

### **Austrian interventions**

#### **On Panel One:**

Thank you very much for the organization of this important and pertinent panel. Austria fully shares the assessment that we need to step up humanitarian and development funding for countries hosting refugees, particularly through long-term and predictable partnerships between multilateral and bilateral humanitarian and development actors. In this regard, we were extremely pleased during this year's ExCom to be informed about the significant involvement of the World Bank in countries applying the CRRF through the use of grants and loans.

Over the past few years, Austria has significantly increased humanitarian financing; in addition to our core contribution, this year we have so far already provided or pledged to UNHCR more than seven million USD for its operations in Jordan, Iraq, Libya, Uganda and Somalia.

Austria knows from its own experience that sudden and large influx of refugees require investments to expand reception facilities and to provide for measures enhancing inclusion such as language courses or work opportunities. After the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, the Wars in the Balkans in the 1990s and very recently in the wake of Syrian war, Austria was confronted with sudden and considerable refugee flows entering into its territory. In 2015 and 2016 more than 130.000 persons requested asylum in Austria, and in 2017 Austria is still among those European States with the highest numbers of asylum applications per capita. Apart from providing accommodation and basic care for asylum seekers in need, my government has considerably increased expenses on measures for integration such as language and orientation courses.

#### **On Panels Two and Three:**

With a recently adopted Integration Act, Austria is setting up clear rules to ensure social cohesion and social peace, acknowledging that successful integration is to the benefit of the entire society. The essential factors are as follows: knowledge of the German language, economic self-sufficiency as well as respect for Austrian and European laws and values. The Integration Act defines rights and obligations for persons entitled to asylum and subsidiary protection and third-country nationals with legal residence.

With a view to promoting the social and economic inclusion of refugees and migrants, the Austrian Federal Government adopted a National Action Plan for Integration

(NAP.I) already in 2010, which pooled integration policy activities by the different levels of government as well as other state actors. Thereby, the NAP.I takes into account the interdisciplinary character of integration. Furthermore, by targeting not only foreign citizens and citizens with a migration background, but the whole of society, the NAP.I points to the fact that integration must be understood as a two-way process. If successful, this process serves as the most sustainable tool when it comes to integrating refugees and migrants as well as to combatting intolerance towards them.