Repatriation of Congolese refugees from Angola to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

- The seventh convoy of the organized voluntary repatriation to DRC departed from Lóvua settlement on 25 November 2019 at 7:30, in the direction of Kalamba Mbuji, Kasai Central Province, DRC.

- The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) utilized nine passenger buses to transport the refugees to the first waypoint where refugees changed and boarded ten trucks. Eight trucks were utilized for luggage. It was necessary to exchange buses for trucks for the second half of the journey to the border due to the road conditions.

- Refugees spent three nights in the departure center in Lóvua settlement. This enabled UNHCR to send the pre-manifest at least 72 hours prior to the journey as per the request by the bank in DRC, to facilitate the assistance package.

- There are two waypoints on the route to the Kasai Central border at Tchicolondo in Angola, which is a stopping point to enable refugees to have a small break. There is also a transit center near the border.

- The convoy arrived at the transit center at 17:15. Due to the long distance to the border, refugees and humanitarian staff spent the night at the transit center. On the following day on 26 November, all 18 trucks crossed the border to DRC at 8:45.

- 410 refugees were part of this convoy including 250 children.

- UNHCR partners provided the following assistance to refugees.
  - The International Organization for Migration (IOM) tagged the luggage of the refugees and accompanied the convoy to Kalamba Mbuji, the transit center in Kasai Central, DRC.
  - Medicos del Mundo (MDM) provided medical and MHPSS assistance. Their ambulance also accompanied the convoy to the border.
  - Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) provided WASH and shelter assistance;
  - Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) provided refugees with food during their stay in the departure center and at the transit center. JRS also provided snacks and water for the journey;

- Government of Angola (GoA) officials were present at Lóvua settlement and, together with UNHCR registration and IOM, checked the Voluntary Repatriation Forms (VRF) as well as final boarding of all passengers on the trucks.

- So far, 2,253 people have been repatriated to DRC.

Contact Details:
Juliana Ghazi – Associate External Relations Officer– ghazi@unhcr.org - +244 931 788 356
Omotola Akindipe – Associate Reporting Officer – akindipe@unhcr.org - +244 926 829 455

www.unhcr.org