



HIGH COMMISSIONER'S GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON SOMALI REFUGEES (GISR)



Tiger nest films



REPORT ON THE MINISTERIAL MEETING

ADDIS ABABA
20 AUGUST 2014

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Cover photos

Living in protracted exile:

Top photo: KH fled Somalia in 1991 and has lived ever since in a refugee camp.

Bottom photo: KH's daughter SB was born in the same refugee camp 21 years ago.

Without ever setting foot outside the camp, SB has grown into adulthood, married, and now become a mother to DB – a third generation Somali refugee.

Report on the Ministerial meeting

UNECA conference centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 20 August 2014

1. Within the framework of the Global Initiative on Somali Refugees (GISR), and following a two-day technical meeting on 18 and 19 August 2014 of delegates from Somalia, the five main asylum countries in the near region (Kenya, Ethiopia, Yemen, Uganda and Djibouti), UNHCR, the African Union (AU), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a ministerial meeting took place in Addis Ababa on 20 August 2014. The meeting was co-chaired by Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs H.E. Dr. Tedros Adhenom Ghebreyesus and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Mr António Guterres. Also attending were Ministers and senior officials from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda and Yemen, along with Senior Officials from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), the African Union (AU), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). A complete list of delegates is contained in Annex 2.
2. The main objectives of the meeting were to:
 - a. articulate a renewed commitment to Somali refugees
 - b. agree on a common ground in the search for solutions for them, and
 - c. take forward the process of galvanising the international community towards these objectives.
3. In his opening statement, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia Dr. Tedros Adhenom Ghebreyesus, noted that the proposed Addis Ababa Commitment had been drafted by senior officials from the six concerned States along with UNHCR, AU, and IGAD at the two-day technical meeting immediately preceding the ministerial meeting. He said this Commitment reflected long lasting solutions and expressed hope to see increased commitment from the donor community to make a real difference on the ground. He cautioned against involuntary returns and highlighted the fact that durable solutions for Somali refugees will vary according to their needs and conditions. He also stressed the need for a cautious approach inside Somalia, saying it is important to assess the situation on the ground and support accordingly. He underlined Ethiopia's support to a pilot project approach of supporting voluntary and spontaneous refugee returns. Referring to the situation in Ethiopia, he emphasised Ethiopia's efforts in providing education and scholarship for refugees, and the need to invest in vocational training and micro-finance and in their socio-economic interaction with host communities.
4. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. António Guterres, expressed his appreciation to asylum countries, the AU, IGAD and the UN, and noted that the high number of delegates present was an indication of their interest in the issue of Somali refugees. He further praised ongoing peace and state-building efforts in Somalia. He noted with concern that media focus was steadily moving away from Africa in general and from Somalia in particular. He called for a solution strategy for Somali refugees and for stronger support to host countries given the pivotal role that they play.

He noted that while repatriation was a priority, large-scale voluntary repatriation was not possible at this moment and therefore there was a continuing need for host governments to provide asylum to Somali refugees.

He highlighted the New Deal for Somalia as a practical effort in bringing peace and stability to Somalia, and commended the efforts of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in this regard.

He expressed his hope for improved asylum conditions wherever possible, including better welfare for refugees and host communities through more self-reliance, mobility, and inter-community cooperation, in addition to increased international solidarity in terms of resettlement opportunities.

5. After expressing his appreciation for UNHCR's efforts and contributions, the Prime Minister of Somalia, H.E. Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed thanked neighbouring countries for hosting Somali refugees. He also thanked the UN, IGAD, the AU and AMISOM for their efforts and work to remove obstacles to enable voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees. He highlighted his Government's commitment to building good governance, ensuring economic viability, and creating the necessary infrastructure for a well-functioning state. He recognised the importance of the 2013 Tripartite Agreement between his Government, the Government of Kenya, and UNHCR, governing the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugee living in Kenya. He looked forward to the start of the pilot spontaneous repatriation project and called for other States to follow suit when the time was right. However, the Prime Minister also noted that the Somali refugee and IDP programmes remain chronically under-funded and called for increased assistance from the international community in addressing a significant and urgent need.
6. The African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Dr. Aisha Abdullahi, emphasized the continuously important role played by the AU in relation to Somalia. She noted that challenges included general insecurity and particularly food insecurity, thus referring to the AU and IGAD early warning calls in that respect. While recognising the contributions and sacrifices of member States, she also called UNHCR to more vigorously seek requisite support. Referring to the 2014 African Union High Level Roundtable dialogue on Durable Solutions for refugees in Nairobi, she reiterated that the forum had made important recommendations, inter alia, with regards to (a) the need for resourcing durable solutions such as bonds, remittances, small funds; (b) creative and innovative practices for durable solutions which should be evidence-based and experiential in approach; (c) international community support to explore alternative policy interventions which may also lead to possible sustainable local integration of IDPs and refugees unable or unwilling to return to their places of origin, (d) conditions for return, including peace and stabilisation efforts and emphasising a concerted focus on capacity-building and support for local accountable administration, state institutions, and planning processes in areas of return.
7. The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development Special Envoy to Somalia, Ambassador Mohamed Affey, said that the ministerial meeting was a positive step building on the recommendations of the High Level Panel of 2013 which was organized under the GISR, at which he was present. He noted that almost all IGAD Member States are hosting significant number of refugees. He congratulated the Somali Government on its efforts to provide better conditions for returns. He re-emphasized the messages of the High Level Panel, including the need to make the Somali refugee experience meaningful through enhancing welfare and reducing suffering, creating conditions for sustainable repatriation of Somali refugees, and partnering with a broad range of stakeholders especially the 'non-traditional' partners including the Somali diaspora and the private sector. He encouraged the international community to engage with the GISR towards achieving these ideals.
8. The United Nations Secretary General's Special Representative for Somalia, Mr. Nicholas Kay, congratulated UNHCR and its Representative in Somalia for their unflinching efforts and underlined the importance of the integrated UN mission's mandate to assist the FGS in peace and state building as well as linking these processes to the creation of conditions that would allow refugee returns. Noting the tremendous progress over the last two years, he also paid tribute to AU, AMISOM for their work to bring stability at an enormous cost and to IGAD for working towards achieving greater cohesion. He pointed out that solutions for IDPs and refugees were inextricably linked to lasting peace and state building in Somalia and called the

international community to play a greater role by increasing resettlement possibilities and supporting refugees and host communities in the asylum countries. In his closing remarks, the SRSR emphasized that the Addis Ababa Commitment came at a critical time of political reforms and other developments, such as the military offensive, in Somalia.

9. These statements concluded the opening session. The following session consisted of country statements by the heads of delegation of each of the six core countries of the Global Initiative on Somali Refugees.
10. The Somalia Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Abdirahman Duale Beyle, extended his deep appreciation to host countries for shouldering such a heavy burden in hosting refugees from his country and commended the Somali National Army and AMISOM for their exceptional efforts in ensuring that peace, stability and growth prevails in Somalia. He highlighted the support that the international community has provided in rebuilding a collapsed State and their efforts in addressing the plight of Somali refugees and IDPs. He commended the dedication and commitment of the international organizations working in Somalia including UNHCR, particularly UNHCR staff in Somalia. He acknowledged the resilience of the Somalis including refugees and IDPs, most of whom have languished in camps for many years. Most importantly, he highlighted the fact that the Somali Government was willing and ready to receive returning Somali refugees. A national agency for refugees and IDPs has been established, the Tripartite Agreement with UNHCR and the Government of Kenya has been signed, and a pilot project to support spontaneous returns is nearing implementation. He also emphasized the need to ensure that refugee rights were protected and that refugees return home safely, when conditions would be ready. He warned however that, without regional and international solidarity, the Somali Government's ability to create lasting change was limited. In closing, he gratefully mentioned that the proposed Addis Ababa New Commitment puts equal emphasis on the pivotal roles of humanitarian and development aid as well as institutional capacity building as essential pillars to the overall stability in Somalia and for the return of Somali refugees.
11. The Minister of Interior of Djibouti, Mr. Hassan Omar Mohamed Bourhan, highlighted the peace and stability in Djibouti, within a region that is fraught with conflicts and instability. He acknowledged the central role of President Ismael Omar Guelleh in this. He highlighted Djibouti's long tradition of hosting refugees which dates to the time of its independence, and noted the country's on-going efforts to host refugees notwithstanding its own socio-economic challenges. He emphasized efforts made by the Government of Djibouti to find solutions for refugees, including repatriation and resettlement. The country's strategy for refugees is currently being developed with UNCHR, and refugee empowerment would be a central feature. He noted that refugee empowerment presents the way to other possible solutions especially if non-traditional actors could be enjoined in the endeavour. The Minister stressed the country's need for international assistance, without which the desired solutions and strategies could not be brought to fruition. The Minister congratulated all efforts for peace and called for the international community's further engagement against terrorist groups and in support of suffering Somalis.
12. The Chairman of the Refugee Affairs Committee of the Government of Kenya, Mr. Ali Bunow Korane, advised that the 2006 Refugee Act was being reviewed to conform to the 2010 Constitution. He emphasized that Somali refugees constituted 'a huge pool of human resources' for the rebuilding of Somalia and that Kenya was promoting various ways in which to enhance the skills of this group. This includes education and vocational training. Regarding durable solutions, he said Kenya is supporting resettlement of refugees to third countries, as well as supporting a gradual move towards repatriation by establishing Help Desks managed by DRA and UNHCR in Dadaab camp as well as information visits for those wanting to repatriate. He said that local integration in Kenya is considered on a case by case basis as per the law. He listed

the major challenges as a) threat of terrorism, b) environmental degradation and c) declining budgetary support from donors for protection of refugees. He called for support on the development of social infrastructure in the pilot areas in order to sustain returns. He stressed the need to strengthen civil security institutions in Somalia like the police and correctional services and offered Kenya's support further capacity-building initiatives to Somalia. He welcomed the proposed Addis Ababa Commitment.

13. The Minister of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees of Uganda, Eng. Hilary Onek, noted the slow pace of the stabilisation process in Somalia while also reminding Uganda's pivotal role as the first AU Member State to deploy AMISOM troops on the ground. He highlighted successes made by the Somali national forces and AMISOM, *inter-alia*, in addressing threats of piracy, securing key government building, and in facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance. He noted the need to do more to consolidate gains in the recently liberated areas and referred to the political disharmony arising from challenges such as clan interests, lack of effective administrative structures and effective coordination mechanisms, lack of predictable funding by the international community, poor infrastructure, the slow pace of social services delivery and hindrance of access to humanitarian activities in areas under opposition groups. He gave several examples of strategies that the Government of Uganda is deploying towards continued protection of Somali refugees. These include REHOPE which promotes self-reliance and resilience for refugees and host communities through multi-sectoral partnerships, a specific programme for urban youth in Kampala, schemes to promote participation in small business ventures, mechanisms to secure land and protect the environment to allow smooth running of livelihood programmes, a Security Enhancement Package which aims to improve on civilian policing in refugee settlements and the introduction of mobile courts to improve access to justice.

He called for resettlement opportunities to be expanded, and for the consideration of alternative legal means of stay as a way to end living in refugee status such as regularisation, visas, residence permits, dual citizenships, and naturalization. He called on the international community to mobilize resources to build the capacity of the Somali Federal Government to facilitate successful repatriation.

14. The Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Yemen, Mr. Ameer Salem Ali Al-Aidroos, reiterated Yemen's open door policy towards refugees, and highlighted the care, attention and special treatment accorded to Somali refugees in Yemen which is carried in the spirit of brotherhood, good neighbourliness and humanity. He highlighted his support to the Global Initiative on Somali Refugees and noted the important role that should be played by all stakeholders, including Somalia, the international community and UN organizations for the full realisation of the goals of the initiative. He said that one of Yemen's main challenges was "clandestine migration". This phenomenon was, in his view, increasingly putting pressure on Yemen's asylum policy. The Minister pointed out the lack of support commensurate to the increasingly significant numbers of arrivals to Yemen and asked for increased assistance from international organizations and donors.
15. In his remarks, the Deputy Special Representative, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Somalia, Mr. Philippe Lazzarini, welcomed the Addis Ababa Commitment as an important additional contribution to peace and state building in Somalia. He acknowledged the participating States' exemplary commitment demonstrated by sharing responsibility for so many refugees. The DSRSG/HC/RC moreover emphasised that if returns were to take place, they should be made in a dignified, voluntary and lasting manner. In his view, large-scale returns could at this point jeopardise Somalia's fragile rebirth. Nonetheless, he pointed to the 'historic momentum' created by current processes driving for such a rebirth and said that they created enough space for the welcomed pilot project for assisted spontaneous returns to Luuq,

Baidoa and Kismayo. He pointed out that failure to address current challenges would undermine peace building efforts in the country. He concluded by emphasizing the need to start working on longer term solutions for Somali IDPs in the country and break the cycle of chronic under-funding in order to start to focus on resilience. He said that capacity at present only allowed actors to concentrate in the most urgent needs. He also called for alignment of various initiatives to the existing coordination architecture and stated that the meeting in Copenhagen in November 2014 would be an opportunity to gauge the international community's commitment for durable solutions.

16. The delegates' common messages included an acknowledgement of the need to maintain an open door policy for Somali asylum-seekers and continue to offer protection to Somali refugees for as long as needed, while respecting the principle of voluntary return, and also an acknowledgement of the challenges that asylum countries, Somalia, regional organizations and the UN presently face. These challenges relate particularly to security, fragility of gains on the ground, institutional gaps, environmental degradation, prospects of another drought and importantly, inadequacy of financial support for Somali refugee and IDP programmes. Speakers emphasised that while conditions for large-scale repatriation do not currently exist, all opportunities should be explored. They undertook to increase regional collaboration and called for more engagement from the international community to support in the creation of a conducive environment for sustainable returns and reintegration. They emphasised that working together for solutions for Somali refugees and IDPs amounted to working together for peace and security not only in Somalia but also from a regional and global perspective.
17. Mr. Negash Kebret, Director General of the International Organisations Directorate General, Ethiopia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presented the *Addis Ababa Commitment towards Somali Refugees*. He said the proposed commitments represent a strong affirmation of what is being done already and important new ideas which would truly make a crucial, transformative difference for Somali refugees who are today trapped in a limbo. Once adopted by this Meeting, the Governments and partners represented here would be committing themselves to move forward in the search for durable solutions for Somali refugees in the sub-region in those terms. On behalf of the experts who participated in the preceding technical meeting, he invited the Meeting to endorse and adopt the commitments. The Addis Ababa Commitment towards Somali refugees was adopted unanimously.
18. In his closing remarks, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees emphasised that the Commitment was not just an ordinary document – it was rather a 'contract'. He underlined that Somalia needed such a strong and unambiguous commitment for its reconstruction and that the project in the three pilot areas in south/central was a genuine opportunity. While acknowledging the support provided all these years, he called for a stronger commitment by the international community for refugees and host countries in the region, especially in light of dramatic funding needs in all dimensions. He announced the convening of a High Level Segment addressing the problems of refugees in Africa during the UNHCR Executive Committee meeting in September-October 2014. He also announced that UNHCR would organize an international event on solutions for Somali refugees in the coming months. Both these would further promote the Addis Ababa Commitment, and help further galvanise the momentum to end the protracted situation of Somali refugees.

