations to strengthen internal coherence, streamline efforts towards greater field support and eventually rebalance accountabilities and authorities between Divisions and regional Bureaux. This process aimed to ensure UNHCR is optimally placed to take on its role as a catalyst for solutions, and to build sustainable relationships with all relevant actors, at the regional, sub-regional and country levels.

We have worked, since the High Commissioner's endorsement of an initial design prototype for regionalisation and decentralisation in June of this year, to refine further this model in view of its expected implementation within the organisation beginning in early 2019. This work is progressing quickly with the High Commissioner and his senior team meeting this week to map a course forward, keeping the impact of eventual changes on our personnel at the centre of our considerations, on which he will brief the Executive Committee in October.

This model, and its eventual roll out to the organisation, will present challenges, opportunities and risks, and constitute a key transformative shift which will allow UNHCR to become more accountable, effective, and efficient in the future. It will aim to create strong country operations, led by representatives empowered to take decisions and run operations effectively. It will also create strong regional entities to provide the management, oversight and support to representatives in the field. Finally, it will create a strong headquarters to drive the mandate, be the engine for strategy and policy, develop global standards, lead corporate initiatives and ensure institutional and global level risk and compliance monitoring, and independent oversight.

And as we proceed into a new phase of this review of the regionalisation and decentralisation architecture of the organisation, we are also ensuring that other work, such as the current revision of our Results-Based Management system supports this. As we seek to create strong country operations, our work on RBM is bringing greater focus on empowering field operations with the flexibility to build country-specific results chains and better manage to results at the local level.

Another major element of our change process in recent months has been the external review of the services, systems and processes of the Division of Human Resources which was discussed at the June Standing Committee. You have since received the executive summary of the report and a note outlining the review's key findings and changes expected in the Division of Human Resources in 2019 and beyond. Ms. Terry Morel, Director of DHR, who has expertly led this process, will provide you

more details on this and other aspects of the Division's ongoing work and I will limit myself to thanking Ms. Morel, who we are sad to say will soon leave the organisation for a well-earned retirement, for the outstanding work she has done to lead the transformation of the Division of Human Resources into a strategic partner to operations, one which provides the organisation with effective workforce management; an enabling work environment and culture, and; leaders equipped to meet the challenges we face. She will be sorely missed.

As previously noted, our reform process aims to align UNHCR with system-wide reforms within the United Nations and its development system. But beyond aligning ourselves with these reforms, we are actively engaged in shaping and driving these reforms. The High Commissioner has taken on the role of co-lead of the Business Innovations Group, driving, together with the World Food Programme, efforts to reform business operations throughout the UN Sustainable Development Group by integrating back offices, expanding common premises and operationalising mutual recognition of policies.

And as we drive change within the UN system, building on our deep-rooted field presence and experience and our need to ensure changes facilitate the delivery of protection and solutions to people of concern across the globe, we also aim to be a positive force for change within the humanitarian system as a whole. We have consequently taken on the role of member of the 2017/2018 Grand Bargain Facilitation Group, helping shape the follow-up to the 'Grand Bargain' reached during the World Humanitarian Summit and drive the reforms to which donors and agencies agreed as part of this. We have simultaneously worked to fulfil these commitments ourselves, and are making steady progress on this.

I will not detail this progress here, as this is outlined in the oral update provided as part of this Standing Committee meeting, but am pleased to confirm that, as I announced when we last met in June, we have successfully started publishing our data to IATI as of last week. Given the interest some of you have shown in this regard, Ms. Rossella Pagliuchi-Lor, Director of the Division of External Relations, will be providing you with a short walk-through of data published to highlight information which is now accessible for all to see.

Madam Chairperson,
Excellencies,

You know that our efforts to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct go back many years. You also know that we have devoted much time and energy this year to addressing recent concerns. This has remained, beyond the headlines, a priority area for the High Commissioner and the organisation as a whole and we are making good progress.

