

ABRE ASPAS]

Madam President,

Mr. High Commissioner,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Brazil congratulates UNHCR on their unrelenting work, for which we should like to express our gratitude. During the last 70 years, the international community and, above all, the victims of forced displacement, have availed themselves of the firm support of this Agency.

We are also grateful to the other members of the Quito Process for their partnership. As challenges related to international protection keep growing in number, size and complexity, coordination and cooperation have never been more important.

Madam President,

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the lives of millions of people, including refugees, migrants and other vulnerable groups. Measures aimed at reducing the spread of the virus suddenly and dramatically reduced the income of those who struggle the most to survive. A true and undeniable "pandemic of poverty".

The Brazilian Government always advocated that the socioeconomic and sanitary crises should be handled simultaneously and with the same sense of responsibility. All States should develop multidimensional policies that include actions in the field of health, the economy, and social protection.

Over 500,000 Venezuelan migrants and refugees, victims of human rights violations, received assistance from the "Operation Welcome" in Brazil. Special attention is given to indigenous communities, the elderly, women, unaccompanied children and people with disabilities. The Venezuelans we host have full access to all public services, the labor market and social benefits, on an equal basis with our nationals.

Brazil has created an extraordinary USD 60 billion cash transfer program for the low-income population. Our strategy of documenting all Venezuelans upon arrival (migrants or asylum seekers) has made it possible to reach and facilitated their inclusion in this program, granting vital resources for their survival.

In order to promote the transition between emergency assistance and effective reception, the "Operation Welcome" has implemented an "internalization" strategy – our internal relocation program. It has supported the voluntary relocation of migrants and refugees to 738 Brazilian cities so far, where

they find better job opportunities and social integration. The project has already benefited more than 58 thousand people, since April 2018.

Likewise, Brazil's National Committee for the Refugees has granted, within the framework of the Cartagena Declaration, *prima facie* refugee status to more almost 50,000 Venezuelans. Brazil today has the largest number of formally recognized Venezuelan refugees in the Americas. Other 150.000 venezuelans were given legal permit status under the Migration Act, whereby all of them are legally protected by Brazil's law and regulation.

We estimate that approximately 400 million dollars have already been directed to the "Operation Welcome" since 2018, without considering the dispersed costs related to public services and social benefits.

Madam President,

Along with Venezuelans, to whom our borders and arms have always been open, Brazil has already recognized the refugee condition of over 10 thousand individuals from other nationalities.

In light of the most recent events in Afghanistan, the Brazilian government has decided to grant humanitarian visas to people affected by the crisis in that country.

For the Afghan situation, special attention will be given to requests from women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and their family groups. Requests will be processed by Brazilian embassies in Abu Dhabi, Ankara, Doha, Islamabad, Moscow and Tehran.

Brazil is also adopting the *prima facie* recognition system for nationals from Syria and from Afghanistan, with more people directly benefiting from this decision.

Madam President,

Our humanitarian policy has also previously benefited Hatian nationals and persons affected by the conflict in Syria. It is an expression of Brazil's firm commitment to human rights and international solidarity. Political will and creative solutions should guide our actions in order to ensure the protection of the most vulnerable.

Thank you!

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