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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fifty-ninth session
Geneva, 6-10 October 2008
Item 5 of the provisional agenda
Reports on the work of the Standing Committee

Report on the Work of the Standing Committee

Report of the Secretariat

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its fifty-eighth session in October 2007, the Executive Committee adopted a decision which set out the issues to be examined by the Standing Committee in its programme of work for 2008.¹ This report provides a summary of the implementation of this programme.

2. The Standing Committee held three meetings in 2008: in March, June and September. A planning meeting of Executive Committee members in December 2007 established the calendar of meetings and determined the distribution of the different agenda items in 2008. This is provided in Annex I.

¹ A/AC.96/1048, paragraph 17.

3. A detailed account of the work undertaken at each of the meetings of the Standing Committee in 2008 is contained in the following reports: *Report of the forty-first meeting of the Standing Committee* (A/AC.96/1052); *Report of the forty-second meeting of the Standing Committee* (A/AC.96/1060); and *Report of the forty-third meeting of the Standing Committee* (A/AC.96/1061). A list of documents relating to these meetings is provided in Annex II.

II. ISSUES COVERED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE IN 2008

A. Programme budgets and funding

4. At each of its meetings, the Standing Committee considered updates on overall programme budgets and funding through which it was kept informed of programme requirements, budgetary measures and funding levels. The Committee also adopted decisions, as listed in section III below. In March, the Standing Committee approved the adoption of a new budget structure, with effect from the 2010-2011 biennium. The Committee was also informed of the assessment of unmet needs of populations of concern, and progress on this was reported on at subsequent meetings in June and September. At the June meeting, the Committee considered the Global Report on UNHCR's activities in 2007, and approved an increase to the 2008 annual budget. The Committee also took note of UNHCR's programme in the United Nations proposed strategic framework for the biennium 2010-2011. In its September meeting, the Standing Committee reviewed the Biennial Programme Budget for 2008 and 2009 (revised).

B. International Protection

5. In March, the Standing Committee received an oral update on the first meeting of the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges that had taken place in December 2007. The June meeting included a debate on the Note on International Protection and on the Agenda for Protection. The Committee also received a progress report on Resettlement.

C. Regional activities and global programmes

6. Regional reviews of UNHCR's programmes and activities in all five regions: Africa; the Americas; Asia and the Pacific; the Middle East and North Africa; and Europe, were considered comprehensively at the Standing Committee's meeting in March. In addition to the regional reviews, the Committee also considered the Office's global programmes and partnerships. This review of regional and global activities was articulated around the global objectives contained in UNHCR's Global Appeal for 2008 and 2009, and emphasized progress and challenges encountered. The Committee also considered an update on UNHCR's emergency response capacity in March, a report on staff safety and security issues in June and a report on emergency preparedness and response in September.

D. Programme/Protection policy

7. At the March meeting, the Committee received a presentation on UNHCR's policy framework and implementation strategy on its role in support of the return and reintegration of displaced populations. The Committee was also briefed on protracted situations which would benefit from international support and, in June, it considered a report on protracted refugee situations. It also reviewed reports on HIV and AIDS policies and interventions; age, gender and diversity mainstreaming and on the progress achieved on the mainstreaming of issues related to internally displaced persons (IDPs).

E. Coordination

8. The Committee considered elements for UNHCR's oral update to the 2008 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at its June meeting. An update on inter-agency coordination issues and strategic partnerships, scheduled for the September meeting, was discussed at an informal consultative meeting.

F. Management, financial control, administrative oversight and human resources

9. At each meeting, the Standing Committee received an update on the structural and management change process. The Committee was briefed on the outposting of services and staff to the Global Service Centre in Budapest, as well as on the results of the Field Review. In June, the Committee was also apprised of the funding liabilities for end-of-service and post-retirement benefits, and of the work of the Inspector General's Office. In September, the Standing Committee received an update on human resources issues.

10. The September meeting considered the Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 2007, and discussed measures taken or proposed in response to recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors for 2006 and previous years. As decided at the March meeting, in September a model of the 2009 budget was presented in the format of the new budget structure, which had been approved in March.

G. Governance

11. In March, the Standing Committee adopted the work programme for 2008 as proposed at its December 2007 planning meeting. In June, under governance issues, the Committee called on delegations to provide suggestions for issues to be included in the High Commissioner's opening statement at the fifty-ninth session of the Executive Committee.

H. Consultations

12. In accordance with its standard practice, the Standing Committee held informal consultative meetings in the course of the year on issues requiring in-depth discussion. These included consultations on UNHCR's structural and management change process; UNHCR's role in support of the return and reintegration process; protracted refugee situations; the new budget structure; possible themes for future ExCom conclusions on international protection; a review of

the use of conclusions on international protection, as well as the process of preparing, drafting and finalizing ExCom conclusions; and the Office's views on the United Nations Delivering as One Initiative.

