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Summary record of the 645th meeting

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Chairperson: Mr. Woolcott.....(Australia)

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

Consideration of reports on the work of the Standing Committee (*continued*)

(a) International protection (*continued*) (A/AC.96/1084, 1085, 1092 and 1094)

1. **Ms. Feller** (Assistant High Commissioner for Protection), responding to points raised at the previous meeting, welcomed the positive developments outlined by a number of members, such as progress in issuing birth certificates to refugees in Thailand; provision of alternative shelter in Zambia for refugees needing to live outside camps; improvements to legislation in Mexico and Estonia; the first naturalization of a refugee in the Republic of Korea; and Algeria's accession to end implementation of various international instruments. Promoting further accessions to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness would be a particular focus for the Office throughout the forthcoming anniversary year.
2. Several themes had prompted comments from a number of speakers. Sex- and gender-based violence was an issue of concern to many, and there was clear determination to make progress in that regard in the contexts of both conflict and mixed migratory flows. The Office was committed to pursuing closer cooperation with the International Organization for Migration on that and a range of other issues. The joint action already taken had led to tangible results, and standard operating procedures were in place to help victims of trafficking.
3. The Office had taken numerous steps to follow up on the urban refugee policy adopted the previous year. She drew particular attention to the involvement of the International Labour Office, which had loaned UNHCR a microfinance expert to assist in piloting guidelines on microfinance. The pilot projects were now being evaluated; among the challenges to full implementation would be ensuring adequate resources.
4. Concerning the ongoing problems presented by mixed migratory flows, she stressed that UNHCR and national and international partners had taken joint action to follow up on the various regional conferences and expert meetings held on the issue. Resulting project proposals were already being considered by donors. The Office was keen to discuss how certain aspects of instruments such as the 1951 Convention should be interpreted, as States would naturally diverge in their interpretation depending on their individual experiences and legal frameworks. It was the Office's responsibility, in accordance with its Statute and article 35 of the 1951 Convention, to promote consistency in interpretation so as to improve the situation of refugees – a task it approached with enthusiasm.
5. The Office was considering how it could promote a more active approach to the application of the cessation clause, where warranted. The fact that the date of 31 December 2011 had been set for application of the clause in the cases of Angola, Burundi, Liberia and Rwanda did not preclude earlier invocation in individual countries if the necessary conditions were met. It was hoped, for instance, that the clause could be applied to Rwanda as of April 2011. Strategies to favour the creation of appropriate conditions for the invocation of the clause would be tailored to each country's circumstances.
6. Following recent consultations, the Office and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) had identified complex disasters as an area for cooperation between them and a suggestion had been made on strengthening cooperation between the Office and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights.
7. She welcomed the proposal made by the representative of Lebanon to hold periodic briefings for government representatives in Geneva on the Office's guidelines on international protection. Lastly, she expressed the view that the statement made on behalf of

non-governmental organizations had overemphasized issues of concern, without taking into account positive developments. The statement would have been more balanced had it given credit to States where due.

8. **Mr. Guliyev** (Azerbaijan) said that Azerbaijan had benefited from close cooperation with the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons, and had made progress in improving living and housing conditions for such persons and identifying other problems that must be tackled. He welcomed the attention devoted by the international community and the Office to the plight of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and expressed the hope that the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa would have a positive impact.

9. In the absence of any legally binding international instrument on internal displacement, the Office's Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement constituted a useful framework for protecting the rights of IDPs. His Government took its responsibility for such issues seriously, in view of the large number of IDPs within its territory, who enjoyed equal rights with other citizens of Azerbaijan and benefited from certain privileges and government assistance. Rapid economic development had enabled the Government to solve remaining problems related to its IDPs, but the durable solution must be their voluntary and safe return to their former homes, a right he hoped they would exercise soon.

10. **Mr. Viktorov** (Russian Federation), welcoming the *Note on International Protection* as a useful means of sharing information and experience among States with a view to improving national legislation and practice, said that the Russian Federation applied the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Additional Protocol as the basis of its protection regime. Any new interpretation of those instruments should be applied solely with the support of States parties, not only to ensure that the Office strictly fulfilled its mandate, but also to avoid overlap with the work of other United Nations humanitarian agencies. The Russian Federation was attempting to expand the humanitarian space by receiving larger numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers annually, while new legislation was being prepared to improve mechanisms for granting refugee status. Creating and strengthening national refugee systems was essential, but should not lead to competition between national institutions and the Office or duplication of efforts.

