



## **I T A L Y**

**STATEMENT BY  
H.E. AMBASSADOR MASSIMO BELLELLI  
AT THE 70<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME  
(GENEVA, 9 OCTOBER 2019)**

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Thank you Mr Chair, Mr High Commissioner, Dear Colleagues,

Italy aligns itself with the European Union statement and wishes to make some further remarks in its national capacity.

The Global Compact for Refugees is a key element that remind us how the notion of responsibility and burden-sharing is central on today's approach to human mobility; in this line we are looking forward to participating at the first Global Refugee Forum in December. We do believe that an active engagement from all participants, will provide a significant opportunity for an in depth dialogue between parties, from Member states to International organizations, from representatives of the Civil society to the private sector and other multistakeholders.

In a global context with increased protracted crises and the rise of humanitarian needs, it is necessary to multiply the efforts of the International Community for the benefit of refugees and other people of concern.

With relevant contributions in the last couple of years, the Italian Government has renewed its commitment to support UNHCR's humanitarian activities in major crisis areas, in line with the long-standing tradition of our cooperation with the UNHCR.

Adequate funding for humanitarian interventions, is an important aspect to alleviate humanitarian needs of asylum seekers, refugees, IDP and stateless people, but it has to be matched also by the willingness to share the burden, and not only the financial one, of the countries that host large number of people of concern to UNHCR. Not only at regional level, but also, may I say, in a globalized context, where international solutions for burdensharing need to be explored. Solutions that take into account the activities of UN agencies, among which UNHCR has a relevant place, as in Syria, Libya and Venezuela, to name a few.

Let me also commend you, Mr. High Commissioner, for choosing statelessness as the focus issue for this year's High Level segment of the Executive Committee. A heinous condition that puts into jeopardy the fundamental human rights of millions of people in the world, exposing them to more vulnerability and discriminations. Statelessness is a situation that needs to be promptly addressed and eradicated.

The relevant results achieved so far in the framework of the “#I Belong” Campaign presented by You, encourage us to seize the momentum to renew collective efforts to end statelessness by 2024.

Italy has been among the signatories of the 1954 Convention. Since 2014, Italy has been at the front line to fight statelessness, taking two important steps in order to end it. The first step concerns the ratification by our country, on 1 December 2015, of the second Convention on the reduction of statelessness of 1961. The second step regards the establishment in 2016 in Italy of a “Working Table on Statelessness”, chaired by UNHCR, which includes a network of 9 civil society organizations committed to protecting stateless persons and their rights in Italy. The Table aims to coordinate advocacy and discussion on operational proposals to improve the protection of stateless persons with the aim to resolve statelessness cases in Italy.

In October 2017, the “Working Table on Statelessness” produced and presented to the Italian Senate recommendations for the protection of stateless persons and the reduction of statelessness in Italy: the first of these recommendations concerned the

improvement of status determination procedures of stateless persons, for which we have in place two procedures, respectively administrative and judicial. To enhance the efficiency of the administrative procedures the recommendations have put forward a parliamentary proposal. The recommendations also focus on the adoption of measures aimed at guaranteeing the effective access to rights by stateless persons, as enshrined in the two before mentioned UN conventions of 1954 and 1961, as said both in force in Italy.

Regarding the Global Action Plan to end statelessness 2014-2024, promoted by the UN, Italy has focused on the implementation in particular of action 7, 9 and 10. Action 9, as said, has been met by Italy's accession to both UN Conventions on statelessness. As regards action 10, Italy has worked to improve its quantitative and qualitative data on statelessness thanks to the valuable contribution provided by our National Statistics Institute (ISTAT). Last but not least, Italy has promoted action number 7 by financing projects of newborns and minors' civil registration in Ethiopia, which is among the first five countries of origin of stateless persons in Italy. The civil registration projects in Ethiopia were financed, both in 2017 and in 2018, thanks to the resources of the Fund for Africa of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

In this context, particular attention to the status of children born in our Country by stateless parents is paramount and providing them with a more thorough protection of their fundamental rights is a delicate aspect for which Italy is committed to keep an active dialogue with the Office of the High Commissioner and with other engaged Member States.

Last but not least, Mr. High Commissioner, allow me to express our sincerest thanks and gratitude to your dedicated and courageous staff in the field, often risking their lives to ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance to those in need.

Thank you for your attention Mr Chair.

