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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fifty-fourth session

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its fifty-third session in October 2002, the Executive Committee adopted a decision on the programme of work of the Standing Committee in 2003¹ in which it sets out the issues to be examined by the Standing Committee. This report provides a summary of this work.
2. The Standing Committee has held three meetings over the past year: in March, June and September 2003. A planning meeting of Executive Committee members in December 2002 established the calendar of meetings and determined the distribution of the different agenda items in 2003, and took note of those foreseen in 2004 and 2005. These are provided in Annex I.
3. A detailed account of the work undertaken at each of the meetings of the Standing Committee over the past year is contained in the following reports: *Report of the Twenty-sixth Meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/974)*; *Report of the Twenty-seventh Meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/984)*; and *Report of the Twenty-eighth Meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/985)*. A list of documents relating to these meetings is provided in Annex 2.

¹ A/AC.96/959, paragraph 27

II. ISSUES COVERED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE IN 2003

Regional reviews

4. Regional reviews of UNHCR's programmes and activities in all five regions – Africa; the Americas; Asia and the Pacific; Central Asia, South-West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East (CASWANAME); and Europe - were again considered comprehensively at the Standing Committee's meeting in March. Strategic presentations, on the basis of oral updates, allowed the Standing Committee to discuss the strategy and evolution of these programmes and the essential challenges for the future. This comprehensive review, first introduced last year, was found to be a useful practice. This year there was a focus on implementation of the Agenda for Protection in the various regions, with specific reference to essential goals and objectives, preceded by an oral update on global progress in the Agenda. The regional reviews were also cross-referenced to the global objectives contained in the UNHCR Global Appeal for 2003.

Updates on programme and funding

5. At each of its meetings, the Standing Committee considered updates on overall programme and funding issues, through which it was kept informed of the situation in terms of programme requirements and funding levels and adopted decisions at its March and June meetings. At the latter meeting, the Committee also considered the Global Report on UNHCR's activities in 2002.

Protection/programme policy issues

6. The Standing Committee reviewed two protection/programme policy issues at its March meeting: an update on safety and security issues for both staff and refugees and the economic and social impact of massive refugee populations on host developing countries as well as other countries.

Protection

7. The June meeting of the Standing Committee included: further reports on progress made in the implementation of the Agenda for Protection; a debate on the Note on International Protection, a report by the Working Group for Resettlement on the strategic use of resettlement; and moves to extend UNHCR's activities in the field of statelessness to all areas where there are stateless persons.

Coordination

8. In March and September, the Standing Committee discussed coordination issues within the United Nations system including UNHCR's participation in the various coordinating mechanisms and its perspective on major issues under discussion.

Management, finance, oversight and human resources issues

9. Management and finance issues were addressed at the September meeting which undertook a preliminary review of financial and budgetary documentation being submitted to the fifty-fourth session of the Executive Committee.

Governance

10. At its March meeting, under governance issues, the Standing Committee agreed once again to replace the traditional annual theme with a debate based on the High Commissioner's introductory statement outlining his perspective on the work of the Office. The Standing Committee also adopted the work programme for 2003 as proposed at the December planning meeting of the Committee.

Consultations

11. In accordance with its standard practice, the Standing Committee held consultations in the course of the year on issues requiring in-depth discussion. These mainly included a series of consultations on proposals arising from the UNHCR 2004 process. Other consultations concerned the High Commissioner's Forum; indicators of host country contributions; as well as measures proposed for adding flexibility to the Unified Budget.

III. STANDING COMMITTEE DECISIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

12. In accordance with the authority vested in it by the Executive Committee, the Standing Committee adopted a number of decisions which are annexed to the reports of the different Standing Committee meetings, as follows:

Report of the Twenty-sixth Meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/974)

- Decision on overall programme and funding in 2002 and projections for 2003

Report of the Twenty-seventh Meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/984)

- Decision on overall programme and funding projections for 2003

Draft conclusions and decisions

13. The following draft conclusions and decisions were prepared by members of the Committee, in a series of informal consultations under the chairmanship of the Rapporteur, for adoption by the Executive Committee at its fifty-fourth session:

- Conclusion on proposals arising from the UNHCR 2004 process;
- General conclusion on international protection;
- Conclusion on the return of persons found not to be in need of international protection;
- Conclusion on protection safeguards in interception measures;

- Conclusion on protection from sexual abuse and exploitation;
- Decision on administrative, financial and programme matters (Programme and Budget for 2004);
- Decision on the programme of work of the Standing Committee in 2004;
- Decision on the provisional agenda of the fifty-fifth session ;
- Decision on observer participation in 2003-2004;
- Decision on Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) observer participation in the work of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme and its Standing Committee.

CALENDAR

(agreed at Planning Meeting of Excom Members
held on 12 December 2002)



STANDING COMMITTEE PROVISIONAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2003

	26th Meeting 4-6 March 2003	27th Meeting 25-27 June 2003	28th Meeting 25 September 2003
PROGRAMMES AND FUNDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on programmes and funding Strategic presentations on: Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, CASWANAME, Europe, and on Global Programmes. These presentations will include relevant aspects of implementation of the Agenda for Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on programmes and funding Global Report (2002) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Programme Budget 2004, including the Report of the ACABQ Mid-Year Progress Report (2003) and update on funding
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral update on implementation of Agenda for Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note on International Protection Implementation of Agenda for Protection² Progress report on UNHCR's activities in the field of statelessness 	
PROTECTION/PROGRAMME POLICY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic and social impact of massive refugee populations on host developing countries, as well as other countries³ Safety and security issues 		
COORDINATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on coordination (partnerships and specific initiatives with other intergovernmental organisations; CEB/IASC) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on coordination (relationships with UN coordination bodies: OCHA/IASC/ECHA/ECPS; ECOSOC/CEB; ICRC)

² Draft conclusions to be prepared for ExCom's fifty-fourth session include: General conclusion on international protection; Protection safeguards in interception measures; State responsibility to accept and facilitate the return of nationals.