11. The international community should devote attention to reducing statelessness, and especially to certain States' policy of segregating their populations artificially into citizens and "non-citizens". He echoed concerns expressed about the increasing abuse of the asylum system and called for a single set of international criteria to be produced for determining the status of asylum-seekers, including in situations of mixed migratory flows. Failure to address those issues could discredit the very institution of asylum.

12. **Mr. Hassan** (Yemen), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he agreed with the Assistant High Commissioner for Protection about the statement made on behalf of non-governmental organizations, which had described the refugee situation in Yemen as alarming, despite the progress that the country had made. The reality was quite different, particularly in the case of Ethiopian refugees. He suggested that the non-governmental organizations concerned should confer with the Ethiopian authorities to clarify the situation of the repatriated refugees, the majority of whom had wanted to return home and had refused to remain in Yemen. The High Commissioner could participate in those enquiries. His Government maintained excellent relations with the Ethiopian refugees it hosted and was working with non-governmental organizations and the Office to resolve their situation.

13. **Ms. Kyriakou** (Greece), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, although high priority was given by her Government to modifying the asylum system, tackling the country's current economic problems took precedence. Nevertheless, a

presidential decree would be promulgated in the coming weeks, amending the country's legislation to reintroduce the appeals procedure for asylum requests and to clear up the backlog of almost 46,000 asylum applications.

14. **Ms. Sebudandi** (Observer for Rwanda), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the statement made on behalf of non-governmental organizations, gave the mistaken impression that Rwanda was pressurizing host countries to return Rwandan refugees and non-refugees. The Assistant High Commissioner for Protection had provided the necessary clarification on the cessation clause. Neighbouring countries were free to return those Rwandans who had entered illegally and whose asylum requests had been rejected. Rwanda had received such citizens in a dignified manner and had resettled them, as was its practice. The deaths of two individuals during deportation had been an unfortunate but partially self-inflicted accident. Such incidents were not uncommon in deportation cases, as asylum-seekers were often reluctant to return to their home countries.

15. With regard to Congolese refugees hosted by Rwanda, returns were being carried out legally, with priority given to voluntary repatriation and all necessary measures taken to ensure security before refugees were repatriated.

16. **The Chairperson** said that the draft conclusion on agenda item 5 (a) would be presented for adoption later in the session.

(b) Programme budgets, management, financial control and administrative oversight (A/AC.96/1083, 1086 and Add.1, and 1088)

17. **The Chairperson** recalled that administrative, financial and audit matters had been on the agenda of each of the Standing Committee's previous three meetings and drew the Committee's attention to the report of the 49th meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/1093). He also drew the Committee's attention to the report of the extraordinary meeting of the Executive Committee of 8 December 2009 (A/AC.96/1080) which had been held to review and adopt the financial rules for voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner as contained in document A/AC.96/503/Rev.9.

18. **Mr. Aleinikoff** (Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees), introducing the agenda item, said he would give an update on the management and structural changes that had been implemented to enable UNHCR to meet the challenges facing refugees and other persons of concern.

19. The overall financial situation of UNHCR was positive: the 2009 accounts had passed through the Board of Auditors without any reservations being expressed and the Office had worked hard to address the issue of audit certification for implementing partners. Progress was being made in improving and harmonizing asset management standards and various options were being explored for financing post-service benefits. Member States would be presented with a preferred option, including a benefits and risk analysis.

20. There had been a record level of contributions in 2009 and the trend was continuing in 2010. However, even if all expected contributions were received, there would still be a funding gap of US\$ 1.3 billion. The Office would prepare a resource mobilization plan to bridge that gap, but donor States must commit increased contributions to meet the needs identified by the Global Needs Assessment.

21. The new budget process allowed UNHCR to have much clearer qualitative and quantitative data on refugee needs and gaps in meeting them, facilitating prioritization at the operational level. The use of the results-based management software (Focus) for planning and programming across all operations had led to a more consistent use of baselines and indicators, although some procedures and results chains required

simplification. A culture of results-based management should permeate all levels of the organization, as it was critical to the wise and efficient use of resources and to ensuring accountability vis-à-vis all stakeholders.

22. The Office had made changes to its human resources policy in a move away from job placement towards a system of career development, and had established its Global Learning Centre in Budapest to provide opportunities for continuing education. Other measures included a new recruitment programme to hire a talented and diverse workforce, a training programme for managers in high-risk environments and a policy for attracting experienced staff laterally from other organizations, NGOs and the private sector.

