

**IASC Weekly Meeting**  
**5 January 2005**  
**Notes**



**1: Briefing on the humanitarian situation and the coordination structure in Chad**  
(by Lucia Alberghini, OCHA Office in Chad)

Mrs. Lucia Alberghini, who has just now left her position as Humanitarian Affairs Officer in the OCHA Office in Chad, gave a briefing of the current humanitarian situation and the challenges faced in Chad.

As the situation in Chad largely reflects the wider regional context with its political, ethnic and economic challenges, it can generally be characterized as instable.

The political instability led to two attempts of coup d'état in the course of 2004. Since Chad's President, Mr. Idriss Deby, belongs to the same ethnic group of the rebels in the Darfur, but came to power in 1990 supported by the Sudanese government, there are tensions between the different actors.

The country is facing a high insecurity in the capital as well in rural areas. The whole country, except Tibesti, which had already been in phase 2 before, has shifted from security phase 1 to security phase 2. Provinces in the eastern border have even shifted to phase 3.

Economically, the population is challenged by a high cost of life, frequent electricity cuts and by irregular payment of civil servants' salaries. Moreover, the exploitation of the oil revenues has no positive side effects for the general population.

Regarding the humanitarian situation, it was expressed with concern that there is an increasing tension between the refugees and the local population in Chad.

Around 200,000 Sudanese refugees are situated along 600km of the border in Eastern Chad, and around 30,000 refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) are located along the Southern border. An arrival of further 50,000 – 100,000 refugees in the course of 2005 is feared.

The sudden influx of refugees arrived in an environment that could even before be described as very fragile. Humanitarian assistance has mainly reached refugees which, however, led to tensions between refugees and the local population.

While refugees have benefited from emergency assistance in the fields of food assistance, health, nutrition, water and sanitation and basic-needs equipment, the local population, especially in Eastern Chad, lacks potable water, firewood, pasture, health centres and schools itself. The tensions are likely to increase. Therefore, humanitarian assistance destined expressly to the local population needs to be put into place urgently.

As the most likely scenario it is assumed that the situation in the Darfur remains unstable which would lead to an increasing number of refugees at the Eastern border of Chad. Consequently, tensions between the refugees and the local population could increase and cause security incidents. The worst scenario assumes an increase in political instability and loss of social control.

The coordination structure that has been scheduled in this context is composed by sectors groups in Abeche and N'djamena, a coordination cell ("support secretariat") consistent of UNHCR, OCHA and the Comité National d'Appui aux réfugiés and the Comité d'Appui à l'Action Humanitaire à Abeche et N'djamena. UNHCR, in collaboration with OCHA, is the lead agency in the humanitarian coordination.

It was strongly suggested to put into place multi-sector interventions in the short and in the medium term for the whole non-refugee population to reduce risks linked to the tensions between the local population and the refugees.

Further recommendations include the urgent development of a Contingency Plan, a better coordination between OCHA Chad and OCHA Sudan, and the urgent plea for the funding of an UNFPA project included into the CAP 2005 which deals with a quick census of the population in Eastern Chad.

Following the briefing, participants further discussed the non-equilibrium in humanitarian assistance. Also, the human rights situation in the region was regarded with concern.

It was also suggested by UNHCR to further work on a Contingency Plan in the following days.

## **2: Debriefing on OCHA mission to Georgia - Transition phase** (by Dusan Zupka, OCHA)

Mr. Dusan Zupka, Humanitarian Affairs Officer of OCHA's Europe, Central Asia, Middle East and North Africa Section, gave a debriefing on a recent OCHA mission to Georgia. The main purpose of the OCHA mission was to prepare the phasing out of OCHA's presence in Georgia.

It was explained why OCHA has formally closed down its office in Georgia in the end of 2004, although Georgia is still a highly instable and volatile country with a number of ¼ million IDPs (figures provided by the government).

The last CAP for Georgia had been launched in 1997. After that, the main focus of the international community moved from emergency relief to recovery and transition. As the emergency situation had already emerged in 1991/92, humanitarian actors experienced a fatigue of donors for Georgia in the last years.

Currently, especially the situation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia remains problematic. Although the challenges in Georgia generally require very different approaches, main efforts should be made in the fields of Good Governance, rule of law and minorities' rights.

As the last CAP had been launched eight years ago, the humanitarian community has tried to attract funding through alternative tools. Since 2002, a conference on Humanitarian Situation and Strategy has been held regularly.

The latest Georgia Humanitarian Situation and Strategy Conference took place on 17 November 2004, and had been prepared by OCHA and chaired by the Resident Coordinator (RC). While the purpose of the meeting was also to line out the strategy for 2005, it was difficult to determine in which stage Georgia is currently located: emergency, transition, recovery or development. Conclusively, different regions in Georgia are currently going through different stages.

