



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
GENEVA**

NOTE: 174/2020

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations in Geneva, presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and has the honour to forward herewith a Statement to the 71st Session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme to be delivered by Honourable Stephen Kampyongo, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs of the Republic of Zambia.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations and other International Organisations in Geneva, avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the UNHCR the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 2nd October, 2020

The Secretariat
United Nations High Commissioner for refugees
GENEVA





**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS**

**STATEMENT TO THE 71ST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S
PROGRAMME (EXCOM), BY HONOURABLE STEPHEN
KAMPYONGO MP, MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS, ZAMBIA**

GENEVA, 5TH TO 9TH OCTOBER 2020

THANK YOU CHAIRPERSON.

YOUR EXCELLENCY, THE HIGH COMMISSIONER,

HONOURABLE MINISTERS,

EXCELLENCIES,

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,

IT IS, ONCE AGAIN, A GREAT HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE TO ADDRESS THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AT ITS 71ST SEATING WHICH IS BEING HELD AT A TIME IN HISTORY WHEN REFUGEE HOSTING COUNTRIES HAVE TO CONTEND WITH BOTH DISPLACEMENT AND A HEALTH CRISIS IN THE NAME OF THE NOVEL CORONA VIRUS. THE HIGH COMMISSIONER, IN HIS OPENING STATEMENT, HAS GIVEN US HOPE AND THE ASSURANCE THAT WITH GREATER SOLIDARITY, WE CAN OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES THAT COVID-19 HAS PLACED ON THE HUMANITARIAN SECTOR.

CHAIRPERSON,

THE GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBIA HAS MAINTAINED ITS OPEN-DOOR POLICY AND HAS CONTINUED TO RECEIVE AND ADMIT REFUGEES DESPITE TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY SOME COUNTRIES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19. IN THIS REGARD, THE COUNTRY'S POPULATION OF PERSONS OF CONCERN

HAS CONTINUED TO GROW AND NOW STANDS AT OVER 92 000 AS AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER, 2020. OUT OF WHICH, 67,404 ARE REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS, OF WHOM CLOSE TO 5,000 ARRIVED BETWEEN MARCH AND SEPTEMBER, 2020. 23,965 ARE ANGOLAN AND RWANDAN FORMER REFUGEES AWAITING THE COMPLETION OF THE FIRST STEPS IN THEIR NATURALIZATION PROCESS.

CHAIRPERSON,

THE DISRUPTION OF THE NORMAL DAY TO DAY LIVES OF REFUGEES AND PERSONS OF CONCERN INDUCED BY COVID- 19 HAS MADE THEM MORE VULNERABLE THAN BEFORE, LEAVING MANY OF THEM UNABLE TO ENGAGE IN ANY MEANINGFUL LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES AND EXACERBATING THE ALREADY EXISTING CONSTRAINTS TO ACCESS BASIC SERVICES, SUCH AS HEALTH, SANITATION AND HYGIENE, FOOD AND EDUCATION. IN ZAMBIA, WE HAVE BEEN WORKING TIRELESSLY NOT ONLY TO EASE THE EFFECTS OF THE PANDEMIC ON REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS, BUT ALSO TO ENSURE THAT WE PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN REFUGEES SETTLEMENTS AND AMONG REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN URBAN AREAS. I AM PROUD TO

SAY THAT AS A RESULT OF THE EFFECTIVE PREVENTIVE MEASURES PUT IN PLACE BY THE GOVERNMENT, WE HAVE RECORDED NO CASE OF COVID-19 IN OUR SETTLEMENTS. FURTHERMORE, IN ORDER TO ALLEVIATE THE HARDSHIPS FACED BY REFUGEES DUE TO THE PANDEMIC, WITH ASSISTANCE FROM UNHCR, VULNERABLE REFUGEES RESIDING BOTH IN URBAN AND SETTLEMENT AREAS WHERE GIVEN COVID-19 RELIEF CASH ASSISTANCE. WE, THEREFORE, IMPLORE OUR FRIENDS IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, IN THE SPIRIT OF THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES AND THE COMPREHENSIVE REFUGEE RESPONSE FRAMEWORK, TO HELP US MAINTAIN OUR RESPONSE TO DISPLACEMENT AND MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF THE CORONA VIRUS ON DISPLACED POPULATIONS.