Annex 1: GISR Ministerial meeting agenda*ECA conference centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia***WEDNESDAY 20 August 2014**

11:00-11:45	I Opening session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcome by Minister for Foreign Affairs, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia H.E. Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus ▪ Introductory statement by UN High Commissioner for Refugees Mr. António Guterres • Statement by H.E. Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed, Prime Minister, Federal Republic of Somalia ▪ Statement by African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs H.E. Aisha Abdullahi ▪ Statement by Inter-Governmental Authority on Development Envoy to Somalia Amb. Mohamed Affey ▪ Statement by UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia Nicholas Kay
11:45-13:00	II Country statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Abdirahman Duale Beyle, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Federal Republic of Somalia • H.E. Hassan Omar Mohamed Bourhan, Minister of Interior, Republic of Djibouti • H.E. Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia • Mr. Ali Bunow Korane, Chairman, Refugee Affairs Commission, Republic of Kenya • H.E. Eng. Hilary Onek, Minister of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, Republic of Uganda • H.E. Ameer Salem Ali Al-Aidroos, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Yemen
13:00-14:00 LUNCH		
14:00-15:00	III Consideration of the Addis Ababa Commitment towards Somali refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video • Presentation by co-chairs • Remarks by Mr. Philip Lazzarini, Deputy Special Representative, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Somalia • Open discussion • Adoption of Addis Ababa Commitment to Somali Refugees
15:00-15:30	V Summing up and closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Summing up by High Commissioner for Refugees ▪ Closing by H.E. Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
15:30 Tea and coffee		
16:00	Press conference (with High Commissioner and Heads of Delegation)	

18:30 Reception at Hotel Sheraton, Addis Ababa



Adopted at the Ministerial meeting of the UNHCR Global Initiative for Somali Refugees (GISR), 20 August 2014, Addis Ababa

We, the Governments of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda and Yemen, together with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU), have today, Wednesday 20 August 2014, reviewed in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the situation of the nearly one million Somalis who remain in exile in the near region¹ as refugees after more than two decades, apart from another one million who are internally displaced.

We appreciate and applaud the hospitality that has been accorded to the Somali refugees by the host countries which have in this time kept their doors open and extended asylum and protection notwithstanding the hardships and sacrifices that are entailed.

Over this time, thousands of Somali refugees found safety and protection in these asylum countries and many have managed to rebuild their lives. Significant numbers have been able to return to their country and were assisted to reintegrate while others were resettled to third countries.

Yet, it is profoundly pre-occupying that today, one tenth of the Somali population remains in protracted exile in the sub-region alone. While essential asylum and protection are available, the majority of the refugees experience unacceptable conditions and face an uncertain future. Food, nutrition, health, sanitation, shelter and other basic needs are in many cases inadequately catered for, while thousands of children are not in school and opportunities for work, employment or other forms of self-realization are limited.

With the majority of the refugees accommodated in camps, freedom of movement is in key respects quite constrained. At the same time, the challenges of hosting the refugees remain compelling ranging from security, law and order, environmental degradation and host community

services and resources which are put under extreme pressure.

While acknowledging that some areas in Central/Southern Somalia have been liberated by Somali National Army and AMISOM forces, more needs to be done to provide basic services. The Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia has reiterated its readiness to receive back home its citizens and some refugees have indeed repatriated spontaneously, however, overall, the conditions for mass repatriation are not yet in existence. The reality of dwindling financial support as well as diminishing international attention as other refugee situations command priority has dramatically compounded the problem.

This protracted and desperate situation in which the lives of thousands of human beings are held in limbo even in their third generation cannot be permitted to continue. The Somali refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) deserve every opportunity to realize full membership to society as a basic right.

A renewed commitment to find telling solutions to this situation is called for. Today, we make this new commitment to assure continuing protection for the Somali refugees and to explore every opportunity for transformative and lasting change for their plight.

In particular, we commit ourselves to:

- i. Maintain our goodwill, assure asylum and international protection for Somali refugees and strengthen the asylum system through ratification, adoption and giving effect to relevant Conventions.
- ii. Take all necessary and feasible measures to address, on one hand, the protection problems facing Somali refugees and asylum-seekers, including human trafficking, smuggling and other problems in the migration/asylum context and, on the other hand, their human, social and economic needs and reduce dependency on relief assistance, build self-reliance and resilience through education, vocational training and income-generating activities and facilitate as normal participation in society as possible.
- iii. Combat the negative perceptions taking ground in some cases against Somali refugees by promoting positive messages on peaceful coexistence of refugees and

¹ This refers to the 427,812 Somali refugees presently in Kenya, 244,340 in Ethiopia, 233,723 in Yemen, 19,799 in Djibouti and 18,534 in Uganda.

- host communities, reinforcing the positive contribution refugees have made to host countries, avoiding the stereotyping of refugees as threats to national security and, at large, fostering congenial relations among peoples.
- iv. Work with and support the Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia to create conditions that will make voluntary, safe and dignified repatriation of the Somali refugees both feasible and sustainable, take advantage through pilot projects of opportunities to appropriately help spontaneously returning refugees to do so safely and sustainably and support equivalent solutions for internally displaced persons.
 - v. Engage with development and regional partners to foster peace, security, law and order and link humanitarian needs and programmes to recovery and development interventions with emphasis on providing basic services, facilities and infrastructure.
 - vi. While reiterating that naturalization is a matter of national sovereignty, explore creative, flexible and other initiatives for alternative stay arrangements, particularly for refugees in protracted exile or who have established enduring links with the country of asylum.
 - vii. Work with bilateral and multi-lateral partners to more effectively address host community needs, the consequences of hosting refugees and unique questions such as nomadic agro-pastoralism and transhumance among the Somali refugees.

We express our gratitude to international partners including donors for the support extended towards Somali refugees and Somalia. We further call upon the international community at large, in the spirit of enhanced international solidarity and responsibility-sharing, to embrace and support these new commitments and, in particular:

- i. Extend all forms of support and collaboration to enable Governments to better receive, protect and meet the needs of the Somali refugees while also addressing host community needs and concerns including, but not limited to, environmental degradation.
- ii. Support and collaborate with the Governments in effectively addressing the terrorism and other security threats in the region which could impact on and

- potentially harm asylum and international protection for Somali refugees.
- iii. Provide and expand resettlement opportunities to benefit a greater number of Somali refugees, particularly those in protracted situations or with vulnerabilities.
 - iv. Provide more adequate financial support to programmes for Somali refugees and for humanitarian needs in Somalia including of the internally displaced persons.
 - v. Support conditions that will avoid further displacement from Somalia, especially civilian safety, law and order and, through effective early warning systems and response, mitigate the risk of another drought and enhance conditions that will make repatriation attractive.
 - vi. Meaningfully support the capacity of the Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia to create peace, security, law and order, social and economic progress and sustainability in Somalia and address humanitarian imperatives.

We underline that, ideally, only a comprehensive, long-lasting and effective solution to the overall political, governance, security, social and economic challenges in Somalia will assure the conditions against new or further displacements and for the sustainable voluntary return home of Somali refugees.

We strongly urge the Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia to sustain and increase its political will in resolutely addressing all these problems. The refugees themselves and the Somali diaspora have an important role to play in these efforts and in the other issues highlighted in these commitments and should be facilitated to do so. As regional partners, neighbours, sisters and brothers of Somalia, we shall always stand by them.

We shall work constructively with national, regional and international partners in a regionally coordinated manner to give effect to these commitments as well as the outcomes of relevant sub-regional and regional meetings. Through the coordinating role of UNHCR, a plan of action will be established for the next phases of the Global Initiative on Somali Refugees to its successful completion, including stakeholder consultations, as well as an indicative work plan for implementing its outcomes.

Annex 3: Ministerial meeting delegates list

Djibouti

H.E. Hassan Omar Mohamed Bourhan
Minister of Interior

Ibrahim Soubaneh Rayaleh
Executive Secretary of L'Office National d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et Sinistrés (ONARS)

Elmi Ahmed Mahmoud
Head of Eligibility Office, ONARS

H.E. Mohamed-Siad Doualeh
Ambassador of Djibouti to the UN Office Geneva

Ethiopia

H.E. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Minister of Foreign Affairs

H.E. Negash Kebret
Director General, International Organisations Directorate General

Ato Ayalew Aweke
Deputy Director, Administration for Refugee and Returnees Affairs

Kenya

Haron C. Komen
Commissioner for Refugee Affairs

Ali Bunow Korane
Chairman, Refugee Affairs Committee (RAC)

Somalia

H.E. Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed
Prime Minister

H.E. Abdirahaman Duale Beyle
Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

H.E. Abdulahi Godah Barre
Minister of Interior and Federalism

Ahmed Nur
Commissioner for Refugees & IDPs

Osman Hassan
Advisor, National Commission for Refugees & IDPs

Ahmed Farah

Advisor, National Commission for Refugees & IDPs

Uganda

H.E. Eng. Hilary Onok
Minister of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees

David Apollo Kazungu
Commissioner for Refugees

Walter Omondi
Senior Settlement Officer

Yemen

H.E. Ameer Salem Ali Al-Aidroos
Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs

Marwan Ali Noman Al-Dobhany
Head of Office of the Vice-Minister, Secretary of the National Committee for Refugee Affairs

Abdullah Ali Mohamed Al-Rahabi
National Committee for Refugee Affairs

African Union

H.E. Aisha Abdullahi
Commissioner for Political Affairs

Rita Ndeto
Head of Humanitarian Affairs, Refugees and Displaced Persons Division

IGAD

H.E. Mohamed Affey
IGAD Envoy to Somalia

Caroline Njuki
Regional Migration Coordinator

UNECA

Mr. Collen Kelapile
Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive Secretary

Francis Nguendi Ikome
Senior Programme Management Officer

United Nations

Nicholas Kay
Special Representative for Somalia to the UN Secretary-General

Philippe Lazzarini
Deputy Special Representative, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Somalia

UNHCR

António Guterres
High Commissioner

George Okoth-Obbo
Director, Regional Bureau for Africa

Ann Encontre
Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Africa

Chrys Ache
Director Representation to the AU and ECA

Honorine Sommet-Lange
Djibouti

Bornwell Kantande
Ethiopia

Raouf Mazou
Kenya

Alessandra Morelli
Somalia

Neimah Warsame
Uganda

Yasuko Shimizu
Yemen

Rapporteurs

Mary Hackett-Jones
UNHCR Ethiopia

Mildred Ouma
UNHCR Ethiopia

Monique Ekoko
UNHCR Representation to the AU and ECA

Periklis Kortsaris
UNHCR Somalia

Annex 4: Technical meeting delegates list

Djibouti

Ibrahim Soubaneh Rayaleh
*Executive Secretary of L'Office
National d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et
Sinistrés (ONARS)*

Elmi Ahmed Mahmoud
Head of Eligibility Office, ONARS

Mohamed-Siad Doualeh
*Ambassador of Djibouti to the UN
Office Geneva*

Ethiopia

Negash Kebret
*Director General, International
Organisations Directorate General,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Ato Ayalew Aweke
*Deputy Director, Administration for
Refugee and Returnees Affairs
(ARRA)*

Ato Daniel Ayale
*Head, Programme Implementation
and Coordination Department, ARRA*

Kenya

Haron C. Komen
Commissioner for Refugee Affairs

Ali Bunow Korane
*Chairman, Refugee Affairs
Committee (RAC)*

Somalia

Osman Hassan
*Advisor, National Commission for
Refugees & IDPs*

Ahmed Farah
*Advisor, National Commission for
Refugees & IDPs*

Uganda

David Apollo Kazungu
Commissioner for Refugees

Walter Omondi
Senior Settlement Officer

Yemen

Marwan Ali Noman Al-Dobhany
*Head of Office of the Vice-Minister,
Secretary of the National Committee
for Refugee Affairs*

Abdullah Ali Mohamed Al-Rahabi
*National Committee for Refugee
Affairs*

African Union

Rita Ndeto
*Head of Humanitarian Affairs,
Refugees and Displaced Persons
Division*

IGAD

Caroline Njuki
Regional Migration Coordinator

UNHCR

George Okoth-Obbo
Director, Regional Bureau for Africa

Ann Encontre
*Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for
Africa*

Honorine Sommet-Lange
Representative, Djibouti

Bornwell Kantanda
Representative, Ethiopia

Raouf Mazou
Representative, Kenya

Periklis Kortsaris
Senior Protection Officer, Somalia

Neimah Warsame
Representative, Uganda

Yasuko Shimizu
Deputy Representative, Yemen

Monique Ekoko
*Representation to the AU and ECA
(Rapporteur)*

Mildred Ouma
Ethiopia (Rapporteur)

Annex 5: Report on the technical meeting

1. Introduction

The technical meeting of the GISR took place in Addis Ababa on 18-19 August, preceding the GISR ministerial meeting on 20 August. It was jointly chaired by Ato Negash Kebrat, Director of International Organisations at the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. George Okoth-Obbo, Director of the Africa Bureau, UNHCR. The meeting was attended by delegations from the Governments of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda and Yemen, as well as UNHCR, the African Union (AU) and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The purpose of the technical meeting was to discuss key issues pertaining to Somali refugees in the region and come to agreement on the way forward; these ideas would then shape the agenda and outcome of the ministerial meeting to take place on the following day.

