



United Nations

**United Nations High Commissioner
for Refugees**

**Report of the Executive
Committee of the Programme
of the United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees**

**Seventy-third session
(10–14 October 2022)**

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Note

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I. Introduction

A. Opening of the session

1. The Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme held its seventy-third plenary session at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 10-14 October 2022. It was opened by the Chairperson of the Executive Committee, the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations Office at Geneva. The First Vice-Chairperson, the Permanent Representative of Djibouti to the United Nations Office at Geneva, and the Second Vice-Chairperson, the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations Office at Geneva, assisted in the chairing of the session.

B. Representation

2. The following Executive Committee members were represented at the session:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, the Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, the Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, the Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. Other United Nations Member States present as observers were as follows:

Angola, the Bahamas, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Burundi, the Central African Republic, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Gabon, the Gambia, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Libya, Mauritania, Mauritius, Monaco, Nepal, the Niger, Panama, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and Viet Nam.

4. United Nations non-member States present as observers were as follows:

State of Palestine.

5. The European Union was represented as an observer.

6. Also present were the following intergovernmental organizations and other entities:

African Union, Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, Council of Europe, Economic Community of West African States, International Development Law Organization, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, International Olympic Committee, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, and the University of Peace, as well

as the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the Sovereign Order of Malta.

7. The United Nations system, specialized agencies and related organizations were represented as follows:

Food and Agriculture Organization, International Organization for Migration, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, United Nations Office at Geneva, World Bank Group and World Food Programme.

8. Some 14 non-governmental organizations and other partners were in attendance.

C. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

9. The Executive Committee adopted by consensus the agenda [A/AC.96/LXXIII/1](#).

D. Election of officers for the seventy-fourth session

10. Under rule 10 of its rules of procedure, the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation, to serve the Committee from the day immediately following their election to the end of the last day of the following annual plenary session:

Chairperson:	Ambassador Ms. Kadra Ahmed Hassan (Djibouti)
First Vice-Chairperson:	Ambassador Ms. Katharina Stasch (Germany)
Second Vice-Chairperson:	Ambassador Mr. Emilio Rafael Izquierdo Miño (Ecuador)
Rapporteur:	Mr. Sumair Gul (Pakistan)

II. Work of the seventy-third session

11. The High Commissioner's statement and comprehensive summary records of each meeting of the session will be made available on the page relating to the seventy-second session of the Executive Committee.¹

III. Conclusion and decisions of the Executive Committee

A. Conclusion on mental health and psychosocial support

12. *The Executive Committee,*

Recognizing that refugees, asylum-seekers, refugee returnees, stateless persons, and, in many situations, internally displaced persons (hereafter 'persons of concern to UNHCR) tend to display great resilience in the face of challenges linked to their displacement or statelessness,

Acknowledging that the experience of displacement or statelessness can lead to an increased prevalence of mental health conditions and challenges to psychosocial well-being,

Recognizing that mental health stressors may occur before, during, and after displacement, due to, *inter alia*, exposure to conflict, violence, persecution, life-threatening routes, economic and financial constraints, lack of access to livelihoods, separation from

¹ See <http://www.unhcr.org/excom>

families, trafficking in persons, racism, xenophobia, discrimination and exclusion, and that such factors may also exacerbate pre-existing mental health issues for persons of concern to UNHCR,

Reaffirming the right of every human being, without distinction of any kind, to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health,

Welcoming with appreciation UNHCR's engagement to date on mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), defined as any type of local or *outside* support that aims to protect or promote psychosocial well-being and/or prevent or treat mental health conditions,

Recognizing the connection between sexual and gender-based violence and acute stress, and the increased risk of mental health conditions among survivors and victims of sexual and gender-based violence,

Recognizing the importance of actions to preserve and promote psychosocial well-being of individuals, households, families and communities, and of the prevention and treatment of mental health conditions, for persons of concern to UNHCR and for host countries and communities as part of comprehensive protection and durable solutions strategies in line with UNHCR's mandate,

Acknowledging the highly stressful environment in which UNHCR personnel, other humanitarian personnel and volunteers often operate, and recognizing the importance of their mental health and well-being to their work,

Welcoming the increased attention to MHPSS in humanitarian settings in recent years and recognizing the need for continued cooperation among States, United Nations partners and other stakeholders, such as civil society, including faith-based organizations, reflecting the sustainable development goals (SDGs), notably SDG 3.4 and 3.5,

