



**SEVENTY-SIXTH SESSION THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME**

**06-10 October 2025 – Assembly Hall at the Palais
des Nations**

STATEMENT OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

**DELIVERED BY H.E. DR. GIRMA AMENTE NONO
AU PERMANENT OBSEVER TO THE UNOG AND OTHER
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA**

Excellency Mr. Marcelo Vázquez Bermúdez, Chairperson of the Executive Committee, Mr. Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

My Delegation aligns with statement made by Cote d'Ivoire on behalf of the African Group.

Excellency Mr. Chairperson,

At the outset, allow me to convey our appreciation to the High Commissioner and his team for their tireless efforts in protecting and assisting millions of refugees and forcibly displaced persons in Africa and globally. We also value the enduring partnership between the African Union Commission and UNHCR, which remains a cornerstone of our collective humanitarian action.

Excellencies,

Africa continues to bear a disproportionate share of the world's forced displacement. Conflicts, climate shocks, and governance challenges are uprooting millions of our citizens. The war in Sudan has created the largest displacement crisis in the world today, while protracted emergencies in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Sahel, Somalia, and the Lake Chad Basin persist. Climate change adds another layer of vulnerability, with droughts and floods driving entire communities from their homes.

Yet even as these crises dominate headlines, we must not forget the **“forgotten crises.”** Situations in Cameroon, Mozambique, Burkina Faso and elsewhere, which remain severely underfunded and underreported, leaving millions in desperate need. We call for renewed global attention and resources to support those who continue to suffer in silence, particularly in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and Central Africa.

Excellency Chair,

The African Union reaffirms its strong commitment to the **Humanitarian–Peace–Development nexus**. Humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding, and sustainable development must be pursued together if we are to provide durable solutions and address the root causes of displacement.

But we face a worrying trend. **Chronic underfunding of humanitarian operations** is gravely undermining our efforts. We see food rations reduced by up to 75 per cent, the closure of health and nutrition services, and the shutting down of schools and vocational facilities for refugee children. Host countries continue to show extraordinary solidarity. Yet without predictable and sufficient international support, their generosity will become unsustainable, and the promises of the Global Compact on Refugees will remain unfulfilled.

In this context, I am pleased to highlight the **operationalization of the African Humanitarian Agency (AfHA)**. Once fully established and hosted in Uganda, the Agency will serve as a continental mechanism to coordinate responses, mobilize resources, and strengthen African ownership in addressing humanitarian crises. We call upon partners to support this process, recognizing this agency’s potential to become a vital pillar of Africa’s humanitarian architecture.

Excellency Chair,

The African Union has also taken significant steps in advancing solutions for **statelessness**. In the coming months, we will launch the **Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Specific Aspects of the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa**. This landmark instrument is testimony to Africa's leadership in addressing statelessness. We call on all partners to support its implementation, and to join us in ensuring that no child in Africa grows up without a nationality or a future.

We further reaffirm our support for the **Global Refugee Forum (GRF)** process. The AU Commission is working with Member States and partners to translate pledges into action and ensure that the Forum's spirit of solidarity yields tangible benefits for refugees and host communities.

Capacity building is also central to our response. The recently established UNHCR **Africa e-Centre** which has become an important platform of our collaboration for equipping humanitarian actors on the continent with the skills and knowledge needed to respond effectively to crises. We will continue to strengthen this collaboration with this Centre, recognizing its vital role in building the capacity for localized preparedness, response, and resilience.

Excellency Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I conclude, I would like to wish Mr. Filippo Grandi, the UN high Commissioner for Refugees all success in his future endeavors and renew to him and his team our appreciation for their efforts during the last ten years. And as we await the appointment of a new High Commissioner, I would like to echo the African Group call for a fair and transparent process that take into consideration global dynamics related to forced displacement and reflect an equitable geographical representation.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm that the African Union stands steadfast in its commitment to safeguard the rights of refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, and stateless persons. Together with UNHCR, our Member States, and partners, we will continue to pursue lasting solutions, to champion predictable and sustainable financing, and to ensure that the voices, dignity, and aspirations of displaced persons are never forgotten.

For us, every refugee, every displaced person, every stateless individual is not just a statistic, but a life, a story, and a future that must be safeguarded. If we act with solidarity and resolve, together we can turn despair into dignity, and transform hope into reality.

I thank you.