

SLOVENIA

Check against delivery!!!

72

**Statement by H.E. Amb. Sabina STADLER REPNIK, Permanent Representative in Geneva, at the General Debate of the UNHCR Global Refugee Forum, Geneva, 17 December 2019**

~~(Mr. Secretary General, Mr. High Commissioner, Mr/Madam Chair, Excellences.)~~

~~Slovenia actively supported the affirmation of the Global Compact on Refugees last year. We see it as a crucial multilateral tool that should guide the international community in addressing together the on-going refugee crisis in the world. While the document contains strong political commitments, its real impact depends on their implementation, as well as on an effective follow-up and proper monitoring. Only thus can we secure a tangible difference in the lives of refugees.~~

The First Global Refugee Forum represents a litmus test of our collective willingness to transform our words into action and deliver. In Slovenia we are putting our money where our mouth is. Refugees are already the biggest recipients of Slovenian humanitarian assistance and they have accounted for over one quarter of our total humanitarian aid in the past 5 years. In addition, this year, we have distributed funds through a number of international organizations to Syria, Yemen and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). These contributions have been followed-up with bilateral activities, implemented by the Slovenia-based humanitarian organization (ITF Enhancing Human Security) and NGOs, which focus on empowering women refugees and child refugees in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Uganda. We have also been regularly responding to calls for addressing humanitarian crises, especially in Iraq and Syria, as well as the needs of refugees who have found themselves on the Western Balkans route.

While contributing globally, we have also acted locally. Slovenia adopted a new and comprehensive migration strategy which addresses several important issues. It defines fast and efficient asylum procedures, provides for efficient integration policies, and addresses causes of migration, all the while protecting life, dignity and human rights of migrants and refugees. The Government has also launched a special project aimed at preventing human trafficking, sexual violence and gender-based violence against asylum seekers. Special

attention is being paid to the most vulnerable category of migrants and refugees: unaccompanied minors. A new stand-alone center for their expedited consideration is being established, based on the good practice from one of our current accommodation facilities. It will offer round the clock professional care, as well as integration and socialization with local children.

Slovenia may not be among the biggest donors in absolute terms, we strive nonetheless to do our share. We announce our contributions in advance and we deliver on what we promise. It therefore gives me great pleasure to announce two additional pledges. Firstly we joined forces with our Austrian friends in a project dedicated to eliminating the threat posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war, in Syria. Secondly, Slovenia has also decided to support the IFRC's emergency population movement appeal for Bosnia and Herzegovina with an urgent donation, which will address the basic needs of more than 7,000 refugees and migrants.

In conclusion, let me say that multilateralism has never been more important than today. And it is precisely because it is being challenged that we need to reaffirm, also through this meeting, that global issues such as the issue of refugees can be addressed efficiently only globally and through mutual cooperation. That is why Slovenia has always supported the work of the UNHCR and why it will remain a reliable partner in the future as well.

*Thank you.*