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Sixty-fourth session

Summary record of the 666th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Monday, 30 September 2013, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Arango Olmos (Colombia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Chairperson**, declaring open the sixty-fourth session of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said that she invited the participants to reflect on the contribution of front-line humanitarian workers to the goal of providing people forced to flee their homes with international support and protection.

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (A/AC.96/LXIV/1)

2. *The agenda was adopted.*

High-level segment on solidarity and burden-sharing with countries hosting Syrian refugees

3. *A short film entitled More than two million was projected.*

4. **The Chairperson** said that the film effectively depicted the tragedy unfolding in the region and the lifesaving efforts being made to address the needs of over 2 million Syrian refugees. She had seen for herself the impressive relief efforts of humanitarian organizations and of the Lebanese people during a visit to Lebanon in June 2013 and had been deeply moved by what she had seen.

Statement by the High Commissioner

5. **Mr. Guterres** (High Commissioner) said that as thousands of Syrians fled the catastrophic situation in their country every day, it was only the generosity of the neighbouring countries that was averting a second humanitarian catastrophe. Those countries were now hosting over 2.1 million registered refugees and hundreds of thousands of Syrians who were unregistered refugees or economic migrants. He asked those countries' Governments to open their borders to all Syrians in need and the international community to share a burden that was too heavy for the neighbouring countries to bear alone.

6. The influx of refugees had compounded the already dire economic consequences of the conflict. In Lebanon, 20–25 per cent of people now living in the country were Syrians. The country was losing 2.9 per cent in GDP growth a year and unemployment was set to rise by 100 per cent by the end of 2014. Providers of local services for the poor were struggling with a 40 per cent increase in demand, and a further 170,000 Lebanese could be pushed into poverty.

7. In Jordan, the cost of hosting Syrian refugees was projected to reach US\$ 1.7 billion by the end of 2013. The surge in demand for health care had led to a shortage of medicines, and the country's drinking water supply had been severely depleted. Turkey, meanwhile, had spent US\$ 2 billion, mostly from its own budget, on refugee assistance, and Turkish hospitals near the Syrian border were operating at almost twice their capacity. The Kurdistan region of Iraq was also under pressure, after the influx of Syrian refugees had increased the population of the Dohuk governorate by 10 per cent.

8. The issue of burden-sharing was more important than ever. To be successful, the current meeting must focus on the strictly humanitarian dimension of the conflict, namely, mobilizing solidarity with the neighbours of the Syrian Arab Republic.

9. The crisis was creating fundamental, structural problems for the countries of the region. More international solidarity was needed not only to assist humanitarian organizations but also to provide emergency development support and structural assistance to the neighbouring States. Many host communities needed massive, long-term

development investment, since the challenges they faced were expected to grow. Those running bilateral development programmes and international financial institutions should consider making those countries priority partners.

10. International solidarity must also include sharing the burden of receiving refugees. All countries, particularly in Europe and the extended Middle East, should allow Syrians access to asylum and quality protection and offer them permanent residence, or admission on humanitarian grounds, and the possibility of family reunification. If the situation deteriorated, an emergency evacuation of Syrian refugees to locations outside the region might be needed in order to ease the pressure on neighbouring countries.

11. There was a growing imbalance between States as far as refugee burden-sharing was concerned. Developing countries currently hosted four out of five refugees worldwide. The Syrian Arab Republic was a testing ground for the international refugee protection system. Would it be able to mobilize massive international support for those hosting millions of refugees at great expense? Was the world able (and willing) to uphold the international protection regime and maintain regional stability? Were international burden-sharing mechanisms up to the task?

Statements by Ministers of host countries

12. **Mr. Zebari** (Minister for Foreign Affairs, Iraq) said that the Syrian crisis had had a tremendous impact on Iraq, which was already contending with critical security, humanitarian and refugee challenges. The arrival of more than 240,000 Syrian refugees since mid-September 2013 had placed an additional burden on the country's resources and on local economies. If the current trend continued, the number of Syrian refugees in Iraq was expected to reach 350,000 by the end of 2013. There was heavy overcrowding in the camps and resources for health care, educational services and sanitation were limited.

