

PODIUM VERSION

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**Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Program
General Debate**

Statement by the Government of Canada
Delivered by Jean-Marc Gionet
Director General
Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada

with **Stellah Nikuze**
Refugee Experience Advisor

to the
77th SESSION
of the
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

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Vérifier à l'audition

**Comité Exécutif du Haut-Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les Réfugiés
Énoncé général**

Déclaration du Gouvernement du Canada
Prononcée par Jean-Marc Gionet
Directeur général
Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada

Avec **Stellah Nikuze**
Conseiller en matière de réfugiés

À la 77ième SESSION
du
COMITÉ EXÉCUTIF
DU HAUT COMMISSARIAT DES
NATIONS UNIES POUR LES RÉFUGIÉS

Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme

General Debate

Statement by the Government of Canada

Mr. Chair, High Commissioner, Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues,

Last month at the UN General Assembly, the Prime Minister of Canada reaffirmed our commitment to multilateralism, international law, peace and prosperity. As we mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Refugee Convention, we should reflect on the place of the international protection regime in the multilateral system, and how we can recommit to cooperation that is equitable and inclusive.

Canada expresses its commitment to multilateralism, and confidence in the resilience of the Convention and the international protection regime.

Access to asylum remains a fundamental principle of international law and an essential feature of Canada's global commitment to humanitarian action. UNHCR's protection mandate and expertise are indispensable, and that capacity must be preserved. We call on all Member States to uphold these principles, and to continue recognizing the importance of multi-stakeholder and whole of society engagement.

Canada remains steadfast in its commitment to refugee resettlement and complementary pathways, which offer urgently needed durable solutions.

We also recognize that UNHCR resources have further declined, internal reforms are ongoing, and the organization needs to prioritize. Developing a credible and transparent global budget model is urgent and essential, and effective governance will be crucial to the development and implementation of a new Strategic Direction.

The 50 by 35 vision should guide how Member States work together in support of refugees, host countries and communities. Canada encourages its partners to commit to collective action on solutions and self-reliance leading to next year's Global Refugee Forum.

We note that financial contributions to UNHCR from the Canadian private sector and the general public were nearly equal to that of the Government of Canada – a strong validation of support existing beyond traditional actors.

We also firmly believe in the importance of refugee voices, local capacity and civil society, and in that spirit, I would like to hand over to my fellow delegate Stellah.

Mr. Chair,

The Refugee Advisory Network of Canada is honoured to participate and bring refugee perspectives and lived experiences to this session of ExCom. We recognize that protection, self-reliance, meaningful participation, and sustainable solutions are interconnected priorities in an effective refugee response. In

a world affected by conflict, instability, displacement, and loss, refugees need protection, access to essential services, and opportunities to build safe, dignified, and independent lives.

Such access can reduce prolonged dependence on humanitarian assistance while enabling refugees to become self-reliant, contribute to their communities and host societies, and ultimately achieve durable solutions. We support an approach to programming that is protection-centred and evidence-based, with continuous risk and vulnerability analysis, age, gender and diversity approaches, and strong coordination with humanitarian and development partners.

Above all else, refugees must be recognized as leaders, contributors, and partners in shaping the policies and programmes that affect their lives. Meaningful participation should go beyond consultation and towards including refugees in the design, implementation, and monitoring of responses. Participation combined with access can strengthen self-reliance, dignity, and resilience.

We welcome the 50 by 35 initiative and encourage all stakeholders to build on the commitments of previous Global Refugee Forums. The Refugee Advisory Network of Canada remains committed to working with all partners to strengthen protection, advance self-reliance, expand solutions, and uphold the dignity, capacities, and aspirations of refugees.

We are fortunate to have a foundation in the Convention, a contemporary framework in the Compact, and an opportunity at next year's Forum. As Canada, we look forward to working collectively to seize it.

Thank you.