



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/1065
30 June 2009

ENGLISH
Original: ENGLISH AND FRENCH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Sixtieth session
Geneva, 28 September - 2 October 2009
Item 5 of the provisional agenda
Reports on the work of the Standing Committee

Report of the forty-fourth meeting of the Standing Committee (3-5 March 2009)

Report by the Standing Committee

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Chairperson of the Executive Committee, Her Excellency Ambassador Laura Thompson Chacón (Costa Rica), opened the meeting, and welcomed Afghanistan, Chad, Latvia, Nepal, Panama and Uruguay as new observers. Bulgaria, Croatia, the Dominican Republic and Slovakia were also admitted as observers during the meeting. The Vice-Chairperson, Her Excellency Ambassador Caroline Millar (Australia), chaired the meeting during agenda items 5 (a) and (b).

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE FORTY-FOURTH MEETING AND OF THE 2009 WORK PROGRAMME

2. The agenda for the meeting (EC/60/SC/CRP.1/Rev.1)¹ was adopted. The Standing Committee's work programme for 2009 (EC/60/SC/CRP.2), as approved at the Planning Meeting held on 12 December 2008, was also adopted.

¹ For Standing Committee documentation (EC/xx/SC/CRP.xx) please see <http://www.unhcr.org/excom>.

3. The Deputy High Commissioner made a short intervention, commenting first on the situation of the Head of UNHCR's Quetta Sub-Office in Pakistan who had been abducted on 2 February, and assured the Committee that UNHCR was doing everything possible to secure his prompt and safe release. He then apologized for the late arrival of conference room paper EC/60/SC/CRP.6 on the subject of programme budgets and funding, explaining that with the closure of the accounts on 28 February, the Office could not have delivered a paper to delegations any earlier. Options for ensuring that this problem would not recur in future would be considered.

III. REGIONAL ACTIVITIES AND GLOBAL PROGRAMMES

4. The Assistant High Commissioner for Operations opened the agenda item with an introductory statement in which she highlighted four cross-cutting issues which had a significant impact on all of UNHCR's operations: staff security; emergency preparedness and response; United Nations reform; and regionalization and decentralization. In closing, she expressed her appreciation for the engagement of Committee members and other partners in support of the work of the Office.

A. Africa

5. The Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa expressed concern about the expansion of conflict-induced displacement in Africa, which posed serious challenges to UNHCR's response capacity, as well as the security conditions in some areas. The Director gave examples of the progress achieved in promoting durable solutions. She referred to the invocation of the cessation clause for refugees from Sierra Leone, and announced that the possible application of the same measure in respect of Liberians was being considered, based on an analysis of the situation in 2009.

6. Delegations commended UNHCR for its achievements in the area of durable solutions and encouraged the Office to pursue these efforts. Many delegations referred to voluntary repatriation as the preferred solution for most refugees, but also emphasized the need for resettlement as an option. One delegation called on UNHCR to proceed more expeditiously with the invocation of the cessation clause. While appreciating UNHCR's role in situations of internal displacement (IDP), delegations encouraged the Office to improve and consolidate inter-agency coordination mechanisms. Several delegations called for the establishment of new facilities to reduce pressure on the overcrowded camps in Dadaab in Kenya. Renewed efforts were required to bridge the gap between relief and development and to support peace consolidation initiatives in a number of situations. Some delegations highlighted the need to address the environmental consequences of displacement (in particular in refugee-hosting areas), while others were concerned about displacement as a consequence of climate change. UNHCR was also encouraged to indicate clearly the financial requirements related to reintegration activities in return areas.

7. The Director stressed the need for caution in invoking the cessation clause, underscoring the complexity of this process, which should include the establishment of adequate legal socio-economic frameworks. She acknowledged the importance of strengthening inter-agency

partnerships to address IDP situations. Moreover, the Director hoped that collaboration with development agencies could finally be formalized to enable a more coherent response to reintegration challenges. She reiterated the Office's commitment to increase resettlement targets and invited countries to expand opportunities accordingly.

