

Thank you

Mr. Chairperson

Mr. High commissioner, which I wish a quick recovery

Madame Secretary

Madame deputy high commissioner

Distinguished delegates

First, I want to tell you a brief story:

In 1998, when Guinea Bissau experienced a civil war that caused several deaths and thousands of refugees. A 16-year-old girl managed to escape by boat and went to Portugal as refuge and lived there for 21 years. After that she returned to Guinea Bissau to live in peace (especially in peace). In Portugal she took a higher education course, she got married and had three children. In Guinea Bissau she becomes an influential person and decides to pursue a political career.

Now I can talk about our politics and governance on the refugee issue

The Guinea Bissau that I represent here, pledged in 2017, with the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to grant Bissau-Guinean citizenship to ten thousand refugees who have lived in our country for at least twenty years.

In December 2018 in the city of Marrakesh in Morocco, Guinea Bissau took part in the appreciation and adoption of the Global Pact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

Currently,

The government of Guinea-Bissau took office on second day of March, 2020 and, like the whole world, we entered in a state of emergency due to the covid19 on March 11 just 9 days after.

- In 2020, the government of Guinea-Bissau validated / adopted the report of governance indicators on Migration and prepared a national Action Plan for the implementation of the Global Pact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.
- In March 2020, after the start of the pandemic and the implementation of the state of emergency, the new government adopted and defined the referral

mechanism for the withdrawal of migrants from Libya.

- The government are also creating an Inter-Ministerial Committee for Migration that will work on the National Migration Policy
- We also adopted and institutionalized standard operating procedures for the protection and reintegration of migrants in Guinea-Bissau.
- Because of covid 19 the government also defined an emergency national plan to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings.

Guinee-Bissau also concluded the 2017 commitment and, the naturalization process for all refugees who entered the country more than a decade ago, is now complete.

However, I can leave this floor at this moment when we are all facing the coronavirus pandemic, without a properly highlight for two aids that should be mentioned:

The Representant of the High Commissioner for Refugees, Ms. Quetta Esteves, Eunice

The representant of the international organization for migration Ms. Amadori Laura they fully support and guide the government in all these achievements.

ChairPerson, all these achievements shows that Guinea-Bissau is more than ever in line with the objectives and principles that guide the global pact and your organization, so that can reiterate our full adherence.

ChairPerson, the government of Guinea-Bissau has adopted the policy of coherence for that Guinea-Bissau is an example of solidarity and responsibility as, incidentally, was clearly mentioned by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. António Guterres at the Sixth Annual Humanitarian Symposium African Union, in Nairobi and reinforced by the nomination of Guinea Bissau as the champion country in the implementation of the global pact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

Ladies and gentlemen, my speech is not to show you that Guinea Bissau treats refugees with dignity, because we do.

- My speech is not to guarantee you that Guinea-Bissau will always be available and with open arms to all those who are in the sub-region or abroad, understand that being in their homeland does not guarantee their lives.
- My speech is to show you that, the support you guarantee for countries like Guinea-Bissau, is not to a 16 year old refugee girl to become Secretary of State for Communities and have the opportunity to speak in front of you.
- The fund that you made available to countries like Guinea-Bissau is so that no 16-year-old girl must choose between her country and her life.

We are all at the point of arrival, but I want to ask you to approach the starting point of all refugees, because that's home-and-land.

Thank you for your attention

8th October 2020