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**REPORT OF THE PRC SUB-COMMITTEE ON REFUGEES,
RETURNEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS**

REPORT OF THE PRC SUB-COMMITTEE ON REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

JANUARY - JUNE 2015

INTRODUCTION

1. The PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, undertook the activities scheduled during the first half of 2015, in accordance with the work plan approved at the beginning of the year. The activities covered assessment missions to South Sudan, Malawi and Uganda. It also covered the sub-committee's participation in the activities of the Commission.

ACTIVITIES

Meetings of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees

2. The Bureau of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees met on 13 February 2015 to conduct preliminary review of its 2015 work plan and prior to the plenary session of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons. The PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons met in plenary session on 20 March 2014 to consider the 2015 draft work plan submitted and to discuss other important issues relevant to the mandate of the Sub-Committee. The discussions at this session focused mainly on the adoption of the 2015 work plan of the Sub-Committee and the arrangements for regional consultations on the African Common Position at the World Humanitarian Summit slated to take place in May 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey.

3. The Bureau of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons met on 13 April 2015, with the Chairman of the Executive Committee of UNHCR, Ambassador Commissario, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Mozambique to the United Nations Office in Geneva. The Chair of the Executive Committee informed that he had just concluded an assessment mission to South Sudan. He stated that the purpose of the mission was to assess the situation of those internally displaced persons under the protection of the United Nations. He also visited the northern state of Upper Nile in South Sudan where there were refugees from South Kodofan and Blue Nile in the Sudan. The Chair further informed the meeting that he will be proceeding to the Gambella Region of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to assess the situation of South Sudanese refugees.member

4. The Bureau of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons reconvened on 11 May 2015, to discuss, with the

Department of Political Affairs on activities related to the implementation of the decision of the Executive Council, EX.CL/Dec.817(XXV) on the implementation of a consultative political process in all regions of the Union in order to adopt a common African position at the World Humanitarian Summit slated to take place in May 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey.

Missions undertaken by the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons

5. Several humanitarian assessment missions were undertaken by members of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, with the support of the Humanitarian Affairs Division of the Department of Political Affairs. These missions fall within the scope of the decision of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons of 20 March 2015, by which it adopted its programme of activities and requested the Commission to undertake a series of activities during 2015, including, among others, field missions to Member States of the African Union which have been most affected by the problem of population displacement and other humanitarian challenges. During the first half of 2015, the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees organized humanitarian assessment missions to the following Member States:

- Republic of South Sudan,
- Republic of Malawi,
- Republic of Uganda.

a) Humanitarian assessment mission to the Republic of South Sudan

6. The PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons undertook a humanitarian assessment mission to the Republic of South Sudan from 19 to 25 April 2015. The mission was led by the new chairperson of the PRC Sub-Committee, His Excellency Mr. Lamine Yahiaoui, Ambassador of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union. He was accompanied by two officials of the Humanitarian Affairs Division of the Department of Political Affairs.

7. In Juba, the capital city, the African Union mission met with government authorities responsible for humanitarian affairs and disaster risk reduction, as well as with the Commission for Refugee Affairs. The mission also met with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in South Sudan, officials of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the UN agencies working in the humanitarian field. The mission subsequently undertook field visits to the civilian protection site located within the UNMISS premises and to the Gorom refugee camp which is about one hour's drive from the capital city.

8. The humanitarian situation in the Republic of South Sudan remains dominated by the living conditions of persons displaced as a result of the fighting that erupted on 15 December 2013 in Juba, between South Sudan government forces and those of the opposition, and which quickly spread to other parts of the country, mainly to Jongolei, Unity and Upper Nile States. The fighting left more than two million displaced persons, out of which approximately 1.5 million persons remained inside South Sudan and more than half a million moved to neighbouring countries.

9. In the country, as at 25 April 2015, the number of internally displaced persons stood at about 604,500 in Jongolei, 366,400 in Unity State, 264,100 in the Upper Nile State and 130,800 in Lakes State. Five percent (5%) of the displaced persons have found refuge in UNMISS civil protection sites, among others, in Bentiu (52 825), the UN camp in Juba (34 805), in Malakal (21 359) and in Bor (2644).

10. In Malakal, the population displacement is mainly caused by ethnic tensions between the Dinka, the NuerNuer and the Shilluk, but also by the ongoing fighting between government forces and the opposition. The high number of internally displaced persons poses a huge challenge to the government of South Sudan, which continues to face food shortages with respect to meeting the needs of displaced persons.

11. South Sudan also faces problems in hosting refugees, mostly those who arrived following the outbreak of fighting in June and September 2011 in the neighbouring Republic of Sudan, between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement – North (SPLM-N) in the states of South Kordofan and the Blue Nile. In South Sudan, these refugees are found mostly in the Upper Nile State, largely in Maban and in Unity. The country also hosts refugees from other States such as the DRC, Ethiopia, Central African Republic and Uganda.

12. Armed violence in this country has compromised the limited progress made by the South Sudanese Government and its people since independence. The means of subsistence of the population was largely destroyed and the young country found itself in a state of humanitarian emergency. For the future, it is hoped that these communities will reconcile their differences and embark on the path to peace.

13. With regard to the accession of the young state to the Union's legal instruments on humanitarian issues, it should be noted that the South Sudanese Government had indicated its intention to adhere to the 1969 OAU Convention, which governs specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa. The country has also signed the Kampala Convention, but is yet to ratify it. It is therefore very important that the African Union continues to support and encourage the government of the Republic of South Sudan to join, ratify, incorporate into its

national legislation and implement the international legal instruments on refugees and displaced persons.

14. It is important however to note that the South Sudanese population places great hope on the African Union's ability to help them bring the protagonists in the conflict to the same table and to persuade them to continue the peace talks. Therefore, it is expected that the African Union will use its good offices to ensure that the stalled mediation is back on track in order for the restoration of peace and stability in South Sudan.

b) Humanitarian assessment mission to the Republic of Malawi

15. The PRC Sub-Committee undertook a humanitarian assessment mission to the Republic of Malawi from 26 to 30 April 2015, to assess the humanitarian situation in the country. The African Union mission was headed by His Excellency Mohamad Fathi Edrees, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union and was accompanied by two officials from the African Union Commission.