B. Asia and the Pacific

8. The Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific highlighted several key challenges and priorities for UNHCR across the region. These included protection of asylum space, protracted situations (refugees and internally displaced persons), refugees and asylum-seekers in urban settings, increased engagement with IDPs and stateless populations, and shrinking humanitarian space.

9. The Committee as a whole expressed its shock over the recent security incident in Pakistan involving two UNHCR staff members. Delegations conveyed their deep sympathy to UNHCR and the family of the staff member who had been killed, and their hopes for the safe release of the Head of the Quetta Sub-Office who had been abducted and was still missing.

10. Delegations were appreciative of the Bureau's results-oriented approach. Considerable concern was expressed about the humanitarian situation in Sri Lanka, and several delegations urged full respect of international humanitarian law and access to safe areas for civilians trapped in the current hostilities. There were also calls to uphold respect for the principle of *non-refoulement* and to ensure access to protection for Muslim residents from Myanmar's northern Rakhine State (Rohingyas) who were seeking asylum in countries in the region. The need for burden and responsibility sharing, in particular an increase in the use of resettlement as a solution to a number of protracted situations, was underlined by several major refugee-hosting countries. Some delegations asked for a progress report on follow-up to the Kabul Conference on the Return and Reintegration of Afghan refugees which had been a welcome opportunity to consider issues of sustainability of returns and focus on the need for a multi-year framework. Concerns were expressed about the future of some Bhutanese refugees with special needs in Nepal who may not opt for resettlement as a durable solution.

11. In her responses, the Director commented that the Bali Process Ministerial meeting in April would afford the High Commissioner the opportunity to discuss the issue of the Rohingyas, with a view to seeking regional solutions. In the course of her interventions, the Director regretted that while UNHCR was endeavouring to respond to requests to expand its operations in a number of conflict-affected areas across the globe, access to affected populations was sometimes being restricted. Acknowledging the generosity of States hosting large refugee populations, the Director recalled that resettlement from some of the countries most affected could not be the only solution. She also referred to the enormous challenges of supporting return and reintegration and ensuring sustainability in environments such as Afghanistan, and the need to mainstream returnees' needs into national development plans, as underlined at the Kabul Conference. The Bureau's Deputy Director provided a brief update on UNHCR's involvement in inter-agency contingency planning in Afghanistan and efforts to develop a comprehensive solutions strategy. Increased financial support would be needed for operations in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and the Director hoped that donors would respond generously.

C. Europe

12. The Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe presented an overview of the challenges faced by UNHCR in the region. She referred in particular to mixed migration movements and related problems of access to territory, reception conditions and asylum procedures for people in need of international protection, as well as to the protracted refugee situations in Serbia and Georgia and the situation in the Northern Caucasus.

13. Several delegations called for greater efforts to find solutions for protracted situations in Europe, and to improve living conditions for asylum-seekers pending a durable solution. The setting up of the European Asylum Support Office was welcomed. Support was also expressed for the resettlement transit centre in Romania, and several delegates acknowledged the efforts being made under the European resettlement programme to provide 10,000 slots for Iraqi refugees. However, some regretted the “asylum lottery” in the European Union, and called for greater harmonization of recognition rates. There was a request to enable access by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to refugee arrival entry points, and to find an alternative to detaining asylum-seekers, as now stipulated in the Reception Directive (under which the maximum length of detention of asylum-seekers is 18 months).

14. In closing, the Director informed the Committee about donor missions that had been organized to mobilize more financial support for old caseloads. She concurred that the European resettlement programme was a good start, and agreed that recognition rates need to be aligned across the European Union. The Director confirmed that UNHCR was encouraging governments to include NGOs in border programmes for asylum-seekers.

D. The Americas

15. The Director of the Americas Bureau outlined current challenges and UNHCR’s strategic focus in the region. The Mexico Plan of Action continued to be the main framework for the Office’s work in Latin America, with particular focus being given to enhancing the international protection regime and to establishing safeguards to allow access to asylum procedures for those in need of international protection within mixed migration flows.

