

AFRICAN UNION

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REPORT ON HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

1. The present report provides a comprehensive overview of humanitarian situation on the continent triggered by armed conflicts, droughts, natural disasters and effects of climate change. It highlights trends in internal displacement and refugee influx, life-saving needs of affected populations and the search for durable solutions. The report further presents the activities carried out by the Commission during the period from January to July 2018, in order to address the root causes, support durable solutions to protracted humanitarian situations, tackle the humanitarian crises and provide Member States in the continent with the necessary assistance. It also highlights some of the preparatory activities being implemented to support the implementation of the decision of the Assembly to mark the year 2019 as a year of refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees towards durable solution.

2. Information in the report is drawn from contributions by Member States of the African Union, AU organs, Regional Economic Communities and UN humanitarian agencies.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN AFRICA

3. The humanitarian outlook on the continent in 2018 is marked by structural drivers including conflicts, political instability, insecurity, natural disasters, terrorism, violent extremisms and limited access to resource as well deficit in good governance and democratization. During the reporting period, effect of unresolved conflicts, of the fall army worm infestation, of natural disasters, of climate change and Ebola outbreak have affected large number of population in many parts of the continent. In some areas, consecutive failed rainy seasons have eroded the coping capacities of communities, particularly in border areas. Populations, particularly, the youth are on the move in search of better life, often exposing themselves to dangerous migratory journeys. Refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), migrants, and returnees often find themselves in precarious situations thereby requiring protection.

4. Protracted crises situations has degraded the coping capacity and resilience of affected populations and host communities. Heavy securitization of border areas has diminished access to land and resources and freedom of movement enjoyed by pastoralists, fishermen and traders. In many regions, terrorist groups they have continued their attacks on humanitarian actors, peace-keepers, camps for refugees and IDPs. This phenomenon imposes restrictions and limit humanitarian access.

5. The majority of African countries hosting refugees continue to shoulder enormous burden and are displaying exemplary solidarity with refugees. In this regard, several Member States of the African Union have put in place progressive policies in implementing the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). These policies offer opportunities for social inclusion of refugees in national programs and

plans. Therefore, the prospect of universal and compressive agreements on Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact on Migration offer opportunities for supporting durable solutions. It is instructive to note that respective African Groups in New York and Geneva are actively and regularly participating in ongoing negotiations on the two compacts, while the Commission is supporting these initiatives.

6. At the same time, countries experiencing active conflicts, have recorded returns of refugees and IDPs. In Libya, the efforts of Tripartite Task Force are yielding the desired result with a significant number of returns achieved since its inauguration. Furthermore, the threat of deportation and detention of thousands of Africans including mostly Eritrean and Sudanese from Israel has exposed many of them to significant protection needs.

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

NORTH AFRICA REGION

Libya

7. Libya continues to face a protracted economic, security and political crisis which has negatively affected the livelihoods of many of its nationals, displaced hundreds of civilians and put migrants and refugees from other parts of Africa in grave danger. The humanitarian situation is further exacerbated by rival administrations, and the limited access by Libyans to social services.¹

8. Humanitarians have also registered² some 217, 000 internally displaced persons in the country and 51, 527 asylum seekers and refugees. . A joint high-level mission conducted in February 2018 has revealed that many refugees and asylum seekers are subjected to detention.² There were reports of attacks against humanitarian actors in several locations. Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) was reported in 9 out of 22 mantikas.³ According to IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix, there are 700,000 migrants in Libya. According to UNHCR and IOM, the number of people who are crossing the Mediterranean has significantly decreased in recent months.⁴ In the first three months of 2018, there was a 74 per cent drop compared in the number of arrivals compared to the period during the same time last year.

¹ Libya, Humanitarian Response Plan, https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/2018_hrp_libya_0.pdf

² Joint Press Statement, High level mission of the AU, EU and the UN visits Tripoli to enhance co-operation on migration and protection issues in Libya, 23 February 2019.

³ UNMAS Libya September 2017.