Underlining the importance of accessibility of MHPSS to all persons of concern to UNHCR, including people with psychosocial and other disabilities,

Reaffirming its commitment to burden- and responsibility-sharing and recalling the importance of international cooperation, in particular to support communities and countries hosting persons of concern to UNHCR, in providing protection and assistance and achieving durable solutions, consistent with the Global Compact on Refugees;

Acknowledging the contributions of persons of concern to UNHCR to addressing MHPSS issues, including the preservation of their psychosocial well-being and mental health, as well as that of their families, households and host communities;

Recalling relevant Executive Committee conclusions, including conclusion N° 47 (XXXVIII) 1987 on refugee children; conclusion N° 105 (LVII) 2006 on women and girls at risk; conclusion N° 107 (LVIII) 2006 on children at risk, and conclusion No 110 (LXI) 2010 on refugees with disabilities and other persons with disabilities protected and assisted by UNHCR, among others, and taking note of the Joint Interagency Call for Action on MHPSS (2020);

Strengthening mental health and psychosocial support approaches, responses and links to protection and solutions

(a) *Encourages* States and UNHCR to continue integrating MHPSS into protection, solutions, emergency preparedness and response strategies, without discrimination of any kind, in ways that do no harm and in line with humanitarian principles, including from the outset of a displacement situation, as well as in protracted situations, with a view to promoting durable solutions;

(b) *Encourages* UNHCR, States and partners to support activities for prevention of mental health conditions, including mitigating risks of re-traumatization and acute stress, and for strengthening community resilience and including MHPSS support in disaster preparedness;

(c) *Underlines* the importance of raising awareness about mental health and psychosocial well-being, early identification of MHPSS needs, reducing stigma and

discrimination associated with MHPSS and facilitating access for all persons of concern to MHPSS wherever it is needed and in their native languages whenever possible, based on the principle of informed consent, taking into account the local context, as well as language, cultural, social and religious diversity;

(d) *Encourages* States, UNHCR and all partners to provide accessible MHPSS services and to communicate information about MHPSS and related procedures, decisions, and policies appropriately so that it is accessible and understandable for persons of concern to UNHCR, including persons of concern with disabilities;

(e) *Encourages* UNHCR, States and other partners to apply a multi-sectoral approach in accordance with human rights, through which the mental health and psychosocial well-being of persons of concern is supported across different sectors of activity and assistance for persons of concern to UNHCR, including protection, assistance, health and education;

(f) *Encourages* UNHCR, States and other partners to provide accessible and continued MHPSS care, treatment and support, whenever possible in the native language of the persons of concern, to address *inter alia*, psychological trauma and serious protection risks, including for survivors and victims of sexual and gender-based violence; and clinical care to address severe or complex mental health conditions;

(g) *Encourages* UNHCR to promote the mental health and well-being of its personnel, other humanitarian personnel and volunteers, and to ensure the provision of MHPSS, where needed, to them, taking into consideration their role in providing effective and sustainable assistance to persons of concern to UNHCR and their host communities;

Support to the enhancement of mental health and psychosocial support capacity

(h) *Welcomes* and encourages continued provision of support, including capacity development and financial assistance for MHPSS for persons of concern to UNHCR, as well as host communities, including its provision in low- and middle-income countries, many of which host large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons;

(i) *Encourages* States to work towards further inclusion in national services and existing systems of care for MHPSS of persons of concern to UNHCR; and calls upon UNHCR and partners to effectively provide and facilitate further support for States in different situations, enabling them to build and expand the capacity of national health systems to provide MHPSS to persons of concern to UNHCR and to the communities hosting them, as well as support to wider protection, durable solutions and emergency responses, consistent with the principles of burden- and responsibility-sharing, taking into account the importance of national ownership and leadership;

(j) *Invites* all States, in line with their economic capacity, to invest resources and expertise to strengthen MHPSS, including the capacity of UNHCR, host states and relevant partners, encompassing, among other aspects, MHPSS provision and supervision by trained professionals, where possible, as well as capacity development and training opportunities for persons of concern to UNHCR and host communities, in line with paragraph 73 of the Global Compact on Refugees;

