

Executive Committee of UNHCR – 4-8 October 2021
Statement of the World Bank

On behalf of the World Bank Group, I would like to commend the High Commissioner Filippo Grandi and all the staff at UNHCR for your tireless efforts to serve the millions of refugees and internally displaced persons worldwide and especially the work you have done over the last six months in the context of the coronavirus pandemic.

As the High Commissioner pointed out in his opening statement, we are facing challenging times and it is critical that we work together to support the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), take forward the commitments made at the Global Refugee Forum and do all we can to address the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic.

As noted by many speakers during this ExCom discussion, the global forced displacement crisis has increased in scale and complexity in the last year. I would like to express our special appreciation to hosting countries who have taken on the responsibility of caring for refugees and to clearly indicate the World Bank Group's commitment to supporting them in their efforts.

The importance of addressing the development dimensions of forced displacement is now well accepted and the role of development institutions in complementing the work of humanitarian agencies is understood. The resources available under the Global Concessional Financing Facility for middle income countries and the IDA 18 refugee sub window in low income settings has provided much needed support to expand services and opportunities for refugees and host communities.

The World Bank Group has put in place emergency COVID support programs in 111 countries and we plan to provide more surge financing over the next year. In response to the High Commissioners call, I can reassure you we are committed to ensuring that refugees and host communities are included in the Bank's COVID response. As the HC mentioned in his speech, we also recognize the impacts of the pandemic on hosting communities and refugees and have set aside \$1 billion in grants from the IDA 19 window for hosting communities and refugees to address them.

As well as the IDA 19 window for host communities and refugees, we also have resources available under IDA 19 FCV window to provide enhanced support to countries facing a range of fragility and conflict risks. In line with the World Bank Group Strategy for Fragility, Conflict and Violence this will enable us to scale up our support to countries of origin to address root causes, help mitigate the risks of crises, maintain core service delivery in the middle of conflict, or to help countries recover and transition out of fragility. This is key to reduce the need for people to flee their own country and to make it possible for them to return.

This is not just about the volume of finance available. Our focus is on actual results on the ground and making a difference to the lives of those who are currently struggling. It is about continuity of education during the current crisis, support to health facilities, protecting jobs and livelihoods and supporting communities. It is about working alongside governments to better respond to a difficult crisis through policy responses and support to the corresponding institutions.

Our partnership with UNHCR is strong. We are grateful to UNHCR for sharing their knowledge and experience and for their advice on critical protection issues. We appreciate the positive comments on our collaboration with UNHCR and are particularly pleased to hear the widespread support for the work of the World Bank - UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement. We are committed to ensuring that the JDC will facilitate a step change in the quality and quantity of data on forced displacement and that this evidence will shape policies and programs going forward. I

To conclude, as the High Commissioner noted there is much to do. By working together, we can make a difference to the lives of all those affected by forced displacement and the challenges of COVID.

Thank you