



# General Assembly

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

### Summary record of the 726th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 10 October 2019, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Delmi..... (Algeria)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

**General debate** (*continued*)

1. **The Chair** thanked the delegations that had spoken during the general debate. He recalled that forced displacement was a global crisis that was caused by many factors and that required a concerted response from the international community. The debate had marked the midpoint of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) #IBelong campaign to end statelessness by 2024. The delegations had highlighted the legislative and operational efforts made by their countries to that end, and, in that regard, the words of Mr. Azizbek Ashurov, 2019 Nansen Refugee Award Laureate, resonated particularly strongly: “Citizenship is not a privilege; it is a necessity”. The delegations had expressed particular concern about the growing number of refugees around the world, a number that had once again reached record levels. They had stressed the need to address the root causes of armed conflict and to place protection at the heart of humanitarian action. Particular attention also had to be paid to persons with special needs, such as persons with disabilities and victims of sexual and gender-based violence. People displaced within their own country as a result of conflict or climate change should not be overlooked either, as they were often more vulnerable than refugees. In that regard, the delegation members had welcomed the new UNHCR policy on engagement with internally displaced persons, and the establishment of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement. The lack of funding, especially for Africa, was a serious cause for concern. Many delegations had reaffirmed their determination to provide predictable, unearmarked funding to enable the timely delivery of coordinated and effective assistance. The efforts and hospitality of developing countries, which hosted 85 per cent of the world’s refugee population despite their lack of resources, had been highlighted. States had been encouraged to include refugees in national health and education programmes and to promote their self-reliance so that they could lead a life of dignity. The importance of data collection and analysis, including with the support of the UNHCR-World Bank Group Joint Data Centre, had also been discussed. Many delegations had called for the global compact on refugees to become a tool to implement the principle of shared responsibility and for the Global Refugee Forum to be used to assess progress and share good practices. Recognizing the need to empower the people whom UNHCR served, the delegations had expressed appreciation at the fact that the voices of refugees were being taken into account. In addition, they had called on the international community to redouble its efforts to create favourable conditions in countries of origin for the voluntary, safe and dignified repatriation of refugees.

2. Reference had also been made to the internal reform of UNHCR, whose decentralization and regionalization had been deemed necessary. The delegations had considered it important to forge new partnerships and strengthen cooperation with other United Nations bodies, regional organizations, the private sector and civil society. There had been a strong call for the development of an environmental strategy, since climate change was a major cause of population movements. The delegations had urged UNHCR to take climate and environmental considerations into account in its humanitarian response. In conclusion, the words of the Deputy Secretary-General summed up the main ideas that had emerged from the debate: “Let us work together and leave no one behind on our journey to peace, prosperity dignity and opportunity for all”.

**Consideration of reports on the work of the Standing Committee**

(a) **International protection** ([A/AC.96/1188](#), [1189](#), [1195](#) and [1197](#))

3. **Ms. Triggs** (Assistant High Commissioner for Protection) said that the global compact on refugees, which was supported by the vast majority of United Nations Member States and had been endorsed by the General Assembly in 2018, would guide the future work of UNHCR, and it was therefore necessary for countries to give effect to the commitments they had made in that context. Indeed, protection needs were constantly increasing, while the humanitarian assistance provided was insufficient to deal with acute crises. For example, in 2018, only 10 per cent of those in need of resettlement had been resettled. UNHCR was further concerned about the increased use of detention of asylum seekers, including children, in violation of international law. However, it was trying to counterbalance that through its work: it had established an asylum capacity support group