The meeting highlighted the protracted nature of the Somali refugee problem. Over 1 million Somalis are displaced inside Somalia, and there are a further 1 million refugees across Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Yemen. The meeting also highlighted recent, though tentative, improvements with regard to peace, security, governance and law and order in Somalia. The role of the Somali National Army and of AMISOM in improving security and liberating some areas of South Central Somalia was acknowledged.

After an initial roundtable discussion in London in 2012, a high-level panel was convened by the High Commissioner in 2013 to discuss how the initiative should move forward. In this time various consultations have been held with the States, and with other stakeholders. The ministerial meeting marks the beginning of a second phase of GISR where the dialogue is being elevated to the levels of those with direct influence on policy in Somalia and hosting States, as well as key regional actors.

2. Country presentations

The first part of the technical meeting was dedicated to presentations made by each country on the current situation of Somali refugees or IDPs in their location.

Somalia

The Somali delegation noted that:

- a. Displacement statistics fluctuate with the success of campaigns by the Somali National Army and AMISOM aim to bring more stability to the country in the long term.
- b. The Federal Government of Somalia remains committed to enabling the return of Somali

refugees and IDPs, and spontaneous returns are already being witnessed in some areas.

- c. There is need to bear in mind the significant challenges that would need to be addressed in order to create the necessary and conducive conditions for return.
- d. Somalia is transitioning from a recovery phase to a development phase which further sets the stage for returns.
- e. Development is already taking place in some locations where stability exists. Efforts are however hampered by inadequate funding which slows the pace of recovery and development.
- f. Humanitarian and Development actors need to work together to fully ensure a smooth and balanced transition from humanitarian to development needs
- g. Promoting regional solutions will ultimately lead to solutions for the country.

Djibouti

The delegation noted that:

- a. There are 17,791 Somali refugees in Djibouti; the majority are in two refugee camps with a smaller number in urban centres.
- b. Somali refugees, except those from Puntland, are recognised on a *prima facie* basis, and have been received in Djibouti since the 1990s.
- c. A favourable protection environment has been promoted in collaboration with UNHCR through the issuance of birth certificates and ID cards to refugees older than 15 years.
- d. Refugee self-reliance is promoted through a skills-training programme implemented by IOM.
- e. With regard to eventual repatriation, refugees cite insecurity as the main barrier to return, and Djibouti maintains that any returns must be voluntary. However, a 'Go and See' visit was recently undertaken to Somaliland for some of the 3,000 refugees in Djibouti who have ties there.
- f. Budgetary constraints restrict the implementation of programmes for Somali refugees, as also does the security threat caused by Al-Shabaab infiltration into the country.

Ethiopia

The delegation noted that:

- a. The country has a long history of welcoming refugees, dating back to the time of the Prophet Mohamed.
- b. Ethiopia has an open-door policy towards refugees which is part of the Government's

'people to people relations', based on the premise that if Ethiopia is hospitable to refugees, it will have good relations with its neighbours.

- c. Between 1988 and 2006, Ethiopia hosted close to 600,000 Somali refugees most of whom returned mainly to Hargeisa through a voluntary repatriation programme in the 1990s, decreasing this figure to 15,000.
- d. Today, Ethiopia hosts approximately 245,000 registered Somali refugees, the majority of whom live in eight refugee camps where a care and maintenance programme is implemented in collaboration with UNHCR and partners. There are also numerous unregistered Somalis living in urban centres including Addis Ababa, where there is a location named "Little Mogadishu".
- e. The IKEA Foundation has been a major donor to the Dollo Ado camps, encouraging a focus on education and livelihoods.
- f. It is believed that refugees who are educated will return and contribute to the re-building of their country. Approximately 27,000 Somali refugee children are enrolled in school and 271 students attend tertiary institutions.
- g. Vocational training programmes are also ongoing, in which approximately 900 Somalis participate; however, more opportunities for refugees to engage in income-generating activities after their graduation are needed.
- h. The Government of Ethiopia has opened the possibility of cross-border support to Somalia, knowing that there are some safe areas inside Somalia close to Dollo Ado. The aim is to make conditions in Somalia more conducive to return and also to facilitate the provision of more humanitarian assistance within Somalia. While the current reasons for flight relate to the threat of Al-Shabaab and food insecurity, this initiative is premised on the idea that if more services are provided inside Somalia, then the numbers fleeing will fall.
- i. There are concerns that the rains in Somalia were again poor this year which may lead to drought, which will lead to more displacement.
- j. While there have been some spontaneous returns which could signal that the time is ripe for Voluntary Repatriation, there is a need to make these returns attractive by investing in Somalia.
- k. The Government of Ethiopia is willing to continue assisting refugees in Ethiopia, as well as to support Somalis in their country of origin. The Government supports the

principle of voluntariness in all returns, and would be interested in a pilot repatriation project.

Kenya

The delegation noted that:

- a. The country is hosting approximately 600,000 refugees, of which 420,000 are Somalis settled mainly in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps.
- b. In terms of solutions, the Government of Kenya promotes third country resettlement of refugees with support from UNHCR and IOM, as well as voluntary repatriation. Approximately 5,000 refugees have already registered for return, and it is expected that repatriation will start in September 2014. A tripartite agreement on return was signed in November 2013 between UNHCR and the Governments of Kenya and Somalia. However, before returns are implemented there is a need for clarification on areas for safe return as well as engagement from local administrations to assess the level of water, health, sanitation and other facilities available to returnees. The Kenyan Government wishes to ensure that the process is both voluntary and sustainable, to prevent reverse movement of repatriated refugees. Regular tripartite meetings are held in this regard.
- c. Local integration has not yet been implemented due to the high numbers of refugees in Kenya; however, the delegation stated that the Government may consider it appropriate for certain groups such as Somali refugees married to Kenyans.
- d. While Kenya has hosted refugees from different countries for many years, it has faced several challenges. The Government has been forced to move refugees to designated camps after a series of attacks which indicated that some refugees were being recruited to undertake terrorist activities. The relocation of refugees from urban areas to camps continues, and those refugees who prefer to stay in urban areas for protection, education, employment or other reasons are encouraged to apply for exemption from this policy.

Uganda

The delegation noted that:

- a. Uganda had a long history of hosting refugees dating to the 1940s.
- b. The Ugandan policy is to host refugees in settlements rather than camps. These

- settlements are large expanses of land measuring over 200 square miles and if computed in monetary terms, would be valued at over USD 20 million annually.
- c. Over 500,000 refugees are accommodated in Uganda, of which 23,000 are Somalis mainly residing in settlements in the south-west and in urban areas.
 - d. The Government of Uganda is committed to the continued protection of Somali refugees until such time as they can return home.
 - e. A number of initiatives have been undertaken by the Government of Uganda, linked to the host population and community empowerment, to secure the asylum space of Somali refugees and to enhance their dignity. When these initiatives become linked with the national development programme, the lives of refugees will be more productive and they will become contributing members of their society when they return home.
 - f. Urban refugees are encouraged to develop leadership skills, while in the settlements, several initiatives are underway including civilian and security policing, improving education and vocational skills programmes and mobile courts.
 - g. The Government issues requisite documentation to the refugees as a protection imperative and discussions are currently underway to issue refugees International Civil Aviation Organization - accepted and machine-readable Convention Travel Documents by the end of September 2014.
 - h. The Government of Uganda believes that political stability inside Somalia will encourage refugees to return. Voluntary repatriation is the most appropriate solution for the majority of Somali refugees, and the Government of Uganda is interested in signing a tripartite agreement with the Government of Somalia and UNHCR.
 - i. Resettlement is another option for vulnerable refugees.
 - j. Naturalization is not an easy option due to constitutional barriers that prevent refugees from obtaining citizenship. The possibility of citizenship by registration may be advocated with the Ugandan Cabinet in collaboration with UNHCR.
 - k. More resources to be made available for refugee programmes, and value for money should be considered for instance by way of empowering national NGOs to be involved in service delivery to refugees rather than international organizations, where possible.

- l. The Government is interested in an exchange visit to Ethiopia to see how the relief to development transition is achieved.

Yemen

The delegation noted that:

- a. Yemen is the only country in the Arab Peninsula to have ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention.
- b. It has had to bear a disproportionate burden of refugee hosting. Currently, there are over 450,000 registered refugees of which 250,000 are Somali. There are also believed to be larger numbers of unregistered refugees in Yemen.
- c. Somali refugees in Yemen are granted the same rights to health care and work as citizens, while several scholarship and professional training opportunities are provided.
- d. However, donor support is currently insufficient to meet the needs of the refugees.

3. Key issues and problematics

At the conclusion of the country presentations, while it was clear that countries vary in terms of their response to the Somali refugee situation, there were also commonalities in terms of good practice and shared challenges.

The common factors include the long tradition in the region of welcoming refugees, which was recognised and valued by all present. It was noted that many refugees from Somalia fled their homes due to famine and drought as well as lack of services, which are not *per se* grounds for refugee status under the 1951 Refugee Convention, but host countries applied an unrestricted interpretation of the 1969 OAU Convention on 'uninhabitable conditions' in the Country of Origin to grant status to refugees who were in need of protection and assistance.

All countries share challenges in terms of security, resourcing, environmental degradation, and resource scarcity. Despite these challenges, the importance was stressed and understood of maintaining asylum space for Somali refugees until such time as conditions were conducive for large-scale repatriation. The importance was also acknowledged of considering ways to improve the quality of asylum, most particularly through a focus on building refugee self-reliance.

Challenges for Somalia

It was noted that a tenth of the Somali population remains in protracted exile in the near region, in addition to the additional number who are around the world. It thus is a truly global refugee dynamic. Somalia is only now entering a post-conflict situation and still faces obstacles on many fronts.

1. Continuing security threats: While the Somali National Army and AMISOM have liberated some areas of South Central Somalia, the situation remains volatile and recent attacks against government targets and the UN in Mogadishu have hit close to the heart of governance. This makes it very difficult for the Government to receive at this point the million refugees in the region, were they to return in the near future.
2. Capacity-building for Somali government: Stability in Somalia will be strengthened through building the capacity of the Government of Somalia in terms of institutions, law enforcement bodies, police and security. Capacity building of the Commission for IDPs and Refugees should also be explored through secondment of staff and exchange of experiences from technical advisers from both in and outside the region. The diaspora could also play a role in such capacity building, with qualified nationals seconded to government institutions as advisors. In this context, there are already several initiatives underway, and efforts should be made to access these existing programmes, as well as encouraging private and public partnerships to contribute to both development and international cooperation.
3. Resource barriers: While needs within Somalia are very high, resourcing is low. Perceptions of corruption and the fragility of the Somali state are barriers for donors who want to fund programmes within Somalia. The example of IGAD-managed donor funds was cited as a possible way to overcome this barrier. However, while partners and donors need to be creative on how to get funding to the grassroots level, the Government of Somalia also needs to be increasingly accountable to donors in order to develop relationships based on trust. In this way its sovereignty will not be compromised by having others managing funds on its behalf. With the Federal Government of Somalia having only been in power for two years, there is a need to build its capacity rapidly to support and sustain any planned durable solutions and absorb resources effectively.
4. Humanitarian needs: Increasing humanitarian assistance was seen by the

meeting as fundamental, especially in the face of recent reports of emerging pockets of famine and food insecurity which may again start causing flight from Somalia. The Government of Ethiopia discussed the possibility of cross-border assistance to Somalia via Ethiopia for this reason, and encouraged that this be explored further.

5. Capacity to absorb spontaneous returns: It was noted that refugees are returning to Somalia on a weekly basis from both Saudi Arabia and Kenya, though the voluntary nature of these returns is not always clear. A tripartite agreement to manage returns has been signed between UNHCR and the Governments of Kenya and Somalia. However, the capacity of the Government of Somalia to fully support these returns must be built rapidly and the particularities of the situation, including the nomadic culture of Somalis, must be kept in mind when understanding repatriation.
6. Creating pull factors and preparing mechanisms for returns: Returns should be made more attractive through improved provision of services in Somalia and increased governance capacity of the Somali Government. Factors such as the number of water points, availability of food, education and health services all contribute to refugees' decisions to return home. The issue of land acquisition and restitution for returnees will be a major issue to be addressed, and it is imperative to build mechanisms to deal with these effectively and transparently. In some locations, the transformation of IDP camps into urban centres could be facilitated, strengthening the nexus between refugee and IDP returns. Some concern was raised that asylum in some refugee camps may be too 'comfortable' when compared with the alternatives if refugees were to repatriate, but it was felt that creating the right conditions in Somalia should overcome this.

Challenges in host countries

The meeting debated at length the challenges faced by host countries, and by Somali refugees in host countries. These included:

1. Limitations of being developing countries: It was noted that all asylum countries in the region are developing countries. While they have been very welcoming to refugees, they often do not have the capacity to support them properly and this sometimes leads to unmet needs, and therefore frustration.

2. Unpredictability of refugee influxes: Refugee influxes can be large and unpredictable, which could lead to severe pressure on scarce resources. For this reason early warning systems related to drought and famine need to be enhanced so receiving countries are better prepared for shortages and emergencies that may occur.
3. Competition for scarce resources: Land in refugee-hosting areas is often communally owned, and the pastoral needs of Somali refugees leads to competition for host communities who may use the land for their own needs such as agriculture or grazing. Environmental degradation as a result of refugees needing firewood as household fuel further strains the relationship.
4. The security angle: Recent security incidents have created a public perception that simplistically link Somali refugees with terrorism. This has led to measures restricting the freedom of movement of refugees in some contexts. States felt that the cost of dealing with security issues cannot be borne by them alone as it was a considerable burden. Political leaders should be called upon to publicise messages on the benefits of hosting refugees, while peace and security in relation to refugees and IDPs should be on the agenda of each Government. Delegates acknowledged the desirability of delinking security and asylum.
5. Limited opportunities for refugees: While essential asylum and protection are available, the majority of Somali refugees experience uncomfortable, sometimes even unacceptable, conditions often in camp settings. Basic needs are often severely lacking. Food, nutrition, health, sanitation, shelter and other basic needs are unevenly catered for, while thousands of children are not in school and opportunities for work, employment or other forms of self-realization are limited. In many cases refugees are housed in camps and face restrictions on their freedom of movement. Their prospects are not bright in terms of opportunities and their future is uncertain.
6. Differential service provision to refugees and host communities: Concern was raised about members of host communities in different locations registering as refugees to access the services that were put in place for refugees which may be better than services provided to the host community, or as lives around refugee camps may be harsh in adverse times such as drought and famine.
7. Mixed migration: As with all nomadic and pastoral populations, mixed migration is a phenomenon that Security and social issues related to Somalis residing in other countries without being registered as refugees were also noted as being part of the phenomenon of mixed migration, with the mobility of Somalis also due to a combination of reasons.