16. Delegations encouraged the Office to pursue the regional resettlement programme, as well as to reinforce opportunities for local integration. UNHCR’s support in helping States build national capacity for refugee status determination processing was welcomed, with several delegates pointing out the challenges of differentiating between forcibly displaced refugees and other people who were moving for economic reasons. Committee members asked for information on measures envisaged following recent conferences on unaccompanied minors and separated children (UAC/SC) and on migration issues in Latin America, and encouraged continued close collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in responding to the challenges of mixed migration. Some delegations underlined the need for the Office to continue to give priority to refugee needs before addressing IDP issues. There were several calls for stronger protection and assistance measures for Colombian refugees in neighbouring countries, and for greater collaboration between the Government, UNHCR and local agencies in Colombia in order to assist particularly vulnerable IDPs.

17. Thanking delegations for their expressions of support, the Director reiterated the importance of the humanitarian policy project being put in place for Colombian refugees in Ecuador and hoped that this would be supported financially and replicated in other countries. UNHCR was committed to maintaining its focus on the resettlement project in Latin American countries, provided resources were available. Strengthening UNHCR's responses to the asylum/migration challenges in the Caribbean would be further discussed at a conference in Costa Rica in November 2009. Measures were being taken to address the issue of unaccompanied minors, notably in Mexican border areas, in coordination with IOM and Government authorities.

E. The Middle East and North Africa

18. The Director of the Bureau for the Middle East and North Africa highlighted some of the challenges in North Africa, where a legal vacuum had created conditions for the arrest, detention and deportation of refugees and asylum-seekers. He also referred to some positive developments such as the progress in the voluntary repatriation to Mauritania. The Director briefed the Committee on the Iraq operation, underscoring the need to maintain asylum space for Iraqis despite improvements in Iraq. He commended the host countries for their generosity. The Director also noted the significant increase in new arrivals in Yemen and appealed for greater support to help cover the needs of this operation.

19. Several delegations commended the generosity demonstrated by neighbouring countries hosting Iraqi refugees, and were hopeful that conditions in Iraq would improve sufficiently to allow voluntary return. While welcoming UNHCR's efforts to find a solution for Palestinian refugees from Iraq, delegations remained concerned over the desperate situation of internally displaced Iraqis. There was broad appreciation for the efforts deployed by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) during the Gaza crisis, as well as for the support provided by UNHCR. However, some delegations expressed concern about the increase in *refoulement* in the region. One delegation enquired about the status of UNHCR's policy on urban refugees and called for a report analysing the extent to which statelessness had been reduced in the MENA region.

20. The Director reiterated UNHCR's commitment to improve the assistance to the refugees in the Tindouf camps, where levels of malnutrition and anaemia among women and children were among the highest in the world. He welcomed the European Union member States' initiative to establish a coherent plan of action for Iraq, and also expressed appreciation for the commitment of some countries to resettle Iraqis. Resettlement would remain a major component of the Iraqi operation and an estimated 60,000-65,000 Iraqi refugees were still in need of resettlement. The Director informed the Committee that an assessment of Iraqi refugees in urban areas had been launched and that this study would be part of the documentation of the 2009 meeting of the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges.

21. One delegation reiterated its request for a census and registration of the populations in the Tindouf camps, recalling that UNHCR and WFP had established their number at 90,000, and that the 35,000 additional rations had been added because of the floods. It considered it necessary to

undertake an evaluation of the real numbers through an actual census in the camps, which would enable an adequation of the assistance required.²

22. One delegation expressed concern about the precarious living conditions of the Sahrawi refugees in the Tindouf camps and the inadequacy of the food rations in relation to the number of refugees, in spite of the increase from 90,000 to 125,000 rations. The registration of these refugees is indissociable from the mandate of MINURSO and should not serve as a pretext for avoiding a humanitarian obligation.³

F. Global programmes and partnerships

23. The Director of the Division of Operational Services (DOS) updated the Committee on UNHCR's strategy on HIV/AIDS care, prevention and treatment programmes for people of concern; ways in which the Office was continuing to enhance its programme monitoring capacity; and various aspects of strategic partnerships, notably in relation to the cluster approach for responding to IDP situations and the UN Delivering as One initiative.

