

Statement  
by  
Sweden

H.E. Ambassador Ms Veronika Bard  
Permanent Representative of Sweden to  
The United Nations Office in Geneva

**General Debate**

Executive Committee of the  
High Commissioner's Programme  
Sixty-ninth session

Geneva, 2 October 2018

Madame Chair, High Commissioner, Excellencies, Colleagues and Friends,  
Sweden aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union.

Mr High Commissioner,

I would like to start by commending you and your staff at UNHCR for all your hard work and dedication, putting your own lives at risk to deliver protection and solutions to refugees and other persons of concern across the globe. We are pleased to hear that work according to UNHCR's five strategic directions (*protect, respond, include, empower and resolve*) continue and that you Mr High Commissioner plans to strengthen UNHCR's cooperation with partners in relation to internally displaced persons.

UNHCR's ability to attract and keep competent staff is critical to your organization's ability to deliver. We commend the efforts made by UNHCR to provide robust security measures and training to your staff, as well as open and transparent career procedures based on merit and gender equality.

I would also like to thank you High Commissioner for personally underscoring the importance of preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. There must be zero tolerance for these actions and strong support for whistle blowing within the UN system. We encourage you to keep this topic high on your agenda and welcome the measures already taken in this regard.

Sweden would also like to commend UNHCR's efforts so far made in relation to the Grand Bargain commitments, not least for your leadership of workstream 4, targeting the

reduction of duplicative processes and management costs. Both areas have strong implications for efficient management of often limited resources, as do non-earmarking and multiyear funding. As a sign of trust and policy commitment, Sweden and UNHCR this year signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement which assures UNHCR predictable funding during the period 2018-2022 totaling around 385 million USD in unearmarked support.

Mr High Commissioner,

As Chief Executive Georgieva said yesterday: *We have to do more, and we have to do it more effectively.* We can all improve the way we work to create a more efficient and effective, transparent and accountable humanitarian system. Year after year, we repeat that the gap between humanitarian needs and available resources continues to grow. The Grand Bargain is one important way of trying to create a more well-functioning humanitarian system. Another way - of course - is the Global Compact for Refugees.

Sweden strongly endorses the Global Compact for Refugees and looks forward to its validation at the General Assembly later this year. That will be a moment to collectively underscore our determination to ensure better burden and responsibility sharing across the globe. We should be proud of this grand achievement that provides us with a historic opportunity to strengthen our cooperation and solidarity with refugees and affected countries.

Resettlement continues to be an important way of showing solidarity with host states and contributing to protection and solutions for persons of concern. As a mark of Sweden's solidarity, we have increased our refugee quota this year to 5000 persons, and we encourage more states to contribute to this important work in cooperation with UNHCR. Sweden is also a strong supporter of UNHCR's efforts to eradicate statelessness by 2024 and welcomes the focus on this topic in 2019.

In conclusion, Mr High Commissioner, as we negotiate the yearly UNHCR Omnibus resolution, we must not forsake the opportunity to make clear that the international community as a whole can and will reach the goals outlined in the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework that guide us in our future work with the Global Compact for Refugees. Sweden stands ready to contribute to the full implementation of this Compact.

Thank you!