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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fifty-ninth session
Geneva, 6-10 October 2008
Item 5 of the provisional agenda
Reports on the work of the Standing Committee

Report of the forty-second meeting of the Standing Committee (24-26 June 2008)

Report by the Standing Committee*

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Chairman of the Executive Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Boudewijn van Eenennaam (Netherlands), opened the meeting. He extended a special welcome to the four new members of the Executive Committee: Benin, Luxembourg, Montenegro and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, following their election by ECOSOC in April 2008.
2. Requests for observer status at meetings of the Standing Committee, for the duration of the 59th session of the Executive Committee from October 2007 to October 2008, were received and granted to the following States: Bolivia, Honduras, Mauritania, Niger, Peru and Uruguay.
3. The Wednesday and Thursday sessions of the 42nd meeting of the Standing Committee were chaired by the Vice-Chairperson, Her Excellency Ambassador Laura Thompson Chacón (Costa Rica).

* Report adopted by the Standing Committee at its 43rd meeting on 23-24 September 2008.

4. Before moving to the adoption of the agenda of the meeting, the Chairman presented a report on his field mission to Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic in May 2008. A copy of the report was made available to delegations.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE FORTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

5. The agenda for the meeting (EC/59/SC/CRP.8/Rev.1) was adopted.

III. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE FORTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

6. The report of the forty-first meeting of the Standing Committee (EC/59/SC/CRP.7) was adopted, with the proviso that an additional paragraph (to be agreed upon) would be inserted after paragraph 33.

IV. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

7. The Assistant High Commissioner-Protection opened the discussions on international protection, underlining the need for UNHCR and its partners to strike the right balance in responding to an “explosive mix” of global challenges. Recalling the significant contribution made by the Agenda for Protection to improving the protection environment, she nevertheless emphasized that its potential was yet to be fully realized. The Assistant High Commissioner called on States, who bear the prime responsibility for delivering protection to refugees, to bolster the collective efforts more effectively, notably through reporting on their own dilemmas and strategies. In closing, she commented briefly on the High Commissioner’s Dialogue, which was designed to feed into reflection and objective-setting on contemporary protection challenges.

A. The Note on International Protection

8. The Director of the Division of International Protection Services presented the Note on International Protection (EC/59/SC/CRP.10), which this year highlighted the links between human rights and refugee law. In his conclusion the Director called for reflection on how to integrate refugee protection better in human rights law.

9. Delegations commended UNHCR for the quality of the Note. Many expressed concern about the increasing numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons, and there were requests for clarification of the term “persons in a refugee-like situation”. Several speakers cautioned that in relation to protection issues in mixed population movements, UNHCR should remain focused on its core mandated responsibilities for refugees and asylum-seekers; however, others were of the opinion that assistance should be provided to all, and that human rights should not be subordinated to migration policies. With regard to combating the trafficking of people, several delegations proposed closer cooperation with regional partners and civil society, in order to ensure that victims had access to solutions. While welcoming the UNHCR Handbook on the

protection of women and girls, the need to continue to give due attention to the specific needs of women and children, notably by supporting more training in sexual and gender-based violence response, was reiterated by several delegations.

10. In response to the critical challenges posed by food price increases, UNHCR was encouraged to work in even closer partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP) and Governments. Delegations also called for greater efforts to support and provide livelihood opportunities for refugees and other displaced people.

11. Delegations reiterated the importance of respecting the principle of *non-refoulement*. Several delegations asked about progress on urban refugee policy. In respect of asylum policy and legislation being developed in Europe, several delegations regretted inconsistencies resulting in unequal protection conditions across the European Union.

12. Recognizing that the challenges of finding solutions for tens of millions of displaced people across the globe demanded different types of interventions, timing, and partnerships, delegations welcomed the choice of protracted refugee situations as the topic for the 2008 High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges. The new developments in achieving durable solutions for some protracted situations were commended; however host countries reminded the Committee that additional funding was required to see through these solutions and ensure that they proved sustainable. Several member delegations expressed appreciation for the review of the Executive Committee conclusions process and the work being done on the General Conclusion, as well as the elaboration of a multiyear work plan to reflect the outcome of these reform efforts.

