

PODIUM VERSION

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Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Program General Debate

Statement by the Government of Canada Delivered by H.E. Leslie E. Norton

Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva

to the
73rd SESSION
of the
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

Geneva, 10 – 14 October 2022

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Comité Exécutif du Haut-Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les Réfugiés Énoncé général

Déclaration du Gouvernement du Canada Prononcée par H.E. Leslie E. Norton

Ambassadrice et Représentante permanente auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies et de la Conférence du désarmement à Genève

À la 73^{ième} SESSION
du
COMITÉ EXÉCUTIF
DU HAUT COMMISSARIAT DES
NATIONS UNIES POUR LES RÉFUGIÉS

Genève, 10 –14 octobre 2022

Government of Canada Intervention to the 73rd Session of the UNHCR Executive Committee (2022) General Statement

Chair, High Commissioner Grandi, distinguished delegates; on behalf of Canada's delegation, I wish to thank the High Commissioner for his opening remarks and for his strong and effective leadership. We would like to congratulate him on his recent mandate extension. We commend the Agency, its staff, and its partners, for their dedication to helping those affected by conflict, often at great risk to themselves.

With unprecedented levels of forced displacement, global food insecurity, and increasing emergencies, we are at a critical juncture. Russia's unjustifiable aggression against Ukraine, including this week's deplorable attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, has led to unprecedented rates of forced displacement in Europe. This crisis demonstrates the imperative of a coordinated response and solidarity among states. However, it must become the norm, not the exception – to support the many underfunded humanitarian crises around the world, including in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, to name only two. Canada has heard the call from the High Commissioner that support for one crisis not be to the detriment of others. This is why we have a needs-based approach to humanitarian assistance, ensuring that our support to Ukraine is in addition to our support for other crises in the world.

Canada is proud to partner with UNHCR in its response to the many displacement crises affecting the world today, and in the quest for durable solutions. As the growth in humanitarian needs continues to outpace available resources, we encourage UNHCR to strengthen coordination with other humanitarian actors, particularly to implement the Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement and the recommendations of the High-Level Panel.

And it is important to recognize now, more than ever, the undue pressures placed on host countries and communities. We need to strengthen our efforts towards increased responsibility sharing.

To this end, Canada calls on the international community to remain committed to the fundamental principles that underpin the *1951 Refugee Convention*, the *Global Compact on Refugees*, and to ensure more equitable and predictable responsibility sharing for refugees and host communities and countries. We are concerned by the

externalization of asylum responsibilities and encourage Member States to guarantee the right to seek asylum.

Canada believes that the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, in particular the MIRPS Framework, is a successful blueprint to implement a regional response towards prevention, protection and durable solutions to forced displacement. That is why Canada was proud to serve as Chair of the MIRPS Support Platform and to welcome the World Bank as its newest member.

Monsieur le Président, nous avons besoin de toute urgence d'un leadership et d'un dialogue politiques plus constants qui s'attaquent aux causes profondes des crises humanitaires. Il nous faut adopter des solutions durables et fondées sur les droits, tout en sauvegardant le rôle primordial des acteurs humanitaires comme le HCR pour sauver des vies. À cette fin, le Canada encourage les États membres à redoubler d'efforts pour tirer parti d'une meilleure articulation des synergies entre les acteurs de l'aide humanitaire, de l'aide au développement et des opérations de paix.

Dans son rôle de chef de file du Groupe de la protection, le Canada encourage le HCR à attirer particulièrement l'attention sur les besoins propres aux femmes et aux filles dans toute leur diversité et aux personnes victimes de discrimination en raison de leur orientation sexuelle, leur identité et leur expression de genre et leurs caractéristiques sexuelles. Entendre, comprendre et prendre activement en compte de l'expérience vécue des réfugiés, dans toute leur diversité, donne de meilleurs résultats.

Le Canada demande également à la communauté internationale de privilégier la participation réelle des réfugiés. Nous continuons de collaborer avec des organisations dirigées par des réfugiés, en particulier, dans le cadre de notre initiative sur l'éducation pour les réfugiés « Ensemble pour l'apprentissage ».

Avant de consacrer le reste de mon temps de parole à Pierre Dushime, qui est cette année le conseiller en matière de réfugiés de la délégation canadienne, je voudrais terminer en exhortant les États membres du Comité exécutif à soutenir fermement le HCR et la réponse globale aux réfugiés.

En ce jour, rappelons-nous notre humanité commune et nos liens. Nous sommes plus forts lorsque nous nous unissons pour construire un avenir plus juste et équitable dans la dignité et la compassion pour tous.

And now, if you allow me, I would like to hand over the microphone to our delegation's refugee advisor, Pierre Dushime.

My name is Pierre Dushime, and I am here today owing to Canada's continued commitment to meaningful refugee engagement and participation.

Substantive refugee engagement can, and ought to be used to influence the international refugee regime to be more equitable, effective, and efficient. Canada acknowledges and applauds Member States that have included refugee advisors on their delegations and strongly encourages other Member States to follow suit.

It is fundamental that we take practical action on including the voices of refugees and that we take a human rights-based approach, where we not only "do no harm", but also consider the principle of "nothing about us without us."

Thank you.