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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Sixtieth session
Geneva, 28 September - 2 October 2009
Item 5 of the provisional agenda
Reports on the work of the Standing Committee

Report of the forty-sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (15-16 September 2009)

Report by the Standing Committee*

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Chairperson of the Executive Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Alberto J. Dumont (Argentina), elected on 1 September 2009 to replace the former Chairperson, Her Excellency Ambassador Laura Thomson Chacón, until the end of the sixtieth session of the Executive Committee, opened the meeting.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

2. The Agenda for the meeting (EC/60/SC/CRP.19/Rev.2) was adopted. Eight delegations took the floor to record their dissatisfaction with the late delivery of key documentation for this Standing Committee meeting, notably *UNHCR's Biennial Programme Budget for 2010-2011*, an initial version of which had been presented in draft format only two weeks before the Committee meeting, with a revised version (EC/60/SC/CRP.27) having been made available one week later.

* Report adopted by the Standing Committee at its resumed meeting on 29 September 2009.

3. The *Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions* which should have been provided as an annex to *UNHCR's Biennial Programme Budget 2010-2011*, had not been made available as the Committee had met less than one week before the Standing Committee meeting.

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

4. The report of the forty-fifth meeting of the Standing Committee (EC/60/SC/CRP.18) was adopted.

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

5. The Deputy High Commissioner introduced this item, commenting on the Office's accomplishments in relation to the structural and management change process. He noted that all the major structural reforms would be put in place by 1 October, against an original target of 1 July. Moreover, the various supporting elements of the process, including the Global Needs Assessment (GNA) and human resources reform, had been introduced and were now being consolidated. The GNA had demanded considerable time and effort in order to assess the needs of all of UNHCR's beneficiaries; however this had resulted in the newly structured budget that was now being presented to the Executive Committee.

6. The Deputy High Commissioner also announced that in recognition of the need to improve UNHCR's programme management, a new Division of Programme Support and Management (DPSM) was being created. This was one of the final steps in the reform process which was now being refined and adjusted as implementation progressed.

A. Finance

7. The Controller introduced the accounts for 2008 as presented in document A/AC.96/1064. Thanks to strong donor support, the Annual Programme in 2008 had been fully funded. Voluntary contributions for all funds combined had reached US\$ 1.628 billion, against a revised total budget of US\$ 1.85 billion. Combined with continued rigorous and cautious financial management, this funding response had helped UNHCR to finish the year in a favourable financial position.

8. One delegation commended UNHCR for the progress made in increasing efficiency and accountability, but cautioned the Office to keep administrative costs as low as possible.

B. Oversight

Issues raised by the United Nations Board of Auditors

9. The Controller presented the Report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts for 2008 (EC/60/SC/CRP.28) and a summary report on main risk areas (EC/60/SC/CRP.20), together with the paper on measures taken or proposed in response to the Report of the Board of Auditors (EC/60/SC/CRP.29).

10. The Office's accounts for 2008 had been qualified by the United Nations Board of Auditors, and the Controller outlined the issues raised and explained UNHCR's position on these. The Board of Auditors had made 19 recommendations in its 2008 report, of which 13 were considered to be main recommendations. The majority related to issues and topics previously raised and nearly all of the recommendations had been accepted by UNHCR and were in the process of being implemented. Four high-risk areas were identified: implementing partner audit certification; asset management, (both non-expendable and expendable); accounting for contributions; and end-of-service and post-retirement benefits liabilities. UNHCR agreed with the recommendations made by the Board for the four high risk areas and the Controller reported on the progress being achieved.

11. With respect to the efforts to obtain audit certificates, UNHCR recognized the importance and value of obtaining independent assessments to confirm that funds disbursed through implementing partners (IPs) were used for the purposes for which they were intended. While acknowledging that the audit certification rate could be further improved upon, the Controller cautioned that it should not be seen in isolation of the Office's comprehensive programme monitoring framework. This included ongoing monitoring of activities by programme staff in the Field, and the requirement for IPs to provide periodic narrative and financial reports, certifying that the funds received from UNHCR had been utilized in accordance with the agreement and in compliance with the Office's rules.