³ With particular reference to the mobilisation of additional development resources, and new partnerships with development funds and programmes, in support of host countries.

	26th Meeting 4-6 March 2003	27th Meeting 25-27 June 2003	28th Meeting 25 September 2003
GOVERNANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of Annual Theme for the fifty-fourth Session of the Executive Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of Annual Theme for the fifty-fourth Session of the Executive Committee 	
MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 2002 • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 2002 • Measures taken or proposed in response to the recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors • Follow-up on actions taken to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the year 2001

Fifty-fourth Session of the Executive Committee <u>29 September - 3 October 2003</u>
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CALENDAR
(agreed at Planning Meeting of Excom Members
held on 12 December 2002)



STANDING COMMITTEE
PROVISIONAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2004

	29th Meeting February/March 2004	30th Meeting June 2004	31st Meeting September 2004
PROGRAMMES AND FUNDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on programmes and funding • Strategic presentations on: Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, CASWANAME, and Europe, and on Global Programmes. These presentations will include relevant aspects of implementation of the Agenda for Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on programmes and funding • Global Report (2003) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Programme Budget 2005, including the Report of the ACABQ • Mid-Year Progress Report (2004) and update on funding
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral update on implementation of the Agenda for Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note on International Protection • Implementation of Agenda for Protection^{1 2} 	
PROTECTION/PROGRAMME POLICY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic and social impact of massive refugee populations on host developing countries, as well as other countries • Safety and security issues • Follow-up to protection/programme policies 		
COORDINATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on coordination issues 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on coordination issues

¹ Draft conclusions to be prepared for ExCom's fifty-fifth session include: General conclusion on international protection; Framework considerations for responsibility-sharing in mass influx situations; Legal safety issues in the context of voluntary repatriation.

² This item will include results of regional studies on protracted refugee situations with a view to identifying durable solutions .

	29th Meeting February/March 2004	30th Meeting June 2004	31st Meeting September 2004
GOVERNANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of Annual Theme for the fifty-fifth Session of the Executive Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of Annual Theme for the fifty-fifth Session of the Executive Committee 	
MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 2003 • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 2003 • Measures taken or proposed in response to the recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors • Follow-up on actions taken to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the year 2002

Fifty-fifth Session of the Executive Committee
September/October 2004

CALENDAR
(agreed at Planning Meeting of Excom Members
held on 12 December 2002)



STANDING COMMITTEE
PROVISIONAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2005

	32nd Meeting February/March 2005	33rd Meeting June 2005	34th Meeting September 2005
PROGRAMMES AND FUNDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on programmes and funding • Strategic presentations on: Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, CASWANAME, and Europe, and on Global Programmes. These presentations will include relevant aspects of implementation of the Agenda for Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on programmes and funding • Global Report (2004) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Programme Budget 2006, including the Report of the A CABQ • Mid-Year Progress Report (2005) and update on funding
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral update on implementation of Agenda for Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note on International Protection • Implementation of Agenda for Protection^{1 2} 	
PROTECTION/PROGRAMME POLICY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic and social impact of massive refugee populations on host developing countries, as well as other countries • Safety and security issues 		
COORDINATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on coordination issues 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on coordination issues

¹ Draft conclusions to be prepared for ExCom's fifty-sixth session include: General conclusion on international protection; Complementary forms of protection; Asylum procedures; Local integration.

² This item will include results of regional studies on protracted refugee situations with a view to identifying durable solutions.

	32nd Meeting February/March 2005	33rd Meeting June 2005	34th Meeting September 2005
GOVERNANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of Annual Theme for the fifty-sixth Session of the Executive Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of Annual Theme for the fifty-sixth Session of the Executive Committee 	
MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 2004 • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 2004 • Measures taken or proposed in response to the recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors • Follow-up on actions taken to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the year 2003

Fifty-sixth Session of the Executive Committee <u>September/October 2005</u>
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STANDING COMMITTEE DOCUMENTATION ISSUED DURING 2003

26th Meeting (4-6 March 2003)

EC/53/SC/CRP.1	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/53/SC/CRP.2	Standing Committee Work Programme for 2003
EC/53/SC/CRP.3	Overall Programme and Funding in 2002 and Projections for 2003
EC/53/SC/CRP.4	Economic and Social Impact of Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries as well as other Countries
EC/53/SC/CRP 5	Safety and Security
EC/53/SC/INF.1	Update on Coordination Issues

27th Meeting (24–26 June 2003)

EC/53/SC/CRP.6	Draft Report of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Standing Committee
EC/53/SC/CRP.7/Rev.1	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/53/SC/CRP.8	Update on Programme and Funding for 2003
EC/53/SC/CRP.9	Note on International Protection
EC/53/SC/CRP.10	Update on Implementation of the Agenda for Protection
EC/53/SC/CRP.10/Add. 1	The Strategic Use of Resettlement
EC/53/SC/CRP.11	UNHCR's Activities in the Field of Statelessness

28th Meeting (25 September 2003)

EC/53/SC/CRP.12	Draft Report of the twenty-seventh meeting of the Standing Committee
EC/53/SC/CRP.13/Rev.1	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/53/SC/CRP.14	Update on Programme and Funding for 2003

EC/53/SC/CRP.15	Draft Report of the 28 th meeting
EC/53/SC/INF.2	Update on Coordination Issues
EC/53/SC/INF.3	Framework for Durable Solutions for Refugees and Persons of Concern
EC/53/SC/INF.4	Supplementary Budget Support Cost System