

## High Commissioner's Advocacy Efforts in Africa

**N**eeds in Africa have not been overlooked by the High Commissioner who in the last two months has visited the continent twice, acting as an envoy for peace, repatriation, and the prevention and sustainable resolution of conflicts.

Crisscrossing the continent, High Commissioner António Guterres first traveled in June to Tanzania and Burundi with European Aid Commissioner Louis Michel. This was Mr. Guterres' second visit to the Great Lakes region this year. Again, it was a joint mission, as the first was conducted with the Executive Directors of UNICEF and WFP. This time the High Commissioner joined the EU Commissioner for Develop-

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*Liberia/ UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres travelling in one of the trucks with Liberian returnees from Sierra Leone in a convoy that returned 125 Liberian refugees from Sierra Leone on World Refugee Day, 20 June 2006. Trip from Bo Waterside to Sinje Transit Center, where the returnees spend the night before moving on to their home villages. / UNHCR / E. Kanalstein / 20 June 2006*

### Highlights

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## Ghana: First sea convoy in 2006 for Liberian refugees



*Ghana / The first sea convoy of the year takes back 300 Liberian refugees home/ UNHCR / N. Jehu-Hohay / July 2006*

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## (United Nations High Commissioner's Advocacy Efforts in Africa

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ment and Humanitarian Aid to see first-hand two major refugee and return operations. They traveled to Mtabila camp in western Tanzania and witnessed refugees repatriated both by boat, from Kigoma to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and overland, to Burundi. The trip served to underline the strong support UNHCR has received from the EU's Humanitarian Aid Department for its programmes in Africa. Both Commissioners used the occasion to appeal for more sustained international involvement in post-conflict situations, pointing out the enormous reintegration obstacles faced by returnees in a region that has faced successive rounds of conflict and population displacement.



*Liberia/ António Guterres sharing with Liberian returnees a joyful moment of the return trip. / UNHCR / E. Kanalstein / 20 June . / UNHCR / E. Kanalstein / 20 June 2006*

### Visit and celebration of World Refugee Day in West Africa

The High Commissioner then flew to West Africa with a stopover in Cote d'Ivoire prior to arriving in Liberia to celebrate World Refugee Day. In Abidjan he met with President Gbagbo and other senior government officials. Appealing for a peaceful, political solution to the current crisis, he underlined that the situation in **Côte d'Ivoire** has the potential to destabilise the entire region.

The High Commissioner chose **Liberia** as the site to mark 20 June this year in view of the optimism and determination that hundreds of thousands of former Liberian refugees brought home after long periods in exile. Those

aspirations resonate across Africa, where almost 300,000 refugees repatriated in 2005, and is the reason why 'hope' was selected as the theme for this year's World Refugee Day. The High Commissioner participated in World Refugee Day activities in the Bo Waterside area and accompanied a convoy of returnees from Sierra Leone from the border to the UNHCR transit centre in Sinje.

### African Union Summit in Banjul

In July, the High Commissioner returned to the continent to attend the African Union Summit in Banjul, **Gambia**, along with Ms M. Kamara, Africa Bureau Director, M. I. Ngandu, Regional Liaison Representative, Addis Ababa, and M. Ron Mponda, Chief of Mission, The Gambia. The two-day session allowed a number of bilateral meetings with heads of state on country-specific issues – operations, registration and asylum law, for example – as well as discussions with key partners on the subject of the asylum-migration nexus. Besides several north African countries, Mr. Guterres held talks with Ethiopia, Malawi, Senegal, and South Africa on the complex issue which also increasingly affects sub-Saharan nations.



*Tanzania/ UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres (centre) and European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid Louis Michel (right) walk through Mtabila camp in Western Tanzania. UNHCR/ K. McKinsey*

## The African Union's first holding of a Ministerial Conference on the problem of forced displacement in Africa

Burkina Faso, the current chair of the Permanent Representatives' Committee Sub-Committee on refugees, hosted the African Union's (AU) first Ministerial Conference on refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), since the transition from the former Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to the AU in 2002. The previous Ministerial Conference on displacement in Africa, held under the auspices of the OAU, took place in Sudan in 1998. The 2006 conference took place in Ouagadougou on 1 and 2 June 2006 and was preceded by a two-day Meeting of Experts. The Conference, whose theme was "Protecting and Assisting Victims of Forced Displacement in Africa", was organized pursuant to the decision of the AU Executive Council meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, in 2005, (Decision EX.CL/DEC.179 (VI)). UNHCR, together with other UN Agencies and AU partners, supported the organization of the conference by contributing to the preparation of working papers and participated in the Conference.



