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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 2013

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/68/450)]

68/141. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the activities of his Office¹ and noting that it includes the first decennial strategic review pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/153 of 22 December 2003, and the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the work of its sixty-fourth session² and the decisions contained therein,

Recalling its previous annual resolutions on the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees since its establishment by the General Assembly,

Expressing its appreciation for the leadership shown by the High Commissioner,

Commending the staff and implementing partners of the Office of the High Commissioner for the competent, courageous and dedicated manner in which they discharge their responsibilities,

Underlining its strong condemnation of all forms of violence to which humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel are increasingly exposed,

1. *Welcomes* the important work undertaken by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and its Executive Committee in the course of the year, which is aimed at strengthening the international protection regime and at assisting Governments in meeting their protection responsibilities;

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 12 (A/68/12 (Parts I and II)).*

² *Ibid., Supplement No. 12A (A/68/12/Add.1).*



2. *Endorses* the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the work of its sixty-fourth session;²

3. *Welcomes* the resumption by the Executive Committee of the practice of adopting conclusions, and notes with appreciation its adoption of the conclusion on civil registration;

4. *Appreciates* the high-level segment of the sixty-fourth plenary session of the Executive Committee, welcomes the statement adopted on 1 October 2013 by States members of the Executive Committee, and calls upon all States to urgently provide assistance, as identified in the statement, in order to relieve pressure on host communities;

5. *Welcomes* the ongoing implementation, and encourages further implementation, of pledges made by States at the intergovernmental ministerial event held in 2011 to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees³ and the fiftieth anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness;⁴

6. *Reaffirms* the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto⁵ as the foundation of the international refugee protection regime, recognizes the importance of their full and effective application by States parties and the values they embody, notes with satisfaction that 148 States are now parties to one or both instruments, encourages States not parties to consider acceding to those instruments and States parties with reservations to give consideration to withdrawing them, underlines, in particular, the importance of full respect for the principle of non-refoulement, and recognizes that a number of States not parties to the international refugee instruments have shown a generous approach to hosting refugees;

7. *Re-emphasizes* that the protection of refugees is primarily the responsibility of States, whose full and effective cooperation, action and political resolve are required to enable the Office of the High Commissioner to fulfil its mandated functions, and strongly emphasizes, in this context, the importance of active international solidarity and burden-sharing;

8. *Welcomes* pledges by States to accede to the statelessness conventions, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons⁶ and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, as well as pledges to remove reservations to them, also welcomes the recent increase in the number of accessions to the two Conventions and notes that 79 States are now parties to the 1954 Convention and 55 are parties to the 1961 Convention, encourages States that have not done so to give consideration to acceding to those instruments, notes the work of the High Commissioner in regard to identifying stateless persons, preventing and reducing statelessness and protecting stateless persons, and urges the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to work in this area in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions and Executive Committee conclusions;

³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 189, No. 2545.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 989, No. 14458.

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 606, No. 8791.

⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 360, No. 5158.

9. *Re-emphasizes* that prevention and reduction of statelessness are primarily the responsibility of States, in appropriate cooperation with the international community;

10. *Also re-emphasizes* that protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons are primarily the responsibility of States, in appropriate cooperation with the international community;

11. *Notes* the current activities of the Office of the High Commissioner related to protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, including in the context of inter-agency arrangements in this field, emphasizes that such activities should be consistent with relevant General Assembly resolutions and should not undermine the refugee mandate of the Office and the institution of asylum, and encourages the High Commissioner to continue his dialogue with States on the role of his Office in this regard;

12. *Encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner to continue responding adequately to emergencies, in accordance with its mandate and in cooperation with States, notes the measures taken by the Office to strengthen its capacity to respond to emergencies, and encourages the Office to pursue its efforts to further strengthen its emergency capacity and thereby ensure a more predictable, effective and timely response to coordinated inter-agency efforts;

13. *Also encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner to work in partnership and in full cooperation with relevant national authorities, United Nations offices and agencies, international and intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations to contribute to the continued development of humanitarian response capacities at all levels, and recalls the role of the Office as the leading entity of the cluster for protection, camp coordination and management and emergency shelter in complex emergencies;

14. *Further encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner, among other relevant United Nations and other relevant intergovernmental organizations and humanitarian and development actors, to continue to work with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat to enhance the coordination, effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian response and to contribute, in consultation with States, as appropriate, to making further progress towards common humanitarian needs assessments, as stated, among other important issues, in General Assembly resolution [67/87](#) of 13 December 2012 on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations;

