

Final/As delivered

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PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

04 October 2017

Madame Chair,
Mr. High Commissioner,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

The Philippines could not agree more with the High Commissioner in emphasizing that we need to double our efforts and accelerate the shift to a new model of response in addressing the new and ongoing crises and protracted displacement. The complexity of the protracted refugee situations worldwide, including the large-scale influxes in the context of mixed movements indeed require our collective effort to provide creative measures in addressing these challenges.

Therefore, the urgent call is for us to work together through the principle of responsibility- and burden-sharing.

We share the view of the High Commissioner that the New York Declaration is a reaffirmation of the international protection regime, and that the principle of burden- and responsibility-sharing is very critical at this juncture. Strong political commitment is undoubtedly needed from the global community.

We, in the Philippines, have a strong humanitarian tradition, including opening our doors to refugees seeking asylum¹. We therefore say that the country remains strongly committed to provide humanitarian assistance and protection for the purpose of alleviating the plight of refugees.

We will continue the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM), our cooperation arrangement with the UNHCR and the IOM that allows for the immediate evacuation of

¹ This included Russians in the 1920's and 1940's; Jews, Spanish, and Chinese in the 1930's; and Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Lao in the 1970's.

refugees who are at risk of refoulement and persecution. This mechanism, the only one in Asia, will continue despite our domestic human and financial challenges due to natural disasters and calamities that hit our country every year. The Philippines is also the only one in Asia to have established a stateless status determination procedure. With these, we reaffirm our commitment to provide meaningful protection and durable solutions for refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons, as much as we can, to ease their suffering.

At the multilateral level, we will do our share of supporting advocacies that find solutions to address root causes of cross-border movements. In this regard, we continue to engage in the Platform on Disaster Displacement, a state-led mechanism that works to enhance cooperation to improve the protection of disaster displaced persons. We have also been actively engaging in the discourse on the Global Compact on Migration and have started our own national inter-agency consultation to contribute to the drafting of the Global Compact.

The Philippines also emphasizes its commitment to continue to support UNHCR through financial contribution.

We are also pleased to note that our people, both individually and as members of NGOs, foundations and the business sector, support the laudable work of UNHCR through their donations to the UNHCR's appeal for resources to meet the extraordinary refugee-related challenges.

Madame Chair,
Mr. High Commissioner,

We reiterate our deep commitment to the refugee and statelessness conventions and continue to stand with the UNHCR and other States in working towards providing the most appropriate means possible for addressing the plight of refugees.

Finally, we laud the UNHCR, and its dedicated staff, who have been indefatigably exerting all efforts and providing their selfless dedication to duty and humanity. END