23. UNHCR was working hard to harmonize its practices with those of other United Nations agencies and to comply with all the commonly agreed standards of accounting, reporting and accountability, including, by 2012, the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).

24. In the course of the reform process, close attention was being paid to continuous monitoring, strong coordination and effective internal and external communication with all stakeholders. A number of areas were being reviewed, including the results framework and the Focus software. A series of “snapshot” evaluations were being conducted to assess how far results-based management was changing working practices. The early indications were that more needed to be done on training and internal communication.

25. The Office was also conducting reviews of regionalization and coordination of oversight mechanisms within UNHCR. A number of regional platforms were operating under different models and the review would consider how those models could best be used to promote harmonized strategies, effective resource allocation and solutions for refugees. The review of oversight mechanisms touched on a core managerial issue for UNHCR – accountability. In the coming year the Office was committed to: seeking ways to simplify the Focus software and establish a culture of results-based management; making Global Focus available; reviewing the Global Strategic Priorities; establishing an independent advisory and audit committee; revisiting risk management practices and structures; and the presentation of financial information; and developing a global communication strategy for advocacy and fund-raising.

26. **Ms. Aderhold** (Germany) welcomed the UNHCR review of oversight and audit structures. The establishment of an independent oversight committee would enable members to identify risks at an early stage and offer UNHCR better support in devising solutions. The results of the first cycle of the new performance management and appraisal system should be carefully analysed and used to inform further development of the system. Priority should also be given to staff recruitment and training. She would welcome further information on discussions in New York concerning the conditions of staff assigned to non-family duty stations.

27. **Mr. Salewicz** (Canada) said that his Government supported the streamlining and reform of UNHCR management and administrative processes and welcomed the progress made in recent years.

28. Accountability was an increasingly important issue and one which his Government viewed as requiring the ability to plan for, and report on, results in a clear and concise manner. Accordingly, his delegation continued to support the efforts of UNHCR to build a stronger and more effective results-oriented organization. It also encouraged UNHCR to make use of the lessons learned in implementing results-based management in 2010 to revise and improve planning, monitoring and reporting tools. A high level of both internal and external oversight was required, and his Government looked forward to hearing further details about the independent advisory and audit committee. Accountability also required a strong evaluation function, and Canada therefore supported recent changes made to

increase the capacity of the Policy Development and Evaluation Service. He commended UNHCR on the progress made on age, gender and diversity mainstreaming and said that he looked forward to hearing how it would build the capacity of staff and partners in that work.

29. **Mr. Mulrean** (United States of America) expressed strong support for the reform efforts of UNHCR and the decisions taken by senior management on structural management change. He said that he looked forward to the outcome of the “snapshot” evaluations and encouraged UNHCR to present its findings to interested Governments and partners.

30. UNHCR headquarters must continue to ensure quality control and consistency across regions. His Government looked forward to receiving more information on how the results framework and the Global Management Accountability Framework would accomplish their intended goals and on the outcomes of the regionalization and decentralization assessment that would take place in 2011.

31. The Focus software should be further enhanced to enable managers to focus on key trends and problem areas and measure performance in meeting objectives. That would require the inclusion of quality data in the programme and more frequent progress reports. His Government would be interested in hearing how the Division for Programme Support and Management was monitoring the system and enforcing its proper use.

32. UNHCR was right to seek new funding opportunities at headquarters level and in the field, but UNHCR headquarters would need to continue to provide appropriate guidance to field staff to ensure they did not request earmarked funds or funds for activities that were not in line with the Global Strategic Priorities and the budget.

33. His delegation would welcome information on the outcome of the comprehensive review that had taken place during the latter half of 2010 on the handling of oversight committee recommendations. While he appreciated the willingness of UNHCR to create an independent audit committee, he stressed that the new body should report to the Executive Committee. He called on UNHCR to amend the terms of reference of the independent advisory and audit committee and to establish that committee in the coming months. The United States looked forward to receiving good and timely information about the performance and requirements of UNHCR.

34. **Mr. Mizuno** (Japan) said that his Government welcomed strengthened partnerships with NGOs. However, it was concerned about a number of issues, namely, the lack of policies or procedures for the de-listing and readmission of implementation partners; the lack of transparency of implementing partner selection procedures; and the need to strengthen capacity-building and monitoring. Japan hoped that improvements would be made swiftly by the Implementing Partner Unit in Budapest. He expressed concern at the delay in fully introducing International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) and urged the secretariat to make every effort to avoid delay beyond 2012.

