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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PROGRAMME OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

Fifty-fifth session

Extraordinary meeting

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 589th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 30 June 2005, at 4 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. ESCUDERO MARTÍNEZ (Ecuador)

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The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m.

OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN (item 1 of the provisional agenda)

1. The CHAIRMAN declared open the extraordinary meeting of the Executive Committee, the purpose of which was to elect a new Chairman.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (item 2 of the provisional agenda) (document without a symbol, distributed at the meeting)

2. The agenda was adopted.

ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN (agenda item 3)

3. The CHAIRMAN said that, as he was unfortunately unable to continue in his duties as Chairman, the Executive Committee needed to elect a new Chairman to replace him for the remainder of his term of office. In accordance with rule 10 of the Committee's rules of procedure, that term of office would expire on the last day of the fifty-sixth session.
4. Ms. FORERO UCROS (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, nominated Mr. Juan Martabit (Chile) for election as Chairman.
5. Mr. KESSEDJIAN (France) seconded the nomination.
6. Mr. Martabit (Chile) was elected Chairman by acclamation.
7. Mr. EGUIGUREN (Chile), speaking on behalf of Mr. Martabit, who was away from Geneva for work-related reasons, thanked delegations for electing his compatriot as Chairman.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS (agenda item 4)

8. Mr. FUJISAKI (Japan) paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman for the wisdom and dedication he had brought to the task of chairing the Executive Committee, for his skill in guiding the Committee through a difficult period of transition, and particularly for breaking new ground as Chairman with his trip to Chad and the Sudan in early 2005.

CLOSING REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER AND THE CHAIRMAN (agenda item 5)

9. Ms. CHAMBERLIN (Deputy United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that she was grateful to Mr. Martabit for being willing to take on the duties of Chairman at a critical time for UNHCR. She also expressed her gratitude to all members of the Committee for their continued guidance on the important subject of protection and on budget matters. Lastly, she paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman for the leadership and conviction he had shown, particularly by going out into the field to gain first-hand experience of the work of UNHCR in an area where it faced some of its toughest challenges.

10. The CHAIRMAN expressed his appreciation to the members of the Executive Committee and the Bureau for their support during his tenure as Chairman. His visit to Chad and the Sudan had been one of the highlights of his career, and had brought home to him the true value of the work of UNHCR, the devotion of its staff and the profoundly humanitarian nature of its work. He paid tribute to the professionalism and dedication of the UNHCR secretariat for making the visit possible and for its ongoing support for the work of the Executive Committee.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.