



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme**  
**Seventy-Third Session**  
**National Statement**

High Commissioner, Chair, your excellencies, distinguished delegates.

High Commissioner, thank you for your Statement to the Executive Committee.

Australia would like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of UNHCR staff to deliver critical protection services to displaced peoples globally. This year has once again witnessed the largest number of people displaced in modern history – now at a staggering 100 million people. We understand that UNHCR, and all our humanitarian partners, are stretched - and we appreciate the commitment of the teams on the ground to stay and deliver.

Last year, we reflected on COVID-19 and its enormous impact on a humanitarian system already stretched to its limits. This year, Russia's illegal war in Ukraine and its spillover, combined with the ongoing impact of COVID, continued instability in many regions, climate change and increased displacement from disasters, and rapidly rising levels of food insecurity globally, will increase humanitarian need.

International cooperation and responsibility sharing must improve to address increasing needs. Australia is committed to working with UNHCR and as part of the global community to realise this improvement. As part of this commitment, Australia continues to be a strong supporter of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Bali Process, and their respective mechanisms, and welcomes UNHCR's active engagement in the Bali Process.

We are proud to remain one of the global leaders in international resettlement and are committed to continuing to support generous and flexible Humanitarian and Settlement Programs. Australia will provide 13,750 places in the 2022-23 Humanitarian Program, which will provide permanent resettlement to those most in need of protection. In addition to this annual program, a further 16,500 places for Afghan nationals will be delivered over the next four years.

Our Government aspires to progressively increase Australia's humanitarian intake. Australia is piloting new approaches to complementary pathways for refugees and displaced people including through refugee labour mobility and community sponsorship pathways, as we committed under the Global Compact on Refugees.

High Commissioner, Australia remains concerned by the significant funding gap facing UNHCR. We thank you for your appraisal of the situation and encourage UNHCR to continue to communicate how the necessity to prioritise, and tough choices, will impact operations - particularly in contexts where UNHCR is the central coordinator in the response.

Australia's longstanding humanitarian partnership with UNHCR is firm. We have signed a new Strategic Partnership Framework with UNHCR, which commits us to providing predictable and flexible multi-year funding over the next four years, including a minimum of \$25 million in 2022/23. To respond to emerging crises, we were pleased to provide an additional twenty-one million dollars this financial year across the Afghanistan and Ukraine appeals. We also encourage other donors to offer predictable, flexible funding where they can, to support UNHCR's work.

UNHCR remains a key partner in our region where Australia focuses our humanitarian assistance, for instance supporting crisis affected and displaced communities across Myanmar and Bangladesh. We remain concerned by the reduction in funding to crises in the Asia-Pacific in the face of continued and

escalating need. It is a region particularly prone to climate driven disasters, and likely increased displacement.

High Commissioner, we commend UNHCR for a more dedicated focus on localisation and meaningful refugee participation. Locally led, inclusive responses are critical to effective, sustainable protection measures and assistance. UNHCR has made notable gains on this, and we encourage you to share lessons learnt across the humanitarian system.

We value our continued partnership with UNHCR and look forward to advancing our shared priorities to support displaced people globally, and in our region. Thank you.

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