



United Nations

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

**Seventy-fourth session
(9–13 October 2023)**

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

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Note

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I. Introduction

A. Opening of the session

1. The Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees held its seventy-fourth plenary session at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland from 9–13 October 2023. It was opened by the Chairperson of the Executive Committee, the Permanent Representative of Djibouti to the United Nations Office at Geneva. The First Vice-Chairperson, the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations Office at Geneva, and the Second Vice-Chairperson, the Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations Office at Geneva, assisted in the chairing of the session.

B. Representation

2. The following Executive Committee members were represented at the session:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, the Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. Other United Nations Member States present as observers were as follows:

Albania, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Comoros, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Gabon, the Gambia, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Malaysia, Monaco, Nepal, the Niger, Oman, Panama, Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and Viet Nam.

4. United Nations non-member States present as observers were as follows:

State of Palestine.

5. The European Union was represented as an observer.

6. Also present were the following intergovernmental organizations and other entities:

African Union, Council of Europe, Economic Community of Central African States, Economic Community of West African States, International Development Law Organization, International Olympic Committee, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and Sovereign Order of Malta.

7. The United Nations system, specialized agencies and related organizations were represented as follows:

Food and Agriculture Organization, International Organization for Migration, World Bank Group and World Food Programme.

8. Some 20 non-governmental organizations and other partners were in attendance.

C. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

9. The Executive Committee adopted by consensus the agenda contained in [A/AC.96/74/1](#).

D. Election of the officers for the seventy-fifth session

10. Under rule 10 of its rules of procedure, the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation to serve the Committee from the day immediately following their election to the end of the last day of the following annual plenary session:

Chairperson: Ambassador Katharina Stasch (Germany)

First Vice-Chairperson: Ambassador Cristian Espinosa Cañizares (Ecuador)

Second Vice-Chairperson: [Deferred]

Rapporteur: Ms. Mary Kibere NAMONO (Uganda)

II. Work of the seventy-fourth session

11. The High Commissioner's statement and comprehensive summary records of each meeting of the session will be made available on the dedicated webpage of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) relating to the seventy-fourth session of the Executive Committee.

III. Decisions of the Executive Committee

A. General decision on administrative, financial and programme matters

12. The Executive Committee:

(a) Recalls that the Executive Committee, at its seventy-third session, approved programmes and budgets for the country and regional programmes, global programmes and headquarters under the annual programme budget 2023, as set out in document [A/AC.96/1224](#), amounting to \$10,211,257,217 for 2023; notes that the additional needs under supplementary budgets in 2023 amount to \$688,206,843 at 31 May 2023; notes the \$100,000,000 needs reduction in respect to operations in Iraq; approves the total current requirements for 2023 amounting to \$10,799,464,061 and authorizes the High Commissioner, within these total appropriations, to effect adjustments in regional programmes, global programmes and headquarters budgets;

(b) Confirms that the activities proposed in the programme budget for 2024, as set out in document [A/AC.96/74/5](#) are consistent with the Statute of the Office of the High Commissioner ([A/RES/428\(V\)](#)); the High Commissioner's other functions as recognized, promoted or requested by the General Assembly, the Security Council or the Secretary General; and the relevant provisions of the financial rules for voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees ([A/AC.96/503/Rev.12](#));

(c) Approves the programmes and budgets for the country and regional programmes, global programmes and headquarters under the proposed 2024 programme budget as set out in document [A/AC.96/74/5](#), amounting to \$10,621,668,339 for 2024 including the United Nations regular budget contribution towards headquarters costs, the

operational reserve and the Junior Professional Officer programme; and authorizes the High Commissioner, within this total appropriation, to effect adjustments in regional programmes, global programmes and headquarters budgets;

(d) Takes note of the financial statements for the year 2022 as contained in the Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the financial report and audited financial statements of the voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 2022 (A/78/5/Add.6) and the Report by the High Commissioner on key issues and measures taken in response to the recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors (A/AC.96/74/4/Add.1); and requests to be kept regularly informed on the measures taken to address the recommendations and the observations raised in these documents;

(e) Requests the High Commissioner, within the resources available, to respond flexibly and efficiently to the needs indicated under the programme budget for 2024; encourages his Office to be as efficient and effective as possible with the funds provided in implementing his mandate, including for durable solutions, while not diminishing life-saving protection and assistance to forcibly displaced and stateless people; and authorizes him, in the case of additional emergency needs that cannot be met fully from the operational reserve, to create supplementary budgets and issue special appeals under all pillars, with such adjustments being reported to the subsequent Standing Committee meeting for consideration;

(f) Acknowledges with appreciation the burden that continues to be shouldered by developing and least developed countries hosting refugees; and urges Member States to recognize this valuable contribution to the protection of refugees and to participate in efforts to promote durable solutions and more predictable and equitable burden- and responsibility sharing; and

(g) Urges Member States, in light of the extensive needs to be addressed by the Office of the High Commissioner, and in parallel with the long-standing and substantial support provided by refugee-hosting countries, to respond generously and in a spirit of solidarity to his appeal for resources to meet in full the 2024 programme budget and to ensure that the Office is resourced in a timely and predictable manner, while keeping earmarking to a minimum level.