13. The Assistant High Commissioner responded that the increased number of persons of concern was due in part to statistical reporting changes. She assured delegations that in mixed migration situations UNHCR would continue to focus on refugees and persons of concern under its mandate and would be working in partnership with other agencies on different aspects of these challenges. Nevertheless, she underlined that UNHCR's work included identifying people in need of international protection in mixed migration situations and promoting protection-sensitive systems. On the question of the definition of people in a "refugee-like situation", she suggested that this be discussed further in a different forum.

14. The Director welcomed the support for the efforts made in the Note to view refugee protection within the framework of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He acknowledged a number of other issues raised by delegations and announced that the policy on urban refugees was expected to be available in August 2008.

B. The Agenda for Protection

15. The Assistant High Commissioner-Protection introduced document EC/59/SC/CRP.12 and the reporting matrices that UNHCR had circulated to help countries report on the progress made on five years of implementation of the Agenda for Protection. She encouraged States to provide input to enable the establishment of a consolidated report, as requested by the Executive

Committee. The report might also serve as the basis for discussions on national issues with civil society.

C. Progress report on Resettlement

16. The Deputy Director of the Division of International Protection Services presented the progress report on resettlement (EC/59/SC/CRP.11). He highlighted the main achievements of recent years, notably the significant increase in resettlement submissions, departures and participation by States in global resettlement activities. He drew particular attention to agreements drawn up by UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration with Romania and the Philippines to facilitate the evacuation of refugees at risk and provide them with temporary protection space pending resettlement. UNHCR continued to call on States and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to enhance partnership and dialogue to pursue solutions in the face of complex challenges.

17. A number of delegations congratulated the Office on its achievements in extending the reach of resettlement and welcomed the efforts of resettlement States, including 13 new countries that had offered resettlement or expressed interest in doing so. Some traditional resettlement countries were committed to provide technical backing and twinning arrangements in support of these efforts, and many reiterated support for resettlement as a key protection tool and durable solution. There were many calls for resettlement to be used strategically, and also for particular priority to be given to those most at need, notably to endeavour to ensure that women at risk comprised at least 10 per cent of submissions.

18. Some delegations asked for further explanations about the methodology used to identify the number of cases identified in need of resettlement, which had risen to 565,000. Others expressed some concern that the increase was not matched by available places offered by resettlement countries; however there were also statements of commitment by some countries to increase quotas and to encourage others to help bridge the gap between resettlement needs and the capacity of resettlement States.

19. The Deputy Director expressed appreciation for the positive comments and offers of support from delegations. He responded to the queries about the identification of needs, recalling that the introduction of the *proGres* registration tool and the age, gender and diversity mainstreaming initiatives in recent years had provided the means to broaden the assessment of the extent of resettlement needs: consequently, he anticipated the need for multi-year planning. Although resettlement could be considered a costly process, this had to be balanced by the costs of protecting and assisting refugees in protracted situations. UNHCR was striving to attract resettlement countries to work with States hosting refugees in protracted situations, such as in the Islamic Republic of Iran and The Sudan, to develop resettlement quotas. While acknowledging comments about the importance of successful integration in the resettlement country, the Deputy Director cautioned that consideration of this should not be used as criteria for resettlement decisions.

V. PROGRAMME/PROTECTION POLICY

A. Protracted refugee situations: revisiting the problem

20. Opening the discussions on UNHCR's renewed initiatives to seek solutions to protracted refugee situations, as outlined in conference room paper EC/59/SC/CRP.13, the Assistant High Commissioner-Protection called on the Standing Committee to encourage and support these efforts. The main objectives were to enable solid, policy-oriented discussions with UNHCR's partners about why situations become protracted and what to do about them; to rekindle interest and widen the span of expertise in collaborative efforts to find solutions; and to focus on particular situations where there may be new openings for progress. As presented in the paper, five situations had been identified where conditions for heightened activities showed potential for progress at the current time. The Assistant High Commissioner reminded the Committee that protracted refugee situations, including urban refugee issues, would be the subject of the High Commissioner's Dialogue in December 2008.

