

**UNHCR Executive Committee 70th Session
7–11 October 2019**

**Agenda item 3: High-level segment on statelessness
and general debate**

Statement by Slovenia

Thank you Mr. Chair

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement made by the EU.

Let me share some thoughts also in my national capacity.

The highest number of forcibly displaced in the last 70 years therefore calls for a need to redouble our solidarity with many thousands of innocent people who are forced to flee their homes each day.

It is important that we can in this regard address the problem of statelessness. Slovenia supports "I belong" campaign to eliminate statelessness by 2024. We firmly believe this campaign will contribute to the elimination of this negative phenomenon during the lifetime of one generation.

Slovenia is a signatory to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (1954), and implements its provisions in the national Law on citizenship, which contains a number of elements that prevent the creation of statelessness taking into consideration the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

Although statelessness is not a major problem for Slovenia, our legislation and practice, provide necessary mechanisms to protect all persons, especially children, in order to avoid this situation.

Allow me, Mr. Chair, to single out that a child born in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia can acquire the Slovenian citizenship if his or her parents are stateless, of unknown citizenship or if the child is found on the territory of the Republic of Slovenia.

In addition, children are given special care in the procedures of acquiring the Slovenian citizenship if failure to grant citizenship would result in the creation of statelessness.

Our legislation also provides more relaxed conditions for granting the Slovenian citizenship as recommended by the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. It must be highlighted that all safeguards that prevent sexual, ethnic, religious discrimination or discrimination on the grounds of citizenship have been incorporated in the legislation as well.

Mr. Chair,

Let me continue by stressing the importance of the Global refugee forum enshrined in the Global refugee compact which presents a historic opportunity to translate into action the principle of international solidarity and responsibility sharing. The Forum is a historic opportunity to build momentum for our collective response to refugee situations.

We commend the work of the UNHCR under the wise leadership of the High Commissioner Mr. Filippo Grandi also in preparation of the forum as well as the work of humanitarian workers on the ground easing suffering around the world on a daily basis.

We condemn violations of international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles, attacks on civilians and humanitarian workers, obstruction of access to people in need, and the use of starvation as a warfare method. They are utterly unacceptable and need an immediate political solution.

United Nations – ensure that millions receive protection, food, medicine, shelter, water and other life-saving forms of assistance. As the humanitarian needs widen the task in front of us is immense.

Therefore, Slovenia has significantly increased humanitarian assistance for refugees in the past years. In 2019 funds have been allocated for Syria, Yemen and DRC. Those efforts complement our bilateral activities in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Uganda, implemented by ITF Enhancing Human Security and NGOs.

Syrian refugees are the biggest recipient of Slovenian humanitarian assistance, having received over one quarter of our total humanitarian aid over the last 5 years, including through the UNHCR. We have fulfilled our pledges so far and our support will continue.

Slovenia has deep appreciation of UNHCR work in handling refugee crisis worldwide. Accordingly, we have been continuously supporting UNHCR's efforts and have gradually increased our contribution by 20% in the last period of four years.

A part of the contribution was provided for UNHCR work with the refugees on a Western Balkans migration route that is far from closed.

As a signatory of the Grand bargain and the “Call for Action to strengthen respect for international humanitarian law and principled humanitarian action”, we are committed to improving the working practices from a donor perspective and those of aid organizations for a more efficient delivery for people in need.

In conclusion, let me inform you that Slovenia is in the process of preparation of our national pledges for the Global Refugee Forum and underline the commitment of my country to effective multilateralism. We see no viable alternative to working together to help people in need.