

Annual Consultations with Non-Governmental Organizations

26 – 27 September 2007, International Conference Centre Geneva
28 September 2007, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

Wednesday, 26 September 2007

International Conference Centre Geneva (ICCG)

11h00 – 13h00 Plenary Session (interpretation English-French-Spanish)

Room 2 Welcome and Opening Address

Nicholas Coussidis, Head, NGO Liaison Unit, UNHCR
Elizabeth Ferris, Brookings Institution on Partnership and Cooperation
Craig Johnstone, UN Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees
Manisha Thomas, Coordinator a.i., International Council of Voluntary Agencies

13h00 – 15h00 Lunch

15h00 – 16h20 Round-table Sessions (Interpretation: English-French-Spanish)

Room 2 Theme Partnership & Accountability

Humanitarian reform: Responding to IDP situations in non-cluster countries

This session will look at the agency's approach to IDP situations in countries where the cluster approach is not applied. This will include a review of UNHCR activities in support of IDPs in protracted displacement situations and in urban environments. Discussions will focus on factors which facilitate, as well as those which limit UNHCR's involvement in such situations, including those related to political contexts, mandate and capacity. The session will contribute to a better understanding among NGOs of what they can expect from UNHCR, and will look at strategies on how UNHCR and NGOs can work together to improve national and international responses to IDP situations, taking into account lessons learned from the evolving nature of UNHCR-NGO cooperation in countries where the cluster approach already is applied.

Moderator: Jens Eschenbaecher, Norwegian Refugee Council, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

Speaker(s): Khassim Diagne, IDP Operations, UNHCR
Elizabeth Ferris, Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement
Naveed Hussain, UNHCR Bosnia-Herzegovina
Dragan Vjanovic, Vasa Prava

Room 3 Theme Partnership & Accountability

How do we make "Principled" partnership work?

For years, UNHCR and NGOs have discussed the concept of partnership. As a result, in many places, UNHCR and its partners have moved beyond top down implementing partnership agreements and attitudes have become more conducive to partnership. In other places, however, partnership continues to remain rhetoric. Earlier this year the Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP) adopted five "Principles of Partnership": *Equality, Transparency, Result-Oriented Approach, Responsibility, and Complementarity*. These Principles are meant to guide the relationships between three families of the humanitarian community – NGOs, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, and the UN and other inter-governmental organisations. How will these Principles be applied so that they move beyond being just commitments on a piece of paper? Has anything changed to make these Principles and the GHP different than previous discussions about partnership? Will these Principles lead to true strategic partnership this time and, if so, how? What steps need to be taken in order to make principled partnership work?

Moderator: Manisha Thomas, ICVA
Speaker(s): Nicholas Coussidis, NGO Liaison Unit, UNHCR
Johanna Grombach Wagner, International Committee for the Red Cross
Mark Prasopa-Plaizier, Oxfam International

16h30 – 18h00 Round-table Sessions (Interpretation: English-French-Spanish)

Room 2 Theme Partnership & Accountability

How to strengthen and improve partnership?

Partnership between humanitarian actors works, but it needs to work better. This session will look

at ways of improving the effectiveness of partnership in terms of better serving affected populations, as well as improving overall transparency and our accountability to those populations and each other. Given that the nature of humanitarian work is changing; there are more actors on the ground, including well financed armed forces and private corporations; the risks and demographics are changing and there is an increasing politicisation of protection and assistance. Can anyone afford to go it alone anymore? Or do humanitarians have, no choice, but to work together better in order to cope with this changing world?

Moderator: Joan Timoney, Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children

Speaker(s): Mamadou Ndiaye, OFADEC

Nicholas Stockton, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership

Alan Vernon, Organizational Development and Management Service, UNHCR

Room 3 Theme Next Steps in Durable Solutions

Toward a conclusion on refugees' rights associated with self-reliance rights in 2008: A civil society perspective

Promoting refugee self-reliance is a major component of the Agenda for Protection with solid grounding in the 1951 Convention and is implicit to the Millennium Development Goals. Self-reliance also plays a significant role in promoting all three durable solutions. Nevertheless, the vast majority of refugees suffer substantial restrictions on those rights which are important to attain self-reliance, including the right to work, to practice professions, to run businesses, to own property, to move about freely, and to choose their place of residence-even in protracted situations. International responsibility-sharing has also been lacking in this area. UNHCR's Executive Committee has addressed many aspects of the Agenda for Protection with specific Conclusions but, despite UNHCR's recommendation, not this one. Such a Conclusion would be particularly relevant to the several major refugee-hosting countries who are not party to the 1951 Convention but who are, as ExCom members, participants in the consensus on its Conclusions. What can civil society actors, particularly those in countries who are members of ExCom do to promote a rights-based approach to self-reliance at ExCom 2008 and in general?"

