



General Assembly

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Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Sixty-third session

Summary record of the 664th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 4 October 2012, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Arango Olmos (Vice-Chairperson).....(Colombia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

1. *In the absence of the Chairperson, Ms. Arango Olmos (Colombia), Vice-Chairperson, took the chair.*

Review of the Annual Consultations with Non-governmental Organizations

2. **Mr. Sukumaran** (Rapporteur for the Annual Consultations with NGOs) explained that the Annual Consultations with NGOs, which had been held in July 2012 with a record number of organizations, had involved eight thematic meetings and five regional meetings and had focused on the subject of partnership. During the consultations, NGOs had asked the countries concerned to increase their maximum annual number of resettlement places, called for the establishment of targeted services to assist women and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in countries of first asylum, and recommended that refugees should be involved in the provision of resettlement services. NGOs had also called for a legal framework to be developed to protect persons displaced as a result of climate change and natural disasters and to ensure that marginalized persons were involved, from the outset, in interventions in emergency situations. Participants had further commended UNHCR on the establishment of the Framework for the Protection of Children. They had called for the application of measures other than detention with respect to displaced children, for concerted efforts to find durable solutions for regions in crisis and for enhanced cooperation between UNHCR and civil society. Lastly, the importance of ensuring that donors understood the critical need for long-term funding for the activities of both UNHCR and NGOs had been underscored.

3. **Ms. Tuohy-Hamill** (Ireland) said that her Government agreed with the point made by NGOs at the Annual Consultations that raising community awareness was essential to combating social exclusion and discrimination against refugees living with HIV/AIDS, supported the development of an action plan to implement the UNHCR Framework on the Protection of Children and hoped that the NGOs concerned would be involved in finalizing the implementation framework alongside partners.

4. **Ms. Tolstoï** (France) said that his Government was closely following the discussions on extending the input in the work of the Executive Committee from NGOs.

5. **Mr. Moeling** (United States of America) said that the United States supported the use of new technologies to improve the quality of services provided to refugees and training in the new tools for humanitarian workers. He hoped that a constructive spirit would continue to prevail at all times in the Annual Consultations with NGOs.

Other statements

6. **Mr. Wak-Woya** (Chairperson of the UNHCR Staff Council) said that the welfare of UNHCR staff in hardship duty stations was a serious concern and that the steps taken by the organization to provide accommodation to the staff members concerned had done little to improve the situation. Moreover, the safety and security of staff in the field were not fully guaranteed. The Staff Council urged the High Commissioner, the international community and Member States to spare no effort to protect UNHCR personnel. In addition, the Staff Council called for more equitable geographic distribution in staffing and the achievement of gender parity at all levels of UNHCR.

7. He drew attention to the situation of staff in-between assignments, which led to frustration among the persons concerned and represented an unnecessary and immoral waste of taxpayers' money. The problem, which received little attention, could easily be resolved through ensuring adherence to the letter and spirit of the policy on appointments, postings and promotions and the establishment of a moratorium on external recruitment until the staff members concerned had been provided with posts. Instead of giving due

consideration to the Staff Council's recommendations, UNHCR management had unilaterally decided to adopt a staff reduction policy, which he deemed to be damaging.

8. **Mr. Aleinikoff** (Deputy High Commissioner) observed that more than one third of UNHCR staff members were serving in hardship duty stations and that security was a priority issue for the organization. UNHCR had pledged to achieve gender equality in recruitment and the implementation of the new recruitment policy, which had not been approved by the Staff Council, would facilitate that process. The decision to adopt a staff reduction policy had been difficult but necessary in order to address significant financial challenges. A number of people whose posts would be abolished in 2013 had not been assigned any duties for several months but had continued to be paid.

Meetings of the Standing Committee in 2013 and other matters

Consideration of the provisional agenda of the sixty-fourth session of the Executive Committee

Draft decision on extending the input in the work of the Executive Committee from non-governmental organizations (decision 2)

Draft decision on the programme of work of the Standing Committee in 2013 (decision 3)

Draft decision on observer participation in meetings of the Standing Committee in 2012–2013 (decision 4)

Draft decision on the provisional agenda of the sixty-fourth session of the Executive Committee (decision 5)

9. **Ms. Hanlumuayang** (Rapporteur) briefly introduced the draft decisions submitted to the Executive Committee for adoption.

10. **The Chairperson** said that if she heard no objection, she would take it that the Executive Committee wished to adopt all the draft decisions.

11. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.