

UNHCR ExCom 77

Statement by Norway

Thank you, Chair. High Commissioner, distinguished colleagues,

In 2026, we marked **75 years since the adoption of the Refugee Convention**. A **cornerstone of international law**, the Convention has protected millions of lives, given hope to people fleeing persecution and conflict, and shown that states can unite around shared rules and responsibilities.

The Convention was born from the devastation of the Second World War. The generation that emerged from that experience understood that human dignity could not depend on the goodwill of the powerful. It had to be protected by law, institutions and commitments shared by states.

Today, the international order of which the Refugee Convention is an essential part is again under pressure. At the same time, the Convention is being tested by new realities, including protracted displacement, mixed movements and mounting pressure on asylum systems. Preserving asylum requires us both to defend the shared rules and responsibilities forged in the aftermath of war and to address the challenges of our time. We therefore welcome the High Commissioner's recognition that refugee protection and efforts to ease these pressures are not competing goals but mutually reinforcing. Safeguarding asylum demands both an unwavering commitment to protection and a stronger focus on solutions.

High Commissioner,

Norway welcomes your vision to **halve by 2035** the number of refugees trapped in protracted displacement and reliant on humanitarian assistance. Such assistance remains indispensable, but it cannot become an end in itself.

The 50 by 35 vision rightly shifts the emphasis from managing displacement to delivering solutions. Greater inclusion and self-reliance can restore dignity and opportunity while making better use of scarce resources. Success will require investment in national systems and sustained support for both refugees and host communities. Norway stands ready to contribute.

Chair,

Protection must remain central to UNHCR's mandate. A smaller operational footprint must not weaken protection monitoring, advocacy or delivery. We are particularly concerned about cuts to child protection and to efforts to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence. We stress the need to protect LGBTQI+ persons of concern. We also underscore UNHCR's continuing importance for internally displaced persons through its protection role, cluster coordination responsibilities and work to advance durable solutions.

These needs are especially acute in today's major displacement crises. **Russia's brutal and illegal war** against Ukraine continues to inflict immense suffering. The conflict in **Sudan** has produced one of the gravest displacement crises in decades. Meanwhile, developments in **Syria** may create greater scope for voluntary return and sustainable reintegration, provided adequate support is maintained.

High Commissioner,

Norway recognizes the **profound financial challenges** confronting UNHCR and the wider humanitarian system, and the exceptional dedication of UNHCR staff who continue to deliver under extremely difficult conditions.

We welcome your efforts to build a more agile, effective and field-focused organization. As UNHCR moves into implementation, **alignment with broader UN reform efforts**, including UN80 and the Humanitarian Reset, will be essential. Reform must preserve the expertise, protection capacity and operational presence needed to fulfil UNHCR's mandate. Local, national and refugee-led organizations are also vital to delivering protection and advancing solutions. As UNHCR adapts to financial constraints, these partnerships should be strengthened, not weakened.

Norway will remain **a steadfast supporter of UNHCR**. We will continue to provide substantial, flexible and predictable funding, and encourage others able to do so to follow suit.

Thank you.