35. **Mr. Park** Young-kyu (Republic of Korea) said that his Government welcomed the continued reform efforts of UNHCR and looked forward to further steps in that regard. He expressed appreciation for the Office’s drive to diversify its donor base. In the Republic of Korea, the role of the private sector in the field of humanitarian assistance continued to expand, and he urged UNHCR to identify further funding opportunities, especially at the local level. He called on the Office to give greater consideration to the underrepresentation of some States, including the Republic of Korea, in staff recruitment.

36. **Mr. Kirst** (Sweden), speaking also on behalf of Denmark, Finland and Norway, said that the Nordic countries strongly supported the involvement of UNHCR in building a robust humanitarian response system characterized by accountability both within the

system and vis-à-vis beneficiaries. They encouraged UNHCR to continue to enhance accountability towards its beneficiaries and would welcome information on any progress with respect to the certification of UNHCR by the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership-International.

37. The Nordic countries supported UNHCR reform and called for the full implementation of results-based management and human resources reforms. They viewed a needs-based budgeting system as a means of facilitating prioritization and considered that the system should be linked to the development of common needs assessment tools, especially in the light of efforts to strengthen the humanitarian response system and deal with the increase in humanitarian needs and the risk of reduced overall humanitarian funding as a result of economic difficulties in various donor countries. UNHCR had been less successful than some other United Nations organizations in attracting funding from pooled funds. They therefore encouraged UNHCR to strengthen its efforts and capacity in that area.

38. The system for oversight had been strengthened but greater clarity was needed concerning oversight responsibilities. With respect to the establishment of an independent audit advisory committee, he urged UNHCR to consider the recommendations of the representatives of internal audit services of the United Nations organizations and multilateral financial institutions on the role and structure of audit committees.

39. The Nordic countries had noted the recommendations in the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the role of UNHCR in the cluster approach for IDPs and urged UNHCR to launch a review of the internal mainstreaming of its cluster related responsibilities, to produce internal guidelines for remote monitoring of programmes in insecure environments and to take a holistic approach to the common humanitarian funds on a country level.

40. The Nordic countries recognized the immense contributions provided by refugee-hosting countries. As far as possible, donor countries should aim to provide un-earmarked funding to enable UNHCR to use funds flexibly across all four pillars of the budget.

41. **Ms. Ingres** (France) said that her Government had taken note of the upward revision of the budget, in line with the new needs-based approach. However, it was important to avoid drawing up a budget with too large a gap between resources and needs. UNHCR should produce a budget that prioritize needs but was also realistic, especially in the light of the global financial crisis. France urged UNHCR to continue its efforts to broaden its donor base, particularly by including the private sector.

42. She welcomed the cost-cutting efforts of UNHCR and noted with satisfaction that the forecast spending increase related to operational activities and would thus directly meet beneficiaries' needs. Her Government had taken note of the 10 per cent increase in the 2010 budget as a result of major humanitarian crises. Nevertheless, it saw a need for more detailed information on the costs and composition of the supplementary budgets required for unforeseen operations. Lastly, France urged the Office to introduce IPSAS fully by 2012.

43. **Mr. Aleinikoff** (Deputy High Commissioner), responding to the points raised by the representative of Germany, said that when UNHCR prepared its preferred option for the resolution of the after-service health insurance issue, it would pay close attention to the way that the question was handled in New York. The Office would share with members of the Executive Committee the draft terms of reference of the planned advisory committee. The performance appraisal management system known as PAMS was in its first year of implementation, and was about to be simplified to make it more user-friendly for both managers and staff. A large number of UNHCR staff worked in non-family duty stations. The recommendation made by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) to

harmonize benefits of all United Nations staff in such duty stations would be detrimental to the Office's staffing efforts, as it would reduce the benefits received by its personnel by some 30 to 40 per cent. UNHCR had conveyed its views to the proper authorities in New York. UNHCR staff were often posted at such duty stations for significantly longer than the staff of other United Nations bodies.

44. The representative of Canada had mentioned the importance of accountability and of results-based reporting in order to increase efficiency. While many baselines and indicators could easily be linked to quantifiable values, some information must inevitably be qualitative information; results-based reporting should therefore never rely entirely on statistics and figures. Results-based management must to a certain extent be nuanced; results were important, but it was also very important to monitor how they were achieved.

