

JOINT STATEMENT BY THE LIKE-MINDED GROUP (LMG)

72nd SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EXCOM) OF UNHCR

General Debate

Geneva, 4 to 8 October 2021

I have the honor of delivering this statement on behalf of Belarus, Cuba, Iran, Laos, Nicaragua, Russia, Syria, Yemen, Zimbabwe and Venezuela.

1. Highlighting the importance of the principles governing the work of the United Nations humanitarian agencies, including those contained in General Assembly Resolution 46/182, on strengthening the coordination of effective humanitarian response to the needs of displaced persons in all parts of the world.
2. Urging the Member States to respect the Charter of the United Nations, International Law, and International Refugee Law, as applicable. To this end, UNHCR represents a key actor to ensure the continued application of the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence within its humanitarian and protection mandate.
3. Noting the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is charged with the task of supervising international conventions providing for the protection of refugees, and recognizing that the effective coordination of measures taken to resolve this problem will depend on the cooperation of States with the High Commissioner.
4. Recalling resolution 428 (V) of 14 December 1950 adopted by the General Assembly concerning the Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which provides that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, acting under the authority of the General Assembly, shall undertake the task of providing international protection, under the auspices of the United Nations, to refugees who qualify under the Statute, and to seek permanent solutions to the refugee problem by assisting governments and, subject to the approval of the governments concerned, private organizations, to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of such refugees or their assimilation into new national communities.
5. Considering important for UNHCR to continue to support countries in formulating comprehensive durable solutions, addressing the needs of vulnerable groups, including refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, and internally displaced persons, under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, working with other international agencies in a coordinated manner following their respective mandates.
6. Reaffirming our condemnation of the continued practices of political instrumentalization of international protection, refuge, and migration and reject the narrative of securitization that has been imposed on the issue of human mobility by some countries for domestic political reasons.
7. Emphasizing the need to unconditionally respect the inalienable right of each State to choose its political, economic, social, and cultural system as an essential condition for ensuring peaceful coexistence among nations and consolidating peace.

8. Considering essential to guarantee the international protection of refugees in host countries and provide logistical and financial support to States that promote voluntary reintegration processes for those who wish to return to their respective countries.
9. Underscoring that both the international community and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees should consider the structural causes of human mobility, particularly those concerning illegal unilateral coercive measures imposed against developing countries, which violate international law and the UN Charter.
10. Recalling that voluntary repatriation remains the preferred solution in most refugee situations. The main priorities are to foster conditions conducive to voluntary repatriation, in full respect of the principle of non-refoulment, to ensure the exercise of free and informed choice, and to mobilize support to underpin safe and dignified repatriation.
11. Expressing that the measures to alleviate the suffering of refugees in the face of large-scale movements or protracted refugee situations must be accompanied by efforts by the international community as a whole to address the root causes of the problem to identify and expedite durable solutions.
12. Recalling that one of the main objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees is to facilitate access to durable solutions by helping to eliminate the root causes of these crises, which is the most effective way to achieve solutions. Under international law and the Charter of the United Nations, political and security cooperation, diplomacy, development, and the promotion and protection of human rights are fundamental to resolving protracted refugee situations and preventing new crises. In this context, the structural causes of human mobility, particularly the negative consequences of unilateral coercive measures, should be considered
13. Underlining the utmost importance of the promotion and protection of the human rights of all refugees and, in this regard, call upon all UN member states to avoid discriminatory measures against refugees based on race, religion, or country of origin.
14. Expressing our strongest condemnation of the promulgation and application of unilateral coercive measures against any Member State in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. We further express our support for the States affected by such measures and urge the international community to take urgent and effective action to eliminate the use of MCUs, to ensure the effectiveness of national responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.
15. We consider the Executive Committee of the Program of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as a platform for the exchange of good practices by UN member states and other stakeholders and look forward to successful deliberations to ensure the effective implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees.

Thank you.