and was working with States and partners to increase the number of resettlement places available and the number of countries offering them. There were four main areas of concern for UNHCR. First, although most States received asylum seekers on their territory, some had closed their borders and were returning new arrivals, sometimes forcing them to take other, more dangerous routes. It was particularly worrying that, in 2019, more than a thousand migrants had died in the Mediterranean. UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) had therefore proposed the establishment of a regional disembarkation mechanism to encourage the sharing of responsibility. Recognizing that migration was exacerbated by climate change, UNHCR would continue to contribute to the international debate on the matter. Secondly, the plight of the 41.3 million people displaced within their own countries as a result of conflicts or natural disasters had to be addressed. To that end, UNHCR had published an updated policy on its engagement in situations of internal displacement and was supporting the GP20 plan of action, which had been launched in April 2018 in cooperation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Thirdly, the mixed character of migration flows complicated matters. Refugees in an irregular situation used the same routes and methods of transport as migrants and ended up in places where they could not benefit from adequate protection. UNHCR was therefore working on the development of protection-sensitive entry procedures and screening and referral mechanisms. In that connection, it was working closely with IOM in the framework of the joint African Union-European Union-United Nations task force on Libya. As part of its activities in that regard, UNHCR remained alert to the threat posed by terrorism and other forms of transnational crime, and it was working with States to develop border management systems that included the collection of biometric data and the identification of persons vulnerable to human trafficking. Fourthly, it was important to promote the self-reliance of refugees and build their resilience. To do so, States had to guarantee them basic socioeconomic rights, the right to work, freedom of movement, and access to health services and education. Self-reliant refugees could not only support themselves but also bring economic and other benefits to their host communities. Globally, access to education continued to be a priority for UNHCR: although half a million refugee children had been enrolled in school in 2018, another 4 million had had no access at all. Lastly, she stressed that the current situation, in which developing countries bore the bulk of the refugee burden, was no longer sustainable. The global compact should contribute to greater equity in sharing responsibility; it provided a framework to ensure that host communities received all the timely support they needed and that refugees had access to health care, education and job opportunities. The Global Refugee Forum should make it possible to give effect to the commitments made.

4. **Mr. Tété** (Observer for Angola) said that data collection and management were essential for the protection of refugees. In that regard, Angola was working to harmonize and share biometric data gathered from refugees who were candidates for voluntary repatriation and those who intended to remain in the country. The Angolan authorities had made every effort to support the voluntary return to the Democratic Republic of the Congo of thousands of refugees living in the Lovua camp. In order to prevent families from being left on the road without protection, they had provided lorries with a capacity of 200 people. Angola reaffirmed its adherence to the global compact on refugees and its willingness to become a full member of the Executive Committee.

5. **Mr. Dávalos** (Ecuador) said that, in 2018, in order to cope with the influx of migrants, his country had adopted a contingency plan to deal quickly and efficiently with requests for international protection. That same year, 17,000 interviews had been conducted to assess the admissibility of applications. Some 20,000 interviews were expected to be conducted in 2019. In order to assist migrants who could not travel to Quito, Ecuador had also set up a decentralized procedure for determining refugee status.

6. **Mr. von Ungern-Sternberg** (Germany) said that countries hosting a large number of refugees, including Germany, needed the assistance of the international community as a whole, particularly with regard to resettlement. In the framework of the European Union's refugee resettlement scheme, Germany had increased its quota for 2020 and hoped that member States would commit themselves to doing the same at the Global Refugee Forum. In order to be effective, protection measures must systematically take into account the specific capacities and needs of persons belonging to very different groups. In that context, Germany encouraged UNHCR to further implement its age, gender and diversity policy.

7. **Ms. O'Connell** (United States of America) said that most States continued to uphold their respective obligations and welcome refugees. The United States particularly wished to commend the hospitality shown by Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan to Syrian refugees, the generosity of the people of Bangladesh towards the Rohingya, and the altruism of the 16 Latin American countries that were hosting more than 4 million Venezuelans. With regard to measures taken for displaced persons, the United States encouraged UNHCR to increase its pool of protection specialists and to deploy technical experts in the field from the onset of a crisis.

8. **Mr. Alemán Pérez** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that the media had manipulated the inaccurate information provided by UNHCR in its note on international protection, and that the figures they put forward were exaggerated. The note stated that the situation in Venezuela continued to deteriorate, which was not true, as evidenced by the return to the country of more than 20,000 Venezuelan nationals, soon to be joined by some 50,000 others who would be voluntarily repatriated. It was also false to assert that countries in the region protected and respected the rights of Venezuelan refugees. On the contrary, the latter were victims of the worst forms of xenophobia and violence.

9. **Mr. de Almeida Tannuri Laferté** (Brazil) said that protection considerations were part and parcel of the measures that the Brazilian authorities were taking to deal with the flow of migrants from Venezuela. The National Refugee Committee had recently decided to apply the provisions of the Cartagena Declaration on Refugees to Venezuelan asylum seekers, in order to expedite the process of determining their status. The granting of refugee status would enable Venezuelan nationals to benefit from all the safeguards enshrined in national and international law, in addition to the protection that they already enjoyed in Brazil as asylum seekers. With the support of IOM, the authorities had launched a human rights guide in Spanish to inform Venezuelans of their rights and refer them to the relevant public services.