The need for action

All present agreed that it was imperative to break through the stalemate that had developed around the Somali refugee situation. They also agreed that an urgent regional and international response would be needed for this, and it was not something that could be achieved by any of the concerned States in isolation.

Some of the strategies discussed in order to initialise this process were:

1. Maintaining asylum space: All countries renewed their commitment to maintain asylum space for Somali refugees. There was also agreement that a regional approach is needed to responsibility-sharing, and that more donor funding is needed to fully meet the needs of refugees and host communities.
2. Improving refugee self-reliance: It was deemed important to start making a shift from the care and maintenance mode of operation to one which focused more on refugee self-reliance and empowerment. The provision of education and vocational training empowers refugees to join the labour market, where they are allowed to do so, as well as equips them with skills which that can be used when they return to Somalia. This will also importantly help to address the culture of dependency that is apparent amongst Somali refugee populations as they enter their third generation in exile. Local integration should be explored further and applied in as far as individual country circumstances permit.
3. Better use of resources: In the context of diminishing resources globally, it is increasingly important that available resources are used intelligently for development in addition to the necessary humanitarian interventions. There is a need for more cost effective programming and coordination at regional and local levels, as well as support to host communities. Tapping into development funding would be a sustainable way of addressing the needs of refugees and IDPs.
4. Building refugee-host community relations:

5. Being realistic about repatriation: The meeting agreed that voluntary repatriation is, in the Somali refugee context, the most appropriate durable solution. However, there was consensus that the time is not right for safe and dignified mass repatriation. A tripartite agreement on voluntary repatriation has been signed between UNHCR and the Governments of Somalia and Kenya and this was acknowledged to provide a useful framework for the voluntary return of refugees in safety and dignity with all international law safeguards present. Other countries expressed interest in also establishing tripartite agreements of a similar nature. Since the signing of the agreement, preparatory activities for implementation have started, including initial visits to Kismayo and Mogadishu to assess the level of preparedness. However, the number of people who permanently return will depend on security in Somalia as well as access to services.
6. Supporting spontaneous returns: At present, some refugees may return to Somalia to explore possibilities, leaving family members in the camps where they continue to access education and other services. Any spontaneous returns that are happening should be supported, for instance through the UNHCR pilot spontaneous returns project. For returns to be sustainable, development must take place in proposed areas of return and service provision must improve. The launch of the pilot project on spontaneous returns from Kenya will allow clear assessment of the challenges and opportunities in the return process.
7. Creating conditions for return: In the absence of the right conditions within Somalia, any returning refugees could become IDPs. The international community should share the responsibility of creating conditions conducive for return. Likewise, Somalia needs to be ready to receive returnees, and initiatives such as Go and See visits should be encouraged and safely organized. In addition to ensuring conditions are conducive to return, there are concerns that the fragility of the environment in Somalia and risk of another drought would in fact lead to further displacement. A profiling exercise was undertaken in a collaborative manner in several locations in Somalia including Kismayo and Baidoa, with the results shared with refugees in Dadaab to gauge if any were potentially interested in returning.
8. Expanding resettlement options: Resettlement opportunities should be explored vigorously inside and outside Africa for vulnerable Somali refugees and those without prospects of safe return. However, it is likely that resettlement will benefit only a small proportion of the Somali refugee population. Additionally, the meeting concluded that the capacity of the Somali Government must be built so as to reintegrate both refugees and IDPs. There is great potential inside Somalia in terms of natural resources: the solution lies within Somalia and with the international community to support them. while
9. Considering creative solutions for long-stayers: The meeting encouraged all Governments to consider positively all possible options for extended stay or permanent residency for Somali refugees. In some host countries, constitutional provisions prevent refugees from becoming citizens while in others, granting citizenship to large numbers of refugees would alter the delicate ethnic composition. Furthermore, this would affect land ownership in host communities which may lead to further rifts. These factors suggest that creating an international formula for local integration is difficult. However the States undertook to consider flexible stay arrangements, particularly for long-staying refugees or those who have established deep links, for instance through marriage, within the host country.
10. Solutions for mobile populations: With regard to mobility of the refugees while in exile, a flexible approach was suggested to take into account the pastoral nature of many Somalis as well as the application of several regional protocols on freedom of movement which could allow people to move temporarily in times of drought, without necessarily becoming refugees. Such an approach could, for example, allow people to maintain their refugee status while also enhancing their livelihoods.
11. Ratifying the 1951 Refugee Convention: More countries in the Arab Peninsula should be encouraged to ratify and implement the 1951 Refugee Convention as this would increase the available asylum space and the meeting felt increased advocacy should be undertaken towards this.
12. Seeking increased engagement of the international community: The meeting agreed that the Somali refugee situation had been somewhat forgotten in the midst of the

various other displacement crises in Africa and elsewhere, including South Sudan, CAR, and Syria. There was consensus that this needs to change, and the international community needs to become more central in the search for solutions. This could be in the following forms:

- a. Capacity-building and support for Somali government: This is essential to create pull factors for return, and to revitalise the country into a stable and prosperous economy in the coming years. Support will be needed across the board, including in governance, law and order, institution-building and economic development.
- b. Capacity-building and support to host States: This will enable them to better provide protection and assistance to Somali refugees while maintaining the delicate balance between refugees' needs and the needs of the host community.
- c. Support to deal with security concerns: With growing concern about terrorism, host States made a very clear plea for support from the international community to help them respond effectively and proportionately without compromising asylum space.
- d. Resettlement opportunities: States were very keen on the international community considering an expansion of resettlement opportunities for particularly vulnerable or long-staying Somali refugees. One State also raised the possibility of seeking resettlement in other African countries.
- e. Financial support: Resource needs are high both within Somalia as well as in host States and it was felt that the international community could play an important part in addressing resource gaps. This should be not only for humanitarian assistance, but also for

development needs in Somalia and in host States.

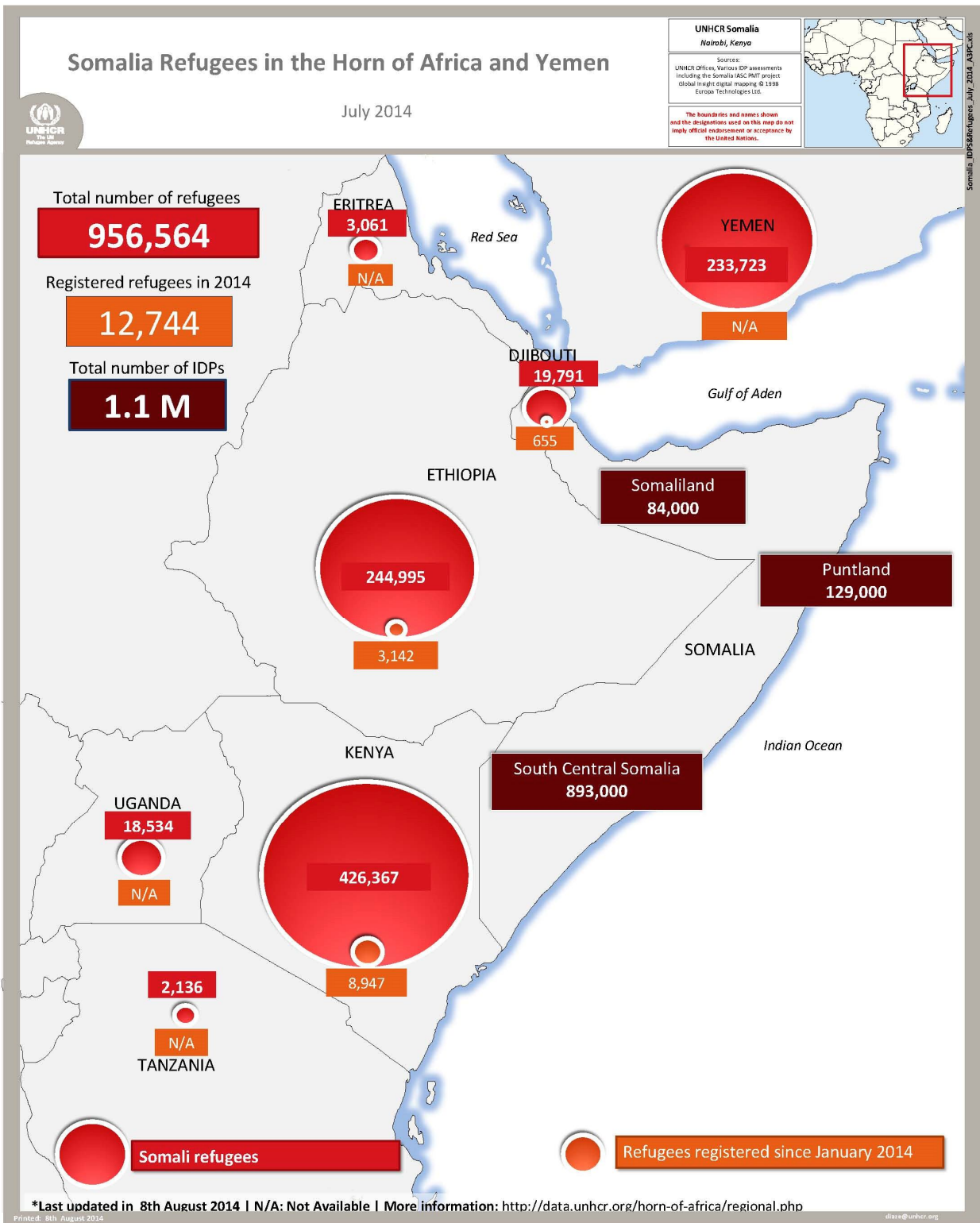
- f. Enhancing food security: This will help prevent further displacement which, if it were to happen, would lead to further human suffering and further complicate the already complex situation.
- g. Increased diaspora engagement: While the Somali diaspora contributes to development inside Somalia through remittances and skills transfer, they should also consider engaging with Somali refugee population for skills-transfer programmes. This will push forward the self-reliance agenda which has been accepted by the meeting as a central theme.

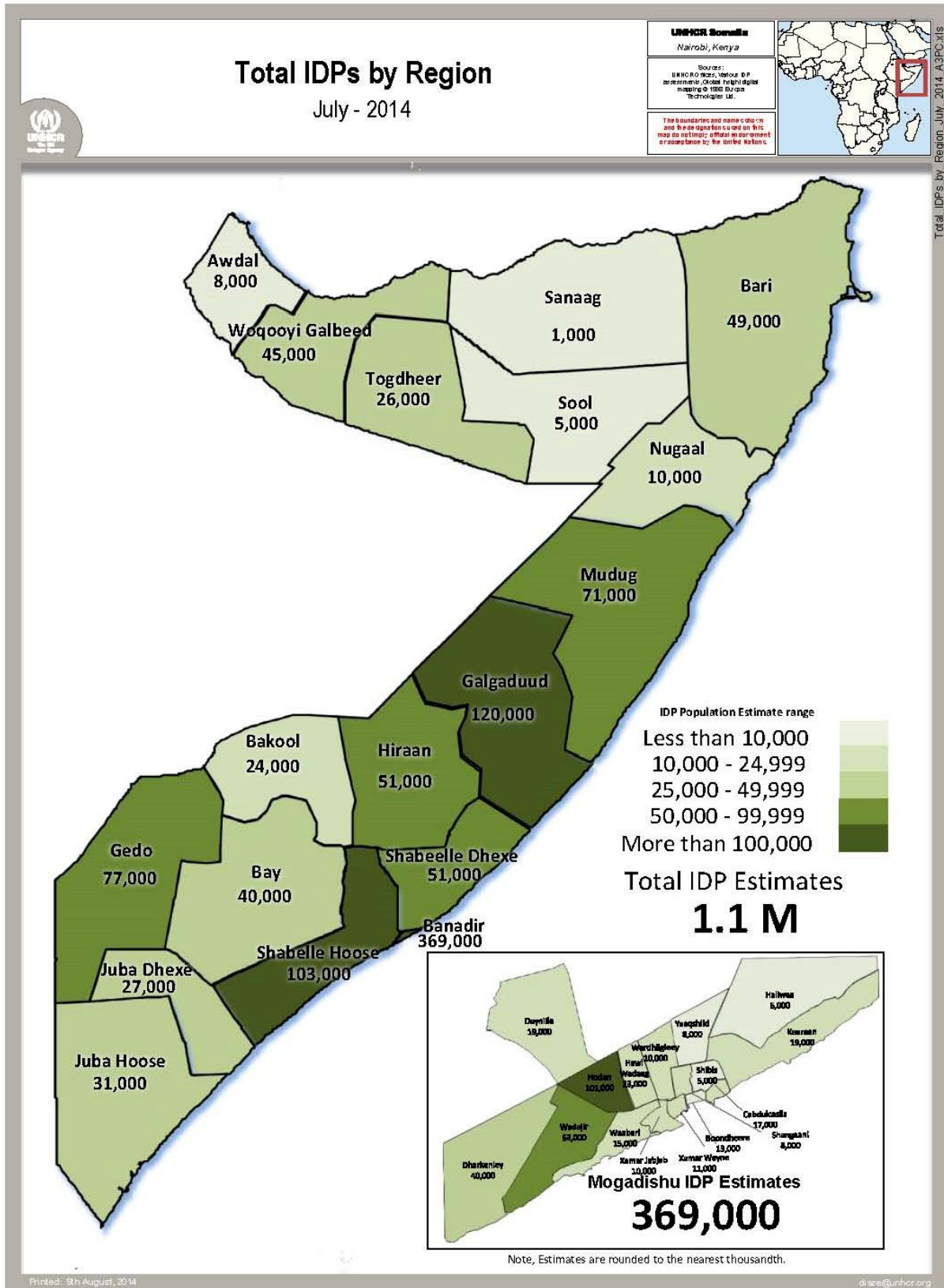
4. Way forward

The meeting noted that there have been several initiatives to promote dialogue on the Somali refugee issue, for example, the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Somali refugees between 2003 and 2006. However, it was also noted that a reason for the lack of success of these regional initiatives has perhaps been their blindness to country-specific contexts. It was therefore recommended that a plan be developed under GISR which has a regional perspective on cross-cutting shared issues, while at the same time being sensitive to the policy and social contexts within each affected State.

