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**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN
Geneva**

Statement

**Statement by the Secretary States and Frontier Regions
at the 75th Plenary Session of the UNHCR Executive Committee
(14-18 October 2024)**

**Chairperson,
High Commissioner Filippo Grandi,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am honored to represent Pakistan at the 75th ExCom session.

As a major refugee-hosting country, Pakistan is cognizant of a growing displacement crisis worldwide. We recognize the enormity of these challenges and are committed to partnering with the international community to find durable solutions.

We deeply appreciate High Commissioner Filippo Grandi and his team for UNHCR's services to millions of refugees and forcibly displaced people worldwide.

Excellencies,

During four decades, Pakistan has hosted Afghan refugees who sought safety and shelter during multiple waves of crises and subsequent displacements.

For the past 20 years, Pakistan stood as a frontline state in the war against terrorism. In the pursuit of peace, we have paid a tremendous cost—over 100,000 precious lives have been lost, with an economic impact of over USD 120 billion.

It is important to remember this challenging context in which Pakistan has continued to extend hospitality to such a large caseload of displaced Afghans.

Today, Pakistan is still host to over 3 million Afghan nationals, including 1.45 million Proof of Registration cardholders and 0.8 million Afghan Citizen Cardholders. An additional 700,000 undocumented Afghans are living in Pakistan.

Pakistan provides Afghans with secondary and tertiary medical health facilities. In addition, thousands of Afghan young men and women study in Pakistan's educational institutions.

Our hospitality has not been limited to providing a safe sanctuary and sustainable social services; more importantly, Afghans enjoy the freedom to maintain their cultural, social, and ethnic identity and traditions without restrictions.

Pakistan has provided opportunities to Afghan refugees for personal growth and realization of their dreams. Some Afghan youth who grew up in Pakistan have become sportsmen of international repute, winning laurels for Afghanistan. We are proud of their success.

Distinguished Delegates,

Several crises have impacted Pakistan's overall economic capacity in the past few years.

Climate-induced floods in 2022 affected a population of 33 million persons in Pakistan, inflicting damage of more than USD 30 billion. These floods impacted areas inhabited by refugees and host communities.

Despite facing severe economic headwinds, Pakistan has shown resilience in its support of Afghan refugees.

However, it is important to recognize that once perceived as stable, protracted refugee situations can face new humanitarian challenges due to climate change, public health crises, or security. Therefore, international attention must never dwindle from such situations.

Chairperson,

Every sovereign state is responsible for regulating the presence of foreign nationals in a manner consistent with the law.

In the last two years, Pakistan has faced a rising wave of terrorism, particularly with cross-border attacks stemming from TTP and other non-state actors. This requires that necessary measures be taken to protect our citizens.

In this context, the Pakistani government introduced the Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan (IFRP) to regulate undocumented foreign nationals without distinction.

This plan is consistent with our domestic laws and our international obligations.

We believe that the future of Afghan refugees lies in Afghanistan, and it is our shared responsibility to create the conditions necessary for their voluntary return and address the root causes of displacement.

At this juncture, I must commend the efforts of the countries that have stepped forward to provide third-country resettlement opportunities to Afghan nationals. It is imperative that the pace of these resettlements be expedited and that other developed countries follow suit, offering refugees a chance to rebuild their future.

Lading and gentlemen,

With a growing displacement crisis and a global resource gap, we recognize the need for a sustainable approach to meeting future challenges.

We have participated in initial discussions on the concept of sustainable programming and would welcome further consultations to evolve a methodology anchored in the principles of burden and responsibility sharing, that addresses the unique features of different situations and countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, finally, let us not forget that behind the statistics and policies, there are millions of lives—men, women, and children—whose future depends on the decisions we make. Our shared

duty is to give them hope, dignity, and the opportunity for a better tomorrow.

I thank you