10. **Ms. Scott** (Canada) said that her country drew inspiration from the protection measures taken by several States, including the granting of tens of thousands of work permits to refugees hosted by Turkey and Jordan, and the integration of Syrian schoolchildren into the national education system in Lebanon. As the 2019–2020 Chair of the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement, Canada welcomed the engagement of interested States and stakeholders in implementing the Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways. It also continued to support the resettlement and integration of refugees through the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative. Canada urged UNHCR to continue to implement its age, gender and diversity policy, including by mainstreaming gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all its programmes.

11. **Ms. Nordlund** (Sweden) said that Sweden was proud to be a resettlement country and was ready to make additional efforts to reach the ambitious goals set out in the global compact on refugees. For that reason, it had taken an active part in the consultations on development of the Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways and was co-chairing, with Ireland, the Priority Situations Core Group. In preparation for the Global Refugee Forum to be held in December 2019, Sweden was co-sponsoring the working group on education, because it believed that education was an effective means of protecting and empowering children.

12. **Mr. Eltohami** (Sudan) said that UNHCR and its humanitarian partners had to work together and in consultation, in particular to determine the protection needs of affected populations. They must also adopt a common approach to the planning of programmes and projects, and to the monitoring of their implementation, in order to avoid the fragmentation and dispersion of efforts. Since the number of returnees was currently extremely low, a common development mechanism should also be established to help create conditions conducive to the voluntary return of refugees.

13. **Ms. Gill** (Australia) said that Australia was proud to be one of the top three resettlement countries and urged other States to maintain or increase their resettlement efforts and to support the UNHCR Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways. She commended the new UNHCR policy on engagement in situations of internal displacement and the decision to establish the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, and she encouraged UNHCR to ensure that it granted equal rights and opportunities to vulnerable and marginalized groups, including women, girls and

persons with disabilities, and to intensify its efforts to combat sexual and gender-based violence.

14. **Mr. Gave** (France) said that his country would co-sponsor the protection capacity working group at the first Global Refugee Forum, in order to contribute to the implementation of the global compact on refugees, and was looking at ways to improve its protection and asylum policies. For several years, France had been engaged in a major reform of asylum legislation, practices and procedures in order to reduce the time taken to process cases and to provide an appropriate response to the needs of the most vulnerable asylum seekers. It supported States that were committed to implementing the comprehensive refugee response framework and regional initiatives such as the comprehensive regional protection and solutions framework. Cooperation with UNHCR continued in the context of the Emergency Evacuation Transit Mechanism in the Niger and resettlement missions in various countries in Africa and the Middle East. France was working closely with European Union member States to develop a common asylum system capable of handling asylum seekers quickly and with dignity, and with countries of first asylum to exchange data and best practices and to strengthen asylum capacities.

15. **Ms. Sato** (Japan) said that her country considered it crucial for young refugees to receive an education so that they could later participate in the reconstruction of their country and prevent further outbreaks of conflict. Since 2016, Japan had thus hosted 80 Syrian students and their families, and Japanese universities, in partnership with UNHCR, were offering refugees the opportunity to follow a higher education programme. Japan, the first Asian country to have developed a third-country resettlement programme, which had helped to promote the integration of refugees into Japanese society, had decided in June to expand the scope and scale of the programme.

16. **Ms. Triggs** (Assistant High Commissioner for Protection) welcomed the efforts made by the various countries and their support for the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner in the area of protection.

