



ZIMBABWE

**STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF
PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR AND SOCIAL WELFARE
OF
THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE**

HONOURABLE ADVOCATE MERCY DINHA (MP)

**TO THE 75TH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE PROGRAMME OF THE UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (EXCOM)
MEETING**

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND:

14-18 OCTOBER 2024

**Chairperson,
Your Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates**

My delegation joins all who have spoken before us in commending you for the manner in which you are presiding over our deliberations. From the outset, Zimbabwe aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Republic of Congo on behalf of the Africa Group.

Your Excellency, at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum, the Government of Zimbabwe joined progressive nations in pledging to achieve the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees. I am pleased to say arising out of the GRF, the Government of Zimbabwe has progressively been strengthening the refugee protection environment. The Refugees Act is currently being amended to align it to the supreme law of the land and international best practices.

Further to the 150 hectares of arable land already developed for irrigation projects at Tongogara Refugee Settlement, the Government of Zimbabwe has availed an additional 25 hectares of land to promote agricultural enterprise by refugees and host communities. The objective is to end hunger, eradicate poverty, ensure healthy lives and achieve gender equality among refugees and the host community. This is guided by the national policy thrust to leave no one and no place behind in development.

Your Excellency, the Government of Zimbabwe is strengthening the whole of society approach to refugee protection by working with

the private sector and other players. Several corporate entities are complementing Government efforts in the areas of education, agriculture, climate action and energy.

In the area of environmental conservation, Zimbabwe has put in place strategies to halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss at Tongogara Refugee Settlement by mobilizing 6 000 trees to establish a woodlot. Our strategic objective is to plant 20 000 trees in the settlement by 2027.

Furthermore, the Government of Zimbabwe fully supports the localization of humanitarian action. Zimbabwe has facilitated the establishment and registration of four Refugee-Led Organisations to promote meaningful participation of refugees in matters affecting them, while strengthening ownership and sustainability of interventions. The organisations are involved in diverse activities such as education, environmental protection, social enterprise and sport and cultural programmes.

Your Excellency, the Government of Zimbabwe welcomes the focus of this year's EXCOM on ending statelessness. I wish to highlight that all migrants in Zimbabwe, including refugees have access to birth and national identity card registration. Third Generation Nationals from neighbouring countries who by virtue of absence from their countries of origin by operation of law have since been regularised through a Presidential prescription. The program has seen the registration by conscription of more than 10 000 families of Malawi, Zambia and Mozambican origin.

In addition, my Government has resolved the technical glitches faced since 2022 that affected the processing of United Nations Convention Travel Documents. This intervention is promoting safe movement of refugees especially youth who are studying outside Zimbabwe.

As I draw to a conclusion of my remarks, I wish to reiterate Zimbabwe's commitment to implementing the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees. As a host country, I wish to call upon other international partners to avail more flexible and unearmarked resources for the benefit of people under our care. Zimbabwe will continue to provide a safe space for refugees and asylum seekers with the limited resources at our disposal and we call for the support of cooperating partners.

Finally, my delegation commends the High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr Fillippo Grandhi for his able and resolute leadership in advancing the protection of refugees at Tongogara Refugee Settlement, and in all other countries where UNHCR is working in. We also appreciate the entire UNHCR staff for their commitment to duty in saving lives especially under very difficult circumstances and we pay our respects to those who have paid the ultimate price in the line of humanitarian duty.

I Thank You.