



# PHILIPPINES

## 73<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAM

### Agenda Item 4(a): International Protection

13 October 2022

Mr. Chair.

The Philippines thanks the Assistant High Commissioner for the presentation. We recognize the critical work of the UNHCR in extending international protection to persons of concern.

We are concerned about the escalation of armed conflicts that has exacerbated forced displacement in many parts of the world.

We are also concerned about incidents of denial of entry, pushbacks, and expulsions in many land and sea borders, resulting to avoidable loss of lives. The negative political messaging and narratives being attached to refugees, other persons of concern, and also migrants, play a critical part in shaping public backlash and restrictive government policies.

There is wide recognition that climate change and natural hazards are drivers of displacement. Part of our vision of climate action is for organizations like the UNHCR to find its niche in this cross-cutting multilateral issue, including working with States in determining how international obligations extend to climate refugees. There should be a clear mandate and operationalization on the breadth and depth of UNHCR's work related to climate displacement.

We endorse the partnership between the UNHCR with the International Organization for Migration. Addressing issues of mixed movements and challenges that come with it, including trafficking in persons, necessarily requires concrete standard operating procedures to enhance inter-organizational efficiency.

Finally, we echo the reminder that persons of concern should have access to rights as enshrined in the relevant conventions and international humanitarian law. This includes providing the right to access asylum and upholding the principle of non-refoulement. States and other stakeholders should promote the human rights of people in vulnerable situations, including women, children, and persons with disabilities. These responsibilities should not be an issue that divides the international community, but common challenges that should unite all of us.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.