

## Tripartite meeting: Parties agree to reinforce voluntary repatriation of Rwandan refugees



The heads of delegations successfully close the 9th Tripartite meeting

A high-level Tripartite Meeting between the Governments of Rwanda, Uganda and UNHCR was held in Kigali from September 29th to 30th.

The Rwandan delegation was led by Hon. General Marcel Gatsinzi, Minister of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs (MIDIMAR). The Ugandan delegation was headed by Hon. Musa Ewceru, Uganda's Minister of State for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees. UNHCR was represented by Ms Neimah Warsame and Mr Kai Nielsen, UNHCR Representatives in Rwanda and Uganda, respectively.

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The Parties to the Tripartite meeting called for the need to re-double collective efforts to find a comprehensive solution to the Rwandan refugee situation. To this end, a joint Communiqué was signed on the modalities for the return of Rwandan refugees from Uganda. Amongst others, Parties agreed to reinvigorate the information and sensitisation campaigns for Rwandan refugees with a view to promote voluntary repatriation, and to swiftly put in place clear practical modalities for the implementation of the Cessation Clauses. The Ugandan Minister pledged that his country "is not relenting in our efforts to continue the mobilisation and sensitisation efforts". Similarly, the importance of information campaigns was echoed by Minister Gatsinzi of MIDIMAR, as he also urged all parties to work towards the speedy implementation of the agreed plan.

The UNHCR Representative reaffirmed UNHCR's commitment to the comprehensive strategy which was established following the visit of the High Commissioner to DRC, Uganda and Rwanda in 2009 and which aims at bringing to closure the Rwandan refugee situation. "UNHCR recognizes the great efforts that have been and continue to be exerted in the implementation of the agreed roadmap for the Comprehensive Conclusion of the Rwandese refugee situation." Ms Neimah Warsame continued: "Despite this salient progress, we realise that more time is needed to create the necessary space to consolidate solutions for refugees in countries of asylum. More time is required to further prepare for what is evidently a complex exemption exercise to identify those refugees with a continued need for international protection. For these reasons, UNHCR has deemed it necessary to adjust the implementation period of the cessation clause to June 30th 2012".

Since the mid-1990s, more than 3 million Rwandans have returned to the country from all over the world.

## Partnership with youth to fight the law of silence



*Despite the solemnness of the issue, the workshop also managed to raise smiles in the audience in Kiziba camp*

When the children of Kibiza camp left the market place after a day of sensitization on violence against children, they were singing with one voice their disapproval of the harm done against them by “sugar daddies and sugar mummies”.

The sensitization session which included theatre, discussions and singing performances was planned under the framework of a six-month communication campaign to fight “Ceceka” - the law of silence - in the camp. The campaign was launched during the celebrations of the International Day of the African Child, on June 16th.

Several songs composed and interpreted by the Jeunesse Chretienne en Mission (JCM) youth music group kick-started the session in the market place. Their performance was followed by two short dramas played by young refugees, illustrating sexual abuse of children by adults, as well as the harmful practice of informal arrangements between families to solve and hide crimes perpetrated against children.

The sketches were accompanied by a discussion with the audience on the reality of the situation in the Kiziba, and on what is wrong and immoral in the behaviour of some adults towards children. More than a thousand refugees thronged the benches and floors of the hall where the event took place - the great majority of them children and adolescents.



*The audience closely followed the sketches on stage*

The children’s final sketch highlighted the despair and suffering faced by children who have lost one of their parents and whose remaining parent decides to remarry. The audience was visibly receptive to the sketches as signs of laughter and disapprobation were in turn demonstrated by the audience as the story was told.



*The workshop gathered both children and adults*

The sensitization activities were arranged by the community-based Child Protection Committee in Kiziba camp, in collaboration with the **Association of Volunteers in International Service (AVSI)** and the association Jeunesse Chrétienne en Mission (JCM).