

*Check against delivery.*

**United Nations Economic and Social Council: Management Segment Meeting  
Presided by H.E. Mr. Bob Rae, Vice-President of ECOSOC and  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations**

**Item 19(e), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Oral Report on the coordination aspects of the work of the Office of UNHCR  
Delivered by Mr. Sivanka Dhanapala, Director of the UNHCR New York Office**

**United Nations Headquarters, New York  
5 June 2024**

Mr. President, Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, I am pleased to present this oral report on the coordination aspects on the work of the Office.<sup>1</sup>

As conflicts continue to fester, no place on earth is untouched by forced displacement, which is further exacerbated by increasing food insecurity and the effects of climate change, as always affecting the most vulnerable. Shortfalls in funding have seriously constrained our ability to respond.

UNHCR estimates that the global number of people forcibly displaced has exceeded 114 million. Later this month, we will issue the new Global Trends report; the figure will be higher.

In Sudan, some eight million people have been displaced inside the country and close to two million across borders since the start of the war in April 2023. Many areas of the country are on the brink of famine, which will affect millions. For example, instability (and conflict) in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Myanmar, Somalia, Ukraine, and the Sahel continue to cause displacement and distress, leading to a breakdown of community support structures and protection systems.

**[Refugee coordination]**

Mr. President,

In December 2023, UNHCR hosted the second Global Refugee Forum, the largest multi-stakeholder event in the world on refugees, with strong and meaningful participation of refugees themselves. The Forum strengthened our coordination and strategic partnerships demonstrating in action the "whole-of-society" approach to better support governments in assisting those forcibly displaced and their host communities, receiving over 2,000 commitments from government, civil society, academia, the private sector and refugee-led organizations. The GRF demonstrates the spirit of multilateralism in action.

In the inter-agency landscape, UNHCR continues exercising leadership and coordination responsibilities in refugee situations, in line with its mandate and in support of national authorities. To this end, in 2023, UNHCR developed eight regional refugee response plans, covering 53 countries. Two of the plans are co-led with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and one with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These plans mobilized 1,470 partners and appealed for \$13 billion to assist approximately 22 million refugees and 12.5 million host community members.

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<sup>1</sup> [A/RES/58/153](#) of 22 December 2003.

UNHCR also supports four government-led regional support platforms, namely, the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees in South-West Asia (Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan); the Regional Comprehensive Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) in Mexico and Central America; the Nairobi process facilitated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in the East and Horn of Africa; and the solutions initiative for the Central African Republic situation. The platforms have evolved into effective mechanisms for international cooperation that convene key stakeholders with a view to enhancing responses in the regions concerned. UNHCR continues to work closely with regional and sub-regional organizations such as IGAD, the African Union, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in support of development of protection standards and solution approaches to address forced displacement and tackle issues of statelessness.

### **[IDP coordination]**

Under the overall framework of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), in situations of internal displacement, UNHCR leads the global protection cluster, and co-leads the cluster on shelter and non-food items with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), as well as the camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) cluster with the IOM.

UNHCR continues to contribute to shape the IASC strategic priorities, co-leading and working together with InterAction the IASC Task Force on Centrality of Protection to ensure that protection remains at the center of humanitarian action. With the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UNHCR co-leads the drafting of global guidance on applying the Humanitarian Development and Peace nexus in practice.

### **[Sustainable Development Goals]**

Mr. President,

While UNHCR remains firmly committed to our humanitarian mandate, we are playing our part in the collective drive to attain the SDGs with the aim of bridging the gap between our humanitarian programmes and the long-term development approach necessary for creating truly sustainable solutions. UNHCR is aligning its programmes with those of development actors within the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. We have also invested in a results-based management tool to enhance coherence between UNHCR country strategies and the collective priorities outlined in such Frameworks. As of this year, all our country operations have developed multi-year strategies aligned where possible, to the UN Development System programme cycle. UNHCR is a member of the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) in all countries where it operates and has been actively engaged in the drafting of the Frameworks. UNHCR systematically engages in regional fora on sustainable development and in regional collaborative platforms including issue-based coalitions, co-leading two on migration and human mobility in the Americas and Europe. In 2024, UNHCR contributed \$2.3 million to the Resident Coordinator system.

A notable collaboration was the United Nations common pledge 2.0 on refugee inclusion, co-led by UNHCR with the United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) aimed at advancing refugee inclusion in UN cooperation frameworks and national systems. Over 100 ambitious and measurable commitments were made by 19 United Nations partners and 50 UNCTs. Commitments are expected to reach 50 million forcibly displaced and stateless people and migrants.

Following in the steps of UN 2.0, UNHCR continues to scale-up its capacity in data, digital, innovation, and strategic foresight. Investment in new skills and capacity-building is key to addressing the pressing

challenges of today. UN 2.0 serves as a powerful catalyst, fostering collaboration among UN agencies and entities, all united in their mission to modernize organizational culture and to leave no one behind.

### **[IFIs]**

UNHCR's partnership with the International Financial Institutions helps promote refugee inclusion and solutions through dedicated financing and private sector mobilization. It has resulted in \$4.1 billion in investments in 73 projects in 17 low-income host countries since 2017. Moreover, under the global concessional financing facility, \$853 million in grants have been allocated to provide \$6.7 billion in concessional loans to five middle-income countries since 2016.

Collaboration with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) has also helped mobilize the private sector. Recent examples are financial inclusion gap assessments in Ecuador, Poland, the Republic of Moldova and Romania and collaboration with Santander Bank Polska that includes \$17 million in loans to micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises that can benefit refugees. Our engagement with IFIs has also been transformative in promoting evidence-based programming and policy-making, as demonstrated by the work of the UNHCR-World Bank Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement. Collaboration has also continued with the African Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

### **[Localization]**

Mr. President,

Participation and meaningful engagement of forcibly displaced and stateless people are core to the work we do to achieve solutions, including through UNHCR's Advisory Board of forcibly displaced people. In 2023, UNHCR and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) held seven regional NGO consultations where some 1,500 participants from local refugee-led organizations, civil society and local NGOs engaged in the deliberations. For the 2023 Global Refugee Forum, UNHCR and ICVA developed a multi-stakeholder pledge on advancing localization, involving funding, capacity-sharing, inclusion in decision-making and coordination.

UNHCR continued developing sports partnerships offering the opportunities to reach a wider audience to combat xenophobia and racism, and to raise awareness about the positive contributions refugees make to societies. These include working with sportswear brands Adidas and Anta and signing a memorandum of understanding with the *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA). UNHCR is also rolling out the sport strategy, "More than a game", in 17 country operations. New projects were initiated in Bangladesh and Malawi, with several others due to be announced this year.

### **[Looking ahead]**

Mr. President,

Emergencies are lasting longer and are becoming more complex. More States are affected by population movements that are increasingly mixed in nature, including both refugees and migrants, while internal displacement continues to rise. In stark contrast, funding is decreasing. Thus, coordination and partnerships are even more essential to providing life-saving assistance and early investment in solutions for an increasing forcibly displaced and stateless population, while also supporting host communities. Fostering such cooperation and partnership has been our strength and lifeline for over 70 years, and indeed is part of our mandate.

Thank you.