12. The Controller explained to the Committee that by 30 June 2009, UNHCR had obtained over 50 per cent of the required audit certificates: an improved performance over prior years. This figure had reached 83 per cent by mid-August. While the majority of audit certificates were eventually obtained, it was difficult for UNHCR to obtain a high compliance rate in time for the financial year-end audit, and meet its own internal policy of 100 per cent compliance by 30 April. The operational context involving deep-field locations complicated audits for security and logistical reasons. Also, many government partners refused to accept audits by an independent third party. And finally, it was often difficult to find appropriate, locally-based audit firms to carry out the necessary work. UNHCR proposed to review the current policy on audit requirements and consider alternative approaches that would be relevant, cost-effective and realistically implementable to improve the compliance rate and mitigate financial risk.

13. In conclusion, the Controller commented that while UNHCR had made extensive efforts to follow up on the recommendations of the Board over the past three years, many of the risks were inherent in the very nature of the Office's operations and unavoidable in carrying out its mandated responsibilities. While it was a challenge for UNHCR to strike the appropriate

balance between maximizing operational effectiveness and minimizing financial risks, the Office remained committed to improving the programme management framework, including the audit certification process.

14. With respect to the introduction of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), the Controller explained that the Board of Auditors' position appeared to differ from that of the United Nations IPSAS Steering Committee, concerning a phased approach to the implementation of the standards. This needed to be urgently resolved in order to prevent UNHCR's 2009 accounts from being negatively impacted.

15. Overall, delegations encouraged UNHCR to continue its efforts to fully implement the various recommendations made by the Board, and expressed support for progress made thus far. Regarding IPSAS compliance, UNHCR was commended for the progress made thus far and concern was voiced regarding the conflicting advice between the Board of Auditors and the IPSAS Steering Committee. A number of delegations expressed an understanding of the difficulties associated with audit certification, but nevertheless encouraged UNHCR to continue to make progress in the area. Several delegations also indicated that they would be willing to consider the proposal for a review of UNHCR's current policy and alternative approaches.

16. The issue of end-of-service and post-retirement benefits liabilities was highlighted as a particular concern, and information was requested regarding the procedures put in place to improve the accuracy and timeliness of accounting for contributions. A number of delegations also queried whether UNHCR had followed up on the proposal to establish an internal audit committee.

17. On end-of-service and post-retirement benefits liabilities, the Controller noted that UNHCR was awaiting a decision by the General Assembly on the proposal to handle this issue at the central level, and indicated that the Office would be guided by that decision. A draft proposal would then be presented to the Standing Committee in June 2010. Regarding accounting for contributions, the Controller confirmed that staff had now been trained to use the new recording mechanism and improved oversight of the process was in place. The Deputy High Commissioner explained the internal mechanism that had already been put in place to fulfil the function of an independent audit committee

Internal audit

18. The Chief of the Geneva Audit Service of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) introduced the annual report on internal audit activities (A/AC.96/1069) undertaken during the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009. The audits undertaken had generated a number of recommendations aimed at improving processes and procedures, as well as governance, management oversight, accountability, and risk management mechanisms. Specific issues raised included the financial and performance monitoring of implementing partners and project monitoring, procurement, asset management, and information technology security, including the safeguarding of data. The increased use of remote management and monitoring was also highlighted as posing a new challenge to UNHCR in terms of measuring operational effectiveness, and new policies and procedures to handle this needed to be developed.

C. Management

Oral update on the structural and management change process and Global Strategic Priorities

19. The Director of the Office of Organizational Development and Management (ODM) updated the Committee on the final stages of the reform process, focusing on results-based management (RBM), the Global Management Accountability Framework (GMAF), the Headquarters review process, and decentralization and regionalization. He also provided an overview of UNHCR's new Global Strategic Priorities, and informed the Committee about the establishment of the new Division for Programme Support and Management (DPSM) and the strengthening of the Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES). This was followed by a presentation from the Director of the Division of Human Resources Management (DHRM), on human resources aspects of reform such as staff communications, UNHCR's new performance appraisal management system, and staff in between assignments.

