



European Union

UNHCR Executive Committee 76th Session 6-10 October 2025

Agenda item 4 a: International Protection Statement by the European Union

Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union as a donor.

The EU welcomes the High Commissioner's opening statement and takes note of the 2026 Programme Budgets. In this challenging financial environment, we underline the need for UNHCR to maintain a clear strategic focus: delivering on its protection mandate, ensuring operational agility, and upholding the integrity of its systems.

The EU is a staunch supporter of multilateralism. This includes the 1951 Refugee Convention, access to asylum and non-refoulement. International refugee frameworks, which are also at the core of EU law, should not be politicised. Today's humanitarian challenges call for more unity, not division.

The EU humanitarian aid budget in 2025 currently stands at EUR 2.56 billion. The EU remains committed to support forcibly displaced persons across all regions, the great majority of whom have been displaced by conflicts – such as Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, the deplorable, dire and catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza, the dismal crisis in Sudan, and other conflicts and ongoing crises in Myanmar and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Our principled assistance is based on vulnerabilities and severity of needs. The EU pays particular attention to addressing the needs of children, women and girls, including because of sexual and gender-based violence.

Our humanitarian efforts focus, among others, on safeguarding rights and ensuring access to essential services. This adds to our significant efforts to reinforce asylum systems, promote self-reliance and durable solutions for forcibly displaced people, while supporting their host communities, to ensure international stability and prosperity benefitting both the EU and partner countries.

At the same time, everyone must shoulder their responsibility and match their economic standing, including emerging global donors and the private sector.

Since 1st of October, a new UNHCR structure is fully in place. This recalibration must be underpinned by rigorous financial management, strong risk oversight and transparent criteria for prioritisation. Targeting support according to severity of needs, cost-effectiveness and risk is essential to sustain donor confidence and mobilise broader support.

UNHCR's engagement in system-wide reform processes such as UN80 and the Humanitarian Reset provides a timely opportunity to enhance efficiency and coherence. Continued alignment with these initiatives, while preserving UNHCR's unique protection role, will be key to maximising collective impact and avoiding duplication.

In line with sustainable responses, we will continue to support host countries and local communities in enabling refugees' inclusion into national public services, notably in education, health and social protection, avoiding separate costly social systems. The scale and complexity of forced displacement today require coordinated responses – rooted in national leadership and ownership, whole-of-government engagement, and inclusion.

The EU will remain a robust partner in supporting UNHCR's mandate and continue to seek closer alignment with all likeminded actors. In turn, we expect clear prioritisation and communication on strategic choices, as well as sound financial management to ensure that limited resources achieve the greatest possible impact for forcibly displaced persons.

Thank you.