



**SEVENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S
PROGRAMME, UNITED NATIONS HIGH
COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR)**

9TH - 13TH October, 2023

Thank you Chairperson for giving Nigeria the floor,

Nigeria aligns with the Statements delivered by the African Group and OIC,

At the very outset, my delegation commends the Chairperson of the 74th Executive Committee, Excellency and dear Sister, Ambassador Kadra Ahmed Hassan for her excellent disposition, wisdom and professionalism.

The number of displaced persons globally has exceeded a hundred and ten million (110 million). Although the number has continued to rise in recent times, the upward swing should, however, not solely be attributed to conflicts, considering the impact of floods, droughts, hurricanes, earthquakes and wildfires. While no continent appears immune to these situations that are clearly out of human control, it then becomes more pertinent to further underscore the need for our collective solidarity to save lives and livelihoods.

Nigeria has received thousands of refugees from neighbouring countries since December 2022. In full expression of solidarity to the plight and conditions of these individuals, therefore, our Government has maintained a friendly asylum regime with zero tolerance to xenophobia, by allowing unhindered asylum processes for people seeking international protection, in line with the principles of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). Nigeria has carefully put in place, a strategic “Emergency Preparedness Plan” to manage this influx of persons, by strengthening its protection capacity and facilitating registration exercises for new arrivals of refugees. Additionally, Temporary Protection Status (TPS) are extended to refugees and asylum seekers.

Indeed, more than ninety thousand (90,000) refugees are included in Nigeria's 2021-2025 National Development Plan, while “Refugee Passports” are freely issued to facilitate smooth movement for these individuals within and outside the country. Furthermore, verification exercises are presently being conducted to facilitate the issuance of Refugee Identity Cards, Bank Verification Numbers (BVN) and National Identification Numbers (NIN), as enjoyed by citizens of Nigeria. In furtherance of our demonstration of unalloyed commitment, we have

also signed a memorandum of understanding with UNHCR, to incorporate refugees into the National Social Register.

In January 2023, Nigeria participated in the 3rd Lake Chad Basin Dialogue held in Niamey, Niger to strengthen regional efforts and partnerships in enhancing solutions to the plight of forcibly displaced persons in the region. This is a commitment that demonstrates our progressive partnership with the Special Adviser of the United Nations Secretary-General on Solutions to Internal Displacement to address the needs of more than two million IDPs in northern Nigeria.

It is equally important to report the establishment of a Presidential Committee on Northeast Rehabilitation and Return of Refugees and IDPs - a policy initiative put in place to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Nigerian refugees in Cameroon, Chad and Niger Republics, in a safe and dignified approach. In this regard six (6) resettlement cities have been constructed for IDPs, in addition to three hundred (300) transit shelters being facilitated in partnership with UNHCR.

We have also launched a National Action Plan to end statelessness and efforts are being made to put in place the "Statelessness Status Determination Procedure", in demonstration of the commitment to "I Belong Campaign to end Statelessness by 2024".

Chairperson,

In fulfilment of the pledges made by Nigeria at the first Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in 2019, strident efforts have been made to provide durable solutions to persons of concern, by facilitating access to socio-economic services in national education and health systems, banking services, documentation processes and livelihood activities.

At the forthcoming Second GRF holding in December, 2023, Nigeria will commit to enhancing pledges and seeking partnerships in the areas of self-reliance (through agriculture), health, education and peacebuilding. In this context, we reiterate the need for the global community, development partners and international financial institutions to recognise and respond to the plight of countries hosting refugees, in the spirit of burden-and-responsibility- sharing.

Finally, my delegation wishes to strongly reiterate the pertinent concerns raised by the African Group and the OIC on the non-transparent process of including non-consensual language in the Budget Programme for 2024, following its consideration and endorsement by all Member States at the 88th Session of the Standing Committee held in September, 2023. UNHCR is a global organisation and will be measured by its commitment to uphold equity and promote transparency.

Nigeria will continue to demonstrate strong commitment to the fundamental objective and ethos of UNHCR in the context of providing assistance and durable solutions to persons of concerns in the country.

I thank you.