



PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

56 Rue de Moillebeau, 1211 Geneva Tel: (4122) 749 1930 Fax: (4122) 734 8085

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Statement by
Lt. General (Retd) Abdul Quadir Baloch
Minister for States and Frontier Regions
(SAFRON)

66th Session of the Executive Committee
(ExCom) of the UNHCR

Geneva, 05 October, 2015

**Mr. Chairman,
High Commissioner Guterres,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am honored to represent my country and address this august forum where deliberations are held to alleviate the miseries of the displaced populations world over. May, I take this opportunity to assure Pakistan's full commitment and support for such noble pursuits as always.

The meeting of the Executive Committee of the UNHCR, this year, has assumed greater significance for Pakistan in view of the High level Segment on the Afghan Refugee situation. We thank the High Commissioner and his team for this initiative, which is aimed at facilitating voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration of Afghan refugees, many of whom have sought refuge outside their country for the last 35 years.

I am sure that the High level Segment and the related events would witness renewal of the international community's commitment, as well as pledges for financial support, to one of the longest protracted refugee situation.

I congratulate Ms. Kathy T. Clements for assuming her duties as the Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees. We wish you every success in your noble pursuit of bringing relief to the refugees.

I thank the High Commissioner for providing us with comprehensive assessment of the key displacement challenges, and the ways and means of providing relief to the displaced people, whose number is now estimated to be 60 million.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan appreciates the commendable work carried out by UNHCR in a difficult operating environment. We also believe that the UNHCR will continue enhancing implementation of its mandate through increased international cooperation.

Today, we are witnessing a sharp increase in the number of refugees and displaced people. While the new emergencies are exerting pressure on the ongoing operations demanding urgent action from the UNHCR, the resource mobilization is not keeping pace. It is our collective responsibility that the refugees are not

forgotten. Equally important is the need to address root causes of the refugee situations.

Pakistan hosts the second largest number of refugees in the world, and continues to do so for more than three decades. I will touch upon the protracted Afghan refugee situation in detail at the High Level Segment.

Here, I would just like to mention that the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan and UNHCR have jointly devised an innovative approach i.e. Enhanced Voluntary Return and Reintegration Package (EVRRP), intended to promote voluntary repatriation on a sustainable basis. EVRRP would complement the return cash grant of USD 200 per individual currently provided to Afghan refugees under the auspices of UNHCR's voluntary repatriation programme with the inclusion of an additional multi-purpose long-term reintegration component. It is our sincere hope that EVRRP will receive generous support and contribution from the international community.

It is important that the UNHCR operations take into consideration the cultural and religious sensitivities of the host communities, in order to receive their maximum support

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to pay my heartfelt tributes on behalf of the Government of Pakistan to His Excellency Antonio Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Refugees for his extraordinary and commendable role as the head of UNHCR. His strenuous and tireless efforts have gone a long way in alleviating the miseries of the displaced populations the world over. High Commissioner's personal interest exhibited towards Pakistan and the Afghan Refugees situation has no parallel and his endeavors would be acknowledged and treasured by us. High Commissioner, thank you for being there and around when the displaced population needed you most.

Mr. Chairman,

I must conclude with our sincere acknowledgement and gratitude to the International Community for its support to Pakistan over the years in hosting the Afghan population, particularly UNHCR, for its vital assistance and the High Commissioner, Excellency Antonio Guterres for his very personal interest.

Thank you.
