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Agenda Item 3 : General debate

Statement by the State of Qatar

**Geneva
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**Madame Chairperson,
Distinguished High Commissioner,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As we witness new and continued conflicts, and ever-more disturbing forms of violence and persecution, we share the concern of the High Commissioner regarding the increasing humanitarian needs and forced displacement. We praise the High Commissioner's work dedicated to solving the problems of refugees from Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Somalia, Rohingya populations, and other places of conflicts or disasters. The State of Qatar contributes every year to the alleviation of these humanitarian crises through the UNHCR.

In 2017, The Qatar Fund For Development has provided \$26.8 million of financial support to UNHCR, and ranked 19th on the list of the UNHCR top donors.

In 2018, UNHCR has received around \$ 20 million from QFFD and Qatari NGO's. This amount is expected, at least, to double by the end of year 2018.

We highly value the activities of the UNHCR in offering international protection and safeguarding the rights and well-being of refugees. The lives of millions of people are at risk today on perilous routes while fleeing war, violence and human rights violations, seeking safety and protection. Regardless of their status, countries must ensure effective protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, while implanting policies that address the movement of refugees.

As we continue to face large-scale influxes and mixed movement of people in many regions of the world, the State of Qatar firmly believes that the refugees response should be guided by the principles of fundamental rights as enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the Geneva Convention on Refugees. The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants reaffirms that international cooperation is an essential element to the refugee protection, and it also underlines the leadership of UNHCR in tackling this pressing phenomenon.

The efforts deployed by UNHCR and the international donors community has helped to improve the situation of

refugees in various parts of the world. However, due to the ongoing armed conflicts in Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Somalia, Myanmar, and elsewhere, the situation remains fragile.

We must be vigilant and act without delay in order to save lives and ensure the protection of refugees.

The State of Qatar believes that alongside assistance to refugees and protection of their rights, special attention must also be given to safe, voluntary and dignified return and to the promotion of legal pathways for those in need of protection.

We should also focus more on the support for internally displaced persons (IDPs) who are at risk of becoming refugees if their displacement persists. As an example, we note, in particular, the current situation in Syria with regard to IDPs fleeing the zones of conflict. The number and structure of displaced population there (mostly elderly and children, i.e. people in vulnerable situations) as well as their suffering continue to be a cause of great concern. We thank the UNHCR for the support it has provided to IDPs through protection and legal assistance, policy development and

capacity building, and through distribution of emergency shelter materials and non-food items.

We also commend the efforts of UNHCR team in leading the process of developing the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), in comprehensive and transparent manner, and we agree with the High Commissioner's statement on the importance of refugee education.

We are pleased to highlight that Education Above All (EAA) a Qatari Foundation, announced this year that 10 million of the most marginalized children worldwide will receive a quality education through EAA's Educate A Child programme, a major milestone towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The education provision has to be supplemented by protection of education and prevention of war, conflict and insecurity.

From this platform, we would like to highlight the importance of the issue of certification and validation of learning, especially to refugee children and youth. This issue represents a major gap in international educational policy and practice, and there is little guidance on which to

generate policy recommendations for Ministries of Education, United Nations agencies such as UNHCR, UNICEF and UNESCO.

Moreover, getting refugee children and youth into school, will not be sustainable nor productive if this education is not documented or officially recognized across different education systems and jurisdiction, to enable them to move to the next grade or cycle of education or to obtain employment in their host countries or when they return home.

we welcome the reference, to facilitate recognition of equivalency of academic, professional and vocational qualifications and the recognition of the skills and qualifications among refugees and host communities, in the GCR.

Madame Chairperson,

The State of Qatar is committed and ready to support you in finding solutions for global refugee-related challenges we all face today. I would like to thank all participants and wish you successful deliberations.

Thank you.