15. *Encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner to engage in and implement in full the objectives of the “Delivering as one” initiative;

16. *Notes with appreciation* the measures taken and efficiencies gained in the process of structural and management change to reinforce the capacity of the Office of the High Commissioner, and encourages the Office to focus on continuous improvement in order to enable a more efficient response to the needs of beneficiaries, including identifying unmet needs, and to ensure the effective and transparent use of its resources;

17. *Expresses deep concern* about the increasing threats to the safety and security of humanitarian aid workers and convoys and, in particular, the loss of life of humanitarian personnel working in the most difficult and challenging conditions in order to assist those in need;

18. *Emphasizes* the need for States to ensure that perpetrators of attacks committed on their territory against humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel do not operate with impunity and that the perpetrators of such acts are promptly brought to justice as provided for by national laws and obligations under international law;

19. *Strongly condemns* attacks on refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons and acts that pose a threat to their personal security and well-being, and calls upon all States concerned and, where applicable, parties involved in an armed conflict to take all measures necessary to ensure respect for human rights and international humanitarian law;

20. *Deplores* the refoulement and unlawful expulsion of refugees and asylum seekers, and calls upon all States concerned to ensure respect for the relevant principles of refugee protection and human rights;

21. *Urges* States to uphold the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, inter alia, through effective measures to prevent the infiltration of armed elements, to identify and separate any such armed elements from refugee populations, to settle refugees in secure locations and to afford to the Office of the High Commissioner and, where appropriate, other humanitarian organizations prompt, unhindered and safe access to asylum seekers, refugees and other persons of concern;

22. *Notes with concern* that asylum seekers, refugees and stateless persons are subject to arbitrary detention in some situations, welcomes the increasing use of alternatives to detention, and emphasizes the need for States to limit detention of asylum seekers, refugees and stateless persons to that which is necessary;

23. *Expresses concern* at the large number of asylum seekers who have lost their lives at sea trying to reach safety, and encourages international cooperation to further strengthen search and rescue mechanisms;

24. *Emphasizes* that the international protection of refugees is a dynamic and action-oriented function that is at the core of the mandate of the Office of the High Commissioner and that it includes, in cooperation with States and other partners, the promotion and facilitation of the admission, reception and treatment of refugees in accordance with internationally agreed standards and the ensuring of durable, protection-oriented solutions, bearing in mind the particular needs of vulnerable groups and paying special attention to those with specific needs, and notes in this context that the delivery of international protection is a staff-intensive service that requires adequate staff with the appropriate expertise, especially at the field level;

25. *Affirms* the importance of age, gender and diversity mainstreaming in analysing protection needs and ensuring the participation of refugees and other persons of concern to the Office of the High Commissioner, as appropriate, in the planning and implementation of programmes of the Office and State policies, also affirms the importance of according priority to addressing discrimination, gender inequality and the problem of sexual and gender-based violence, recognizing the importance of addressing the protection needs of women, children and persons with disabilities in particular, and underlines the importance of continuing to work on those issues;

26. *Notes* that the lack of civil registration and related documentation makes persons vulnerable to statelessness and associated protection risks, recognizes that birth registration provides an official record of a child's legal identity and is crucial

to preventing and reducing statelessness, and welcomes pledges by States to ensure the birth registration of all children;

27. *Strongly reaffirms* the fundamental importance and the purely humanitarian and non-political character of the function of the Office of the High Commissioner of providing international protection to refugees and seeking permanent solutions to refugee problems, and recalls that those solutions include voluntary repatriation and, where appropriate and feasible, local integration and resettlement in a third country, while reaffirming that voluntary repatriation, supported, as necessary, by rehabilitation and development assistance to facilitate sustainable reintegration, remains the preferred solution;

28. *Expresses concern* about the particular difficulties faced by the millions of refugees in protracted situations, and emphasizes the need to redouble international efforts and cooperation to find practical and comprehensive approaches to resolving their plight and to realize durable solutions for them, consistent with international law and relevant General Assembly resolutions;

29. *Recognizes* the importance of achieving durable solutions to refugee problems and, in particular, the need to address in this process the root causes of refugee movements;