21. Many delegations commented on this issue, welcoming the revived emphasis on protracted refugee situations and applauding the latest developments and collaborative initiatives, notably with regard to examples of local integration in the United Republic of Tanzania and in West Africa. Expressing regret that half of the world's refugees were currently in protracted situations, several delegations noted that there was a need for a balance between searching for durable solutions and helping to alleviate the current situation, including by preparing and reorienting refugees for future developments. Other delegations called for concrete work plans for each of the five priority situations and the identification of situations with regional dimensions which might be addressed through a comprehensive plan of action. Education, health and other social services, and self-reliance strategies were important, as was adequate funding to support local integration and self-reliance programmes, not forgetting measures to ensure peaceful co-existence with local communities and to promote sustainable practices to counter the environmental impact of refugee encampments.

22. Some delegations challenged a suggestion in the conference room paper that according the status of legal migrant for some refugee groups might offer an interim or alternative solution. Whatever the solutions being sought, it was recalled by many delegations that partnership, including the Delivering as One initiative, would play an essential role. The topic of protracted refugee situations was widely supported as a theme for an Executive Committee Conclusion.

23. The Assistant High Commissioner thanked the Committee for the keen interest and support of delegations with regard to this topic. She would take the comments into consideration in reviewing the strategy presented in the paper, and UNHCR was open to work together with countries to advance solutions. Evaluation mechanisms were being scheduled and UNHCR appreciated the importance of involving countries of asylum, and refugees themselves, in all planning phases. The Assistant High Commissioner confirmed that urban refugee issues would be included in the consideration of protracted refugee situations at the High Commissioner's Dialogue in December. She responded to several queries regarding specific situations and the choice of the five pilot situations and indicated that other countries may be added as conditions evolved. On the question of considering migration as a possible option for some refugees, the

Assistant High Commissioner explained that this was simply an indication of current exploratory thinking on how to maximize the potential of such an option to benefit refugees where it might be possible.

B. Age, gender and diversity mainstreaming

24. The Director of the Division of International Protection Services presented the report on UNHCR's age, gender and diversity mainstreaming (AGDM) strategy (EC/59/SC/CRP.14). He stressed that one of the key objectives was to identify and implement targeted actions to address inequalities and support the empowerment and protection of discriminated groups, in particular women and girls at risk. The Director also referred to the achievements and challenges mentioned in the report and the accountability framework.

25. Delegations commended UNHCR for progress achieved. Some expressed the hope that the Office would continue to prioritize the strategy and that sufficient resources would be made available to support it. Several delegations stressed the need for full participation and support by senior management, and wanted to know more about the AGDM ACTION plan. One delegation called for the appointment of more women to senior positions within UNHCR, in the belief that this could reinforce AGDM implementation. Two delegations urged UNHCR to give greater consideration to people with disabilities among refugees and others of concern.

26. The Director reaffirmed that AGDM implementation remained a key strategy for UNHCR and emphasized the importance of training, as well as on input from partners, notably NGOs, on the forthcoming evaluation of AGDM and the development of the ACTION plan. He noted that AGDM was being used to develop participatory assessment in cluster situations.

27. The Deputy High Commissioner intervened on the issue of gender equality and commented that he was not satisfied with the gender balance at UNHCR. The main challenge was the high attrition rate among women mainly due to UNHCR's rotation system and presence in so many non-family duty stations. He also confirmed that it was unlikely that the United Nations' goal of parity at all levels by 2010 would be met; however UNHCR would continue its efforts in this respect.

C. HIV and AIDS policies and interventions

28. The Chief of UNHCR's Public Health and HIV section presented conference room paper EC/59/SC/CRP.15, including the new HIV and AIDS strategic plan for 2008-2012. Globally, access to HIV prevention, care and treatment programmes had improved, and UNHCR had achieved full coverage of essential prevention interventions in refugee operations where it was coordinating health, HIV and community services. The Office was involved in different coordination fora on HIV and AIDS, both within the United Nations system as well as in regional initiatives. However, there were still many challenges, notably with regard to the inclusion of refugees in national programmes in host countries.