45. The Division of Programme Support and Management, with the assistance of the Organizational Development and Management Section, was engaged in a comprehensive review of the results-based management system, monitoring the performance of software in the field and verifying the global strategic priorities. The Office was trying to ensure that the work produced by the Policy Development and Evaluation Service was actually put to good use to increase performance. UNHCR could benefit from an effort to ensure that age, gender and diversity were more systematically mainstreamed into its targets and reporting of results. The results and conclusions of the snapshot evaluations would be shared with everyone as soon as they were available and updates on the Global Management Accountability Framework and changes in the results-based management system would also be made available to the members of the Executive Committee. The data put into the *Focus* software obviously had to be of good quality, and the use of that software required qualified staff. Therefore, additional training on the best use of sources for that software package would probably be carried out in the field. One of the issues that had to be addressed was the best way to include baselines and targets.

46. The representative of the United States had expressed the view that the independent advisory committee should report directly to the Executive Committee, and other members of the Executive Committee had suggested that the practices of similar bodies should be studied and considered. Most such bodies reported to chief executives, not to their governing bodies.

47. Responding to the statement by the representative of Japan, he said that the Office would consider establishing a formal, written procedure for the readmission of implementing partners with which UNHCR had terminated its cooperation. The Office would make every effort to implement IPSAS by 2012.

48. Turning to the subject of funding, he said that while field staff should be engaged in fundraising, such activities should not result in heavy earmarking of resources, which would undercut other priorities. The representative of the Republic of Korea had highlighted the importance for UNHCR, when bridging the funding gap, to be as efficient as possible and to expand its donor base, especially by including the private sector. Millions of dollars had been raised from the private sector following the floods in Pakistan, and a plan was in place to increase such fundraising in the coming two or three years. Other strategies for increasing the Office's funding base included tapping into development funds, finding new donors and calling for traditional donors to provide funding over a number of years.

49. Responding to questions raised on behalf of the Nordic States about certification under Humanitarian Accountability Partnership-International and the possibility of carrying out common needs assessments with other agencies, he did not have the information at hand, but would subsequently send details to the Governments in question. To improve its use of multi-donor trust fund and Central Emergency Response Fund resources, UNHCR

had recently recruited a person with experience in how such funds worked, and would pay greater attention to bridging relations between the field and the funds' offices. UNHCR would follow up on the recommendations of its internal auditors.

50. The representative of France had pointed to the growing gap between the Global Needs Assessment and the resources available. While more funding was needed to close that gap, efforts must be taken to ensure that the Global Needs Assessment did not constantly increase irresponsibly. Under the Global Needs Assessment process, priorities were set taking into account the political context of operations and the feasibility of implementation, but without excluding activities important to persons of concern.

Consideration of reports relating to programme and administrative oversight and evaluation

(a) Report on activities of the Inspector General's Office (A/AC.96/1089)

51. **Mr. Akodjenou** (Inspector General), introducing the report on activities of the Inspector General's Office, said that since July 2010 the Inspection Review Board had begun issuing advice on standard inspections for operations in five countries, and an inspection agency, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, had decided to work with his service on inspection strategies, methodologies, tools and skills. Recently, an inspection team which included a witness protection expert had been sent to the field in response to serious allegations of misconduct affecting beneficiaries. In late August 2010 an ad hoc inquiry team had been sent to investigate possible financial mismanagement. Its report had been submitted in September.

52. The level of compliance with inspection recommendations was approximately 90 per cent and had had many positive effects. UNHCR staff were strengthening dialogue with and accountability to persons of concern, more UNHCR offices had established mechanisms for recording and tracking individual protection incidents, and standard operating procedures were now more complete, resulting in fewer irregularities in cases involving refugee status determination, resettlement and sexual and gender-based violence. Authority was delegated more consistently in human resources management, and the creation of the Global Learning Centre had helped to maintain a culture of learning throughout UNHCR. IGO was also responsible for identifying good management practices and recurrent findings in its work, both positive and negative, so as to help effect improvements in the way UNHCR operated. A document summarizing those aspects had been published in September 2010. It listed good practices, and specifically mentioned a number of needs, for example for alternative and creative means of providing access to staff members for persons of concern, for a review of existing standard operating procedures, for additional training in the use of the standard global refugee registration system, *proGres*, and for training in effective communication and leadership skills for managers. There was also a need to place more importance on implementation of the 2007 policy on minimum working and living conditions, to monitor and support implementing partners more effectively and to halt the irregular use of the affiliate workforce.