The fundamental agreements which had been reached over the course of the meeting were shaped into the '*Addis Ababa Commitment towards Somali Refugees*'. This formed the outcome document which was, after some drafts were worked through and debated, finally approved by the technical meeting at the close of the session with the intention of being taken to the ministerial meeting for approval and adoption. Similarly, the meeting also approved a draft Communiqué for onward endorsement by the ministerial meeting – this was for release at the press conference to follow the ministerial meeting.

Annex 6: Somali refugees in the region – July 2014





Annex 8: Statements made at the Ministerial meeting

Opening remarks by H.E. Dr. Tedros Adhenom Ghebreyesus, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of Ethiopia

Addis Ababa, 20 August 2014

I declare that the Ministerial meeting is open.

Excellency Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed, the Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia,
Excellency Antonio Guterres the High Commissioner for Refugees,
Madame Commissioner,
Excellencies Ministers,
Participants,
Ladies and gentlemen.

Let me first of all warmly welcome you all to Addis Ababa to participate in the Ministerial meeting on UNHCR Global Initiative on Somali Refugees which is of great concern to the international community particularly to the States in the region. I also wish to seize this opportunity to thank the High Commissioner for having launched the Global Initiative on Somali Refugees to mobilise the much needed support of all stakeholders with a view to dealing with the prevailing situation that Somali refugees continue to face. I would further like to extend my appreciation to UNHCR for its wide-ranging work carried out across the world to assist refugees and internally displaced persons in many parts of the world including the Horn of Africa. The convening of the High Level Panel on Somali refugees by UNHCR in 2013 is a concrete testimony to the commitment of the High Commissioner to help Somalia, host countries and refugees to find durable and comprehensive solutions to Somali refugees. The 14 guiding principles and the way forward endorsed at the Panel provide all-inclusive and viable recommendations to be considered at this Ministerial meeting in addressing the problems of Somali refugees.

I would also like to thank my brother Prime Minister Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed for attending this initiative. It shows his government's strong commitment to address the refugee challenge. I would also like to appreciate IGAD's and AU's role on this initiative.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

Ethiopia has a long tradition of receiving and hosting refugees from all corners of its borders and has maintained its open door policy to provide the necessary protection and assistance to refugees. Ethiopia's policies on refugees are governed by the principles enshrined in the 1951 United Nations Convention and its protocol of 1967 as well as the 1969 OAU convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa. In order to properly implement these international and regional

instruments, Ethiopia enacted a refugee proclamation in July 2004 that established legislative and management frameworks for the reception of refugees and to ensure their protection and promote durable solutions. We have continuously taken concrete measures in discharging our responsibilities aimed at providing protection and assistance to refugees and displaced persons. We undertake these activities in collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, and other partners. These humanitarian activities are also guided by the principles of strengthening people to people relations. We believe that strengthening people to people relations would have long-term positive impact on the lives of people in our sub-region and the refugees. We have also taken measures to facilitate the smooth social interactions between refugees and hosting communities. These activities need to be further intensified, with the ongoing close collaboration with UNHCR, donor communities and other humanitarian organizations.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

Currently Ethiopia is hosting 632,000 refugees from neighbouring countries of whom 245,000 are Somali refugees hosted in 8 refugee camps in Ethiopia. This figure doesn't include Somali refugees living in Addis Ababa and other major towns by supporting themselves. It's also worth mentioning in this connection that Ethiopia used to host more than 600,000 Somali refugees in late 1980s and early 1990s. We have also made some efforts to open schools for the refugees. We have managed to enroll about 26,000 children in primary schools, and 2,000 students in secondary schools. This year alone 884,000 Somali refugees have graduated in different skills training in higher learning institutions in Ethiopia. Ethiopia also granted university scholarships in different fields for 271 refugees. Existing project skills training and supporting micro-finance have benefited some refugees too. We shall further strengthen these activities since we believe that this is still small considering the population of refugees we have.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

The most durable solution for refugees will vary according to their particular conditions and of their host countries. It's obvious that there is a need to focus on durable solutions and in this regard, creating conducive conditions in Somalia is imperative. But due to many factors, the conditions are not yet fully ripe. However, providing effective humanitarian assistance in Somalia, particularly in areas where there is relative peace, will save the refugees from difficult journeys to neighbouring countries and help build peace, security and stability in Somalia. Fortunately there are areas in Somalia which are relatively peaceful and stable.

Though very few in numbers, we have observed spontaneous returnees to Somalia from Ethiopia. This should be systematically supported. We should also need to plan for a pilot project of organized voluntary return to selected safe and accessible areas in which services and facilities can be created. I underline the word 'voluntary', We should also need to take caution not to give the impression that we are forcing refugees to repatriate without their wish. The refugees should know that they are our brothers and sisters, and should consider Ethiopia and other neighbouring countries as their home, and that they can return whenever they wish to do so and whenever they are ready. We should consult the refugees properly, assess the situation on the ground with the Government of Somalia, and create conditions that encourage the refugees to return to their places on a voluntary basis. Moreover, to make the return attractive, some basic infrastructure developments like water points, clinics and schools have to be rehabilitated or built in the areas of return.

The document before us, prepared by senior officials of our countries, provides a good basis to give guidance and support to UNHCR on best way of handling Somali refugees in a durable fashion. We should therefore give equal attention to current protection and assistance needs of refugees and to finding long-lasting solutions. While the primary responsibility for dealing with the challenges of the refugees rests with the hosting countries and the Government of Somalia, we believe that there is a greater need for international solidarity and burden-sharing. In this regard, the challenge of mobilizing resources is immense and should be addressed by the augmentation of international assistance. The Global Initiative is a significant development in paving the way for international pledges to tackle the challenges and we hope to see the increased commitment and resolve of the donor community to make a real difference on the ground. I would like to use this opportunity to thank our brother António for all his hard work to make this a reality, especially in mobilizing the international community

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

In conclusion let me reiterate our gratitude to the High Commissioner for the Global Initiative and for his leadership. We count on the support of the donor community for their unreserved support and contributions to improve the lives of the refugees around the world including in Ethiopia. I would also like to reiterate that Ethiopia remains committed to fully discharge its responsibilities in protecting and assisting the refugees in finding durable solutions. I would like to finally say thanks to all our neighbours who are supporting Somalia and also our brother António for supporting Somalia. We need to really strengthen our

support to the Somali Government to make a difference.

I thank you.

Opening remarks by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. António Guterres

Addis Ababa, 20 August 2014

Honorable Prime Minister,
Honorable Ministers and Commissioner,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

When we have a protracted refugee situation that runs for more than two decades, when more than two million Somalis are displaced inside and outside the country, when we see babies being born in Dadaab whose parents were already born in Dadaab, and when at the same time we see the focus of the international media moving from Africa in general and from the Somalia situation in particular, to concentrate more and more on the Middle East and on Ukraine, and when the global media and political attention of the international community are being diverted from this crisis, then I believe the Global Initiative on Somali Refugees is more necessary than ever. And I believe that this meeting, an essential pillar in the development of the Initiative, is an absolutely crucial one.

I think that this is an opportunity for a core group of countries to find common ground for a strategy, a solutions strategy, for Somali refugees. It is also an occasion to express common commitments in relation to those Somali refugees. But it must be a first step in mobilizing the international community for much stronger support - not to the refugees but to Somalia, to strengthen its capacity to overcome its difficulties, and to the host countries and communities facing such a strong impact on their economies and their societies.

I think the international community needs to recognize that without the generosity and the hospitality of Ethiopia, Kenya, Djibouti, Yemen, and Uganda, the tragedy of the Somali refugees would become a total catastrophe. Although the leadership lies with Somalia and the host countries, we should not forget that there is a common responsibility of the international community in relation to Somali refugees. And assuming these responsibilities becomes more necessary than ever, when we try and move from a care and maintenance situation to a solutions strategy approach for Somalis.

We know that the preferred solution for refugees everywhere is voluntary repatriation in safety and

dignity where adequate conditions are met for that to be possible.

We are aware of the very important progress that is being made in Somalia, with the new government, on the way towards elections in 2016, with the New Deal Somalia Compact, with the efforts of AMISOM and of the National Somali Army to create more secure conditions in the country. I think we should praise those efforts. But we are also aware of the fragilities that the process still has, like the insecurity that still exists in large parts of the country and the enormous difficulties in relation to providing conditions for normal economic and social activities. This creates a situation in which I would say we do not yet have the conditions for a massive movement of return to Somalia, but at the same time we should be open to look into opportunities, and to take profit of those opportunities when adequate conditions are met.

In relation to this there are two absolutely key aspects. The first (and I had the opportunity to meet the Prime Minister this morning) is the very strong commitment that has been made by the Government of Somalia in the context of their efforts to build institutions, for the bringing peace to the country, and for the New Deal Compact to create conditions for harmonious development, to consider sustainable voluntary repatriation to be a national priority, to bring all Somalis together. No Government can ignore the conditions of 20% of its population. So this engagement is a very important guarantee for us all. But we also need the international community to fully support this engagement, to fully support the efforts that are being made in creating the conditions for Somalia to overcome its security problems, for Somalia to stabilize its political process and to create the conditions for the development of the country.

At the same time, knowing that massive voluntary repatriation is not possible today, aspect other thing I would like to underline as an extremely positive development is the clear engagement of the neighbouring countries to go on providing asylum to Somalis in need. And allow me, because that's my job as High Commissioner, I need to push for the rights and interests of refugees, and for hopefully also creating conditions to improve those asylum situations whenever possible. We are not discussing local integration here, that is of course a matter of national sovereignty which we fully respect, but we are discussing the improvements that can be done for a more dignified life for refugees, and for a better welfare for them, and for the communities in which they live. I would like to underline that everything that can be done for self-reliance, for more mobility wherever possible,

for better cooperation with local communities, is extremely positive.

Some positive experiences with this need to be mentioned here. For instance the out-of-camp policy that Ethiopia adopts, the scholarships the Honorable Minister just mentioned for Ethiopian universities, the experience in Dollo Ado where refugees and local communities are working together on new farming projects – a lot can be done. I will always advocate with all of you for possible improvements in the conditions of refugees. But I do so knowing that our objective, our goal, is for conditions to be created to enable Somali refugees to return one day and contribute to the reconstruction of their own country.

In this context, I think it is very important that the international community also assumes much stronger responsibilities. Somalia cannot do it without financial support, and the neighbouring countries struggle with the huge impact on their economies and their societies, and with the global impact of the Somali crisis on their security situation. This needs much stronger international solidarity, which includes supporting the projects of the Somali government, solidarity supporting the refugees and supporting the host communities, solidarity supporting the host countries in relation to their security concerns, and solidarity in resettlement opportunities for Somalis. We need an international community much more engaged both in the political process and in the humanitarian process in order to create the conditions for the solutions strategy to be successful. This is an area where the leadership will lie with Somalia, the host countries, and regional organizations like IGAD and the African Union. But the responsibility is a common responsibility of the international community.

Let's be clear. We live in a world where everything has become globalized. The last thing that became global was terror. And to work together for peace and security in Somalia is to work together for peace and security at the global level in our troubled world.

Thank you very much.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed, Prime Minister of Somalia

Addis Ababa, 20 August 2014

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the High Commissioner personally for taking this initiative to renew the region's and the world's attention for that matter to the plight of Somali Refugees. I also give my heartfelt appreciation to the Foreign Minister of Ethiopia for hosting this important event. Further I

make special mention of the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary General, and representatives of AU, IGAD, and ECA whose facilities we are now using.

The over 1 million Somalis who mostly live as refugees as well as another million who are displaced are the result of conflict, drought and famine and other ills afflicting the Somali nation. I want to express the deeply felt gratitude of the Somali people for the asylum accorded to them and for the kind hospitality with which way they are being hosted by their brothers and sisters in the five neighboring countries here represented.

The majority of these refugees and IDPs are unfortunately the most vulnerable in our society: women, children and the elderly. Their needs are massive requiring equally massive levels of assistance which is increasingly becoming difficult to obtain. Whereas we are grateful to donors, and agencies such UNHCR and other sister UN agencies, IOM, NGOs both local and International, for extending help to Somali refugee and IDPs, nevertheless they do not adequately match the needs: witness the chronically underfunded Humanitarian Appeal for Somalia.

Despite many impediments Somali refugees have made significant contributions to their home country for example through life-saving remittances as well as to the countries from which they have received asylum. They are therefore not a burden but people who contribute to the economies of host countries, by using their qualities and skills as survivors and entrepreneurs. These qualities are the ones that made them overcome enormous difficulties; which helped them survive journeys through vast deserts; or by sea on flimsy boats. They have survived human traffickers, they have survived others who have tried to deny them their internationally recognized right to seek asylum. It has made them establish successful communities dubbed 'little Mogadishu' in many cities around the world.

International recognition of the Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia gave impetus to the search for solutions to alleviate the suffering of our people and has led to the setting up of the National Commission for Refugees and IDPs. One of its immediate tasks was to embark on negotiations with Kenya which was hosting nearly 500,000 refugees, the largest group of Somali refugees anywhere in the world. This resulted in the signing on Nov 10th 2013 by GFRS of a Tripartite Agreement for Voluntary Repatriation of Somali refugees living in Kenya. In this respect I recently met the President of Kenya and his Deputy to discuss further the implementation of the agreement which provides the legal framework for the modest, orderly and

voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees. We hope to be able to operationalize its main provisions soon and to enter into similar agreements with other countries hosting Somali refugees who are represented in this meeting, conditions permitting.

Mr. High Commissioner and distinguished participants. I would to assure you that my government is dedicated to removing as many obstacles as possible to repatriation and reintegration of our people in their home country. In this connection we are expanding, with the help of our National Somali Army together with AMISOM, areas of peaceful coexistence, governance and development; we have put together and inter-ministerial task force to mitigate the negative impact of the potentially devastating drought. Our stabilization programme may be slightly delayed but it is on course, our institutions are being rejuvenated whilst new ones are being created, and state building is ongoing. However we need the participation of the international community to equally rededicate themselves to help us further. We understand that competition for resources is keen. But I believe our case requires immediate and special attention. As I said before our needs are enormous and we must not fail to put on solid footing the gains we have all made so far.