24. The Director of International Protection Services (DIPS) reviewed progress in rolling out the age, gender and diversity mainstreaming (AGDM) strategy and steps being taken by the Office to scale up efforts to protect people of concern who live with a disability. The AGDM accountability framework had been extended, and an evaluation of the impact of AGDM on persons of concern being carried out would be reported on later in the year.

25. Comments by delegations included a reminder of the importance of AGDM as a key protection strategy and a request for annual reporting on successes and challenges in this respect. One delegate regretted the slow progress in achieving gender equity in HIV strategies for refugees, particularly for women in Africa. Another delegation drew attention to the upcoming conference on climate change and migration in Copenhagen later in the year and the importance of close collaboration with partners, notably IOM. The choice of urban refugees as the focus of the 2009 High Commissioner's Dialogue was welcomed.

26. In their responses, both Directors reassured the Committee that priority was being given to addressing gaps in applying AGDM, including in collaboration with UNAIDS for HIV/AIDS programmes. The Director of DOS confirmed that UNHCR's strategic global priorities were being incorporated in the GNA through the *Focus* software tool. With regard to the urban refugee issue, the Director of DIPS announced that the new urban policy guidelines would be issued before the High Commissioner's Dialogue.

² The High Commissioner's Office has clarified that UNHCR has no way to determine the exact number of refugees presently staying in Tindouf, and that all quoted figures refer to the number of rations effectively distributed.

³ See footnote 1.

G. Supply Chain Management

27. The Director of DOS took the floor again to update the Committee on developments in Supply Chain Management (as per document EC/60/SC/CRP.5). He referred in particular to the outposting of the Supply Management Service (SMS) to Budapest and new strategies to put in place standardized, but flexible, processes based on recommendations emerging from an independent examination of UNHCR's supply functions by the Fritz Institute.

28. Delegations welcomed UNHCR's initiatives to strengthen its logistics and procurement management capacity and encouraged the Office to work closely in partnership with other organizations, in particular its partners in the emergency shelter cluster, as well as with the World Food Programme more generally. Some reservation was expressed in relation to UNHCR undertaking a global role as a major delivery agency and providing support in natural disaster situations, and the Office was urged to prioritize according to its mandate. Noting from the conference room paper, that the savings realized from the move to Budapest had already reinforced the capacity of SMS, one delegation requested an overall costed work plan and further updates on the impact of the savings on beneficiaries.

29. The Director thanked delegations for their encouragement and support. He reassured those who had expressed concerns that the objective was not to be the leader, but to lead moves to respond better to beneficiaries and that other agencies were calling on UNHCR to do more in this respect. The focus would be on improving methodology and human capacity, not increasing the number of staff. The Head of SMS confirmed that accountability mechanisms would be incorporated in *Focus* and that current investments in the revamping process were designed to lead to economies of scale as well as greater credibility and flexibility.

IV. PROGRAMME AND PROTECTION POLICY

A. Oral update on implementation of the policy framework and strategy in support of the return and reintegration of displaced populations

30. The Assistant High Commissioner for Operations briefed the Committee on the implementation of the policy framework since its issuance in September 2008. She observed that there had been progress in the form of more assertive engagement in early-recovery plans for areas to which refugees or IDPs had returned, and the inclusion of reintegration needs in development plans. Outstanding challenges included: fragile security in certain areas of return; housing, land and property rights; limited absorption capacity; and resource mobilization.

31. Delegations expressed support for UNHCR's efforts to support the return and reintegration of refugees and IDPs, underscoring that these should be complementary to national programmes. Several delegations stressed the need for a coordinated approach in return and reintegration activities. One delegation asked how this strategy would be implemented under the new budget structure, since the reintegration "pillar" would be funded on a project basis. One delegation warned UNHCR of the risk of creating "protracted reintegration situations" if benchmarks and an exit strategy were not put in place in time. One delegation reiterated that the

Office should have a catalytic role. Another alerted the Committee to the European Union's recently published guidelines on property rights.

32. The Assistant High Commissioner acknowledged the need for exit strategies and benchmarks. She explained that the new budget structure would ensure more transparency, and that funding of the reintegration pillar would depend on donors.

