

Ethiopia



**Statement by  
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**Excellency Madame Chairperson,**

**Excellencies and distinguished representatives,**

**High Commissioner for Refugees,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Ethiopia aligns itself with the statement delivered by Uganda on behalf of the African Group.**

**Madam Chairperson,**

I would, at the beginning, like to say a few words about the important changes taking place in Ethiopia. In the last five months, transformational changes have been undertaken in Ethiopia. Indeed, Ethiopia has been engaged in thorough-going reform and liberalization process which have positive impact on our multilateral cooperation, in particular in creating a peaceful and enabling environment to discharge our humanitarian obligations which includes refugees.

Despite the growing number of refugees, migrants and IDPs and the meager resources at our disposal, Ethiopia has continued to the best of its ability to provide an international protection system to the refugees it is hosting in its own territory. Although this is our solemn duty and responsibility to share the global burden of refugees, our capacities however are very limited to meet complex emergency challenges as the situation requires. While we recognize and express gratitude to our humanitarian partners and to UNHCR, we need today, more than ever before urgent and increased support to meet the myriad of challenges that we are confronted with. We are hopeful that we will see enhanced support in the months to come in order to help address the increasing burden of refugees we are compelled to shoulder as one of the large refugee hosting state on the African continent.

**Madam Chairperson,**

It is our fervent hope that the Global Compact on Refugees that the international community is expected to adopt at the end of this year in New York will better address the principle of burden and responsibility sharing through practical actions. Our hope emanates from the fact that all actors, not only states but also humanitarian and development actors as well as other stakeholders will be fully involved thereby making the outcome a win-win to all sides.

In the past three years, pursuant to the pledges that we had made in September 2016 in New York, Ethiopia has been undertaking important steps towards ensuing better protection to refugees by improving their overall self-reliance capacity through the provision of education, strengthening out-of-camp policy and affording other essential social services. That is why we also fully embraced the CRRF for the implementation of our pledges. Since that time, and in collaboration with several partners, we have embarked on a series of activities aimed at transforming the manner in which our country responds to the needs of refugees, including by strengthening the nexus between humanitarian assistance and development interventions. Furthermore, amendments to the refugee proclamation, which is aimed at incorporating recent policy commitments of the government and to create a conducive legal environment for comprehensive response in the country, are expected to be endorsed by the parliament in the coming few months. This is indeed a key encouraging development as it is critical to the implementation of our wide-ranging pledges.

Refugee education, as one of our pledges has also seen remarkable progress over the years. The gross enrolment of refugee children in the primary school has reached 72% while secondary education stands at 12%. In addition, on 10,000 hectares of land granted by the Government of Ethiopia, with the support of partners, the construction of irrigation infrastructure for refugees

and host communities, helps produce crops and fruits to the benefit of both refugees and host communities. The groundwork for the realization of the Jobs Compact, which is expected to provide jobs to 30,000 refugees to and 70,000 locals in industrial parks to be built in different parts of our country is well underway. We have also amended our vital events registration system and has launched registration in all the 27 refugee camps giving equal access to civil registries regardless of their nationality in a bid to reduce statelessness.

In our effort to improving the protection and wellbeing of refugees as well as their host communities, and in light of the “leave no one behind” maxim of the agenda 2030, the government has continued to seek a demand- driven technical and financial support, particularly from the development partners such as the World Bank, EU, DFID, including the private sector like the IKEA Foundation. We are particularly pleased to note here that the World Bank has approved projects to Ethiopia from the IDA -18 facility.

While Ethiopia continues to host large number of refugees, close to 1.8 million internally displaced persons have brought an additional burden to shoulder on. Our response to this is based on “The New Way of Working” by linking humanitarian assistance with the long-term developments and peace building which, we believe will increase resilience of communities. In this regard, while we express our appreciation for the support extended to us by UNHCR and partners, we still request their support to the government efforts to meet the challenges of IDPs.

**Madame Chairperson,**

Ethiopia’s refugee response plan unfortunately, continues to suffer from serious under funding which is compromising the quality of protection system that is provided. Out of the 321 million USD budget for 2018, it is only 25 percent that is funded thus far. The fact that Ethiopia’s funding gap which currently stands at 75% worse than the 45% global funding gap is very much telling about funding constraint we are faced with. Underfunding, ear

marking, unpredictability, untimely release of the funding has hampered our capacity to respond to complex emergencies in a more development-oriented way. In addition, limited Socio-economic opportunities for both the refugees and host communities; insufficient skills and other types of training for the refugees, lack of recreational and social gathering centers is also becoming more challenging.

**Madame Chairperson,**

As I mentioned in the beginning of my statement, significant changes are undergoing not only within Ethiopia itself but their positive dividends of the internal change have been felt throughout the sub-region. The new leadership of Ethiopia, under Prime Minister Dr. Abiye Ahmed is working toward a peaceful and integrated Horn of Africa region. As mentioned in the High Commissioners opening statement, after two decades of hostility, Ethiopia and Eritrea have signed a peace agreement, restored diplomatic relations, reopened embassies in both capital cities and resumed flights and road transportation between the two countries. This has brought a great sense of hope for the people of the two countries. Moreover, as a Chair of the regional body, IGAD, Ethiopia is also playing a key role in the recent signing of the final peace deal between the Government of South Sudan and SPLM-IO while efforts of normalization of relations between Eritrea, Djibouti and Somalia are continuing to bear fruit. We therefore call upon the UNHCR and the international community to continue supporting these peace efforts as they contribute significantly to addressing refugee challenges which are primarily caused by conflicts and wars.

**Thank You**