

75th Session of the UNHCR Executive Committee (14–18 October 2024)
Statement by Ambassador OIKE Atsuyuki
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Chair, High Commissioner, Excellencies, and distinguished colleagues,

Today, we are confronted with an unprecedented scale of humanitarian crises. The tragic levels of forced displacement in recent years have been intensified by ongoing conflict and climate change.

First, I wish to express our gratitude to refugee-hosting countries. Every day, Member States across Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and the Americas keep their borders open to those seeking asylum while continuing to host refugees in protracted situations. Continuous efforts are essential to address this urgent reality.

Second, let me pay tribute to humanitarian workers and call for respect for International Humanitarian Law.

I appreciate the dedication of all the humanitarian workers operating under dire conditions. Japan is deeply concerned about the growing disregard for IHL. It is imperative that we uphold this body of law and the values it represents. As members of the ExCom of UNHCR, we must view each individual suffering in these crises from the perspective of leaving no one behind.

Today, I would like to pay particular attention to the High Commissioner's proposal on sustainable support.

It is unrealistic to rely solely on humanitarian assistance to address the multiple crises we are facing today. As former High Commissioner Madam Ogata stated, “humanitarian action alone is not enough to solve refugee problems.” In the face of multifaceted challenges, Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus approaches are more significant than ever. This is why we have been advocating the HDP Nexus approach.

The HDP Nexus creates opportunities for non-humanitarian entities to assist refugees from the outset of crises. By establishing the HDP Nexus Multi-Stakeholder Pledge Platform with UNDP, Japan aims to promote a “whole-of-society approach,” inviting diverse stakeholders—including MDBs, bilateral development institutions, private companies, and local NGOs—to leverage their strengths.

Mr. High Commissioner, you mentioned UNHCR’s pursuit of more sustainable support. We welcome it, and regard it as UNHCR’s approach to realizing the HDP Nexus.

For example, providing opportunities for education and vocational training is essential to increase the self-reliance of refugees, as called for in the Global Compact on Refugees. Such cooperation could be provided by development actors. The feasibility of inclusion depends on the local context, but UNHCR can act as a catalyst in mobilizing development partners. In addition, development cooperation in countries of origin can foster an enabling environment for return. An example of such cooperation is the humanitarian demining effort in Ukraine.

Effective implementation of sustainable support is crucial. However, conditions on the ground vary significantly. We appreciate that UNHCR has initiated regional consultations in an inclusive manner, which we believe will help to clearly define the roles of UNHCR and development actors in a way that is tailored to each country’s context. Importantly, development assistance in this context should take the form of additional funding that benefits both refugees and host communities from the perspective of burden and responsibility sharing.

Additionally, initiatives like disaster risk reduction and early warning systems can mitigate future crises. Climate change can be a root cause of displacement and a risk factor for conflict. Collaborating with climate funds is part of our collective goal.

(Check against delivery)

Chair, we stand at a pivotal moment in history, when there is a need to transform traditional humanitarian approaches. As a co-convener of the Second GRF and leader of the HDP Nexus initiative, we are dedicated to achieving tangible results by the High-Level Officials Meeting in 2025.

Finally, we commend UNHCR's leadership in regard to the issue of statelessness. We recently initiated a digital birth registration project in post conflict areas of the Philippines. We remains committed to ending statelessness and will give consideration to its approach to the Global Alliance.

Thank you.