

**The Speech note of Dr. Mahmoudi, Assistant Minister of Interior & Director
General of BAFIA at 72nd. Annual Meeting of EXCOM - Oct. 2021**

IN THE NAME OF GOD, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to express my gratitude on behalf of the Islamic Republic of Iran's government & myself to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for its efforts to alleviate the suffering of refugees.

Distinguished Participants,

As you are aware, despite the numerous economic and social problems caused by the eight-year imposed war, unjust sanctions and unilateral coercive measures, the Islamic Republic of Iran, has so far participated in hosting and supporting refugees many times more than its fair share and has welcomed a large number of refugees for more than 40 years.

Mr. President,

The escalating instability in Afghanistan, which we are witnessing today, is the product of two decades of presence of some countries in that country , under the pretext of fighting terrorism and the result of 20-year occupation of Afghanistan was destruction of assets and infrastructure, brain drain, internal displacement and in particular, the displacement of millions of Afghan migrants beyond the country borders.

Ladies & Gentlemen,

Considering the situation and developments in Afghanistan, it is necessary to mention this bitter experience of my country in recent years. Some of the members of the international community and also UNHCR warn of the need to accept asylum seekers, as soon as possible, during crisis & emergency situations, but unfortunately in practice & when asylum crises subsided, they have no motivation & specific plan to achieve a durable solution and realize voluntary repatriation of refugees, leaving the host countries alone with various problems and deepening

inequality between countries in accepting international & humanitarian responsibilities.

Distinguished Participants,

Due to the special geographical characteristics of the Islamic republic of Iran, Displaced persons & Afghan asylum seekers consider it as a way to travel to European countries, but so far, the Islamic republic of Iran which has received more than 3.5 million of legal & illegal Afghan citizens, has endured exorbitant & heavy costs in dealing with unauthorized border crossings & unfortunately the necessary cooperation & support has not been provided to the Islamic republic of Iran so far, and the international organizations and donor countries have allocated very small amount which has covered only 5% of refugees needs & costs. Therefore, I declare that due to prevailing conditions, accepting the displaced population in Iran is not possible any more.

Mr. President,

Now is the time for the international community to respond to the demands of the Islamic Republic of Iran in such difficult circumstances as follows:

- 1) At the present time, our initial & urgent request to the international community is to address the root causes of asylum, and in particular, to end destabilizing actions which lead to asylum seeking, once and for all.
- 2) The UNHCR & the humanitarian actions of the international community should seriously pursue the empowerment of individuals to exercise their right to return to their homeland, from the beginning of the formation of an asylum process, and UNHCR should increase the actions significantly to promote, facilitate and coordinate voluntary repatriation operations, in line with the requirements of statutes & previous approvals of the executive committee.
- 3) More serious attention to “resettlement in third countries”, as the second solution for the international community to participate in resolving the refugee problem & increase the quota of asylum seekers living in Iran by

third countries, especially the European Union is necessary. Burden-sharing of this global responsibility is our serious demand.

- 4) In response to the continued support of refugees, the Islamic Republic of Iran calls for a mutual commitment of the UNHCR & the international community for adequate & equitable support & the existence of a clear & coherent program for the permanent solution of this issue.
- 5) I reiterate on playing a proportionate role, not beyond the fair share of my country of this international responsibility, and urge the international community & the High Commissioner for Refugees to assist in this regard to take concrete steps for ending unjust burden-sharing & prevent further economic & social problems for countries like Iran, which hosts a large number of refugees.
- 6) While appreciating all the limited support, the Islamic Republic of Iran expects all parties, with regard to inhumane sanctions & in the context of the covid-19 epidemic, to participate in meeting the costs of refugees with mutual & proportionate responsibility sharing & we are ready to cooperate with UNHCR & the international community to agree on a sustainable & fair approach.

Thank you for your attention.