CHAIRPERSON,

DUE TO THIS HEALTH CRISIS, GOVERNMENT AND ITS PARTNERS HAS LAGGED BEHIND IN IMPLEMENTING REFUGEE PROGRAMMES, AND HAS IN SOME INSTANCES HAVE HAD TO CANCEL OR SUSPEND OTHERS ALL TOGETHER. HOWEVER, ZAMBIA REMAINS FULLY COMMITTED TO COMPLETE THE LOCAL INTEGRATION OF ANGOLAN AND RWANDAN REFUGEES.

IN THIS REGARD, I AM PLEASED TO INFORM THIS MEETING THAT THE GOVERNMENT, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE UNHCR, HAS COMPLETED A

PILOT PROJECT TO ISSUE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY RESIDENCE PERMITS TO FORMER ANGOLAN REFUGEES AND WILL ISSUE AN ADDITIONAL TWO THOUSAND (2000) PERMITS BY THE END THIS YEAR.

CHAIRPERSON,

IN ORDER TO FULFIL THE PLEDGES WE MADE DURING THE GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM, ZAMBIA HAS COMPLETED A FEASIBILITY STUDY AND COST ANALYSIS FOR CONNECTING THE THREE (3) REFUGEE SETTLEMENTS TO THE NATIONAL ELECTRICITY GRID. THE GOVERNMENT UNDERTAKES TO CONTRIBUTE US \$ 2 MILLION THROUGH THE RURAL ELECTRIFICATION AUTHORITY BUT WILL REQUIRE A CONTRIBUTION OF US \$ 1.5 MILLION FROM COOPERATING PARTNERS TO FULLY IMPLEMENT THE PROJECT.

SIMILARLY, CHAIRPERSON, WE PLEAD WITH ALL INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS TO ASSIST US IN STRENGTHENING SERVICE DELIVERY IN HEALTH, WATER, SANITATION, EDUCATION AND PROTECTION TO OUR POPULATION OF REFUGEES IN THE THREE SETTLEMENTS IN VIEW OF THE GROWING NUMBERS THAT HAS CONTINUED TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE COUNTRY'S ALREADY STRAINED SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS.

TO CONCLUDE, CHAIRPERSON, THE WORLD IS WITNESSING EXTRAORDINARY TIMES, FACING CHALLENGES SUCH AS FINANCIAL CRISIS, CLIMATE CHANGE, CHANGING TECHNOLOGIES AND NOW THE GLOBAL HEALTH PANDEMIC. IT IS IN SUCH TIMES THAT COUNTRIES TEND TO ALLOCATE RESOURCES TO THEIR OWN CITIZENS AND LEAVE OUT VULNERABLE PEOPLE, SUCH AS REFUGEES, THAT ARE BEING HOSTED WITHIN THEIR TERRITORIES.

IT IS, THEREFORE, IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT EVEN IN TIMES OF CRISIS, OUR INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE REFUGEE PROTECTION REMAINS AN UNEQUIVOCAL BINDING OBLIGATION. IT'S AT THIS TIME THAT OUR HUMANITY IS TRULY TESTED.

I LOOK FORWARD TO TODAY'S DISCUSSION ON HOW WE CAN COME TOGETHER, NOT ONLY IN WORD BUT ALSO IN DEED, TO STRENGTHEN OUR CO-OPERATION, SOLIDARITY AND LONG-TERM COLLECTIVE ACTION IN OUR COMMITMENT TO THE PRINCIPALS OF REFUGEE PROTECTION.

I THANK YOU