16. The African Union mission to Malawi met with various representatives of ministries, departments and agencies responsible for response actions in times of floods and those in charge of assisting internally displaced populations. The mission then travelled to the southern regions of the country, which have been most hit by the floods, including the districts of Phalombe, Nsanje and Chikwawa, to assess the situation of persons displaced by natural disasters.

17. The humanitarian situation in Malawi is characterized by recurrent natural disasters, such as floods and drought, which affect about 26,000 persons each year. In January 2015, districts in the south experienced significantly higher rainfall that caused massive flooding along the Shire and Rub rivers thereby resulting in severe human and material damage. These rains resulted in the loss of lives, destroyed homes, displaced families, carried away cattle and inundated farmland in 15 districts.

18. As at 30 April 2015, more than 145,000 persons were still displaced as a result of the floods and were temporarily housed in six of the 15 affected districts. A total of 106 deaths were recorded and 64,000 hectares of agricultural land had been inundated, causing the government to worry about harvests and food security for the population in the coming months. Floods and population displacements were followed by a cholera epidemic. A total of 423 cholera cases and six deaths were recorded in April 2015.

19. The coordination of the humanitarian response and initial recovery activities following this disaster is directed by the Government of Malawi, through the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA), with support from humanitarian partners and donor agencies. The Ministry of Defence and the

Malawi National Police Force also provided operational and logistical support at the district level to enhance response coordination. The Government frequently convenes the National Committee on emergency interventions and assistance to disaster victims to examine progress reports on response to these floods.

20. However, concerns have been expressed about the need to improve the coordination mechanism between the national and district levels and the need to set up early warning systems. The government of Malawi could improve on its commitment in planning for relocation of IDPs to new and safe lands as the same populations have been victims of the same disaster of floods each year in the same areas where they live. This could be accompanied by a long-term plan of starting new livelihood programs to allow affected persons to restart their life after the recent floods washed their properties away.

21. It is important for the Government of Malawi to undertake long-term developmental projects, such as reforestation of lands and intervention strategies to harvest the heavy rainfall, for irrigation of farmland during the dry season. The de-silting of the River Shire should also be taken into consideration

22. There is a clear need for an improved disaster preparedness system in Malawi. The importance of establishing a national contingency plan seems to be one of the long-term measures in Malawi. Malawi and Mozambique experienced an equal severity of heavy rainfall and floods, but the floods in Malawi had a more devastating impact on the environment and population. There could also be joint preventive measures, preparedness plans and projects which would benefit the populations in the flood prone areas in the neighboring countries.

23. In a gesture of solidarity, the African Union announced a donation of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) to the affected populations.

c) Mission to the Republic of Uganda

24. The PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons undertook a humanitarian assessment mission to the Republic of Uganda from 18 to 22 May 2015. This mission, led by His Excellency Mr. Joseph Nourrice, Ambassador of the Republic of Seychelles to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union, was organized in conjunction with the humanitarian visit to the country by Her Excellency Dr. L. Aisha Abdullahi, Commissioner for Political Affairs.

25. The purpose of this joint mission was, among others, to observe the Ugandan policy regarding the hosting and integration of refugees. A policy that differs from those generally applied in many countries, since it encourages refugees to resettle rather than reunite in refugee camps.

26. The African Union mission was received by two senior officials from the Office of the Prime Minister, namely, the Permanent Secretary and the Commissioner for Refugees, both of who informed the AU delegation on the Government's refugee policy.

27. The Government of the Republic of Uganda has indeed taken the initiative to implement an integration policy which includes refugee integration issues in the national development plan. This ensures budgeting and consideration of refugee issues in the definition of the country's migration policy. This policy allows and empowers local communities and their leaders to include refugee groups within their communities in their local plans, especially concerning issues of security and means of subsistence. The Government also informed the African Union mission that it intends to deal with naturalization questions.

28. The Delegation of the African Union welcomed the policy on the hosting and integration of refugees in Uganda, which is holistic and progressive and enhances the capacities and skills of refugees to build their means of subsistence, even while they are displaced. Uganda's policy on the hosting and integration of refugees was seen as a flagship policy which should be supported and shared with other African countries as a best practice to be emulated.

29. The African Union mission also met with humanitarian partners working in the country and visited refugee resettlement camps in Kyangwali and Kiryandogo in northern Uganda, where refugees from South Sudan, DRC and Kenya live. This field visit thus enabled the African Union mission to appreciate the positive effects of the government policy implemented on the hosting and integration of refugees. They live in suitable conditions on land given them to grow and produce food, as a means of ensuring food self-sufficiency. The refugees who have been resettled in these camps do not need food aid from the United Nations or any other humanitarian organizations.

30. Nevertheless, there were concerns about the use of charcoal, as the main fuel for food preparation for the population in the resettlement sites and for the local community as well. Indeed, charcoal use contributes to forests and trees depletion in the region. Hence it is necessary to use environmental resources in a sustainable manner, by renewing what has been used and identifying other sources of energy in a bid to save trees and thus protect the environment.

31. Primary education is provided to refugee children in these camps. Training in trades such as sewing, hairdressing, brick making or carpentry are also provided by various humanitarian actors working in the camps.

32. However, the African Union mission found that, although primary school education is available for the refugee children in these resettlement camps, secondary education is lacking. This is explained by the fact that secondary

education is not part of the basic services provided by the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations.

33. However, there is one private secondary school in the area, but it is still inaccessible to refugee children without financial resources. Local communities in Kiryandogo have established an open secondary school, which refugee children can attend. But the school does not offer enough courses due to a lack of teachers, as well as of laboratory equipment and other important equipment. Also lacking are dormitories to house orphans and children who live far away from the school.

34. In a gesture of solidarity with the people and government of the Republic of Uganda in their effort to host refugees and in solidarity with the refugee population in that country, the African Union delegation presented a cheque of one hundred thousand US dollars (US\$ 100,000.00) to contribute to the Kiryandongo secondary school community's effort to provide accommodation for refugee children and for children in the local community of Kiryandongo.

