



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges: Protection at sea

Regional roundtable: protection at sea in the Caribbean

Thursday, 11 December 2014, 09:00-10:45
Palais des Nations, Room XXV

Moderator:

Ms. Marta Juarez, Director of the Regional Bureau for the Americas, UNHCR

Panellists:

Commodore Roderick Bowe, Commander of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force

Ms. Joan Thomas Edwards, Director, International Organizations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jamaica

Ms. Clara Gardiner, Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Border Control and Labour, Turks and Caicos Islands

Mr. Wesley Howell, Deputy Chief Officer, Security and Public Safety, Ministry of Home Affairs, Cayman Islands



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The High Commissioner's Dialogue on protection at sea has both a thematic and geographic focus. The regional roundtable on protection at sea in the Caribbean will provide an opportunity for a more focused analysis of maritime movements. Some countries and territories are more affected than others. For example, the Bahamas, Cayman Islands, Jamaica, and Turks and Caicos Islands receive disproportionately high numbers of migrants. Affected countries and territories in the region report that close to 3,000 migrants arriving irregularly by sea are repatriated annually. These individuals predominantly comprise nationals of Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Regional consultations held in the Caribbean in 2013 and 2014 have given States and territories the opportunity to explore opportunities for coordinated action to adopt human rights-sensitive and development-oriented measures. The objective is to reduce irregular maritime movements, improve search-and-rescue, ensure protection for refugees and stateless persons (offshore and on-shore), and discourage immigration detention. Countries and territories in the region have repeatedly called for the establishment of a regional consultative mechanism, possibly under the aegis of existing platforms, which would facilitate burden and responsibility-sharing in the face of mixed migratory flows by sea. This call was reiterated in the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action of 3 December 2014.

*Coffee and croissants will be provided outside of the room.
Interpretation will be offered in English, French and Spanish.*