B. Oral update on implementation of the global workplan for IDP operations and progress on mainstreaming

33. The Assistant High Commissioner for Operations then briefed the Committee on the latest developments with regard to IDP operations, including an increase in the number of beneficiaries compared to a year earlier. She also referred to the scaling down of the IDP advisory team, with other Divisions progressively assuming the management of these responsibilities. She outlined the main challenges, which included: the operationalization of UNHCR's protection role; access to displaced populations and humanitarian space in increasingly volatile areas; protecting and finding durable solutions for displaced people in urban centres; and the challenges of displacement linked to climate change.

34. Delegations stressed the importance of the upcoming African Union summit where a groundbreaking draft Convention on the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa was expected to be adopted. Several delegations reiterated that the primary responsibility for the protection and assistance of internally displaced people lay with States. Delegations expressed support for UNHCR's engagement in IDP operations, particularly its assumption of coordination responsibilities through the cluster approach. They stressed the need to expand partnerships, particularly in challenging operations such as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia. UNHCR was encouraged to make greater use of country-level pooled funding mechanisms.

C. Oral update on the High Commissioner's 2008 Dialogue on protracted refugee situations

35. The Director of the Division of International Protection (DIPS) briefed the Committee on the second meeting of the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges that took place on 10 and 11 December 2008. The meeting had focused on protracted refugee situations.

36. Delegations reiterated their support for the work being undertaken by UNHCR to find durable solutions for refugees in protracted refugee situations, or to improve their living conditions. Some delegations referred to voluntary repatriation as the preferred durable solution; others pointed out that resettlement was only available to a small number of refugees. Several delegations underscored the need to support host communities, in particular in developing countries. Delegates also stressed the importance of addressing the root causes of protracted refugee situations.

37. The Director announced that a report on follow-up to the recommendations of the 2008 Dialogue would shortly be shared with the Permanent Missions. The report would provide

information on the work plan prepared by the Office; the activities being undertaken; and progress achieved in the five situations covered by the High Commissioner's Special Initiative on protracted refugee situations. The Dialogue would focus on protection challenges for persons of concern in urban settings, and was scheduled to take place on 9 and 10 December 2009.

V. MANAGEMENT, FINANCIAL CONTROL, ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES

38. At the start of his introductory statement to agenda item V, the Deputy High Commissioner noted with appreciation delegations' expressions of concern and sense of shared responsibility for the safety and security of staff sent to work in operations endorsed by the Executive Committee. Making reference to his recent missions to Kenya, Colombia and Ecuador, the Deputy High Commissioner reminded the Committee of the additional burdens for countries hosting refugees, and thanked the States concerned for their respective collaboration.

39. On the issue of reform, he spoke of the progress achieved with outposting, restructuring and results-based management, notably the ongoing development of the *Focus* system tool and the establishment of the Global Needs Assessment process. The latter would be the subject of further reporting to the Standing Committee in the course of the year, and UNHCR was on track to accomplish the majority of these initiatives by June 2009. Human resources (HR) reform was still being put in place, with the aim of establishing a world class HR operation at UNHCR by the end of the year. The Deputy High Commissioner also made reference to new criteria being considered with regard to the make-up of the Oversight Committee and welcomed Executive Committee members' observations on this issue.

A. Update on UNHCRs structural and management change process

40. The Director of the Office for Organizational Development and Management introduced document EC/60/SC/CRP.3, and further updated the Committee on the latest developments related to the different strands of the reform process. He highlighted progress and next steps in the areas of results-based management, the roll-out of the *Focus* software and the Global Needs Assessment (GNA) methodology; follow-up to the Field Review; HR reform and the Headquarters Review; as well as commenting on decentralization and regionalization.

41. Many delegations commended UNHCR on the reform efforts to date, but several expressed disappointment that more detailed information on savings and other benefits achieved had not been presented to the Committee to date. Concern was voiced that regular programme activities might be disrupted by implementation of such an ambitious reform agenda. There were several queries about the anticipated restructuring of the Divisions of International Protection and Operational Services (DIPS/DOS).