53. One of the Inspector General's main challenges was to implement fully the recommendations contained in the report issued by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). The oversight infrastructure in UNHCR was still developing, and IGO, which was just one of many units responsible for oversight, would play a central role as it went ahead. The OLAF report had recommended the creation of an external advisory committee. Under the ongoing reforms, another proposal would lead to the establishment of an independent advisory committee.

54. While considerable progress had been made regarding the quality, timeliness and impact of IGO inspection reports, further improvement was still possible. As for

investigations, the main challenge was one of capacity. Every year, the IGO Investigation Service had to assess and reply to some 1,000 complaints, many of which were particularly time-consuming and complex, especially those relating to harassment or abuse of authority. Any extension of the IGO investigative mandate to cover alleged misconduct by non-UNHCR personnel would therefore require substantial additional resources.

55. In future, IGO would strengthen cooperation with its counterparts within UNHCR and with other partners who had relevant expertise, and would be pleased to cooperate with Member States to carry out training in administrative investigations and to explore how existing investigative capacity could be mobilized.

56. **Mr. Mulrean** (United States of America) said that the Inspector General and his team played a crucial role in enhancing the performance of the Office. While acknowledging the Inspector General's comments concerning the capacity of his service, he expressed the hope that its reports would come out in a more timely fashion.

57. **Mr. Rasmussen** (Denmark) said that the role played by the Inspector General included the reinforcement of administrative and operational management and the enhancement of transparency and fairness, all of which were vital in a context of internal reform.

58. **Mr. Kusimba** (Kenya) said that since assuming his duties the Inspector General had visited Kenya to address various issues, and had at that time held candid conversations with the Kenyan Government. The work of his service should be supported fully, as it was crucial to UNHCR activities.

59. **Mr. Akodjenou** (Inspector General) said that his service would continue to do its best to produce reports in a timely manner so as to maximize the benefits for operations.

(b) Policy development and evaluation (A/AC.96/1090)

60. **Mr. Crisp** (Head of the Policy Development and Evaluation Service), introducing the report on the work of the Policy Development and Evaluation Service between October 2009 and July 2010 (A/AC.96/1090), said that the evaluation function of UNHCR was stronger now than over the previous two decades. Two additional members of staff had been recruited to the Service and another new post would be filled in the near future. All staff had received specialized training in evaluation objectives, methods and management. The revised evaluation policy had aligned UNHCR with the United Nations Evaluation Group's norms and standards, and steps had been taken to strengthen coordination between the Service, the Inspector General's Office, and internal and external auditors. As a result, the Service's work programme had become highly demand driven and focused on the themes and operations of greatest concern to senior management. Nonetheless, the evaluation policy of UNHCR continued to safeguard the independence of the Service by excluding senior management from decisions relating to evaluation methodology, findings and recommendations.

61. The Service had undertaken a wide range of projects, evaluating the operational role of UNHCR in mixed migratory movements, protracted refugee situations, refugee protection and solutions in urban areas, refugee education and the return and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons. The Service was also contributing to policy development through its analysis of issues such as the role of UNHCR in natural disasters; the concept of civilian protection and its relationship to the UNHCR mandate; the role of refugees and UNHCR in country of origin elections and peacebuilding processes; the response of UNHCR to border closures in mass influx situations; and the role of migration and mobility in the search for durable solutions to refugee situations.

62. A rapid review had been undertaken of results-based management in the field, based on missions to Georgia, the Sudan, Tanzania and Yemen. A report was being drafted by an independent consultant and its findings and recommendations would as usual be placed in the public domain. The project had given the Service's staff a better understanding of how evaluation functioned as essentially the qualitative face of results-based management, serving as a tool for gathering evidence of the impact of the Office's work and the variables that determined whether strategic objectives and priorities were being met. In presenting recommendations designed to improve organizational performance and delivery, evaluation also served an essentially results-oriented function.

63. He invited members to make specific proposals for new policy development and evaluation projects. Projects currently in the development stage included a review of the protection problems that UNHCR had encountered in recent natural disasters; an examination of the experience of UNHCR in working in insecure environments and with non-State actors; a joint evaluation with the World Food Programme of the impact of food distribution in protracted refugee situations; a review of recent efforts to bridge the gap between humanitarian assistance and development aid; and a joint project led by the Division of Programme Support and Management to review the technical integrity and quality of UNHCR programmes. The Service had also been asked to commission an independent study of the costs to States of hosting large refugee populations.