III. STANDING COMMITTEE DECISIONS

13. In accordance with the authority vested in it by the Executive Committee, the Standing Committee adopted a number of decisions which are annexed to the reports of the different Standing Committee meetings, as follows:

- (a) *Report of the forty-first meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/1052)*
 - (i) Decision on programme budgets and funding in 2008

- (b) *Report of the forty-second meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/1060)*
 - (i) Decision on overall programme budgets and funding for 2008
 - (ii) Decision on UNHCR's programme in the United Nations proposed strategic framework for the biennium 2010-2011

Annex I

STANDING COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME CALENDAR FOR 2008
(English and French only)

	41st Meeting 4-6 March 2008	42nd Meeting 24-26 June 2008	43rd Meeting 23-24 September 2008
PROGRAMME BUDGETS AND FUNDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on programme budgets and funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on programme budgets and funding • Global Report (2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Biennial Programme Budget for 2008/2009, revised budgets for 2008/ 2009, update on funding for 2008 and the Report of the ACABQ on the draft updated budget for 2008/2009
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral update on the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note on International Protection • Progress report on Resettlement • Agenda for Protection • Presentation on topic(s) proposed for ExCom thematic conclusions on international protection in 2009 	
REGIONAL ACTIVITIES AND GLOBAL PROGRAMMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic presentations on Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa and Europe as well as on global programmes and partnerships • Initial presentation on assessing the unmet needs of populations of concern • Oral update on emergency response and preparedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff safety and security issues, including refugee security • Report on the unmet needs of populations of concern and the impact thereof 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency response and preparedness
PROGRAMME / PROTECTION POLICY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNHCR's role in support of the return and reintegration of displaced populations: Policy framework and implementation strategy • Oral update on protracted situations which would benefit from international support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on protracted situations: situations which would benefit from international support with a special focus on disengagement strategies, including early recovery • Report on Age , Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM) • HIV/AIDS policies and interventions • Global work plan for IDP operations and progress on mainstreaming 	

	41st Meeting 4-6 March 2008	42nd Meeting 24-26 June 2008	43rd Meeting 23-24 September 2008
MANAGEMENT, FINANCIAL CONTROL, ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on the structural and management change process • Follow-up to the recommendations of the Board of Auditors on the accounts for 2006 and previous years • Oral update on the work of the Inspector General's Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral update on the structural and management change process • Field Review follow-up • Presentation of a proposal to fund after-service liabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral update on the structural and management change process • Implementation of Human Resources policies • Voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 2007 • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 2007 • Measures taken or proposed in response to recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors for 2007 and update on measures taken on recommendations in previous years • Internal audit
COORDINATION			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on strategic partnerships
GOVERNANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of work programme for 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements for UNHCR's oral update to ECOSOC • Suggestions on issues for the High Commissioner's opening speech at the 59th session of the Executive Committee 	

**59th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME:
6-10 OCTOBER 2008**

Annex II

STANDING COMMITTEE DOCUMENTATION ISSUED DURING 2008

41st Meeting (4-6 March 2008)

EC/59/SC/CRP.1/Rev.1	Provisional annotated agenda
EC/59/SC/CRP.2/Rev.1	Standing Committee work programme for 2008
EC/59/SC/CRP.3 and Corr. 1	Update on the structural and management change process: progress report on outposting, regionalization and field review
EC/59/SC/CRP.4	Follow-up to the recommendations of the Board of Auditors on the accounts for 2006 and previous years
EC/59/SC/CRP.5	UNHCR's role in support of the return and reintegration of displaced populations: policy framework and implementation strategy
EC/59/SC/CRP.6 and Corr. 1	Programme budgets and funding in 2007, and projections for 2008
EC/59/SC/INF.1	Assessing the unmet needs of populations of concern

42nd Meeting (24-26 June 2008)

EC/59/SC/CRP.7 and Corr.1	Draft report of the 41 st meeting of the Standing Committee
EC/59/SC/CRP.8/Rev.1	Provisional annotated agenda
EC/59/SC/CRP.9 and Corr.1	Update on programme budgets and funding, in 2007 and 2008, including a proposal for an increase to the 2008 Annual Programme Budget
EC/59/SC/CRP.10	Note on international protection
EC/59/SC/CRP.11	Progress report on resettlement
EC/59/SC/CRP.12	Note on the Agenda for Protection
EC/59/SC/CRP.13	Protracted refugee situations: revisiting the problem
EC/59/SC/CRP.14	Report on age, gender and diversity mainstreaming
EC/59/SC/CRP.15	HIV/AIDS policies and interventions
EC/59/SC/CRP.16	Progress on mainstreaming IDP issues and global workplan for IDP operations
EC/59/SC/CRP.17	Staff safety and security issues, including refugee security
EC/59/SC/CRP.19	UNHCR's programme in the United Nations proposed strategic framework for the biennium 2010-2011
EC/59/SC/INF.2	Funding liabilities for end-of-service and post retirement benefits

43rd Meeting (23-24 September 2008)

EC/59/SC/CRP.7/Corr.2	Corrigendum to the Report of the 41 st meeting of the Standing Committee
EC/59/SC/CRP.20	Draft report of the 42nd meeting of the Standing Committee
EC/59/SC/CRP.21/Rev.1	Provisional annotated agenda
EC/59/SC/CRP.22	Update on programme budgets and funding for 2008
EC/59/SC/CRP.23	Update on human resources issues
EC/59/SC/CRP.24	UNHCR emergency preparedness and response in 2007 and 2008
EC/59/SC/CRP.25	Summary report on main risk areas raised in the report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts for 2007
EC/59/SC/CRP.26	UNHCR's biennial programme budget 2008-2009 (Revised)
EC/59/SC/CRP.27	Report of the Board of Auditors on the financial statements of the Voluntary Funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 2007
EC/59/SC/CRP.28	Measures taken or proposed in response to the report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts of the Voluntary Funds for the year ended 31 December 2007
EC/59/SC/CRP.29	Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)
EC/59/SC/CRP.30	Draft report of the 43 rd meeting of the Standing Committee
EC/59/SC/INF.3	UNHCR's new budget structure: model for 2009
EC/59/SC/INF.4	Update on coordination issues: strategic partnerships

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