*Ouagadougou/ Participants to the African Union Ministerial Conference on "Protecting and Assisting Victims of Forced Displacement in Africa". Daouda Doug/AU web Site*

Throughout the conference, the AU Ministers and Experts discussed and reviewed the achievements and the challenges faced by Member States, the AU Commission and its partners in meeting the assistance and protection needs of refugees, returnees and IDPs. In particular, they reaffirmed the principle of voluntary repatriation, sustainable reintegration and its nexus with issues of peace and security. AU Ministers also discussed issues pertaining to the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps, the physical protection of women and children, the forced recruitment of child soldiers and the need to identify new strategies for resource mobilisation.

### The need for a continental framework governing the situation of IDPs in Africa

After two days of deliberations, the AU Ministers recommended several steps to strengthen the protection and assistance for Africa's forcibly displaced populations. In particular, the Ministers confirmed that the AU should develop a continental legal framework governing the situation of IDPs in Africa to be presented to the AU Summit in January 2007.

#### **NGO statement delivered at the June 2006 UNHCR Standing Committee in Geneva**

"NGOs (...) laud the proposals being discussed by the African Union (AU) to agree the first ever binding treaty on IDP protection. We urge that every support is provided for the ratification and implementation of the IDP Protocol as well as support to the leadership of the AU to develop legislation that can be a model for other jurisdictions. NGOs also urge for the continued involvement and engagement of civil society organisations in the formulation of legal frameworks as they are vital actors in monitoring the implementation of international and regional agreements at the national and local levels."

Additionally, the Ministers decided that the AU should urgently draft Africa-wide rules with regard to the separation of armed elements from refugee, IDP camps and settlement areas. They also recommended that the AU undertakes a special high-level initiative, led by the Chairperson of the AU Commission and the current Chairperson of the Africa Union, with regard to resource mobilisation for the return and sustainable and effective reintegration of displaced persons. The focus of this initiative would be to alert donors and partners to the risks that dwindling international support for recovery and rehabilitation poses to peace and stability in post-conflict situations.

All the decisions and recommendations of the Ministerial Conference were endorsed at the AU Summit on 1 and 2 July 2006 in Banjul, The Gambia.

***The African Union was established in 2002. It comprises 53 members States. Forty-one countries are parties to the 1969 OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa. More on the Africa Union at [www.africa-union.org](http://www.africa-union.org).***

*(With credits to Katherine Cocco, UNHCR Addis Ababa)*

## Ghana: First sea convoy in 2006 for Liberian refugees

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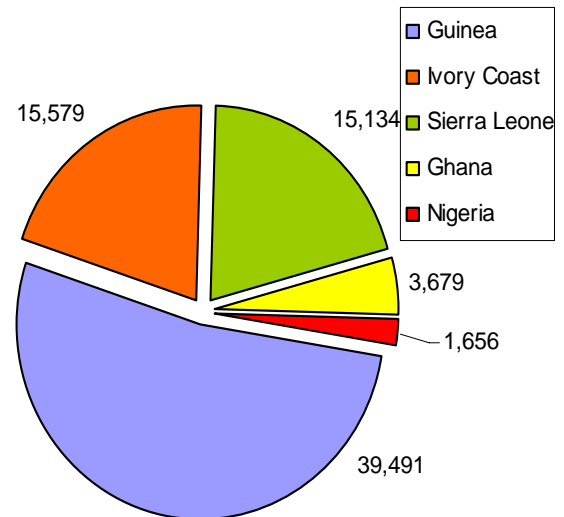
Marking the first sea movement since UNHCR's policy shift, in February 2006, to actively advocate voluntary repatriation for Liberian refugees, the *Brenda Corlett*, a Gambia-based vessel, left the port of Tema (Ghana) on the 27 July with 300 Liberian refugees aboard. This four-day voyage to Monrovia is the fourth sea movement since the beginning of the voluntary repatriation exercise in 2004 but the first of the year. So far, with a combination of air and sea travel, UNHCR has assisted almost 3,700 Liberian refugees to repatriate from Ghana, raising the total number of refugees repatriated with the organization's assistance from the sub-region to some 75,000 at the end of July 2006.

