

**Sixty-Seventh Session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's
Programme**

03 to 07 October 2016, Assembly Hall
Palais des Nations
Geneva, Switzerland

PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

04 October 2016

1. Mr. Chairman,
Mr. High Commissioner,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen.
2. At the outset, the Philippines expresses its deep congratulations to Mr. Filippo Grandi on his appointment as High Commissioner. His sterling credentials and long involvement with refugee issues and humanitarian assistance in various regions of the world have been serving the UNHCR very well.
3. The Philippines joins other Member States in welcoming the Political Declaration of the High Level Summit on Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants and its Annexes - the "Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework" and the "Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration" - adopted at the Summit last 19 September in New York.
4. The Summit was a landmark event that validates the international community's serious collective effort in addressing the difficult challenges of the situation of refugees and migrants.
5. We join other Member States in expressing deep concern over the complexity of the issues surrounding emergencies and protracted refugee situations worldwide.
6. The Philippines reiterates what UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stressed in his statement yesterday that the staggering numbers of displaced people – each one of them represents a human life – and therefore we need to urgently address this crisis of solidarity that is before us.
7. We also share the view of the High Commissioner that with the context and levels of forced displacement today, as well as the pressure on hosting States and communities, which shoulder the burden of massive influx of people fleeing conflicts, strong political commitment is clearly needed from the global community.
8. As a country with a strong humanitarian tradition, the Philippines wishes to emphasize our resolute commitment to provide humanitarian assistance and protection for the purpose of alleviating the plight of refugees.

9. We shall sustain our support for the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM), a cooperation arrangement with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the IOM. The ETM provides for the immediate evacuation of refugees who are at risk of *refoulement* and persecution from their countries of origin. Our cooperation under the ETM continues despite the difficult human and financial challenges facing our country in terms of attending to thousands of displaced by typhoons and other calamities that hit the Philippines annually.
10. We shall continue to support UNHCR through institutional coordination at the global level, so that all of us can ably address the refugee crisis and provide durable solutions.
11. Likewise, we will continue to do our share in finding solutions to address root causes of cross-border movements in general through our advocacies and involvement in different fora:
 - For example, we continue to engage in the follow-up mechanism of the Nansen Initiative – the Platform on Disaster Displacement, where we join other Member States in working towards enhanced cooperation to improve the protection of disaster displaced persons.
 - Working with the United States, IOM and other partners, we have developed the Guidelines on Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) to address longer-term consequences of migrants caught in countries experiencing conflicts or natural disasters.
12. We are pleased to note that the Filipino people, individually or as members of NGOs, foundations and the business sector, see the need to support the laudable work of UNHCR and respond generously to the UNHCR's appeal for resources to meet the extraordinary refugee-related challenges.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. High Commissioner,

13. The Philippines reiterates its deep commitment to the refugee and statelessness conventions. We will continue to stand with the UNHCR and other States in working towards providing the most possible and appropriate means of addressing the plight of refugees.
14. Finally, the Philippines pays tribute to the great women and men of the UNHCR for their selfless dedication to duty and service to humanity. END