

United Nations General Assembly Fifth Committee

Agenda item 134

Proposed Programme Budget: biennium 2012-2013: special subject –
UNHCR financial reporting

Wednesday, 5 October 2011

Introduction of the document A/66/352

**Kumiko Matsuura-Mueller, Controller, Director Division of Financial and
Administrative Management, UNHCR**

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

For your consideration is the Report of the United Nations High Commissioner on transitional measures concerning financial reporting under the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, transmitted to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General in his Note as contained in document A/66/352.

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to introduce the document.

The General Assembly, through its resolution 60/283 of 7 July 2006 approved the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) as the accounting standard for all United Nations organizations to replace the United Nations System Accounting Standards (UNSAS).

UNHCR aims to be compliant with IPSAS effective 1 January 2012. For this purpose, the financial rules for voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner, which are currently in accordance with UNSAS need to be revised to be in line with IPSAS.

As a general background please allow me to make a small remark: the financial rules for voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees have been established subsequent to the General Assembly Resolution 1166 of 1957, which decided that: “appropriate financial rules for the use of all funds received by the High Commissioner under the terms of the present resolution shall be established, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the High Commissioners’s Programme, and in accordance with the Statute of the Office of the High Commissioner and Financial Regulations of the United Nations”.

The proposed amendments to the current financial rules have been submitted to the Executive Committee for its consideration at its 62nd session, being held between 3 and 7 October.

In the process of revising the financial rules, UNHCR has consulted with other United Nations system organizations in particular with those who were early adopters of IPSAS. The amendments have also been reviewed by the United Nations Board of Auditors, the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Legal Advice Section of UNHCR and their comments have been duly taken into consideration.

The final draft document containing the amendments to the rules has been reviewed by the ACABQ at its 7 September meeting, and its comments were reflected in a corrigendum to the document submitted to the Executive Committee.

Subject to the endorsement by the Executive Committee, the revised IPSAS based financial rules for the voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner may be applied as long as they are in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the United Nations, as stipulated in the GA resolution 1166.

In this respect, taking into consideration of the timing of the alignment of the United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules with IPSAS, the High Commissioner is requesting the approval by the General Assembly to allow UNHCR to apply the Financial Regulations of the United Nations mutatis mutandis in a manner that is consistent with IPSAS, as a transitional measure and until such time that these regulations are revised to become IPSAS based.

On behalf of the High Commissioner for Refugees, I would like to thank you for your consideration of this request.