Moderator: Alice Nah, HAKAM and Migration and Refugee Working Group, Malaysia

Speaker(s): George Okoth-Obbo, Division of International Protection Services, UNHCR

Merrill Smith, US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants

Judy Wakahiu, Refugee Consortium of Kenya

Room 4 Theme Special Situation Focuses

Protection in mixed migration flows

Migratory movements are often mixed in character and include refugees and asylum seekers, a fact which is not always sufficiently taken into account by States. Their efforts to "combat" irregular migration have negatively impacted on the possibility to find international protection. Restrictions on access to safe territory include the "externalisation" of border controls and undifferentiated practices of interception, sometimes in cooperation with countries of origin or transit. Increasingly, states impose control functions on private actors such as airline companies. By denying access to territory and related procedures, such practices place people in need of international protection at grave risk. Migrants and refugees alike are often pushed back across land and sea borders and asylum seekers are not given any chance to have their claim individually examined. The human rights of all individuals caught up in these flows must be respected. Measures to control migration need to ensure that the fundamental obligation of *non-refoulement* is not violated. The session will discuss activities undertaken by and issues of concern to NGOs and UNHCR, and learn of the strategic directions being taken by UNHCR to assist states in making their entry systems more protection sensitive.

Moderator: Pia Oberoi, Amnesty International

Speaker(s): Bishop Giorgio Bertin, International Catholic Migration Commission

Patricia Coelho, European Council on Refugees and Exiles

Christopher Hein, Italian Refugee Council

Anja Klug, Protection Operations and Legal Advice Section, UNHCR

Thursday, 27 September 2007
International Conference Centre Geneva (ICCG)

10h00 – 11h20 Regional Sessions

Room 3 Europe Bureau

(Interpretation English-French-Russian)
Discuss strategies and partnerships with the Director.

Moderator: Christine Bloch, Jesuit Refugee Service
Speaker(s): Pirkko Kourula, Director *joined by:*
Guy Ouellet, Deputy Director
Udo Janz, Deputy Director

Room 4 Americas Bureau

(Interpretation English-Spanish)
The session will provide an overview of developments, accomplishments and challenges in North America and the Caribbean, and Latin America – the latter in particular in the context of the Mexico Plan of Action.

Moderator: Enrique Burbinski, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society
Speaker: Philippe Lavanchy, Director

11h30 – 13h00 Regional Session

Room 3 MENA Bureau

(Interpretation Arabic-English-French)
The session will provide a general overview of developments, challenges and achievements in the Middle East and North Africa.

Moderator: Abdul Rahman Al Attar, Syrian Red Crescent Society
Speaker(s): Radhouane Nouicer, Director

11h30 – 13h00 Round-table Session (Interpretation: English–French–Spanish)

Room 4 Local integration in Africa: lessons learned and the way forward

The session aims to highlight new opportunities to achieve local integration for refugees in the African context, where several States have expressed an increased receptiveness to options for local integration for remaining groups of refugees. The session will provide an opportunity to share experiences regarding the role and constraints faced by the various actors involved in the local integration of refugees. Strong partnerships with Governments, regional organizations and NGOs are required to address the multifaceted challenges of local integration, including its legal, socio-economic and cultural components. The session will promote discussion of the role of NGOs in pursuing this durable solution and explore opportunities for partnerships. Presentations will highlight three refugee situations: Somali Bantus in Tanzania; urban refugees in South Africa; and the remaining Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees in West Africa.

Moderator: Michael Gallagher, Jesuit Refugee Service
Speaker(s): Johnson Brahim, Government of Tanzania
Fatima Khan, University of Cape Town Law Clinic
Raouf Mazou, UNHCR Liberia

13h00 – 15h00 Lunch

15h00 – 16h20 Regional Sessions

Room 2 Africa Bureau

(Interpretation: English-French)
Following a brief presentation by the Director of the Africa Bureau on main developments and challenges in Africa since the last NGO consultations, discuss issues of concern with the Africa Bureau.

Moderator: Mamadou Ndiaye, OFADEC
Speaker(s): Marjon Kamara, Director *joined by:*
Marie-Christine Bocoum, Deputy Director
Steven Corliss, Deputy Director
Mengesha Kebede, Deputy Director

Room 3 Asia and the Pacific Bureau

(Interpretation English-French)

Partnership in Advocacy: Brief presentation on areas and themes in the region where UNHCR and partners can work in a complementary manner on advocacy for refugees. Overview of models where advocacy by numerous stakeholders has helped to unblock stalled issues, bring renewed attention to 'forgotten' problems, and/or highlight publicly issues where UNHCR has counted on the support of partners to make progress.

Moderator: Alice Nah, HAKAM and Migration and Refugee Working Group

Speaker: Janet Lim, Director

15h00 – 16h20 Round-table Session (Interpretation English-French-Spanish)

Room 4 Theme Special Situation Focuses

Creating safe schools and learning environment

It is important to raise awareness and commitment to address critical issues impeding access to quality education so that children are ensured a safe and quality school and learning environment. Schools first and foremost need to provide safe environments for all children; yet an alarming number of schools throughout the world are failing to protect students from violence, in particular countries with weakened systems as a result of armed conflict. Violence in schools is reportedly often gendered in nature. This has an impact on the access and quality and safety of learning and teaching in classrooms all over the world. Estimates suggest that close to half of all female students and a sizable number of male students experience some form of sexual violence within an educational context. An unknown number of students are subjected to physical and psychological forms of gender-based abuse such as corporal punishment and bullying. This session will include presentations and discussion on protection risks as a consequence of lack of access to quality education as well as samples of good practices of programmes and guidelines.