30. *Recalls* the important role of effective partnerships and coordination in meeting the needs of refugees and in finding durable solutions to their situations, welcomes the efforts under way, in cooperation with countries hosting refugees and countries of origin, including their respective local communities, relevant United Nations agencies, international and intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations, as appropriate, non-governmental organizations and development actors, to promote a framework for durable solutions, particularly in protracted refugee situations, which includes an approach to sustainable and timely return that encompasses repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction activities, and encourages States, in cooperation with relevant United Nations agencies, international and intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and development actors, to support, inter alia, through the allocation of funds, the implementation of such a framework to facilitate an effective transition from relief to development;

31. *Recognizes* that no solution to displacement can be durable unless it is sustainable, and therefore encourages the Office of the High Commissioner to focus on a solution-oriented approach that supports the sustainability of return and reintegration;

32. *Calls upon* States to create opportunities for resettlement as a durable solution, recognizes the need to increase the number of resettlement places and the number of countries with regular resettlement programmes and to improve the integration of resettled refugees, calls upon States to ensure inclusive and non-discriminatory policies in their resettlement programmes, and notes that resettlement is a strategic protection tool and solution for refugees;

33. *Notes with appreciation* the activities undertaken by States to strengthen the regional initiatives that facilitate cooperative policies and approaches on refugees, and encourages States to continue their efforts to address, in a comprehensive manner, the needs of the people who require international protection in their respective regions, including the support provided for host communities that receive large numbers of persons who require international protection;

34. *Notes* the importance of States and the Office of the High Commissioner discussing and clarifying the role of the Office in mixed migratory flows, in order to better address protection needs in the context of mixed migratory flows, bearing in mind the particular needs of vulnerable groups, especially women, children and persons with disabilities, including by safeguarding access to asylum for those in need of international protection, and also notes the readiness of the High Commissioner, consistent with his mandate, to assist States in fulfilling their protection responsibilities in this regard;

35. *Emphasizes* the obligation of all States to accept the return of their nationals, calls upon States to facilitate the return of their nationals who have been determined not to be in need of international protection, and affirms the need for the return of persons to be undertaken in a safe and humane manner and with full respect for their human rights and dignity, irrespective of the status of the persons concerned;

36. *Expresses concern* about the challenges associated with climate change and environmental degradation to the operations of the Office of the High Commissioner and the assistance it provides to vulnerable populations of concern across the globe, particularly in the least developed countries, and urges the Office to continue to address such challenges in its work, within its mandate, and in consultation with national authorities and in cooperation with competent agencies in its operations;

37. *Urges* all States and relevant non-governmental and other organizations, in conjunction with the Office of the High Commissioner, in a spirit of international solidarity and burden-sharing, to cooperate and to mobilize resources, including through financial and in-kind assistance as well as direct aid to host countries, refugee populations and communities hosting them, with a view to enhancing the capacity of and reducing the heavy burden borne by countries and communities hosting refugees, in particular those that have received large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers, and whose generosity is appreciated;

38. *Calls upon* the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to play its catalytic role in mobilizing assistance from the international community to address the root causes as well as the economic, environmental and social impact of large-scale refugee populations in developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, and countries with economies in transition, and notes with appreciation those donor States, organizations and individuals that contribute to improving the condition of refugees who remain vulnerable members of society;

39. *Expresses deep concern* about the existing and potential challenges posed by the world financial and economic crisis to the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner, and calls upon the Office to further explore ways and means to broaden its donor base so as to achieve greater burden-sharing by reinforcing cooperation with governmental donors, non-governmental donors and the private sector;

40. *Recognizes* that adequate and timely resources are essential for the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to fulfil the mandate conferred upon it through its statute⁷ and by subsequent General Assembly resolutions on refugees and other persons of concern, recalls its resolutions [58/153](#) of 22 December 2003,

⁷ Resolution 428 (V), annex.

[58/270](#) of 23 December 2003, [59/170](#) of 20 December 2004, [60/129](#) of 16 December 2005, [61/137](#) of 19 December 2006, [62/124](#) of 18 December 2007, [63/148](#) of 18 December 2008, [64/127](#) of 18 December 2009, [65/194](#) of 21 December 2010, [66/133](#) of 19 December 2011 and [67/149](#) of 20 December 2012 concerning, inter alia, the implementation of paragraph 20 of the statute of the Office, and urges Governments and other donors to respond promptly to annual and supplementary appeals issued by the Office for requirements under its programmes;

41. *Requests* the High Commissioner to report on his annual activities to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session.

*70th plenary meeting
18 December 2013*