**(b) Programme budgets, management, financial control and administrative oversight**  
([A/AC.96/1197](#), [A/AC.96/1188](#), [A/AC.96/1195](#), [A/AC.96/1196](#), [A/AC.96/1190](#) and [Add.1](#), and [A/AC.96/1192](#))

17. **Ms. Clements** (Deputy High Commissioner) said that, over the previous year, UNHCR had worked towards decentralization by restructuring the organization, strengthening the role and competencies of country offices, creating dozens of technical positions and clearly defining their responsibilities. Once the reorganization was complete, country representatives and their teams would be able to make decisions more quickly and respond to operational contexts, and multi-country offices would be established for some operations. The revised resource allocation framework, the strengthening of the Regional Committees on Contracts, improved asset management and greater devolution of authority to country and regional offices to manage personnel were the cornerstones of the transformation process. From January 2020, country representatives would have the authority to make structural changes, and heads of sub-offices would be able to make certain decisions on personnel management and budget. Procurement and supply processes, rules and procedures would be simplified. A new approach to planning would be adopted, enabling better monitoring of programme implementation and faster adaptation to the dynamic context of field operations. The approach would build on the new data transformation strategy, through which financial, human resources and operational data would be consolidated. The new approach to data, which would be implemented by the Division of Strategic Planning and Results, would support the integration of functions related to strategic planning, resource allocation, monitoring and reporting. The new Division would implement a results-based management system, which would replace the Focus tool and make the work of UNHCR more coherent. UNHCR was contributing to the reform of the United Nations system by playing a leading role, together with the World Food Programme, in the group tasked with identifying ways to improve the efficiency and quality of programme support services. Beyond technical and organizational aspects, UNHCR intended to adapt its culture and working methods by improving internal communication and information-sharing, making transparent decisions and creating a less hierarchical working environment. Various measures had also been taken to strengthen the integrity of the organization and eradicate sexual misconduct, such as the allocation of

additional resources to the Inspector General's Office and other oversight bodies, the decision to allow candidates from outside the organization to apply for the post of Inspector General, and the improved integration of the internal audit function. Since the launch of the Risk Management 2.0 initiative in 2017, UNHCR had focused on strengthening its risk management capacity and mainstreaming risk management into its day-to-day activities. UNHCR worked closely with the Board of Auditors, which had certified its financial statements for 2018, and had been proactive in 2019 in implementing the recommendations made by the auditors. The biennial programme budget for 2020–2021, which had been welcomed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, reflected the strengthened role of country offices. According to the most recent estimates, the funding shortfall for 2019 would amount to \$4 billion, or about half of the total budget. Difficult choices therefore had to be made, to the detriment of the needs of refugees. At a time when the United Nations system was experiencing one of the most serious liquidity crises in its history, UNHCR called on Member States to pay their contributions in full as soon as possible. It was endeavouring to find new funding from the private sector, whose contribution had increased from \$70 million in 2010 to \$423 million in 2018, with the aim of reaching \$1 billion by 2025.

18. **Ms. O'Connell** (United States of America) said that effective oversight of activities was essential for the protection of refugees and the proper management of the limited resources available to UNHCR. The Risk Management 2.0 initiative would mitigate the risk of fraud and misconduct and make it possible to take prompt disciplinary action where appropriate. The United States of America looked forward to hearing details of how UNHCR was strengthening the link between risks, operational objectives and resource allocation through its new results-based management system. The eradication of sexual exploitation and abuse and of sexual harassment was a major goal. The organizational reform of UNHCR, which the United States of America supported, would require the establishment of clear lines of accountability and strong leadership in the field, although ultimate responsibility would always fall on senior management. UNHCR was invited to provide information on the training given to staff members called upon to assume new responsibilities, and to continue to report to the Executive Committee on the progress of reform and the strengthening of oversight and risk management activities.

19. **Ms. Hopp** (Germany) said that the success of the Global Refugee Forum would be measured by the ability of UNHCR to mobilize additional funds. Germany would like to see emphasis placed on multi-year planning and a coherent approach to the various ongoing reform processes. In the light of budgetary constraints, operational priorities must be set and development actors must be involved in situations from the outset. Each year, the humanitarian sector consumed \$1.2 billion of energy. It was estimated that UNHCR, by placing renewable energy at the heart of its energy strategy, could save approximately \$0.5 billion per year. Germany found it regrettable that certain areas of activity had not been audited, owing to a lack of resources, and called for the necessary funds to be allocated to remedy the situation and strengthen risk management. It believed that the increase in the number of complaints of sexual exploitation and abuse and of sexual harassment stemmed from the improvement of the complaints mechanism, and it encouraged UNHCR to intensify its fight against those acts. The Joint Data Centre on Forced Displacement, which was the result of collaboration between UNHCR and the World Bank, would enable data and resources to be linked and would be used in the development of strategies. It would be essential for the data to be well protected.