20. The achievements to date were described as significant, substantive, and far-reaching. One delegation stressed the importance of anchoring the changes within the organization as part of its culture, pointing out that the cooperation of staff at all levels was required in order to be successful. Regarding decentralization, while the steps taken were welcomed in terms of making the Office more field-oriented, concern was expressed as to how UNHCR could avoid retaining de facto authority at the central level, while maintaining the necessary oversight. One delegation asked about how some of the complicated and intricate procedures, particularly those which were internet-based, would be understood and applied in the deep field where connectivity was often a problem. The progress made in addressing the issue of staff-in-between assignments was welcomed, as was the establishment of DPSM and the strengthening of PDES; however, delegations asked what this implied in terms of additional resources needed in 2010.

21. Regarding the establishment of DPSM and strengthening of PDES, the Director of ODM responded that the intention was to implement these changes within the existing resources. In respect of a request for UNHCR to clarify the division of responsibilities of the audit, evaluation and inspection functions, as well as those of the Ethics Office, he indicated that a matrix which explained the various mechanisms would be made available to delegations. On regionalization and decentralization, the Director recalled that this process had been guided by an analysis of what was needed at Headquarters in order to provide support to the Field, and that the introduction of tools such as the GMAF and *Focus*, would help ensure its success. He also noted the concern regarding application of some of the procedures in the Field and indicated that UNHCR was working on providing increased support to areas where connectivity was a problem. Regarding cooperation within UNHCR, the Director of DHRM assured delegations that the staff had generally embraced the concepts of results-based management and increased accountability. It was however, important to ensure that the expectations of staff in the Field were better managed and communication improved.

Report on the Ethics Office

22. The Director of the Ethics Office presented the conference room paper (EC/60/SC/CRP.21 and Corr.1) and reported that the first year of work of the Ethics Office had been devoted to launching and developing activities, as well as to promoting awareness of this new support function designed to help staff navigate their way through challenging situations. The Office had already responded to several hundred queries for advice on ethical issues and supported over 460 staff in compliance with the Financial Disclosure programme.

23. A number of delegations commended the work of the Ethics Office, and in particular the fact that it had reached out to the Field. In response to a question as to whether the Office had sufficient staff and resources, the Director commented that its size was comparable to that of other ethics offices within the United Nations system and that so far it had been able to meet the demands at hand.

D. Human resources

24. The Director of the Division of Human Resources Management (DHRM) provided an update on the policy on achieving gender equity in UNHCR staffing, as outlined in conference room paper EC/60/SC/CRP.22. He presented some additional comparative statistics to illustrate trends within UNHCR at different grade levels and organization's position in relation to other United Nations agencies: in some areas a degree of progress in moving towards gender equity had been achieved, while in others, the targets had not been met. He then commented on some of the key challenges which DHRM was attempting to tackle by raising awareness and increasing accountability, notably the lack of ownership to date regarding the gender policy.

25. Many delegations taking the floor welcomed the achievements so far, but regretted that targeted objectives had not been met and called on the Office to accelerate its efforts to reach the levels set. It was recognized that these challenges were not unique to UNHCR and that efforts should be pursued in partnership with other agencies. There were calls for more information on the Office's overall strategy for implementing the policy; the work being undertaken by the Senior Task Force on gender issues; and how gender equity issues were being prioritized in the new Global Strategic Priorities. One delegation recalled the importance of appropriate gender representation amongst field staff who were in direct contact with populations of concern in order to ensure operational effectiveness. Another delegation suggested that in order to overcome the challenge of lack of ownership, emphasis should be put on communicating the rationale behind gender equity. Several delegations asked for regular reports on this issue, including an update at the next Standing Committee meeting in March 2010.

26. In responding to questions, the Director referred to several new initiatives such as the Gender and Diversity Scorecard which would be launched in November and would constitute an important awareness-raising and management monitoring tool. He commented on some of the constraints to increasing the level of gender parity in recruitment, notably in areas such as field safety and telecommunications operations where it was not easy to find suitably qualified women applicants. The Deputy High Commissioner added some closing remarks, expressing his

disappointment at the results to date but assuring the Committee that the human resources management reforms under way would provide the necessary tools for change in respect of efforts to achieve gender parity.