Voluntary repatriation for the 38,000 Liberian refugees remaining in Ghana will continue with regular sea and air movements until June 2007, with the air movements targeting refugees with special needs. Despite a decrease in the number of returns due to the rainy season and difficulties to organize convoys, the repatriation continues from other West Africa countries. With almost 40,000 returns since the beginning of the repatriation operation in 2004, Guinea accounts for half, followed by Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone.



Ghana/ Liberian refugees waving at families and friends upon their departure for Monrovia. / UNHCR / N. Jehu-Hohay / July

Repatriation movements to Liberia  
(main countries of asylum, since 2004)



### In Brief...

Mr. **David Kapya**, former Deputy Director of the Sudan/Chad Special Operations, is now the Coordinator for the same operation area, following the departure of Mr. **Jean-Marie Fakhouri**, former Director of the Sudan/Chad Special Operations and who took new functions as Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (DSRSG) for Humanitarian, Development and Reconstruction issues in Iraq.

Ms **Aida Haile Mariam**, former Deputy Representative in DRC, has taken up her new functions as Representative in Ghana, replacing **Thomas Albrecht**, former Representative, and **Luc Stevens**, Representative *ad interim*.

**World Refugee Day:** World Refugee Day was marked on 20 June all over the world and in Africa, where there are 2,6 million refugees.

**"If there is one common trait among the tens of millions of refugees that we at the UN refugee agency have helped over the past 55 years, it's the fact that despite losing everything, they never give up hope," said UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres.**

**Contribution to the Africa Newsletter :** The Africa Newsletter is prepared by the Africa Bureau with the contribution of Offices in the Field and the support of Headquarters colleagues. For comments : please contact H  l  ne Daubelcour, External Relations Officer, Africa Bureau (+ 41 22 739 83 68) or [daubelco@unhcr.ch](mailto:daubelco@unhcr.ch).

## Reintegration of the Sudan/ Chad Special Operations in Africa Bureau

For the past three years, the Africa Bureau of UNHCR did not deal with operations Sudan and Chad. In 2003, UNHCR took the decision to extract Chad and Sudan from its Regional Bureau for Africa and create a separate unit, called the *Sudan/Chad Special Operations*, dedicated to these two countries only.

With 868 UNHCR posts in the field and headquarters, and 26 offices set up in both countries, this Unit has operated on several humanitarian fronts: **Eastern Sudan**, which hosts some 120,000 Eritrean refugees; the **Darfur region** of Sudan, which has witnessed the flight of some 207,000 refugees to **Eastern Chad** and of some 1.8 million IDPs within Darfur, including 700,000 persons in **West Darfur** where UNHCR is present; **South Chad** where UNHCR provides assistance and protection to 48,000 refugees from Central Africa Republic; and **Southern Sudan** to prepare for the return of Southern Sudanese refugees and IDPs to this region devastated by an internal conflict which lasted more than two decades.

The decision to create this special unit for Chad and Sudan was prompted, on the one hand by the complexity and scale of the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, and on the other by the prospects for peace in Southern Sudan and the expected challenges of preparing for the repatriation of half a million Sudanese refugees from seven neighbouring countries. With the widening implications of the Darfur crisis, UNHCR considered that it was time for Sudan and Chad to re-integrate the Africa Bureau. This merger became effective in May 2006. The Africa Bureau now officially covers all sub-Saharan Africa.

As a result of this re-integration, the Africa Bureau now oversees more than half of UNHCR offices worldwide, with 137 offices out of 262, covering for 2006 a budget of 672.9 million USD (including 465.9 million USD for EXCOM budget and 206.9 million USD for supplementary programmes in Africa; please see funding table on the last page of Africa Newsletter). With 2,507 posts, the Africa Bureau has 37% of the regular UNHCR workforce in the world. In addition, there are 498 posts created for specific programmes, such as the Southern Sudan and DRC repatriation operations, bringing the total number of UNHCR staff dedicated to providing assistance and protection to populations in need in this region of the world to 3,005 persons.