Moderator: Christine Bloch, Jesuit Refugee Service

Speaker(s): Wayne Bleier, Christian Children Fund

Jackie Kirk, International Rescue Committee

Marion Fresia, Technical Support Section, UNHCR

16h30 – 18h00 Round-table Sessions (Interpretation: English-French-Spanish)

Room 2 Theme Special Situation Focuses

The challenges and opportunities for the delivery of protection and assistance in complex humanitarian emergencies and operations

This session will focus on the opportunities presented to the humanitarian community at this time to improve impact and accountability in protection and assistance in complex humanitarian emergencies. Key discussion areas will include: the opportunity to use presence as an effective protection tool, successful examples of protection mainstreaming into sector assistance, and development and utilization of monitoring and evaluation tools for protection interventions. It is expected that challenges to moving forward with suggested new protection initiatives will be raised in the spirit of identifying solutions.

Moderator: Thomas Getman, World Vision International

Speaker(s): Andrew Harper, Iraq Support Unit, UNHCR

Jean Louis Jacot, International Committee for the Red Cross

Gerry Simpson, Human Rights Watch

Makiba Yamano, World Vision Pakistan

Room 3 Theme Next Steps in Durable Solutions

Improving and expanding refugee resettlement

The session will present NGO perspectives from recently established resettlement programs in Latin America (Argentina and Brazil) and emerging/potential programmes in Europe (France and Italy). Panellists will discuss cooperation with UNHCR and with government partners in planning and implementing resettlement programs. Discussion will focus on overall challenges to new programmes under the Mexico Plan of Action, solutions presented and the value added by NGO involvement, and will provide a basis for discussion of the advocacy and planning currently underway for potential European programmes. In addition to the above mentioned panellists, UNHCR Resettlement Services will be represented on the panel and will provide an overview of the importance of improving and expanding resettlement operations in the current context of increased refugee numbers worldwide.

Moderator: Jared Bloch, International Catholic Migration Commission

Speaker(s): Enrique Burbinski, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society

France Charlet, Forum Réfugiés

Vincent Cochetel, Division of International Protection Services

Christopher Hein, Italian Refugee Council
Rosita Milesi, Instituto Migrações e Direitos Humanos

Room 4 Theme Next Steps in Durable Solutions

Build the peace: Livelihoods in post-conflict return

The session will focus on the importance of creating economic opportunities in the context of refugee/IDP return; the shortcomings of many current interventions; the importance of livelihoods as a tool of protection; and what can be done to improve economic programs especially those targeting women and youth. The session will include case examples from South Sudan and Liberia as well as current activities underway within UNHCR such as the Women Leading for Livelihoods project.

Moderator: Melanie Teff, Refugees International

Speaker(s): Dale Buscher, Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children

Alfredo Lazarte, ILO Crisis Group

Pablo Mateu, Peace Building, Livelihoods and Partnerships Section, UNHCR

18h30 Reception – UNHCR Cafeteria

Friday, 28 September 2007

Palais des Nations Geneva, Room XIX

10h00 – 11h30 Plenary Session (interpretation English-French-Spanish)

Room XIX *Can there really be a link between the NGO consultations and ExCom?*

UNHCR's Annual Consultations with NGOs have long been called "Pre-ExCom" because they are held prior to UNHCR's Executive Committee meeting. What were once a one-day meeting of NGOs to strategise on their interventions to ExCom, today's consultations range over a period of three days with discussions on issues of shared concern that rarely find their way into the ExCom deliberations. The report by the Pre-ExCom Rapporteur generally has little impact because it is delivered far down the agenda and States rarely ask questions. The session will question if there are ways to link the NGO consultations and ExCom. What is the purpose of such a linkage? Can ExCom become a more dynamic body that would allow for better discussion that would bring in the debates from the NGO consultations? Should NGOs influence the ExCom agenda? Would changing the timing of the NGO consultations improve the ability of linking to ExCom?

Moderator: Pia Oberoi, Amnesty International

Speaker(s): Ann Blomberg, Swedish Mission

Erika Feller, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, UNHCR

Eileen Pittaway, Asian Women's Human Rights Council

11h00 – 12h00 Plenary Session (interpretation English-French-Spanish)

Room XIX *Report on the NGO consultations*

Ambassador Love Mtesa, ExCom Chairman

James Thomson, Rapporteur to the Annual Consultations with NGOs

12h00 – 13h00 Plenary Session (interpretation English-French-Spanish)

Room XIX *Closing Address by*

António Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Refugees