⁴ Desperate Journeys January-March 2018, UNHCR, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/63039>

9. Libya has reported the return of 278, 000 IDPs to their areas of origin. The African Union is working with its UN and EU partners to facilitate stranded migrants and vulnerable refugees. Through the overall facilitative role of the AU-led Task Force on Libya, more than 15,000 migrants have been voluntarily returned to their country origin. Thanks to the generosity and solidarity displayed by the government in Niger, 1, 342 refugees have also been evacuated to reception centres in Niger. However, countries who have pledged to facilitate ‘third country pathways’ through resettlement are yet to fulfil their pledges.

10. All in all, it is appropriate to recognize and commend the efforts so far deployed by the Government of Libya, including its collaboration with the Commission, to resolve the situation of the stranded African migrants. Furthermore, the Commission appreciates Libya’s efforts to control and close “shelter centres” under its supervision and encourages the authorities to pursue their commitments

The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

11. The refugee situation of the **Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic** populations in the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria remains protracted. Currently, more than 173,600 Western Sahara Refugees live in 5 main camps in Aaiun, Dajla, Smara, Bojadour and Auserd,⁵ As of 31 December 2017, according to the UNHCR.

12. For more than 40 years, the Saharawi refugees have been living under extremely harsh conditions in the Sahara Desert in south-western Algeria And depend on the Algerian Government and UN agencies humanitarian assistance. It is instructive that the findings made by the UNHCR will form an important tool in the future in determining the assistance to be provided to the Saharawi refugee population.

13. From the foregoing, the African Union appeals to the international Community to contribute to the improvement of the difficult and extremely harsh conditions in which lives this vulnerable refugee population who are awaiting.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REGION

Burundi

14. The political crisis in Burundi has resulted in significant internal and cross-border displacement. As of March 2018, some 431, 632 Burundians have sought refuge outside of their country.⁶ Burundi’s neighbours continue to display an exemplary level of solidarity with Burundian refugees. Tanzania is hosting the largest number of Burundians with 254,000 refugees, while 89,000 are in Rwanda with another 44,000 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and some 40,000 in Uganda. Smaller refugee

⁵ Western Sahara Red Crescent, January 2018.

⁶ Burundi Situation, UNHCR, <http://www.unhcr.org/burundi-situation.html>.

numbers have also fled to Kenya, Zambia, Mozambique, Malawi and South Africa.⁷ Nonetheless, it is convenient to note that a sizeable number of Burundian refugees have recently returned to their country.

15. The humanitarian response in Burundi is substantially underfunded. According to OCHA, out of the 141.8 million USD humanitarian actors requested, so far only 3.2 million (2.3 percent) have been met.⁸ The Government of Burundi continues to express its objection regarding the projection of number of persons in need of humanitarian assistance in the country.

Central African Republic

16. Violent clashes in the Central African Republic have led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians both internally and beyond the border. In some areas, security has further deteriorated due to attacks by armed groups including against humanitarian actors. According to UNHCR, there are 568,752 refugees from Central African Republic who fled to Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad and Republic of Congo.⁹ There are currently 687, 398 IDPs in the country.¹⁰

17. The African Union Commission, through the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR and the African Union Mission for the CAR (MISAC), is fully engaged with the Government and parties to the conflict to encourage them to implement the peace process and facilitate the recovery program. Despite positive efforts by the government and its partners, humanitarian efforts in the country remain heavily underfunded. Taking into account the Brussels Donors Conference on CAR, held in November 2016 and within the framework of the African Solidarity on the CAR, in February 2017, the Commission calls upon all the donors to honour the pledges made to support the efforts by the Government of CAR, especially in financing the national plan for recovery and peace consolidation in CAR (RCPCA).

The Democratic Republic of Congo

18. The Democratic Republic of Congo continues to face multi-dimensional humanitarian crisis which is triggered mainly by conflicts, Ebola virus disease and natural catastrophes. The country currently tops the displacement table in Africa. There were 4.5 million IDPs as of the end of 2017. Between 12 and 19 March 2018 violent clashes between Mayi-Mayi factions and the Armed Forces of the DRC led to the displacement of more than 30, 000 persons.¹¹ During the same month, clashes

⁷ <http://www.unhcr.org/afr/news/briefing/2018/2/5a79676a4/burundi-risks-becoming-forgotten-refugee-crisis-support.html>

⁸ Burundi Humanitarian Bulletin, OCHA, <http://www.unocha.org/burundi>.