13. The Federal Government had contributed over US\$ 45 million to cover basic needs, support UNHCR operations and assist internally displaced persons inside the Syrian Arab Republic. The Kurdistan regional government and local communities had contributed US\$ 60 million in humanitarian assistance. The authorities and host communities had been supportive of the Syrian refugees but increased international support was needed to meet the refugees' needs and sustain delicate political and ethnic balances. The conflict posed a direct threat to peace and security in the Middle East and created heightened security threats, as insurgents in the Syrian Arab Republic attempted to infiltrate refugee camps.

14. Iraq called for a negotiated solution to be found to the conflict. It welcomed the recent adoption of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) and called for those who used chemical weapons to be held to account. It supported the proposed "Geneva II" framework and looked to the Syrian Government to comply fully with Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). It called upon the international community to help countries and host populations to bear the refugee burden. Noting that only 23 per cent of the UNHCR-led Regional Response Plan for Iraq had been funded to date, he said that the additional needs generated by the presence of refugees must be incorporated into development plans.

15. **Mr. Judeh** (Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jordan) said that the Jordanian authorities and Jordanian people had taken in refugees from the outset of the crisis. By the summer of 2012, the situation had deteriorated and the number of refugee arrivals had almost tripled. The Government had thus been forced to open refugee camps. One camp was now the fourth largest city in Jordan and home to 125,000 of the 600,000 Syrian refugees living in the country. Syrians now represented almost 21 per cent of the country's total population.

16. Jordan was working with various partners to address the refugees' needs and prepare the camps for winter. While it focused on the logistics and operational aspects of managing the refugee influx, it recognized that there was a need to take a medium-term view and to

examine the issue of hosting refugees. The resilience of host communities was waning, as the refugee presence had created competition for space, jobs and resources, put pressure on local services. The international community must assume its responsibilities in order to enable Jordan to continue to serve as a safe haven for refugees.

17. The heart of the problem was the political impasse. A lasting solution was only attainable through the implementation of the measures agreed to at the 2012 Geneva conference. A multilevel approach was required to tackle the problem of humanitarian access in the Syrian Arab Republic, to relieve the pressure on host countries and to address the long-term impact on host communities. Outpourings of goodwill were appreciated, but “milestone” meetings such as pledging conferences produced tangible results, and more should be organized. As His Majesty King Abdullah II Bin Al Hussein of Jordan had said, Jordanians had opened their arms to those in need but could not shoulder the burden of what was a regional and global challenge.

18. **Mr. Davutoğlu** (Minister for Foreign Affairs, Turkey) said that Turkey had kept its borders open to Syrian refugees from the outset but the number of arrivals had risen from 7,500 in 2011 to 50,000 in 2012 and 500,000 in 2013 as the Syrian regime used heavier and heavier weapons. While his Government welcomed the framework agreement reached in Geneva in 2012 and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), it was disappointed that the latter made no reference to the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. It was to be hoped that a future resolution would break the international community’s silence on the humanitarian tragedy.

19. The chemical weapons initiative, if successful, would eliminate a serious threat to regional security and prevent the recurrence of the regime’s crimes against humanity. However, explicit measures must be taken to prevent the regime from using the initiative to continue its bloody campaign. More than 120,000 Syrians had been killed by conventional weapons and if no solution to the conflict were found soon, refugee numbers would increase further.

20. Turkey afforded temporary protection to some 201,000 Syrian refugees in 21 shelters and to 350,000 Syrian refugees living elsewhere. The anticipated influx of an additional 500,000 refugees by the end of 2013 would do nothing to improve the situation. The refugees’ needs were being met and Syrian refugees and Turkish nationals received equal treatment. Regular visits were made to the camps by high-level officials and camp conditions were relatively good.

21. While, since 2011, Turkey had channelled humanitarian aid worth some US\$ 2 million to Syrians in dire need through the “border zero point” operation, the international response to what was an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe had fallen short of the mark. The international community had failed to provide a political solution or an effective humanitarian response. Its silence on the Syrian crisis could not continue.

