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UNHCR's 10 Point Plan in Central America, Western Africa, Eastern Africa and Southern Asia – a two year project

UNHCR's *10 Point Plan of Action on Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration* (10 Point Plan) has met with great interest by States as well as other stakeholders. The Plan was issued by the Office in 2006¹ to assist States to develop comprehensive and protection sensitive migration strategies. During the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges which took place in December 2007², participants acknowledged the direct relevance of the areas covered in the 10 Point Plan for the better management of refugee protection and international migration. Participants also pointed out that the Plan needs to be further elaborated and some of its terminology further clarified. In addition, there was agreement that the 10 Point Plan is an instrument for action which is to be implemented on a regional basis.

UNHCR has initiated a number of follow-up activities to the High Commissioner's Dialogue. One of these is a two-year project on the 10 Point Plan entitled "UNHCR's 10 Point Plan in Central America, Western Africa, Eastern Africa, and Southern Asia" designed by the Office's Division of International Protection Services. The project will be realized in 2008-09 thanks to generous funding UNHCR has received from the European Commission. It consists of two interrelated components: The development of implementation strategies for the 10 Point Plan in four different regions through regional stakeholder conferences; and the further development and elaboration of the 10 Point Plan as a tool through expert roundtables and a Best Practice Handbook.

1. Stakeholder conferences - development of regional implementation strategies

UNHCR will convene four regional conferences on refugee protection and international migration in cooperation with regional governments and partners. Each conference will last two - three days and will be aimed at senior level government officials, international organizations and civil society representatives. Building on, and furthering, the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges, the regional conferences aim at sensitizing key stakeholders to the protection challenges arising out of situations of mixed migration. They will also serve to familiarize them with UNHCR's 10 Point Plan as a possible framework for the development of a 'protection sensitive' migration strategy. On the basis of an analysis of the particular migration situation in the region, and its challenges and opportunities for persons of concern to UNHCR, the conferences would also serve to build regional consensus on key elements of an implementation strategy.

¹ The document is available at <http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/4742a30b4.pdf>.

² Further information on the Dialogue is available at <http://www.unhcr.org/protect/473db6522.html>.

Four regions have (tentatively) been identified and timeframes for the conferences have been established in consultation with the respective bureaux and (regional) offices in the field. The first of these conferences will be targeted at the mixed migration situation in the Gulf of Aden. UNHCR will convene this first conference in:

- Sana'a, Yemen in May 2008.

The other three regional conferences are envisaged in:

- West Africa (Dakar) - Oct 2008
- Asia (Bangkok) - March 2009
- Central America (Costa Rica) - November 2009.

2. Further development and elaboration of the 10 Point Plan

2.1. Good Practice Handbook

The EC funded project will enable UNHCR to complete and issue a 'Good Practice Handbook' on the 10 Point Plan. The Handbook will be a compilation of good practice examples from different regions, including an explanatory note on all of the Plan's Ten Action Points and other tools (questionnaires, check-lists, list of references etc.) to provide further guidance on the Plan and facilitate its implementation. A preliminary version of the Handbook's core text is expected to be ready for distribution in summer 2008. The Handbook will be reviewed and finalized based on the comments and feed-back received. It will be published in English in the form of a loose-leaflet binder. Translations into French, Spanish and Arabic will follow.

2.2 Expert Roundtables

UNHCR will convene four 1-2 days expert roundtables in Geneva on the various action points of the 10 Point Plan. Around 30 experts from governments, other international agencies, academia and civil society will be invited. The participants will be chosen on the basis of their in-depth knowledge of, and practical experience in, the topic for discussion. Representation of different regional practices will be ensured. The roundtables will provide a forum for an in-depth discussion on the different chapters of the Handbook and offer the opportunity to gather additional best practice examples. Discussions will be based on the chapters of the preliminary version of the relevant Handbook and the commentaries the expert participants will be requested to prepare for the roundtable. The outcome of the roundtables will be accounted for in the final version of the Handbook. The following is a tentative schedule for the roundtables. Concept notes and agenda for each of the workshops will be distributed to interested parties within the next few months:

Roundtable I: Protection sensitive entry systems – September 2008

Roundtable II: Reception Conditions, profiling and referral and differentiated processes and procedures - November 2008

Roundtable III: Cooperation among key partners and secondary movers (solidarity and burden sharing aspects) - December 08/January 2009

Roundtable IV: Return arrangements for non-refugees and alternative migration options and information strategy – February 2009

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