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**Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations
High Commissioner for Refugees
Sixty-eighth session**

Summary record of the 702nd meeting

Held at the Palais de Nations, Geneva, on Monday, 2 October 2017, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. McCarney..... (Canada)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

General debate

1. **The Chairperson**, opening the general debate, said that she wished to remind participants that the object of the exercise was to discuss regional situations and global challenges. Delegates were requested to focus their comments on purely humanitarian issues and to avoid political matters.

2. **Mr. Johnson** (Togo), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that by the end of 2016, the number of persons forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, violence or natural disasters had reached over 65 million worldwide. In 2016, the General Assembly of the United Nations had adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, in which it had recommended that the international community adopt a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder approach in order to ease pressures on the host countries involved and enhance refugee self-reliance. Developing countries were particularly affected, since they received 84 per cent of all refugees. African countries had kept their borders open and were providing shelter and protection to some 20 million displaced persons across the continent. Support from the international community and a steady flow of financial assistance were essential in order to find lasting and appropriate solutions in Africa. In that regard, the African Group was aware that the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank had funding of US\$ 2 million to support host countries, but would like more information on the distribution of the resources, the regions that would benefit and the programmes for which the funding would be used, as well as the types of assistance that would be provided by the World Bank, including whether the assistance would take the form of loans or subsidies. Cash-based programming should be introduced widely in Africa, in line with the commitment made under the Grand Bargain on humanitarian financing.

3. As at 31 July 2017, funding had been secured for only 27.5 per cent of the budget for Africa of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The African Group was very concerned about the situation and called for clearer planning and priority-setting with respect to the programmes implemented in Africa. It was all the more concerned as there were plans to reduce the budget for Africa in 2018, even though the number of refugees was not expected to noticeably decrease. The African Group would like UNHCR to engage in more extensive consultations with host countries, in order to ensure that funding was used for priority measures to fulfil people's basic needs. With that in mind, the African Group welcomed the multi-year funding plans and private donor fundraising strategy developed by UNHCR.

4. **Mr. Sørensen** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania, said that global humanitarian financing requirements for 2017 had been estimated at US\$ 23.7 billion and that there was a funding gap of US\$ 13.3 billion. It was therefore necessary to mobilize additional funds through traditional and innovative mechanisms and improved efficiency. As the world's largest humanitarian donor, the European Union looked forward to UNHCR implementing the changes foreseen in its Strategic Directions 2017–2021. The European Union and its member States firmly supported the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. The Executive Committee was a fitting platform for the implementation of collective and multilateral measures to make the comprehensive refugee response framework a success. The range of proposals made during discussions on the framework showed that the time had come to draw up a global compact on refugees. In 2016, the European Union and its member States had adopted a new, development-oriented approach to forced displacement. They considered that particular attention should be paid to the protection of refugee women and girls and to the economic empowerment of refugee women. The European Union continued to work towards reforming the common European asylum system. Discussions were being held with a view to addressing the weaknesses demonstrated by the displacement crisis of 2015 and 2016 and in order to reach agreement on a sustainable, efficient and humane asylum system. At the same time, member States of the European Union had also considerably stepped up their resettlement efforts, notably through the implementation of the European resettlement scheme of July 2015 and the

European Union-Turkey statement of March 2016. In the same spirit, at the end of September 2017, the European Commission had recommended resettling 50,000 persons in need of international protection over the following two years. The ongoing displacement crises illustrated the importance of protection in emergency humanitarian operations. The Myanmar refugee crisis highlighted the need for unrestricted humanitarian access and for a solution to the problem of statelessness. The European Union encouraged UNHCR to continue participating in the discussions on the global compact on migration.

5. **Mr. Quinn** (Australia), speaking on behalf of the Group of Friends of the UNHCR campaign to end statelessness (the “I Belong” campaign), said that he represented a cross-regional group of States that was committed to ending statelessness by 2024. The number of States parties to the statelessness conventions of 1954 and 1961 had increased from 83 to 89 and from 61 to 69, respectively, since the launch of the UNHCR campaign in 2014. Thanks to reforms carried out in Madagascar and Sierra Leone, the number of States that did not allow mothers to transfer nationality to their children on an equal basis with fathers had fallen. The Group welcomed the adoption of national action plans to combat statelessness in countries such as Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria and the efforts made by Thailand to end statelessness among schoolchildren. The Group also noted with satisfaction the law that Brazil had passed to facilitate the acquisition of nationality by stateless persons. At the regional level, the Group welcomed the adoption of the Banjul Plan of Action of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on the Eradication of Statelessness 2017–2024 and the new draft declaration by member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. In order to end statelessness by 2024, it was important not only to maintain that level of progress but also to increase the momentum. With its mandate to prevent and reduce statelessness, UNHCR would play a crucial role in achieving that goal. It should continue to work with the Inter-Parliamentary Union in order to encourage States to adopt best practices for the prevention and reduction of statelessness.

