

Statement of Slovak Republic ExCom

Dear Mr. Chairperson, High Commissioner, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Slovakia fully aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and its Member States and with the statement made on behalf of the group of friends of the #IBelong campaign to end statelessness.

As we have heard in Mr High Commissioner's speech, the situation in forced displacement evolves not just in numbers, but also in complexity. This trend is likely to continue. The entire international community feels consequences of this massive phenomenon, however, the biggest burden remains on host countries, often developing ones, facing their own challenges.

It is obvious that only political engagement and addressing root causes can bring sustainable solutions. Besides conflict resolution, mediation and prevention more attention has to be paid to climate change adaptation and early warning, as environmental factors are playing ever-growing role in displacement.

The world is still far away from ending numerous protracted conflicts, and even after, it will take time until the situation becomes favourable for safe and sustainable return of those forced to flee their homes. Meanwhile, these people need protection and access to basic services. All of us are responsible and have to do our part.

The Global Compact for Refugees demonstrates ways for new approach. Application of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework gives positive examples to follow and build on. We believe that the Global Refugee Forum will create new synergies among all actors and areas, leading to durable solutions and easing pressure on hosting countries. It will enhance protection, which stays, and must remain, in the centre of humanitarian response.

We pay tribute to the High Commissioner, all his staff and partners on the ground for their dedication and endeavour in assisting and protecting refugees and other people of concern in most difficult, often life-threatening, environments.

Mr. Chair,

Before the I Belong campaign, the international community barely dealt with statelessness, without imagining the scope and consequences of this issue. The campaign proves UNHCR's efforts to solve efficiently situation of stateless persons.

Slovakia as party to both of the United Nations Statelessness Conventions stays firmly committed to eradication of statelessness. Our legislation facilitates naturalization of stateless persons and assures that no child born on the territory of Slovak republic remains without citizenship. We cannot, but only agree, that statelessness has a detrimental effect on multiple human rights of human being. Therefore, we welcome a significant progress achieved in a recent period to reduce statelessness. On the other hand, we must continue with our endeavour to fight against this negative phenomenon.

Mr. Chair,

Internally displaced form the largest group of persons of concern to the UNHCR and their number continue to grow. We commend the new UNHCR policy on engagement in situations of internal displacement. In this way, activities linked with assisting IDPs will be better rooted in the organization's internal framework as well as in the overall inter-agency cooperation.

Qualitative changes in forced displacement, together with the UN reform process call for structural adaptation. Slovakia welcomes UNHCR's transformation initiative in order to face emerging challenges in more efficient and comprehensive way. We appreciate open communication held with member states on UNHCR reforms, which will ensure cooperation that is more efficient.

Let me conclude with expressing Slovakia's readiness to engage in this cooperation and to continue its support to the UNHCR.

Thank you.