



## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

Speech by the Honourable Gareth Guadalupe, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Communities of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe on the 74th Executive Council of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Program

1. Your Excellency President of our 74th Session,
2. Dear Ministers,
3. Ladies and Gentlemen Ambassadors,
4. Distinguished Delegates,
5. Ladies and Gentlemen
6. All protocol duly observed,

Excellencies,

My country, the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, has the high honour of showing solidarity with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for holding its 74th Executive

Council, an event that we take advantage of, to congratulate the achievements of this Organization in favour of humanitarian cause and applaud this event initiative to elucidate the efforts undertaken by the international community in favour of refugees around the world.

As you may know, Excellencies, with the end of the World War II, the world endeavoured to create the United Nations with the aim of ensuring and promoting international peace and stability among peoples, preventing conflicts, spreading human rights, humanitarian aid and other means that contribute to a peaceful world.

For various reasons, more than seven decades later, unfortunately, international conflicts persist all over the world. However, at the epicentre of everything are the disadvantaged, the refugees, the internally displaced, who justify our presence here today, in this outstanding Council of consultation on this matter.

We are certain that no one doubts the need for a global effort, but with greater demands to put an end to the imbalances and inequalities promoted by war and cross-border conflicts which, as I said, are the roots of those entire disaster.

Excellencies,

Faced with our own inability, as world leaders, to promote effective global peace, we continue to live in a blanket of misunderstandings that are not compatible with a world significantly marked by new social and economic

challenges. That ends up being another opportunity given to us so that we can guarantee what the United Nations charter says in terms of human rights and make the world a little better.

Ladies and Gentlemen Delegates,

Last May, the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe assumed the rotating Presidency of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa (UNSAC). And regarding the issue of refugees, we made a commitment to contribute to promoting the recognition of the international legal Status of Stateless Persons. We defend the development of a regional strategy that reflects the real conditions of refugees and that allows us to move forward towards community development.

It is in this regard that the Government, that I have the privilege to represent, has initiated international procedures, through the Offices in Yaoundé for United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the African Union and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), with a view to ratifying the conventions and treaties that contribute to this purpose. As a matter of fact, we have approved on September 8th at the Council of Ministers and submit for ratification 4 (four) conventions, namely, the **Organization of African Unity Convention which governs specific aspects of the refugee problem in Africa**; the **African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally**

**Displaced Persons in Africa; the Convention for the Reduction of Stateless Persons; and the Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons.**

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

May I be allowed, at the end, to reaffirm that São Tomé and Príncipe, as a member of the International Community, a lover of peaceful cohabitation between peoples, is eager to promote cooperation and solidarity between nations, and express its total interest in ensuring that effective international organization solidarity is also sensitive to the cause of stateless people, refugees and internally displaced people.

Thank you very much for your attention.