Participation and contributions by persons of concern

(k) *Encourages* States and UNHCR to facilitate the active participation and contributions by persons of concern to UNHCR in matters affecting them in the field of MHPSS, whenever possible, including by drawing on and further developing the capacity of individuals, families, households and communities to provide support to others, including the delivery of peer-to-peer counselling and other forms of support;

(l) *Emphasizes* the benefits of exploring alternative delivery methods of MHPSS, including with the use of technology, consistent with data protection and privacy principles, to effectively meet the needs of persons of concern to UNHCR as well as host countries;

(m) *Calls on* UNHCR, in collaboration with host States, to focus on contextualized, inclusive, non-discriminatory and community-based approaches in the provision of MHPSS;

Partnerships

(n) *Encourages* UNHCR, States, other UN agencies and other relevant partners, such as civil society organizations, including faith-based, refugee-led, and women-led organizations, organizations representing persons with disabilities, and other organizations representing people in vulnerable situations, to continue to work together effectively and strengthen coordination around MHPSS for persons of concern to UNHCR;

(o) *Calls upon* States, UNHCR and other international actors to strengthen cooperation with and develop the capacity of local partners in the provision of MHPSS;

(p) *Calls upon* the international community to support and collectively contribute to the mental health and psychosocial well-being of persons of concern to UNHCR and host communities;

(q) *Encourages* States, UNHCR and other partners to use evidence- and research-based approaches and share information about good practices that have successfully supported effective MHPSS responses in different settings.

B. General decision on administrative, financial and programme matters

13. *The Executive Committee,*

(a) *Recalls* that the Executive Committee, at its seventy-second session, approved programmes and budgets for the country and regional programmes, global programmes and headquarters under the annual programme budget 2022, as set out in document [A/AC.96/1213/Rev.1](#), amounting to \$8,993,707,996 for 2022; *notes* that the additional needs under supplementary budgets in 2022 amount to \$1,540,294,608 at 31 May 2022; *approves* the total current requirements for 2022 amounting to \$10,534,002,570; and *authorizes* the High Commissioner, within these total appropriations, to effect adjustments in regional programmes, global programmes and headquarters budgets;

(b) *Confirms* that the activities proposed in the programme budget for 2023, as set out in document [A/AC.96/1224](#), are consistent with the Statute of the Office of the High Commissioner ([A/RES/428 \(V\)](#)); the High Commissioner's other functions as recognized, promoted or requested by the General Assembly, the Security Council or the Secretary-General; and the relevant provisions of the financial rules for voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees ([A/AC.96/503/Rev.11](#));

(c) *Approves* the programmes and budgets for the country and regional programmes, global programmes and headquarters under the proposed 2023 programme budget, as set out in document [A/AC.96/1224](#), amounting to \$10,211,257,217 for 2023, including the United Nations regular budget contribution towards headquarters costs, the operational reserve and the Junior Professional Officer programme; and *authorizes* the High Commissioner, within this total appropriation, to effect adjustments in regional programmes, global programmes and headquarters budgets;

(d) *Takes note* of the financial statements for the year 2021 as contained in the Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the financial report and audited financial statements of the voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 2021 ([A/77/5/Add.6](#)) and the Report by the High Commissioner on key issues and measures taken in response to the recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors ([A/AC.96/1223/Add.1](#)); and *requests* to be kept regularly informed on the measures taken to address the recommendations and the observations raised in these documents;

(e) *Requests* the High Commissioner, within the resources available, to respond flexibly and efficiently to the needs indicated under the programme budget for 2023, *encourages* his Office to be as efficient and effective as possible with the funds provided in implementing his mandate, including for durable solutions, while not diminishing life-saving protection and assistance to persons of concern, and *authorizes* him, in the case of additional emergency needs that cannot be met fully from the operational reserve, to create supplementary budgets and issue special appeals under all pillars, with such adjustments being reported to the subsequent Standing Committee meeting for consideration;

(f) *Acknowledges* with appreciation the burden that continues to be shouldered by developing and least developed countries hosting refugees; and *urges* Member States to recognize this valuable contribution to the protection of refugees and to participate in efforts to promote durable solutions and more predictable and equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing; and

(g) *Urges* Member States, in light of the extensive needs to be addressed by the Office of the High Commissioner, and in parallel with the long-standing and substantial support provided by refugee-hosting countries, to respond generously and in a spirit of solidarity to his appeal for resources to meet in full the 2023 programme budget and to ensure that the Office is resourced in a timely and predictable manner, while keeping earmarking to a minimum level.

