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Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Sixty-sixth session

Summary record of the 684th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Monday, 5 October 2015, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Commissário(Mozambique)

Contents

Opening of the session

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

High Commissioner's opening statement and general debate


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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Chair** declared open the sixty-sixth session of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and warmly welcomed all the participants, particularly the representatives of Armenia, Chad, Georgia and Uruguay, which were new members of the Committee. The Committee, which was now 98 members strong, was continuing to grow and to broaden its geographical representation, which clearly indicated that the international community was aware that the challenges facing the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were global and required cohesive responses.

2. Turning to the visits he had carried out during his mandate to South Sudan, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Tindouf, Algeria, he said that he had been deeply moved by the plight of the refugees and the hospitality of the host countries and communities. He also applauded the courage, humanity, dedication and sense of duty of the UNHCR staff.

3. With almost 60 million displaced persons around the world as a result of persecution, conflict, widespread violence or human rights violations, and because of the rapid and uninterrupted succession of large-scale emergencies unfolding against a backdrop of political, social and economic turmoil, the humanitarian landscape had deteriorated and the pressure on humanitarian partners had increased. Regardless of their legal, geographical and social differences, the participants in the sixty-sixth session of the Executive Committee were gathered together out of respect for human rights and their shared humanitarian values, motivated by their desire to provide international protection and support to those who had been forced to flee.

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

4. *The agenda was adopted.*

High Commissioner's opening statement and general debate

5. *The participants were invited to view a short film entitled, "A world in crisis", which provided a window into the complex challenges facing UNHCR and its partners.*

Opening statement

6. **Mr. Guterres** (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that 10 years ago, some people had wondered if UNHCR had a future, since global refugee numbers were declining and old wars had been laid to rest in former conflict zones. Today, that question was no longer asked. Only 126,000 refugees had been able to return to their country in 2014, compared with over a million in 2005; 15 conflicts had broken out or reignited over the previous five years and none of the old conflicts had been resolved. The number of people globally displaced every day had quadrupled in five years, from almost 11,000 in 2010 to 42,500 in 2014.

7. Over the previous 10 years, despite strong economic growth, a decrease in the number of persons in absolute poverty, and technological advances, the world had become more fragile. Conflicts now spread in unpredictable ways and had become highly complex, which had led to a shrinking of the humanitarian space and complicated the work of organizations such as UNHCR. Although the major interlinked crises in the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq were powerful examples of those changes, with more than 15 million people uprooted, it should not be forgotten that, in the previous 12 months alone, 500,000 people had been displaced in South

Sudan, 190,000 in Burundi, 1.1 million in Yemen and 300,000 in Libya. In the Asia-Pacific region, 94,000 people had crossed the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea. In Central America, thousands of people, many of them children, were fleeing gang violence. There had been little improvement in the crises affecting the Central African Republic, Nigeria, Ukraine and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

8. No one should be surprised by the dramatic events witnessed on the beaches and borders of Europe over the previous months, as humanitarians had been sounding the alarm for several years. The decision of the European Union to relocate 160,000 asylum seekers in its member States was a significant step in the right direction. It was also necessary to create reception centres near the entry points with sufficient capacity to receive, assist, register and screen tens of thousands of people, together with legal avenues for economic migrants and those in need of protection.

9. The current crisis, which was both a migration and a refugee crisis, resulted in mixed migratory flows. The forthcoming summit of the European Union and the African Union in Malta should lead to a new pact on common development and cooperation policies that would allow people to have a future in their own countries so that migration remained a choice. The rise in the number of Syrian refugees coming to Europe was due to the loss of faith in a political solution to the conflict, the depletion of refugees' resources, and the shortfall in humanitarian aid funding, particularly following the 30 per cent cut in assistance provided by the World Food Programme due to a lack of funding.

10. Over the previous year, UNHCR activities had once again been heavily focused on emergency responses — 600 emergency deployment missions had been fielded — putting a considerable strain on the organization's capacities and resources. The structure and policy framework of the Office of the High Commissioner had been reconfigured to clarify responsibilities. UNHCR had supported States to develop national asylum systems and continued to work on child protection, for example within the framework of the "Educate a Child" programme, and to combat sexual and gender-based violence through the "Safe from the Start" project.

11. He hoped that all States would support UNHCR in achieving the objectives of the global campaign launched in 2014 to end statelessness by the year 2024.

12. UNHCR was also working to change the approach to humanitarian aid from one based on care and maintenance to a systematic and market-based humanitarian approach, in order to enable the people concerned to become economically independent and to earn their own living.

13. All those efforts, however, were undermined by the serious financial deficit, which was steadily growing as the explosion in needs outweighed the very generous donor support. The humanitarian system was bankrupt inasmuch as it could no longer meet the requirements of basic protection and life-saving assistance to preserve the dignity of the persons concerned. The 33 appeals launched by the United Nations to help 82 million people had only received 42 per cent of the necessary funding and it was expected that UNHCR would receive only 47 per cent of the funds it needed in 2015. Given that, in Africa, UNHCR had a \$215 million deficit for expenses that had already been authorized, including for the establishment of 14 new camps and the expansion of 7 others, he appealed to donors to come forward. While expressing his deep gratitude to the donors who had provided \$3.3 million to UNHCR in 2014, he emphasized that humanitarian budgets were not sufficient to cover the bare minimum, the results of which were evident. It was important to start reconsidering right now the ways in which responses to humanitarian crises were financed.

14. Humanitarian interventions should be closely linked to development activities. Development actors should work side by side with humanitarians from the beginning

of a crisis to prevent further conflict, support host communities and pave the way for sustainable solutions. Countries that hosted large numbers of refugees were the first line of defence against conflicts and terrorism and were the pillars of peace and stability in their region. However, many of them were middle-income countries which were excluded from development cooperation mechanisms.

15. Those developments must not be an obstacle to the autonomy of humanitarians, who acted with full neutrality and impartiality. UNHCR had strengthened its cooperation with the World Bank and continued to work with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Trade Center (ITC) to improve the economic situation of refugees. At a time when Governments had just agreed on sustainable development goals for 2030, there was an opportunity to ensure that refugees also benefited from the measures taken to meet those goals.

16. It was more necessary than ever to understand and address the root causes of displacement. That notion would be central to the Dialogue on Protection Challenges in December 2015. It was evident that armed conflict remained the biggest driver of displacement. Humanitarian crises brought on by conflict could only be ended with political solutions and there would be no real improvement until the Governments that financed, armed and supported the parties to the conflicts overcame their differences and conflicting interests, acknowledged that they were all losers in those conflicts and agreed on a common way forward to end the bloodshed.

17. Nobody could deny the impact of climate change on the displacement of populations. Reaching an agreement on cutting greenhouse gases at the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris would not be enough; States must also take measures to relocate the people affected. He expressed his gratitude to the Governments of Switzerland and Norway for spearheading the Nansen Initiative in the three years since its creation. On 13 October 2015, the protection agenda concerning cross-border displacement in the context of disasters and climate change should be adopted.

18. The organization of the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit was timely and would provide an opportunity to address the issue of enhanced accountability towards the persons benefiting from humanitarian aid and the pressing need to find solutions to protracted displacement situations.

19. After making the connection between humanitarian aid and development, it was imperative to build a more inclusive humanitarian system that better reflected the universal character of the values guiding humanitarian action and enabled all humanitarian actors to pool their capacities. Refugee protection was an excellent example of the universality of humanitarian values, even if they were expressed differently. All major religions embraced the values and principles that underpinned refugee protection, such as compassion and generosity towards people in need and providing shelter for persecuted strangers. They even proclaimed early equivalents of the concept of non-refoulement. In a world where more than two thirds of refugees were Muslim, it was important to recognize that the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees contained nothing that was not already espoused by Islamic traditions and ancient legal texts. Furthermore, many key principles of international humanitarian law had, broadly speaking, equivalents in other cultures. It was possible to expand on that common basis to build a system guided by the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, recognizing the diversity of expressions and perspectives, and allowing for more openness and collaboration in the service of the people concerned.

20. All nations and communities were becoming multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multicultural. The best way to counter Islamophobia was to reduce the appeal of

extremist ideologies to young people and to defend tolerance and openness. The acts of kindness of millions of individuals in host communities and across the world showed, day after day, that tolerance and solidarity ran deep in the hearts of humanity and that compassion could win out over fear and tolerance over xenophobia.

21. The future of UNHCR was anchored to four pillars: its staff, its broad partnership base, its continued ability to reform and innovate, and the strength of its protection mandate. The strength, ingenuity and commitment of the staff were impressive, and the sacrifices that hundreds of staff members made, sometimes at risk of their lives, should be commended. He invited Member States to reconsider the specificities of UNHCR human resources management, which, given the particular challenges faced in many duty stations, could not be subject to the same mobility rules as those fixed for the entire United Nations system.

22. The second key aspect for the future of UNHCR was partnership. In 2014, the High Commissioner had worked with over 900 partners worldwide, mainly national organizations, and over 40 per cent of its expenditure had been related to such partnerships. UNHCR also worked closely with international organizations, such as the World Food Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Organization for Migration. After signing their "Joint note on mixed situations" in 2014, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNHCR had developed field-based coordination modalities. UNHCR was committed to strengthening its partnerships, through its new framework agreements and the follow-up to the strategic partnership dialogue of 2012.

23. With regard to the third key aspect, reform and innovation, UNHCR had implemented, some years previously, an ambitious reform programme to reduce staff and administrative costs and prioritize delivery capacity. New technologies had been used to improve communication with refugees and meet their needs. Innovation, however, also involved training users so that they could identify the most appropriate tools for a given task. The future of humanitarian organizations would depend on their readiness to change and adapt, within the framework of the same values as those underlying their current work.

24. The 1951 Convention remained as relevant as ever: the institution of asylum must remain sacrosanct and must be preserved through international cooperation and equitable burden-sharing. Any future protocol to the Convention must address those two issues. The legal status of refugees was what rendered them most vulnerable. The current crisis clearly showed that it was essential to guarantee the principle of international protection and to defend the High Commissioner's mandate to intervene with Governments on behalf of refugees and other people within its remit.

General debate

25. **Ms. Mukantabana** (Rwanda), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that Africa was grappling with emergency situations related to the displacement of refugees, as well as protracted refugee situations that placed a heavy burden on host countries, which often faced economic challenges themselves. She noted with concern the expected reduction in the budget allocated to humanitarian assistance for refugees and displaced persons in Africa for 2016 to 2017. She also found it regrettable that the high-level segment of the sixty-fifth session of the Executive Committee, on enhancing international cooperation, solidarity, local capacities and humanitarian action for refugees in Africa, held in 2014, had failed to mobilize the necessary support for refugees and host countries. The countries hosting large refugee populations should be given more support; Africa alone could not break the complex cycle of forced displacements, which constituted, together with conflict, the major obstacle to development. The Group of African States would continue to

work with other States to ensure that displacement remained central to the international development and climate agendas.

26. **Mr. Sørensen**, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States, and also the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, said that the European Union continued to mobilize all its efforts to respond to the influx of refugees on the basis of solidarity and responsibility-sharing. That collective approach was characterized by the implementation of numerous measures, including: the provision of increased funding to migrants' countries of origin and neighbouring countries through United Nations bodies, including UNHCR, with an additional €1 billion allocated for 2015 and 2016; increased assistance to the Western Balkan countries; the resettlement of more than 22,000 displaced persons in need of international protection; increased registration and reception capacities for third-country nationals at European external borders, as well as the relocation to other European Union member States of 160,000 persons in need of international protection in Greece and Italy; access to asylum for a growing number of asylum seekers in the European Union; and the strengthening of development cooperation by increasing financial contributions to the European Union Regional Trust Fund for Syria and setting up the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa.

27. The vast majority of the world's displaced persons lived in protracted situations and should be given the opportunity to contribute to the economic and social development of their host countries. Since 2014, the European Union had been implementing regional development and protection programmes and holding strategic discussions on the links between humanitarian and development assistance in protracted situations. It supported UNHCR in its efforts to identify durable solutions.

