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

Sixtieth session

Extraordinary meeting

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 627th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 1 September 2009, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. MILLAR (Australia)
(Vice-Chairperson)

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In the absence of Ms. Thompson Chacón (Costa Rica), Ms. Caroline Millar (Australia), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRPERSON

1. The CHAIRPERSON declared open the extraordinary meeting of the Executive Committee, the purpose of which was to elect a new Chairperson.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (document without a symbol, distributed at the meeting)

2. The agenda was adopted.

ELECTION OF A CHAIRPERSON

3. The CHAIRPERSON said that, owing to the reassignment of the current Chairperson, Ms. Thompson Chacón, the Executive Committee must, under its rules of procedure, elect a new Chairperson to replace her for the remainder of her term of office. In accordance with the decision adopted by the Executive Committee at its fifty-fifth session in 2004, that term of office would expire on the last day of the sixtieth session.

4. Mr. MONTALVO (Ecuador), speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC), nominated Mr. Dumont (Argentina) for election as Chairperson.

5. Mr. HADJICHRYSANTHOU (Cyprus) seconded the nomination.

6. Mr. Dumont (Argentina) was elected Chairperson by acclamation.

7. Mr. DUMONT (Argentina) said that the role of Chairperson would be a challenge. The members of the Executive Committee had shown a keen interest in the High Commissioner's programme budget targets. Much had been achieved in relation to accountability, transparency and predictability and members of the Executive Committee had been supportive of the long-term reforms undertaken by the High Commissioner. Nevertheless, in 2009, difficulties had been encountered in achieving higher standards in international protection. He expressed the hope that the differences of opinion could be overcome in forthcoming meetings.

8. Argentina had an active refugee policy, conducted a growing resettlement programme within the Latin American region and had shown a strong commitment to helping increase international protection for refugees and displaced persons. The support of the members of the Executive Committee for his election implied recognition of his country's efforts in that regard.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9. Mr. ISMAIL (Pakistan) asked the secretariat to clarify the procedure for notifying countries of possible candidates prior to elections.

10. Ms. WALKER (Secretary of the Executive Committee) said that although it had not been secretariat practice to circulate possible lists of candidates prior to elections, any suggestions by members of the Executive Committee to do so could be considered.

CLOSING REMARKS

11. After the customary exchange of courtesies, the CHAIRPERSON declared the extraordinary meeting closed.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.