



**STATEMENT BY H.E. DR. CLEOPA MAILU, EGH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
PERMANENT MISSION OF KENYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN GENEVA  
DURING THE UNHCR HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIALS MEETING, 14<sup>TH</sup> TO 15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2021**

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**High Commissioner,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**

1. Kenya is delighted to join the international community in this important meeting.
2. It is timely as it gives us an opportunity to take stock of the pledges that we made two years ago at the historic Global Refugee Forum.
3. Despite the challenges resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, important strides have been made at the global, regional and the national levels as highlighted during this meeting.

**High Commissioner,**

4. At the Global Refugee Forum, Kenya pledged to continue to implement the commitments made under the IGAD Process as contained in the Nairobi, Djibouti and Kampala Declarations. More specifically, Kenya committed to continue to strengthen support to refugee and host community education, include refugees in development planning especially on area based development approaches, and to continue to strengthen institutions that manage asylum, deliver services and provide security in refugee hosting areas.
5. Additionally, as a member of the core-group of the I-Belong-Campaign on Statelessness, the Government of Kenya, during the High-Level Segment on Statelessness, held during the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNHCR Executive Committee, in October 2019, Kenya pledged, *“to recognize and register as Kenyan citizens members of the Shona community, who qualify for citizenship under the law by 2020.”*
6. Kenya is pleased to inform that progress has been achieved on the implementation of both the pledges made during the GRF as well as the High Level-Segment on Statelessness.

7. In fulfilling the pledges made at the GRF, the Government of Kenya has worked closely with UNHCR to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic on refugees hosted in Kenya. The Government has included refugees in its response plans and continues to do so. The Government of Kenya has been steadfast in ensuring the continuation of refugee education in the midst of the on-going Covid-19 pandemic.
8. In recognizing the reality of the new normal, the Government of Kenya decided to re-open schools on 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2021. The refugee operations in line with the Government guidelines re-opened schools a few days later. In order to adhere to Government COVID-19 guidelines on social distancing, refugee operations adapted the double shift system with a cohort of students coming to school in the morning while a different cohort come to school in the afternoon. The double shift system has continued to operate with the same set of teachers for the morning and afternoon shift, posing a big challenge on overload of the teachers to effectively plan, teach and mark students' work. This is to ensure that no child is left behind.
9. In fulfilling the pledge on statelessness, on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2020, during Kenya's 57<sup>th</sup> Independence Day celebrations, His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta, granted citizenship to 1,670 stateless Shona and 1,300 stateless persons of Rwandan descent who qualify under the law as Kenyan citizens.
10. This landmark decision by the Government of Kenya, means that solutions have been afforded to the two communities who have lived in Kenya for decades. This historic gesture comes four years after the granting of citizenship to the Makonde in 2016.
11. Kenya's commitment to its international obligations remains unwavering.

### **High Commissioner**

12. As we look forward to the next Global Refugee Forum in 2023, it is imperative that Kenya reiterates the importance of enhanced burden and responsibility-sharing as well as the importance of re-doubling efforts on the search for durable solutions to refugee situations, especially those caught in protracted situations.

I thank you.