



77th Session of the UNHCR Executive Committee (ExCom)

Agenda Item: General Debate

Chair,

High Commissioner,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Malta aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and would like to make these additional remarks in its national capacity.

At the outset, I wish to thank the High Commissioner for his statement and for his leadership in steering UNHCR through these challenging times. As the number of conflicts and crises continues to rise, UNHCR personnel across the world remain crucial to meeting the humanitarian needs of millions of vulnerable people, especially women and children.

The unprecedented number and scale of conflicts is displacing large numbers of people and placing immense pressure on UNHCR and other humanitarian organisations. Malta believes that addressing the root causes of displacement and ensuring respect for international humanitarian law remain the most viable and sustainable ways to respond to this growing challenge.



Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine has caused large-scale displacement in Europe and inflicted enormous human suffering. Together with the other EU Member States, Malta will continue to support Ukraine by providing temporary protection to its citizens in need of protection.

Against this backdrop, as we mark the 75th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention, Malta reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the Convention, its core values and principles, and its full support for UNHCR as the Convention's guardian. Malta co-sponsored the side event at the UN General Assembly commemorating the anniversary, and looks forward to participating in the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection in December.

Last year, Malta joined many other States in endorsing the Declaration for the Protection of Humanitarian Personnel. In doing so, Malta reaffirmed its commitment to international humanitarian law, which protects civilians and aid workers and enables humanitarian access. Malta pays tribute to UNHCR staff for their dedication while working in conflict situations and under extremely difficult circumstances.



High Commissioner,

A central goal you have set for the organisation is to reduce the number of people dependent on humanitarian assistance, through the 50 by 35 vision. Malta supports efforts to expand durable solutions for persons benefiting from international protection. Last year, Malta launched a new integration strategy and five-year action plan. The plan introduced comprehensive measures to strengthen social inclusion, with particular emphasis on access to services, employment, education, housing, language learning, psychosocial support and participation in local communities. This moves Malta's approach beyond initial assistance and accommodation towards longer-term social and economic integration.

Malta welcomes your efforts to adapt operations to financial constraints while ensuring sustainability and sound management. We recognise the difficult decisions this has required. Focusing on the core mandate, avoiding duplication with other agencies and streamlining operations are essential to ensure the decreasing resources are channelled where they matter most for the organisation. Malta also supports UNHCR's non-discriminatory, human rights-based approach in the field, including its age, gender and diversity policy.



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Chair,

As the Refugee Convention turns 75, our task remains to address the drivers of displacement, protect displaced people and advance durable solutions. Malta will continue to work with UNHCR to do just that.

I thank you.