Consultation on African Common Position to the World Humanitarian Summit

35. It will be recalled that at the 68th United Nations General Assembly in September 2013, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon announced the first ever World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) to be held in May 2016, in Istanbul, Turkey

36. Accordingly, noting that Africa will be at the centre of the World Summit discussions, the Executive Council in Decision EX.CL/Dec.817(XXV), while welcoming the announcement by the UN Secretary General of the first ever World Humanitarian Summit to be held in Istanbul, Turkey in May 2016, “...called on the African Union Commission (AUC) in close collaboration with the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees and IDPs to establish an African Common Position that will be presented at the World Humanitarian Summit...and to continuously make progress report to the Executive Council at each Ordinary Summit leading up to the World Humanitarian Summit...”

37. Moving forward, the Commission in collaboration with the Permanent Representative Sub-Committee for Refugees, Returnees and IDPs, is implementing a roadmap for a political process which will involve regional consultations in all the five regions of the union (see the attached list of events).

38. The regional consultations will give rise to discussions amongst Member States and Regional Economic Communities on emerging issues within the global and regional humanitarian landscape, in so doing undertake a “**Political Process**” for reform to strengthen the humanitarian system, rooted in **Shared**

Values in Africa that put humanity at the centre, while being more relevant, inclusive and fit for Africa in the present and future challenges.

39. The roadmap leading to the adoption of the CAP is as follows:

27 – 29 May'2015	Southern Africa	Midrand (done)
28 – 31 July'2015	Eastern Region	Arusha
August'2015	Northern	Addis Ababa/Algiers
12 – 14 August'2015	Central Africa Region	Yaoundé
26 – 28 August'2015	Western Africa Region	Abuja
September'2015	High-level Platforms	Nairobi/Addis Ababa/Abuja
September'2015	PRC/Sub-Committee briefing	Addis Ababa
November'2015	Experts Meeting	Addis Ababa
November'2015	Ministerial Conference	Addis Ababa
November'2015	PRC/Sub-Committee briefing	Addis Ababa
November'2015	PRC Briefing	Addis Ababa
January'2016	Executive Council	Addis Ababa
January'2016	Assembly	Addis Ababa
May'2016	Presentation of CAP	Istanbul
June'2016	Post-Istanbul Plan of Action	Addis Ababa
Feb'2017	Regional Conference on Implementation of Istanbul Commitments	TBD

40. The regional consultations will give rise to discussions amongst Member States and Regional Economic Communities on emerging issues within the global and regional humanitarian landscape, in so doing undertake a “**Political Process**” for reform to strengthen the humanitarian system, rooted in **Shared Values** in Africa that put humanity at the centre, while being more relevant, inclusive and fit for Africa in the present and future challenges.

41. Three outcomes of this political process are envisaged:

- (a) **Common African Position, to** highlight Africa’s concerns and proposals for a transformation of the global humanitarian system, on a future humanitarian Agenda which is relevant and fit for the future;

- (b) **Declaration** reaffirming AU's commitment to addressing issues of forced displacement and a reaffirmation of Africa's Ideals of *Pan-Africanism* and goals, while highlighting milestones in setting a future humanitarian Agenda; and
- (c) a set of Recommendations as a call to action on specific targets, to comprehensively address issues of forced displacement on the continent.

42. Outcomes of regional consultations will be considered through the AU's Decision making process, involving validation by STC in November 2015 and adoption by the Ordinary Summit in January 2016, before presentation to the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey later in May 2016.

43. The World Humanitarian Summit process presents Africa with another opportunity to call for change, in the way humanitarian action is organised and delivered. As the world braces for change, Africa needs to be part of this history by articulating her concerns on the future humanitarian agenda. This will in many ways leverage Africa to reaffirm her priorities and targets at the Summit. The Common Position will also give rise to Africa in providing greater cooperation and solidarity reaffirming the humanitarian imperative. The Common Position aims to ensure that Africa's voice and concerns are not only heard but taken into account in shaping a new global architecture for humanitarian action.

44. In so doing, Africa will not only call for a review and transformation of the global humanitarian system to bridge existing gaps, but will also seek to lay emphasis on a future humanitarian architecture that is more relevant, timely, effective, efficient and fit for future challenges. In light of her interconnectedness with the global system, Africa will seek to contribute to what future global humanitarian system Africa would like to see, that ensures efficient and effective delivery of humanitarian action globally and on the continent. In Istanbul Africa will also seize the moment, to not only reaffirm its commitment to dealing with challenges facing the continent on humanitarian issues, but to also unequivocally bring to the global agenda her concerns.

45. The Common Position will be anchored on the founding Ideals of the Union of: ***Pan-Africanism***, and ***Shared Values*** which emphasise ***Solidarity of States***, as well as Africa's commitments in post 2015 development Agenda, Post-2015 DRR Framework, and the African Common Position on Climate Change. Africa's narrative in shaping a new humanitarian agenda in a globalized and rapidly changing humanitarian landscape will also be anchored on AU's vision as articulated in the Constitutive Act of the African Union; the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration of 2013; Shared Values, the Kampala Declaration and Plan of Action which aims to address root causes and progressively eliminate forced displacement on the continent, as well as AU Commitments in post 2015 Agenda and Post Hyogo Framework.

46. The first consultative meeting for Southern African Region took place from 27 – 29 May 2015, in Midrand, Southern Africa. The meeting emphasised the primary responsibility to protect and ensure security of all populations in need of humanitarian assistance. To do so, there is need to build State capabilities to predict, prevent, and respond to humanitarian crises, as well as to adapt its humanitarian intervention to emerging issues. Called for building local capacities, not only at the level of the State, but also at the level of local communities, placing emphasizing them as vital players within the entire humanitarian system.

47. On partnerships, the meeting emphasized the role of international humanitarian organizations as well as regional organizations remains subsidiary to the intervention by local communities, which are the first responders to humanitarian crises and need to be supported.

48. With regards the reform of the Humanitarian System, the meeting called for a paradigm shift for humanitarian action to go beyond response to emergencies, linking it to the development agenda of the concerned country, including all levels. It emphasised that Prevention is a key factor to mitigate the impact of humanitarian crises. Prevention is more cost effective than humanitarian response to emergencies.

49. It emphasised strategic reform in terms of shifting from Norm setting to Norm implementation by States, including through adherence to relevant regional and international instruments.

50. On migration, the meeting emphasised humanitarian action and response to take into account emerging issues in the region, in particular the issue of migration in SADC region. States should deal with the problem of xenophobia, applying UN and AU migration related policies, including those facilitating vital role of mobility for integration. The SADC protocol on facilitation of movement of persons is an important tool to address issues related to migration.