29. Delegations expressed support for UNHCR's work and collaborative activities in this field and recognized the progress made. Concern was expressed about the non-availability of free antiretroviral treatment in returnee areas, and discrimination against HIV patients by some resettlement countries. Several delegations stressed the importance of partnerships, including with national counterparts, and of the inclusion of HIV and AIDS in a comprehensive reproductive health programme. One delegation called for more attention to be paid to the impact of HIV and AIDS on children.

30. UNHCR acknowledged a number of ongoing challenges raised by delegations. An external evaluation of all public health activities was planned for 2009.

D. Progress on mainstreaming IDP issues in UNHCR
and global work plan for IDP operations

31. The Senior IDP adviser presented the plan to mainstream activities in UNHCR on behalf of internally displaced persons (IDPs), and the 2008-2009 work plans for the IDP field operations (EC/59/SC/CRP.16). He recalled that over the past three years, UNHCR had worked with its partners in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to set up the cluster approach and respond to the protection and assistance needs of IDPs. He also expressed appreciation for the support provided by ExCom members, despite the misgivings of some with regard to UNHCR's role in this respect. As requested by the Committee, IDP activities were being mainstreamed and the conference room paper outlined the main achievements as well as outstanding challenges.

32. Most speakers expressed support for UNHCR's role with IDPs and progress being made with the mainstreaming process. Several delegations stressed the importance of avoiding dual structures, and one questioned UNHCR's capacity to mobilize the additional resources required. A group of delegations reiterated the importance of State sovereignty and took the position that UNHCR's role with IDPs should be in support of Governments' own efforts. Some concerns were voiced about the figures used in the different country operations and why UNHCR did not rely on official government figures. Delegations also requested further information on progress achieved in implementing recommendations and on the inter-agency evaluation; how the Office intended to work in mixed IDP and refugee situations; how IDP costs would be represented in the new budget structure; and a definition of the concept of "provider of last resort" and of the recurrent costs for global cluster leads.

33. UNHCR fully agreed that coordination with Governments was fundamental in any activities undertaken by the Office to provide protection and assistance to IDPs. With regard to internal organizational working arrangements to cover IDP issues in UNHCR following the phasing out of the IDP advisory team in December 2008, some reorganization was under way to entrust IDP responsibilities to the Divisions of International Protection Services and of Operational Services, with IASC-related issues remaining under the purview of the Division of External Relations (as outlined in EC/59/SC/CRP.16). The Deputy High Commissioner explained that the issue of recurrent costs had been discussed with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and with donors, with a view to finding a common definition. OCHA was also preparing a paper on the question of "provider of last

resort". More complete answers on "grey areas" in the evolving new budget structure would be provided to the Committee in September to show more clearly how the Office proposed to deal with budgeting for the different groups of people of concern.

VI. REGIONAL ACTIVITIES AND GLOBAL PROGRAMMES

34. The Deputy Director a.i. of the Division of Operational Services briefed the meeting on staff safety and security issues, including refugee security. Over 40 per cent of UNHCR staff worked in high-risk security environments and, since 2004, additional resources had been allocated to security-related activities. UNHCR was working closely with other United Nations departments and agencies to ensure adequate coordination of security management. The Office welcomed a stronger inter-agency security mechanism, but cautioned that the United Nations security management system needed to give more consideration to UNHCR-specific organizational and mandate-related concerns, notably the physical protection of people of concern. The Deputy Director also informed the meeting of the global assessment on vulnerability to explosions that had been carried out following the bombing of the United Nations premises in Algiers in December 2007.

35. Delegations welcomed UNHCR's efforts to increase security for staff and people of concern, notably in respect of MOSS compliance and the inclusion of partners in security training, and took note of the corresponding increase in costs and need for additional support. Several delegations condemned recent attacks on United Nations staff and premises, and there was a call for States to reconfirm their respect for the Convention on the Safety of United Nations personnel. One delegation asked for more information on how UNHCR worked with non-United Nations partners on security issues. One delegation pointed out that the Brahimi panel report was not limited to Algeria but covered the whole world.

