



Republic of Rwanda

Ministry in charge of Emergency Management

**Rwanda's Statement for the UNHCR Seventy Third Session of the Executive
Committee - 10 October 2022**

Hon. Marie Solange Kayisire, Minister in charge of Emergency Management

**Chairperson,
High Commissioner,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

I am very honored to join you today for the 73rd Session of the Executive Committee. My delegation associates itself with the statement made by CHAD on behalf of the Africa Group, and we commend the High Commissioner for his comprehensive report.

Mr. High Commissioner, let me start by thanking you as well for UNHCR's continued collaboration with Rwanda in the management and protection of refugees, returnees and people evacuated from Libya to Rwanda through the Emergency Transit Mechanism. Today, we are proud of the progress made, and we are committed to continuing to strengthen this partnership.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Currently, Rwanda hosts more than 127,000 refugees. 90% of them live in refugee camps across the country and are depending on humanitarian assistance.

In line with the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and the Global Compact on Refugees, the Government of Rwanda has strengthened policies and programs aimed at the socio-economic inclusion of refugees in areas of education, health, civil registration, access to finance, right to work opportunities, to name a few.

In the spirit of the humanitarian development nexus, the long-term aspiration of the Rwandan Government is to ensure that refugees living in our country are able to realize their productive potential as self-reliant members of the society, equipped to improve their livelihood and contribute to economic development of the country.

Distinguished delegates,

Today, there is increasing criminalization of irregular migration and dangerous journeys continue to cause loss of life and enrich criminal networks.

In accordance with the principles and norms set by international laws, Rwanda is prepared to welcome vulnerable migrants through multilateral and bilateral agreements.

Since October 2019, through a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the African Union, the Government of Rwanda and UNHCR, 1279 people of concern have been evacuated from Libya. Among these, 713 have been received by third countries under resettlement programs. We thank Canada, Sweden, Norway, France, Finland Belgium and Netherlands for their contribution to finding durable solutions for these migrants.

The experience gained from the operationalization of the Emergency Transit Mechanism has shown that for specific problems there are always workable solutions when joint efforts are made.

Rwanda remains committed to cooperating with stakeholders to contribute to addressing these migration challenges. We strongly believe that this is a shared responsibility, which is why we call on UNHCR and partner countries to come together to find sustainable solutions.

Importantly, there is a need to tackle the root causes of irregular migration and assisting those trapped in these tragic journeys by healing, educating and empowering them for a better future.

I wish to stress that while Rwanda fully abides by international and national laws and principles, the doors are always open for discussion on initiatives to mitigate irregular migration, and enable migrants to enjoy their basic human, social and economic rights.

Chairperson,

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic on the refugee response and returnee operations around the world, Rwanda continued to provide protection and assistance to refugees, opening its doors for asylum seekers and helping refugees achieve durable solutions.

Allow me to provide some highlights:

- ✓ Since August 2020, more than 30,000 Burundian refugees have been facilitated to return to their country under safe and dignified voluntary repatriation and this will continue;
- ✓ Regarding the Global Refugee Forum, held in December 2019, we are progressing well in implementing the commitments made in the areas of education; health, jobs and livelihoods; energy, infrastructure and environment; civil registration and refugee access to legal documentation. However, we are doubling efforts to increase job prospects as well other economic opportunities to address unmet refugee needs, and continue to empower them to be self-reliant.
- ✓ We have a good progress in implementing the Government commitments on eradication of statelessness by 2024. These include a newly adopted nationality law facilitating the naturalization of stateless people, establishment the National Statelessness Taskforce, systematic birth registration which assigns children a unique identifier directly at birth in the health facility, to name a few;
- ✓ Following the cessation clause, Rwanda has continued to open its doors for Rwandan returnees, including 1,924 refugees received this year mainly from the DRC. We urge countries hosting Rwandan refugees to continue to mobilize them so that they return, or alternatively ensure their integration in their host countries.
- ✓ The development approach for refugee response is being successfully implemented in Rwanda. Supported by partners funding, we have been able to build infrastructure including classrooms, water systems, markets and to improve economic opportunities for refugees, paving the way to self-reliance.
- ✓ Rwanda's recent national census included refugees. A specific and dedicated report is being produced, which will inform future response and refugee inclusion in national development planning.

Mr. High Commissioner,

As I conclude, I would like to thank you again, and commend the leadership of the UNHCR its programme and achievements this year. I also take this opportunity to

reiterate Rwanda's commitment to ensure continued collaboration in protecting and improving the welfare of people of concern.

I thank you for your kind attention.