For me the Global Initiative is a marker on a journey. The goal however should be the implementation its outcomes.

Finally I wish you successful deliberations and fruitful outcomes.

Thank you.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Aisha L. Abdullahi, Commissioner for Political Affairs, African Union
Addis Ababa, 20 August 2014

Your Excellency the Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia,
Your Excellency Mr. Tedros Gebreyesus, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia,
Your Excellency Mr. Antonio Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,
Your Excellency, Representative of IGAD
Your Excellency UN Secretary General's Special Representative for Somalia
Honorable Ministers
Distinguished invited guests,
Ladies and gentlemen.

It is my pleasure and honor to be with you today at this Ministerial Meeting of the UN High Commissioner's

Global Initiative on Somali Refugees. The African Union has a long standing partnership with the UNHCR and I am confident to say that this partnership has continued to grow from strength to strength. Let me therefore take this opportunity to sincerely commend the High Commissioner for convening this important meeting. It undoubtedly comes at a critical juncture for Somalia and its people.

The African Union has continued to play an important role in Somalia and we will not relent on our responsibilities in that country. We have witnessed some political and security progress amidst continuing concerns, that we must acknowledge. These positive developments, even if not witnessed far and wide have all the same prompted spontaneous and self-sponsored as well as supported returns of Somali refugees in the past year. However Somalia continues to suffer from security as well as impending food crisis that create a high risk of continued or repeated displacement. Indeed, just a little over a month ago, the AU and IGAD launched a Call for Early Action for the Horn, to mobilize necessary response to the worrying early warnings on an impending humanitarian crisis in the country. This situation must remain on our agenda if such returns are to be sustained.

We are gathered here today to sustain dialogue between the Federal Republic of Somalia and the Somali refugees hosting countries on the issue of durable solutions as well as mobilize the support and action of regional and international partners. The Somali case is perhaps the most pressing refugee case on the Continent today. As such, I would like to salute the Governments of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Yemen for showing immeasurable solidarity and support for the Somali refugee population over the past three decades. We recognize the contributions and sacrifices you have made to enable our Somali brothers and sisters to have respite from what they have had to flee their country from, particularly in the face of your own socio-economic developmental, environmental and security concerns. It has been said that “we cannot separate the beauty and goodness of hospitality from its difficulty”.

It has always been the position of the African Union that the continued burden faced by many Member States with regards to the significant refugee populations that they are hosting should be appropriately acknowledged **and** supported. This is where the international community and regional institutions must play a greater role in supporting these countries deal with the security, social, and economic pressures that come with their hospitality. No country should be left to shoulder such burdens alone otherwise states will not be encouraged. This is a challenge I want to throw to UNHCR to not only

seek for open door policies but to also seek for requisite support to that hospitality since it comes with a cost.

I also wish to recall that Member States must on their part adhere to their regional and international obligations with regards to the refugee populations they are hosting and ensure that any measures implemented comply with those obligations fully. We must refocus attention and initiate concrete action on the search for durable and holistic measures to ensure that in the first instance the causes for displacement are addressed and the measures are in place for the voluntary returns of populations.

Without taking too much of your time, I would like to inform you that I organized an African Union High level Roundtable dialogue on Durable Solutions for refugees, in February of this year in Nairobi, Kenya. This meeting brought together partners dealing with refugees in the region, namely IGAD, NRC, UNHCR, IFRC, Kenya Red Cross, OCHA, Save the Children and the government of Kenya among others. The purpose of this roundtable dialogue was to kick start bold, creative and innovative thinking for durable solutions protracted cases, and since we were in the region, the Somali caseload was one of interest. I would like to share with you some of the findings:-

1. The need for resourcing durable solutions - the forum noted that durable solutions for refugees are connected to sustainable economic growth and livelihoods, and as such required significant resources. A number of financial mechanisms such as bonds, microfinance and credit, are available, and so are Diasporas remittances, although still overwhelmingly used for immediate/consumption needs. Nevertheless, there is a lack of an overarching financial architecture which seeks to leverage these various instruments, constituencies, and institutional frameworks and expertise to mobilize resources at the scale necessary. The forum recommended that an appropriate financial architecture for durable solutions be developed.

2. Creative and innovative practices for durable solutions - the forum noted and appreciated innovations being implemented in the region. As such, the forum called for the promotion of evidence-based and experiential approaches which draw lessons from such ongoing processes as well as other case studies of relevance in the region such as the past repatriation of South Sudanese refugees from Kenya and Ethiopia. These should be analyzed and disseminated to provide a guiding tool on returns and reintegration for Member States and other actors across the continent.

3. The meeting called on the international community to support Member States to explore alternative policy

interventions including investment in projects that seek to enhance the socio-economic situation of host communities and local integration for IDPs and where possible refugees unable or unwilling to return to areas of origin. In this regard, the forum called on the AU to link with African policy and financing institutions to identify viable policy interventions and programs that provides alternatives to traditional durable solutions and 'unlock' displacement by focusing on broader development plans that include all citizens and residents within a region

4. On conditions for return - the forum noted the contributions by Member States, the UN and the AU, through various peace, mediation, and stabilization efforts, including UN and AU peace support missions in creating conducive conditions for return. The forum noted that political resolution of conflicts and the resumption of security are key prerequisites for returns. Moreover, other minimal local conditions need to be present such as the availability of basic services and livelihood opportunities, and presence of local good governance. Indeed, participants noted that if returns proceed out of step with, or quicker than state building efforts, they are likely to undermine them. As such, the forum recommended a concerted focus on capacity building and support for local accountable administration, state institutions, and planning processes in areas of return.

I leave you with this few indicative recommendations which I believe are not different for the 2 million Somali refugees spread across the different countries represented in this room. I conclude by reinstating our commitment in supporting the government of Somalia as well as the governments of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda in the search for a sustainable durable solution as provided for in the relevant regional and international instruments.

I thank you for your kind attention and look forward to the outcomes of this meeting.

Statement by H.E. Amb. Mohamed Affey, IGAD Special Envoy to Somalia

Addis Ababa, 20 August 2014

Your Excellences,
Ladies and gentlemen.

Allow me from the onset to commend the High Commissioner for refugees for following up and acting on one of the key recommendations from the High Level Panel held last year in Geneva, that of holding consultations with countries affected by the Somali refugee situation. By hosting the regional Ministerial

meeting of the Global Initiative on Somali refugees in Addis Ababa, the conversation is coming closer home as was envisaged during our discussions last year. I also commend governments of the region for taking up the issues presented within the GISR and encourage concerted and united effort in dealing with this matter.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

Almost all of IGAD member states are hosting significant numbers of Somali refugees and this makes the GISR very crucial for IGAD. The representation in this meeting by member states is varied and rich and will therefore go a long way in building a consensus on the best approaches to find sustainable solutions to displacement and refugee situation in Somalia.

The office of the IGAD Special envoy to Somalia continues to engage with the Somali government on various issues. At the political front, my office is working towards supporting discussions around federalism as a governance option. IGAD member states continue to support peace building efforts in Somalia through contributing troops to AMISOM which supports humanitarian access to the displaced and those most in need. IGAD is also engaging with the Somali government through the Drought Disaster and Resilience Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) towards strengthening communities' resilience that in the long run could prevent displacement and eventually need for asylum. Through this initiative, the Somali government has developed a country programming paper with seven underpinning pillars that go towards building sustainable livelihoods for the Somali population especially those at most risk of drought disaster.

As recognized during the High-level panel, there are three areas that need concerted effort by all stakeholders. They include the need to make the Somali refugee experience meaningful and humane through enhancing their welfare and reducing suffering, creating conditions that could facilitate a meaningful repatriation of Somali refugees and partnering with a broad range of stakeholders especially the 'non-traditional' partners including the all-important Somali Diaspora and the private sector. Concerned member states are encouraged to engage with the GISR towards achieving these ideals.

Ladies and gentlemen.

IGAD is working towards exploring ways of supporting focused livelihood training with the International Organization for Migration and private sector actors in Somalia. This initiative aims at provision of skills that are needed by the private sector and therefore guaranteeing employment. More initiatives like these are needed in both Somalia and in areas of asylum as

the shift from a strict humanitarian to development approach takes shape.

IGAD recognizes the important role that the Somali Diaspora plays in supporting families back home but also keeping many public services available through their entrepreneurial spirit. The engagement with this important constituency in the search for sustainable solutions to the Somali refugees should be consistent and the call for a mapping of the Somali Diaspora around the world needs to be taken up.

This meeting aims at articulating a common ground in search of sustainable solutions for Somali refugees. The recommendations of the two days technical meeting of representatives of concerned countries are crucial in the realization of this objective as they engage on a daily basis with issues of Somali refugees and understand the realities we discuss today. It is also a demonstration of renewed regional commitment to Somali refugees and an assurance that they are not forgotten.

Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen, IGAD will remain engaged in the activities of the GISR that complement other regional efforts towards the stabilization and the search for peace in Somalia. We are keen to follow up on the new commitment towards Somali refugees that will also inform our interventions at the regional level towards the protection and assistance of Somali refugees and the entire population of Somalia.

I thank you.

Statement by Mr. Nicholas Kay, UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia

Addis Ababa, 20 August 2014

Your Excellency Foreign Minister, Federal Republic of Ethiopia,
Your Excellency the High Commissioner for Refugees,
Your Excellency Madam Commissioner,
Ministers and senior officials of the 6 regional countries,
Fellow ambassadors
Ladies and gentlemen

Thank you very much for this opportunity to participate in this important ministerial meeting, and I sincerely congratulate the UNHCR and the Governments here represented for this important initiative. As the head of the integrated UN Mission in Somalia, what is my interest in today's event? I have two interests. First is the international community through the security council has charged me, mandated me with the responsibility of assisting the Federal Republic of Somalia to build its peace and build its state, which is

therefore to create conditions which would allow return of refugees. And my second interest is that I'm deeply conscious that the return of Somalis to Somalia will also be net benefit to the peace building state building process in the country. The Somalis across the world have a great deal to offer to their homeland.

I would like to pay particular tribute to my colleague, the Head of UNHCR in Somalia, Alessandra Morelli, and her team who do a great job day in and day out at some personal risk and displaying personal courage, to assist in this process of creating the conditions and assisting displaced and refugee returns.

So the situation from my perspective in Somalia is that we can see tremendous progress in the last years. The emerging signs of stability are heartening and bode well for the future. The Federal Government is pushing forward with improving governance, reforming the security sector, and building its capacity to deliver vital services to its own people.

Yet, after decades of conflict and turmoil in Somalia, two million of its citizens remain displaced within and outside the country. One message we all hear loud and clear from many Somali refugees is their desire to return to their homeland and contribute to the vital work of building peaceful stable prosperous future. The progress the Federal Government is making with the support of the international community, and I pay special tribute to the contribution of AMISOM and the African Union to delivering greater peace and stability at enormous cost in terms of investment, of effort, and sacrifice to do so. And also I pay tribute to IGAD, I think this is remarkable the effort that is being achieved in Somalia by the international community, remarkable for the great cohesion of the international community and effort there, African Union, United Nations, IGAD, European Union and others.

This progress is significant and it's opening up opportunities for the return of some Somali refugees to their homeland. Of course, many thousands of Somalis have already returned and are now making an important contribution to the progress and prosperity of the nation. We hope that many more will return. In recent weeks in Somalia we have been encouraged by the State formation processes taking place in South West Somalia and in the Central regions. We remain deeply committed to these processes to realize Somalia's vision for 2016, that is, a review of the provisional constitution, agreement on Somalia's federal states, and the holding of elections in 2016. This vision will only be realized if Parliament, the executive and presidency work without delays and with a unity of purpose. There will be many refugees who want to play a full and active role in the political reforms that

Somalia has now started. Supporting those who wish to return voluntarily benefits everybody.

But of course there are many challenges to those who want to make that journey back home. The security situation, I can attest from first-hand experience, remains precarious. And the humanitarian situation has increased the challenges that are facing returnees. Today's meeting is therefore an important opportunity for the international community to discuss the most pressing issues facing Somali refugee and IDP populations. On the one hand it is important that the international community plays a bigger role in sharing responsibility, for instance by increasing resettlement opportunities for Somali refugees, and facilitating the search for innovative solutions. And on the other hand, the international community must continue to offer full and continuing support for Somalia's refugees and IDPs.

I believe the engagement of the Somali diaspora and private sector should be increased. Both have expressed initial support for the aims of the Global Initiative on Somali Refugees. I hope that today we'll be able to agree a renewed commitment to helping Somali refugees and IDPs to play an active role in the progress that Somalia is now making. The meeting comes at a critical time for Somalia as the country pushes forward with political reforms and military offensive aimed at creating lasting peace and stability for all Somalis.

Personally, as the head of an integrated UN mission in Somalia, I can assure you that the I and the 1,300 UN staff working on the ground working across Somalia every day, shall continue to do everything in our power on the ground to support peace building and state building. I look forward to today's discussion on how the international community works together and best supports the voluntary returns of all Somali refugees and IDPs to their homes and communities.

I thank you enormously for your attention.

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Abdirahman Duale Beyle,
Minister for Foreign Affairs and International
Cooperation, Federal Republic of Somalia**
Addis Ababa, 20 August 2014

Excellency Foreign Minister of Ethiopia,
Honourable High Commissioner,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great honour for me and my delegate to be invited to address such a momentous meeting on a Global Initiative for Somali Refugees.

From the outset, I join our Prime Minister in expressing, on behalf of our Somali people as a whole, and in particular those displaced inside or outside the country, our deep gratitude to the countries in the region represented at this meeting. Needless to say, they have made great sacrifices for the Somali people: on the one hand shouldering the heavy burden of hosting our refugees for all these years despite their limited resources; and on the other hand making no less sacrifices in joining the SNA/AMISOM effort to defeat the enemies of peace, stability and development in Somalia. This is what we expect from our brothers. This is what Somalia would have done too in normal circumstances and it will return favour when its turn comes.