22. A road map was needed to cope with the humanitarian disaster. The international community could, for example, scale up the contributions to the Syria Regional Response Plan (RRP) and to the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan (SHARP) and fund them fully. The United Nations should ensure that Member States met their obligations. Bilateral contributions to the neighbouring host countries should also be increased. The United Nations should lead resettlement and humanitarian admission projects and priority should be given to the most vulnerable refugees.

23. The neighbouring countries should pursue the dialogue that was being coordinated by UNHCR, and monthly ministerial and field meetings should be held. Witnesses should be involved in public information activities concerning the humanitarian tragedy in the Syrian Arab Republic. A representative assembly of Syrian refugees should be formed to visit United Nations Headquarters and donor country capitals and to share eyewitness

accounts of events in their home country. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) should consider establishing orphanages for Syrian refugee children who had lost their parents.

24. While host country Governments deserved support, it must be borne in mind that responding to humanitarian needs was a shared responsibility. His country called for a strong Security Council resolution that would provide, at a minimum, for the creation of safe areas and humanitarian corridors in the Syrian Arab Republic. The international community must not forget the vulnerable victims of the Syrian conflict.

25. **Mr. Abou Faour** (Minister for Social Affairs, Lebanon) said that the international community's response to the cold-blooded execution of over 1,000 Syrian men, women and children was hard to imagine and hard to accept; international justice and humanitarian justice were evidently not the same.

26. Lebanon assumed its humanitarian responsibilities towards the Syrian refugees, was committed to maintaining open borders and was not extraditing Syrian activists of any kind. However, in addition to the 400,000 Palestinian and 10,000 Iraqi refugees living in the country, there were now some 1.3 million Syrian refugees and a further 92,000 Palestinian refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic. Thirty per cent of the population of Lebanon were refugees. If transposed onto the populations of other countries, for Germany, that would represent 25 million refugees and for the United States of America, 93 million refugees.

27. In 2012–2014, the Lebanese economy was predicted to sustain losses of some US\$ 7.5 billion. Tourism was down by 30 per cent compared with 2010, and the country's already insufficient energy resources were under strain. Cases of sexual exploitation of girls, prostitution, early marriage and child labour were rising sharply and the number of street children was over 3,000. Refugee inflows placed pressure on the prison system, which already suffered from serious overcrowding. The number of Syrian refugee children registering in Lebanese schools had almost tripled since 2012, and the start of the academic year had been postponed.

28. The crisis had affected agriculture; the incidence of plant and livestock diseases in Lebanon had increased due to a lack of control and monitoring in the Syrian Arab Republic. The refugee presence had also placed Lebanese health services under colossal pressure. Diseases such as polio and measles had resurfaced and new diseases, such as leishmaniasis, had appeared. In recent months, two Lebanese children had died after being refused admission because of a shortage of beds.

29. Recalling that demographic pressures had contributed to the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war, he said that certain acts by the Syrian regime to forcibly displace particular population groups had adversely affected the delicate demographic balance in Lebanon. Indeed, some antagonism towards Syrian refugees had already surfaced. A substantial parliamentary bloc was calling for border closures and for steps to be taken to turn refugees away or repatriate the refugees in coordination with the Syrian Government.

30. The international response to the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon had been disappointing. Lebanon was the weakest host country in terms of its humanitarian relief capacity and was unable to intervene even in cases of need. Its calls to the international community for assistance had met with no response. The reason given — negative experiences with previous Lebanese Governments — could not be sustained. The World Bank supported the "Better Living Conditions for Lebanon's Poorest" project, and support should not be withheld because some components of the Lebanese Government were unacceptable to some members of the international community.

31. The Lebanese Government had abided by its commitments in the face of domestic opposition. The failure of the international community to do its part would lose it an important ally in the local Lebanese community.

32. An international conference should be convened in the near future to secure additional financial assistance and promote burden-sharing. The decision by the Government of Germany to offer 5,000 resettlement places to Syrian refugees was welcome, and a committee should be established to prepare for the return of Syrian refugees once the situation had stabilized. Preparations should be made for a second Geneva conference that would pave the way for the return of the refugees in safety and dignity. When the current crisis was over, the Syrian people would remember what positions the international community had taken and which countries had stood by them.

