

**UNHCR Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's programme
(ExCom) Seventy-sixth session
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General debate**

UN Women Statement

**Delivered by Asya Varbanova, Head of Humanitarian Section and
Deputy Chief of Humanitarian Action**

Mister Chairman, High Commissioner, Excellencies, colleagues,

Thank you for the opportunity to address this Committee on behalf of UN Women. We gather at a time when more than **122 million people are forcibly displaced**, and the global humanitarian system is under immense pressure. Yet amid these challenges, we must remember - women and girls are not only among those most affected - they are also among the most powerful drivers of resilience, recovery, and peace.

In every camp, settlement, and host community, women are organizing for safety, dignity, and opportunity. Our responsibility is to match their courage with commitment—to listen to them, to resource them, and to ensure they have the power to shape the future they deserve.

From **Sudan to Gaza, Ukraine and the DRC**, displaced women are sustaining families, leading humanitarian response, mediating local conflicts, and rebuilding community cohesion. But despite this leadership, women-led and women's rights organizations including women refugee-led organizations, remain underfunded – in fact the most underfunded - and often operating on the margins of formal humanitarian coordination.

The recent [UN Women global study, 'At a Breaking Point'](#), found that nearly **two-thirds of women's organizations in crisis contexts face the risk of closure** due to aid cuts, if nothing changes in the coming months. These are not just statistics—they are the lifelines of women and girls in displacement contexts. Because when these organizations collapse, access to vital-lifesaving protection, GBV prevention and response, and livelihoods often collapse with them.

We have many analyses, including some recent ones, that echo this: that women-led organizations are often the first to respond, the last to leave, and uniquely positioned to rebuild social trust. And yet, their leadership is still seen as peripheral rather than central to humanitarian decision-making.

UN Women's work across more than 40 humanitarian contexts, often in partnership with UNHCR, demonstrates what is possible when this change. From Uganda to Bangladesh to Colombia and Jordan, we have implemented joint initiatives that have demonstrated that when women have been given power and resources, when their solutions are upscaled, this leads to qualitative, effective sustainable solutions.

Mr. Chairman,

The **High Commissioner's call** for moral clarity and a reaffirmation of humanitarian principles resonates strongly with UN Women, with our mandate and our work. Protecting the rights of displaced women and girls is not only a humanitarian imperative; it is a matter of justice and peacebuilding. Gender inequality is both a **root cause and a multiplier of fragility**, and without addressing it, we cannot achieve sustainable solutions.

We therefore call for **protection of women's rights and participation** as a non-negotiable element of refugee and displacement responses; for **direct, flexible, and multi-year funding for women-led and refugee-led organizations**; and **stronger integration of gender equality and women's economic empowerment** into national inclusion and resilience frameworks - consistent with the Global Compact on Refugees and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace continuum.

UN Women stands ready to deepen our collaboration with UNHCR and partners - through the ongoing **Humanitarian Reset**, the **UN80 initiative**, and the **Global Refugee Forum review**—to ensure that women's leadership is not an afterthought but the foundation of our collective response.

Let me also commend the work of the **Global Alliance to End Statelessness** that UN Women joined and has been an active member from its beginning. In one year since its launch, the Alliance engaged over 150 members. For many women and girls, statelessness begins with discriminatory nationality laws that deny them the

right to live as full citizens. Such laws not only strip women and girls of their basic human rights, but also kickstart a domino effect that severely limits their equality and empowerment. UN women will continue to support the Global Alliance and our collective work to address statelessness.

Before I conclude, allow me to express **our appreciation to High Commissioner Filippo Grandi** for his exceptional decade of leadership of the refugee agency. Over ten years, Mr. Grandi has guided UNHCR through a time of unprecedented displacement with integrity, compassion, and humanity. UN Women greatly valued his partnership and his consistent advocacy for inclusion, for gender equality, and for ensuring that women and girls are central to durable solutions.

Thank you.

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