

Distinguished UNHCR authorities, representatives of participating States:

Good morning.

Rather than reiterating the concerns already voiced by my colleagues throughout yesterday's and today's sessions — in which more than forty-seven countries have taken the floor — I believe it is appropriate to address the issue that concerns us all. It represents a shared challenge for our States, and calls upon us to seek alternative and forward-looking solutions that foster the evolution of a system which, having prevailed for many years, now requires transformation.

In this regard, the Government of Argentina fully aligns itself with the statement delivered yesterday by the delegation of the United States.

To bring about meaningful and lasting reform, we must be willing to undertake an honest process of self-assessment. This necessarily involves rethinking functions, redistributing tasks, optimizing resources, and reorganizing structures that, at present, often contribute only to bureaucratizing the mandate entrusted to them. It also requires enhancing transparency and accountability for an endeavor which — while expenditures remained steady — appeared unproblematic, yet upon the need for adjustment, revealed concerns regarding continuity and a sense of disenchantment with the very State that had long served as its principal financial supporter.

The investment of States in the implementation of public policies must always be preceded by a clear justification of the actions undertaken. This ensures an understanding of their rationale and allows for the readjustment of those measures that do not align with the obligations assumed. The absence of well-founded explanations for the significant financial commitments made by States has led us, for several months now, to focus primarily on the issue of underfunding — diverting our attention from the substantive analysis of individual cases emerging across the globe, and, even more regrettably, from identifying improvements to the missions and objectives of this institution in its vital role of protecting humanitarian rights.

As President Javier Milei underscored during the eightieth session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, “we must return to our foundations; we must recover a sense of what truly matters.”

In that spirit, the pursuit of peace must remain our foremost priority. Returning to fundamentals in this context would mean enabling UNHCR to refocus on its core mandate — through a more streamlined and efficient structure, capable of centering its efforts on the humanitarian work required in the field. This should draw on its considerable expertise in global response mechanisms such as the provision of safe drinking water, food, and medical assistance to those in need of protection from forced displacement, while ensuring that those fleeing conflict or persecution receive prompt refuge.

We must also recall that international systems are not intended to interfere with, or reinforce, the sovereignty of States. Their purpose is to complement national efforts, strictly within the scope of the mandates that gave them origin.

It is equally important to recognize — as I emphasized during my intervention before this body in May of this year — that each region of the world, and indeed each country, experiences distinct realities in relation to asylum. Geographic location, proximity to States affected by armed or internal conflict, the existence or absence of national legislation implementing the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol, tolerance in applying refugee status to cases of economic migration, and the misuse of the asylum mechanism in circumstances where it is clearly inapplicable — all these factors vary significantly, warranting differentiated measures and distinct levels of UNHCR engagement on the ground.

This, in turn, points to the pressing need to modernize existing systems, to harness technological tools wherever conditions permit, and to prioritize those regions experiencing the highest levels of forced displacement.

In this process of reform, bilateral cooperation between States should play a predominant role. Within the framework of our sovereign authority, each State must be able to adopt the measures it deems appropriate and effective in matters of asylum — without the obligatory intermediation of the institution as a necessary participant. In practice, as we know, States frequently take decisions in partnership with sponsors who possess field expertise and who assume the financial responsibility for implementing such measures.

In conclusion, it is time to reflect on this institution's essence and to realign it with the purpose for which it was created. Let us undertake the changes required to face current and future challenges together — with fairness, efficiency, and resolve — in defense of those who are truly in need.

Thank you.