64. The Service looked forward to the findings of a Canadian study on how UNHCR responded to oversight findings. As an interim measure, the revised evaluation policy had introduced some additional follow-up mechanisms, including Executive Office directives, management response requirements and utilization reviews. While there were always lessons to be learned from ineffective interventions, missed opportunities, unintended consequences and wasted resources, humanitarian evaluation played an important role in encouraging innovation, celebrating creativity and recognizing achievement, especially in highly complex and dangerous environments.

65. **Mr. Mulrean** (United States of America) said that the Service's reports contributed to an understanding of the effectiveness of UNHCR activities in improving the situation of beneficiaries on the ground. Given the Office's reform process and new approaches in areas such as the needs of urban refugees, analysis was more important than ever. In the context of the introduction of the Focus software and the new planning and budgeting processes, he asked how important the Global Strategic Priorities were in the current thinking of UNHCR and whether they were a central element for measuring its effectiveness.

66. **Mr. Rasmussen** (Denmark) said that the Service fulfilled an important role in examining the efficiency and effectiveness of UNHCR. Given that the subjects of its evaluations were both timely and relevant, UNHCR should continue allocating the necessary funds and human resources for the Service.

67. **Mr. Crisp** (Head of the Policy Development and Evaluation Service) said that the report on the rapid review of the implementation of results-based management in the field was currently being drafted. The Global Strategic Priorities were one of the components of results-based management that had been examined in that review. The report would therefore include some reflections on how and to what extent those Priorities were being used.

68. He noted that the Service had worked closely with Denmark on a recent evaluation of the UNHCR response to the protracted refugee situation in the United Republic of Tanzania; the report on the findings would also be published shortly. He encouraged other members to participate in future joint evaluation activities.

Consideration and adoption of the Biennial Programme Budget 2010–2011 (revised)
(A/AC.96/1087 and Add.1 and 2)

69. **The Chairperson** drew attention to the proposed Biennial Programme Budget 2010–2011 (revised) and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, as contained in documents A/AC.96/1087 and A/AC.96/1087/Add.1 respectively. The documents had been reviewed by the Standing Committee during an informal consultation and at its 49th meeting. Document A/AC.96/1087 also contained the draft general decision on administrative, financial and programme matters, which the Standing Committee had discussed at the meeting and informally.

70. **Mr. Aleinikoff** (Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees) gave a presentation on the revised Biennial Programme Budget 2010–2011, which had been the first biennial budget based on a comprehensive assessment of global needs and new financial rules. The Global Needs Assessment identified the minimum requirements for persons of concern to lead their lives in dignity and security. In 2010 it had helped to detect several gaps, such as in food security and education cover, and focus appropriate interventions. He drew attention to the funding gap, which stood at US\$ 1.3 billion in 2010. In prioritizing activities within the available funds, life-saving activities came first, but coherence and continuity, operational context and implementation capacity were also taken into account. Nonetheless, the need to prioritize meant that some of the basic needs of millions of people worldwide were not met and their rights not respected. UNHCR therefore intended to fully fund the Global Needs Assessment as soon as possible.

71. Highlighting the major changes and key initiatives for the 2011 revised budget, he noted that it represented an increase of some US\$ 541 million against the initial 2011 budget, about 90 per cent of which related to programmed field activities and global programmes. The remaining 10 per cent related to increases at headquarters and for the Operational Reserve. In addition, an addendum to the budget document (A/AC.96/1087/Add.2) detailed the revised 2011 requirements for the additional needs under the Pakistan operation related to the floods, which would be formally discussed at the 50th meeting of the Standing Committee in March 2011.

72. **Mr. Mulrean** (United States of America) said that the goal of UNHCR should be to become a performance-driven organization that was able to show concrete results, best practices, and efficiencies, but also how beneficiaries had been better served as a result of its involvement. Members should measure UNHCR on how well it performed its duties, not how much funding it received. His delegation looked forward to hearing how the Office would measure and report on the impact of resources linked to the Global Strategic Priorities and how it would monitor progress towards objectives and report back on results achieved.

73. The introduction of the Global Needs Assessment had required much staff time and increased consultations with partners and beneficiaries. It had also raised expectations of what UNHCR could and should deliver. He encouraged the Office to continue to ensure that all its reform efforts were consistent with the steps being undertaken to transform and adapt the United Nations system to current realities.

