Press Release: Joint Visit to the Naivasha “Open Area” in Khartoum State

Khartoum, 16 October 2018. The Commissioner Hamad Elgizouli Morowa from the Commission for Refugees (CoR), Deputy Commissioner Dr. Mohammed Al-Sinari from the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan Gwi-Yeop Son, and the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR Representative in Sudan Noriko Yoshida, jointly visited on 9 October 2018 the South Sudanese refugee and host communities in Naivasha, Umbadah locality, which is the second largest “open area” refugee settlement in Khartoum State.

The CoR Commissioner Mr. Morowa reassured that the refugees are welcome in Sudan. “Until the time comes when you can return to South Sudan, we welcome you, and with our partners from the UN and other organizations we will continue to support you to the best of our abilities,” Mr. Morowa said. The Commissioner referred to the ongoing campaigns to register all the South Sudanese, affirming the Government’s commitment to provide all refugees with documents.

On behalf of the HAC Commissioner, the HAC Deputy Commissioner Dr. Al-Sinari lauded the resilience of the refugees and encouraged them to not lose hope as they are not forgotten, assuring them that Sudan will continue to support them until their plight is solved. Dr. Sinari also asked the international community to give more attention to refugees in Sudan.

The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator expressed her appreciation to the Government of Sudan for the long-standing generosity and support of refugees. “We will do our best to assist prioritizing the most critical needs, our goal is to enable you to help yourselves and become self-sufficient and resilient,” Ms. Son said addressing the refugee and host communities.

The UNHCR Representative Ms. Yoshida expressed her appreciation to the government and local authorities for the facilitation of access and humanitarian activities, calling for the authorities to maintain sustained access.

To date, only minimal intervention has been made for refugees in the “open areas”. In March 2018, around 22,650 refugees and 548 of the most in need among host community families in Naivasha received blankets and plastic sheeting from CoR and UNHCR. This was part of a larger non-food assistance to over 10,000 households (57,346 individuals) that reached all “open area” settlements. In August 2018, UNICEF provided school supplies and recreational kits benefiting 1,250 refugee children, in Naivasha.
In August 2018, the Government of Sudan and humanitarian actors finalised the interagency “Khartoum Open Areas Response Plan”, covering an estimated 58,000 refugees in nine open areas to address their most critical multisectoral needs for an initial period of nine months. The Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SHF) recently approved $2 million for immediate needs in the “open areas”, which covers approximately 10% of the $20 million total requirement for the Open Areas Response Plan.

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For further information, please contact the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Sudan (OCHASudan@un.org).