C. Decision on the revision of the financial rules for voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees

14. *The Executive Committee,*

(a) *Having* considered the proposed revision of the current financial rules for voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees ([A/AC.96/503/Rev.11](#));

(b) *Recalls* the decision of the Standing Committee, at its eighty-fifth meeting, to request the High Commissioner to submit a final draft to the seventy-third session of the Executive Committee;

(c) *Acknowledges* the major organizational transformation the Office is currently going through, including various initiatives to optimize processes and systems used to deliver to persons of concern to UNHCR;

(d) *Acknowledges* the importance for UNHCR of having a financial governance framework that supports transparently this transformation and effective financial management;

(e) *Endorses* the proposed revision and requests the High Commissioner to promulgate the revised financial rules ([A/AC.96/503/Rev.12](#)) with effect from 1 January 2023.

D. Decision on the programme of work of the Standing Committee in 2023

15. *The Executive Committee,*

Having reviewed the issues before it at its seventy-third session, and bearing in mind the decisions adopted at that session,

(a) Decides to convene three formal meetings of the Standing Committee in 2023, to be held in March, June and September;

(b) Reaffirms its decision on the framework for the Standing Committee's programme of work ([A/AC.96/1003](#) paragraph 25, sub-paragraph 2(c)); authorizes the Standing Committee to add and delete items, if appropriate, to this framework for its meetings in 2023; and requests member States to meet in December 2022 to prepare a detailed work plan for

formal adoption by the Standing Committee at its first meeting in 2023;

(c) Calls upon its members to continue efforts to ensure that debate at the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee is of a substantive and interactive nature, yielding practical guidance and clear advice to the High Commissioner, in keeping with the Committee's statutory functions;

(d) Calls upon the Office of the High Commissioner to be explicit and analytical in its reports and presentations to the Committee and to submit documentation in a timely manner; and

(e) Further requests the Standing Committee to report on its work to the seventy-fourth session of the Executive Committee.

E. Decision on observer participation in meetings of the Standing Committee in 2022-2023

16. *The Executive Committee,*

(a) *Approves* applications by the following Government observer delegations for participation in meetings of the Standing Committee from October 2022 to October 2023:

Angola, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Iraq, Panama and Ukraine;

(b) *Authorizes* the Standing Committee to decide upon any additional applications from Government observer delegations to participate in its meetings during the aforementioned period;

(c) *Approves* the following list of intergovernmental and international organizations to be invited by the High Commissioner to participate as observers in relevant meetings of its Standing Committee from October 2022 to October 2023:

United Nations specialized agencies, departments, funds and programmes; African Union; Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf; Commonwealth of Independent States; Council of Europe; Central African Economic and Monetary Community, Economic Community of Central African States; East African Community; Economic Community of West African States; European Union; Intergovernmental Authority on Development; International Centre for Migration Policy Development; International Committee of the Red Cross; International Development Law Organization; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; League of Arab States; Organization of Eastern Caribbean States; International Organisation of La Francophonie; Organization of Islamic Cooperation; the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe; Southern African Development Community; Sovereign Order of Malta; and University of Peace.

F. Decision on the provisional agenda of the seventy-fourth session of the Executive Committee

17. *The Executive Committee,*

(a) *Recalling* its decision on working methods adopted at its fifty-fifth plenary session (A/AC.96/1003 paragraph 25);

(b) *Decides* to adopt as the provisional agenda for the seventy-fourth session of the Executive Committee the standard model contained in sub-paragraph 1(f) of the above-mentioned decision.

G. Decision on the participation of intergovernmental organizations in private meetings of the Executive Committee

18. *The Executive Committee,*

(a) *Recalling* rule 38 of its Rules of Procedure ([A/AC.96/187/Rev.8](#)) and its decision on the participation of intergovernmental organizations in private meetings of the Executive Committee adopted at its sixty-seventh plenary session;

(b) *Approves* the application by the European Union to participate as an observer in the Committee's private meetings on asylum and refugee matters within its competence during the seventy-fourth session of the Executive Committee.