Secondly, we would like to thank the international community for all its efforts to help restore peace and security in Somalia since the collapse of the Somali State and shouldering the humanitarian needs of our displaced people inside and outside the country.

Thirdly, we have to express our profound appreciation to UNHCR and other organizations for their unfailing service to our people. In this regards, our special thanks are due to the Country Representative of UNCHR, Ms. Alessandra Morelli and her team. We have come to admire and appreciate her dedication, and at times putting her life on the line in the service of our people. Her example should serve as an inspiration and role model to others.

Your Excellency and Honourable High Commissioner. Coming now to the subject of Somali refugees worldwide, the point of departure is to appreciate what they constitute for us in terms of numbers, and socio-economic and political implications.

Somali refugees, together with IDPs, represent a significant proportion of the overall Somali population. They comprise farmers, fishermen, pastoralists and generations of educated and skilled young people who could contribute to our economic and social development. Our people have not willy-nilly opted to become refugees out of choice. They have been forced to leave their country, often at immense cost to them, because of the dire situations they faced in our country. Rather than languish in refugee camps, our refugees would have willingly and voluntarily returned home if the conditions that forced them in the first place did not prevail and if durable solutions for their resettlement are on offer. It is therefore in Somalia's great interest that our refugees in the region return to their country of origin once conditions conducive to their return are in place in their areas of return.

In terms of initiatives to deal with refugees and IDPs, the Federal Government of Somalia has taken the necessary key steps for dealing with displacement, inside and outside the country.

Firstly, we have established the Somali National Agency for Refugees and IDPs which is now operational. Secondly, we have entered into a Tripartite Agreement with the Kenya Government and UNHCR for the eventual voluntary return of Somalis refugees when the conditions are right. The Technical Commission created to implement the Tripartite Agreement is already engaged in the repatriation of some spontaneous voluntary returns to their areas of origin. And if this pilot initiative is successful, we expect others to follow their example. Similar tripartite arrangements could be made with other countries hosting Somali refugees when the time is ripe and conditions inside Somalia permit.

Your Excellency and Honourable Commissioner.

By conclusion, let me once again, reiterate the determination of the Somali Federal Government to meet its national obligations to Somali refugees and IDPs to the extent permitted by its limited capacities and resources. But without regional and international solidarity, what the Somali Government can achieve can only be limited. In this regard, we, as government and people of Somalia, are greatly heartened that the countries in the region hosting Somali refugees have once again reaffirmed their solidarity with the Somali people in adopting the Addis Ababa New Commitment.

We are grateful that this Addis Ababa New Commitment puts equal emphasis on the pivotal roles of humanitarian and development aid as well as institutional capacity building as essential pillars to the overall stability in Somalia and for the return of Somali refugees.

Given this New Commitment at the regional level, we are optimistic that there will be a similar solidarity at the international level through the Global Initiative on Somali Refugees that the Honourable High Commissioner has launched.

I thank you Your Excellency and Honourable High Commissioner and distinguished delegates.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Hassan Omar Mohamed Bourhan, Minister of Interior, Republic of Djibouti
Addis Ababa, 20 August 2014

Honorable Ministers,
Mr. High Commissioner for Refugees,
Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is an honor for me to address this meeting in order to present the refugee situation in the Republic of Djibouti as well as the challenges my country has to deal with in order to ensure the protection of and assistance to those persons who had been forced to leave their countries to find refuge here.

The Republic of Djibouti is known for its political stability in a region plagued by endless wars and internal conflicts, and this is in general due to, I should say, the foresight of its leaders, especially of His Excellency Mr. Ismael Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti.

With regard to the history of the first refugees, Djibouti began receiving them when the country had just gained independence in 1977. Tens of thousands of persons have since then found refuge in my country while fleeing the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia.

In the 80s and 90s, several tens of thousands equally flocked to neighboring countries, forced by socio-political problems and internal conflicts in the region. At the height of those crises, the total number of refugees in Djibouti represented up to a quarter of its national population even if all of them were not in the camps for refugees with a formally determined status.

This is to show you the sacrifices made by the people of Djibouti to offer help and assistance, in spite of their limited means, to their brothers and sisters in a region often plagued by problems and recurrent natural disasters.

The Republic of Djibouti was able to assume its responsibilities with the support of the international community coordinated by UNHCR. Several camps have since then been opened (Holl-Holl, Ali-Addeh, Assamo, Aour-Aoussa) to shelter and support these populations. Sometimes towns, like Ali-Sabieh and Dikhil, have themselves welcomed refugees into their midst thereby providing access to the services generally available to the local population.

At the same time, the Republic of Djibouti and UNHCR implemented solutions to try to solve the problems which could have led to the protracted refugee situation. It is in this regard that over 19,000 refugees from northern Somalia (Somaliland) were repatriated in dignity and security between 2002 and 2007. At the same time, tens of thousands of refugees were resettled in countries like the United States, Canada, Australia and some European countries.

Since 2006/2007, my country has been recording the steady arrival of refugees fleeing the outbreak of violence in southern Somalia, and natural disasters (drought, famine) which repeatedly affect the country. 16,644 refugees from South-Central Somalia were received into the Republic of Djibouti between 2009 and 2013. The number of refugees from South and Central Somalia has clearly decreased over the past few years with the increasing stabilization of the country.

We salute the efforts and commitments of the international community to restore peace and security through actions to consolidate peace, especially peacekeeping missions which Djibouti is part of.

However, we urge the international community to recommit itself strongly and decisively to Somalia in order to prevent the political and security threat posed by the emergence of armed, extremist and violent groups such as Al-Shabaab, determined to hinder the peace process and worsen the suffering of the Somali population, from causing Somalia to slide into darkness and chaos.

Currently, Djibouti hosts 20,695 refugees and 3,814 asylum seekers officially registered with the National Assistance Office for Refugees and Disaster Stricken People (NAORDSP, known as ONARS) and UNHCR, as well as tens of thousands of migrants who use the Republic of Djibouti as a destination or transit country in their search for a better life.

Over 20,000 refugees from the region (made up of more than 19,000 Somalis) live in the Ali-Addeh and Holl-Holl camps where UNHCR and the ONARS are implementing a multi-sector assistance. About 4,000 refugees and asylum seekers also live in the urban areas. At this point, I thank the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) which has been undertaking, since 2013, assistance activities in terms of providing shelter and sanitation facilities for refugees in partnership with UNHCR and ONARS.

UNHCR and ONARS are currently making preparations for a verification exercise scheduled to start from November 2014. This exercise is necessary in order to obtain reliable figures about the beneficiary population, on their profiles, and thereby better target the assistance programs and the search for durable solutions.

Djibouti and UNHCR are also working on a 5-year strategy, with the key component being the empowerment of refugees as the driving force in the search for solutions. This strategy, which covers sectors like water, shelter, hygiene and sanitation, access to secure energy, mixed migrations, education and

livelihood opportunities, is going to be the backbone of UNHCR's operations in Djibouti for the next 5 years.

Besides the search for traditional solutions like repatriation or resettlement, the increased empowerment of refugees aims at presenting other solutions and possibilities to the beneficiary population which could thereby gain an important level of integration. The implementation of this strategy will obviously require the mobilization of not only the traditional partners of UNHCR but also new partners in order to guarantee its success.

Finally, it goes without saying that all the desired solutions and strategies being proposed here and there would not bear fruits if the international community does not redouble its efforts at reinforcing security and establishing lasting peace in Somalia. Significant changes are taking place in Somalia. Let us continue on this path and step up our support for the country so as to definitely set it back on the path of stability and development, which will be a guarantee of security in the region.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
I thank you for your attention and interest.

Statement by Mr. Ali Bunow Korane, Chairman, Refugee Affairs Committee, Government of Kenya
Addis Ababa, 20 August 2014

Distinguished delegates
Ladies and gentlemen.
Kenya is a signatory to the 1951 UN Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention relating to refugee protection and has remained steadfast in receiving, hosting and protecting refugees within its borders.

The Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA) was formed by the enactment of The Refugee Act in 2006, to manage and protect refugees in Kenya. This Act is currently being amended to conform to the Kenya Constitution. The Refugee Bill 2014 is currently awaiting enactment by Parliament.

Kenya hosts a large number of refugees and asylum seekers from at least 19 countries. Kakuma hosts over 172,000 refugees owing to the ongoing South Sudan conflict. Dadaab refugee complex hosts approximately 380,000 refugees. About 40,000 refugees remain in urban areas. This brings the total to over 600,000 refugees hosted in Kenya.

Promotion of durable solutions: In recognition of the need to support the future lives of the refugees and in

contributing to the rebuilding of their country upon return, the Government of Kenya supports the provision of education for refugees. There are also tertiary, vocational training centres and recently a university campus established in Dadaab. This over the years has created a huge pool of human resources that will go a long way in rebuilding Somalia.

The Government of Kenya continues to promote and facilitate durable solutions to refugee protection and management. They include:

- i) Resettlement to third countries such as US, Canada, Australia, Norway, and Sweden among others. The bulk of the resettlement work is done by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The Kenya Government through DRA mainly issues refugee ID cards, which is a pre-requisite for resettlement. The Government also issues Exit Visas for refugees leaving the country.
- ii) Repatriation to the country of origin. There are registration desks in the camps that are managed by DRA and UNHCR for those who would like to be voluntarily repatriated to their countries of origin. This follows an assessment mission conducted by the Government of Kenya, refugee leaders and UNHCR to establish the conditions and preparedness of possible receiving areas. The most recent of the series of tripartite meetings and visits took place between 4th and 15th August 2014. The feedback from the 'Go and See, Come and Tell' visits has been overwhelmingly positive. This is as evidence by the registration to repatriate up to 5,000 refugees in the week following.
- iii) Local integration in Kenya may be considered on a case by case basis as per the law as established.

Repatriation of Somali refugees: Following the signing of the Tripartite Agreement between Kenya, Somalia and UNHCR in November 2013, the phased repatriation of Somali refugees is expected to start soon. In close consultation with the Government of Somalia and UNHCR, capacity building efforts are underway to ensure adequate preparedness to receive the returnees. For instance, training was held for 6 staff of the Somali refugee agency by the DRA Kenya in August. Such initiatives will continue.

In the spirit of solidarity and burden-sharing, the Government of Kenya calls upon the international community to establish the necessary support for social infrastructure for it to sustain the returnees. It should be noted that a considerable number of refugees estimated at over 100,000 have already returned spontaneously and voluntarily to Somalia within the last one year. The number consists primarily of those who came to Kenya during the 2011/2012 drought in the Horn of Africa and skilled workers going to take advantage of the improving security situation – they

work in organizations and do private business in Somalia.

Challenges:

1. The threat of terrorism remains a major challenge for the government and the people of Kenya.
2. Environmental degradation of refugee hosting areas
3. Declining budgetary support from the donor communities in the protection and management of refugees.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. The Government of Kenya welcomes the Addis Ababa Commitment towards Somali refugees and reiterates its commitment to supporting durable solutions to refugees and especially those from Somalia.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Hillary Onek (MP), Minister of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, Republic of Uganda

Addis Ababa, 20 August 2014

The High Commissioner, UNHCR,
Hon. Ministers,
Invited Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Warm greetings to you all from the Republic of Uganda, the Pearl of Africa!

I wish to extend my gratitude to the High Commissioner for inviting me to this beautiful and historic city of Addis Ababa to discuss the durable solutions to the Somali refugees in the Region. Indeed the problem of Somali refugees evolved out of the political instability that culminated from the collapse of the Somali State after the fall of Siad Barre in 1990s. Somali refugees are scattered in different parts of the region running away from the political turmoil in their country. Currently Uganda hosts over 400,000 refugees of which 22,000 are from Somalia. Over 1 million Somalis are internally displaced. The situation of refugees has not improved significantly following the slow pace of stabilization efforts in Somalia.

Besides the refugee crisis, the anarchy in Somali has had spillover effects that include; terrorism, proliferation of small arms, piracy and other transnational crimes to the region, Uganda inclusive. Early foreign interventions in the '90s to stabilize Somalia proved futile. Uganda in the Pan African spirit spearheaded efforts by the African Union to restore order in Somalia by deploying troops in the country under AMISOM in March 2007. Since then a number of countries have joined the Mission ie. Burundi, Sierra Leone, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya.

Since 2007, AMISOM has made significant progress in the security and political domains. Notable achievements include the dislodgement of Al-Shabaab from Mogadishu and other strategic towns like Baidoa, Kismayo and Jowhar among others which continues to expand the authority of the Central Government. They have also overseen a smooth political transition from Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to Somalia Federal Government (SFG). The improved security situation has provided a conducive environment for development in Somalia to take root. This has encouraged Somalis in diaspora to return home to rebuild their country. Flights and dockings into Mogadishu have more than doubled. Piracy off the Somali coast has reduced to a minimum level due to improved security situation on the mainland and efforts by international maritime forces. AMISOM has facilitated building of government institutions like legislature, judiciary civil service and security forces among others. AMISOM has facilitated humanitarian activities as well as providing limited aid in form of medical care, clean water and minor road repairs among others. They have helped secure key government installations and infrastructure including State House, airport, Parliament and seaport among others. They provide VIP and escort duties, and lately Uganda has deployed a UN Guard battalion to protect the UN premises and humanitarian workers in Mogadishu.

Despite the aforementioned achievements, a number of challenges continue to affect efforts for durable solutions to refugee crisis. These include isolated incidents of insecurity in liberated areas and continued hold onto some areas by Al-Shabaab terrorists, continued political disharmony arising from clan interests that over-ride national interests, lack of effective administrative structures in liberated areas, lack of an effective coordination mechanism for the rebuilding State institutions, the absence of some partners and organizations within the existing mechanism, lack of predictable funding by the international community, poor infrastructure particularly roads impeding delivery of humanitarian aid especially to rural areas, the slow pace of social services delivery, and hindrance of access to humanitarian activities by Al-Shabaab in areas under their control.

As you will appreciate, Uganda continues to maintain an open refugee policy since the Second World War when we first hosted over 7,000 Polish refugees in the late 1940s. It is worth noting that given the global security dynamics, Uganda continues to be a haven and champion of peace in the region. This has been reinforced by her glowing spirit of Pan Africanism as evidenced in a number of pacification efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, Somalia, Burundi, the recent rapid response in

Juba - South Sudan - following the mutiny in December last year and the medical contingent to Liberia to manage the Ebola epidemic. Uganda calls upon the International community to support these efforts.

