



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

UNHCR 75th Executive Committee

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Agenda item 3: High-level segment on statelessness and general debate

Chair,

Croatia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union.

We thank the High Commissioner for his statement that once again pointed out dire reality the world is facing. Nevertheless, there is progress and the challenges in front of us can be solved through joint efforts. We would like to congratulate High Commissioner and UNHCR for unyielding resolve to keep focus on sustainable solutions.

Let me use this opportunity to recall once again the second Global Refugee Forum in Geneva. As a manifestation of our common efforts towards people who have been forced to flee their homes, more than 2,000 pledges made on that occasion guarantee that they are not left to fend for themselves. Fortunately humanitarian spirit is still alive and states along with other stakeholders must ensure brighter future for those in need. Special merits go to those that have accepted those persons in spite of their own challenges and that is why we hereby express our sincere gratitude to them.

Croatia is strongly committed to active role in implementing actions envisaged in the GRF and we are well known for the protection and help of those in need. We have been actively engaged in providing support to displaced Syrians who fled to the neighboring countries, through projects supporting children, women and basic health care. Our support for Syrian refugees will continue, and we have already pledged 600.000€ at the 8th Brussels Conference for the period 2025 – 2027.

In addition, during 2nd GRF Croatia presented new pledges - allocation of financial aid for the civilian population of Gaza in the amount of 1,250,000€ through activities implemented by the UNRWA, the ICRC, the WFP and the UNICEF and the humanitarian aid to the civilian population of Armenia, through financial contribution of 250,000€ given through the ICRC. I must proudly add that our pledges have already been fulfilled.

Let me also point out that in October last year, Croatia expressed its support to the regional pledge presented at the OCSE conference on Access to Civil Documentation and Prevention of Statelessness in South – East Europe in Skopje, North Macedonia, whereby we expressed our support to the #IBelong Campaign, targeted towards resolving cases of the statelessness in the region and we welcome all efforts aimed at ending statelessness.

Unfortunately, the war in Europe has become a reality once again due to the Russia's unjustified and illegal aggression against Ukraine. Since 2022, Croatia has provided safe haven for more than 25,000 displaced persons from Ukraine. All those who requested temporary protection were provided with housing, for which Croatia allocated 60 million €. Additionally, they are provided with health and social care, have access to primary and secondary education, and at the same time they are able to access the labor market without a residence and work permit or work registration certificate.

Croatia will remain committed to the protection of fundamental rights of the people on the move – by supporting the Global Compact for Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. As mostly transit country, Croatia firmly stands in support of prioritizing safe and legal migration pathways. Therefore, we welcome the consensual adoption of this year's ExCom Conclusions on durable solutions and complementary pathways.

In conclusion, I would like to draw your attention to the close collaboration of the Croatian Capital City of Zagreb with the UNHCR office in Zagreb and their latest joint project on the establishment of the One Stop Shop – Welcome Center and central information point for asylum seekers, persons under international or temporary protection and foreign workers. This enables refugees and migrants in Croatia to access a wide range of basic services while going through the complex process of resettlement and integration.

Chair,

Let me end by expressing our gratitude to all UNHCR staff for their tireless work and underline Croatia's continued commitment to our longstanding partnership with the UNHCR.

Thank you!