## A Strategic Meeting – WFP and UNHCR working together in West Africa

UNHCR and WFP have worked closely together for the past fifteen years to meet the needs of Liberians who fled civil war mainly into Guinea, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria. In this spirit of long-lasting collaboration, WFP and UNHCR organised a strategic meeting with their representatives of the aforementioned countries, all of which are concerned by the Liberia situation. The meeting was held in Freetown in May 2006 and was co-chaired by Ms Marjon Kamara, UNHCR Regional Director for Africa, and Mr Mustapha Darboe, WFP Regional Director for West Africa. The main focus of this meeting was to finalize the joint regional strategic plan for the completion of the assisted repatriation operation, including strategies for addressing the remaining refugee populations in asylum countries.

It was agreed that the cut-off date of the assisted repatriation operation would be June 2007. The main concern of the meeting was to strike a balance between the need to keep the momentum of the repatriation and the necessity to ensure that the rights of refugees and their basic needs are met in the countries of asylum. To this end, WFP will be ending general distributions in refugee camps by December 2006, while targeted feeding will continue for the first six months of 2007.

As part of the outcome of the meeting, WFP and UNHCR have conducted Joint Assessment Missions (JAMs) in July 2006 in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Ghana to fine-tune the joint strategy and assess the assistance needs. In Sierra Leone and Guinea, the Government participated in the exercise.

*(A contribution from WFP)*

# Funding Update

	ANNUAL PROGRAMME BUDGET						SUPPLEMENTARY PROGRAMME BUDGET						GRAND TOTAL		
	AFRICA	CENTRAL AFRICA & GREAT LAKES*	EAST & HORN OF AFRICA*	SOUTHERN AFRICA	WEST AFRICA	SUB-TOTAL	Darfur	Southern Sudan Repat. & Reint. + IDPs	Repat.& Reint.of Congolese Refugees	IDP SBs				SUB-TOTAL	
										CHAD	DRC	LIBERIA	SOMALIA	UGANDA	
INITIAL BUDGET		190,158,105	99,206,821	56,157,105	103,900,704	449,422,735	33,185,494	65,863,243	75,570,862	2,866,764	14,707,251	13,754,660	4,712,603	6,572,031	217,232,908
REVISED BUDGET		195,619,854	103,594,093	57,989,842	108,720,600	465,924,389	21,085,381	65,863,243	75,570,862	2,866,764	14,707,251	13,754,660	4,712,603	8,386,699	206,947,463
BROADLY EARMARKED FUNDS (at regional and subregional level)	62,705,960	26,454,429	13,150,558	6,790,101	12,752,631	121,853,679									121,853,679
% Revised Budget		14%	13%	12%	12%	26%									
EARMARKED FUNDS (at country/sectoral level)		93,513,708	31,376,805	9,113,168	29,586,485	163,590,166									163,590,166
% Revised Budget		48%	30%	16%	27%	35%									
SB CONTRIBUTIONS							17,786,726	31,559,284	26,188,918	1,000,000	10,409,128	5,938,466	2,694,039	8,794,988	104,371,549
FUNDS AVAILABLE	62,705,960	119,968,137	44,527,363	15,903,269	42,339,116	285,443,845	17,786,726	31,559,284	26,188,918	1,000,000	10,409,128	5,938,466	2,694,039	8,794,988	389,815,394
PERCENTAGE FUNDED OF REVISED BUDGET		61.3%	43.0%	27.4%	38.9%	61.3%	84.4%	47.9%	34.7%	34.9%	70.8%	43.2%	57.2%	104.9%	50.4%
															57.9%

The following donors have provided UNHCR with broadly earmarked funds: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Japan, Monaco, Norway, Sweden, United States of America and Private donors. The following donors have provided UNHCR with earmarked funds: Australia, African Union, Belgium, Canada, CERF, Denmark, Estonia, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, OPEC Fund, South Africa, Spain\*, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, UN Pool Funds, United States of America and Private donors. \* Includes contributions from the central government and other public administrations, the latter channelled through Espana con ACNUR.