36. UNHCR confirmed that great importance was placed on working on security with non-United Nations partners through information-sharing and joint training. Although it was often difficult to quantify requirements to mitigate constantly evolving risks and manage security standards, the Office was in the process of calculating current and additional costs, which would be shared with the Committee. A renewed focus on local risk assessments was needed.

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

A. Update on the structural and management change process

37. The Deputy High Commissioner expressed deep appreciation to member States for their continued support of the reform process. He highlighted the achievements and acknowledged that considerable work lay ahead, in particular with regard to the recruitment, postings and promotions system, career planning, resolving the challenges related to staff in between assignments, and further streamlining Headquarters.

38. The Director for Organizational Development and Management then briefed the Committee on the Field and Headquarters reviews, decentralization, regionalization and results-based management.

39. Delegations urged UNHCR to move ahead with the Headquarters Review. While expressing appreciation for the progress achieved so far with reform efforts, some delegations asked to be kept informed about further outposting and other changes, as well as measures that would be taken vis-à-vis staff members holding a permanent contract who might be affected by the continued reforms. One delegation encouraged the building of local capacity. Another delegation called for discussions on how the changes would be reflected in budgetary terms. On decentralization and regionalization, delegations urged UNHCR to develop clear and strong accountability. With regard to results-based management, delegations emphasized the importance of training staff in the use of the new *Focus* software.

40. The Director assured delegations of UNHCR's commitment to transparency vis-à-vis ExCom members, staff and NGO partners. He also said that the Staff Council, and the entire staff, would be encouraged to participate in UNHCR's second Global Staff Survey to be launched at the end of July. In response to a question about the participation of partners in the Field Review survey, he explained that only those who received funds from UNHCR were included. The Director announced that UNHCR intended to introduce an accountability framework in the coming months which would reinforce the terms of reference for the regional offices. He also confirmed that priority was being given to appointing national officers to ensure continuity and national capacity in field offices.

B. Funding liabilities for end-of-service and post-retirement benefits

41. The Controller presented the information note on the funding liabilities for end-of service and post-retirement benefits, which included an overview of funding mechanisms being considered or in use by other United Nations organizations.

42. One delegation queried whether unearmarked contributions were used to pay for the current "pay-as-you-go" system, and suggested a levy on all contributions to cover these costs in the future. Another delegation agreed that the current system was inadequate, especially with an ageing work force. It was also suggested that organizations should study the impact on their programmes of funding end-of service and post-retirement liabilities.

43. The Controller responded that a levy of 8 per cent had previously been rejected by the General Assembly and that the United Nations was preparing a report which would include a funding proposal to be presented at the 63rd session. UNHCR would take guidance from the United Nations on this issue and, in the meantime, continue with the "pay-as-you-go" approach.

VIII. PROGRAMME BUDGETS AND FUNDING

44. The Deputy High Commissioner introduced the agenda item on budget and funding issues. He commented on the curious nature of the effects of exchange rate fluctuations which had caused some confusion over the Office's proposal to seek the Committee's permission to

raise its spending authority for the current year budget. He explained that exchange rate variations had resulted in some US\$ 50 million of losses, which needed to be reflected as an increased need in terms of budgetary space. Food prices had risen by some US\$ 12 million and fuel costs by around US\$ 8 million. The Operational Reserve would need to be boosted to accommodate what would likely amount to further needs of US\$ 30-35 million. Hence UNHCR was asking the Committee to approve an increase to the 2008 annual programme budget, as presented in the draft decision annexed to conference room paper EC/59/SC/CRP.9.

A. Global Report on activities in 2007

45. The Director of the Division of External Relations presented the Global Report on activities in 2007, drawing attention to key policy areas and particular challenges. The 2007 Report had attempted to quantify the impact of the additional resources made available for operations as a result of the reform efforts.

46. Delegations commended this report as a key reporting instrument. Suggestions put forward for areas for improvement included more information on: reporting against performance targets with data disaggregated by sex and age; UNHCR's contributions towards the Millennium Development Goals; evaluations; policies and programmes, notably in urban environments; and private sector funding.

