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Statement on International Protection

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Statement by Sweden

Speaker: Ms Veronica Nordlund, First secretary, Permanent Mission
of Sweden

We wish to thank UNHCR for the note on international protection. The note reflects the very important work undertaken by UNHCR and its partners. While the world is witnessing its highest levels of displacement, access to protection is shrinking globally. Responsibility for people in need of protection should not be the task of only a few.

The extremely worrying situation in Afghanistan and the challenges in the region reminds us of the need for greater coordination among states to support large refugee hosting countries and the need to offer access to legal pathways to protection for persons in need thereof.

We see resettlement as vital tool for those with urgent protection needs but also a concrete operationalization of the principles of solidarity and responsibility sharing. We stand firm on our yearly resettlement quota of 5 000 places in close cooperation with UNHCR. Sweden is committed to fulfil our Global Refugee Forum resettlement pledge, that is to support an expanded and strategic global resettlement response. As former co-Chair to the UNHCR Priority Situations Core Group Sweden will continue our engagement in the Core Group and support UNHCR's work with the implementation of the UNHCR Three-year strategy on resettlement and complementary pathways.

With regards to strengthening asylum systems, Sweden has long experience from twinning projects and other asylum support arrangements. We intend to continue sharing our experience as well as supporting and participating in projects in order to strengthen asylum systems where needed, including through the Asylum Capacity Support Group (ACSG). Sweden remains open for suitable matching opportunities through the support group.

In the EU - Sweden will continue to be a strong voice for greater solidarity and responsibility sharing and for fair and effective asylum policies. As to the negotiations on the proposals in the EU pact on Migration and Asylum, it is key for Sweden to have an effective solidarity mechanism in place. Member States in need should be ensured of effective support and the overall aim should be a more even distribution of asylum seekers. The system should be efficient, sustainable and safeguard the right to asylum.

With the number of displaced persons worldwide reaching a record 82.4 million in 2020, we recognize the need for increased and strengthened action to address the need of protection of people that have been forced to leave their homes. We welcome UNHCR and partners work to provide this protection in humanitarian crises around the world including by finding durable solutions and promoting respect for the rights of refugees, IDPs and stateless persons through inclusion in national systems and safety nets.

This is a challenging time globally for so many vulnerable people in need of protection. Sweden's commitment is clear; to the principles of protection and to ending statelessness, addressing the increasing numbers of internally displaced persons and their need of protection and assistance, upholding effective asylum systems and supporting durable solutions.

Protection and solutions for displacement situations need to be placed at the top of the international political agenda.

Thank you.