



**SOUTH AFRICA'S STATEMENT AT THE  
76<sup>TH</sup> EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH  
COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME (EXCOM)**

**DELIVERED BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS**

**MR. NJABULO NZUZA**

**6 – 10 OCTOBER 2025**

**GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

**Thank You Chairperson,  
Honorable High Commissioner for Refugees  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

South Africa aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on behalf of the African Group.

We commend the leadership of the High Commissioner who during his tenure fostered collective responsibility among Member States to address and alleviate the disproportionate burden borne by host countries, many of whom are low- and middle-income nations. The establishment of the Global Refugee Forum, the #IBelong Campaign, and the sustained protection efforts during the Covid-19 pandemic, stand out as outstanding achievements of High Commissioner Grandi.

Chairperson,

South Africa remains firmly committed to a rules-based multilateral system and institutions of global governance. We believe that the time has come to safeguard their continued relevance and integrity by ensuring inclusive and transparent consultations aimed at making the system more equitable, effective, and responsive to current global realities and challenges. We say this because, as a country, we have directly benefited from the positive intentions and cooperative spirit that underpin multilateralism.

We are deeply concerned by the alarming increase of global displacements which the UNHCR has projected will reach 123 million persons by the end of 2025. We recognise that wars, violence and persecution are the immediate and visible symptoms of the inability to prevent forced displacement of people. We call for a resolute commitment, by Member States, to address the root causes of displacement. This amongst others includes calling upon the international community to support initiatives aimed at creating a conducive environment for voluntary return as the preferred durable solution.

Chairperson,

South Africa notes, that while the number of displacements continue to grow exponentially, funding cuts have forced humanitarian agencies to scale down on operations and activities. Southern Africa remains the worst impacted even, in the midst of a humanitarian crisis in the region.

The Closure of the Southern African Bureau should not undermine the continued efforts and progress which has been made by Member States in enhancing international protection in the region.

Chairperson,

As we consistently reported previously, South Africa would like to reiterate that our country continues to be inundated by mixed movement of persons of which many are not in need of international protection. This sadly, overburdens our asylum system, compromising the provision of services to legitimate asylum seekers.

At present, my government has recruited more legally qualified adjudicators to robustly address the historical appeals backlog in line with national legislation. We hope that the existing commitments by the UNHCR towards the surge project on the backlog will be honored and completed within the agreed timeframes.

My government reassures your esteemed office and this august gathering that we will continue to seek humane and secure, durable solutions for those who need international protection in our country. South Africa will provide a detailed report on this matter at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review in December 2025.

Chairperson,

In 2024, South Africa approved a White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration and Refugee Protection. This policy is being reviewed, and consideration are being made on the concerns raised by various stakeholders on some policy proposals. A revised White Paper will be released for public comments by the end of this year.

**Lastly Chairperson**, we reiterate our call for the respect of international humanitarian and human rights law, especially providing the protection of humanitarian aid workers. We further call for the immediate release of South Africans and other nationals who have been abducted in international waters as part of the humanitarian mission on their way to Gaza. Finally, we reaffirm our solidarity with the people of Palestine.

I thank you.