⁹ UNHCR Central African Republic Situation Report, <http://data2.unhcr.org/fr/situations/car>.

¹⁰ CAR Emergency Dashboard, March 2018,

https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/CAR_Dashboard%20EXT_MAR_2018%20.pdf

¹¹ OCHA, 29 March 2018.

occurred between armed groups and the FARDC near Katindia. Some 14, 000 people were also displaced in March due to heavy rains in Bukama, DRC. Many of the displaced stayed in the open while some were hosted by host families.¹² Similarly heavy rains have displaced people in South Kivu. While situations deteriorate in some areas, improvements in security in others led to the return of IDPs. 14,000 IDPs returned back to their homes in South East of Kipese between February and March 2018.¹³

19. The international partners of the DRC organized a donor's conference on 11 April 2018 in Geneva, Switzerland. Citing lack of coordination and disputing the estimate for persons in need, the Government of DRC declined to participate in the conference. The AU Commission always encouraged international partners to work with concerned Member States to coordinate humanitarian assistance within their territories, in accordance with international law and legal instruments of the African Union.

20. On 8 May 2018, DRC Ministry of Health declared an outbreak of Ebola virus disease in Bikoro Health Zone, Equateur Province. This is the ninth outbreak of Ebola virus disease over the last four decades in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with the most recent occurring in May 2017. According to figures from the government of DRC, there are 58 cases, out of which 27 resulted in fatalities. The Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention has deployed 25 epidemiologists, laboratory experts, and anthropologists to support the government's efforts to control the outbreak.

EAST AND THE HORN OF AFRICA REGION

Ethiopia

21. According to the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) published by IOM in collaboration with the Ethiopian National Disaster Risk Management Commission in March 2018, there are 1, 216, 793 Ethiopians who are displaced by low-level intensity conflicts. In recent months, inter – communal tensions have been pronounced between Oromia and Ethiopia-Somali region. On 10 March 2018, a violent encounter between the Army and protesters led to the death of civilians and displacement of many persons. This led to the flight of over 10, 000 civilians in to Kenya in March 2018.¹⁴ However, about 3000 of the affected population have since voluntarily returned. It is equally important to note that the Government of Ethiopia took steps to reconcile the affected communities and this has significantly achieved the desired peace and led to the resettling of the displaced persons.

22. The Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front elected H.E. Dr Abiyeh Ahmed as its Chairman. Recent political developments in the country has created the

¹² OCHA, 29 March 2018.

¹³ OCHA, 26 March 2018.

¹⁴ Thousands flee into Kenya to escape Ethiopia Violence, 28 March 2018.

much-needed hope for new momentum for reconciliation, political opening as well as increased effective humanitarian response.

Kenya

23. It is important to recognize that Kenya has traditionally displayed remarkable solidarity with refugees. Climate shocks, conflict, insecurity and political instability continue to drive humanitarian needs in the Horn of Africa. Kenya currently hosts 483,597 refugees and asylum seekers from Somalia, South Sudan, DR Congo, and Ethiopia as of 29 February 2018,¹⁵ with host locations in Dadaab, Kakuma, and Nairobi. Of the 483,597 refugees and asylum seekers, 276,899 of the population displaced in Kenya are of Somalia citizenry seeking refuge due to the unrelenting drought, famine, and conflict in Southern Somalia.¹⁶

24. In March 2018, Kenya saw a stream of 10,557 Ethiopian citizens/ refugees fleeing into Moyale, Northern Kenya, to escape political tensions and security operations in Ethiopia. 80% of the civilians/refugees/ asylum seekers were women and children, including pregnant women and about 1,500 children under five.¹⁷ UNHCR has reported that over 3, 000 of these civilians/refugees/ asylum seekers have voluntarily returned since the election of new Prime Minister in Ethiopia.

