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

Fifty-third session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 569th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 4 October 2002, at 11 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. YIMER (Ethiopia)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE FIFTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (agenda item 13) (document without a symbol, distributed in the meeting room)

1. Ms. LYNCH (Rapporteur) thanked the members of the Executive Committee for the trust they had placed in her and for the spirit of dialogue and conciliation which they had demonstrated and which had made it possible to reach agreement on a number of difficult and thorny issues. Introducing the draft report of the fifty-third session, she noted that the three conclusions adopted during the current session by the Executive Committee were closely linked to the outcome of the Global Consultations on International Protection. Regarding the decision on the participation of observer delegations in meetings of the Standing Committee in 2002-2003, the following countries should be added to the list approved earlier: Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Cuba, Egypt, Kenya, Saudi Arabia and Swaziland. The Chairman had also suggested that the following intergovernmental organizations should be added to the list of those invited to participate as observers in meetings of the Executive Committee: the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). That proposal was designed to strengthen UNHCR's cooperation with African institutions, thus satisfying the High Commissioner's wish to establish close links with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The text of the High Commissioner's opening statement, the Chairman's summary of the general debate and the Agenda for Protection would be annexed to the final version of the report, which would be introduced in the Third Committee of the General Assembly as an addendum to the High Commissioner's annual report.

2. Mr. LUBBERS (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that the text of his closing statement should be included verbatim in the report.

3. Mr. KARLINS (Latvia) requested that Latvia be included in the list of States wishing to participate in meetings of the Standing Committee as observers.

4. The report of the fifty-third session of the Executive Committee, as orally amended, was adopted.

CLOSING STATEMENT BY THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

5. Mr. LUBBERS (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) read out his closing statement, the text of which would be annexed to the report of the fifty-third session of the Executive Committee.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION (agenda item 14)

6. The CHAIRMAN said that the Executive Committee, which, in addition to its members, had been attended by 67 observer delegations and numerous intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, was in a dynamic phase of its evolution. Once again, its work

had been characterized by a spirit of conciliation, based on the principles of humanitarianism and consensus. The general debate had provided a forum for some very constructive comments on a wide range of issues brought up by the High Commissioner and the debate on international protection had demonstrated that there was unanimity on the need to implement the Agenda for Protection. A number of parallel meetings, for example, on NEPAD and the development of UNHCR's field operations, had enabled field officers and Governments alike to air their views. The statement by the Staff Council had provided valuable insights into its concerns. The perennial subject of funding had been central to the debates because, without the necessary resources, the search for durable solutions would remain futile. All pledges should be honoured as soon as possible and all members of the international community should identify innovative approaches to find extra resources without which UNHCR would be unable to help refugees.

7. Following an exchange of courtesies, The CHAIRMAN declared the session closed.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.