

73rd Session of the UNHCR Executive Committee (10–14 October 2022)
Statement by Ambassador HONSEI Kozo, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan
Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Geneva

Thank you, Chair,
Mr. High Commissioner,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Japan would like to pay sincere tribute to the staff of UNHCR for their dedicated work under severe conditions. High Commissioner, we are also grateful for your strong leadership. We are very pleased that you will continue to lead UNHCR for another 2.5 years. Your firsthand observations based on a number of missions always help us understand the reality of humanitarian situations on the ground.

Japan is deeply concerned about the fact that, for the first time in history, more than 100 million people have been forcibly displaced due to conflict, violence, human rights abuses, and persecution.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has not only triggered a large-scale refugee crisis but has also caused a global food and energy crisis. Japan cannot condone any attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force. We strongly urge Russia once again to stop the aggression immediately. Climate change is prominent among the multiple factors that significantly impact the phenomenon of displacement as we see in Pakistan, giving rise to rapid increases in refugee and IDP numbers and contributing to the prolongation of displacement.

Chair,

The High Commissioner has just shared the severe humanitarian situation of tens of millions of displaced and stateless people around the globe. We believe it is incumbent on the international community to increase its support for refugees now at this time when they are left facing a more difficult situation than ever before.

As for Africa, Japan co-hosted the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) last August. At that time, Prime Minister Kishida announced Japan's contribution for Africa over the next three years. That includes provision of coordinated humanitarian and development assistance to 1.5 million refugees and displaced persons and their host communities through the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Japan would like to further promote its cooperation with UNHCR in this regard.

We have also widened our acceptance of people from their countries of origin, including Afghanistan and Ukraine. As for Ukraine, the Government of Japan has also been providing temporary protection to nearly 2,000 people.

Chair,

Japan is deeply concerned by the tendency for UNHCR's funding gap to grow every year in spite of the increasing number of people in need.

At the same time, a positive development is the expansion of partnerships with the private sector in many countries, including Japan. Since the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis, many Japanese companies, organizations, and individuals have provided substantial support, and the Japanese public is becoming increasingly concerned about the refugee issue. Today, Japan's private sector is among the top 10 donors.

We appreciate UNHCR's efforts to promote partnership with the private sector, especially those of the UNHCR Tokyo office, and the Government of Japan would like to continue to work with UNHCR in this regard.

We also acknowledge with appreciation UNHCR's initiative to increase the efficiency of organizational and operational costs through the Business Transformation and UN Fleet initiatives, among others.

Chair,

Japan extends its appreciation to all refugee-hosting countries for their generosity. Recognizing the need for burden- and responsibility-sharing, we would like to reconfirm our continuing strong commitment to supporting refugees and affected populations. To this end, Japan is pleased to be a co-convenor of the Second Global Refugee Forum in 2023. We are ready to contribute to making the forum an important milestone for the international community in tackling the challenges of forced displacement.

Thank you.