42. Some delegations recommended that UNHCR ensure complementarity of the GNA with other organizations' assessment methodology, such as the "ACE" tool being developed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; others requested that host countries and beneficiaries be included in the needs assessment process. One delegation pointed out that identifying total needs did not mean that funding would be commensurate, and that the budget

would still have to be based on a realistic expectation of funding availability. More information was requested on how the GNA would function, notably the incorporation of cross-cutting issues such as AGDM and HIV/AIDS, and prioritization strategies, if needs increased and budgets decreased. References made to the new budget structure included comments that flexibility should not be reduced and concern that firewalling of certain parts of the budget could lead to greater earmarking of funds.

43. Responding to the requests for more details on savings accrued due to the various reform efforts, the Director stated that as presented in Annex II of CRP.3, the Office was on track to achieve its objective of savings of \$10 million per year from 2010. Further information would be made available as soon as the reform process reached an appropriate stage for conducting a cost-benefit analysis. On the DIPS/DOS restructuring proposals, he commented that one outcome of discussions to date had been the decision to establish the Supply Management Service as a division in its own right, with the overall aim of ensuring stronger links and a coherent strategy between Headquarters and the Field.

44. The Director explained that, while ongoing reform initiatives affecting budgetary and operational planning were complex, they needed to be rolled out simultaneously. He assured the Committee that, after a challenging transitional phase, *Focus* would standardize much of UNHCR's assessment, planning and budgetary work, leading eventually to a smoother process. He also confirmed that the GNA process was based on participatory assessment involving persons of concern, host countries and partners. The Results Framework fully integrated cross-cutting as well as regional issues, and UNHCR was consulting closely with OCHA and partner agencies with regard to *Focus*. An informal consultative meeting was scheduled for April at which delegations would receive more information on prioritization in the GNA.

B. Follow-up to the recommendations of the Board of Auditors
on the accounts for 2007 and previous years

45. The Controller presented document EC/60/SC/CRP.4 on follow-up measures taken by the Office in respect of recommendations by the Board of Auditors concerning previous years' audit reports. The accounts for 2005 had been closed and implementation of five recommendations from the 2006 accounts remained outstanding. The Controller then updated the Committee on action taken and progress achieved in respect of the four main risk areas identified in the audit of the Office's 2007 accounts: implementing partner audit certification; asset management; staff in between assignments; and end-of-service and post-retirement benefits and liabilities.

46. Two delegations emphasized the need to ensure a fully independent oversight committee. Another delegate expressed concern that UNHCR faced serious risks in continuing to apply the "pay-as-you-go" principle to the coverage of end-of-service and post-retirement liabilities. Acknowledging shared concerns on the latter point, the Controller reiterated that UNHCR was working on a proposal for a funding mechanism similar to those being used by other United Nations agencies, which would be presented to the Committee in June 2009.

47. In response to a comment about the need to ensure the appointment of appropriately qualified and trained staff while endeavouring to reduce the number of staff in between

assignments (SIBAs), the Deputy High Commissioner updated the Committee on the current position with regard to the number of SIBAs. He explained the main constraints, notably the lack of flexibility of the United Nations system, which had played a significant role in perpetuating the SIBA situation, and assured the Committee that the new human resources policies and reform measures being introduced would cure the systemic inflexibility and help resolve many of the outstanding SIBA cases.

C. Oral update on the work of the Inspector General's Office

48. The Inspector General briefed the committee on the work of his office in 2008 and early 2009, and announced that the High Commissioner had decided to establish a working group to ensure a coordinated approach to following up on the recommendations of the independent review of the Inspector General's Office by the European Commission Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the Management Audit by the United Nations Board of Auditors.

49. Delegations expressed appreciation that ExCom members had been given access to the two reports on ad hoc enquiries carried out in 2008, and asked that the Management Audit report also be made available. Other requests for clarification included details on the timeline for implementing the OLAF and Board of Auditors' report recommendations, and how UNHCR planned to avoid potential overlap between the different oversight functions within the organization.

