

UNHCR 69th ExCom – October 2018

Agenda item 3 *General debate*

DENMARK

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Madam Chairperson, High Commissioner, Distinguished delegates.

Denmark aligns with the statement made on behalf of the EU and its member states.

Denmark remains deeply concerned with the number of protracted crisis for which solutions are yet to be found, as well as the many new emerging forced displacement crisis, including the Rakhine crisis. With scarcity of political solutions and growing restrictions on protections space and humanitarian access, UNHCR's work – alongside host governments – to protect and secure durable solutions for refugees is more important than ever.

We are all aware that forced displacement is a humanitarian protection challenge but also a very significant development challenge. While humanitarian assistance is of the utmost importance, it cannot stand alone. 85% of the worlds' forcibly displaced are hosted in developing countries. These countries are shouldering huge burdens and responsibilities, and in doing so they are essentially providing a *global public good*. Host countries have a right to expect the support of the international community. This is precisely why we need the Global Compact on Refugees. The GCR is a real opportunity for improving the prospects for forcibly displaced and the communities which host them.

Madam Chair,

Let me join others in commending UNHCR for having managed the process towards the GCR in an open manner. Under your steadfast stewardship, the formal consultations on the GCR ended with acclamation on

4 July 2018. The outcome is very much our collective responsibility - and so is the crucial need for ensuring a robust implementation.

In doing so, we need to stay as loyal as possible to the real potential of the CRRF. We therefore call on fellow donors, host states as well as UNHCR and all other assistance actors to step up to the fact that we all need to transform our way of working, if we are to succeed in improving the response to forced displacement.

Comprehensive approaches have to be underpinned by national leadership and ownership. Inclusion in national education and health systems, access to labour markets and freedom of movement for refugees, paves the way for additional development funding. It also fosters increased self-reliance among refugees and facilitate durable solutions, including – as the preferred durable solution – voluntary and sustainable repatriation to countries of origin in safety and dignity once that becomes possible or local integration in neighboring countries.

Such coherent approaches can be a real game changer for how we respond to situations of forced displacement. It is a *New Way of Working* for all of us and we will all have to adapt – not least UNHCR that now has the opportunity to re-double its focus on strategic priorities related to protection and facilitating solutions. This will require a change in organizational structures, priorities, incentives and in the mind-set of staff. We are confident that you will succeed.

Let me assure you that Denmark is committed to this approach and to the implementation of the GCR.

We have already increased our humanitarian funding to record levels and in line with the comprehensive approach outlined in the GCR we have taken significant steps to include the response to protracted displacement through our development programmes.

During the past year we have allocated significant amounts from Denmark's development budget for a range of countries affected by protracted displacement, including Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya, Afghanistan and Bangladesh as well as countries in the Middle East. This support amounts to more than 300 mio. USD, including 72 mio. USD to countries applying the CRRF, hereby also addressing root causes of forced displacement.

Let me be clear; this development funding is *in addition to*, not to the detriment of, humanitarian funding.

We underline that comprehensive approaches can and should be adapted to the context in question.

Comprehensive responses necessitate strong government ownership and leadership as well as full respect for the humanitarian principles.

We also highlight the crucial importance of collection of and analysis of data in large displacement situations and we look forward to working with you on this, including through supporting and collaborating with the new World Bank UNHCR Joint Data Centre in Copenhagen. This will be a priority for Denmark.

We also very much look forward to participating in the Global Refugee Forum in 2019 and we trust that UNHCR will guide us all in its new role as a leading voice and catalyst for protection and solutions in a wider and more diverse system that emphasizes leadership by affected governments in partnerships with development actors, the private sector and civil society organizations.

Madam Chair,

Let me once more affirm that Denmark is – and will continue to be – a staunch supporter of UNHCR as evidenced by our partnership agreement providing flexible, multiyear *un-earmarked* humanitarian funding for UNHCR. Finally let me express our appreciation and gratitude to the staff of UNHCR, working tirelessly around the world in often difficult and dangerous conditions to protect and assist those who are forced to flee.

I thank you.