74. UNHCR should diversify its donor base in order to avoid becoming increasingly dependent on a few donors. However, when fundraising at the field level, headquarters must take a leadership role and provide clear guidance and a unified message to its staff, partners, and donors. Similarly, the difficult prioritization decisions that UNHCR had to make should be made with full participation and input from the field. Regional differences notwithstanding, a consistent approach on prioritization was imperative to ensuring support from donors and maintaining confidence in the Office's decision-making.

75. The new budget structure provided members with a comprehensive view of the work of UNHCR. UNHCR should pay increased attention to providing further guidance and field support on the use of the budget structure and its various pillars, as detailed in the revised budget document. His delegation would welcome continued reporting on how UNHCR was addressing this matter.

76. He would also appreciate further information on how activities to deal with internal displacement caused by natural disasters could be incorporated into the UNHCR budget without affecting regular operations. His Government continued to have reservations about the Office's capacity to respond adequately in such circumstances, particularly since the lack of adequate protection staffing continued to be a serious issue for UNHCR worldwide.

77. In view of the increased resource requirements for 2011, members must be prepared to support UNHCR diplomatically and financially. It might take donors several years to fund the Global Needs Assessment fully, but the challenge was not to deliver a UNHCR wish list. What was needed was to meet basic minimum standards, support human rights and achieve durable solutions. In 2011, he hoped that UNHCR would be able to increase its donor base, strengthen capacity, reporting, and monitoring of results against its stated objectives, and ensure a better quality of life for its populations of concern.

78. **Ms. Asakura** (Japan) commended UNHCR for the introduction of the new budgetary system, which clearly detailed the needs in the field and identified funding shortfalls, making the overall picture of UNHCR activities much clearer. Japan also welcomed the reforms to reduce spending at headquarters in order to make the most of limited resources, and hoped that efforts towards a more efficient and effective use of the budget would continue.

79. Japan had cooperated to the greatest extent possible with UNHCR in human security and peacebuilding, which were two pillars of Japanese foreign policy. Total Japanese contributions in 2010 had exceeded US\$ 143 million, which was the highest level to date. In addition, un-earmarked and loosely earmarked annual contributions had been provided to allow UNHCR more flexibility and had now reached their highest level.

80. Japan was concerned at the funding gap between the real needs of UNHCR and its current contributions, and welcomed efforts to find new donor countries, improve access to pooled funding, and raise private funds. In pursuing those efforts, she urged the Office to take advantage of the sixtieth anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention to find new donors.

81. **Mr. Aleinikoff** (Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees) said he agreed that UNHCR should be "performance driven". The Global Strategic Priorities were of central importance; UNHCR would report on progress in accomplishing them. With results-based management, UNHCR would set targets and baselines, then display the results reached. Shortfalls would be analysed and lessons learned from them.

82. The 2011 commemorations were an excellent opportunity to attract more donors, reaffirm the core principles of protection, highlight new protection challenges and launch a major communications programme using more modern means such as web-based resources. He hoped to raise additional funds from new donor States and the private sector.

83. In 2010, UNHCR had begun its annual programme review in the field, taking advice from field staff, operation by operation, on how to plan the 2011 programme. In late 2010, prioritized field plans would be revised to ensure that they were adequately linked to the Global Strategic Priorities.

84. He reassured members that UNHCR would move carefully into the area of providing protection in natural disasters and would consult them widely. The High Commissioner had clearly indicated his intention to further increase resources for

protection activities in UNHCR core activities worldwide. The number of staff working on protection issues had increased by several hundred over the last four years and would continue to rise. Protection in natural disasters would not be undertaken at the expense of other programmes and projects.

85. He noted with pleasure Japan's donation of US\$ 143 million in 2010, which was the largest annual contribution by far. He welcomed the increase in un-earmarked and loosely earmarked funds and urged all donor States and friends to follow suit in order to fully fund the budget.

Draft decision on administrative, financial and programme matters

86. **The Chairperson** drew attention to the draft decision on administrative, financial and programme matters. If the Committee adopted the draft decision, it would approve the total revised budget requirements for 2010, amounting to US\$ 3,288,729,631, and the total biennial programme budget requirements for 2011, amounting to US\$ 3,320,830,000. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Executive Committee wished to adopt the draft decision.

87. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.