

## **Summary Record**

### **Meeting with the Parties on the Confidence Building Measures Programme**

Geneva, 9 – 10 February 2011

At the Greentree meeting of 9 November 2010, Morocco and the Frente Polisario, as well as the two neighbouring countries, Algeria and Mauritania, who participated as observers, agreed to meet under the auspices of the UN in Geneva on 9-10 February 2011 to review the implementation of UNHCR's 2004 Plan of Action on Confidence Building Measures (CBM) and the agreed proposal for the family visits by road.

The meeting was opened and closed by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and co-chaired by the UNHCR Chef de Cabinet and the Director of the Bureau for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara attended as an expression of their support to the CBM programme.

During the two days of deliberations, the participants reaffirmed the importance of the CBM programme and the need to find ways and means to maximize the links between the families divided by the conflict over the past 35 years. The Parties expressed their commitment to cooperate fully with UNHCR in implementing the Plan of Action of 2004, in accordance with its mandate and principles, and to preserve the humanitarian character of the CBM operation.

After extensive discussions, the Parties and the two neighbouring countries agreed to the following conclusions:

1. In the spirit of simplifying the technical procedures at field level for family visits, UNHCR will submit to the Parties for approval one single list of beneficiaries, after verification is completed by UNHCR through full access on both sides. This will allow for the maintenance of a pool of pre-cleared candidates which should lead to more frequent visits over a six to twelve months period.
2. The seminars, as stipulated in the plan submitted to the Parties during the meeting, will be re-launched, with the first one to be held within the coming months of 2011. The Parties will submit lists of proposed participants for final selection by UNHCR. UNHCR will immediately commence the preparatory steps to organize the first seminar, including exploring Madeira, Portugal, as a possible venue.
3. For the previously agreed-upon road option for family visits, UNHCR will deploy a reconnaissance mission, no later than April 2011, to conduct a technical feasibility assessment of a road route to transport the beneficiaries (the Terms of Reference of the mission were shared during the meeting). Meanwhile, UNHCR will look into the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of providing a larger aircraft for the family visits by air.

4. The mail services and the resumption of the telephone centres have been agreed to in principle, but the implementation modalities will need to be determined. UNHCR will provide some proposals for further consideration and discussion.
5. As this was the second such meeting since July 2000, it was agreed to hold regular coordination meetings at least twice a year, in Geneva, to review progress and discuss issues of mutual concern.
6. An evaluation exercise, to be held at a later date, will draw lessons to further improve the CBM programme.

The High Commissioner concluded the meeting by expressing his appreciation for the constructive discussions and the full engagement of all participants for the successful continuation of the CBM programme.

Geneva, 10 February 2011