

NIGERIA'S PRESENTATION AT THE HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIALS MEETING OF THE GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM IN GENEVA ON 14TH – 15TH DECEMBER, 2021 BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER, FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS, DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, HAJIYA SADIYA UMAR FAROUQ.

EXCELLENCIES,

The Government of Nigeria wishes to align itself with the previous speakers in commending UNHCR for organizing this High-Level Officials Meeting within the framework of Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). For us, this meeting is very critical as it avails States the platform to dialogue on the progress of implementation of the pledges made during the first Global Refugees Forum (GRF) held in 2019 and the lessons learnt from the responses of Member States to the COVID-19 pandemic and the circumstances it created.

In 2019, Nigeria demonstrated its commitment to the implementation of the GCR by making four pledges before the UN member States at the first GRF in Geneva. These include:

Pledge 1: To include refugees, IDPs, returnees and their host communities in National Government development plans;

Pledge 2: To strengthen its protection capacity;

Pledge 3: To ensure the availability and access to durable solutions for refugees and IDPs; and

Pledge 4: To continue playing an active and constructive role in regional and sub-regional efforts to address the root causes of displacement.

Since then, Nigeria has made concerted efforts towards the implementation of the pledges and this is driven by Nigeria's open protection environment and commitment to host refugees which is key to the overall implementation of GCR. A crucial foundation for the inclusion of Refugees, IDPs and returnees into National services such as education, health, WASH, identification and promoting self-reliance within the national economic development framework of the country has been solidly put in place. Presently, the Government is finalizing the 2021-2025 Nigeria Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) to incorporate issues of refugees and IDPs, and including budgetary provision for projects that will address the issues.

Other concrete steps towards the implementation includes but not limited to:

- A. The adoption of the National IDPs Policy. The approval of the Policy which was facilitated by the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development (FMHADMSD) incorporates the provisions of African Union Kampala Convention. It is an overarching framework for protection and management of IDPs in Nigeria,
- B. Promoting the registration of refugees by ensuring that they are included in the National Identification Number (NIN) system; and
- C. The inclusion of refugees in national social safety nets through the Government's National Social Safety Net Coordination Office (NASSCO) in the FMHADMSD.

Your Excellencies, the Government of Nigeria has developed a Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus Plan with the purpose of advancing durable solutions for refugees, IDPs and returnees as well as other vulnerable populations in Nigeria. The plan advocates for a development-oriented approach, advancing the localization of frameworks for sustainable development, capacity building of local actors, area-based approaches and

exit strategies for humanitarian interventions. Meanwhile, resettlement cities are currently being constructed in Borno, Edo, Zamfara, Katsina and Kano States for IDPs and returnees.

Allow me, at this juncture, to announce that Nigeria has articulated a Roadmap for the operationalization of the pledges and the overall implementation of the GCR. This Roadmap document, which was developed with the support of UNHCR, has been validated by relevant stakeholders drawn from the States, Local Governments and national actors, serve as a guide to the implementation of the pledges with appropriate coordination structures and mechanisms for follow up. The Roadmap lays out concrete steps and priorities, identifies operational entry points and defines indicators for measuring short- and longer-term progress in areas such as health, education, water, sanitation, jobs and livelihoods, energy, infrastructure, solutions and protection capacity.

Distinguished Delegates, there is no doubt that Nigeria has taken concrete steps in the implementation of its pledges. However, it has had challenges; especially the COVID 19 pandemic which almost paralyzed the economic, as well as social and political activities in the country. But with resilience and perseverance, the Federal Government of Nigeria through FMHADMSD set up a Task Force comprising of other relevant Ministries and Agencies to address the humanitarian challenges resulting from the COVID 19 movement restrictions and consequence. The Task Force ensured the equitable distribution of relief items to all and sundries; most especially, the refugees in Nigeria. The movement restriction period was a blessing in disguise to some smart and innovative ones in the country who developed new ways of doing businesses, such as the online trading and other innovative businesses. It was also during this period that the Federal Government, through my Ministry, rolled out the Cash Based Initiative (CBI) which

targeted the poorest of the poor and paid them stipends to alleviate their excruciating conditions. This exercise was and is still being implemented under the National Social Investment Programs supervised by my ministry. Nigeria has also taken strides in ensuring that refugees, IDPs and other vulnerable populations are being vaccinated against COVID-19.

Nigeria acknowledges the need for addressing the root causes of displacement at national and regional levels and commits to continually provide leadership in creating an enabling platform for discourse within the region, within the context of ECOWAS and Lake Chad Basin Commission Protocol while ensuring voluntary return in safety and dignity. A substantial amount of displacement in Nigeria is due to climate change – flooding, droughts, extreme weather patterns – and we are working hard in developing and disseminating disaster risk reduction awareness especially to areas where the effects of climate change are most damaging. We also commit to holding regional protection dialogues on the Lake Chad basin focusing on conflict resolution and peace building.

Excellencies, Nigeria recognizes that one key element of the successful implementation of GCR is the principle of responsibility sharing. Hence, we call on member states for increased commitment to this principle and encourage development partners to be more involved on the issues of refugee management. More support is solicited for hosting countries and Nigeria is open to such support.

Let me conclude by acknowledging the continued support of UNHCR Nigeria for their immense contribution and guidance to the management of refugees

and IDPs in Nigeria as we enter the next stages for the operationalization of the roadmap for the implementation of the pledges.

Thank you for listening.