



Intervention of Ambassador  
Geert Muylle  
Permanent Representative of Belgium  
At the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee  
of the High Commissioner for Refugees

Genève, 7-11 October 2019

(check against delivery)



- BE aligns itself with the statement made by the EU on behalf of the EU and its Member States;
- BE and UNHCR have been partners for a long time. The partnership is based on our mutual commitment to an efficient and effective, transparent and responsible humanitarian system. In June this year we had a successful bilateral consultation in which our partnership was extensively discussed. The needs and challenges are immense with the historically high number of forced displaced people and refugees worldwide, as well as the increasingly difficult protection context.
- BE has signed both conventions on statelessness. We were pleased to note the progress reported on by UNHCR on the Global Action Plan to end statelessness.
- BE supported the CRRF / GCR process from the start. Support for host countries, strong humanitarian development nexus, innovation, data and evidence-based programming and private sector engagement are important elements of the GCR for BE, as well as predictable and flexible financing. The focus is now on the implementation and follow-up of the compact. In this regard, we look forward to the Global Refugee Forum. Belgium has decided to co-sponsor the protection capacity workstream, and we are currently preparing the presentation of good practices and pledges in this area.
- BE welcomes the internal UNHCR reform processes including decentralization and regionalization. In this way, the organization adapts to new dynamics and opportunities, including flexibility and agility in the field, while giving due attention to the UNDS reform. BE asks UNHCR to retain attention for the costs and transparency, as well as efficient and effective operating modalities. BE also welcomes the initiatives regarding result-based management and expects regular reporting on this. BE continues to stress the importance of cooperation and coordination with various UN agencies and other stakeholders.

- BE wishes to congratulate UNHCR with its unqualified audit opinion and thanks UNHCR for the transparent reporting regarding the follow-up of the recommendations of various control bodies and on the integrity initiatives. BE encourages UNHCR to continue its commitment to the timely implementation of the recommendations.
- BE increased the non-earmarked contribution to the general resources of UNHCR to USD 9.5 million per year for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020. This confirms the BE policy and our Grand Bargain commitments on predictable and flexible multi-year financing. In addition, BE finances UNHCR interventions in Lebanon, Iraq, Chad, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan and Yemen. This will bring the total BE contribution to UNHCR for this year to well over 20 million USD.
- BE also continues its efforts in terms of resettlement. Between 2013 and 2019, 3.284 refugees from 9 countries of origin have been resettled in Belgium. The target for 2020 is 1.150 refugees.
- To end with a positive note, we would like to congratulate the Government of Rwanda, in cooperation with the African Union and UNHCR, on the initiative to start an Emergency Transit Mechanism in Rwanda, It will provide urgent and lifesaving assistance to African refugees and asylum-seekers currently being held in detention centers in Libya. It is encouraging to witness this level of solidarity.

Thank you