20. **Ms. Sato** (Japan) said that she was concerned at the significant funding shortfall that the Office of the High Commissioner was experiencing despite an unprecedented level of contributions. Japan commended the efforts that UNHCR was making to broaden and diversify its donor base and its ability to mobilize funds from the private sector. The contributions of Japan in 2019 were higher than in the previous year: in addition to its regular contribution, it had helped to finance activities in Myanmar, Pakistan, Syria, Brazil and Colombia and was cooperating with UNHCR to meet the needs of Venezuelans. It was committed to supporting the work of UNHCR, in particular by providing a field presence and human resources. Lastly, Japan welcomed the various initiatives that UNHCR had taken to strengthen the organization in terms of priority-setting, improving effectiveness and efficiency, risk management, and combating sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

21. **Ms. Gillen** (Canada) said that she welcomed the establishment by UNHCR of a change governance board to oversee and manage its own transformation process and hoped that it would consult the Executive Committee regularly to ensure that the changes made were consistent. Her Government welcomed the decision to hold quarterly integrity briefings and called for the recent findings of the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network to be taken into account, particularly those related to strategic architecture, results reporting and gender equality. It considered that it was essential to increase the capacity of the Office of the High Commissioner, particularly in the area of analysis and evaluation. The Government of Canada took note of the Office's efforts to strengthen cooperation with United Nations partners in the context of actions for internally displaced persons, to establish strong partnerships with development actors and to improve relations with civil society and implementing partners. It called for a strengthening of the mechanism for reporting and presentation of results, including those related to gender equality. It welcomed the fact that UNHCR was reporting on flexible funding and encouraged it to reiterate the value of such resources to the organization and to provide an accurate account of their use.

22. **Ms. Clements** (Deputy High Commissioner) welcomed the efforts made by the various countries and the support that they showed for the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner. She said that the Standing Committee would want to meet regularly with the Executive Committee – in other words, with the donor members of the organization, who were keenly interested in the work of UNHCR and its activities in the field – to discuss the issues of risk management, combating sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, the multi-year planning of activities and of the energy strategy, the Joint Data Centre on Forced Displacement, and data protection, among others. In the context of the regionalization and decentralization process proposed by UNHCR, the roles and responsibilities of the different entities, namely country representatives, regional offices and headquarters institutions, would need to be further defined and capacities would need to be strengthened at all levels of the chain of accountability. UNHCR also welcomed the increase in the number of complaints of sexual exploitation and abuse, and of sexual harassment, as a sign that awareness of the complaints mechanism was growing and that victims had understood that their complaints would be followed up.

23. **Mr. Alemán Pérez** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that President Maduro had been elected in 2018 by direct universal suffrage with 67 per cent of the votes in free and fair elections, which had been monitored by around one hundred foreign observers. The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela considered it unfair to attribute to its policy the phenomenon of mass migration, which resulted solely from the coercive measures illegally imposed by the Government of the United States of America and governments subjugated to it, such as that of Brazil, and their desire to appropriate the country's natural resources. The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reaffirmed its willingness to work with UNHCR to find lasting and viable solutions to the refugee crisis. It had never used the status of a refugee or migrant for political purposes and ensured respect for the rights and freedoms of persons residing in Venezuela, without distinction as to nationality or origin.

#### **Consideration of reports relating to programme and administrative oversight and evaluation (agenda item 5)**

##### *Report on activities of the Inspector General's Office (A/AC.96/1193)*

24. **Ms. Farkas** (Inspector General) said that the oversight reform process, which had brought changes to the structure of the Inspector General's Office and to the roles and responsibilities of its staff, was nearing completion. Relationships with the Office's key counterparts had been strengthened, particularly with executive and senior management and the UNHCR Audit Service of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. Her Office had also established links with its counterparts in other United Nations entities and with several Inspectors General of Member States. The purpose of the changes was to better harmonize and coordinate the work of the oversight bodies of UNHCR and to ensure that investigations were conducted by professionals, which provided assurance to the High Commissioner, Member States and persons of concern to UNHCR. During the reporting period, the Inspector General's Office had received more than 1,200 complaints of misconduct, an increase of 40 per cent compared to the previous period (2017–2018). As in



the previous period, most of the complaints received had concerned fraud with financial implications, refugee status determination and resettlement fraud, and sexual exploitation and abuse. In total, the Office had opened 140 investigations and had issued investigation reports concerning 155 individuals. The High Commissioner had imposed disciplinary sanctions on 29 staff members, and in 19 cases those sanctions had resulted in dismissal or separation.

