



Joint Communiqué

Tripartite Commission for the Voluntary Repatriation of Somali Refugees from Kenya

30 July 2015, Kenya: The Tripartite Commission for the Voluntary Repatriation of Somali Refugees from Kenya, comprising the Government of the Republic of Kenya, the Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia, and UNHCR, met on 29 July 2015 to work on enhanced support for the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees from Kenya to Somalia.

The Commission agreed on concrete operational modalities to scale up the safe, dignified and voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees from Kenya. A new Joint Strategy and Operational Plan, effective now, envisages the voluntary repatriation of 435,000 Somalia refugees in phases. The phased approach in the Strategy outlines planned support to the voluntary return and reintegration of 10,000 refugees in 2015; 100,000 in 2016; 150,000 in 2017; 130,000 in 2018 and 35,000 in 2019.

Experience from the Voluntary Repatriation Pilot Phase (December 2014 to June 2015), during which 2,589 Somali refugees returned voluntarily to their areas of origin, provided a solid foundation for the new Joint Strategy. This Strategy outlines the operational modalities and support which will be provided in Kenya and Somalia to ensure safe, dignified and sustainable return and reintegration.

While the Pilot Phase pioneered support to voluntary repatriation in three districts - Luuq, Baidoa and Kismayo – the Commission agreed to support future returns to any area in Somalia, with special focus on nine districts that have been identified for comprehensive return and reintegration support – namely Mogadishu, Afgoye, Jowhar, Balcad, WanlaWeyn and Belet Weyne as well as Luuq, Baidoa and Kismayo.

Recognizing the fragile security environment in Somalia, particularly in South Central regions, the Joint Strategy acknowledges emerging pockets of stability and new opportunities to pursue durable solutions for Somalia's displaced. Following more than two decades of instability compounded by consequences of recurring natural hazards, solutions are needed for the 1.1 million internally displaced Somalis as well as the more than 900,000 Somali refugees hosted in the region, half of whom reside in Kenya.

The Tripartite Commission stipulated the importance of mobilizing resources to enable the implementation of the Joint Strategy. To strengthen the resilience of the refugee and host communities in Kenya, and create conditions in Somalia that are conducive to meaningful and sustainable reintegration, the Commission will advocate for international support to comprehensive, integrated area and community-based interventions.

To pursue this aim, a portfolio of projects was provisionally endorsed for Kenya and Somalia as further work continues. These projects are aligned with national development priorities in both countries, and with the vision and spirit of the 2013 Tripartite Repatriation Agreement. The portfolio will be launched during the Pledging Conference on Solutions for Somali Refugees in Kenya scheduled to take place towards the end of this year.

The Commission has instructed its Technical Committee to meet in August 2015 to work on implementing the new Joint Strategy and Operations Plan and to complete project proposals supporting specific humanitarian and development oriented resilience action in both Kenya and Somalia.

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