

67th meeting of the Standing Committee
Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme
Kelly T. Clements, Deputy High Commissioner
Room XIX, Palais des Nations
21-22 September 2016
*Introductory remarks to Agenda Item 2(a): Finance, Oversight, and
Management*

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Thank you for welcoming me here. Please allow me to express my thanks as well to my colleague, the Assistant High Commissioner for Operations Mr. George Okoth-Obbo, for providing introductory remarks earlier today.

As you can appreciate, the New York summit was a rare opportunity – perhaps unique in our lifetimes - for the international community to meet and focus on how to improve the international response to large movements of refugees and migrants. I am proud to report that it has resulted in, to quote the High Commissioner, “a political commitment of unprecedented force and resonance”. The New York Declaration is a meaningful step forward towards filling a perennial gap in the international system and truly sharing responsibility for refugee protection. The blueprint for

making this happen, the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (or “CRR” for short), is a key part of the Declaration that UNHCR has been tasked with developing and initiating. Needless to say, this is a pivotal moment on the world stage, and our organization has been called upon to help lead the way forward.

Mr. Chairman,

We must be prepared to take advantage of this historic opportunity, despite the challenging context described earlier by the Assistant High Commissioner for Operations. It is therefore more important than ever that UNHCR operate as efficiently and effectively as possible. The outgoing and incoming Chairpersons for the Independent Audit and Oversight Committee (IAOC) will discuss next some of the progress we are making in this regard.

Based in part on IAOC’s insights as well as feedback from various bodies—including this Standing Committee itself—we have recently undertaken a comprehensive review of our oversight functions. This review is designed to strengthen individual functions as well as to improve how they coordinate with each other. This coordination is especially

important for ensuring that our oversight of separate issues throughout the organization ultimately culminates into a comprehensive—and critical—look at how UNHCR functions. I am confident that the benefits of this process will be manifold: a lighter oversight burden on our field colleagues, less overlap between functions, and a more strategic process for identifying, analysing, and resolving systemic inefficiencies. These benefits are necessary if we are to continue to maximize available resources on behalf of the people we serve.

Part of this rationalisation involves strengthening our involvement with the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). I have discussed this process, and the broad reforms undertaken, at length with both the Chief of our Audit Service, whom you heard from earlier today, and the current Chairperson of the IAOC. I would like to thank both of them for their valuable inputs and ongoing engagement in this process.

Mr. Chairman,

Structured and systematic risk management is an important control function and remains in the focus of the Executive Office. Our Enterprise Risk Management unit continues the necessary efforts to achieve quality risk analysis and to organically embed the outcome in management processes.

While some good practices have already emerged, more is being done to further improve risk management practices in the organization. UNHCR's Chief Risk Officer will provide more information on this process later.

In this difficult climate, we must reach out to engage all sectors of society. This marks the first year that we have had an agenda item at Standing Committee devoted to our private sector partnerships. These relationships have become increasingly important in recent years. While they yield much more than funding, to be clear, the increase in funding is notable: this year, we expect to raise \$310 million, more than fourteen times the amount we did in 2006. Almost half of this year's total is expected to be un-earmarked funds. And, as I mentioned earlier, the private sectors offers a promising range of expertise and technical capabilities that we are beginning to leverage. UNHCR's Director of External Relations and Head

of the Private Sector Partnerships Service will offer more insights on this topic later.

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Once again, I thank you for welcoming me here today. I am happy to be here to benefit from the valuable discussions we have planned in this the 67th session of the Standing Committee.