

UNHCR ExCom 2023 - New Zealand statement

International Protection

Thank you, Chair. We extend our gratitude to you and your team for the insightful paper on international protection that New Zealand has studied with keen interest.

Seventy-five years ago we came together to affirm the intrinsic rights and equal worth of every individual. The belief in the universal and indivisible nature of human rights remains as vital today as it was then. It is the responsibility of each and every government to strive for greater promotion and safeguarding of human rights for all.

When marginalised groups have their rights realised, respected and fulfilled, our societies are stronger, safer and more prosperous.

As we witness multiple displacement crises unfold worldwide, New Zealand is dedicated to collaborating with UNHCR and the global community in finding enduring protection solutions for refugees in need of international sanctuary.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to UNHCR for its tireless efforts in providing such solutions and offering humanitarian aid to displaced populations across the globe. We also recognise the often perilous and isolated environments in which UNHCR and its dedicated staff operate.

The world is facing multiple threats and challenges. We are seeing and feeling the impacts of climate change in our Pacific region. The scale of humanitarian crises and human rights violations across the globe will continue to increase if we do not collectively fight climate change.

We are also seeing a concerted effort to systemically wind back the rights of individuals who are members of vulnerable groups, including women and girls in all their diversity, the LGBTQIA+ community, Indigenous Peoples, and persons with disabilities.

Individuals who sit at the intersection of these marginalised groups are particularly vulnerable, and so our responses must include dedicated resourcing to address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

New Zealand is an advocate for inclusive humanitarian action grounded in a comprehensive and all-encompassing protection agenda, ensuring that every person of concern receives the requisite safeguarding and support. We applaud UNHCR's unwavering commitment to inclusive humanitarian action, and commend UNHCR's prioritisation of its policy on prevention of, and response to, gender-based violence.

It is now more important than ever to be united. New Zealand acknowledges that access to rights, protection and solutions ultimately depends on the commitments and actions of States. New Zealand is steadfast in its endeavours to promote international cooperation and effective burden-sharing in addressing global displacement. We stand behind the implementation of commitments and legal obligations in good faith, and in alignment with the Global Compact on Refugees.

New Zealand remains committed to implementing our pledges, and supporting adaptable and sustainable protection solutions. I thank you.