51. On data and gender, the meeting emphasised protection an assistance of women and children in humanitarian crises to be at the centre of the humanitarian system. Called for enhancing capabilities on data collection, analysis, and sharing information which is credible and reliable to ensure informed decisions. Consequently, there is need to coordinate and harmonize such information and data.

52. On humanitarian financing, the meeting noted the need for the establishment or the implementation of funding mechanisms to mobilize resources in favour of countries with limited resources. Called for increased the domestic resource mobilization to reduce over dependency on external resources, as well as ensuring timely, and predictable availability of resources.

53. In this respect, the role of host countries should be recognized as a significant contribution to humanitarian assistance as they are bearing important financial and social burdens. In accordance with the principle of burden sharing, and on the basis of real costs of that burden, host countries deserve regional and international assistance to help them in mitigating the impacts of their hospitality.

54. On access and security, meeting called for mechanisms to ensure the security of humanitarian workers and infrastructure, and in guaranteeing of the humanitarian space. The meeting noted the growing presence and implications of Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs), and recalled the on-going efforts, in particular within the UN Human Rights Council to consider concluding a legally binding international instrument to regulate their activities.

55. On post Istanbul, the meeting emphasised the need to implement commitments to be undertaken in Istanbul. Emphasised that Africa's Humanitarian Agenda is ongoing and will not be limited to the Istanbul event. Noted the need for a plan of action for the implementation of Istanbul commitments.

CONCLUSION

56. To date, the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons has accomplished a major part of its work plan and will continue to implement its programme of activities for the rest of the year while focusing on the rest of the activities in its 2015 work plan, namely:

1. *Continue to undertake missions to the countries most affected by the problem of refugees, returnees and displaced persons, namely: Nigeria, Ethiopia, Cape Verde, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic and the three Member States that were affected by the Ebola virus, namely Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.*
2. *Continue to hold consultations in the rest of the regions of the Union on the African Common Position at the World Humanitarian Summit slated to take place in May 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey, in compliance with the published schedule.*
3. *Work with key departments of the African Union Commission on the discussions concerning the coordination of activities of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees and the PRC Sub-Committee on the Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa (SEAF), in a bid to address the need for the harmonization of the mandates and roles of the two Sub-Committees.*

EX.CL/895(XXVII)vi
Annex

**REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE
HUMANITRAIN SITUATION IN AFRICA**

JANUARY - JUNE 2015

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN AFRICA

JANUARY - JUNE 2015

The report gives a panoramic view of the humanitarian situation on the continent. It also analyses the trends and challenges of the consequences of situation of conflicts and disasters on populations across the continent. The report also gives account of the activities of the Commission as well as that of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons, including the collaboration and cooperation with other AU partners and humanitarian agencies working in the field.

I. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN AFRICA

1. The current humanitarian situation on the continent continues to be driven by three significant factors. Conflicts resulting in continued instability; governance deficits in many of the affected countries; and climate change resulting in harsh and erratic climatic conditions- all creating fragility which further compounds and makes more complex the humanitarian situation on the continent. Since January 2015, when the last report was submitted, the continent has witnessed new and continued situations of different humanitarian consequences occasioned by the effects of these three drivers alluded to above.

2. There continues to be worrying waves of insecurity in Central African Republic, Kenya, Libya, Eastern DRC, Nigeria and the Lake Chad basin, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. At the same time, resurgent conflictual situations have been witnessed in Burundi as a result of the failed coup d'état attempt while South Africa experienced xenophobic attacks on innocent foreigners. Mozambique, Madagascar and Malawi continue to suffer the effects of climatic changes resulting in heavier patterns of rainfall than hitherto experienced in the past.

3. The general fragility of the security situation and concomitant instability in Libya, have all combined to make the country an un-governed space, thereby, providing a haven for human smuggling and trafficking across the Mediterranean Sea into Europe. South Africa too continues to be a major destination of asylum-seekers, as well as migrants searching for better economic and social opportunities.¹ In fact, there are confirmed reports of human smuggling and trafficking into South Africa.²

4. The North East of Nigeria still remains an area of serious concern. Nearly 1.5 million persons are still internally displaced despite the gains made by military authorities in recent times, as Boko Haram still creates a volatile situation in the Lake Chad Basin area³. At the moment, the security situation in the far North of Cameroon

¹ UNHCR, May 2015, Report on South Africa

² Ibid;

³ IOM May 2015, Regional Response Situation Report

appears relatively calm, while Boko Haram insurgent activities are being experienced around the Niger border resulting in new displacement within the Lake Chad Basin region.⁴

5. The West African sub-region has witnessed the positive significant decline in the incidence of the spread of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). As of 8 May 2015, Liberia recorded no new EVD cases which led to the world Health Organisation declaring the country free of EVD. Ebola Treatment Units are now being decommissioned. It is pertinent to note the commendable efforts of the African Union in combating and treating EVD cases in the three most affected countries of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone, through the **African Union Support to Ebola Outbreak in West Africa (ASEOWA)**. The mission, under the able leadership of Major- General Oketta of Uganda provided arrow head deployment of African medical and other personnel, who formed the vanguard of those treating patients directly in the majority of the cases.

6. Closely linked to the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) are its effects on the food security situation in the affected sub-region, particularly the affected countries. The pandemic resulted in the depletion of household stocks which created an earlier than normal start to the lean season. The consequence of this is that food security situation is beginning to deteriorate compared to previous months in the three most affected countries. In addition, household incomes from most sources remain below average, due to a general economic slowdown across the three countries.⁵ It is encouraging to note that given the assumption that the rainy season will start normally, it is expected that agricultural activities will kick start the livelihoods in these countries⁶, which will offset the effects of EVD due to declining resilience.

7. The incidence of irregular migration continues unabated, leading to deaths of many migrants in the Mediterranean Sea. As of April 2015, Italian authorities have rescued over 10,000 persons, of which 1056 are from Syria, while the rest are Africans. The breakdown of the numbers is as follows: Gambia (1,413), Senegal (1,187), Somalia (1,107), Mali (991), Eritrea (9906), and Nigeria (873). The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has called for swift action from the European Union, following what can be regarded as the worst tragedy in living memory involving migrants crossing the Mediterranean from North Africa.

