

**Launch of the 2015 Inter-Agency Regional Refugee Response Plan for
CAR Refugees**

Palais des Nations, Geneva (room XXVI)

10-11:30, Friday, 23 January 2015

Remarks by Brian Lander, Deputy Director, WFP Geneva

Outline [check against delivery]:

[Salutations]

More than 420,000 refugees, returnees, and third country nationals have fled with no assets into neighbouring Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Republic of Congo, the majority arriving since January 2014 in remote areas with limited services. WFP is assisting these refugees through blanket and supplementary feeding to stabilize undernutrition; and restore access to basic services through food by prescription, emergency school feeding, and other services.

In November and December 2014, WFP reached 503,651 beneficiaries with food assistance; 76 percent of planned tonnage was distributed. Both Bangui and Bouar sub-offices achieved 100 percent of planned distributions. Nine Kamaz trucks and five trailers have arrived in Bangui from Douala to augment the overall trucking capacity. In Cameroon, the eighth distribution cycle concluded in the East, Adamawa and North regions on 22 December. WFP reached 88,207 beneficiaries, which represents a 2 percent increase from the previous round.

In response to another wave of insecurity in Central African Republic and further displacement of populations, WFP will respond in 2015 through a new Regional Emergency Operation, to better reflect the format of the inter-agency response. The regional approach will span the five countries and consolidate earlier country-specific responses to this prolonged crisis. The emphasis on a regional approach will allow for more coherent medium term planning, more equitable use of resources between the countries affected by the crisis, as well as bring coherence to supply chain management

Overall, in 2015 WFP will support 1.5 million beneficiaries in the region, through a budget of US\$196 million, with food assistance, nutritional support (to children and PLW) and cash vouchers where appropriate. WFP will target 1.2 million beneficiaries inside CAR, 182 thousand in Cameroon, 95 thousand in DRC, 50 thousand in Chad and finally, 15 thousand in RoC. Cash and Voucher modalities will be implemented in targeted areas of Chad and DRC. With the exception of two camps in DRC where market conditions allow for cash transfers, value based vouchers will be implemented.

Although at the moment the situation (from an operational point of view) is fairly stable in the asylum-receiving countries, WFP stands ready to scale up in response to potential eruptions of violence and very quick changes in scenario. WFP hopes to be able to maintain current level of assistance although a decrease of 77 percent (TBC) in livestock, 50 percent (TBC) in food production and major disruptions in trade are expected. Field colleagues report that the

situation inside C.A.R remains volatile, with very uncertain security conditions straining WFP's ability to gain access to vulnerable populations; every week trucks are high jacked and looted. However, it must be noted that the recent establishment of inter-agency convoys to move relief items, has improved our ability to reach remote areas. The humanitarian and donor community, alike, must remain vigilant, noting that it is only through political solutions that the humanitarian situation will begin to abate. We must therefore keep a close eye on the situation, paying particular attention to two important upcoming political events. The first, will be the outcomes of the Bangui Forum, to be held in February 2015, which will discuss issues such as governance, reforms, security, reconciliation and accountability. The second, will be the elections, to be held in August 2015. They will shape the political future and stability of the sub-region.

Given the situation outlined above and despite the momentary stability in the surrounding countries, C.A.R itself must not be forgotten and must be funded accordingly. A well-funded operation will ensure that WFP, and the rest of the humanitarian community, is ready to scale up if needed, while continuing to address the life-saving needs of the most vulnerable in the region.