V. PROGRAMME BUDGETS AND FUNDING

A. Update on programme budgets and funding

27. The Controller introduced document EC/60/SC.CRP.23 on programme budgets and funding for 2009, commenting on income and expenditure under the 2009 annual programme budget and in respect of the 29 supplementary programmes approved in 2009, as well as on the “New or Additional Activities – mandated-related Reserve” (NAM Reserve) appropriation level. She noted that, with the expectation of further contributions in 2009 to the NAM Reserve, the Office was proposing that the Executive Committee consider approving an increase to the 2009 appropriation level from \$75 million to \$90 million. This would be included in the General Decision on administrative, financial and programme matters for adoption by the 60th session of the Committee.

28. The Director of the Division of External Relations then provided an update on the funding situation in 2009. With income to date at the highest level ever received at that point of the year, she expressed the Office’s sincere appreciation to donors, as well as to host countries without whose support UNHCR would not be able to protect refugees and other persons of concern. Private sector fund raising had also reached new levels of income and growth. In closing, the Director appealed for additional and flexible contributions to ensure the completion of 2009 operations without disruption.

29. With the main focus of delegations’ questions on the proposed Biennial Programme Budget for 2010-2011 under the new budget structure, there were few comments on the current year update. However, one delegate drew attention to the projected shortfall of US\$ 494.9 million presented in the conference room paper, and called on other donors to help ensure that this gap was met before the end of year, as well as on UNHCR to report more on the consequences on programmed activities of end-of-year funding shortages.

B. UNHCR’s Biennial Programme Budget for 2010-2011

30. In her presentation of the proposed 2010-2011 Biennial Programme Budget (EC/60/SC/CRP.27), the Controller explained that the field budgets had been presented at the “comprehensive” level, representing the totality of needs identified through the global needs assessment process, while global programmes and headquarters budgets had already been prioritized. Any additional funding received in excess of projected levels for 2010 would therefore be allocated to activities benefiting people of concern to UNHCR in field operations.

31. Total budgets submitted by the High Commissioner would amount to \$3,007.2 million for 2010 and \$2,780.0 million for 2011. These amounts included an Operational Reserve, as well as a small NAM Reserve for each of the years. Although in theory, the comprehensive budgets were designed to include all known needs for persons of concern, UNHCR was

proposing to retain a small NAM Reserve of \$20 million in both the 2010 and 2011 annual budgets to accommodate possible requests by donor countries to carry out activities that had not been included in budgetary cost assessments.

32. The Controller also illustrated the budgetary breakdown by “rights group”.¹ For 2010 the percentage breakdown would be:

- basic needs and essential services: 37%
- Headquarters and regional support: 17%
- logistics and operations: 11%
- durable solutions: 10%
- favourable protection environment: 6%
- fair protection processes and documentation: 6%
- community participation and self-management: 6%
- security from violence and exploitation: 5%
- external relations: 2%

33. Many delegations commended UNHCR’s efforts to introduce the 2010-2011 biennial budget in a new structure. They had appreciated the informal consultative meetings designed to help them understand the new budget framework, although some would have wished for more details, for example a country-specific breakdown of the budgets for regional activities. One delegation expressed the hope that the budget increase would improve health, education, water and sanitation conditions in the camps. However, other delegations cautioned that since the 2009 budget had not been fully funded, it would be important to avoid creating false expectations among local government, non-governmental organizations and beneficiaries about the capacity of UNHCR to implement all budgeted activities under the 2010 budget. Expectations would have to be managed and resource mobilization efforts intensified.

34. There were several queries regarding the flexibility of funds being allocated across the pillars and countries; the potential problems that earmarking might bring; and UNHCR’s policy for prioritizing the resources if the budget was not fully funded. A number of speakers underlined the importance of transparent resource allocation based on humanitarian needs and reiterated requests for both donors and hosting countries to be consulted and kept informed in the process. One delegation commented that the targets in the Global Strategic Priorities were too broad and vague in places, and called for some adjustments to ensure greater clarity.

35. Several delegations raised the issue of the mainstreaming of the cluster approach, including how UNHCR’s global cluster responsibilities would be reflected under the new budget structure. Another asked about exit strategies for protracted situations and encouraged UNHCR to collaborate with other United Nations agencies which could take over on developmental issues.

¹ A “rights group” is a thematic grouping of objectives representing the areas of impact in UNHCR operations.