6. **Mr. Dačić** (Serbia) said that, for several years, the annual session of the Executive Committee had taken place in specific circumstances, against the backdrop of the migrant and refugee crisis. In order to tackle that crisis, it was necessary not only to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need, but also to find durable solutions to the problem of protracted displacement. His Government welcomed the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and was convinced that the refugee crisis, which was a global rather than regional problem, could only be solved through coordinated action involving all States Members of the United Nations. The consultations on a global compact on refugees and migrants were a step in the right direction. Since 2015, Serbia had been at the centre of the Balkan migration route, which had been travelled by 900,000 migrants fleeing from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and other conflict zones to Western and Northern Europe. The official closure of that route in March 2016, following an agreement between the European Union and Turkey, had reduced the number of persons in transit but had also led to migrants staying for longer periods in transit countries. His Government urged that a single solution be found at both the European and global levels, for the problem was a global one, unprecedented in the post-Second World War era.

7. The refugee crisis in Serbia should be considered in a broader context, bearing in mind that the country had been faced with the problem of protracted displacement since the late 1990s, when hundreds of thousands of refugees, including 200,000 persons displaced from Kosovo, had fled the territories of the former Yugoslavia and sought refuge in Serbia. The Serbian authorities had not followed the UNHCR recommendation of April 2014 concerning the cessation of refugee status for persons displaced from Croatia between 1992 and 1995, since they considered that the recommendation had been made without consulting those concerned and prematurely, as Croatian refugees continued to face serious obstacles to the exercise of their rights to housing, employment and land. Moreover, they were concerned that the recommendation, which would become effective in early 2018, could jeopardize the implementation of the Regional Housing Programme.

8. **Mr. Hasanov** (Azerbaijan) said that his country was still confronted with the unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Armenia and that Armenian troops continued to occupy 20 per cent of Azerbaijani territory. Azerbaijan was providing assistance to more

than 640,000 internally displaced persons; the situation had become unsustainable. Returning those people to their homes in peaceful and safe conditions remained a priority for the Azerbaijani Government. So far, 96 modern residential facilities had been built and housing had been provided for 250,000 refugees and internally displaced persons. The poverty rate among displaced persons had fallen from 75 to 12 per cent and a total of US\$ 6 billion had been spent in the last 20 years on solving the social problems faced by refugees and displaced persons. However, a situation of such gravity and complexity could not be resolved without support from the international community. To enable all internally displaced persons to return to their homes, Azerbaijan had developed the “Great Return” programme, in collaboration with several international organizations. The conflict was not over; daily violations of the ceasefire and targeting of residents had become the norm. Armenia was spreading propaganda to justify the illegal, forced resettlement of Syrians of Armenian origin and other persons. The problem facing Azerbaijan was global, as well as regional. The main obstacles were the non-constructive position adopted by Armenia and its breaches of the ceasefire and other violations of the resolutions and decisions of the Security Council of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe.

9. **Mr. Mbella Mbella** (Cameroon) said that his Government aligned itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Togo on behalf of the African Group. There were around 65 million asylum seekers in the world and Cameroon had received 400,000 of them, from 33 different countries, including 90,581 Nigerians seeking refuge from the violence of Boko Haram and 232,917 Central Africans fleeing from political instability and conflict. There were also 235,913 internally displaced persons in Cameroon. By way of remedy, the Government, together with UNHCR, had set up eight camps offering assistance of various kinds. It also spent around 6 billion CFA francs (€13.5 million) on refugee protection each year, which was a huge sacrifice for the country. On 2 March 2016, Cameroon, Nigeria and UNHCR had signed a tripartite agreement on the repatriation of Nigerian refugees living in Cameroon and a meeting between the parties on the implementation of that agreement had been held on 10 August 2017 in Abuja; the allegations that Cameroon was forcing refugees to return to their country were therefore unfounded. Arrangements had been made to issue refugees with biometric identity cards and negotiations on a tripartite agreement between Cameroon, the Central African Republic and UNHCR were under way. In addition, the Government was organizing a workshop on incorporating the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa into national law; it would be held on 10 and 11 October 2017 in Yaoundé.

