

Thank you, Mr. High Commissioner.

I would like to thank

the UNHCR

and the Swiss Government

for holding this important meeting.

This year means a lot to both Korea and UNHCR.

Because it marks the 30th anniversary of

Korea's membership in the UN,

as well as the 70th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention.

In this monumental year,

Korea is very pleased to reaffirm Korea's commitment

as a responsible member of the international community,

to continue to participate in the strengthened cooperation and solidarity,

as stated in the GCR.

In 2019, Korea made six pledges
for the period of four years.

As it is halfway through the period,
I would like to share the progress
in three broad categories of the objectives of the GCR.

First, Korea has put significant efforts
into two objectives of the GCR,
regarding host countries and countries of origin
in order to share the burden and responsibility
of the international community.

The three pledges of Korea are
especially related to these objectives.

Korea has contributed 90.7 million USD
to the Country-based Pooled Funds
which supports conflict-affected regions
such as Yemen and Syria,

so that Korea's pledge to continue and expand its "humanitarian assistance to refugees" could target their specific situations.

Humanitarian crises and sexual violence are indivisible problems in countries of origin.

In order to fulfill its pledge to

"prevent and respond to sexual violence in conflict"

Korea has contributed 8.62 million USD

to Gender-Based Violence(GBV) projects and the Global Survivors Fund

to tackle gender-based violence,

which amounts to 72% of the 12 million USD it pledged.

Also, I would like to emphasize that we need more donors.

Under the joint pledge with civil society,

which is to "strengthen cooperation in addressing refugee issues,"

my government has implemented the GCR

through a whole-of-society approach

with multiple partners.

The government formed a regular communication channel with NGOs, and has also endeavored to support civil society projects more.

Civil society, too, has seen achievements such as expansion of their programs for refugees.

Thus, truly we are cooperating as “Team Korea.”

Second, the pledge of Korea to “expand refugee support under the humanitarian assistance, development, and peace nexus strategy” is highly relevant to the objective of the GCR to enhance self-reliance of refugees.

To integrate refugees into host countries’ socio-economic activities and improve their self-reliance,

Korea has already contributed 37.7 million USD to relevant Multilateral Development Cooperation Projects, which amounts to 75.4% of the 50 million USD it pledged.

Third, our two pledges are relevant to the objective of the GCR to expand access to third countries.

Although Korea is not one of the major destinations for refugees, Korea is making efforts to create more favorable conditions.

Korea, the second Asian country to launch a pilot resettlement program, has received 17 refugees in 2020, following its pledge to accept refugees for “resettlement,”

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Korea will continue to take small yet steady steps towards its achievement.

Furthermore, I am pleased to inform you that the pledge to “strengthen the National Capacity for Protecting Refugees” is completed.

Korea established a separate division under the Ministry of Justice dedicated to evaluation of refugee applications, just as promised.

Beyond the pledges already made,
Korea will always keep in mind the essence of the GCR,
which is to help the vulnerable in need of protection.

Even though they may not fit into the strict definition of “refugee.”

Korea does not ignore their needs.

Korea received almost 400 Afghans
through “the Operation Miracle.”

It also granted special permits to stay to

Myanmar and Afghan nationals in Korea on humanitarian grounds.

If I may quote: “will is power.”

Korean government will continue to engage in the issues of refugees
with firm commitment moving forward.

Thank you very much. /End/