

Remarks for the 74th Standing Committee meeting
Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme
Kelly T. Clements, Deputy High Commissioner
Room XVII, Palais des Nations
5-7 March 2019

Mister Chairperson, Excellencies,

In the interest of time, I will limit these remarks to the most pertinent elements related to the broader management and transformation of the organization, and my colleagues will complement under specific agenda items.

Many of you will already be familiar with our ongoing change process, especially in regards to regionalization and decentralization. You will recall that the High Commissioner announced at the 69th session of the Executive Committee in October 2018 that Regional Bureaux will be moved from Geneva to their respective regions, and redesigned and equipped to provide stronger support and oversight at the country and regional levels.

Since ExCom we have not only developed but begun implementing our roadmap. We have identified and communicated the location of our seven new Bureaux, and held extensive consultations with colleagues, sister agencies, partners, and governments alike. We have a separate agenda item, 3C, where we will discuss further the implementation of the decentralization plan.

Change, however, is about more than bureaus and locations; it is about transforming how we protect, respond, include, empower and solve. The physical relocation and functional restructuring of the Bureaux is only one component of a broader change process, and it is within that context which I will situate my opening remarks today.

Change, also, is about people. We fully understand that the process is challenging for many colleagues, and we can expect some turbulence in the coming months as we consolidate this transformation. These developments have and will affect many colleagues and their families in profoundly personal ways, and, with strong support from leadership, including dedicated resources from the Change Team and the Division of Human Resources, we will continue to do our best to mitigate the impact. It is important that we get this right, including strengthening our workforce at the country and regional levels, and more fundamentally delivering better results to the people we serve.

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Excellencies,

The context of UNHCR's transformation is inseparable from the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees and the implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, which no doubt my colleagues Volker Turk and Daniel Endres will touch upon under Agenda Items 8 and 9.

This brings me to the first component of change: partnerships. In order to strengthen our work with partners, including both with sister agencies and national development institutions, we must situate our change process within the context of broader reform of the United Nations Development System (UNDS). This process promotes greater efficiencies and collaboration within the UN, and further devolution of decision-making authority to the field, very much in line with UNHCR's own direction.

Therefore, if we are to leverage protection and solutions for refugees, we will need to strengthen our capacities to engage in the structures and processes of the UN at country and regional level. In particular, enhanced UN Regional Centres will have a critical role to play in determining what happens at country-level and how UN Development Assistance Frameworks are shaped and monitored over time, as well as how they inform sub-regional development strategies and decision-making. While not a development agency, we intend to continue to engage consistently and constructively in these regional processes and fora, and to lead on issues of forced displacement, mixed movements and protection.

There will be further discussion on the programmatic and partnership elements of UN reform under agenda item 5, which will highlight the importance of strengthening the partnership approach already well developed on the humanitarian side, not least with our NGO partners. While UNHCR welcomes the UNDS reform, we will always retain our commitment to complementary humanitarian action, emergency response and the centrality of protection, as highlighted also in the GCR. This will be presented by Ms. Dominique Hyde, who I would like to welcome to UNHCR as the new Director of External Relations. Dominique joined our team in January 2019 following substantial experience with organizations including the World Health Organization, World Food Programme and UNICEF.

It is equally important, however, to look at the enabling aspects of UN Reform, in particular our work in co-leading the Business Innovations Group with the World Food Programme (WFP). The BIG is responsible for consolidating enabling functions into common services - locally, regionally, and globally - to improve back office support and direct more resources to make more effective core programming and delivery. The targets are, of course, ambitious, especially in regards to common premises, and investments will be required to deliver the anticipated efficiencies.

Already in the first six months since we established an independent, inter-agency project team to lead this work, there has been considerable progress towards the conceptual design of these complex work streams and in regards to some of the key enablers. In particular, a high-level commitment to mutual recognition of policies and procedures has now been signed by twelve agencies, including of course UNHCR and WFP, and will now be operationalized by the High-Level Committee on Management, of which I am Vice Chair to USG for Management Beagle, in consultation with the BIG project team.

We believe that the BIG represents an opportunity for the UN system both to transform the way in which agencies work together, and leverage our collective resources and economies of scale to ensure our enabling functions support more efficient delivery on the ground. And for UNHCR this is yet another opportunity to invest in partnerships and maximize the resources invested in strong country and regional offices. In short, a perfect complement to UNHCR's own transformation.