10. **Mr. Dambazau** (Nigeria) said that, as part of its efforts to implement the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the protocol thereto, his country had established a National Commission for Refugees, whose mandate was being expanded to include migrants and internally displaced persons. Nigeria was currently hosting 3,000 migrants and had received many others since the 1960s. At the same time, an unprecedented number of Nigerians had fled to Chad, Cameroon and the Niger, as a result of the violent extremism of Boko Haram, especially in the north-east of Nigeria; as at 1 March 2017, there had been 200,346 Nigerian refugees in those countries. To enable them to return in safety and dignity, Nigeria had signed a tripartite agreement with Cameroon and UNHCR on the voluntary return of Nigerian refugees living in Cameroon. Similar agreements would need to be signed with Chad and the Niger. Unfortunately, it had become clear that the Cameroonian authorities were forcibly repatriating Nigerian refugees from Cameroon, as indicated in a report published by Human Rights Watch in September 2017. Other acts of violence had also been committed, including in the Bakassi Peninsula.

11. According to the Displacement Tracking Matrix of the International Organization for Migration, there were 1.89 million displaced persons in the six north-eastern states, of whom 1.7 million were in the states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. Overall, more than 14 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance. Most of the displaced persons wanted to return home but were unable to in the present circumstances. The Buhari Plan and other programmes had been implemented in 2016 to remedy the situation. Furthermore, in order to better coordinate the national and international response to the crisis in the north-east, the Ministry of the Interior was organizing a seminar in Abuja on 15 and 16

November 2017, in which UNHCR was invited to participate. It was also drafting a national policy for safety and security; the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons, meanwhile, was working on a national policy on internally displaced persons. In addition, efforts were being made, particularly by the state government of Borno, to rebuild damaged homes and public infrastructure and to prepare for the return of refugees.

12. **Mr. Mkhize** (South Africa) said that his Government aligned itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Togo on behalf of the African Group, as well as the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the global compacts on refugees and migration that were to be adopted in 2018. Taking into account that the majority of displaced persons were in Africa, UNHCR needed to help the international community to find ways to share that responsibility while addressing the root causes of displacement, namely underdevelopment. It was important to focus on debt relief, market access, fair trade, technology transfer, the promotion of foreign direct investment, intensification of efforts to meet development goals, agriculture, food security, investment in health infrastructure, education, cultural development and respect for sovereignty. His Government had recognized the positive role played by refugees in its National Development Plan — Vision for 2030 and its White Paper on International Migration. It had taken steps to improve the handling of asylum applications, having received over 1 million asylum applications between 2006 and 2015 (the equivalent of one third of all applications received by the European Union), all of which had been processed. Failed asylum seekers and illegal migrants were returned to their country of origin in a humane manner. In such cases, the Government worked closely with organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the South African human rights commissions. Lastly, it should be noted that South Africa was one of the few countries to have acceded to the refugee conventions without any reservations.

13. **Mr. Baloch** (Pakistan) said that there were over 65 million displaced persons worldwide, 86 per cent of whom were hosted by developing countries, and that, in the space of a month, half a million Rohingya had fled Myanmar to escape persecution. It was important to focus on international cooperation, responsibility-sharing and measures to address the root causes of displacement. Pakistan had hosted Afghan refugees for more than 36 years, providing them with access to education, health care and livelihood opportunities. Furthermore, the Government of Pakistan supported their voluntary return in safety and dignity, through the implementation of the Afghan Management and Repatriation Strategy, and had doubled the voluntary repatriation grant from US\$ 200 to US\$ 400 in 2016, for that purpose. It was therefore concerned that UNHCR planned to cut the budget for operations in Afghanistan and to reduce the voluntary repatriation grant. Pakistan remained committed to working within the framework of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, which would end in December 2017, and would subsequently continue its work through a regional approach to the issue, focusing on voluntary return, sustainable reintegration and support to host countries. It did not support local integration, however, and considered that the process should be led by Afghanistan.

