

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AND
OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
G E N E V A

**74th Executive Committee of the
United Nations High Commissioner's Programme for Refugees
Statement of Mr. Gordan MARKOTIĆ, Ambassador, Charge d'affaires**

Madam Chair, Mr High Commissioner, Excellencies, Colleagues and Friends,

Croatia aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Allow me first to express our deep condolences to Israel, the Israeli people, and the families concerned. We stand strong and united in our condemnation of terror and violence, and of the heinous attacks against Israel. Hostages must be released, and civilians protected in line with IHL.

We remain deeply concerned by the record-high global humanitarian needs that have been increasing lately at a tremendous pace. Humanitarian assistance is of crucial importance for the people in need. Their livelihoods and their dignity is at the centre of our actions.

1. For my country it is essential to maintain a robust humanitarian response in all crises around the globe and no one should be left behind. Solidarity and burden sharing should be a norm for all of us. We should show the same level of solidarity and compassion to all refugees and forcibly displaced persons. We strongly support the independence of the High Commissioner in his work and his report.

Madam Chair,

2. We are grateful to countries and communities for their willingness to help those in greatest need. The focus should be on promoting long-term solutions for humanitarian emergencies and tackling the root causes of crisis.

In that vein, Croatia continues strengthening its cooperation with the countries of the Horn of Africa, including by contributing up to 600 000 EUR for the period 2023-2025 for projects of development cooperation and humanitarian aid to be carried out through bilateral and multilateral channels and according to the needs of the countries in the region.

3. Croatia has contributed to the health care programmes for Syrian refugees in Jordan in 2023. Previously we were engaged in a project for Syrian women refugees in Lebanon with the aim to provide them with ICT skills training. We also helped to improve education conditions for Syrian children refugees in Jordan and Lebanon.

Madam Chair,

5. The unjustified Russian aggression against Ukraine, which Croatia strongly condemns, has caused many to flee their homeland in search of safety and protection. Croatia currently hosts more than 24 000 Ukrainian refugees under temporary protection that enables them access to accommodation, education and health care. Total amount of the urgent and humanitarian assistance rendered to Ukraine is 51.7 million EUR. Recognizing that the war against Ukraine has increased food insecurity and aggravated humanitarian crises worldwide, Croatia has responded by offering its sea and river ports for the export of Ukrainian grain.

6. Tomorrow Croatia is hosting High-Level International Donors' Conference on humanitarian demining in Ukraine. The Conference brings together global partners to address the pressing issue of mine contamination resulting from Russia's unjustified aggression against Ukraine. Croatia, having experienced the impact of military aggression first hand, co-hosts the event to demonstrate solidarity and support for Ukraine's recovery. Demining is prerequisite for the safe and voluntary return of the refugees.

7. Let me conclude by extending our strongest appreciation and gratitude to UNHCR staff, especially to those serving in some of the most challenging environments.

I thank you.