25. Internal displacement in Kenya is linked to flooding and consecutive failed rainy season which has inversely effected the crop growing capacities of agro-pastoralist communities. Kenya has seen an influx of traditional internal and cross-border migration due to climate change and periodic droughts in northern Kenya. 40,000 Kenyans have been internally displaced due to drought and food insecurity.¹⁸ 244,400 persons have been internally displaced and more than 80 people have been killed in recent flooding which has also affected other parts of East Africa.¹⁹

¹⁵ <http://www.unhcr.org/ke/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/03/KENYA-Statistics-Package-February-2018-1.pdf>

¹⁶ <http://www.unhcr.org/ke/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/03/Kenya-Infographics-February-2018.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNICEF%20Kenya%20Humanitarian%20Situation%20Report%20-%20March%202018.pdf>

¹⁸ More than 20,000 people were displaced by drought in Garissa and Turkana counties in Kenya between 1 January and 31 March. Another 5,000 people fled violence relating to cattle rustling in Baringo County during the same period, and more than 30,000 Kenyans with their cattle migrated to Uganda in search of water and grazing pastures. One hundred people who had received UNHCR support to return to Somalia arrived in Kenya's Dadaab camp in March (OCHA, 31 March 2017).

<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/internal-displacement-update-issue-14-22-march-5-april-2017>

¹⁹ OCHA Flash Update #2: Floods in Kenya, 3 May 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/ocha-flash-update-2-floods-kenya-03-may-2018>.

Tanzania

26. Tanzania remains the largest host of Burundian refugees in the region with women and children making up 78 percent of the total refugee population.²⁰ As of 21 March 2018, it has been reported that there are 251,375 refugees mainly from Burundi²¹ who have been fleeing political unrest since 2015. As of 31st of January 2018, 13,868 Burundian refugees have been repatriated.²² Additionally, Tanzania has had an influx of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) fleeing forced recruitment, direct violence, and other abuses by armed groups due to political tensions. Tanzania faces a massive humanitarian crisis due to the instability of the DRC and Burundi. The Government of Tanzania and several humanitarian organizations have played pivotal roles to improve access to services for refugees and asylum seekers.

27. 58% of the refugees hosted in Tanzania are children, 6.4% are unaccompanied and separated children under the age of 18.6% of the refugees require additional support due to special needs.²³ Over 364, 276 people are in need of humanitarian assistance in Tanzania.²⁴

Somalia

28. Somalia has been experiencing a humanitarian crisis for decades, mainly due to ongoing conflict, natural disasters and economic crisis. The terrorist group Al-Shabaab continued to commit brazen attack against civilians and troops of the African Union Mission in Somalia. The terrorist attacks of 14 October 2017 targeted civilians in Mogadishu killing in excess of 500 people. The group also committed attacks on 23 February 2018 and 1 April 2018.

29. The humanitarian crisis has caused both internal displacement and cross border displacement of population to other countries. According to UNHCR, the number of Somali refugees in other countries has reached 875,939 persons on 31 January 2018, testament to the immense solidarity displayed by African countries towards refugees. Kenya hosts the most refugees from Somalia, 35.8%. Yemen attracts more than 29.2% of refugees and Ethiopia 29%. According to the updates made on March 31, 2018, the number of refugees registered in Somalia is estimated at 15,259 people, with 14,885 registered asylum seekers. An estimated 2.1 million persons are internally displaced in

²⁰ <http://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2017/8/599555014/unhcr-tanzania-outline-next-steps-address-refugee-situation.html>

²¹ <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/burundi;>
<http://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2018/2/5a79676a4/burundi-risks-becoming-forgotten-refugee-crisis-support.html>

²² [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/62996.pdf;](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/62996.pdf)
<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/VolRep%20of%20Burundian%20Refugees%20from%20Tanzania%20to%20Burundi%20-%20February%202018.pdf>

²³ <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/61371> (57)

²⁴ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/60116.pdf>

the country. The country has experienced 1, 287, 000 newly displaced persons in 2017.²⁵

30. Since the election of President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo on 8 February 2017, the country has made significant progress. The Somali authorities are, with the support of international humanitarian organizations and national NGOs, providing assistance to vulnerable populations, i.e. drinking water, developing their coping capacities and resilience, and supporting rural communities. Immunization campaigns were also organized. The African Union through AMISOM is playing critical role in providing security to civilians and government institutions and providing the much needed capacity building program to government institutions.

Sudan

31. Sudan has faced humanitarian crisis for years, caused mainly by protracted internal conflicts that continue to affect parts of Darfur, Kordofan and Blue Nile. The conflicts, which is abating mostly in the Darfur, have led to massive displacement, As of December 2017, the country has 2,072,000 IDPs²⁶ The conflict in South Sudan has also forced thousands of South Sudanese refugees cross borders to reach Sudan in search of assistance.

32. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated, according to the latest update on March 18, 2018, that there are at least 767,992 refugees in Sudan. For its part, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has put forward alarming figures according to which about 2.2 million people are displaced in 2018. The government coordinates all International organizations including UNHCR, IOM and OCHA and engage directly with national NGOs to coordinate their efforts and provide information on movements of population and communities vulnerabilities.

South Sudan

33. The conflict in South Sudan has entered its fifth year. The result has been one of the worst humanitarian crisis on the continent. In addition to the protracted conflicts which has triggered unprecedented humanitarian needs, civilians are also subjected to cycle of worsening food insecurity and threat of man-made famine. According to OCHA over two third of the population face rising risk of hunger.²⁷ There are 1,899,000 internally displaced persons, many of them being displaced multiple times.²⁸ Several are located in UN Protection of Civilians Camps with restricted movement. It is estimated that more than 80 percent of the displaced are women and children. The country has

²⁵ Global Report on Internal Displacement, May 2018, p. 17.

²⁶ Global Report on Internal Displacement, May 2018, p. 96.

²⁷ South Sudan Humanitarian Situation Bulletin, March 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan/south-sudan-humanitarian-bulletin-issue-03-23-march-2018>.

²⁸ Global Internal Displacement Report, May 2018 , IDMC, p.96.

also experienced attacks against humanitarian workers, high level of sexual violence against the displaced and limited access to social services.

34. It is instructive to point to the fact that about a third of the population is in forced displacement, either as refugees or in internal displacement. Indeed, Uganda, currently hosts about 900,000 South Sudanese while Ethiopia and Kenya also host significant number of refugees from the country. Despite its own immense challenges and problems, South Sudan also hosts refugees. According to UNHCR, 276, 900 Sudanese refugees are hosted in South Sudan.²⁹ The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is working with the African Union and the United Nations to revitalize the Peace Process but so far, the process has not lead to concrete outcome of peace and reconciliation.

WEST AFRICA REGION

Burkina Faso

35. Burkina Faso is hosting refugees from Mali (23,874 persons), Central Africa Republic (211), Chad (82) Rwanda (24) Congo (27) Burundi (31) Democratic Republic of Congo (33) Togo (14) others (14). The total number of refugees in Burkina Faso is 24,310 persons.³⁰ The country is also increasingly becoming a transit and asylum country for mixed migratory flows due to the multiple threats of the region. According to ICRC, 15 000 Burkinabe citizens are internally displaced in Soum Province, while an estimated 3000 Burkinabe citizens fled over the border to look for safety in neighbouring Mali.³¹ Malian refugees continue settle in to Burkina Faso, mainly in Loroum Province.

36. The Burkinabe authorities offer asylum in collaboration with UNHCR to the refugees residing in the Sahel region and for those who are in need of international protection. The Government, in coordination with UNHCR is preparing the relocation of approximately 9000 refugees living out Goudoubo and Mentao Camps areas, zones which offer a favourable protection environment and access to basic social services. Government is also currently working with UNHCR on the implementation of a national action plan to eradicate statelessness by 2024.

Niger

37. Niger's humanitarian context is marked by the frequency and recurrence of food insecurity, forced displacement of populations, epidemics as well as disasters, affecting

²⁹ UNHCR Operation Worldwide,

http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2553#_ga=2.257254990.430860922.1525015207-589326944.1524832189,

³⁰ <http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/UNHCR%20Operational%20Update%20Burkina%20Faso%20-%20December%202017%20-%20February%202018.pdf>

³¹ ibid

populations already heavily affected by a high level of poverty and an absence of resilience to cope with the disasters.