14. **Mr. Henshaw** (United States of America) said that his Government supported the comprehensive refugee response framework and the global compact on refugees and had provided assistance to a number of countries. For example, in order to support the Rohingya who were fleeing the violence in Burma, it had supplied an additional US\$ 32 million, bringing the total aid provided in 2017 to US\$ 95 million. Further assistance was needed, however, and the United States Government called on the Burmese Government to allow international humanitarian organizations to gain access to Rakhine State. With respect to Syria, his Government had announced on 21 September that it would provide an additional US\$ 697 million, bringing the total assistance provided in 2017 to US\$ 1.4 billion. In the Chad Basin, the savagery of Boko Haram and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant had created one of the worst humanitarian crises in African history; in that context, his Government welcomed the tripartite agreement on the voluntary return of refugees. In South Sudan, refugee camps should continue to be reserved for civilians and armed actors should be prevented from interfering with humanitarian assistance. The comprehensive refugee response framework and the global compact on refugees were an opportunity for the international community to adopt a global approach similar to that of previous

initiatives, such as the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees and the International Conference on Central American Refugees; the United States was helping to implement the framework within its region.

15. **Mr. Grandi** (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that the World Bank IDA 18 funding consisted of a combination of grants and low-interest loans from the International Development Association and would be allocated to 13 countries, including 12 African countries. He thanked the European Commission for requesting member States to prepare for the resettlement of an additional 50,000 refugees and commended the European Union for reforming its asylum system. He welcomed the action taken by African countries to support refugees and the tripartite agreement signed by Cameroon, Nigeria and UNHCR on the voluntary return of refugees. He shared the view, expressed by several delegations, that it was necessary to improve the coordination of national and international efforts in that region. UNHCR would continue to support the efforts of the Serbian Government to resolve the problems faced by Croatian refugees. He welcomed the investments made by Azerbaijan to assist people who had been displaced for an extended period of time. He commended Pakistan on its efforts to support Afghan refugees over the previous 40 years and noted the proposal to find ways to implement the comprehensive refugee response framework at the regional level. Lastly, he thanked the United States for its commitment to the framework.

16. **Ms. Dlamini** (Observer for Swaziland) said that her country remained committed to providing a second home for refugees until conditions were such that they could return to their homes. The bill on refugees was at the final stage of the legislative process; under another bill that had recently been proposed, refugees would be entitled to legal aid. Her Government called on political decision makers worldwide to ensure that refugees and asylum seekers were able to rebuild their lives in peace and dignity.

17. **Mr. Madula** (Observer for Malawi) said that his country had acceded to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa of 1969, and that it had been hosting refugees for over four decades. There were more than 3,200 Mozambican asylum seekers at the Luwani camp; a tripartite agreement on their repatriation would be signed soon. In addition, there were more than 30,000 refugees from Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the Dzaleka camp. They were allowed to work and were accorded the same rights as Malawian citizens under the Constitution. The Government wanted to enable them to become self-reliant and called for financial assistance in that connection. Malawi continued to face the challenge of mixed migration and received over 400 individuals each month. The Government was grateful to the United States, Canada and Australia for agreeing to resettle refugees from Malawi and encouraged countries in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region to facilitate the voluntary return of their nationals. In collaboration with UNHCR, the Government was setting up a new camp in Katiri, Karonga, in order to reduce overcrowding in the Dzaleka camp. Malawi remained committed to helping refugees and asylum seekers as much as possible and called on the international community to provide financial support.

18. **Mr. Fatty** (Observer for the Gambia) said that he wished to thank the international community and the United Nations system for their support to his country during the recent political impasse. His Government aligned itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Togo on behalf of the African Group and supported Nigeria in the fight against terrorism, which was a major cause of displacement to neighbouring countries. Most refugees in the Gambia were well integrated, although their situation could be complicated by the lack of identity documents from their country of origin. The Ministry of the Interior issued long-term residence permits to refugees who had opted to remain in the Gambia, in order to facilitate their naturalization. The Gambia Commission for Refugees organized training courses, registered refugees and assessed their situation to ensure that they received appropriate assistance. Those measures had helped to reduce the number of refugees from more than 11,000 to around 7,900. The Gambia had also ratified the two United Nations conventions on statelessness and had recently hosted the regional ministerial meeting for the validation and adoption of the Banjul Plan of Action of ECOWAS on the Eradication of Statelessness 2017–2024. It had developed a five-year plan

to end statelessness and was working with UNHCR and other relevant stakeholders to conduct a survey of children born in the Gambia who had not been officially registered. He thanked UNHCR and other development partners for supporting the voluntary return of around forty refugee families and emphasized the new Government's commitment to the principles of good governance and the rule of law.