8. Given the dismal nature of the situation, it is suggested that the African Union Commission initiate efforts that will complement existing measures such as the UNHCR Horn of Africa Initiative on irregular migration. In this regard, it is suggested that an AU High Level meeting of experts be convened to critically examine the situation. The need to monitor the activities of human smugglers and traffickers in and around the Sahara Desert should be paramount to the work of such a group of experts. The Commission wishes to draw attention to the fact that it is now imperative that a concerted effort is

⁴ Ibid;

⁵ FEWS Net, 30 April, 2015, Special report on Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone

⁶ Ibid;

required to combat trafficking on land as almost an equal number of persons lose their lives in the trans-Saharan commute to North Africa, as those on the sea.

II. REGIONAL ANALYSIS

North Africa Region

9. The North Africa region continues to witness a spike in the number of migrants attempting to make hazardous and often fatal crossing to Europe through the Italian island of Lampedusa. According to the IOM, the latest count of migrants arriving by sea, for the month of May stood at 14,908. This figure is 25,703 for the first four months of 2015. The striking element of the current phenomenon is the increased rate of fatalities when compared to the same period last year. In the first quarter of 2015, about 1780 deaths were recorded compared to 96 deaths during the same period last year.⁷ This figure is therefore, indicative of the fact that the continent is in a period of “unprecedented human disasters and emergencies”⁸ In fact, the Mediterranean crossing can be regarded as the world’s deadliest migrant crossing.

10. The fragile security situation in **Libya** has resulted in the lack of capability by the state to maintain requisite national authority across the country. Libya prior to its descent into civil war, a final destination for some migrants now constitutes a transit for nearly all of the mixed migratory flows from Sub-Saharan Africa onward to Europe. The situation is further driven by the instability that is currently affecting the Northern region. The violence and unrest in many of the countries have also created protection needs, with increased number of refugees and asylum seekers being arrested, detained and sometimes killed by extremist groups. Most of these migrants hail from sub-Saharan Africa. Apart from the refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa, there are about 155,000 Syrian refugees in North Africa, of this number, about 140,000 are in Egypt.⁹

11. There are about 50,000 Malian refugees in **Mauritania's Mbera Camp**, near the border with Mali. At the moment the influx of people into Mauritania and spontaneous returns has stabilised. With this stabilization, it is hoped that an accelerated return to peace in Mali will activate repatriation programme. However, close attention and encouragement are being given to voluntary returns of refugees to Mali facilitated by UNHCR.

12. There is still the protracted refugee situation of the **Saharawi** in Algeria. The situation has spanned a period of 40 years now. It is an on-going situation and they are settled in five camps near **Tindouf** on the Sahara Desert. The refugee population lives in 5 main camps that bare the names of the main cities of Western Sahara (Aaiun, Dajla, Smara, Bojador and Auserd), in extreme meteorological and geographical

⁷ IOM, 19 April 2015, The migration news dash, Situation report no.002

⁸ Ibid;

⁹ IOM, April 2015, Statement of Director General, Mr. Lacy Swing

conditions where the temperatures can reach 50 degrees in the summer and become freezing cold in the winter in addition to sand storms.

13. Tindouf is a remote area and therefore, the refugees are dependent on humanitarian assistance, majority with little prospects for sustainable livelihood or resilience. It is estimated that there are about 165,000 refugees in the camps. There is need for more concerted efforts by the African Union and the international community to meet the needs of the Sahrawi refugees.

14. Complementary to the previous conclusions of the WFP-UNHCR's Joint assessment mission (JAM), the UNHCR office in the Saharawi refugee camps and the NGOs operating in these camps stressed during its annual meeting last October 2014 that the minimum amount of money required to cover the global needs in the different sectors for 2015 is 37million USD (needs that are not covered by other donors). Nonetheless, the aid planned by the UNHCR for 2015 is 9,1 million USD, which means that the unmet needs gap remains very high.

15. In **Tunisia**, there are a total of 1,024 people of concern. Pending the adoption and implementation of an asylum law in Tunisia, the UNHCR continues to be sole entity conducting refugee status determination in the county.¹⁰ The organisation, therefore, ensures that only persons of concern to it are registered, issued with UNHCR certificates and protected against *refoulement (return)*. The objective of the UNHCR is now to support Tunisia in creating a comprehensive national protection system. This is very crucial as it will serve as protection to future cases of displacement that were unable to fall through the crack of status determination.

Central Africa Region

16. The recent election related violent conflict in **Burundi** has generated a humanitarian crisis. The protests and the response of the police escalated matters which sparked internal displacement of persons and influx of over 80,000 Burundians to neighbouring DRC (8,700), Rwanda (over 25,000) and Tanzania (over 48,000).¹¹ The situation is further complicated with Burundi also receiving about 50,000 refugees mostly from DRC. Despite various attempts from different quarters including the African Union, East African Community, and the wider international community the situation eventually resulted in an inchoate coup attempt on 13 May 2015. The failed Coup d'état aggravated the situation by increasing the level of the chaos and the incidents of reprisal attacks thereby, plunging the country further into the abyss. Reports of political violence, intimidation, harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention were rife with about 20 deaths and over 200 injured recorded; and about 900 arrests made during the various demonstrations.¹²

¹⁰ UNHCR, Sub-regional operations, Profile – North Africa

¹¹ OCHA, 14 May 2015, Country update on Burundi

¹² *ibid*;

17. **Central African Republic (CAR)** continues to experience persistent violence and insecurity against the civilian population. Of the various incidents of violence against the affected population, 2108 of such cases or 17% of the total cases were against aid workers.¹³ Humanitarian access continues to be hindered by interference in the implementation of humanitarian activities. The number of CAR refugees in neighbouring countries is estimated to have reached about half a million, with Cameroon hosting the majority of the refugees. The number of IDPs has also reached about 400,000 as of 1 May 2015.¹⁴ . The IDPs continue to be exposed to poor living conditions in displacement sites while there are also cases of harassments and constrained access to humanitarian assistance for those outside of the IDP displacement sites.

18. The security situation in CAR remains fragile as the country continues to be engulfed by violent attacks on civilians. Humanitarian operations are also impeded by on-going insecurity and attacks on humanitarian facilities and workers. Food shortage and malnutrition particularly amongst children persist as a result of decline in crop production, food reserves, and disruption of humanitarian activities. Continued lack of malaria control and treatment activities coupled with outbreak of measles in some regions have created added burden on the already overstretched and limited resources of health care system.