In March of this year the High Commissioner decided to bring greater structure to our engagement on this matter through the appointment of a Senior Coordinator to lead and coordinate this work and drive our ambitious workplan for accelerated action. Diane Goodman joins me today and has done an extraordinary job of coordinating our initiatives on both sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, drawing on existing resources in the organisation, including a working group and Senior Level Task Force which I chair.

Since then, we have published a short guide for managers on the prevention of, and response to, sexual harassment in the workplace; opened a confidential independent helpline which is available to all colleagues who wish to report misconduct or obtain advice; put in place a psychosocial case management system to support both victims and witnesses of sexual harassment, and; issued new administrative instructions on protection against retaliation which now cover our entire workforce,

and expand the scope of protected activities, and the range of corrective measures in cases of retaliation.

We have also launched an independent evaluative review of UNHCR's existing procedures and policies on sexual exploitation and abuse which is being carried out by a strong team with extensive expertise. All the while, we have worked to put in place senior intervention teams to engage proactively with colleagues in the field on these issues, open space for dialogue and address emerging issues and concerns. The first mission of such an intervention team is expected in the coming weeks.

Critically, we have made substantial efforts to increase our communication with personnel on these issues and impact the manner in which they are perceived, discussed and tackled within the organisation. To that effect, we have created a dedicated set of pages on both our internet and intranet sites offering a wide range of information and resources for the benefit of both external audiences and internally to guide colleagues, survivors and managers. We have also held two informal exchanges on sexual misconduct with the global workforce, most recently this past Monday.

Much of this work benefits from, and strengthens, efforts previously initiated to reinforce the diversity of our organisation's workforce and ensure that our personnel share, and operate in line with, a strong set of values. All hands are on deck to shape and influence our organisational culture and address entrenched power imbalances which so often are at the root of sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment.

This is an important issue which merits further discussion. As this was not formally included in the meeting's agenda when drafted some months ago, I have asked Diane Goodman to join me at the end of this meeting, under item 5 (other business). Please do not construe the inclusion of this issue under the AOB line to mean that it lacks importance to us. To the contrary, we are most keen to open-up and maintain a constructive and transparent discussion with you on this which we feel would not be well served by nestling this topic within other important agenda items.

We have made substantial progress, under the able stewardship of our new Chief Risk Officer, Ms. Hanne Raatikainen, in rolling out the Risk Management 2.0 initiative announced by the High Commissioner at the last Executive Committee meeting and reinforcing risk management throughout the organisation, aimed at strengthening the risk culture of UNHCR.

In addition to the senior deployment already in place in Kenya when the initiative was announced, we have fielded senior level temporary support to our operation in Uganda and Iraq in past months to kickstart work throughout those operations. The High Commissioner has now appointed Senior Risk Management and Compliance Advisors to key target operations, including Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Iraq; is deploying additional temporary capacity in a number of operations, and; has appointed two roving Senior Risk Management and Compliance Advisors who will work as part of the Enterprise Risk Management team in headquarters to provide support to small and medium-size operations. Capacity in the Regional Bureaux to deal with risk management and compliance issues is also being strengthened and we are increasing our investment in training personnel on risk management, strengthening our enterprise risk management tools and reporting, and ensuring that best practices are shared across the organisation.

This additional risk management capacity will help Representatives and management teams in the field to anticipate emerging risks and opportunities and be agile in detecting, acknowledging, and

responding to changes in the operating environment to ensure strategic planning and decision making is consistently informed by operational and management risks.

And while we improve our ability to identify and mitigate risks, we continue to work to reinforce oversight bodies following the review of oversight functions completed in late 2016 and subsequent reforms. I have spoken at length about these reforms in previous Standing Committee meetings so will limit myself to saying that these reforms are bearing fruit and we are seeing better integration of the internal audit function within UNHCR and an improved interface between UNHCR's management and oversight functions through strategic oversight meetings engaging the entire Senior Management Committee and replacing the Internal Compliance and Accountability Committee (ICAC) dissolved by the High Commissioner in mid-2017.

