

*Thank you Chair,*

*Deputy Secretary-General,*

*High Commissioner,*

*Excellencies, dear Colleagues*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*Germany aligns itself with the EU Statement.*

*Statelessness is a profound violation of an individual's human rights. It would be deeply unethical to perpetuate the pain it causes when solutions are so clearly within reach.*

*With these words five years ago Antonio Guterres – the High Commissioner for Refugees at the time- started UNHCR's Global Action Plan to end statelessness by 2024. Statelessness is an anomaly with devastating impact on the lives of at least 10 million people around the world.*

*This is half-time of the #IBelong campaign – time to take stock and to build on the existing momentum to achieve the ambitious target to eradicate statelessness by 2024.*

*The 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness provide the international legal framework*

*to fight and prevent statelessness. And the conventions contain the human rights of stateless persons thus upholding human dignity. Germany calls upon all States that have not yet done so to ratify these instruments.*

*We applaud UNHCR's relentless advocacy to make sure that the millions of people without a nationality can not only access basic services, but that they can participate in social, political and economic life with the rights of nationals of a state.*

*And we fully support UNHCR's efforts to put statelessness to an end. In addition to our engagement in the #IBelong campaign and financial support to this high level segment, we have also taken a look at our own practices.*

*We are pledging today that, guided by UNHCR's action plan, Germany will examine its reservations towards the convention on statelessness from 1961 which were made upon ratification and start a review process within our line ministries, to evaluate the necessity of those reservations. And we encourage other States to take similar steps.*

*High Commissioner,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*2019 marks yet another year with a record number of forcibly displaced people around the world. Protracted situations remain unsolved and we have seen major new*

*displacements out of Venezuela or the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Global Compact on Refugees and our joint contributions to this year's Global Refugee Forum are more relevant and timely than ever.*

*Germany commends UNHCR's continuing efforts to provide protection and assistance to refugees in the Syria context. And we express our gratitude to all countries that have continuously been providing asylum and perspectives to refugees. We agree with UNHCR's assessment that the conditions for a systematic return of refugees from neighboring countries to Syria are not met at present. Germany encourages UNHCR to maintain and intensify transparency and information exchange with donor countries, especially with regard to messaging on protection and return.*

*The worsening situation for millions inside Syria reminds us of the numerous protracted and newly emerging situations of internal displacement around the world. UNHCR's strong commitment to IDP protection is needed more than ever. We welcome recent efforts to establish a High Level Panel on internal displacement to put the plight of IDPs higher on the agenda of the international community. UNHCR's new IDP policy is a step in the right direction to foster a more predictable and sustainable approach to IDP situations. At the same time, effective coordination and cooperation between UN agencies remain a key area of concern to Germany.*

*Germany would also like to commend UNHCR's efforts in Libya to advocate for the release of refugees and asylum-seekers as well as for alternatives to detention, including through its gathering and departure facility. We are deeply concerned about grave human rights violations and the worsening humanitarian situation in Libya and will continue our support to UNHCR's crucial engagement on the ground.*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*UNHCR however increasingly operates in difficult, often hostile and volatile environments. We convey our sincere respect to all UNHCR staff working in an often dangerous environment, risking their own safety and security for the protection of others.*

*In today's conflicts, we observe a very worrying trend of an increasing number of attacks against humanitarian personnel, medical personnel and installations as well as deliberate denials of humanitarian access. Therefore Germany, together with France, launched an initiative in the UN Security Council in April for the respect for International Humanitarian Law and the protection of humanitarian space. At this year's UN-GA our two countries launched a "Humanitarian Call for Action" with concrete commitments to strengthen respect for IHL, protection of humanitarian personnel and principled humanitarian action. We appreciate that 41 States have already declared their support for the "Call" and we encourage more States to follow.*

High Commissioner,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

*I would like to conclude with an outlook to the most important event for UNHCR and for the international refugee protection regime in its recent history: the first ever Global Refugee Forum (GRF). Last year's affirmation of the Global Compact on Refugees marks a historic milestone in multilateralism and presents our shared conviction that solidarity and cooperation are the only way to sustainably address today's refugee movements. The GRF is now our opportunity to life up to the commitments all of us made in the GCR - by making substantial contributions to solutions for the displaced and by preserving quality asylum space through support provided to host countries and communities. We call on all Member States to use this unique event to share lessons learned, get recognition for their efforts for the displaced and come forward with impactful pledges for the benefit of the refugees and those who host them.*

*As Co-Convener of the GRF, Germany has been contributing and will continue to contribute its share to the success of the Forum. And we count on the significant engagement of all of you!*

*Thank you Chair.*