36. In response to the issues raised regarding flexibility within the budget allocations, the Controller explained that unearmarked funds would move freely across all four pillars, with humanitarian needs as a main deciding factor. If earmarked contributions were received, a corresponding amount of unearmarked funding would be released to cover needs elsewhere. In case of a likely shortfall, the Operational Reserve would be frozen, up to the level of the anticipated funding shortage, to avoid budget capping.

37. In response to a query regarding the increased number of staffing positions, the Controller explained that in 2009, the total number of annual programme posts plus supplementary programme posts was 6,703; in 2010, 7,782 posts were anticipated, provided that the programmes budgeted for were fully funded.

38. The Controller reported that initial reactions to the new budget structure at the recent meeting of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and in informal exchanges with other United Nations agencies, had been positive, including acknowledgement of the progress achieved by UNHCR in introducing a results-oriented management system.

39. The Deputy High Commissioner acknowledged that the move to results-based budgeting had not gone as far as he had envisaged at that point, but with the need to be realistic, UNHCR had given instructions to staff to put emphasis on implementability. Despite the considerable increase in the amount budgeted, he was optimistic that the budget presented could be funded and called on donors to live up to this responsibility. He also confirmed that prioritization would be based on humanitarian needs, including for cluster responses. Protracted situations had been reflected in the budget on the basis of expectations as to what could realistically be done; nevertheless, additional funding might be forthcoming under Pillar 3 or under the NAM Reserve should new opportunities open up. On the issue of pooled funding, he pointed out that there were differences between organizations and that UNHCR was not likely to be involved in this to the same extent as UNDP, for example. In response to queries about emergency funding, he reminded delegations that the Operational Reserve was designed to cover such situations and that the High Commissioner could also create supplementary programmes when necessary.

C. Proposal for a revision of the Financial Rules

40. The Controller outlined the key points contained in the proposal to change UNHCR's Financial Rules (EC/60/SC/CRP.24). She explained that a revision was necessary because of the adoption of the new budget structure, as well as to provide sufficient flexibility to allow for compliance with both the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) and the United Nations System Accounting Standards (UNSAS). In addition, the revision would make more explicit the authority of the High Commissioner, in areas where the Rules had previously been silent. Finally, the opportunity was being taken to modify the structure of the Rules and to update concepts and terminology.

41. While Member States were generally supportive of the need to revise the Financial Rules, appreciating in particular the efforts aimed at increased accountability and transparency and the attempt to create a more flexible, operational space in which UNHCR could operate, the majority of delegations taking the floor requested more time for review and called for independent, external advice. The issue of borrowing was highlighted as a principle concern, with some suggesting the need for a more precisely targeted provision, including necessary approval by the Executive Committee, and others questioning whether other agencies in the system engaged in this practice.

42. Several delegations expressed reservations regarding the removal of references to the Board of Auditors (BOA) and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), as well as the deletion of the phrase, “in a manner consistent with the United Nations Financial Regulations”. Regarding the latter, there was a proposal to reword the phrase, adding the clause, “until IPSAS is fully implemented.”

43. There were also questions regarding the expanded authority of the High Commissioner, in particular the provision to formalize the authority to create new funds, special accounts, and reserves and to transfer surplus between them; as well as the provision authorizing the approval of supplementary budgets for new situations and making adjustments within the approved Annual Budget.

44. Aside from requesting independent, external advice, Member States expressed a keen interest in receiving feedback from OIOS, the BOA, and the United Nations Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) on the proposal. Because the proposed changes were far-reaching, the point was made that Member States needed to be clear what precedents were being set, and to be assured that the Rules did not leave open a wide area of manoeuvre, leading to the reinterpretation of provisions down the line.

45. The Chairperson proposed that the decision contained in Annex II (EC/60/SC/CRP.24) be deferred in order to give the Committee more time to review the proposal, and until such a time as Member States were in a better position to reconsider it. Despite this postponement, delegations were generally supportive of a proposal made for UNHCR to move ahead with those specific revisions which the Office felt needed to be adopted immediately, particularly those related to the new budget structure and IPSAS compliance. The Controller added that the provisions which focused on more flexible implementing arrangements, such as grant agreements, were also urgently needed.

D. UNHCR’s resource mobilization strategy, including private sector fund raising

46. The Director of the Division of External Relations introduced conference room paper EC/60/SC/CRP.25 and commented on current opportunities and new challenges for UNHCR in the field of resource mobilization.

