



Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the
United Nations Office and other international organizations

Statement

By

Mr. Majid Hamedani

Director for Refugees, Natural Disaster and Drug Control

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Mr./Madam chair,

I would like to express the Islamic Republic of Iran's gratitude to UNHCR, the High commissioner, and its tireless staff for all efforts they have done to mitigate the suffering of refugees and other displaced people all around the world.

I wish to convey my sincere condolences to our Afghan citizens who have lost their loved ones in the recent devastating earthquake in Herat, a city near Afghanistan's border with Iran. This earthquake has led to the displacement of tens of thousands of people, just as the cold season is approaching. Unless the international community promptly responds to their urgent needs, we may witness another large influx of displaced individuals into my country. To prevent a new global migration crisis, the most effective approach would be to address the fundamental requirements of Afghans affected by the disaster, including providing food, shelter, medicine, and life-saving infrastructure.

Mr./Madam Chair,



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The humanitarian situation in our region has been continuously aggravated by the political turmoil in Afghanistan following the prolonged presence and thoughtless withdrawal from the country. As a result, a significant number of Afghan displaced persons have irregularly sought refuge in Iran. However, relying on its limited resources up to now, Iran has continued to offer Afghan nationals in the country access to livelihood opportunities, public education, healthcare, and other essential services, often on a similar footing as Iranian citizens.

The portion of international contributions is still meagre. Adherence to the international regime of protection without mobilizing sufficient resources in the spirit of the well-known principle of burden and responsibility sharing, is a counsel of perfection for host countries. Iran has gone above and beyond in its efforts, far exceeding its fair share in hosting and protecting refugees which caused us difficulties to continue this way.

In an endeavor to alleviate the challenges faced by the Afghan population due to the Taliban's strict regulations, which include a ban on female students pursuing higher education, Iranian universities have demonstrated their willingness to accommodate and enroll a significant number of Afghan girls. Moreover, girls have made up 47% of all Afghan children who are freely enjoying access to the Iran's Public Education System.

With a view to the mentioned services and due to the absence of essential infrastructure in Afghanistan, millions of Afghan people are leaving their country in pursuit of a better livelihood to Iran; however, they may not meet the criteria outlined in the 1951 Refugee Convention, which primarily grants refugee status based on persecution.



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Now is the international communities' turn to demonstrate its solidarity with the refugees and Afghan people in need of international protection and their host communities. Otherwise, Iranian authorities may not be able to justify applying national protection policies to Afghan nationals in the eyes of the Iranian public opinion. It is important to note that Iran's support for the mixed flow of refugees and migrants cannot be a permanent solution. Therefore, there is a need for serious and timely planning for a permanent resolution to this issue, which should be part of cooperative efforts based on the principle of international responsibility.

Mr./Madam Chair

While supporting and the approach of the Strategic Solutions for Afghan Refugees (SSAR), the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that voluntary repatriation should be the top priority among durable solutions, as a fact that is endorsed by all SSAR declarations. The disregard for this solution by certain stakeholders, using the longstanding pretext of Afghanistan's ongoing instability, is no longer acceptable.

Considering the substantial support that Iran provides to refugees and Afghan nationals, it's evident that the UNHCR's budget for 2023 is significantly insufficient and falls short of covering the actual hosting expenses. Furthermore, there is a noticeable discrepancy between the proposed annual budget and the actual budget realized by UNHCR for its operations in Iran.



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Chair,

In reference to the inclusion of nonconsensual language concerning sexual orientations in the Note on International Protection, our delegation holds the view that bringing in politically sensitive and controversial notions, concepts, and language by the Secretariat could potentially hinder the work of this body. These concerns do not enjoy universal acceptance and consensus. My delegation reserves its position on the use of terms that do not enjoy international consensus, certainly in paragraph 16 of the UNHCR's Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/74/3).

I would like to take this opportunity to express my delegation's heartfelt sympathy for the nation of Palestinian, particularly the innocent people of Gaza who are losing their lives and vital infrastructure under the intense bombardment by the occupiers.

In conclusion Chair,

The Islamic Republic of Iran remains committed to cooperating with UNHCR and other members of the international community to do its best in alleviating the plight of forcibly displaced people and their host communities, in line with its fair share.

I thank you.