VI. PROGRAMME BUDGETS AND FUNDING

50. With regard to the late receipt of document EC/60/SC/CRP.6, the Chairperson undertook to pursue discussions with senior management and member States on how to overcome the problem of late documentation for Standing Committee meetings. It was agreed that delegations could address any outstanding queries on the contents of the document to UNHCR after the meeting. The Deputy High Commissioner made a personal commitment to ensuring that the documents on the 2010-2011 budget would be made available well in advance of the September Standing Committee.

51. Commenting on the document, the Deputy High Commissioner stressed that 2008 had been a good year in financial terms, despite considerable currency exchange rate fluctuations. Exchange rate instability was continuing in 2009, posing financial management challenges for the Office. He expressed appreciation that, despite the global financial crisis, many donors had agreed to maintain their contribution levels in 2009. However, he cautioned that the crisis could have a significant negative impact in 2010.

52. The Controller then commented on CRP.6, underlining that the financial situation reported in the document had been based on the latest estimates prior to closure of the 2008 accounts. Thus all income and expenditure figures were provisional. The Director a.i. of the Division of External Relations thanked donor and host governments for their ongoing support. He briefed the Committee on UNHCR's funding situation, highlighting the importance of maintaining the level of 2008 contributions in real terms in 2009.

53. Delegations urged donors to keep supporting the work of UNHCR. One delegation expressed concern that the financial crisis could have a negative impact on the funding situation of the Office. Another asked that donors be alerted in a timely manner to new or revised Supplementary Programmes, pointing out that some of the 2009 Supplementary Programmes were not new, and expressing the hope that this would be remedied under the new budget structure.

54. The draft Decision on Programme Budgets and Funding in 2009 (see Annex I) was adopted.

VII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

55. There being no further business, the Chairperson closed the meeting.

Annex I

DECISION ON PROGRAMME BUDGETS AND FUNDING IN 2009

The Standing Committee,

Recalling the Executive Committee's decision at its fifty-ninth session on administrative, financial and programme matters (A/AC.96/1063, para. 16) as well as its discussions under the programme budgets and funding item at the forty-third meeting of the Standing Committee,

Reaffirming, the importance of international burden and responsibility sharing in reducing the burden of host countries, especially developing ones,

1. *Notes* that UNHCR's overall needs under its Annual Programme for 2009, based on currently known requirements, amount to \$1,275.5 million, as approved by the Executive Committee at its fifty-ninth session;
2. *Notes* that 2009 Supplementary Programme Budgets currently amount to \$725.3 million, including \$117.0 million for programmes benefiting internally displaced persons;
3. *Recognizes* that emergencies and unforeseen activities unfolding during 2009 may result in the need for additional or expanded Supplementary Programmes and that additional resources, over and above those for existing budgets, would be required to meet such needs; and
4. *Urges* Member States, in light of the extensive needs to be addressed by the Office of the High Commissioner, to respond generously, in a spirit of solidarity, and in a timely manner, to his appeal for resources to meet in full the approved 2009 Annual Programme Budget, as well as the requirements of the 2009 Supplementary Programme Budgets.

Annex II

FOLLOW-UP ACTION

As requested by members, points noted for follow-up action in respect of topics being considered under the work programme of the Standing Committee during the 59th session of the Executive Committee, will be posted on the Standing Committee password-protected page of the website (access via www.unhcr.org/excom). A matrix reflecting the action requested and measures taken will be updated regularly, and the Chairperson will report to the Standing Committee on the status of follow-up at the subsequent Standing Committee meeting.

1. Request for information on availability of Urban Refugee Policy.
2. Request for report on the impact on beneficiaries of the reorganization of the Americas Bureau.
3. Several renewed requests for a report on cost savings from reform measures and resulting increase in support to beneficiaries to be provided at June Standing Committee.
4. Call for more information on effects of decentralization in Africa region.
5. Request for ongoing information on the *Focus* results-based reporting tool.
6. Request for overall costed work plan and analysis of savings and impact on beneficiaries resulting from the reconfiguration and outposting of the Supply Management Service.
7. Discussions to be held between the ExCom Bureau and UNHCR senior management on how to avoid late delivery of documentation for Standing Committee meetings.

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