33. **Mr. Kamel** (Assistant Minister for Arab Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Egypt) said that the total number of Syrians who had arrived in Egypt since the start of the conflict had risen to above 300,000. Of that number, 124,000 had been registered or were awaiting registration with UNHCR. The figures proved beyond doubt the urgent need for concerted international action.

34. Aid so far had been minimal at best, and the already limited resources of host countries were under increasing strain. The Government of Egypt was committed to ensuring the best possible treatment for all Syrian refugees and to providing equal access to education and to health services for all Syrian nationals who needed them.

35. Egypt urged its international partners to push for a political solution to the crisis and, in particular, for the proposed “Geneva II” conference to be convened as soon as possible. It called upon them to increase their engagement, to adopt a burden-sharing policy, to accept more refugees and to commit to the United Nations Regional Response Plan. Effective and real support that empowered the Syrian people to achieve a better future was essential, for even if there were a prompt resolution to the crisis, the return, recovery and reconstruction process would be long and protracted.

36. **Mr. Friedrich** (Minister of the Interior, Germany) said that delivering aid to refugees in neighbouring countries and supporting host countries was a priority for his Government, as was supplying humanitarian aid within the Syrian Arab Republic itself. Germany had so far provided almost 2.5 million euros in humanitarian, transitional and development assistance and was working to supply drinking water and other facilities at refugee camps in Jordan. Around 19,000 Syrians had found protection in Germany and a further 5,000 would be welcomed in the near future.

37. Since resettlement programmes could be considered too limited to bring real relief when operated in isolation, his Government called on other countries outside the crisis region to initiate humanitarian admission programmes, following the example of Norway, Austria and others. It also called on the Security Council to adopt a resolution on the issue.

Statements by Heads of United Nations partner organizations

38. **Ms. Clark** (Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) said there was a growing recognition of the fact that host countries could not bear the cost of the crisis alone and that the political and humanitarian crisis had grown into a development crisis which would have a deep and lasting impact on the region’s future. A creative, collective approach was needed, in which vital lifesaving humanitarian aid was complemented by development support.

39. A comprehensive regional framework that set out the complementarities between the development and humanitarian responses should be drawn up as a matter of urgency. The establishment of host community support platforms in Jordan and Lebanon had marked significant advances towards that goal and should help the stakeholders to formulate joint

strategies. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had appointed a subregional development coordinator to work with counterparts from UNHCR and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). A series of joint assessments of the development impact of the crisis had furthermore been conducted.

40. It was vital that, in responding to the crisis, the international community should set a precedent for cooperation and coordination. The protracted and unpredictable nature of the crisis precluded the possibility of a tidy sequence of support from initial aid through recovery to long-term development. The humanitarian and development work needed to proceed simultaneously and without delay.

41. **Mr. Lake** (Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund) said that a grim milestone had been reached in August 2013, when the number of children fleeing the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic had passed the 1 million mark. After witnessing unspeakable violence, those children now found themselves in crowded, makeshift schools and at growing risk of contracting disease, as host countries' infrastructure was stretched beyond capacity. With the children's long-term future and immediate well-being at risk, the humanitarian response must be accompanied by development assistance.

42. At camps in Jordan, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was working with the Government to provide wash facilities to protect children against measles and to improve access to education by introducing double shifts for teachers. The world could not afford a lost generation of Syrian children who were ill-equipped to rebuild their shattered country and were instead more likely to perpetuate the suffering that they had endured. The international community must share the burden with host countries and provide additional support for both direct victims and every child affected by the conflict.

43. **Ms. Cousin** (Executive Director, World Food Programme) said that the goal of the World Food Programme (WFP) response was to meet immediate needs while building resilience wherever possible. In partnership with a group of local NGOs led by the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, WFP was providing basic food staples for around 3 million people in the Syrian Arab Republic and supplementary nutrition for malnourished children. It hoped to be reaching 4 million people by the end of 2013 but the increasing use of violence, roadblocks and controls was reducing its access to populations in need. In the hotspots of rural Damascus, Aleppo and Hasakah, well over a million people were thought to be trapped without access to food. The access problems had been compounded by the worst wheat harvest that the country had experienced in a decade and a consequent 60 per cent rise in the price of imported food staples. Freezes on Syrian bank deposits had prevented brokers from responding to recent Government commodity tenders, further exacerbating the shortages and price hikes.

