
361st Plenary Meeting
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**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT COUNCIL ON THE
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADOPTION OF
THE 1951 CONVENTION RELATING TO THE
STATUS OF REFUGEES**

The Permanent Council,

Welcoming the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at its Plenary Meeting today,

Reaffirming the fundamental importance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as the multilateral institution with the mandate to protect refugees and to find durable solutions to their problems,

Commending the long-standing, pragmatic and target-oriented co-operation between bodies, institutions and field missions of the OSCE and the UNHCR,

Recalling the commitments contained in the 1992 Helsinki Concluding Document and the Charter for European Security, as well as in its Platform for Co-operative Security,

Noting that this year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, which together with its 1967 Protocol, remains the foundation of the international refugee protection regime,

Recognizes with appreciation that the fundamental principles and rights embodied in these instruments have provided a resilient protection regime within which millions of refugees have been able to find safety from persecution;

Expresses its concerns that violations of human rights of refugees and internally displaced persons caused by conflicts endanger peace and stability in the OSCE region, and remains committed to continue to address these problems;

Commends the UNHCR for its ongoing actions to fully implement its mandate in a changing world and in the light of new challenges;

Welcomes the process of Global Consultations on International Protection initiated by the UNHCR to revitalize the international protection of refugees on the basis of a

reaffirmation of the relevance and fundamental importance of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees;

Expresses the determination of the OSCE participating States to contribute to the Global Consultations on International Protection undertaken by the UNHCR and the first-ever meeting of States Parties, jointly organized by the Swiss Government and the UNHCR, with a view to strengthening the international refugee protection regime;

Encourages OSCE bodies, institutions and field missions to continue the close co-operation with the UNHCR, on the basis of the Platform for Co-operative Security and consistent with their respective mandates, in order to assist concerned participating States, where appropriate, in creating conditions conducive to the voluntary return and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons.