



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
10 October 2012  
English  
Original: French

---

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

### Sixty-second session

#### Summary record of the 656th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Friday, 7 October 2011, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson:* Mr. Badr.....(Egypt)

## Contents

Election of officers

Adoption of the report of the sixty-second session of the Executive Committee

Closing of the session

---

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent *within one week of the date of this document* to the Editing Unit, room E.4108, Palais des Nations, Geneva.

Any corrections to the records of the public meetings of the Executive Committee at this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

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

**Election of officers**

1. **Mr. Smidt** (Denmark) nominated Mr. Knutsson (Sweden) for the office of Chairperson.
2. **Mr. Demiralp** (Turkey) seconded the nomination.
3. *Mr. Knutsson was elected as Chairperson by acclamation.*
4. **Ms. King** (United States of America) nominated Ms. Arango Olmos (Colombia) for the office of Vice-Chairperson.
5. **Mr. de Almeida Filho** (Brazil) and **Mr. Morales** (Ecuador) seconded the nomination.
6. *Ms. Arango Olmos (Colombia) was elected as Vice-Chairperson by acclamation.*
7. **Ms. Lascurain** (Mexico) nominated Ms. Hanlummyuang (Thailand) for the office of Rapporteur.
8. **Mr. Seytre** (France) and **Mr. Domingo** (Philippines) seconded the nomination.
9. *Ms. Hanlummyuang (Thailand) was elected as Rapporteur by acclamation.*

**Adoption of the report of the sixty-second session of the Executive Committee**

(document without a symbol, distributed in the meeting room)

10. **Ms. Lascurain** (Rapporteur) briefly introduced the draft report of the sixty-second session. Sections I and II provided an overview of the work of the session. Section III contained the decisions adopted by the Executive Committee. Lastly, the annexes contained a list of the decisions taken by the Standing Committee in 2011, together with the Chairperson's summary of the general debate held over the week. The final version of the report would be submitted to the Third Committee of the General Assembly as an addendum to the High Commissioner's annual report.
11. *The draft report of the sixty-second session of the Executive Committee was adopted.*

**Closing of the session**

12. **Mr. Guterres** (High Commissioner) thanked the outgoing Chairperson and his successor and the outgoing Rapporteur and her successor, and expressed appreciation to the President of Tunisia for attending the session and for his contribution to the work of the Executive Committee, and to all delegations. He drew attention to the considerable convergence of views that there had been during the session, as delegations had affirmed that they were committed to supporting refugees, displaced persons and stateless persons, a cause that transcended the legitimate foreign policy interests of each country.
13. Turning to the future, the High Commissioner emphasized the need for UNHCR to keep to the priorities that had been clearly established during previous sessions of the Executive Committee and the dialogues held over the previous four years. He said it was important to acknowledge the gaps in the protection regime relating to new forms of displacement that were caused by multiple factors and that gave rise to population movements of increasing complexity and to devise new approaches to deal with them. In particular, UNHCR must focus its efforts in particular on preventing sexual and gender-based violence and protecting women, children and stateless persons. It must do more to support the ever growing number of urban refugees. UNHCR must show even greater resolve in dealing with protracted refugee situations. Although progress had been made in

various parts of the world in resolving the plight of the Bhutanese refugees in Nepal, Afghan refugees in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, Burundian refugees in the United Republic of Tanzania and the refugees present in eastern Sudan, much remained to be done, and the issue must remain a high priority for the Office. On voluntary repatriation, which had worked very well for 20 years but stalled over the previous 2 years because of the open-ended nature of certain conflicts, there was a need to acknowledge that there was no humanitarian "solution". Nevertheless, even if UNHCR was not the right body to deal with political matters, it could play a catalytic role, as it had done recently with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia in relation to displaced persons in the former Yugoslavia.

14. Beyond the political context, the economic and social realities facing both refugees who wished to return home and communities that hosted them, and that could be paying a high price for doing so, must not be forgotten. That was why development cooperation was such an important element of refugee assistance. Capacities in regard to coordination between United Nations development agencies and international financial institutions and between multilateral and bilateral actors were far from adequate. Development programmes were needed to support communities in countries of origin, host communities, and local integration and self-reliance. The importance of access to education and vocational training for refugees, particularly in protracted refugee situations, must not be forgotten either. UNHCR was undertaking a needs assessment in that area and would be formulating a strategy.

15. Given the structural problems of the organization and the resources available going forward, UNHCR must continue to improve transparency, risk management, results-based management, and financial and programme monitoring, while at the same time simplifying procedures and adopting innovative approaches with a view to improving the living conditions of persons under UNHCR protection. To enhance transparency, action must now be taken to follow up on the recommendations that had been accepted. A system should be established to measure results and present them to stakeholders, including members of the Executive Committee, for assessment. It was not possible to show on a systematic basis what the results of changes in human resources management had been, as that would be incompatible with the cost-reduction strategy. If it was important to demonstrate transparency vis-à-vis States members and donors, it was all the more important to do so vis-à-vis beneficiaries. There was no point in creating a bureaucratic monster.

16. As for organizational culture, there was a tendency to intervene rapidly rather than to account for the action taken or to coordinate with other organizations. The other tendency was to establish a new post as soon as a problem arose. On the contrary, use must be made of available human resources and if a post had to be created then another one must be abolished. The organization needed to be able to intervene without needing to expand its manning table.

17. On human resources management, ongoing dialogue was needed to balance the interests of staff with those of the organization. UNHCR must remain flexible and capable of renewing itself so that it could draw on new ideas. Diversity was also important, as it would allow UNHCR to adapt to a constantly changing world.

18. After the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chairperson declared the sixty-second session of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees closed.

*The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.*