47. Several delegations advised UNHCR to reinforce Headquarters’ role in guiding and overseeing fund raising initiatives in the Field to ensure consistency with global strategic priorities and avoid the risk of earmarking of funding at local level. There were also calls for

increased cooperation and strategizing with development partners to help raise funds for activities that might not fall clearly under UNHCR's mandate, notably in transition situations, and avoid overlap. One delegation sought more information on the impact on beneficiaries if funding shortfalls were to prevent needs identified being fully met; another advocated an objective and realistic presentation of needs. While welcoming the growing income from private sector fund raising, delegations asked for more information on the investment required in relation to the targets set for 2011 and 2012. One delegation commented on the need to market the added value of UNHCR's work in order to broaden the donor base, and pointed out that amongst the G20 nations, only nine figured on the list of the Office's major donors.

48. Acknowledging the importance of Headquarters providing guidance to the Field and avoiding the risk of donors receiving different messages, the Director confirmed that new guidelines had been prepared in 2009 and that work to ensure coherent messaging was ongoing with field and bureaux colleagues. On the issue of coordinating fund raising with partners, the Head of the Donor Relations and Resource Mobilization Service observed that Pillar 3 of the new budget structure offered new opportunities for helping returnees reintegrate, and that the Office was reaching out to new partners for funding in this area. However, he reassured the Committee that UNHCR's objectives would be focused on light rehabilitation work in critical areas, for example supporting the renovation of school infrastructures to enable children to pursue their education on return. The Head of the Private Sector Fund Raising Section commented on the strategy undertaken in the past three to four years and the targets set up to 2012. A key part of the strategy had been to develop monthly giving from public donors which spread the risk of falling short of targets. With plans afoot to seek public money in a number of new countries, she assured delegations that the government of each country concerned would be informed of UNHCR's fund raising strategies in this respect.

VI. COORDINATION

49. The Director of the Division of External Relations presented the update on coordination issues and strategic partnerships (EC/60/SC/CRP.26). She commented that partnership served as a multiplier, in terms of the efforts required to respond to the current challenging environment in which UNHCR carried out its activities. The Director spoke about strategic partnerships in the context of United Nations reform, including humanitarian reform initiatives; UNHCR's own reform process and harmonization of internal practices with the United Nations system; and the specific challenges of humanitarian space and safety and security.

50. Member States welcomed UNHCR's commitment to the cluster approach, but called on the Office to ensure that this commitment was infused with accountability at all levels, including through the provision of clear instructions to relevant divisions, Bureaux and country offices. A number of delegations acknowledged that the cluster approach could benefit from more flexibility and less bureaucracy and suggested that UNHCR could help pave the way for solutions to these problems. UNHCR was also encouraged to look at the possibility of co-chairing clusters with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Field, wherever possible.

51. A number of delegations emphasized the need for a more common approach to needs assessments, encouraging UNHCR to step up its efforts in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Needs Assessment Task Force. The Office was also encouraged to continue supporting the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) system; to ensure coordination by representatives at the country level; and to formalize accountability through management procedures. The importance of partnerships and coordination with regional mechanisms, for example on the issue of humanitarian space, was highlighted. Delegations also expressed strong support for UNHCR's leadership on the issue of humanitarian space and paid tribute to staff members working in such a difficult operating environment.

VII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

52. The Deputy High Commissioner delivered some closing comments, recalling some of the main criteria which had driven the reform process and acknowledging areas where improvement was still required, including his perception of the need for the growth of an organizational "culture of perpetual refinement" to support the implementation of the reform measures. In closing, he expressed gratitude for the support provided by the Standing Committee, from donors and hosting countries alike, and for the dedication of field and headquarters staff. In response to a query from one delegation, he announced that following some adjustments, the matrix clarifying the responsibilities of the various oversight and advisory functions of UNHCR would be circulated to delegations before the upcoming Executive Committee session.

53. Following some announcements regarding the 60th plenary session of the Executive Committee, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed.

Annex

LIST OF POINTS FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTION

1. Provide an update on progress in achieving gender equity in UNHCR staffing at the 47th meeting of the Standing Committee in March 2010.
2. Provide a matrix clarifying the responsibilities of the various oversight and advisory functions of UNHCR.

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