



Permanent Mission of Italy
UN - Geneva

Statement of Italy

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Item 3, General Debate Geneva, 15 October 2024

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Thank you, Madame Chair.

Mr. High Commissioner, Excellences, Distinguished Delegates,

Italy aligns itself with the EU statement and will make additional remarks in its national capacity.

When we gathered in this same room last year, we recognized that the continuous efforts needed towards the protection of forcibly displaced persons and the challenges associated with displacement, exacerbated by conflict, persecution, climate crisis and disasters, are more essential than ever. Indeed, while the numbers grow by the day, the means to sustainable responses are shrinking. The 1951 Geneva Convention and the Global Compact on Refugees tell us that **satisfactory solutions to refugee situations cannot be achieved without international cooperation: this key principle must be at the core of our collective action.** During last year Global Refugee Forum, we have committed to take this action and we are now working on the implementation of our national and multistakeholder pledges,

looking at the 2025 High-Level Officials Meeting where we will take stock of the progress made.

The staggering number of ongoing emergencies and protracted crises leading to catastrophic humanitarian consequences is alarming. Conflicts and violence unfold in Ukraine, Sudan, Haiti, Myanmar, Syria and Afghanistan, while the human cost of war continues to grow in Lebanon, Gaza and the region as a whole, resulting in immense suffering and forced displacement for millions of persons. **Let me take this opportunity to commend, Mr. High Commissioner, all humanitarian workers on the ground, among which UNHCR staff and its partners, facing constant emergency and unacceptable security threats.** 280 aid workers have been killed in 2023, and 2024 is on track for an even deadlier outcome with more than 172 deaths recorded so far. We express our deepest condolences to UNHCR for the death of two members of its staff in Lebanon last month and **we urge all parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law.** These legal frameworks were created to pave the way to peace but instead are constantly being violated with impunity.

Mr. High Commissioner, **the 15th of November this year marks the 70th anniversary since Italy's ratification of the Geneva Convention and the beginning of the solid partnership established with UNHCR.** The visit of our President to UNHCR headquarters earlier this month was a recognition at the highest level of the Italian engagement with the Agency. Your participation to the Ministerial G7 meeting on Interior and Development as well as other ministerial meetings and UNHCR's engagement in Italian initiatives such as the "Rome Process" and the implementation of the "Mattei Plan" for Africa reaffirm our determination to work together on the protection of persons under UNHCR mandate, in a spirit of solidarity and burden and responsibility-sharing.

We express our unwavering support to UNHCR, that, thanks to its "panoramic" approach, provides protection and assistance to forcibly displaced persons globally, and we reiterate our commitment to the right to seek and enjoy asylum. Allow me to also commend UNHCR and IOM for their collaborative work on a whole-of-route, rights-based approach to mixed movements. Italy's national policies on migration and asylum will continue implementing this approach, in line with the EU Pact, and will certainly benefit from both agencies' efforts, especially for movements along the Central Mediterranean route.

Durable solutions and complementary pathways have the potential to curb irregular migration and the use of smuggling and trafficking networks. We will continue to lead the Regional Development and Protection Programme for North Africa, to accompany efforts of host countries to provide adequate reception, access to international protection and durable solutions within mixed movements contexts. Promoting and expanding access to employment supports refugees in re-establishing an independent, productive life with an adequate standard of living and requires collaborative approaches among States, civil society, the private sector, and development actors across countries of origin, asylum, transit and destination, also thanks to initiatives such as the Welcome Programme, that manages to offer concrete answers for integration.

We also appreciate the results of the I-Belong Campaign and the launch of the Global Alliance to End Statelessness, which will continue to provide technical support to Member States, address gaps and raise awareness on statelessness. I would like to thank in this regard Ms. Nosizi Dube and Ms. Noor Azizah for the powerful testimony they delivered yesterday.

In 2024, Italy has so far responded with more than 42 million dollars to UNHCR's humanitarian activities. In addition, private donations from my country have reached more than 14 million dollars as of today. We welcome UNHCR's sustainable programming approach, promoting inclusion, self-reliance, and resilience for displaced people and host communities.

Finally, we reiterate our steadfast support to UNHCR work in combating all forms of discrimination for the people they serve and **commend its commitment to inclusiveness, diversity and gender equity in its policies and organizational culture, to provide a truly inclusive and sustainable refugee response.** Italy will continue to amplify the voices of the marginalized and advocate for a principled, effective and inclusive humanitarian action for all.

I thank you.