

## Notes for Standing Committee Briefing- Progress Report on Resettlement

I would like to join the DIP Director in thanking hosting and receiving countries for finding solutions for refugees- including through resettlement.

### 1. Introduction

- The Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement chaired this year by Denmark have just had their 20th anniversary. During these 20 years 1.3 M refugees were able to start a new life. The dividends went much beyond the resettled refugees themselves considering that many, thanks to this opportunity, contributed to sustain their families in countries of origin and asylum and contributed to the economies of their new countries.
- During the last two years **over** 140,000 refugees have been resettled.
- I am pleased to report an increase in both departures and submission over the reporting period.
  - a) in 2013 **-16 % increase in departures over the reporting period-** 71,411 resettled refugees in 2013 compared to 61,649 in 2011  
*Contributing factors: efforts by RST states to streamline security requirements, redirection of submissions- Syria, use of VCT and Emergency Transit facilities*
  - b) **-25% increase in submissions from 2012-** 93,226 submissions – ( 75,080 ) **94% acceptance rate overall**; number of Women at Risk at 12% in 2013 - exceeding the 10% target set by ExCom Conclusion No 105 (LVII)(2006) in both 2013 and 2012).  
*Contributing factors: increased submissions from priority situations, simplify procedure, group RST from Rwanda and increased deployment of RST expert.*
  - c) UNHCR redoubled its engagement to work with RST countries to address processing challenges and intends to do even more as agreed last week at ATCR
- Despite these positive trends, there is still a huge gap. More than **950,000 refugees need resettlement while only 80,000 regular places are available-** plus the 30,000 places for Syrians.
- UNHCR :
  - continues to advocate for the expansion of a RST programme which is responsive first and foremost to humanitarian and protection imperatives - there is a decline of interest in resettling certain populations - despite the huge needs among these groups;
  - encourages countries which provide RST on ad hoc basis to consider becoming more predictable;
  - encourages States to offer more places for emergency and medical cases, and to consider accepting more cases on a dossier basis;
  - encourages European countries to maximize the opportunity offered by the Joint EU RST program.

### 2. Resettlement capacity is gradually growing

- The resettlement family now totals 27 resettlement States. We welcome Belgium, the return of Switzerland and the Japanese shift from pilot to regular programme.
- Germany, Hungary, and Spain received the first arrivals under their formal programmes

- I would like to acknowledge the very encouraging response by 22 countries to the HC call for RST and other forms of admission for Syrian refugees during the Syria High Level segment last year (22 states have made pledges for Syrian admissions and the initial goal set at 30,000 by end of 2014 has been met and exceeded). *We now call on States to make a pledge towards the goal of providing protection to 100,000 Syrians in 2015-2016.*
- In this respect UNHCR wishes to acknowledge the leadership of Germany in facilitating other forms of admission through the establishment of an humanitarian admission programme. This programme simplifies processing, which allows quicker departures.
- We congratulate other European states that have followed this example. UNHCR strongly encourages ALL states to be flexible in providing other forms of admission to the Syrian refugees most in need particularly those generously hosted in Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. In this process UNHCR is working with States to ensure the quality of asylum, and a solutions vision.

### 3. Resettlement within emergency responses

- The Syria situation reminds us that resettlement plays an increasingly important protection role during emergencies.
- In this respect I would like to thank those RST countries who offered emergency RST quota under the Solidarity initiative scheme which resulted in the resettlement of non-Libyan refugees stranded in Shousha and Salloum camps.
- Departures of non-Syrian refugees out of Syria are facilitated through non-traditional approaches, including video conferencing, emergency evacuations to the Emergency Transit Facilities (ETFs) and the establishment of the 'land bridge' to Beirut international airport.
- The number of refugees sent through the ETF have increased (*Timisoara and Humenne from 230 in 2011 to 418 in 2013 - over 2,200 refugees have brought to safety at an ETF*) however challenges of long processing times and refusals of preliminary-approved cases remain to be solved.

### 4. Partnership is central to our work

- Of course our key partners are **host countries** who offer protection to the vast number of refugees.
- Partnerships with Resettlement countries, Non Governmental Organizations, and the IOM are illustrated by the robust Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement that concluded last week.
- During this consultation we reaffirmed that we can do better in linking RST to other protection interventions and connecting RST to broader host-countries goals and long-term solutions strategies. The concept of strategic use of RST has generated much debate, while it has produced some protection dividends in certain situation it has not yet supported solutions objectives. It is therefore important to engage with host countries to understand their interests and when there is a convergence it is important to agree on a coordinated response which can align efforts by all concerned countries.
- In this context contact and core groups continue to provide for operational coordination and for more strategic and longer-term collaboration (Syrian and Congolese groups are

examples in this respect ) and more needs to be done to revisit the other existing groups for priority situations.

- Just as the Core Groups are bringing a broader view to resettlement planning, so can collaboration between the Resettlement Working Group structure and the members of the Solutions Alliance encourage closer ties to comprehensive strategies and planning.
- **Collaboration with NGOs is critical.**
- It includes advocacy: identification of cases; community outreach; information sharing; and reception and integration. We are working closer with some on expert matters – including on Best Interests of the Child Determinations.
- Deployments through ICMC and RefugeePoint continue to be the mainstay of processing capacity in the field. (50% of our field capacity is generated by the deployment schemes generously supported by the US, Norway and Canada and in 2013 by Australia as well).
- We take this opportunity to thank these countries for their invaluable support and encourage more countries to support these schemes.

#### **5. Integrity is core to UNHCR processing**

- Given the growing numbers of refugees, UNHCR is increasingly reliant on quality registration and on field-based casework to support our holistic approach to protection. We are working to improve the quality of refugee interventions, especially in child protection, SGBV, and community development, and resettlement is an essential tool in this holistic process.
- Looking forward, the enhancement of UNHCR's proGres database and the global rollout of Biometrics will not only improve protection outcomes but will also strengthen fraud prevention systems.
- The RST service supports training and policy development within UNHCR to ensure compliance with Anti-Fraud guidance through all stage of refugee processing. UNHCR continues to strive towards strengthening oversight, raising awareness, and to increasing capacity to analyze trends and investigate fraud.

#### **6. Integration is a key element of the resettlement cycle.**

- Ensuring that refugees are able to integrate into their communities is essential to effective resettlement. UNHCR continues to support new and emerging States to prepare the groundwork to receive resettled refugees, and facilitates the sharing of best practices between all resettlement partners.
- We are also considering how these lessons can be useful in the re-examination of how we undertake refugee protection in countries of first asylum.

#### **7. In summary**

- Resettlement is a key element of a comprehensive approach – from emergencies to solutions
- We rely on you to support us as we continue to improve the integrity of the system and the quality of individual protection case management.

- Partnership is central to forging alliances among humanitarian and development actors, host and support states. Together we can do more to advance the protection situation and solutions opportunities for refugees.

July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 Renata Dubini