

NIGERIA'S STATEMENT DELIVERED BY HAJIYA SADIYA UMAR FAROUQ, THE HONOURABLE MINISTER, FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS, DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE 73RD SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EXCOM) OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME OCTOBER, 10TH – 14TH 2022

The High Commissioner,

Member States of the Executive Committee,

On behalf of the people and the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, I am delighted to address members of the Executive Committee (ExCom) of the High Commissioner's programme and I must commend the High Commissioner and his team for hosting the 73rd session. I wish to congratulate the High Commissioner for the extension of his tenure till 2025. I also wish to express my government's gratitude on the excellent partnership we have between UNHCR Nigeria and the Nigerian Refugee Commission.

Nigeria aligns itself with the statement made by the Republic of Chad on behalf of the Africa Group.

2. Excellencies, Nigeria remains committed to its obligations under the 1951 UN Convention to protect and provide assistance to refugees and the Global Compact for Refugees, which, in 2019, Nigeria pledged to:

"Include refugees, asylum seekers, returnees, IDPs, Stateless persons and host communities in national development plans; strengthen its protection capacity; ensure availability and access to durable solutions for refugees and IDPs; and sustain Nigeria's role in regional and sub-regional efforts in addressing the root causes of displacement."

3. To operationalize the GCR pledges, Nigeria in collaboration with UNHCR produced a Road Map, which serves as a guide and reference on the implementation of the GCR in Nigeria. This Road Map has been embedded in the Medium-Term National Development Plan 2021-2025 alongside many initiatives for the welfare of Persons of Concern.

4. It should be highlighted that Nigeria has approved its **National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons and its Action Plan** for implementation which provides appropriate safeguards and guarantees protection for displaced populations

in a coordinated manner. Currently, there are **approximately 3.2 million internally displaced persons** in Nigeria. It is in this regard that our government has scaled up efforts towards providing durable solution and has developed a legal instrument for the domestication of the Kampala Convention that is before our Federal Legislative body for passage into law.

5. In September, Nigeria launched its **National Action Plan to Eradicate Statelessness**. If you recall, Nigeria made pledges at the High-Level Segment on Statelessness in 2019, and these pledges have been incorporated for operationalization in order to meet up with the global target for 2024.

6. In the last six (6) years, Nigeria has seen an increased influx **of asylum seekers and refugees** from neighbouring countries. Nigeria is host to 84,314 registered **refugees** and asylum seekers from 34 countries in addition to over 5,000 unregistered Cameroonian refugees/asylum seekers that recently arrived. There are about 341,642 Nigerian Refugees spread across Niger, Chad and Cameroon. In adherence to the principle of ***non-refoulement*** and the non-encampment policy and as an inclusive measure, Nigeria has encouraged integration into host communities in border towns. This policy encourages local integration and facilitates access to livelihood activities. In recognition of this, the cities of Abuja, Lagos and Calabar have been recognized and declared as Refugee Friendly communities.

7. His Excellency, President **Muhammadu Buhari** recently approved the adoption of **Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for maintaining the Civilian and Humanitarian Character of Asylum of Cameroonians in Nigeria**. The SOP provides a procedure for the profiling of applicants for asylum who are suspected of having played an active part in armed conflict.

8. Under the auspices of the **Tripartite Agreement between Nigeria, Cameroon and UNHCR**, over 5000 Nigerian refugees have been voluntarily repatriated to the country. Negotiations have reached an advanced stage for the voluntary repatriation of Nigerian Refugees in Niger and Chad. Nigeria is also constructing resettlement cities in six states across the nation for returnees and IDPs. It is worthy of note that we have scaled up efforts, towards repatriating persons of concern in the North-East, through the Presidential Committee on Repatriation, Return, and Resettlement of Displaced Persons in the North East.

9. To facilitate family re-union, educational studies, medical care abroad, business services and other complementary pathways for regular migration, Nigeria continues to issue the

Convention Travel Documents (CTD) to deserving refugees. Effort is being made to sensitize Embassies and High Commissions in Nigeria to recognize and honour the CTD when presented by refugees. We are strengthening our data management capacities for capturing and delisting IDPs, while also developing initiatives towards increasing civic registration of persons of concern.

10. Mr. Chairman, Nigeria is resolute in the fight against trafficking in persons and Smuggling of Migrants through Evidence-based Response. Nigeria commends the collaborative effort of UNHCR, IOM and other stakeholders that adequately respond to challenges faced by trafficked persons in this project.

11. Mr. Chairman, it must be underscored that the negative impact of **climate change** in the Lake Chad Basin has increased the number of displaced persons in the region. More recently, floods and other extreme climatic events have contributed to an additional wave of internal displacement. On the part of our government, we are implementing the **National Flood Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan** to enhance preparedness, build resilience of affected local communities, and to build back better in line with the Sendai Framework. We are seeking partnerships to mitigate and adapt to climate change especially in the displacement context.

12. Within Nigeria's **Humanitarian – Development – Peace Framework**, we are focusing on 5 core pillars, namely: Emergency, Livelihood, Recovery and resilience building, Management of Migration in emergency, Bridging humanitarian responses with long term development; and Peace and security. We therefore invite partners to note these areas.

13. Your Excellencies, in 2022, geo-political conflicts coupled with the effects of climate change have led to a dramatic rise of forced displacement across the world and Nigeria wishes to lament on the abhorrent treatment of refugees and migrants of Sub-Saharan African descent. **Racism and discrimination** should have no place in our world today that if we are to build sustainable peace, foster prosperity and improve livelihoods and resilience in a manner that preserves the environment and protects vulnerable populations.

14. Nigeria **calls** for global collaboration and cooperation with burden sharing and solidarity particularly to refugee origin and host countries impacted by crises. This is in line with our commitment as Member States to the Global Compact for Refugees.

15. Nigeria commends the sustained efforts of UNHCR. We also **call** on the UNHCR and other migration stakeholders, to continue to work with the Nigerian government towards aligning

policies and programs alongside our national development priorities and values as a nation.

16. Let me use this opportunity to invite you all to **International Humanitarian Summit** organized by the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development. This event seeks to bring stakeholders together to discuss data-based interventions to improve humanitarian service delivery in Nigeria.

Excellencies, Members States of the Executive Committee, thank you for listening.