47. The Director took note of the comments and suggestions for future reporting.

B. Update on progress towards measuring total needs

48. The Deputy High Commissioner recalled the contradiction between the current budget and funding situation and the serious gaps in resources available to protect and care for persons of concern: this had prompted UNHCR to launch a global needs assessment initiative. Initial results drawn from data gathered in eight countries had provided but a partial estimate of the situation at that point. Political constraints and problems in gaining access to people of concern had limited the results and more analyses would be required. Nevertheless, the gaps identified were already showing that the programmes examined were underfunded by some US\$ 48 million, and the Deputy High Commissioner proposed to add that amount to the 2009 portion of the 2008-2009 biennial budget already approved by the Executive Committee at its 58th session in October 2007. However, he assured the Committee that such funds would not be spent until UNHCR was certain they would become available. Beyond 2009, UNHCR intended to expand the global needs assessment initiative to the organization at large for the biennium 2010-2011. Future budget requests would reflect this increase in recognized needs, to be phased in gradually over a 3-5 year period, and the Deputy High Commissioner hoped that the donor community would respond accordingly.

49. While regretting that more information had not been provided in a report prior to the meeting, a number of delegations expressed support for the initiative and took note of the planned increase in the 2009 budget. Delegations looked forward to more detailed information at the 43rd meeting of the Standing Committee in September, notably on updated results and how the global assessment related to other needs assessment tools.

C. Update on programme budgets and funding in 2007 and 2008, including a proposal for an increase to the 2008 Annual Programme Budget

50. The Controller provided an update on the 2007 financial situation, the current 2008 situation and the proposal for an increase to the 2008 Annual Programme Budget, as presented in conference room paper EC/59/SC/CRP.9 and explained by the Deputy High Commissioner in his introduction to the agenda item. She provided further details, adding that the projected funding available for 2008 was likely to exceed the Executive Committee-approved budget for 2008 by \$49.6 million. The primary reasons for proposing an increase in the 2008 annual programme budget were related to the significant decline in the relative value of the US dollar to most other currencies. This meant that activities approved by the Executive Committee for 2008 now cost more, in budgetary US dollars, than had been estimated a year ago. UNHCR planned to adjust the budget rates for non-US dollar currencies for selected operations in line with current programme objectives and priorities, and thus required additional budgetary space.

51. In order to create this space and also to be able to respond to unforeseen activities and further emergencies until the end of the year, the mechanism being proposed was to reconstitute the Operational Reserve at the full 10 per cent of current programmed activities, thereby bringing the 2008 Annual Programme Budget to a revised figure of US\$ 1,088.2 million. The subsequent increase in budgetary space would allow UNHCR to selectively cover adjustments of budget rates for non-US dollar currencies, rising fuel costs and other inflationary pressure on the basis of current programme objectives and priorities, and also respond to new operational needs until the end of the year.

52. In response to a query on how UNHCR would prioritize, notably in the context of the global needs assessment, the Deputy High Commissioner explained that the Office had used the mid-year review process to decide which country operations would be compensated for exchange rate losses. Not all losses could be covered, and prioritization would be undertaken on the basis of the greatest need.

53. The Controller concluded by making reference to the 2009 Annual Programme Budget which was currently under revision. It was likely that the budget would be increased to reflect the impact of revised budgetary parameters, including updated budget rates for non-US dollar currencies, inflationary pressure and current projections of operational needs. The final results of this budget exercise would be reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), and presented to the 43rd meeting of the Standing Committee in September for consideration.

54. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the clear explanations provided in the oral presentations, commenting that the conference room paper had been difficult to understand and calling for better articulation of important issues in future conference documents. There was general support for the proposed budget increase and the draft decision (Annex VI of EC/59/SC/CRP.9) was adopted.

D. UNHCR's programme in the United Nations: proposed strategic framework for the biennium 2010-2011

55. Delegations took note of UNHCR's draft programme which formed part of the proposed United Nations Strategic Framework for the biennium 2010-2011 by adopting the draft decision contained in Annex I of document EC/59/SC/CRP.19. The overall Strategic Framework would pass through several review phases at United Nations Headquarters in New York before being submitted to the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly for approval in late 2008.

