

Egypt

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me at the outset to express Egypt's gratitude to UNHCR for the preparation of the 70th Session of EXCOM and the High Level Segment on Statelessness.

Egypt would like to align itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished delegation of Zimbabwe on behalf of the African Group.

Egypt welcomes the High Level Segment on Statelessness, which is taking place at the midpoint of the 10 year "I Belong Campaign" to end statelessness. Egypt would like to highlight its own good practices in this area. According to its constitution, nationality is conferred upon any child born to an Egyptian father or an Egyptian mother, and legal recognition of the child is a right guaranteed and regulated by law, including through registration and provision of identity documents. In fact, Egyptian mothers were granted the right to pass the Egyptian nationality on to their children ten years before the beginning of the campaign, in 2004, [and this legal provision has been applied retroactively to confer Egyptian nationality on those born to Egyptian mothers prior to that date]. This is in accordance with the CEDAW and Action 3 of the Campaign to end Statelessness.

Equally significant is the amendment of the Child Law in 2008 to allow mothers to register their newborn children for the purposes of issuing a birth certificate. In addition to this, according to Egyptian legislation children of unknown filiation born in Egypt have the right to Egyptian nationality. These measures are in accordance with Actions 7 and 8 of the campaign.

Egypt is willing to cooperate with UNHCR and other concerned UN agencies to share its best practices, including in the area of ending discrimination between men and women in nationality laws.

Mr. Chairman,

Egypt's Chairmanship of the African Union coincides with the declaration of 2019 as the "Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally displaced Persons" in Africa. Egypt has therefore hosted a number of important regional events to promote the theme, including the preparatory workshop of the Aswan Forum on Forced Displacement in Africa, held in August 2019. This is just one facet of Egypt's commitment to the cause of protecting refugees.

Egypt has a long-standing tradition of admitting and hosting refugees, and currently hosts refugees from a total of 58 countries, many of whom live in Egypt without needing to register as refugees. Moreover, they have access to public services on an equal footing as Egyptian citizens, and there have no need or incentive to register or apply for refugee status. They are also guaranteed freedom of movement, as Egypt, unlike many other countries, continues to reject confining refugees to camps. As a result, only around 250,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt are registered with UNHCR, while we host millions in refugee like situations, who are not officially registered but cannot avail themselves of the protection of their countries of origin.

Mr. Chairman,

Refugees, asylum seekers and people from refugee-like situations in Egypt have access to public healthcare services, on an equal footing with Egyptian citizens.

Recently, Egypt extended its '100 million health campaign,' to detect and eliminate hepatitis C to all refugees and other foreigners on Egyptian soil. Egypt extends public education services to all refugee children from Arabic-speaking countries. Refugees, asylum seekers and people in refugee like situations also benefit from the same subsidies on basic goods and services as Egyptian nationals. In addition to these measures, Egypt is looking into presenting a number of pledges at the Global Refugee Forum in the areas of education, jobs and livelihoods, as well health care services, and we look forward to exploring potential partnerships in these areas in the lead-up to the GRF.

Mr. Chairman,

Egypt is concerned that the number of refugees and displaced persons continues to rise, [reaching 70.8 million people worldwide in 2019, of which 85% are hosted by developing countries]. While Egypt extends its appreciation to the donor community, we emphasize the centrality of more equitable "burden and responsibility sharing", which represents the core principle of the GCR. With this in mind, Egypt has been a strong supporter of the Global Refugee Forum, and was the first country to announce itself as a co-sponsor of one of the Forum's thematic areas, namely burden and responsibility sharing. We believe it is essential to step up the level of international solidarity to ease the growing impact on host countries, to provide more opportunities for resettlement, and to resolve root causes of refugee situations to prevent their occurrence and create conditions for return. Egypt has therefore exerted significant efforts to promote a comprehensive approach to resolving conflicts and to achieving post-conflict reconstruction and development in Africa, as part of our priorities during Egypt's Chairmanship of the AU. The challenges that persist are immense, and we are fully committed to work

in partnership with UNHCR and all concerned partners to seize the momentum created by the first GRF to work towards overcoming these challenges.

Thank you