25. During the reporting period, 48 complaints of sexual harassment had been received, compared to 38 in 2017–2018, and the number of complaints of sexual exploitation and abuse, which in 80 per cent of cases had involved UNHCR partners, had almost doubled, from 65 to 126. The rise in the number of complaints related to sexual misconduct could be attributed to greater staff awareness and improved trust in reporting and response mechanisms. The Office prioritized such complaints, with 72 per cent of them being processed within the six-month time frame. The Office had completed four inquiries during the reporting period. The first, conducted by the Investigation Service, had concerned the death of a UNHCR staff member, and the other three, conducted by the Strategic Oversight Service, had concerned partnership management, the implementation of the Emergency Policy in seven operations, and refugee registration in Uganda. The findings of the inquiries had been shared with executive management. The growing number of misconduct complaints and complex situations requiring the Office's urgent intervention and expertise would make it increasingly difficult for the Office to meet the demand. The findings of a peer review indicated that there was a need to strengthen the capacity of the Investigation Service.

*Report on evaluation (A/AC.96/1194)*

26. **Ms. Shroff** (Head of the Evaluation Service) said that the Evaluation Service had published 15 evaluations in the previous year and was currently conducting 35 others on key issues such as the humanitarian-development nexus, data and information management, measures to combat sexual and gender-based violence, emergency response, private sector engagement and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. Analysis of the efforts made and the results obtained in the field yielded a number of lessons that would assist in the implementation of the global compact on refugees. First, the measures taken by UNHCR to create an environment conducive to the economic inclusion and self-reliance of refugees had begun to bear fruit. To make that happen, the Office of the High Commissioner had had to overcome two major challenges, namely building long-term partnerships in a context in which annual grant-making cycles were the norm, and developing income-generating activities in a context characterized by a high level of insecurity, limited public resources and a restricted legislative framework. Despite those obstacles, the evaluations had concluded that UNHCR had been successful in facilitating multi-year, multi-stakeholder partnerships with the private sector, financial service providers and government entities on access to employment, energy, the Internet and financial services. Evaluation findings had formed the basis for the development of the new global strategy (2019–2023) for refugee livelihoods and economic inclusion. Secondly, a pragmatic approach, involving the translation of international humanitarian law into messages and actions that could be easily incorporated into development planning and private sector priorities, had been found to be much more effective in strengthening the protection of refugees and persons of concern to UNHCR. Thirdly, the evaluations had concluded that the effects of applying comprehensive refugee responses were not generally visible in the short term and that, even when cooperation was working well, persons of concern should continue to receive UNHCR operational support in many areas on a temporary basis, until both refugees and host communities had benefited, as had been the case in Turkana, Kenya. Fourthly, the evaluations had concluded that, in order to effectively tackle sexual and gender-based violence, flexibility was required in the implementation of response measures. In Lebanon, for example, awareness-raising on sexual and gender-based violence issues had been carried out through mobile phones, social media and outreach volunteers. Moreover, it had been found that, in general, such efforts were more effective when volunteers were recruited from refugee and host communities. Fifthly, many evaluations had concluded that UNHCR needed to produce better data and information to support decision-making, coordination and advocacy. The data transformation strategy, which reflected those findings, included measures to increase capacity in statistics and demographic analysis and to develop new standards for data collection and the protection and responsible use of data. Sixthly, the evaluation of



protection against sexual exploitation and abuse had concluded that the foundations for a culture change in that regard had been laid in UNHCR. However, UNHCR needed to communicate more widely about the good practices observed by some, the corrective measures taken where necessary, and the disciplinary measures imposed on perpetrators of such acts. The regional offices would in future include staff responsible for conducting independent evaluations, which would make it possible to meet the demand for decentralized evaluations. In the context of United Nations reform, the Grand Bargain (humanitarian funding agreement) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Evaluation Service had undertaken several inter-agency or joint evaluations, including of the inter-agency humanitarian response to Cyclone Idai, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

*The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.*