At the Humanitarian Situation and Strategy Conference 2005 four priority areas for Georgia have been outlined:

1. Enabling Transition

2. Conflict-affected Populations
3. Vulnerable Populations
4. Natural Disasters

The final document of the conference is attached to the notes.

OCHA's phasing out of its presence in Georgia firstly resulted in the downsizing of staff from 10 to four within the course of 2004, and finally resulted in the formal close of the OCHA Office in the end of 2004.

However, it has been agreed with the UN Country Team and the RC to put in place transitional structures before the final end of OCHA's presence to ensure effective humanitarian coordination.

As the UN Development Group (UNDG) has provided 100 000 US\$ to set up a new transitional unit in Georgia, it was agreed that three OCHA staff members will remain in this unit.

Following the briefing, UNHCR provided an update on their main activities in Georgia, where it deals with 4 situations/ issues: Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Chechnya refugees and strengthening the national asylum system. As Georgia has ratified the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, more work could be done regarding the national system. UNHCR also expressed their concern about OCHA's departure, but welcome the new transitional unit. The RC had suggested UNHCR as lead agency in case of an emergency since the transitional unit will not deal with emergency situations. However, UNHCR expressed concern about the capacities to assume new tasks.

During the discussion, it was focused on the transitional unit, which could be an example for other countries going through transition phase. Further questions related to UNOMIG and UNDP's role in assisting and protecting IDPs.

### **3: IASC Standard Briefing** (by Kirsi Madi, IASC Secretariat)

- The IASC Task Force on the Tsunami/Earthquake disaster in Asia will meet this afternoon, Wednesday 5 January, at 15h30 in Room F-3.
- An information meeting on the Flash Appeal for the Tsunami affected communities will be held tomorrow, Thursday 6 January at 15h00 in Room XIX (Building E, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor) in the Palais des Nations. The meeting will be chaired by Ms. Yvette Stevens.  
It will provide a forum for affected communities and agencies being active in the region to provide an overview of the planned activities and related requirements reflected in the Flash Appeal, which will be launched in Jakarta on the same day.  
Invitations have been sent out to the Permanent Missions of the UN Member States as well as to the agencies.
- Further, a pledging conference/ information meeting on the Tsunami disaster at the Ministerial Level will be held on Tuesday, 11 January at 15h00 in Room XIX (Building E, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor) of the Palais des Nations.  
The meeting will be chaired by Mr. Jan Egeland, who will give a brief update on current activities and remaining challenges, as well as on the contributions pledged and received. Member states will have the opportunity to announce new pledges in response to the Flash Appeal.

Invitations have been sent out to the Permanent Missions of the UN Member States as well as to the agencies.

- The Programme Kick-Off of the CAP will take place on the same day, Tuesday, 11 January, from 10h00 – 12h30. The venue will be confirmed later in a separate e-mail.

The first meeting of the IASC Reference Group on the Humanitarian Response Review which was scheduled for Monday, 10 January, was postponed to the first week of February.

**IASC Weekly Meeting  
5 January 2005  
List of Participants**



<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
Lucia Alberghini	OCHA	
Dusan Zupka	OCHA	Zupka@un.org
Kirsi Madi	IASC Secretariat	madi@un.org
Kemlin Furley	UNHCR	furley@unhcr.ch
Zola Dowell	OCHA	dowell@un.org
Dina Abou Samra	NRC	Dina.abousamra@nrc.ch
Gustavo Laurie	UNMAS	glaurie@unog.ch
Michel Nouredine Kassa	OCHA	kassam@un.org
Muray Mubiaka	OHCHR	mmubiaka@ohchr.org
Amanda Bok	ICRC	abok@icrc.org
Peter Neussl	OCHA IDD	neussl@un.org
Caroline Peguet	OCHA	peguet@un.org
Leyri Segura	IASC Secretariat	Seguragomez@un.org
Stefan Toma	UNICEF	stoma@unicef.org
Craig Sanders	UNHCR	sanders@unhcr.ch
Ellen Funch	IASC Secretariat	funch@un.org
Michael Hyden	ACT – Action by Churches together	mhy@act-intl.org
Ariane Waldvogel	WFP	Ariane.waldvogel@wfp.org
Olivier Degreef	UNICEF	odegreef@unicef.org
Olivier Mouquet	UNHCR	mouquet@unhcr.ch
Paul Paredes	FAO	Pparedes-portella@unog.ch
Lisa Holstenson	ReliefWeb	holstenson@un.org
Laura Calvio	OCHA	calvio@un.org