19. The issue of child soldiers is another crisis which requires due attention. Though over 300 child soldiers of which majority are less than 12 years old were released by the militias recently. It is estimated that thousands of children are still being used as combatants, sex slaves and for other atrocious purposes.¹⁵ Continued protection, psychosocial support and the reunification with family and reintegration into communities still remain a challenge.

20. The **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** also continued to receive large influx of refugees due to the volatile situation in CAR in areas bordering DRC. As of March 2015, the number of refugees from CAR reached close to 100,000¹⁶. The majority of these refugees live in remote regions of the DRC which lack basic services. Though refugees are relocated to new sites, most stay in sporadic sites in host communities near the border¹⁷.

21. DRC itself is overwhelmed by continued conflict, particularly in the Kivu area which is devastated by fighting by various armed groups and this has resulted in the mass internal displacement of people¹⁸. Recruitment of child soldiers by various armed

¹³ UNOCHA, Situation Report no.54

¹⁴ UNHCR Regional Update 55, 18 April- 1 May 2015 –Central African Republic Situation

¹⁵ UNICEF, 14 March 2015 News Note, http://www.unicef.org/media/media_81890.html

¹⁶ UNICEF, 20 March 2015, Situation update on CAR, Refugee crises in DRC ,

UNICEF, January March 2015, Humanitarian report on DRC Unicef

¹⁷ Ibid;

¹⁸ Ibid;

groups remains a concern. A total of 924 children were released from various armed groups in DRC from January to March 2015, with the majority of them coming from North Kivu region.¹⁹ On the other hand, attacks on humanitarian workers and organisations continue to hamper humanitarian interventions.

Lake Chad Basin

22. The spill over effect of the armed conflict in **Nigeria with Boko Haram into Lake Chad Basin region mainly Chad, Cameroon and Niger** has created what is regarded as 'the worst humanitarian crises facing Africa now.'²⁰ The escalating insecurity and violence in Nigeria particularly in the north eastern regions continues to lead to internal displacement of thousands and triggers refugee crisis in neighbouring countries. More than 192,000 are believed to have sought refuge in Cameroon, Chad and Niger.²¹ These countries have also been immersed in armed conflict with the same insurgent group which has concomitantly affected their own population and raised the number of IDPs and refugees throughout the entire Lake Chad Basin region. Many have also been separated from their immediate family including children split from their parents. In Nigeria, Yola, Maiduguri, Jos and Kano regions, unaccompanied minors have been registered by the Nigerian Red Cross and International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (ICRC).²² Though humanitarian assistance by local governments of Cameroon, Chad and Niger coupled with international humanitarian organisations often catered for the basic needs of the refugees,²³ the large number of displaced people and limited number of humanitarian organisations, testifies to the severity of the situation.

23. **Cameroon** continues be challenged by influx of significant number of refugees and IDPs due to the persistent crisis in its neighbouring countries namely CAR and Nigeria. The significant number of refugees created pressure on host communities threatening peaceful coexistence. According to the figures of WFP & UNHCR, as of the end of April 2015, Cameroon received 33,500 refugees from Nigeria and 216,000 from CAR. Furthermore, an estimated 106,000 people have been internally displaced. Humanitarian assistance to the IDPS and refugees are impeded by the insecurity in the far northern regions bordering Nigeria. Despite this, government of Cameroon maintained humanitarian space for the movement of humanitarian relief by providing armed escorts for humanitarian convoys, providing security in refugee and IDP camps and allocating additional refugee sites for relocation into relatively safe areas away from the border.

24. In **Niger**, authorities estimated that more than 100,000 refugees from Nigeria, returning Nigeriens and significant number of people whose nationality is not yet verified

¹⁹ UNICEF, January-March 2015, Humanitarian Report, Democratic Republic of Congo

²⁰ ICRC, 13 May 2015 , video newsroom, <http://www.icrcvideonewsroom.org/content/open.asp?ID=um57445.1w10920255218130n.56&category=Africa>

²¹ Nigeria Inter Agency Response Plan 2015

²² ICRC, 13 May 2015 , video newsroom, <http://www.icrcvideonewsroom.org/content/open.asp?ID=um57445.1w10920255218130n.56&category=Africa>

²³ Nigeria Inter Agency Response Plan 2015

are currently in the country. According to the authorities, the displaced population is likely to reach 130,000 by the end of 2015.²⁴ Though Nigerian refugees have been received in Niger, recent evacuation of inhabitants of Karamga Island on Lake Chad following attack by insurgents at the beginning of May created sudden removal of both Nigerian refugees and local Nigeriens in the area. The evacuation took place in 100 villages across 74 islands within 48 hours, to the main land of Niger which resulted in unsafe and undignified evacuation of locals and refugees.²⁵ As a result, a large number of Nigerian refugees who initially fled their homeland fearing attacks from Boko Haram have found themselves in a quagmire as they continue to face evacuation from neighbouring countries like Niger and Chad. According to OCHA, about 14,000 Nigerians moved to the border between Niger and Nigeria as of 06 May 2015.²⁶ Close to 6,000 Nigerian refugees in Niger have returned to Borno State whilst about 2,000 Nigerian refugees from Lake Chad in Niger have gone to Chad.²⁷

25. **Chad** is also believed to host an estimated number of 450,000 refugees who fled fighting in CAR and the Darfur in Sudan.²⁸ The current figure of displacement in Chad according to official sources stands at 386780 Darfurian refugees, 260570 CAR refugees and 16800 refugees from Nigeria. The insecurity in Nigeria has added to the burden of shouldering refugees in addition to the poverty and insecurity of its own population. Chad is also faced with the problems associated with its own IDPs due to lingering internal conflicts and recently due to military action against insurgents, on the Chadian side of Lake Chad area.