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The second big area of change is with regards to systems and processes.

In parallel with the work of the BIG, we need to simplify and modernize our enabling functions, which was clearly identified as a critical need in the Rapid Organizational Assessment of Headquarters in 2016. This led, amongst many other things, to the commissioning of a holistic review of our human resources systems, services and tools, which was completed in March 2018.

The overall implementation of the recommendations of the HR review and the transformation of the Division of Human Resources aim towards a more field-driven model which partners with operations to develop and deliver HR solutions in the most effective and efficient manner, with the support of the future HR regional teams. Put another way, we want stronger, more strategic HR capacity, especially at country and regional levels, and less transactional HR process at all levels. This will be critical to identify and move talent from region to region and help to transform the skills of the organization.

On that note, I would like to welcome Ms. Catty Bennet Sattler, the new Director of the Division of Human Resources. Ms. Bennett Sattler joined us in December 2018 from the ICRC, and will apply her extensive UN, humanitarian and private sector experience to take the HR transformation process forward.

In short order, DHR under the leadership of Catty, her predecessor and strong team, has realigned HR activities among Services through the implementation of a new structure, developed a high level roadmap and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), worked to define the roles and authorities of regional HR teams to be embedded in the seven Regional Bureaux, and identified the core processes to prioritize for review and simplification, putting clients – the people of UNHCR - at the centre of its work.

The other side of the systems coin is with regard to how we deliver our programmes around the world and measure the impact of our work, particularly in the context of the Global Compact and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework. We have discussed in previous Standing Committees the work of our new Evaluation Service, and the implementation of the revised Evaluation Policy, and I would encourage you to look at many of the Service's recently released evaluation reports on our website.

The next step will be the quantitative aspect of measuring results. When we originally launched the Results Based Management revision project in 2015, its objective was to replace Focus, the antiquated software tool, and fix a range of smaller issues with the framework and its core indicators. As we mentioned at the last Standing Committee in September 2018, we have now redirected the project's orientation towards empowering field operations with the flexibility to build country-specific results chains, measure outcomes and impact, and use results-based management to advance UNHCR's commitment to greater evidence-based planning.

A fundamental enabler of the revised RBM project is our broader data initiative, which we are building into the implementation of both regionalization/decentralization and the GCR. Central

to UNHCR's relevance at country level is our ability to understand and address the needs, quickly and efficiently target the right kind of support, and deliver and monitor results. This all comes down to data, and our initiative is ultimately not about collecting more data, because if anything we have too much, but rather determining what data we need to make decisions, enhancing the data literacy of our decision-makers, and building systems and processes to optimize our use of that evidence base, all the while ensuring a strong data protection framework.

As a piece of that broader information landscape, the RBM project is now firmly on track as an institutional change process aimed at renewing the organization's entire approach to planning, not only the results framework and the IT tool but also how we manage to results. The project aims, therefore, to do six things:

- 1) Be **people centric**, by concentrating on how UNHCR and others' actions contribute to changing the wellbeing of persons of concern.
- 2) Focus on **outcomes and impact**, including through joint processes and data collection.
- 3) Empower the field by providing **country offices with the flexibility** to develop context-specific indicators.
- 4) Improve **collaboration and partnership**, by investing in multi-year planning with partners and focusing on measuring collective outcomes.
- 5) Support **organizational changes processes**, including the ongoing regionalization, empowerment of the field and process simplification.
- 6) Enhance **transparency and accountability**, including by building in new feedback and data streams.

Of course, as with any change, this shift comes with trade-offs. Greater flexibility at the field will reduce the quantity – but not, we believe, the quality – of global aggregation for reporting purposes. A greater focus on measuring collective outcomes will also limit our ability in some instances to attribute and calculate UNHCR's contribution to the exclusion of other actors. However, not only is this the spirit of the GCR and its programme of action, but it is the optimal way to use evidence to measure how the needle moves on the collective results we are trying to achieve with our partners.

We believe this direction solves the fundamental problems with our existing results-based management system, and that the time is now to build this into the redesign of our structures, systems and processes as an organization. We also recognize that this ambitious new direction requires certain investments in key enablers, such as capacity development in key functions, and ultimately culture change in how we plan, manage and report on our work.

