



STATEMENT

BY

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OF

THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA

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Thank you, Madam Chairperson,

Ethiopia aligns itself with the statement delivered by Chad on behalf of the African Group.

I would like to start my statement by congratulating the High Commissioner for the extension of your tenure. We commend your personal commitment and would like to reassure my country's support in your future work.

Chairperson,

Ethiopia hosts more than 875,000 refugees from 26 countries. The long-established generosity of Ethiopia and Ethiopians has made easy for refugees to seek asylum and stay in the country. Ethiopia has continued extending its hands to people fleeing conflict despite the fact that we ourselves are challenged by conflict and drought. This is mainly due to the core principles of our history and culture of refugee hosting that precedes the establishment of international refugee laws. This has been attested by the fact that Ethiopia has continued receiving asylum seekers even during the COVID-19 pandemic. More than fifty thousand asylum-seekers have been granted refugee status in Ethiopia over the past three years.

Chairperson,

Despite the socioeconomic challenges, COVID, natural disaster and conflict, coupled with limited international support, Ethiopia made a significant progress in achieving the pledges we made as one of the co-conveners of the 2019 Global Refugee Forum. With our partners, we were able to achieve a lot of milestones in the four areas, and if the necessary support continues, I can confidently foresee that we will achieve more

in the coming 14 months. Furthermore, my country will be eager to share its experience to the new co-conveners for their future work.

Ethiopia has included refugees in its national education system from pre-school up to tertiary education. Nearly 200,000 refugees are attending 54 primary and 12 secondary schools. More than 6,200 have enrolled to the government colleges and universities on a 75% subsidized tuition fee. In addition, the government, in collaboration with UNHCR and other partners, is providing primary health service in 33 health centers and posts.

Cognizant of the protracted nature of the refugee operation and the need to have self-reliance as the only way out, my government has given increased job opportunity to refugees in joint project approach with developmental partners and private sectors. To have a sustainable jobs creation modality to refugees and hosting communities, national roadmap is being developed to include refugees into the national TVET system. We are also working on a roadmap to integrate the oldest refugee camp – Kebribeyah – with the adjacent town with the same name, changing the refugee camp into a settlement and then making it part of the town.

Nonetheless, the full realization of my government's commitment to the refugee response would require collective effort and support from the international community; in the spirit of burden and responsibility sharing. Unfortunately, the reality shows that burden- and responsibility-sharing in hosting, protecting, and assisting refugees has so far been inadequate, inequitable, and inconsistent. The refugee operation in my country has seen probably the highest ration cut, which stood at 46 percent of the minimum standard. While this is averted considerably due to the gracious contribution from the US government and other donor countries, it still requires the attention it deserves. I feel I am compelled to state the obvious that refugees are almost equally vulnerable wherever they are and need a fair attention from our donors irrespective of their origin and newness of the situation

Chairperson,

I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to focus on energy and environment, as the refugee operation has a huge impact on natural resources. In my country, access to clean energy in host communities is very low and hosting huge number of refugees for longer period of time has further increased pressure on the environment.

Recognizing the challenge, in line with the policy of Green Legacy of the country, my organization has been planting more than one million seedlings every year for the past three years in and around refugee camps. In addition, in some areas, energy efficient equipments and alternative energy sources are being piloted in a small scale, with the aim of addressing household energy needs.

However, these initiatives, though noble and encouraging, are not enough to mitigate the impact and rehabilitate the environment. More funding and engagements are required to scale-up the access to renewable energy. Hence, my country would like to appeal to UNHCR and other stakeholders to invest more to scale-up and expand alternative energy interventions for cooking, lighting, and other uses in refugee and host community areas.

Chairperson,

Finally, I would like to highlight that Ethiopia is extending hands to refugees while it has millions of internally displaced persons. In this regard, while we express our appreciation for the support extended to us by UNHCR and partners, we still request more support to the government efforts to meet the challenges of IDPs. We firmly believe this is the time to show concrete solidarity in addressing collectively the serious humanitarian crises, the scale of which our world has never witnessed before.

I thank you!