



**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN  
Geneva  
On behalf of the OIC Group in Geneva**

**Statement**

**Statement by Mr. Sumair Gul, Second Secretary**

**Under Agenda Item 4: Consideration of reports on the work of the Standing Committee at 73<sup>rd</sup> Executive Committee Meeting 10-14 October 2022**

**(To be delivered on 13 October 2022 around 1100-1300 hours)**

**Chairperson,**

My delegation is delivering the statement on behalf of OIC Group of countries in Geneva.

The OIC countries wish to refer to the UNHCR Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/1222), and Programme Budget for 2023 of the Office of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/AC.96/1224).

We wish to register our concern over the continued direct and indirect references to controversial terminologies such as sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI). We wish to reiterate that these notions and concepts are neither universally agreed nor are compatible with national laws, customs, morals and cultural sensitivities of OIC countries. They also do not represent any branch of international law.

The OIC Group in Geneva has previously sounded its concern to UNHCR at previous ExCom and Standing Committee meetings. In a letter by the OIC Coordinator addressed to the High Commissioner dated 16 June 2022 **now contained in UNGA document No. A/76/913**, the OIC countries have outlined their views and positions on these controversial concepts.

As we have pointed out earlier, the existing international law is sufficient to cover protection of the displaced persons without discrimination of any kind. We are dismayed at retention of non-universal and disputed references of SOGI.

**Chairperson,**

The OIC countries reiterate their call for use of universally agreed terminologies in UNHCR texts. Such an approach is essential to maintain the apolitical persona of UNHCR and to stay faithful to the core of its mandate as set out in UNHCR Statute, the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol.

UNHCR documents should not be the vehicles for advocacy of controversial concepts.

**Chairperson,**

The OIC Group, therefore, once again urges further steps for clear distinction between documents to which Member States are asked to associate themselves with and those to which they are not. As a bare minimum, a footnote conveying that a given *document does not represent views and positions of all Member States* should be inserted in the non-negotiated and Secretariat reports presented at Standing Committee and Executive Committee meetings for consideration by Member States.

**Chairperson,**

The OIC countries host more than two-third of the total refugee population in the world. For us, protection of refugees is a religious, moral and legal duty grounded in principles of Islamic law, the International Humanitarian Law, International Refugee law as well as other international obligations. We, therefore, have important stakes in what UNHCR does **normatively** and **operationally**.

The OIC countries assure UNHCR of their lasting commitment to protect the most in need without any discrimination.

**I thank you.**

\*\*\*