38. Niger is situated in West Africa in a sensitive geopolitical zone linking the Sahara desert with the Sahel, and with Central Africa. The country has developed into a major hub of migratory movements northwards to Algeria, Libya and the shores of the Mediterranean Sea to cross into Europe. As of March 2018, there were 166,232 refugees from mainly Mali, Nigeria and Chad.³²

39. Niger has been welcoming refugees from Mali since the outbreak of the crisis in 2012, and continues to welcome new arrivals, despite the signature of a Peace Agreement in Algiers in 2015. The majority of Malian refugees are located in 3 camps in the region of Tillabery, others in a refugee hosting area in the region of Tahoua, and the remainder in urban centers in Niamey and Ayorou. There are currently 57,327 Malian refugees in Niger.³³

40. The region of Diffa in the extreme East of the country is part of the country most affected by the attacks of Boko Haram, around the Lake Chad Basin. The region has been hosting refugees since 2013, when Boko Haram violence intensified in the North Eastern Regions of Nigeria. In 2015, the attacks in Nigeria crossed the border into Niger. There are currently over 250,000 displaced persons scattered throughout the region, including 108,470 Nigerian refugees, as well as IDPs and returnees. UNHCR manages one official camp in the region which hosts less than 12,000 refugees. Some of them have chosen to remain in spontaneous sites or amongst the local community.

41. In this context, existing national strategic frameworks need to be given special attention by Niger's development partners in order to help mobilize the necessary resources to enable the authorities to effectively tackle the roots causes of the country's vulnerability.

42. Some 300 000 migrants pass through Niger each year. UNHCR estimate that up to 30% of these persons may be potential asylum seekers in need of international protection. Thus, Niger authorities are working closely with UNHCR to improve Refugees Status Determination procedures in the country, as well as to identify potential asylum seekers.

Nigeria

43. The security situation in North-East Nigeria continues to remain tense with attacks from Boko Haram while counter-insurgency operations by Nigerian military is recording significant success. This fragile situation continues to pose a threat in the Lake Chad Basin area. 1.7 million people remain internally displaced due to economic,

³² Niger-Mali Situation, UNHCR, 30 April 2018, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/country/ner>.

³³ Ibid.

social, and environmental factors.³⁴ However, the Federal Government of Nigeria, through its comprehensive Humanitarian Response Plan has put in place a solid response mechanism to the humanitarian crisis. With over 203,000 Nigerian refugees seeking asylum in Cameroon, Niger, and Chad, the Nigerian military has made gross efforts to regain control over the North East of the country. However, civilians in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger still face human rights violations in the region, causing waves of displacement of already vulnerable civilians.

44. The countries of the Lake Chad Basin have been dramatically affected by water scarcity, a key driver of the current displacement. As many as 20 million from Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger rely on Lake Chad for livelihoods and pastoralist farming including fishing. However, due to the shrinking of the Lake Chad Basin by more than 90% as a result of rising temperature and climate change, exposed the population to food insecurity, which inversely left populations of region exposed to Boko Haram insurgencies., This situation contributes to further regional displacements..³⁵ The crisis has been exacerbated by conflict induced food insecurity and the dangers of protecting the displaced are compounded by deteriorating security situation as well as socio-economic fragility.

Mali

45. Mali continues to face a volatile security situation characterized by intense *jihadists* attacks particularly, in the North and Centre. In fact, the country faces growing threats of terrorism criminality by armed groups and inter-communal tensions. As of 31 December 2017 there were 526, 505 persons living in a precarious situation linked to terrorism. In March 2018, there are some 136,422 Malian refugees in other countries mainly in Mauritania, Niger and Burkina Faso.³⁶ The Returning refugees are estimated at 63, 107 persons. Some 38, 172 IDPs have also returned³⁷.

46. Displaced and affected population face important lack of protection due to limited access to public services, documentation, shelter, water, education and food security. Humanitarian assistance is frequently blocked or slowed down due to the security situation in the central and northern regions of Mali. The United Nations Multi-dimension Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) has suffered direct attacks by terrorists groups.

47. Despite significant challenges, the implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement aimed at re-establish peace and security in the region advances slowly. The United Nations Security Council recently urged the Malian stakeholders to implement the agreement of 2015 and threatened to punish the authors for non-compliance of the peace process. The government of Mali, signed a new roadmap to accelerate the implementation of the 2015 Algiers peace agreement with

³⁴ Global Report on Internal Displacement,

³⁵ *ibid*

³⁶ <http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/UNHCR%20Operational%20Update%20-%20January%202018.pdf>

³⁷ According to Malian authorities

the Platform, armed groups and the former rebellion of the Coordination of Movements of Azawad (CMA). This document also aims to create a climate conducive to reconciliation, return of refugees and IDP's and also the organization of free and inclusive elections throughout the territory.

