

## Item 2 (b)

### **Update on Resettlement – Speaking Notes for Standing Committee on Protection 21-23 June**

**Delivered by Kate O'Malley Deputy Director (Resettlement), Division of International Protection**

Chair, Deputy High Commissioner, distinguished delegates and partners

I welcome this opportunity to provide you an update on Resettlement. I refer you to the background paper for this item – **EC/67/SC/CRP.11** - which provides detailed reporting on the highlights of our efforts in 2015 and 16 as well as focus areas for 2017.

Last week the Resettlement Service of UNHCR met with officials from States and NGOs that are actively engaged in resettlement activities for its Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement in that context, we were also able to report on progress in resettlement and discuss a range of policy and operational issues.

We were pleased to have engaged a number of new resettlement states as well as states that are re-establishing programs further to commitments made at the 30 March meeting on pathways to admission for Syrian refugees. In that context we also launched the annual Projected Global Resettlement Needs report and I will draw on some of the details in that report today.

I would like to focus my remarks on three areas this afternoon:

1. The **numbers as they relate to resettlement**
2. The **impacts of resettlement**
3. And **process reforms and resourcing developments**

Firstly **the numbers**

- As set out in the paper, UNHCR has submitted more than 1 million refugees for resettlement in the past decade.

- There has been a significant stepping up in the last few years in particular
  - In 2015, 134,000 submissions were made to resettlement states
  - Compared to 2012, at just below 75,000
- Within four years therefore, UNHCR's annual submissions increased by some 79 per cent. And based on the projected submissions for 2016 which is likely to exceed 140,000, this would constitute **a 20 year high** and a **near doubling of submissions since 2012**.
- The availability of increased quotas from states has of course been key to these positive developments – with increased quotas committed by the United States, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and the European Union during 2015.
- Notwithstanding this growth, the gap between needs and resettlement places available continue to grow as the global refugee population increases.
- Of note, despite the renewed efforts, the number of refugees submitted for resettlement in 2015 was 0.8 per cent of the global refugee population under UNHCR's mandate.
- For the last decade it has been on average just 0.9 per cent of the refugee population that has been submitted for resettlement.

**2) It is worthwhile however to look at the valuable impacts these resettlement efforts have achieved.**

- Firstly, in terms of the refugee groups that benefited from resettlement in 2015, we note that:
- Resettlement took place from some 87 countries of asylum involving refugees from 65 countries of origin, demonstrating that targeted and strategically employed resettlement is a global tool.

- The efforts do however concentrate on key groups: Syrians were the largest group to be submitted in 2015; followed by refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Somalia and Myanmar. This group combined represented 78 per cent of all submissions last year.
- There were also key milestones reached in terms of large-scale internationalized resettlement efforts thanks to the cooperation of a range of countries working together:
  - In 2015 the 100,000<sup>th</sup> refugee from Bhutan was resettled out of the camps in Nepal. This program was launched in 2007 with many resettlement state actors involved and this achievement demonstrates the powerful impact of collective efforts in resettlement.
  - Similarly, the coordinated efforts for expanding capacity to resettle Syrian refugees, advanced by the meeting of 30 March this year and the Syrian Core Group has garnered commitments for some 201 000 resettlement places. I would like to acknowledge the support of Sweden, Canada and now Norway for chairing the Syrian Core Group process.
- Beyond the numeric impacts, resettlement can also be measured in terms of **how it has responded to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable**. UNHCR measures this through the recording vulnerability categories of its submissions.
- Globally, resettlement continued to act as a key protection tool throughout the period. The submission vulnerability category of **Legal and physical protection needs** was the largest category submitted in 2015 at 34 per cent. **Survivors of Violence and/or Torture** was the second largest category at 24 per cent of submissions. Submissions under this category have almost quadrupled since 2005.

- In addition, the continuous prioritization of **Women and Girls at Risk** meant that levels remained fairly stable in recent years at around 12 per cent, exceeding UNHCR's objective of submitting at least 10 per cent of resettlement cases under this category for the fifth consecutive year.
- With the cooperation of resettlement states we have also kept open the ability to refer refugees for emergency and urgent resettlement. 11 per cent of cases were submitted as urgent priority, and 548 individuals, or less than one per cent of the annual submissions were submitted under the emergency priority.

**3) I would now like to focus on some major developments with respect to UNHCR's resettlement capacity and reform to resettlement processes.**

- UNHCR prepared a Plan of Action for up-scaling of Resettlement in late 2015, on the basis that there was an expected 37 per cent increase in submissions needed for 2016. The plan centered on:
  - Immediate scale up of the capacity of field operations for resettlement processing
  - Strengthening headquarters capacity to provide policy and guidance to ensure sustainability of increased referrals for resettlement.
  - Expanding additional pathways to protection and solutions to complement increased resettlement.
- In February 2016, UNHCR released a Supplementary Appeal for USD 39.1 Million to implement these activities
- States have contributed USD 21 Million in response to this Appeal. I would like to acknowledge the support of the United States, Canada, Australia, and United Kingdom in this respect.
- In terms of implementation I would emphasise some key achievements:
  - 2016 UNHCR prioritised capacity for field operations through the creation of 250 positions. As of May 2016, approximately 70% of

the total additional workforce has been recruited, majority of which are supporting MENA and Africa regions in registration, resettlement and community based protection.

- New funding has facilitated a new push on training: over 200 staff both UNHCR and affiliate workforce working in protection, will be **trained through eight new blended learning programs delivered through self-study modules, more than 40 webinars and eight workshops**. This training will be complemented by on-the job learning package for newly recruited staff and an advanced resettlement program for managers.
- Efforts are also underway to strengthen the integrity of processing with new policy and guidance on anti-fraud under development and additional support to the field through integrity officers and multifunctional visits.
- Reforms to resettlement processing have also been a key feature of 2015 and 2016 activities. Resettlement states have worked closely with us in new streamlined modalities which aim to reduce overlap and redundancy and increase the pace at which submissions can be made. This is a confirmation of streamlining efforts over some years.

**4) In concluding I would like to reflect on the priorities we have identified for the remainder of 2016 and heading into 2017:**

- 1. *Expand global resettlement capacity.*** The Projected Global Resettlement Needs report indicates that resettlement needs will reach 1.19 million in 2017 and our target for submissions will be 170 000. We will work with you toward this goal through advocacy and support, in particular to enable emerging resettlement states to participate fully.
- 2. *Improve coordination and streamline procedures:*** through a comprehensive review of the resettlement process in order to better understand the relationship between case processing at UNHCR and at the State level. The emphasis will be on efficiency but also the ongoing effectiveness of resettlement as a protection tool.
- 3. *Ensure effectively targeted resettlement:*** our advocacy will be on ensuring resettlement programmes that are global and preserve the

humanitarian foundation of resettlement, including the focus on vulnerable refugees.

4. ***Ensure the integrity of the resettlement process***: UNHCR will roll out its revised anti-fraud policy, along with training tools, and conduct oversight missions and put in place the network of senior UNHCR integrity officers.
5. **Strengthen and foster partnerships**: with states through the resettlement meetings and mechanisms and with NGOs as deployment partners in resettlement processing and in refugee identification.

I will finish on this note to leave time to take your questions.

In doing so I would like to underline that **resettlement is a partnership activity** and I would like to commend our partners, states, NGOs and advocates for the role they play in its effectiveness. The period since the last update on resettlement has seen some significant shifts, with meaningful increases in quotas and a readiness to adjust the way we approach processing. We look forward to your ongoing support and partnership in these endeavors.