The Government of Uganda renews its commitment to continued protection of Somali refugees, and has come up with the following strategies:

- The Refugee and Host Empowerment Framework (REHOPE) which is a self-reliance and resilience strategic framework for refugees and host communities in Uganda. This approach is a multi-sectoral partnership between government of Uganda (GoU), humanitarian and development partners to enhance coordination of transitional programming from emergency towards development with the view to integrate local service delivery, and joint resource mobilization for refugee hosting districts. The REHOPE is being developed to be symmetrical with the National Development Plan Two (NDP- II - Vision 2040), and district development plans and frameworks emphasizing strong working relationship with Government in the implementation of the Framework.

- A specific program for Urban Youth in Kampala where Government, UNHCR, JICA are empowering refugee youth such as the Welcome Somali Girls Group in Kampala which supports young refugee girls learn leadership skills, build a peer support system and acquire entrepreneurship skills.

- Given the enabling refugee policy / legislation, quite a number of Somali refugees in the rural refugee settlements like Nakivale are today engaged in self-initiated small business ventures such as transport (bus services) and commercial trading. In addition, Government, UNHCR and partners are also supporting Somali women and youth groups through a comprehensive range of livelihoods and self-reliance assistance, ranging from skills and business training and start-up kits.

- Government continues to secure the land and protect the environment to allow the smooth running of the said livelihood programmes. Population dynamics require a delicate balance in providing land for nationals as well as refugees.

- Government of Uganda has proposed to UNHCR the notion of a Security Enhancement Package [SEP]. With this government hopes to improve on the civilian nature of policing in the various settlements. This calls for the deployment of not only police personnel, but also tools and equipment to enable them carry out effective policing of the settlements.

- Re-introduction of mobile courts to bring legal services closer to the people of concern. This was piloted, however, sustainability was a challenge due to lack of budget lines to avail the requisite resources. I should note that the results of this system are positively enormous.

DURABLE SOLUTIONS - THE UGANDA PERSPECTIVE

The Government of Uganda clearly understands that the most durable solution to the refugee phenomenon is repatriation. Repatriation should be voluntary, in dignity and sustainable.

Secondly, increased resettlement opportunities both without and within Africa should be made available. Government of Uganda therefore calls upon African Union to champion the cause of African governments offering resettlement opportunities within Africa supported by UNHCR and UNHCR to engage countries elsewhere to increase resettlement opportunities.

Thirdly, exploring other alternative legal means of stay as a way to end living in refugee status, should be tested. These may include regularizing ones stay in a country following immigration procedures, ie. obtaining visas, residence permits, dual citizenship, and in the greater spirit of Pan Africanism, open up to naturalization, but giving due cognizance to individual state political, social and economic dynamics.

Lastly, my Government believes that the international community should mobilize requisite resources to build the capacity of the Somali Federal Government to embark on the journey of receipt and resettlement of its returning nationals and IDPs in a sustainable manner.

I wish to reiterate my earlier submission that Uganda's refugee policy remains magnanimous to all those deserving protection as established in both the International, Regional Conventions and within Uganda's refugee legislation.

I thank you all and God bless.

Statement by H.E. Mr Ameer Salem Ali Al-Aidroos, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Yemen

Addis Ababa, 20 August 2014

His Excellency Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus,
Foreign Minister of Ethiopia,
His Excellency António Guterres, High Commissioner for Refugees,
Their Excellencies and Heads of Delegation,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good morning.

Let me at the beginning highly thank the UNHCR for their invitation and for arranging this important meeting, and thank the Ethiopian Government for their gracious reception.

Ladies and gentlemen.

This meeting comes after a high-level meeting that was held in Geneva in November 2013. That meeting discussed the situation of Somali refugees, challenges facing refugees, suitable options for improving conditions of Somali refugees and developing their capacities to help them participate effectively in host communities they are living in and their home communities once they are back, and the importance of increasing international aid, attracting more attention to their suffering and contributing to finding suitable solutions.

The notable improvement in the political and security situation inside Somalia, after a new parliament and a new president were elected, enhances our hope that solutions for the Somali problem in general and the problem of Somali refugees in particular are possible, as long as Somali parties themselves are willing to make concessions and to agree on ways to restore security and stability to the Somali State, and as long as the international community has honest intentions to help in this regard; particularly after Somalia had been ignored by international community for more than two decades of wars and fighting that caused so much destruction and pushed millions of Somali people to flee and migrate.

Ladies and gentlemen.

Though it is still going through a significant transition in its modern history and despite the great political, economic and security challenges it has been facing since 2011, Yemen has always taken the lead in aiding and helping brothers in Somalia; either by receiving hundreds of thousands of refugees in last two decades or by continuous political efforts to mediate national reconciliation in Somalia and bringing different Somali parties together into dialogue in order to restore security and stability to Somalia and put an end to the sufferings of Somali people at home and abroad. Yemen has received more than 250,000 Somali refugees according to UNHCR's records, in addition to 750,000 unregistered migrants from the Horn of Africa. Today, Yemen experiences a new phenomenon of increase in illegal migrants, whose number exceeded one million. This doubles the economic, security and social burden borne by the Yemeni Government, particularly as there are more than 450,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) as a result of internal crises. Yemen is still adopting the open-door policy towards Somali refugees, who receive all care, attention and special treatment; they are offered all the same basic services as Yemeni people based on concepts of brotherhood, neighborliness and humanity, but also out of Yemen's adhering to relevant international conventions.

In spite of all this, aid offered to Yemen from international organizations and donors in relation to

refugees is still very limited and insufficient. It cannot keep in pace with the numbers of refugees, with the increase in illegal migrants or with different circumstances and challenges faced by Yemen. Therefore, the Government of Yemen continues to call upon international organizations and donors to increase aid and double efforts to assist refugees in Yemen and enhancing Yemeni Government's efforts to cope with such challenges.

Praising the Global Initiative for Somali Refugees (GISR) launched by UNHCR – under which this ministerial meeting is being held – and praising the positive role and efforts of UNHCR to support Somali and other refugees, the Yemeni Government hopes this meeting will bring about desired results, endorse the results of the technical meeting held during the past two days, and endorse the Addis Ababa Commitment so as to help find suitable solutions for Somali refugees. These solutions should include encouraging voluntary repatriation by Somali refugees and establishing safe places in Somalia; a matter that was stressed and recommended by the Sana'a declaration issued by the Regional Conference for Refuge and Migration from the Horn of Africa to Yemen in November 2013. However, the Yemeni Government believes this can only be achieved through effective and serious participation from all Somali parties, in addition to actual involvement by the international community and donors in offering reasonable, acceptable solutions that can be implemented. The Yemeni Government also stresses again that all solutions, irrespective of their honesty and seriousness, can only bear fruit if the final goal is to help Somali brothers and sisters. These solutions should assist on-going efforts of the Somali President and Government in restoring security and stability and normalizing the situation of state institutions so that Somalia can be an effective member of the regional and international community.

Thank you.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Negash Kebret, Director General, International Organisations Directorate General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Ethiopia

Addis Ababa, 20 August 2014

Mr. High Commissioner,
Your Excellency the Prime Minister of the Federal Government of Somalia,
Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished Delegation Heads,
Delegation members,
Agency Partners from the African Union, IGAD and the United Nations,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

As we know, the principal objective of the High Commissioner's Global Initiative on Somali Refugees is to rally new impetus to find meaningful, transformative and durable solutions for the nearly 1 million Somali refugees in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Yemen. How these five countries, along with the country of origin, Somalia, would move forward on that issue is what the technical experts representing them, UNHCR, AU, IGAD and ECA have met on Monday 18 August and yesterday, Tuesday 19 August 2014 under the co-chairmanship of the Government of Ethiopia and UNHCR to elaborate proposals for consideration, endorsement and adoption by the Ministerial Meeting today.

The results of our deliberations are contained in two substantively identical documents which I have the pleasant task, as co-chair of the experts' meeting, to present for your consideration. The first of the documents is one we have named *'The Addis Ababa Commitment Towards Somali Refugees'*. The second is the *'Communique'* through which the results of the Ministerial Meeting would be publicly announced starting with a press conference already this afternoon by the co-chairs of this meeting accompanied by the six delegation heads and later disseminated in national, regional and global media.

In presenting these documents for your consideration, I will briefly explain the process of how they were arrived at and what they contain.

As the experts worked to elaborate the proposals I am presenting on their behalf for your consideration today, each State participant, starting with Somalia, in the first instance provided an overview of the situation it faces.

Somalia's overview included a description of the overall political, security and humanitarian situation in the country today. The delegation highlighted internal displacement as an even more immediately compelling humanitarian preoccupation. It reiterated the Somali Government's commitment to receive back home its citizens but also the different challenges which face the question of return. The main point underlined by the delegation was that conditions were still variable across Somalia, and the Government did not have the capacity to receive and absorb the massive or sudden return home of 1 million refugees. It underlined the need of working to create conditions that would feasibly accommodate return as the pivotal action called for.

In this respect, as far as the delegation was concerned, supporting the establishment of the capacity of the Government of Somalia to address all the questions which would create or contribute to those conditions

was the ultimate imperative. The delegation also urged flexible, creative or alternative approaches by asylum Governments on a number of questions, including greater freedom of movement and freer inter-border mobility for Somalis all of which would add up to the special solutions which the situation calls for.

The asylum countries then followed and overviewed the number, history and trends of the Somali refugees each State is hosting; the accomplishments which have been realized in catering to their needs and situation; the material, social and economic condition of the refugees; the challenges being encountered by the asylum countries and the consequences of refugee hosting and presence; and the legal, policy and operational measures they have implemented in addressing the situation.

The fact that the survival, sustainability and solutions needs of the refugees are not adequately met because, principally, of funding limitations emerged as a cross-cutting pre-occupation. Likewise the prospect of another drought/famine cycle which would predictably produce yet more or new Somali refugees and internally displaced persons. The implications of this situation in respect of the search for durable solutions whether in the context of asylum or return of the refugees to Somalia formed a key question of the deliberations.

The discussions were fully engaged, highly participative, open, frank and serious. They took place on the basis of equality, fairness and mutual respect among all the participants. On some of the questions, there was from the outset convergence in analysis, views and what we would be recommending to the Ministers. On others – especially the questions of voluntary repatriation and local integration - the diverse approaches, perspectives, nuances or vision of the respective State participants could be seen.

In the end, consensus was fundamentally reached on most of the questions under debate. In particular, let me underline that everything in the “Addis Ababa Commitments” we are presenting for your consideration and endorsement was fully agreed by all the participants. The participants further agreed that we should thus unanimously recommend to you, the Principals, to endorse and adopt the document. On their behalf, I am thus presenting the “Addis Ababa Commitments” accordingly.

Allow me briefly to describe what is contained in the “Commitment”. The document begins with a short resume, drawing from the preoccupations highlighted by the delegations in their overviews mentioned earlier, of the Somali refugee question in the five countries represented at this meeting. Against the background of

those preoccupations, it elaborates a series of commitments that the six countries and agency partners represented in the meeting would be undertaking for themselves collectively to better address the situation of the Somali refugees they host.

Key among these is the commitment to continue keeping borders open, receiving Somali refugees, making available asylum and international protection for them and doing all possible to improve the rights, social and economic situation of the refugees. On the other hand, the challenges and problems governments face in meeting and exercising their obligations are highlighted for attention. These range from threats to national security and capacity gaps to the consequences of hosting refugees including environmental degradation and tensions over limited natural resources.

With regard to voluntary repatriation, the commitment to adhere to the voluntary nature of return in conditions of safety and dignity has been strongly underlined. The consensus was that, overall, the conditions for massive repatriation do not for the moment exist. The document thus calls for attention to be dedicated to creating conditions in Somalia which would make voluntary repatriation attractive and feasible. At the same time, recognizing that there are Somali refugees who are returning spontaneously to Somalia or seeking support to repatriate, a commitment is proposed to support in all feasible ways such spontaneous returns while being attentive to the complications which unsuccessful returns would create for the sub-region as a whole.

On local integration, the discussions of the problem of refugees caught in unending exile or lack of opportunities led to the formulation of an approach which, while reiterating the sovereign privilege of Governments to determine questions such as the naturalization of refugees as citizens, nevertheless would commit the respective Governments to readiness to consider all other possible and positive options or alternatives.

Thirdly, the document formulates a number of commitments which address particular realities, questions and challenges in Somalia, for instance that solutions for Somali refugees necessarily entail working for solutions for Somali IDPs and that, therefore, equivalent efforts should be made for the latter. Early warning on the signs of another drought and responding to them in a timely manner are highlighted. The point is also made that only a comprehensive, long-lasting and effective solution to the overall political, governance, security, social and economic challenges will assure the conditions against new or further displacements and for

the sustainable voluntary return home of Somali refugees.

Fourthly, the Commitments, first, appreciate the support that the international community, particularly donors, has extended for the benefit of Somali refugees and then make a number of calls for renewed commitment and actions in this domain, the key ones of which pertain to the enhancement of international solidarity and responsibility-sharing. The call to provide more adequate financial support for Somali refugee and IDP programmes and also to increase resettlement places for Somali refugees are the most important in this respect.

The Commitments conclude by speaking about the way forward. Governments would commit to working with each other, sub-regional, regional and international partners, actors and stakeholders in a regionally coordinated manner to realize the proposed commitments. The results of other sub-regional or regional meetings or initiatives addressing Somali refugees would also be implemented as relevant. The participation of the refugees themselves, and the Somali diaspora at large are specially underscored.

With respect to the next step of the GISR, UNHCR is enjoined to elaborate and share a Plan of Action Work leading, first, to the successful conclusion of the GISR process and, secondly, for implementing the results.

Honourable Ministers, that is a summary of the new commitments which we have together unanimously agreed to recommend for your consideration. We believe that the proposed commitments represent a strong affirmation of what is being done already and important new ideas which would truly make a crucial, transformative difference for Somali refugees who are today trapped in a limbo. Once adopted by this Meeting, the Governments and partners represented here would be committing themselves to move forward in the search for durable solutions for Somali refugees in the sub-region in those terms. On behalf of the experts, I invite you to endorse and adopt the commitments.

Thank you.