

17 December 2019

## National statement at the Global Refugee Forum

Delivered by: H.E. Ms Ann Linde, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden

High Commissioner, Distinguished Delegates,

The timing of this Global Refugee Forum is very important. It is a stark reminder that conflicts around the world continue to displace evermore people. The total number of globally displaced is now the highest on record.

Powerful, moving stories of displacement occur around the world. Whether it is in Afghanistan, Syria or South Sudan. Stories of hope, fear, courage and distress remind us of the many challenges that refugees are facing across the world.

The Global Compact on Refugees is a true expression of the importance of multilateralism. It offers a clear path to take concrete action in support of refugees and the communities that host them.

The guiding principle is that refugees should be included in national systems, and the societies and economies of their host countries. This in turn will enable refugees to contribute to their new communities.

To succeed we must all commit to more equitable sharing of the burden and responsibility for hosting refugees. When refugees are measured in relation to national populations Sweden ranks as the seventh largest among the top ten host countries.

As we look ahead there are three critical issues that we need to address to improve the lives of refugees.

Firstly, there should be adequate funding, and preferably more un-earmarked funding as this enables UNHCR to act quickly, flexibly and in underfunded situations.

For 2019 Swedish un-earmarked funding to UNHCR amounts to 100 million US dollars. In addition 42 million US dollars have been allocated to emergency appeals and specific projects.

Secondly, with a growing number of refugees more people than ever need resettlement in another country. To respond to this the Swedish refugee quota has increased from 1,900 to 5,000 places. This makes us one of the largest recipient countries in the world. More countries should commit towards the resettlement of refugees and continued contribution to resettlement needs.

Thirdly, although there has been significant progress on refugee education there is still a lot of progress to be made. More than half of the world's school-age refugee children do not get an education.

Providing quality education should always be a key part of the response to displacement as is clearly stated in the Global Compact for Refugees. However, this requires sustained and accelerated investments.

I would also like to take this opportunity to stress that we must follow through on our commitment to end statelessness and increase our support for the rapidly growing number of IDPs displaced by conflict and violence. Today's internally displaced are often tomorrow's refugees.

We must get better at preventing and solving conflicts. In that work we need to ensure increased participation of women in the full range of diplomatic and peacemaking efforts.

No matter how good our intentions are in responding to refugee crises, we must never forget to listen to the refugees themselves, and embrace the important features of refugee resourcefulness and self reliance.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank the UNHCR, Switzerland, the co-convenors of the Forum, and other international organizations, as well as the many civil society organizations and other relevant actors– who are doing their utmost to support the many refugees across the world.

Thank you