44. Elsewhere, WFP was supporting around 1.2 million people in host countries. Its aim was to increase that figure to 2.6 million by the end of 2013. It hoped to mitigate the negative effects of the refugee influx on food security and nutrition in vulnerable host communities. In Lebanon, for example, the rapid change in supply and demand had pushed domestic food prices up by 11 per cent, affecting poor families most of all.

45. On the positive side, food voucher programmes were being used to ensure that the WFP response benefited host communities as well as refugee families, and the emphasis on locally produced commodities was providing a solid revenue stream for Turkish and Lebanese farmers. WFP would continue to supply the immediate food and nutrition needs of victims and work with agencies, Governments and regional communities to ease the burden of those whose generosity was saving the lives of so many.

46. **Ms. Amos** (United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator) said that the crisis had escalated into a regional crisis that had huge implications for global peace and security. Its brutal and protracted nature called

for a coordinated response that extended far beyond humanitarian aid delivery. She called on development partners, financial institutions and humanitarian organizations to join forces in the formulation of multi-year assistance programmes for the Syrian Arab Republic and its neighbours that would build resilience, social cohesion and security and continue to support the refugees.

47. Noting that only a political solution would end the crisis, she urged all actors with influence on the parties involved to push for an immediate start to negotiations to end the fighting. In the meantime, the United Nations Security Council should issue a statement on the necessity of humanitarian action, and the international community must demonstrate increased solidarity and engagement.

Statements by guest speakers

48. **Ms. Georgieva** (Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, European Union), calling for an end to the paralysis of the past year with regard to the Syrian crisis, said that the European Union had raised over 2 billion euros for the Syrian Arab Republic and its neighbours. Around 40 per cent of that aid was being used to provide food, shelter and medicine inside the Syrian Arab Republic, another 40 per cent to support the refugees and the remainder to assist host communities. She called on other donors to follow suit; without adequate support, there could be a change of attitude within host communities that would have potentially devastating consequences.

49. She supported the previous calls for a strong and clear Security Council resolution on the humanitarian impact of the crisis and the need for access; failure to issue a statement condemning the violence against civilians and those endeavouring to assist them would set a dangerous precedent. She also called for increased engagement from the international community to obviate the risk of regional destabilization. Potentially, the biggest danger was radicalization of a generation of youth. Ultimately a political solution would be the only way to end the crisis, but in the meantime solidarity with those who so desperately needed assistance was vital.

50. **Mr. Al-Maatoq** (Humanitarian Envoy of the Secretary-General for Kuwait and Chairman of the International Islamic Charitable Organization), commending the Governments of Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq for opening their border to Syrian refugees, called for a coordinated international effort to meet the basic needs of all Syrian refugees. At a donor meeting held in Kuwait in January 2013, he said that participants had pledged to contribute US\$ 1.6 billion in humanitarian aid. Around two thirds of those funds had already been made available. Donors that had yet to honour their pledges should do so by the end of 2013. Kuwait had already provided US\$ 300 million to United Nations agencies, including US\$ 110 million to UNHCR and the International Committee of the Red Cross for their humanitarian programmes in the Syrian Arab Republic.

51. **Mr. Burns** (Deputy Secretary of State, United States of America) said that inflows of Syrian refugees were placing enormous strain on host Governments and communities and causing significant demographic changes in the region. The Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, for example, was now that country's fourth largest population centre and one in four people living in Lebanon was a Syrian refugee. The United States had contributed more than US\$ 1 billion in aid to the Syrian people.

