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**Intergovernmental event at the ministerial level of
Member States of the United Nations on the occasion of
the 60th anniversary of the 1951 Convention
relating to the Status of Refugees and
the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention
on the Reduction of Statelessness**

DENMARK

Statement by

**HE Mr Steffen Smidt
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Denmark
to the United Nations Office at Geneva**

Geneva, 8 December 2011 PM

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- Mr. Chairperson, High Commissioner, as we mark the anniversary of the Conventions today, please allow me to express our full support for your important work. We regret that many persons continue to depend on the safeguards and protection provided by these legal instruments.
- Denmark urges the UNHCR to remain committed to its core mandate: To further implementation of the Conventions and to respond in a fast, efficient and constructive manner to emergencies resulting from mass displacement.
- Our expression of support for the Conventions and UNHCR is by extension an expression of solidarity with refugees and stateless persons and the challenges that they face.
- We believe that the best responses to problems are often to be found when multiple stakeholders put their heads together and contribute to joint responses. When it comes to ensuring international protection for those in need, regional fora are playing an increasingly important role.
- In the European context, the European Union is currently developing the second generation of the Common European Asylum System. This aims to ensure that asylum seekers are met by asylum procedures and reception conditions of a high standard. This should be the case regardless of potentially intervening factors, including for example the number of persons seeking asylum at a given point in time. Establishing effective solidarity between EU Member States is therefore a central tool to ensuring effective protection for refugees in the European region.

- The development of the Common European Asylum System will be a clear priority during the upcoming Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. An important part of the EU's approach is the recently established European Asylum Support Office. This provides general support to further practical cooperation among Member States and includes support to Member States that find themselves faced with particular challenges in the face of migratory pressures.
- Denmark also aims to further discussions on resettlement during our upcoming Presidency. We find it important to support other countries, which receive large amounts of asylum-seekers as part of a larger global response. In this regard, assisting in capacity-building efforts has proven to be an effective way of ensuring a sustained impact. Denmark will therefore continue its engagement in initiatives seeking to achieve protection on a regional basis.
- In conclusion, Mr. Chairperson, Denmark would like to encourage regional actors and the UNHCR to work closely together and exchange ideas on best practices to promote high protection standards and to find the most effective ways to reach our shared end goal – the provision of effective protection to those in need.
- I thank you, Mr. Chairperson