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**UNHCR Executive Committee, 76h plenary session
Geneva, 8 October 2025**

Agenda item 3: General debate

Statement by the Republic of Lithuania

Mr. Chairperson,

Lithuania fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of Likeminded European Member States. I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

We thank the High Commissioner for his insightful statement. I take this opportunity to express to Mr. Filippo Grandi our true appreciation for his commendable leadership during the last ten years at the helm of UNHCR.

We highly value the activities of UNHCR in guaranteeing international protection and safeguarding the rights and well-being of all refugees, displaced and stateless people. Lithuania is a strong supporter of UNHCR and it can count on our continued cooperation and support. We are committed to the protection of refugees, especially those escaping conflict and persecution in their countries of origin. We recognize the increased protection challenges faced by refugees, particularly, women, children, persons with disabilities and other forcibly displaced persons in vulnerable situations.

Mr. Chairperson,

We appreciate the role of UNHCR in providing assistance to Ukraine during the ongoing Russian aggression. We urge for immediate and unimpeded access for UNHCR and other mandated international bodies to all Ukrainian refugees. We remain extremely concerned about the reports of children from Ukraine being forcibly deported to Russia and Belarus. We support initiatives aimed at seeking to clarify the fate of them all. We welcome the UNHCR 2025-2026 Regional Refugee Response Plan for Ukraine which also covers activities in Lithuania and is assisting the Government of Lithuania to respond to the needs of refugees. Since the beginning of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, more than 93 thousand Ukrainians have already received shelter in Lithuania. Currently, almost 50 thousand Ukrainian citizens are in Lithuania under temporary protection. These persons benefit from access to accommodation or means to obtain housing, health care, education and access to the labour market.

Mr. Chairperson,

We are concerned by UNHCR's dire financial situation. In this respect, we welcome UNHCR's efforts and measures already taken in pursuing budget saving, prioritization of activities and revision of programmes of UNHCR. Also we support the engagement of UNHCR in implementation of the United Nations Secretary-General's UN80 Initiative.

Mr. Chairperson,

I would like also to underline the issue of the instrumentalization of migrants for political purposes by the authorities of Belarus (since 2021) and more recently - by Russia. We are deeply concerned by this inhumane and unacceptable act of using human beings in need to advance political goals and endangering the lives of vulnerable people from third countries. Therefore, Lithuania has filed a case against Belarus at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) regarding the organized smuggling of migrants into Lithuania.

We request that UNHCR, together with other competent international organizations, engage with the Belarusian and Russian authorities urging them to assume their full responsibility in complying with their international legal obligations.

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me assure you that Lithuania is committed to continue supporting UNHCR, politically and financially, and actively engage in finding solutions to global refugee related challenges that we face today.

I thank you.