

State Minister's Speech: 76th Session of the UNHCR Executive Committee

Honorable Chair, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, it is a privilege to address the **76th Session of the UNHCR Executive Committee**. I extend my warmest greetings on behalf of the Government of Somalia as we gather here today. We appreciate the opportunity to address this esteemed assembly and express our gratitude to the High Commissioner for his unwavering commitment and support for Somali refugees in the Horn of Africa region, Yemen, and our internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Somalia is currently overcoming a long period of instability, during which our governance structures, laws, and systems were severely disrupted. Despite these challenges, we are now taking critical steps toward peace, stability, and recovery. A major part of this journey involves upholding and implementing the laws that protect our most vulnerable populations and our commitment is clear in the Refugees & Asylum Seekers Law, which was adopted in 2024. Since its adoption, we have been working intensively on implementation, including strengthening the National Commission for Refugees and IDP's (NCRI) institutional capacity. This year we launch the Refugee & Asylum Seeker ID Card Issuance initiative — a milestone in upholding the rights & access to services for these communities. So far more than 35,000 individuals have received the new ID card that will allow access to vital services.

Chair, I am honored to announce an **historic development** in Somalia's commitment to protecting and assisting our internally displaced persons (IDPs). The House of the People of the Federal Parliament has officially **passed the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons Act of 2025**. This landmark bill has been submitted to the Upper House for final approval, which we anticipate will be expedited.

This legislation represents a **comprehensive legal framework** designed to address the multifaceted challenges faced by millions of our fellow Somalis displaced by armed conflicts, natural disasters, and the devastating impacts of **climate change**. Its passage underscores Somalia's unwavering dedication to upholding its obligations under the **2009 Kampala Convention** of the African Union. The Act establishes foundational definitions and legal principles, assigns clear responsibilities to the Federal Government, Federal Member States, local authorities, and other actors, mandates the creation of an **Inter-ministerial Committee**, and allocates **specific budgetary provisions** to ensure effective coordination and durable solutions. We thank UNHCR Somalia for assisting with this legislation.

Chair, Somalia has made notable progress in implementing the pledges we made at the Global Refugee Forum, integrating them into the NCRI's 5-year strategic plan and the National Transformational Plan. We are grateful for the support from the international community, but the successful implementation of these national initiatives requires **adequate and sustained funding**. Current funding levels remain insufficient, which severely limits our ability to carry out comprehensive programs for our displaced populations.

Finally, while the needs and challenges on the ground remain substantial, there is a clear window of opportunity for all stakeholders to work together and enhance the capacity of receiving communities, expand access to basic services, and create livelihood opportunities. This collaborative effort requires flexible mandates without relinquishing responsibilities. We, therefore, urge UNHCR to **maintain its essential role in repatriation and reintegration** efforts.

Thank you.