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The final transformation I wish to highlight is with regards to integrity and oversight. As you are aware, we faced a number of integrity related matters in our operations last year, including Kenya, Uganda, Libya, and Sudan, but also made a concerted and proactive effort across the organization to invest in prevention and response.

We continued to roll-out risk management 2.0, training all 180 senior staff across the organization who are risk focal points, and actively disseminated good practices on how to handle integrity challenges throughout the organization. These actions follow, and draw from, experiences in the aforementioned countries, which have also been the first operations to receive senior deployments.

Considerable progress has also been made related to sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse, including the publication of a short guide for managers on prevention and response, the establishment of a psychosocial case management system to support victims and witnesses.

A new Oversight Policy articulating an over-arching framework for different internal and external oversight functions in which the roles and responsibilities of these entities, management and UNHCR personnel are also set out, is expected to be issued by mid-year. Through the issuance of the Policy, the terms of reference of the IGO will be updated and new terms of employment for the next Inspector General will be introduced, in line with recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit.

The terms of reference for the Independent Audit and Oversight Committee (IAOC) are therefore being proposed for amendment in this session of the Standing Committee in order to allow the IAOC to advise the High Commissioner on the appointment and potential early termination of the next Inspector General, who will be the first External Inspector General for the organization.

The lessons learned from recent experiences have also informed how we sharpen accountabilities and bring decision-making and oversight closer to the field. A key design consideration underpinning the decision to regionalize and decentralize was a clear, robust application of the 'Three Lines of Defence'.

The fundamental goal of the Change process is to strengthen UNHCR's country offices to better manage and fully 'own' first line risks and to reposition UNHCR to meet future challenges and meet expectations for a more 'solutions-oriented' response. To that effect, new skills and capacities required at country-level were recently mapped and have significantly informed the design of our new regional bureaux. The refocusing of Bureaux on 'second line' functions will, together with an increase in the number of regional offices enable Bureau Directors to assume accountability and exercise significant authority to oversee risks and seize opportunities for regions of manageable size and operational complexity.

Ultimately, you know that we operated in 130 countries with over 470 field locations, a workforce of over 16,000, and over 1,000 partners, working next to the people we serve in an increasingly complicated, sometimes dangerous, and challenging environments. New regionalized bureaux structures will not prevent all issues from arising but are designed to ensure that immediate action is taken to mitigate emerging risks, and reinforce country-level capacities from bureaux platforms before operational challenges spiral into major corporate emergencies, clarify who is accountable for what, and ensure that HQ is kept informed and able to support Country Representatives and Bureau Directors as required.

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I will end with a few notes regarding budget and resource mobilisation, the details of which will be presented later under item 4.

Mr. Hans Baritt, Controller and Director of the Division of Financial and Administrative Management, will provide you with details of our 2018 and 2019 budgets and Ms. Hyde, will present our resource mobilisation efforts. I will limit myself to noting that while our budget for 2018 stood just above \$8 billion, funding received for the year is estimated to be just shy of \$4.7 billion, leaving us once again at around a 43 per cent gap. The Directors will focus on the impact on the people we serve and their hosts of those gaps in support.

We thank most sincerely the generosity of donors who provided record support to the organisation in 2018. However, we are compelled, with growing needs, to ask for more funding and urge donors to provide contributions as early as possible in the year, and with as much flexibility as possible in line with Grand Bargain commitments. This will allow us to support life-sustaining aid and protection for the people we serve and who rely on us.

Finally, in the context of the Grand Bargain, in which donors committed to reducing individual assessments, I would also invite you to today's side event on the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) assessment of UNHCR, which we consider to be an important learning and donor accountability tool. This joint assessment provides us with a valuable overview of where the organization stands in key management areas and how we can further improve our organizational effectiveness. We particularly support this joint approach and the potential it brings to streamline donor assessments.

Today we will discuss the big picture outcomes of the report, which covered 2016 to mid-2018 and was released late last week. In fact, many of the areas identified in the report as requiring improvement relate to transformative initiatives which I have covered in these remarks, including results-based management, the evaluation function and of course regionalization and decentralization. We appreciate the hard work of the assessment team, look forward to the discussion in a few short moments, and welcome you to join us.

Thank you.