28. In 2014, the European Union and its member States had contributed \$1,017 million to the UNHCR budget, or around 30 per cent of the total.

29. **Mr. Dačić** (Serbia) said that his country, whose border had been crossed by 170,000 migrants since the beginning of the year, was experiencing a wave of mass migration towards European Union countries. Serbia had made great efforts to welcome the flux and provide assistance to persons in need but, owing to its limited capacities, could not assume that burden alone. The adoption of partial or local measures, such as closing borders and building fences, was not a feasible solution; such a complex problem required cooperation among the countries concerned, a common response from the European Union and the engagement of the entire international community.

30. Serbia was currently home to 44,000 persons from Croatia and from Bosnia and Herzegovina who had refugee status, and 200,000 displaced persons who had fled Kosovo and Metohija after 1999. His Government had learned from that experience that there were no simple, administrative solutions to the refugee problem, which was why it had rejected the 2014 UNHCR recommendation on the cessation of refugee status for persons who had fled Croatia between 1992 and 1995 and who had not been able to resettle there. Serbia expected the second six-monthly UNHCR report on the implementation of the recommendation to reflect the situation on the ground in an unbiased manner. He further pointed out that less than 5 per cent of the displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija had returned to the province, even though one of the main tasks of the international presence in that region was to create the conditions for a safe and free return.

31. Speaking in his capacity as Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, he said that that Organization was working together with UNHCR and the European Union in the South Caucasus in the

framework of Working Group II of the Geneva International Discussions, including on issues relating to refugees and displaced persons, and that guidelines and documents had been published supporting the work of the agencies responsible for refugee protection. Cooperation with UNHCR had been particularly significant in Ukraine and needed to be strengthened in the Mediterranean.

32. **Mr. Abdullah** (Yemen) said that his country was experiencing a difficult period in its history, with the uprising of the Houthi militia and forces loyal to ex-president Saleh. His Government was thankful to the countries which had supported the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia, which had paved the way for the restoration of the legitimate Government and the liberation of the provinces under rebel control, including the capital. His country was facing exceptional circumstances as the conflict had triggered the displacement of 500,000 persons. Other people had fled the country, and his Government was grateful to the neighbouring countries that had taken them in. Despite the current situation, a large number of migrants continued to arrive in Yemen, particularly from Ethiopia and Somalia. For over 20 years, Yemen had hosted some 264,000 refugees from Somalia, Ethiopia, Iraq and Syria. There were around 750,000 other refugees in Yemen (asylum seekers, displaced persons from the Horn of Africa or migrants in an irregular situation), who had been provided with health, education and employment services on an equal footing with Yemenites. The situation meant the country was obliged to seek further assistance from the international community, since the needs were beyond its means.

33. A seminar on protection at sea had been organized by the National Commission for Refugees of Yemen with the support of UNHCR, within the framework of the follow-up to the Sana'a Declaration, adopted in November 2013. The seminar had led to the adoption of recommendations aimed at protecting migrants from any abuse. Yemen had also participated with UNHCR in the seventh annual protection dialogue, on protection at sea.

34. **Mr. Mitchell** (Observer for the Bahamas) said that he wished to thank the international community for its support to the Bahamas following the devastation caused by hurricane Joaquin. His Government considered that dialogue with countries of origin, transit and destination were necessary for safe and orderly migration. It respected its obligations in that regard but considered that countries needed to protect their borders against migrants in an irregular situation. The Bahamas was one of the 28 signatories to the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action aimed at finding sustainable solutions for persons who were forced to relocate. Owing to its characteristics and the complexity of its migration phenomena, the Caribbean region should organize an in-depth dialogue among all its countries in order to develop a comprehensive plan and adopt measures to address the problems posed by migration.