52. The volume of humanitarian assistance reaching Syrians inside their country must be increased. Aid must be allowed to reach the most vulnerable population sectors and the areas most affected by the fighting. It was time for the Security Council to demand unfettered humanitarian access. Relief efforts by the United Nations should be linked to economic development and stabilization programmes. Particular attention should be paid to preventing gender-based violence, human trafficking and early marriages among Syrian refugee women and girls. In that connection, the "Safe from the Start" initiative, which had

been launched recently by the United States, was designed to prevent gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies. Almost 2 million children no longer attended school in the Syrian Arab Republic. More must be done to restore their access to education, prevent them from being coerced into informal labour and protect them from the influence of extremist groups. The international community must engage with the authorities of host cities and communities in order to help them deal with their refugee populations.

53. **Mr. Byam** (Director, Strategy and Operations in the Middle East and North Africa Region, World Bank) said that countries hosting large numbers of Syrian refugees faced four key challenges: heightened insecurity, strained public services and infrastructure, increased competition for jobs between refugees and locals, and housing shortages. A recent assessment by the World Bank had shown that the worsening security situation in Lebanon had hit tourism and other key sectors of the economy hard. Inward investment had dwindled and trade had been disrupted. Tax revenue was falling while the cost of dealing with the refugees was pushing up public spending. Poverty in Lebanon was set to increase by 17 per cent and the percentage of Syrian children in public schools could rise to 57 per cent. US\$ 1 billion would be needed to restore infrastructure there to pre-crisis levels.

54. In Jordan, the country's capacity had been sorely tested and its stability threatened. Paradoxically, economic indicators had improved in 2013, owing to government spending that was financed largely by the Gulf States. The World Bank was working with UNHCR and other agencies to improve local services in areas affected by refugee arrivals.

55. South-east Turkey had especially felt the impact of the influx of refugees, whose presence posed a growing challenge in urban areas and placed a strain on hospitals and social services. The cost of hosting Syrian refugees in Turkey had been estimated at US\$ 40 million a month. Humanitarian response initiatives there needed to go hand in hand with development programmes.

56. **Ms. Engström** (Sweden) said that 7,000 children had been killed in the course of the civil war in the Syrian Arab Republic and that 1 million had become refugees. Particular attention should be paid to them and to their education. Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic had yet again been forced to flee from conflict. More must be done to secure their rights.

57. People of Syrian origin had filed more than 25 per cent of asylum applications in Sweden, and the Swedish Migration Board had recently decided to grant permanent residence to all refugees from the Syrian conflict present in Sweden. More than 20 per cent of resettlement places in Sweden would be set aside for those refugees. Sweden had contributed approximately US\$ 90 million in response to the Syrian crisis and was providing funds for the core budgets of the main humanitarian agencies. It had also earmarked US\$ 6 million specifically for UNHCR to use in its response to the crisis.

58. **Mr. Barth Eide** (Norway) welcomed the adoption of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) and expressed the hope that another resolution calling for unlimited humanitarian access to the Syrian Arab Republic would also be passed. Renewed hopes of a political solution to the crisis meant that, in the short term, fighting could be expected to intensify as each side attempted to improve its strategic position prior to any possible agreement. In 2013, Norway had earmarked US\$ 140 million in humanitarian assistance for the Syrian Arab Republic, half of which had been allocated to the Regional Response Plan. The Government had decided to accept 1,000 Syrian refugees for resettlement in 2014. To tackle the unfolding regional development crisis, the United Nations, donors and countries in the affected area needed to focus on strategic priorities. As a rule, such large-scale refugee crises required both humanitarian aid and concerted development planning.

59. **Mr. Al-Attiyah** (Observer for Qatar) said that the Syrian conflict and related humanitarian catastrophe posed a threat to security in the Middle East and to international

peace. The international community could not remain silent about that tragedy. It must share the burden and mobilize resources to assist the displaced and support neighbouring countries and host communities. It must seek to achieve: unrestricted humanitarian access in the Syrian Arab Republic; protection of humanitarian organizations operating there and the establishment of safe areas and security corridors for the population. Qatar had dispatched relief convoys for Syrian refugees and internally displaced people and had provided almost US\$ 1.2 billion in aid. It would spare no effort to alleviate the Syrian people's suffering and to help the people to secure their demands.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.