



**Statement by Ambassador Dušan MATULAY, Permanent Representative
of SLOVAKIA to the United Nations Office and other International
Organizations in Geneva
PLENARY SESSION
GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM
(13 – 15 December 2023)**

Check against Delivery

Excellencies,

Dear participants of the Global Refugee Forum,

We convene at this Global Refugee Forum after four years during which have seen developments that prompted a further rise in the overall number of people on the move, including the most vulnerable among them – the refugees and IDP's.

The recently published second UNHCR's "Global Compact on Refugees indicator report" and, among other, its finding that a surge in the scale of burden and responsibility outpaced available solutions, yet again underscores the fact that none of us is above this immense challenge and we all must contribute according to our capacity.

Since the beginning of the Russian war in Ukraine, Slovakia has received tens of thousands of Ukrainian refugees. More than one hundred ten thousand are hosted today.

It is also in this important context that we are honored to commit at this Global Refugee Forum to contributing to the global burden-and responsibility-sharing with the following pledges:

-We will continue with implementing policies focused on development in countries of origin to help eliminate root causes of migration and improve living conditions of refugees and IDPs in their territories, while paying special attention to the humanitarian-development-security nexus;

-In 2024, we will provide no less than 14 experts to assist with asylum procedures to countries facing massive influx of refugees;

-We will simplify and facilitate the inclusion of persons with medical training enjoying a temporary protection status into our national health system;

-And finally, we will be offering complementary language courses to the children of refugees attending schools so that they can fully enjoy their general schooling. The Slovak government is also considering introducing compulsory schooling for children of foreigners, including those of refugees residing in our territory as well as supporting training courses for adults.

At the same time, we are pleased to join in the following collective efforts:

-In support of the multi-stakeholder pledge on “Sport for Inclusion and Protection”, the Slovak National Olympic Committee will assist the Olympic Refuge Foundation programme which seeks to strengthen capacity within the community sport system to contribute to the mental health and psychosocial well-being of young Ukrainian refugees and their host communities. Specifically, we will identify and engage local sport clubs and coaches who may benefit from the training and, where necessary, provide logistical support to host trainings.

-And the multi-stakeholder pledge submitted by the OECD on behalf of its Development Assistance Committee delivering a common position regarding forced displacement.

Before closing, let me reassure you of my country’s support for this high forum. We hope that its outcomes will be a crucial boost to delivering on the ambition and key objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees adopted in 2018.

Thank you.