



**ZIMBABWE**

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF  
PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR AND SOCIAL WELFARE OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE**

**HONOURABLE JULY MOYO (MP)**

**TO THE  
74<sup>TH</sup> EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE PROGRAMME OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (EXCOM)  
MEETING**

**On**

**AGENDA ITEM 4A**

**ON INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION**

**GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

**12 OCTOBER 2023**

- **Chairperson,**
- **Your Excellencies,**
- **Distinguished Delegates,**

Zimbabwe takes the floor in support of the statement delivered by the distinguished delegate of Ethiopia on behalf of the African Group. We welcome the discussion paper on International Protection which gives us an overview of the progress made in securing the rights of persons-of-concern to the UNHCR.

Your Excellency, as articulated in the Africa Group statement, and also highlighted in the paper before us, the number of displaced persons in need of humanitarian assistance continues to rise, while the gap between humanitarian needs and available funding also continues to widen. We note that this is attributable to various challenges that include conflict and climate change-induced natural disasters. As the region hosting the largest numbers of refugees and internally displaced people, Africa continues to be hardest-hit by the challenges of offering international protection to persons-of-concern to the UNHCR in the wake of decreasing financial support.

Your Excellency, there is need, now more than ever, to intensify efforts to address the root causes of forced displacements. It is high time that we collectively focus on greater investment in peace-building initiatives globally which will significantly reduce the pressure on humanitarian assistance. Let us encourage peace and dialogue as ways of resolving conflict in order to avoid forced displacements.

In addition, the effects of climate change continue to force the displacement of huge numbers of people, hence we call on states to honour their commitments to climate-financing and we look forward to the operationalization of the loss and damage fund as committed at COP 27 in Egypt. This will go a long way in mitigating the negative effects of climate change.

Your Excellency, Zimbabwe has taken note of the issue of mixed movements and trafficking in persons, and wishes to encourage continued collaboration between the UNHCR and IOM. In our case, the two

organisations work very well together on the ground in Zimbabwe; and we appreciate that the collaboration helps in bridging the funding gap which has been identified as a major concern during the General discussion of this Excom. The collaboration also helps to leverage on technical expertise to holistically address issues affecting persons-of-concern.

Your Excellency, on the issue of Refugee Status Determination and asylum systems, I wish to highlight that Zimbabwe, as a host country, receives and processes applications from asylum seekers through an inter-agency Status Determination Committee. This Committee has worked very well with the assistance of the UNHCR, who are coopted as an observer. The Committee currently does not have any backlog on applications for refugee status as it meets regularly to process such requests. In this regard, we sincerely appreciate support from the UNHCR Country Office.

Your Excellency, with respect to durable solutions, Zimbabwe supports addressing root-causes for the displacement of persons. In addition, we view voluntary repatriation as a viable way to return persons-of-concern to their countries of origin in a dignified manner. However, Your Excellency, we have noted that in some cases, refugees are not willing to return to their countries of origin after a cessation clause has come into effect, and we request the UNHCR to assist member states to deal with these situations without compromising the dignity, safety and rights of the people of concern.

**I Thank You.**