



Permanent Mission of Italy
UN - Geneva

I T A L Y

**STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR VINCENZO GRASSI
AT THE 74th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME
*10th October 2023***

* * *

Thank you Chair,

Mr. High Commissioner, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union yesterday.

When we gathered last year for the 73rd session of the ExCom, we recognized the exceptional challenges we had to face collectively. One year later the global humanitarian situation is even further aggravated by the alarming pace of protracted displacement situations in complex and multi-layered humanitarian crises, the result of which is a staggering figure of over 110 million refugees, internally displaced persons, asylum seekers, stateless persons. The challenges associated with displacement are further exacerbated by violence and political instability with regional spillovers, pandemics, economic recessions, natural disasters, consequences of climate change. And the list could continue.

Saving lives, alleviating suffering and maintaining human dignity during and in the aftermath of crises remain top priorities for the Italian Government. We have never failed to provide support to those in need and have never spared efforts aimed at finding

solutions for the displaced with strong commitments in the areas of resettlement, humanitarian corridors, evacuations and complementary pathways, with one major objective in mind: to provide a glimmer of hope and a way out of dire conditions for the most vulnerable.

Confronted with these exceptional circumstances, Italy has responded so far with 33.1 mln USD to UNHCR's humanitarian activities. In addition, private donations from my country have reached 24.1 mln USD as of today, confirming our long-standing tradition of solidarity. We have also continued to provide flexible funding for UNHCR to better assist and protect those caught up in emergencies or in forgotten and neglected crises.

Chair, in the current global crisis landscape we believe special mention should be made to the importance of the 'humanitarian-development-peace nexus'. In order to meet peoples' needs, mitigate risks and vulnerabilities and move towards sustainable peace, humanitarian, development and peace actors must work in a more coherent and coordinated manner.

The impact of climate change acting a multiplier, interacting with conflict, violence and other causes of displacement, further exacerbates humanitarian crises worldwide. The climate emergency is a whole new paradigm for humanitarians and we need to urgently reframe our vision and approach to prevent the situation from deteriorating further, as the provision of humanitarian aid might soon be overwhelmed and in need of a new set of action-guiding principles. Given the increasing constraints for humanitarian workers around the world, allow me to take this opportunity to commend UNHCR and its staff on the ground as well its partners for their professionalism, dedication and relentless efforts, often operating in insecure environments weakening their ability to assist and protect refugees. We also reiterate our support to the independence of UNHCR in presenting its professional views to the membership, in line with its policy on age, gender and diversity and commend its work in combating all forms of discrimination for the people they serve.

We are confident that the upcoming Global Refugee Forum will mark a milestone in building international solidarity and mobilizing real, sustainable and positive change for those in need of international protection and the countries and communities that host them. It will also allow Member States to take stock of progress towards the implementation of pledges and initiatives made in 2019.

Chair, the Global Compact for Refugees envisions more predictable and sustainable support to transform the way the world responds to refugee situations, benefitting both refugee populations and the communities hosting them and we stand ready to continue promoting support for the GCR and strengthening cooperation and solidarity with refugees and affected host communities.

In conclusion, Italy will continue to be actively and strongly committed, both bilaterally and at the international level, to work hand in hand with UNHCR in the reception and protection of refugees fleeing violence and persecution. We believe that the international community should multiply efforts to alleviate human suffering and meet the basic needs of the people of concern to UNHCR, not only in a spirit of solidarity and burden and responsibility-sharing, but also with a view to keeping those who are often unseen, unheard and left behind on the radar of the international community. We must always remind ourselves that “every person counts”.

I thank you for your attention.