E. Staff Council

56. The newly elected Chairman of UNHCR's Staff Council gave a short address to the Standing Committee.

IX. COORDINATION

57. The Senior Inter-Agency Officer presented an outline of elements which would form the basis of UNHCR's oral update to the 2008 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). She highlighted the Office's support for the United Nations reform process, bilateral cooperation with different United Nations and other international agencies and commented on various aspects of current coordination and partnership with non-governmental organizations.

X. GOVERNANCE

58. A number of suggestions were made with regard to possible topics for inclusion in the High Commissioner's opening statement at the fifty-ninth plenary session of the Executive Committee. These would be conveyed to the High Commissioner for his consideration.

59. The Chairman proposed that a five-minute time limit be set for statements at the plenary session in order to maintain a reasonable pace during the debates and appealed to delegations to exercise self-restraint and good time management.

XI. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

60. Several points were raised by delegations, including a call for a review of the timing of the Annual Consultations with non-governmental organizations to avoid any future clash with a Standing Committee meeting. There were also requests for updates on partnership strategy and on UNHCR's responses to evaluations. Two delegations were in favour of posting a matrix on UNHCR's website to report on the follow-up of issues raised during Standing Committee meetings.

61. The Secretary acknowledged the constraints posed by the simultaneous holding of the Standing Committee and the Annual Consultations with NGOs which, in 2009, would revert to the customary September schedule. While recalling that the Chairman usually commented on

follow-up at the beginning of each Standing Committee when the report of the previous meeting was presented for adoption, the Secretary also undertook to look into the possibility of posting a matrix on responses to follow-up points raised during Committee meetings.

62. There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed

Annex I

DECISION ON OVERALL PROGRAMME BUDGETS
AND FUNDING FOR 2008

The Standing Committee,

Recalling the Executive Committee's decision at its fifty-eighth session on administrative, financial and programme matters (A/AC.96/1048), as well as its discussions under the programmes, budgets and funding item at the forty-first meeting of the Standing Committee,

Reaffirming the importance of international burden and responsibility-sharing in reducing the burden on countries hosting refugees, especially developing ones,

1. *Recalls* that the Executive Committee, at its fifty-eighth session, approved UNHCR's 2008 Annual Programme Budget at a level of \$1,096.1 million (which included \$34.8 million from the United Nations Regular Budget and \$10.0 million for Junior Professional Officers);
2. *Notes* that exchange rate fluctuations, emergencies and unforeseen activities have increased UNHCR's 2008 budgetary requirements;
3. *Approves* an increase to UNHCR's 2008 Annual Programme Budget amounting to \$77.1 million, thereby bringing the revised 2008 Annual Programme Budget to a level of 1,173.2 million (including \$34.8 million from the United Nations Regular Budget and \$10.0 million for Junior Professional Officers);
4. *Notes* that the 2008 Supplementary Programme Budgets currently amount to \$571.6 million, including \$120.8 million for programmes exclusively benefiting internally displaced persons (IDPs);
5. *Recognizes* that emergencies and unforeseen activities unfolding in 2008 may result in the need for additional or expanded Supplementary Programmes and that additional resources, over and above those for existing budgets, would be needed to meet such needs; and
6. *Urges* Member States, in light of the extensive needs to be addressed by the Office of the High Commissioner, to continue to respond generously and in a spirit of solidarity, and in a timely manner, to his appeal for resources to meet the requirements under both the revised 2008 Annual Programme Budget as well as the 2008 Supplementary Programme Budgets.

Annex II

DECISION ON UNHCR'S PROGRAMME IN THE UNITED NATIONS
PROPOSED STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE BIENNIUM 2010-2011

The Standing Committee,

Takes note of the attached Programme 20: International Protection, Durable Solutions, and Assistance to Refugees of the biennial programme plan of the United Nations proposed strategic framework for the period 2010-2011.

Annex III

LIST OF POINTS FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTION

1. Insert additional paragraph (after para.33) into EC/59/SC/CRP.7
2. Provide more information at the 43rd meeting of the Standing Committee (under Item 4(d) Progress on mainstreaming IDP issues)
3. Provide more information on updated results of the global assessment at 43rd meeting of the Standing Committee
4. Prepare web-based matrix to facilitate follow-up of issues raised during the Standing Committee meetings