



**Misión Permanente del Ecuador
ante la ONU y otros Organismos Internacionales
Ginebra - Suiza**

Geneva, 10 July 2017

Thank you Chair.

Ecuador would like to thank the Co-Chairs and panellists for the space created for the discussion of responsibility sharing in international protection.

The distinguished Ambassador of Brazil has referred to the 2014 Brazil Plan of Action; the longstanding regional experience in cooperation, and some of the modalities of responsibility sharing among developing countries, recognizing at the same time the existing transnational challenges.

Ecuador is part of the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action. We believe that, it is a relevant framework for cooperation and solidarity that responds to new challenges in international protection, through the development and provision of durable and creative solutions, such as the regional labour mobility of refugees. In this context, it is worth mentioning that Ecuador has developed modalities for protection prior to the Brazil Plan of Action, that have been recognized by UNHCR as a world referent. An example of those, is the 2009-2010 Ecuador Plan of Action for the so called “Enhanced Registration Process” by which Ecuador, being already the biggest recipient of refugees in all Latin America and the Caribbean, implemented a large-scale registration process, which included several special mobile units nation-wide, with particular attention to areas along the northern border with Colombia, registering a total of 27.740 refugees in a one year period (March 2009-March 2010). As Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during part of that process of massive recognition of the status of refugee, I can assure that the lessons learned (not only positive lessons) are worth to be considered in the construction of a Global Compact.

Ecuador has had a clear and evolving path in international protection for decades, which led to the recent approval of the National Law of Human Mobility, recognized by both, UNHCR and IOM, as possible the most advanced in the world. Let me emphasize that in its Chapter 5 several of the recommendations of the Brazil Plan of Action are included.



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In this sense, humanitarian visas (including in the case of natural disasters); national identity cards; and travel documents for refugees have been a reality for years in Ecuador. In a recent event, in the framework of the UNHCR Executive Committee, Ecuadorian machine readable (and soon digital) travel documents for refugees and stateless persons were presented as an example of good practice.

Having the highest number of refugees in Latin America and the Caribbean, there are no mobility restrictions for refugees in Ecuador. They have the same rights and duties of any other Ecuadorian citizen, with the exception of certain electoral rights. This situation translates in the full enjoyment of the high quality public universal education and health systems by refugees and asylum-seekers, under equal conditions as the national population. The same principle applies to all benefits: housing, the right to work or engage in any legal economic activity (without requiring any special work permit), social security, automatic nationality for children born in Ecuador, financial and banking services, and only upon presentation of the provisional asylum-seeker certificate.

It has been a challenging process based on a State Policy that is still evolving. It has had an enormous economic, political and social cost that has been addressed in several ways, such as through the empowerment of local governments and civil society in promoting the integration of refugees as key elements for development, and through the achievement of other durable solutions.

In conclusion, and because of the reduced time allowed, Ecuador, a small developing country with a solid humanitarian and human rights policy, has been able to do what many developed countries avoid. Let's be honest, in many cases just not to pay the political cost. I can proudly say that Ecuador is a model to follow in the process of the construction of a Global Compact for refugees. Our experience is at the service of that process.