Sierra Leone

48. Sierra Leone has been experiencing food insecurity due to flooding, disease outbreaks and drought. These scourges continue to challenge the livelihood of those who are most vulnerable. Floods and mudslides in 2017 have displaced 12, 000 persons.³⁸ More than 3,000 people have lost their homes.³⁹ On the 16 January 2018, The Government received 52 homes from three local construction companies as a contribution to the 14th of August 2017, mudslides and flash flood victims.⁴⁰

SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION

Zambia

49. At the end of February, it was reported by UNHCR that Zambia hosts more than 72,151 people⁴¹ with the country seeing its largest influx of Congolese refugees into Zambia in the past five years.⁴² As of March 2018, there are currently 44,283 registered Congolese in Zambia residing in one of the three refugee settlements.⁴³ This number may increase due to the protracted political stalemate in the DRC which spiralled pockets of instability into other parts of the region. Congolese refugees have attained international protection in Zambia for decades, however, the recent political instability has resulted in a humanitarian crises. Fortunately, the Government of Zambia has made grand strides in granting *prima facie* status to refugees fleeing conflict in Katanga and Tanganyika provinces of the DRC.

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS

50. African Union Member States are fully engaged in ongoing consultations and negotiations on the two draft global compacts on refugees and migrants. All 193 Member States including those from Africa have agreed on the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. African position regarding elements of the Global Compact on Migration (GCM) are reflected in its common position on GCM and the revised African Union Migration Framework. Moreover several African Countries are

³⁸ Global Report on Internal Displacement, May 2018, p. 96.

³⁹ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Sierra%20Leone%20Gender%20Alert%20-%20Aug.pdf>

⁴⁰ <https://reliefweb.int/report/sierra-leone/sierra-leone-mudslide-report-6-months>

⁴¹ <http://www.unhcr.org/afr/zambia.html?query=zambia>

⁴² <http://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2017/10/59d34a2e4/drc-violence-drives-3300-congolese-zambia-month.html>

⁴³ <http://www.unhcr.org/afr/zambia.html?query=zambia>;

<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/62409>

piloting the Comprehensive Refugees Response Framework, contained in Annex 1 of the New York Declaration. In November 2017 the African Union Commission brought together representatives of African Union Member States to deliberate on the implementation of the CRRF and identifies African priorities that must be reflected in the GCR. Lessons learnt from the CRRF piloting and the outcome of the 2017 Humanitarian Symposium will contribute to the development of the GCR.

STEPS TAKEN BY THE AFRICAN UNION IN ADDRESSING HUMANITARIAN CRISES

51. The AUC continues to provide much-needed technical support to Member States in enhancing their capacity to develop appropriate policies on humanitarian assistance in situations of conflicts and natural disaster. The Commission support the work of the PRC Sub-Committee on refugees, returnees and IDPs in carrying out its missions to countries experiencing humanitarian crisis. Through the Joint Task Force on Libya, the Commission is also providing strategic and operational support to facilitate the voluntary return of stranded and most vulnerable refugees.

52. In order to support the ratification and implementation of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, the Commission has published and commenced the dissemination of the Model Law on the Convention in all African Union languages. The timely publication of the Model Law is intended to mark the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles, the accepted international standards used to develop national legislations, policies and programs to address the challenges of internal displacement in Africa.

53. In order to realize Agenda 2063 and implement various decisions made by the Assembly and the Executive Council, the Commission has taken concrete steps towards the operationalization of the African Union Humanitarian Agency. In this respect the Commission has identified an consultant to carry out a feasibility study. The Commission will hold consultations with member states and partners on the modalities of establishment of the agency. The Commission briefed the AU Peace and Security Council on steps taken in this regard. It is expected that the agency will draw inspiration from existing structures and mechanisms in Member States and Regional Economic Communities and take into account the comparative advantages within the UN system, bearing in mind the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity.