35. **Ms. Richard** (United States of America) said that she was deeply concerned about the lack of resources of United Nations humanitarian agencies, which had to contend with many new and protracted crises. The international community should increase its financial contributions and enlist the help of the private sector, and the list of donor countries should be lengthened. Her Government had made an additional \$419 million available for Syria, raising the total to \$4.5 billion in humanitarian aid to that country since the start of the conflict there. It had also dedicated \$56 million in humanitarian assistance for displaced Iraqis and \$80 million to the crisis in South Sudan. A large portion of that funding was allocated to UNHCR, which in 2015 had received a record contribution of \$1.3 million from the United States of America. Additionally, her Government was committed to increasing the number of persons resettled in its territory, which would rise from 70,000 in 2015 to 85,000 in 2016 and to 100,000 in 2017. At least 10,000 Syrians would be resettled in the United States in the coming year. It was important that the resources allocated for development and aid

for refugees should be used more effectively. She looked forward to reviewing the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Humanitarian Financing.

36. **Mr. Boshab** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that his country had always opened its borders when groups of people or individuals had sought asylum in its territory. Currently, more than 19,000 Burundi nationals had been granted asylum and 99,359 Central African nationals had been settled in five zones located in two provinces in the country. He requested UNHCR assistance in finding a solution to the problem of the 10,880 former Angolan refugees who had opted for voluntary repatriation but remained in the territory without any specific status, and for the 245,820 Rwandan refugees who were still in the country. He believed that a strong and coordinated commitment at the subregional level would enable a larger number of nationals of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to return home.

37. **Mr. Baloch** (Pakistan) said that for over 30 years Pakistan had been the country hosting the second largest number of refugees. The Afghan and Pakistan Governments and UNHCR had devised a voluntary return and reintegration programme intended to promote sustainable voluntary repatriation. The programme complemented the \$200 grant given to each Afghan refugee by UNHCR.

38. **Mr. Nkaiserry** (Kenya) said that his country currently hosted more than one million refugees, 600,000 of whom were registered, and the deteriorating situation in Burundi and in South Sudan meant there was likely to be an increase in the number of refugees from those countries. To date, Kenya had taken in over 200,000 refugees from South Sudan. The longer the refugee camps existed, the more susceptible they were to becoming havens for criminal — especially terrorist — activities, as was the case of the camps in Dadaab. He was concerned about the allegations that some UNHCR personnel were facilitating terrorist activities in Kenya. His Government was not satisfied with the implementation of the tripartite agreement on the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees, which it had signed in November 2013 with the Government of Somalia and UNHCR, although that had not prevented tens of thousands of Somali refugees from returning spontaneously to their country.

39. **Ms. Iivula-Ithana** (Namibia) said that African States had always demonstrated hospitality and solidarity towards refugees, in accordance with the Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa and the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention). African States currently hosted over 11 million displaced persons from the African continent. Namibia hosted 6,208 refugees and asylum seekers, 80 per cent of whom were from the Congo. Each month, around 30 asylum seekers crossed the Namibian borders. Namibia would continue to host refugees, whom it considered ordinary people living through extraordinary times, while promoting durable solutions.

40. **Mr. Guterres** (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that the international community must measure up to the remarkable solidarity shown by Africa in the context of the refugee crisis, including by allocating the necessary financial resources for the implementation of humanitarian programmes on the African continent. As the representative of the European Union had pointed out, it was essential to focus on the links between development and humanitarian action. He paid tribute to the exemplary manner in which Serbia was addressing the refugee crisis in Europe, for which cooperation among States was essential. UNHCR supported the regional rehousing programme and would be following with interest the development of the situation concerning the cessation clause and Croatian refugees.

41. UNHCR was totally committed to supporting humanitarian action in Yemen, where a large number of inhabitants had been forcibly displaced, and would continue

its cooperation with the Yemeni authorities to guarantee free access for humanitarian personnel to people in need. He highlighted the hospitality with which Yemen had always treated refugees, even when it was in a difficult situation, and hoped that the international community would provide sufficient support to enable the country to rise to the challenges it faced. He thanked Yemen for its efforts in terms of protection in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea; UNHCR was prepared to launch an initiative in that area in the near future.

