



- Your Excellency, Chairperson of the Executive Committee, Ambassador Maria Nazareth Farani Azevedo and your Bureau.

- The High Commissioner, His Excellency Filippo Grandi.

- Distinguished Delegates.

I thank the High Commissioner for his opening statement. We commend the UNHCR and other humanitarian workers staffs for their dedication to duty amidst the challenges caused by the COVID 19 pandemic. Our deepest condolences go to the families of those who have lost their lives.

The Government of Uganda's Covid 19 pandemic response is all inclusive and the refugee have access to Covid 19 vaccinations as the host communities. Uganda has benefited from vaccine doses through the COVAX facility. While we appreciate this contribution from the donors, we need more. It is therefore, critical that, UNHCR lends itself to national efforts to obtain these life saving vaccines for low-income refugee host countries like Uganda.

We remain committed to our international obligations to refugees. Uganda is host to One Million Five Hundred Three Thousand Six Hundred and One refugees (1,503,601). We have maintained an open door refugees and asylum seekers in distress. Throughout worldwide border restrictions and lockdowns due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Uganda continued to play its role in the international refugee response and received Eighty Thousand Two Hundred Twenty Four (80,224) new refugees since 2020. This is proof that we can manage border restrictions in a manner that does not infringe on core human rights and

refugee protection standards. What is required is global commitment and solidarity.

Chairperson, Uganda is of the firm belief that no one chooses to flee their country or be a refugee and if they do, they must be treated with dignity. It is in that spirit that the Government of Uganda accepted to temporarily host Afghan nationals and other nationals at risk following the recent developments in Afghanistan. This decision is informed and consistent with Uganda's policy of receiving refugees and persons in distress as well as making our contribution, as a member of the international community to matters of international concern.

Uganda is among the first countries to implement the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). Government has enhanced a conducive environment in which refugees enjoy similar services with the host communities and refugee services have been included in the National Development Planning Cycle. We have developed Refugee Response Plans covering various sectors that require funding. We are concerned with continued reduction in funding amidst increase in numbers, if not abated may lead to a policy shift.

Environmental protection remains key in our operation, with emphasis on other alternative energy sources, improved housing and shelter initiatives, that have a bearing on overall health and wellbeing of the refugees.

We appreciate funding commitments of the Global Refugee Forum 2019 from our traditional partners and the World Bank. Integration of refugee services CANNOT happen without sustainable commitments. We are hopeful that these commitments will help us procure the infrastructures for refugees and host communities. We look forward to the December Global Refugee Forum meeting to assess our progress.

We continue to work with our neighbours to address the root causes of refugee flows including conflicts that have caused these displacements in the region. We applaud and associate ourselves with IGAD efforts in the South Sudan situation.

We are pleased to report that we have embarked on the voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees. We believe that return is the most durable solution and we call upon UNHCR and all partners to support us in this approach and also support the sustenance of returnees in the country of origin.

Finally, Chairperson, We are encouraged by the reforms carried out by UNHCR to respond to staff safety as well as to the concerning issues of integrity. Noting the existing gender and regional imbalances in senior management positions in UNHCR. Therefore, we restate our call for balanced geographical representation of affirmative action for candidates from low-income host countries.

I thank you for listening to me.