54. Pursuant to the decision of the Assembly, the year 2019, has been declared as year of “Refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons towards durable solutions.” Moreover the year will also mark the 50th Anniversary of the adoption of the 1969 OAU Convention as well as the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the 2009 Kampala Convention, both provide a strategic opportunity to re-commit to the values, principles and standards of Africa’s legal protection framework. The Commission is currently setting-up a team within the Department of Political Affairs which will have the task of implementing a range of commemoration activities in collaboration member states, the RECs and relevant partners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

55. On the basis of the foregoing, the AUC recommends the following:

- a) There are no humanitarian solutions to political led-crisis. . Member States are therefore, called upon to take concrete steps in **addressing the root causes of humanitarian crises** by expanding democratic space, inclusive development, and good governance, developing disaster preparedness, prevention and response mechanisms. Such mechanisms will include developing early warning systems and conflict resolution as well as implementing human rights commitments as enshrined in both the African Union human rights instruments and other international treaties.
- b) To enable the African Union to fulfil its humanitarian responsibilities, member states are called upon to gradually implement the Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.709(XXI) which called for the gradual increment of the contribution from the AU administrative budget to the humanitarian fund from 2 to 4 percent.
- c) Member States and the AU should continue to advocate and call for **international solidarity with countries experiencing significant humanitarian crisis**. This must reflect itself in concrete financial support by donors and international partners in support of the AU Member States which face large number of displaced persons.
- d) As a component of global responsibility and burden sharing and with a view to implementing the return and evacuation plan to support stranded African Migrants and vulnerable refugees in Libya who are subjected to serious violations and abuse, all members of the AU-EU-UN Tripartite Taskforce should continue to call for **expedited implementation of pledges made to find third-country pathways including through resettlement**.
- e) Member States, which have not **signed and ratified key African Union instruments in particular the 2009 Kampala Convention and the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, right of residence and right of establishment** should do so to ensure its entering into force, domestication as well as implementation of these instruments.

DRAFT
DECISION ON THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN AFRICA
Doc. EX.CL/1082(XXXIII)

The Executive Council,

1. **NOTES WITH CONCERN** the complexities of the humanitarian situation in Africa which notably continue to be driven by conflict, political instability and natural disasters including climate change related issues;
2. **STRESSES** the importance of political, economic and social solutions to humanitarian challenges on the continent and **URGES** Member States to scale up efforts on tangible measures to address the root causes of humanitarian crises;
3. **ENCOURAGES** Member States to enhance sustainable investment on building capacities to prevent, prepare, respond and recover from both conflict related, human induced and natural disasters;
4. **REMINDS** Member States to implement the priorities and commitments stipulated in the Common African Position on Humanitarian Effectiveness to strengthen humanitarian action both at national, regional and continental levels in close cooperation with international humanitarian actors;
5. **COMMENDS**
 - i) the efforts of Member States, and the humanitarian partners of the AU which supported and facilitated the safe, voluntary and dignified return of stranded African migrants and vulnerable refugees in Libya and welcome the efforts made by Libya in addressing in cooperation with international community in this regard;
 - ii) Member States which continue to host refugees and share their burden in the spirit of humanity and solidarity.
6. **REITERATES** the **CALL** on Member States to hold an Extra Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government next year to deliberate on root causes and the quest to finding solutions to forced displacement, migrants and protracted refugees situations on the continent;
7. **CALLS ON** Member States to implement the of the Executive Council decision, EX.CL/Dec.709(XXI), which called for the gradual increment of the contribution from the AU Administrative Budget to the Humanitarian Fund from 2 to 4 percent;
8. **ENCOURAGES FURTHER** adoption and implementation of migrant integration policies;

9. **REAFFIRMS** decisions on the adoption and implementation of key AU humanitarian instruments including the African Union Convention for the Protection Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa and Calls ON Member States which did not sign, ratify and implement the Convention to do so and encourages enhanced participation in negotiations on international instruments related to migrants and refugees;
10. **REITERATES**, in the same vein, the importance of an African common position on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration which is to be adopted at the Intergovernmental Conference to be held in Marrakech, Morocco, on 10 and 11 December 2018, in order to ensure that the African position is duly taken into account;
11. **UNDERLINES** the importance of studies, research, data collection and information exchange in the field of migration and refugees for an efficient and coherent African humanitarian action at the national, regional and continental levels;
12. **EXPRESSES DEEP CONCERN** on the recent outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) and **CALLS ON** Member States to render requisite support to the DRC to effectively respond and prevent future incidents of EVD.

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