

Ambassade et Mission Permanente de la République de Djibouti
Auprès de l'ONUG, de l'OMC et des Organisations Internationales en Suisse



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REPUBLIQUE DE DJIBOUTI

71st session of UNHCR Executive Committee

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Geneva

S.E. Kadra Ahmed Hassan

Ambassador

Permanent Representative

Mr. Chair,

Mr. High Commissioner,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Djibouti aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the African Group.

Mr Chair, my delegation commends you, and the members of the Bureau, on the manner you are steering the work of the Executive Committee.

Djibouti thanks UNHCR for the preparation of this session and its dedication in fulfilling its mission to respond to the needs of refugees worldwide, often in difficult conditions such as the one we are experiencing with COVID 19.

I also thank the High Commissioner, Mr. Filippo Grandi, for his opening statement, which highlights the global situation of forced displacement in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, and the commitment of UNHCR, which remains intact despite the pandemic.

Mr. Chair,

Mr. High Commissioner,

Djibouti has a long tradition of hosting refugees since its independence. Its objective has been and still is to receive refugees in dignity and strive to improve their living conditions in the best of its capacity. In the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees, Djibouti continued focusing on the integration of refugees in the Djiboutian society.

Since the pledge of Djibouti Head of State related to the education of refugees in September 2016, the Government took measures and adopted progressively

laws which give refugees access to social services such as health services, employment opportunities and today they can even open bank account. Djibouti adopted the national refugee law in January 2018, which aims to vividly promote the socio-economic inclusion of refugees, in creating conditions conducive to the development of their potential.

The most recent laws aim to strengthen and consolidate the legal and regulatory system adequate for the care and protection of refugees along with the host communities, while taking into account the complexity created by the mixed movements of refugees and migrants.

In the education sector, after having successfully integrated the refugees present on its soil in its education system for basic education, Djibouti has this year allowed refugees to access secondary and higher classes and Djiboutian scholarships like Djiboutian students. This completes the inclusion of refugees in the Djiboutian education system.

Regarding refugee women and girls, Djibouti also pay specific and due attention to their situation in providing them timely protection and assistance, including in the cases of gender-based violence.

Mr Chair,

Mr. High Commissioner,

Covid 19 paralyzed economic and social activity in Djibouti as everywhere else. Nevertheless, the timely decisions taken by the Government have made it possible to stabilize the effects of the pandemic and control its impact on the population and refugees. Even during the period of lockdown, the flow of asylum seekers and migrants continued and UNHCR as well as other relevant partners support and cooperation is to be recognized and praised.

As a host country, Djibouti remain committed to its pledges and international obligations. However, to sustain its actions in this time of sanitary, economic and social crisis created by Covid 19, increased international financial support is needed, in particular in this phase of post Covid 19 economic recovery plans elaboration.

Covid 19 is an additional burden for hosting countries, such as mine, where already meager available resources are strained for host communities as well as refugees.

This health crisis and pandemic situation has demonstrated the importance of upholding the principles of solidarity and burden sharing underpinning the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees. COVID 19 has highlighted more than ever the necessity and urgency of implementing the Global Compact, starting with honoring the pledges and commitments made at the 1st Global Refugees Forum.

As mentioned by the High Commissioner, more pledges are needed and making the funds already pledged available in timely and predictable manner is crucial.

In this context, at the regional level, it is important to accelerate the operationalization of the IGAD Support Platform, launched at the Global Refugees Forum, which aims at mobilizing political, technical and financial support for pledges to address education health, and livelihoods-related needs in refugee-hosting areas of the IGAD region.

Mr. Chair,

Mr. High Commissioner,

The pandemic has often revealed and exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and inequalities in many countries. Furthermore, Djibouti is affected by climate

change and particularly faces the drought due to insufficient rainfall, often followed by floods and locust infestation. That is why my Government appreciates UNHCR's efforts to find solutions with member States concerned like Djibouti to cope with climate change challenges. The Report on UNHCR Operations Updates in the East and Horn of Africa provides online training sessions on risk management and internal controls for several countries including Djibouti. Djibouti will welcome all initiative aiming at addressing the climate change. We will be ready to engage in this critical issue to better respond to the needs of refugees and host communities living in vulnerable conditions.

Mr. Chair,

Mr. High Commissioner,

Djibouti reiterates its commitment to uphold its international and regional obligations and pledge to continue welcoming refugees on its territory in a dignified manner. We call upon our partners to continue providing indispensable support by increasing and strengthening their funding efforts in the spirit of solidarity and burden sharing.

I would like to take this opportunity to underline the importance of reinforcing their engagement with UNHCR in favor of refugee's assistance and protection.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express my Government gratitude to the office of UNHCR in Djibouti and its team and reiterate our commitment to achieve together our commonly defined objectives regarding refugees and host communities well-being, self-reliance and sustainable development.

I thank you.