Southern Africa Region

26. Heavy rains in **Malawi and Mozambique** devastated large number of areas thereby adversely affecting the livelihoods of many households and claiming peoples' lives. Massive floods in the southern districts of Malawi between January-February 2015 affected about 250,000 people, forcing about 230,000 of them to abandon their dwellings and areas.²⁹ State of Emergency was declared on 13 January 2015 and the preliminary response plan was launched. About 145,000 persons remain displaced whilst the majority of the displaced have returned to their residential areas by April 2015. A total of 106 deaths were registered and 64,000 hectares of land of which approximately 40,000 hectares of cropland were flooded.³⁰ In April 2015, the flood and massive movement of people triggered Cholera outbreak in some districts resulting in 423 cases and 6 deaths.³¹

²⁴ *ibid*;

²⁵ UNHCR, Thematic Update, 11 May 2015, Lake Chad Evacuation.

²⁶ UNOCHA, Flash Update 1,8 May 2015, Nigerians Fleeing Niger.

²⁷ *ibid*;

²⁸

²⁹ UNHCR, January 2105, UNHCR operation in Malawi, factsheet

³⁰ UNICEF, 14 April 2015, Malawi humanitarian situation report, no. 18

³¹ *ibid*;

27. **In Mozambique** heavy rain and flooding since the start of the wet season towards the end of 2014 particularly during January - March 2015 affected, in total around 370,906 people, 163 fatalities, destroyed 35,000 houses and loss of 103,807ha of agricultural land.³² Heavy rain and flooding displaced a large number of people totalling 68,000 which prompted a cholera outbreak in some areas with more than 8,000 cases and 64 deaths.³³ According to the assessment of the World Bank, damages caused by the heavy rains and flooding are estimated to reach around US\$ 400-500 million. Humanitarian support including emergency food assistance to people affected by food insecurity in flood affected was reported.

28. **In South Africa**, disputes and xenophobic attacks on foreigners started as labour disputes among foreigners and South Africans in few sites near Johannesburg, Gauteng Province in January 2015, gradually expanded to KwaZulu-Natal Province and other parts of the country by March 2015. The unfavourable socio-economic situations characterized by high unemployment, widening economic and social gap in the population and weak systems of service delivery are often cited as the underlying factors triggering the wave of attacks against foreigners, their business and migrant workers. The unabated attack ended up by displacing an estimated 5,000 foreigners and the killing of 6 persons.³⁴ Many sought refuge in churches and mosques and community shelters, as protests to the attacks and clashes spiked in April 2015. The escalation prompted the government to contain the violence and support refugees and asylum seekers of South Africa. Thousands of foreigners/migrant workers who were displaced were sheltered in stadiums prior to their voluntary repatriation to neighbouring countries. South Africa still hosts 65,000 recognised refugees and 295,000 asylum-seekers,³⁵ from DRC, Congo, Ethiopia, Somalia and Zimbabwe.

29. **Zambia**, alongside some of its neighbouring countries experienced dry spells as a result of below average rainfall. The overdue rain in April caused crop failure which to a short in food supplies to households. Maize productions is at a five year low thus, casting fear of food insecurity coupled with a hike in food /crop price and decline demand for domestic agriculture based labour market.³⁶ Despite decade long sustained economic growth, Zambia still grapples with income inequality, poverty, food insecurity and poor nutrition and related challenges.

East Africa Region

30. During the first half of the year, in the eastern region, conflict and unfavourable climate conditions are the key drivers of deteriorating food insecurity and displacement in the region.

³² UN Office of the Resident Coordinator, 24 April 2015, Mozambique Flooding, Situation report , no. 6

³³ *ibid*;

³⁴ UNHCR, 14 April 2015, News Stories, Concern at Xenophobic Violence in South Africa.

³⁵ *ibid*;

³⁶ Food and nutrition security working group, April 2015, Issue 1.

31. The late and poor start of the rains from March to May has affected water availability, pastoral resources and crop production. This has resulted in a longer than normal pastoral lean season in some areas and reduced agricultural labour opportunities. Consequently, malnutrition levels are expected to worsen after May and are already above critical thresholds in parts of **northern Kenya, Eastern and Southern Ethiopia, rural Djibouti and south central Somalia.**

32. Tropical storms Chedza and Fundi hit **Madagascar** on 16 January 2015 which was followed by heavy rainfall in the weeks that followed. This resulted in the flooding of rivers and destruction of cropland. It is estimated that a total of 265,129 people were affected out of which 62,544 and about were temporarily displaced and 115 people were killed.³⁷ Furthermore, an estimated 578,000 people were food insecure out of which 144,000 required urgent assistance. Although the government response plan and partner support responded, with poor harvest expectation in May/June, the problem of food insecurity may not be entirely addressed.³⁸

33. In April, Al Shabaab militants attacked the University of Garissa in **Kenya** during which 147 students were killed and 79 were wounded. This was the latest in a series of attacks by Al Shabaab on Kenya since 2011. In the wake of this reprehensible attack, the Government announced that the Dadaab refugee camp, hosting 550,000 Somali refugees should be closed within three months and the refugees returned home. The international humanitarian community overwhelmingly sympathize, share and understand the concerns arising from the situation, the Government was however, urged to critically consider the effects of the abrupt closure of the camps. It is envisaged that forcing refugees back to Somalia will result in dire humanitarian consequences which may impact on the country's obligations under international refugee law.

34. Following a visit by the UNHCR High Commissioner to Somali and Kenya, a common understanding was reached on three issues – the need to ensure that return of Somali refugees from Dadaab is voluntary and that it takes place in safety and dignity and in accordance with the tripartite agreement between Kenya, Somalia and the UNHCR; that cooperation was essential to boost security in Dadaab; and thirdly, there should be an expansion of additional areas for people to return to in Somalia.

35. **In South Sudan**, the civilian population continues to bear the brunt of the conflict which started in 2013. The fragile situation coupled with severe effect of climatic changes in the form of heavy long seasonal rains has constituted logistical constraints. This has combined with the conflict to disrupt the delivery of food and other essential commodities to their much needed destinations. Renewed and continuing fighting in Upper Nile State and Unity State has led to the loss of lives, including those of humanitarian aid workers. At the moment more than 1.5 million persons have been uprooted and the continuing violence could also precipitate famine in the country.³⁹

³⁷ OCHA Humanitarian Bulletin, May 2015 – Southern Africa, Issue18

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ UNHCR, Country Operations Profile –South Sudan

36. Intensified armed hostilities in Unity State since the beginning of May has affected hundreds of thousands of people of Bentiu. As hostilities escalated around these areas, civilians in main towns reportedly fled to remote villages while others dispersed to the bush. The escalation of violence obliged most humanitarian partners to evacuate their staff from the towns of Leer, Koch, Nyat, Ganyiel and Mayendit. The humanitarian activities in the area were halted and, as a consequence, over 300,000 civilians are in need of emergency relief, food aid and medical services including lifesaving assistance.

