



I T A L Y

**STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR GIAN LORENZO CORNADO
AT THE 73rd SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME
(GENEVA, 10th OCTOBER 2022)**

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Thank you Chair,

Mr. High Commissioner, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union.

When we gathered last year for the 72nd session of the ExCom, we recognized the exceptional challenges that we had to face collectively. Today, the humanitarian situation in the world has even further aggravated due to the unjustified and unprovoked Russian attack to Ukraine, bringing war and forced displacement at the heart of Europe.

Wars, food insecurity, protracted displacement situations, conflicts, socio-economic effects of the pandemic, violence, extreme weather events and natural hazards are forcing people to flee their homes. The number of displaced persons keep growing at an alarming pace and complex and multi-layered humanitarian crises have further aggravated the fragilities of those in most vulnerable situations, especially refugees, internally displaced persons, asylum seekers, stateless persons and those entitled to international protection.

Confronted with exceptional circumstances, Italy has responded with unprecedented means. We have shown our solidarity to those in need, we have doubled financial resources for ensuring a timelier and more effective emergency response and

we have promoted a stronger collective engagement and increased humanitarian efforts.

Therefore, continuing our strong commitment to UNHCR's humanitarian activities, in 2021, we have doubled our financial contribution to the Agency, reaching 70 million euros, and we have already allocated the same amount of fund for the first 9 months of 2022. We have also increased our flexible funding since the beginning of the year, as a sign of trust in UNHCR's capacity to respond to major crises and to help improve the living conditions of its persons of concern worldwide.

The humanitarian response of the Agency for the situations in Afghanistan, Ukraine, Syria, and the Western and Central Mediterranean keep being the top priorities for Italy, with and increasing support for the Ethiopia situation and the Horn of Africa. In this regard, it is perhaps worth mentioning that the refugee crisis involving people fleeing from the Horn of Africa was the focus of a joint mission of our MoFA and UNHCR to Sudan last august, within the framework of a recently launched joint communication strategy.

In addition, we have been regularly supported UNHCR in financing several JPO positions. Allow me, Chair, to commend the Agency and its staff for their professionalism, and their tireless efforts in ensuring the continuous delivery of humanitarian assistance to those in need.

In the last year, in close partnership with UNHCR, we have been continuing our resettlement and relocation programs, in order to ease pressure on first countries of asylum, and we have transferred additional refugees from Ethiopia and Lebanon through humanitarian corridors. In addition, we have stepped up our efforts and our engagement in providing tertiary education to refugee students in Italy, further expanding our program called « University Corridors for Refugees», allowing almost 70 students from several countries to continue their university education in over 34 academic institutions in Italy.

In preparation for the next Global Refugee Forum, we would like to recall the importance of the Global Compact for Refugees and its key elements of burden and responsibility sharing, even more critical to today's approach to address forced displacement, as they require the continuous active engagement from all stakeholders. To this end, we encourage UNHCR to keep the momentum and further expand its donor base, especially by increasingly involving the private sector and all relevant international financial institutions.

Lastly, let me express our satisfaction for the extension of the mandate of the High Commissioner Grandi for another two years and a half. We are relieved that he will stay in the position for a little while and we commend his strong sense of responsibility towards the persons that he serves.

In conclusion, Italy will continue to be actively and strongly committed, bilaterally and at a collective level, in working hands in hands with UNHCR. We believe that the international community should increase its efforts to alleviate human suffering and cover the basic needs of asylum seekers, refugees, IDPs and stateless people, not only in a spirit of solidarity and responsibility-sharing, but also with a view to keep the attention on those who are often unseen, unheard, and left behind.

I thank you for your attention