We continue to collaborate closely with the UN Board of Auditors and welcome their recommendations and guidance to improve UNHCR's control framework and the effectiveness of the organisation. As you will have noted, the Board concluded, following its examination of financial statements prepared for the year, that these fairly presented, in all material aspects, UNHCR's financial position and its financial performance and cash flows for the year.

UNHCR continues to address the weaknesses and areas for improvement identified by the BOA and, as of April of this year, had closed 60 per cent of the recommendations issued by the BOA for 2016 and previous years while remaining such recommendations were in the process of implementation, often requiring a phased approach through projects stretching over several months or, in some cases, years. The BOA further articulated recommendations in a number of important areas of our work, including as concerns our agency's work in support of Agenda 2030 and our work to date for the prevention of fraud and corruption.

Insights provided by the BOA are critical to ensuring we improve the organisation's control framework while improving the effectiveness of our delivery of protection and solutions for people of concern. It is our aim and hope, as we reconfigure substantial elements of the organisation and review the way in which we work that we will enhance the organisation's ability to follow-up on these recommendations, and become more light-footed in our response to these.

Madam Chairperson,
Excellencies,

The actions and initiatives I have just outlined are but some of the measures put in place in recent months as part of our prioritisation of investments in integrity across the institution. We have progressively adopted additional measures with regards to prevention, training, awareness-raising, effective investigation, survivor and whistle-blower protection, and robust action against perpetrators. These measures, rolled out across our various divisions and services, contribute in a coordinated manner to our organisation-wide objective of strengthening integrity, accountability and transparency across all aspects of our operations.

These initiatives come at a cost, albeit one which we expect will lead to reduced costs in the longer term as our preventative efforts aim to reduce the number of incidences of fraud, corruption, sexual abuse and exploitation, sexual harassment, and other forms of misconduct. We have therefore put out a funding proposal to donors to help support this investment in both 2018 and 2019, and ensure we work together to enhance integrity across the organisation. We welcome your support of our efforts.

We have, and continue to, bring much change to the manner in which UNHCR is structured and operates. This is, in part, a response to a changing world and an unprecedented displacement crisis but also aims to bring greater efficiency and effectiveness to the organisation and the manner in which it responds to the needs of displaced populations across the globe.

Those needs remain significant and are reflected in our 2018 budget which, from an initially approved US\$ 7.5 billion, now stands at US\$ 8.2 billion since the inclusion of 6 supplementary budgets to meet needs arising from the Central Mediterranean, DRC, Venezuela, Myanmar, Syria, and South Sudan situations and amounting to US\$ 712 million.

You have now received and reviewed our revised budget for the ongoing biennium which I am happy to say was positively received by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). This budget reflects comprehensive needs as assessed based on planning assumptions and the most likely scenarios regarding refugees and forced displacement worldwide.

As you know, our current Global Needs Assessment-based budgeting was first introduced in the 2010-2011 programme budget to allow us to fundraise for the comprehensive range of protection and assistance UNHCR is mandated to deliver. Unfortunately, we continue to face a significant funding gap which currently stands at close to half of our total budget. These factors jeopardise our ability to meet displaced populations' critical needs and continue to force us to make difficult choices. This affects not only the people we serve but also the countries and communities hosting them.

With needs remaining high, and our funding gap an unfortunately constant feature, we continue to seek diversity in our funding sources. You are familiar with the investment which the organisation has made in fundraising from the private sector in previous years, increasing income from just over US\$ 70 million in 2010 to US\$ 400 million in 2017. We remain committed to this approach and are on track to raising US\$ 445 million this year and, ultimately, to reaching our target of USD 1 billion in revenue from private sector sources by 2025.

The high levels of funding your governments and the private sector have provided us this year reflects the considerable confidence you have in UNHCR. We are most grateful for this and committed to ensuring that UNHCR is best suited to meet the needs of refugees and displaced populations, both today and in the future.

Thank you for your steadfast support.