19. **Mr. Mohamed** (Djibouti) said that his delegation aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of Togo on behalf of the African Group. In Djibouti, there were around 27,000 refugees in the Ali Addeh, Holl Holl and Markazi camps and in urban areas. Most were from Somalia, Ethiopia, Yemen and Eritrea. Asylum seekers from Yemen and Somalia were granted refugee status on a prima facie basis. The Refugees Act had been promulgated in January 2017; legislation for the implementation of that Act was being drawn up with a view to protecting the fundamental rights of refugees. The government body responsible for refugee assistance would soon receive additional resources, as well as technical support from UNHCR. Pursuant to the memorandum of understanding signed by the Ministry of Education and UNHCR, refugee children were now enrolled in the national education system. With support from UNHCR, the Government was implementing the comprehensive refugee response framework with respect to access to health care, water and livelihood opportunities, and had long been promoting the self-reliance of refugees through vocational training courses and income-generating activities. It had also facilitated the return of 589 Somali refugees and the resettlement of 54 Somali and Eritrean refugees in the United States and Canada. Djibouti supported the work of UNHCR and called for greater international solidarity to assist with the management of refugees in low-income countries.

20. **Mr. Bazoum** (Observer for the Niger) said that his Government aligned itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Togo on behalf of the African Group. It was deeply concerned by the scale of forced displacement around the world, especially in Myanmar. In the past 10 years, the Niger had faced a series of challenges: the mass return of its own nationals from Côte d'Ivoire and Libya, followed by the influx of over 60,000 Malians displaced by the Libyan crisis and the arrival of 110,000 Nigerian refugees forced out by the rise of Boko Haram. The actions of that terrorist organization had also led to the forced displacement of 130,000 people in the region of Diffa. The Government had deployed significant military and financial resources towards providing assistance and protection for displaced persons and host communities along the country's borders with Mali and Nigeria, which meant that far fewer resources were available for basic social services. Given that refugees in Africa remained displaced for an average of 17 years, it was important to fully support their socioeconomic integration, rather than keep them in camps in the hope that peace would eventually be restored. The Government was therefore carrying out major urban development projects to give refugees the opportunity to live outside refugee camps, in contact with local communities. The Niger was also on a mixed migration route to Europe. In order to deal with that migration movement, countries on both sides of the Mediterranean needed to look beyond their own simplistic arguments and work together to find solutions. There was an urgent need to implement the Valletta Action Plan on a large scale and to ensure that speeches about solidarity and cooperation between Africa and Europe were followed by action.

21. **Mr. Aye** (Observer for Myanmar) said that peace and national reconciliation were a priority for his Government. With respect to the situation in Rakhine State, the Government had established a central committee for peace and development and an advisory commission on the situation in Rakhine State, led by Kofi Annan. However, on 25 August 2017, just after the implementation of the commission's recommendations had been announced and the day before the commission's final report was to be made public, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army had attacked 30 police outposts, killing and injuring several members of security personnel and causing many people to flee their homes. Since then, the national security forces had been conducting security operations to avoid collateral damage and had provided humanitarian assistance to all displaced communities. A field visit had been carried out on 27 August 2017. The involvement of terrorist organizations had increased the national security threat and undermined the Government's efforts to stabilize the situation. A coordination meeting had been held on 4 September 2017 with international partners, including representatives of the United Nations and the Red Cross.

Although the security situation had improved and there had been no armed clashes since 5 September 2017, much more needed to be done in order to increase stability in the region and to ensure lasting peace, harmony and development. With that in mind, a presidential decree establishing a committee for the implementation of recommendations on Rakhine State had been issued on 12 September 2017. It was important to ensure that all communities affected by the crisis received equal assistance, without discrimination. The next national priority would be to enable the safe, voluntary return of all refugees who had fled to Bangladesh and to provide them with education and health services, without discrimination.