42. He expressed the solidarity of UNHCR in the wake of the hurricane that had hit the Bahamas, and underscored the need to take account of climate change in the fight against forced displacement. He welcomed the signing by the Caribbean States of the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action to strengthen international protection.

43. He thanked the United States of America for the financial assistance it had provided for UNHCR and refugees, particularly for the resettlement programmes. He also thanked the Republic of the Congo, which had always been a land of welcome for refugees; UNHCR was totally committed to helping find a definitive solution for Rwandan refugees.

44. He acknowledged that for three decades Pakistan had been the country hosting the greatest number of refugees in the world, and underscored Mr. Baloch's courage and personal commitment in his efforts to combat the mindless association of Afghan refugees with terrorists. UNHCR fully supported the voluntary return and reintegration programme put in place by Pakistan for refugees.

45. UNHCR was looking forward to a successful outcome to the forthcoming Ministerial Pledging Conference on Somali Refugees, which would take place in Brussels, and was prepared to facilitate the implementation of the voluntary return programme. He strongly condemned all terrorist activities, irrespective of whether they were carried out by Somali refugees, Kenyans or UNHCR personnel, and trusted that the Government of Kenya would enforce the rule of law in that type of situation.

46. He thanked the representative of Namibia for recalling that, in adopting the Kampala Convention, the African Union had been the first organization to adopt a legally binding instrument on internal displacement, and commended Namibia for having brought its legislation into line with that instrument.

47. **Mr. Sadi** (Cameroon) said that Cameroon was currently hosting some 325,000 refugees, the majority of whom were from the Central African Republic, which was beset by severe political instability, and from Nigeria. According to estimates, there were over 250,000 Central African refugees and around 60,000 Nigerian refugees in Cameroon. In addition, the number of internally displaced persons was estimated at around 100,000. A million Cameroonians were said to have been affected by the mass influx of refugees. In that context, the Government of Cameroon had undertaken to strengthen the security arrangements in the areas hosting large numbers of refugees in an effort to prevent attacks by armed groups. It had also allocated several hundred hectares of land to set up sites for the accommodation of refugees and had allocated \$70 billion to an emergency programme aimed at improving basic social services. Noting that the mass influx of refugees put a huge strain on his country's development capacity, he called for support from the international community. According to Cameroon's humanitarian partners, \$145 million would be needed to care for Central African refugees in 2015; to date, however, Cameroon had received only 20 per cent of that total. It was also estimated that in order to manage the crisis of refugees from Nigeria and the Central African Republic, a further \$300 million would need to be raised.

48. **Mr. Harrington** (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that his country had funded UNHCR operations to the tune of £6.75 million and had

helped to rescue almost 7,500 refugees trying to cross the Mediterranean. The United Kingdom had also provided sanctuary to 5,000 Syrian refugees since the beginning of the conflict and intended to resettle an additional 20,000 vulnerable Syrians. His Government was focusing its efforts on formulating a comprehensive solution which took into account the causes of the refugee crisis, and had pledged £1.1 billion for that purpose. However, much remained to be done, since the appeals made for the region were only 40 per cent funded. As displaced persons were the group most likely to be left behind, the upstream issues needed to be addressed, particularly those relating to education and employment. At the forthcoming World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, the international community should focus on compliance with international humanitarian law, support for humanitarian organizations in terms of development aid in countries hosting refugees, and new ways of financing humanitarian action.

49. **Mr. Hattrem** (Norway) said that donor countries should support UNHCR action and fulfil their national obligations in order to contribute to the search for solutions to the refugee crisis. He welcomed the focus, in the 2015 Dialogue on Protection Challenges, on the root causes of forced displacement. Noting that UNHCR was severely underfunded, he recalled that Norway had offered to host, in partnership with Germany, an international donor conference for Syrian refugees.

50. **Mr. Guterres** (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that Cameroon was a pillar of humanitarian action and stability in Central Africa and the first line of defence against Boko Haram attacks. He recognized that the United Kingdom was the donor country that had most increased its support and applauded Norway for its active role in humanitarian action, as well as in the prevention and resolution of conflicts.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.