B. Decision on the programme of work of the Standing Committee in 2024

13. The Executive Committee:

Having reviewed the issues before it at its seventy-fourth session, and bearing in mind the decisions adopted at that session,

(a) Decides to convene three formal meetings of the Standing Committee in 2024, to be held in March, June/July and September;

(b) Reaffirms its decision on the framework for the Standing Committee's programme of work (A/AC.96/1003 paragraph 25, sub-paragraph 2(c)); authorizes the Standing Committee to add and delete items, if appropriate, to this framework for its meetings in 2024; and requests member States to meet in December 2023 to prepare a detailed work plan for formal adoption by the Standing Committee at its first meeting in 2024;

(c) Calls upon its members to continue efforts to ensure that debate at the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee is of a substantive and interactive nature, yielding practical guidance and clear advice to the High Commissioner, in keeping with the Committee's statutory functions;

(d) Calls upon the Office of the High Commissioner to be explicit and analytical in its reports and presentations to the Committee and to submit documentation in a timely manner; and

(e) Further requests the Standing Committee to report on its work to the seventy-fifth session of the Executive Committee.

C. Decision on the observer participation in the meetings of the Standing Committee in 2023–2024

14. The Executive Committee:

(a) Approves applications by the following Government observer delegations for participation in meetings of the Standing Committee from October 2023 to October 2024:

Central African Republic, Cuba, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Guatemala, Honduras, Iraq, Liberia, Malaysia, Niger, Sierra Leone and Ukraine.

(b) Authorizes the Standing Committee to decide upon any additional applications from Government observer delegations to participate in its meetings during the aforementioned period; and

(c) Approves the following list of intergovernmental and international organizations to be invited by the High Commissioner to participate as observers in relevant meetings of its Standing Committee from October 2023 to October 2024:

United Nations specialized agencies, departments, funds and programmes, African Union, Central African Economic and Monetary Community, Commonwealth of Independent States, Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, Council of Europe, East African Community, Economic Community of Central African States, Economic Community of West African States, European Union, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, International Centre for Migration Policy Development, International Committee of the Red Cross; International Development Law Organization, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, International Organisation of La Francophonie, League of Arab States, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Southern African Development Community, Sovereign Order of Malta and University for Peace.

D. Decision on the provisional agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the Executive Committee

15. The Executive Committee:

(a) Recalling its decision on working methods adopted at its fifty-fifth plenary session ([A/AC.96/1003](#) paragraph 25); and

(b) Decides to adopt as the provisional agenda for the seventy-fifth session of the Executive Committee the standard model contained in sub-paragraph 1(f) of the above-mentioned decision.

E. Decision on the participation of intergovernmental organizations in private meetings of the Executive Committee

16. The Executive Committee:

(a) Recalling rule 38 of its Rules of Procedure ([A/AC.96/187/Rev.8](#)) and its decision on the participation of intergovernmental organizations in private meetings of the Executive Committee adopted at its sixty-seventh plenary session; and

(b) Approves the application by the European Union to participate as an observer in the Committee's private meetings on asylum and refugee matters within its competence during the seventy-fifth session of the Executive Committee.

F. Decision on a multi-year work plan for Executive Committee Conclusions

17. The Executive Committee:

Reaffirming the important role of the Executive Committee in forging consensus on vital international protection and durable solutions issues, standards, policies and practices, as well as the value of Executive Committee Conclusions as guidance for States, UNHCR, non-governmental organizations and other actors in providing protection, assistance and solutions for refugees and other persons of concern,

Having considered the potential contribution of future Executive Committee Conclusions on a range of themes,

Welcoming the proposals received from Member States and UNHCR,

Recognizing the usefulness of an indicative work plan of identified themes for the three-year period ahead, and that such a work plan would enable the Committee and UNHCR to better plan for relevant conference room papers, Informal Consultative Meetings, and briefings,

Underscoring that the Committee retains flexibility to adjust and modify the 2024-2026 work plan, in particular to consider additional themes as conditions may warrant, as well as to update the work plan annually on a rolling basis,

(a) Agrees to the following work plan of themes for consideration and development in 2024, 2025 and 2026:

2024 – Durable solutions and complementary pathways.

2025 – Climate action as relevant to UNHCR's activities.

2026 – Education.

(b) Agrees to update in 2026 Conclusion No. 110(LXI) 2010 on refugees with disabilities and other persons with disabilities protected and assisted by UNHCR;

(c) Notes the topic of the impact of hosting refugees, to be addressed in future conclusions from 2024; and

(d) Requests the Executive Committee Bureau and UNHCR to take this work plan into account in preparing a draft programme of work for the Committee's consideration during the December Planning Meeting.

G. Decision on the simultaneous distribution of documents of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

18. The Executive Committee:

Recalling General Assembly resolution [69/324](#) on multilingualism, which underlines the responsibility of the United Nations to integrate multilingualism into its activities, as well as General Assembly resolution [70/9](#) on the pattern of conferences, which emphasizes multilingualism as a core value of the Organization and calls for the strict respect of the rules concerning the simultaneous distribution of General Assembly documents in all six official languages,

Reaffirming the importance of multilingualism as a means of promoting international understanding and respect, peace and security, and cooperation among nations,

Recalling the decision adopted by the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's programme at its sixty-seventh session in October 2016, as contained in [A/AC.96/1165](#) paragraph 19,

(a) Notes that the following documents prepared for the annual sessions of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme cannot, for procedural

reasons, be submitted to the United Nations Documents Management Service within the stipulated timeframes to allow for the simultaneous distribution in all official six languages: (i) Key issues and measures taken in response to the report of the Board of Auditors; (ii) the UNHCR annual programme budget; (iii) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions; and (iv) Report of the June/July and September meetings of the Standing Committee;

(b) Recalls that the official and working languages of the Committee are English and French, and agrees to consider these documents and their draft decisions on the basis of the equally authentic English and French originals submitted by the substantive secretariat;

(c) Acknowledges that the requirement of simultaneous distribution of these five documents in the six official United Nations languages may be exceptionally lifted for the annual sessions of the Executive Committee; and

(d) Acknowledges further the need to make available these documents in all six official United Nations languages as early as possible.