37. At the moment, there are now a total of 1.5 million IDPS in **South Sudan**, while the country is also host to about 261,925 refugees from Sudan, DRC, Ethiopia and Central African Republic.

38. Food insecurity remains a serious concern in South Sudan. Conflict affected areas registered a very large cereal deficit. A large number of the displaced population will depend mainly on food assistance. Conflict and insecurity affected migration and caused unusual movements of livestock, which raised concerns about disease outbreaks. Furthermore, a continued decrease in humanitarian funding in South Sudan has taken its toll on aid partners throughout the country, forcing some to pull out of operations that currently provide critical services for thousands of vulnerable IDPs and children.

39. Ethiopian recently overtook Kenya to become Africa's largest refugee-hosting country following the arrival of hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese in Ethiopia. Currently the refugee population in Ethiopia has reached about 630,000. The spike in the number is attributed to the civil war that is raging in South Sudan. It is noteworthy to state that Ethiopia continues to host a large population of refugees from many African countries, including Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea, Rwanda, Burundi and Yemen.

40. **Uganda**, continues to host refugees from South Sudan, Kenya, and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It is noteworthy to commend the effort of the government of Uganda in ensuring the integration of refugees in the country. The government provides land for the livelihoods of the refugees and it has created a pragmatic symbiosis between the refugee community and host community.

41. Following weeks of renewed tensions in **Sudan**, between the Southern Reizegat and Ma'aliya tribes in East Darfur, fighting between these two groups erupted on 10 May near Abu Karinka. Reports of both civilian and combatant casualties were received by the African Union –United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), following the first day of fighting. Humanitarian response continues in North Darfur, with aid partners responding to the emergency situation in Mellit locality following the conflict between the Berti and Zayada tribes in February and March 2015. It is equally pertinent to note that Sudan is also receiving South Sudanese displacement, who are not considered refugees in Sudan. In another light, Sudan recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Chad on mutual return of refugees from their respective countries.

West Africa Region

42. During the first half of the year, the Ebola situation, a measles and meningitis outbreak in Niger, as well as security in Northern Nigeria, continued to pose challenges for the region. Food security was another concern for the region, especially in the three Ebola affected countries.

Ebola

43. The Ebola epidemic continued in 2015, albeit with a gradual decrease in new cases for all three Ebola affected countries, **Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone**. In total, since the beginning of the outbreak in 2014, a total of 26,724 confirmed probable and suspected cases of Ebola have been reported in these countries. There have been 11,056 reported deaths.

44. The Government of Liberia, in collaboration with humanitarian partners, declared the end of active transmission of Ebola in Liberia on 9 May 2015. This follows 42 consecutive days without reporting a single newly confirmed case of Ebola Virus Disease, and all patients discharged from the Ebola treatment centres. Sustained community engagement towards long term surveillance and response capacity will continue.

45. Provisional data indicates that there was a total of 9 newly confirmed cases of Ebola in Guinea and Sierra Leone for the week ending 10 May 2015: 7 were in Guinea and 2 were in Sierra Leone. The response efforts in both Sierra Leone and Guinea continue, with active case finding, cross border collaboration, security reinforcement and support, and community engagement meetings.

46. An International Monetary Fund press release, following its recent 23 April to 8 May visit to Guinea, states that although macroeconomic stability has been maintained in Guinea, its economic growth has been slowed down to 1.1 per cent due to the social and economic consequences of the Ebola outbreak. In April 2015, the United Nations Development group calculated that West Africa as a whole may lose an average of at least US\$ 3.5 billion per year from 2014 to 2017, as a result of the Ebola outbreak.

WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT

47. It will be recalled that at the 68th United Nations General Assembly in September 2013, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon announced the first ever World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) to be held in May 2016, in Istanbul, Turkey. Accordingly, noting that Africa will be at the centre of the World Summit discussions, the Executive Council in Decision **EX.CL/Dec.817 (XXV)**, while welcoming the announcement by the UN Secretary General of the first ever World Humanitarian Summit to be held in Istanbul, Turkey in May 2016, “...called on the African Union

Commission (AUC) in close collaboration with the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees and IDPs to establish an African Common Position that will be presented at the World Humanitarian Summit...and to continuously make progress report to the Executive Council at each Ordinary Summit leading up to the World Humanitarian Summit..." The World Summit is organized around four thematic areas: ***Humanitarian Effectiveness; Transformation through Innovation; Reducing Vulnerability and Managing Risk and Serving the needs of people in conflict.***

48. **Three** outcomes of this political process are envisaged: **a). Common African Position**, to highlight Africa's concerns and proposals for a transformation of the global humanitarian system, on a future humanitarian Agenda which is relevant and fit for the future; **b). Declaration** reaffirming AU's commitment to addressing issues of forced displacement and a reaffirmation of Africa's Ideals of *Pan-Africanism* and goals, while highlighting milestones in setting a future humanitarian Agenda; and a set of **c). Recommendations** as a call to action on specific targets, to comprehensively address issues of forced displacement on the continent. The common position will further seek Africa's commitment to the following:

- Primary responsibility of the State to protect and assist affected populations
- Guarantee by the State of requisite humanitarian space and access,
- Commitment to use of military assets in assisting those affected by conflict
- Upholding of humanitarian principles and international standards in shaping humanitarianism in Africa.

CONCLUSION

49. The continent, in the last six months witnessed the decline in the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in West Africa. This portends a good sign that by the end of the year the EVD will be a thing of the past. It is also evident that with military gains made by the combined efforts of forces from Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, the Boko Haram phenomenon may also be on the decline. Consequently, it is expected that there will be an abatement in the dire humanitarian situation in the Lake Chad Basin region. Even though the negative activities of Al Shaabab continue in Kenya and Somalia, the efforts of AMISOM in combating the situation in Somalia will eventually have positive consequences in Kenya.

50. Consultations with the remaining regions on the continent with respect to the forging of an African Common Position to the World Humanitarian Summit will continue in the next semester. The Commission urges all regions to actively participate in the formulation of the common position.

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