

Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands at the 70th session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (7-11 October 2019)

[Introduction]

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Thank you, High Commissioner Grandi.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered on behalf of the EU and its member states.

We would like to make some brief remarks in our national capacity

[High Level segment on Statelessness]

First of all, we thank UNHCR for organising the high level segment on the protection of stateless persons. We support UNHCR's involvement in a more strengthened UN-wide engagement on statelessness, including the SG's guidance note and key messages on statelessness in January 2019. In this respect, we fully support UNHCR's #IBelong campaign to end statelessness by 2024.

[International Protection: Global Compact on Refugees and CRRF]

Furthermore we thank the High Commissioner, the deputy High Commissioner and all the UNHCR-staff once more for the achievements of a number of important milestones over the past year, most importantly the affirmation of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), a major step towards improved, more equitable and more predictable burden- and responsibility sharing. We are acutely aware of the plight of hosting countries, and once more we express our unwavering support for the GCR and its goals.

The Global Compact on Refugees' affirmation was followed up by ongoing preparations for the first ever Global Refugee Forum (GRF), and the further work done in CRRF countries. We thank UNHCR for the regular updates and briefings on the GRF in Geneva.

We commend all countries applying the CRRF or similar responses, who have been able to enact or implement laws and regulations guaranteeing rights of refugees, supporting self-reliance and resilience and including them in national development planning and service delivery and will continue to support them. Let me underline a few concrete examples of such support.

[New resources/funding]

Strengthening reception and protection in support of host countries is a key component of our foreign policy. The government has dedicated €128 million annually – in addition to existing humanitarian and development funding – for this goal in the years ahead. We intend to step up support for greater access to education, greater access to services, protection for the most vulnerable, and the creation of employment opportunities for both refugees and their host communities.

[Partnerships]

Last year, in line with the Compact's comprehensive and multi stakeholder approach, the Netherlands launched a new partnership with UNHCR, IFC, ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank – with a total value of €500 million for four years – to support a development-based approach to forced displacement. It improves prospects for both refugees and host communities in –amongst others- the Middle East and the Horn of Africa.

[Resettlement]

[Madam Chair/Mr Chairman], The Netherlands remains committed to helping meet global resettlement needs. As a legal route to protection for vulnerable refugees and part of the comprehensive approach to migration it is important that as many States as possible engage in resettlement. With joined efforts a lot can be achieved. We reiterate our call to other states to start programmes of their own, and actively take part in cooperation and exchange to enhance the quality of our resettlement processes, from selection and pre-departure preparation to realizing a smooth landing and swift integration into our societies.

[SEA-SH]

We greatly appreciate UNHCR's proactive stance on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEA-SH). We support UNHCR's zero tolerance for not acting, and the senior management's strong commitment. We will closely follow the implementation of the strategy and action plan, and we urge that sufficient capacity be made available in the Inspector General's Office to address such matters.

[Mental health and psychosocial support - MHPSS]

[Madam Chair/Mr Chairman], A holistic refugee response should include mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). We compliment UNHCR with the progress made and encourage UNHCR to play an active role in the integration of mental health and psychosocial support into all sectors.

Today we are hosting the first international conference on MHPSS in Amsterdam. We are fully committed to continue our advocacy and action for MHPSS and have submitted a proposal for a spotlight session at the GRF.

Together, we should seize this opportunity at the GRF, to take this issue an important step further.

Thank you Mr Chairman].