22. **Ms. Koné** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that her delegation endorsed the statement made by the representative of Togo on behalf of the African Group. Her country's long-standing commitment to the protection of refugees had been enshrined in its new Constitution in 2016. In addition, her Government planned to adopt legislation on asylum and the provision of passports to refugees living in Ivorian territory. UNHCR support had enabled the voluntary return of more than 90 per cent of 300,000 Ivorian refugees in less than six years. Pursuant to the Abidjan Declaration of Ministers of ECOWAS Member States on Eradication of Statelessness, the Government had granted Ivorian nationality to some 15 million descendants of immigrants born in Côte d'Ivoire, and had funded the issuing of civil status certificates, certificates of nationality and identity cards to over 610,055 undocumented Ivorians aged 16 years and over. Moreover, identity papers had been issued to 1,165,325 students through a civil registration initiative.

23. **Mr. Onek** (Uganda) said that his country had a refugee population of 1.35 million, of whom 1 million were from South Sudan and 80 per cent were women and children, and would continue to maintain an open-door policy. It was urgently necessary to increase spending on refugees, which currently amounted to just US\$ 0.4 per refugee. The Government planned to improve its existing structures for the reception and management of refugees, rather than create new ones. Uganda had been implementing the comprehensive refugee response framework for over fifty years and would share its expertise in refugee management with countries that were in need of assistance. There was an urgent need to provide host communities with additional resources. It was regrettable that the Refugee Host Empowerment Programme had not been properly implemented and lacked the necessary funding. His Government was making use of a loan provided by the World Bank and was sure that it would help to improve the asylum situation. It had established a refugee information management system, which had been used to verify the situation of 80 per cent of refugees, in collaboration with UNHCR. Uganda hoped that the conflicts in South Sudan and elsewhere in the region would soon be resolved. It also hoped that the initiatives led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Nairobi Declaration on Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees and the Reintegration of Returnees in Somalia of March 2017 and the measures taken by Burundi in the context of the talks sponsored by the East African Community would help to end the conflict in Somalia. According to a study conducted in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme, his country's annual contribution to the refugee crisis amounted to US\$ 342 million.

24. **Ms. Røslund** (Norway) said that Bangladesh was to be commended for assisting the Rohingya. All States needed to step up their efforts in the context of the global compact on refugees. Norway had three main priorities: access to education for children in situations of conflict and crisis, to which it devoted 8 per cent of its humanitarian assistance; financial assistance, especially cash-based assistance and unearmarked funding, which helped to preserve the dignity and independence of beneficiary countries and stimulate their economies (US\$ 40 million of the US\$ 118 million provided by Norway to UNHCR in 2016 had been unearmarked); and the protection of displaced persons and the return of those who did not need international protection. Although the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants referred to internally displaced persons, there was no international strategy for dealing with that issue. With regard to the conflict in Syria, she recalled that displaced persons should not be returned unless they no longer faced security risks and no longer required international protection. That year, Norway had provided US\$ 22 million to support the work of UNHCR in Syria and neighbouring countries and would contribute an additional US\$ 3 million for that purpose.

25. **Mr. Kampyongo** (Zambia) said that Zambia maintained an open-door policy with respect to refugees. Each day, more asylum seekers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo crossed the border. Over 6,000 Congolese refugees had entered Zambia since January 2017, more than 3,000 of whom had arrived since 30 August 2017. Most of them were fleeing conflicts in some areas of the provinces of Tanganyika and Haut-Katanga. The Government had drawn up a contingency plan and had set up a transit centre to house refugees in the north of the country. His delegation shared the concern expressed in the statement made by the representative of Togo on behalf of the African Group that inadequate resources had been allocated to refugee management in Africa. It commended the countries that were piloting the comprehensive refugee response framework. His Government had granted the right to residence to more than 20,000 former refugees from Angola and Rwanda, through a local integration programme that had been financed, in particular, by contributions from Canada, the United States and Japan. A number of problems had arisen during implementation of the programme, including a shortage of financial and human resources. The Government looked forward to benefiting from the US\$ 2 billion that had been allocated to host countries by the World Bank. It also hoped that Zambia would become a pilot country for the comprehensive refugee response framework. In order to expand the capacity for asylum seekers and improve the national protection framework, it had drafted new legislation on refugees, which incorporated into domestic law the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the 1967 Protocol thereto, as well as the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa of 1969.

26. **Mr. Grandi** (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that he welcomed the efforts made by the States and thanked them for supporting the work of UNHCR.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.