



Rwanda' s Statement in the 69th Session of ExCom

Madam Chairperson

Mr. High Commissioner,

Distinguished Delegates

I' m very pleased and honored to be part of the 69th Session of the Executive Committee of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees with my delegation.

From the outset, let me stress that my delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Ugandan delegation on behalf of the Africa Group.

I am also thankful to the High Commissioner for the invitation to the Government of Rwanda. I commend the High Commissioner for his excellent and dedicated work, and for his comprehensive report. Let me take this opportunity on behalf of His Excellency Paul Kagame, the President of the Republic of Rwanda and on my own behalf to express our sincere appreciation for your recent visit in the Great Lakes Region and in Rwanda in particular.

Madam Chairperson,

I would like to seize this precious opportunity to brief about the current situation of refugees hosted in Rwanda, as well as the continuous process of receiving and reintegrating Rwandans who return from exile following the closure of the Rwandan Refugee Chapter in December 2017.



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Madam Chairperson

Rwanda is currently hosting more than 150,000 refugees who mainly fled from Eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi.

The majority of these persons of concerns are camp-based refugees living in six refugee camps including the largest one accommodating more than 57,000 Burundian Refugees.

The big majority of the refugee population in Rwanda depends on humanitarian assistance. The Government of Rwanda ensures security and protection to all refugees and contributes to the promotion of their well-being by integrating them into existing socio-economic programs such as education, Health, Livelihood activities, to name just a few. Rwanda is a champion of the 1951 Refugee Convention and our domestic refugee law of 2014 endows refugees with a full set of rights including the right to work and the right to freedom of movement.

Madam Chairperson,

On 14th February 2018, the Government of Rwanda adopted the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) which is in line with the four commitments made by our country in 2016 to further the socio-economic empowerment of refugees. Through the CRRF, we are planning to outline a holistic approach which can bring development benefits for both refugees and host communities.



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We are at the initial and early stages of adoption of the CRRF and have consulted across Government to ensure that the purpose and objectives of the CRRF are known and well understood.

Beyond that, the Government of Rwanda is updating the strategic plan to accommodate the 4 commitments made in Leaders' summit in 2016. These commitments are in the sectors of Education, Health, livelihoods and provision of refugee Identity cards.

Madame Chairperson

Distinguished delegates

The Government of Rwanda has already made good progress in delivering the above mentioned commitments,

Madam Chairperson, allow me to announce that today, 83,4% refugee students are integrated in national education system, the Government of Rwanda and UNHCR launched the joint strategy on economic inclusion of refugees and 12 NGOs and private companies are currently implementing livelihoods programs on behalf of the Government and UNHCR to ensure self-reliance of refugees. In addition, refugees benefit secondary and tertiary health services and in the near future Urban refugees will be enrolled in the Community based insurance scheme. On the issuance of Refugee Identity card, the Government renewed Refugee Identity cards and recently where the verification exercise was completed, 3762 IDs



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have already been issued. 100% of refugees aged 16 years and above will progressively be provided with Refugee ID cards as the Refugee verification exercise goes on.

Madam Chairperson,

The CRRF implementation and inclusion of refugees in National programs is a journey that need joint efforts and burden sharing to reduce pressure on refugee hosting countries.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the UNHCR and other key partners for their great contribution and support provided towards assisting refugees despite their limited resources and I call upon the development partners to join humanitarian agencies to bridge the existing gaps in humanitarian sector and therefore build the self-reliance of refugees through their empowerment.

Madam Chairperson,

The Government of Rwanda is not only concerned by refugees hosted in its territory but it has been promoting the return and reintegration of Rwandan refugees, and facilitating the local integration of those opting to stay in their host countries.

Since January 2018, right after the implementation period of the Comprehensive Solution Strategies (CSS) for Rwandan Refugees that came into effect on 31st December 2017, we have so far received more



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than 2400 returnees, majority of them coming from the Eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In order to ensure a sustained and dignified return and reintegration opportunities, the Government of Rwanda enroll returnees into national programs. And the process starts with National Identification cards and Community Health based insurance known as *Mutuelle de Santé*, while UNHCR provides the return grant (equivalent to 250\$ per adult and 150\$ per child) and WFP a three months' food package to enable returning Rwandans coop with the new life while in their Communities they are absorbed into the existing social protection schemes.

Madam Chairperson,

Let me take this opportunity to reiterate our Government commitment to continue welcoming Rwandans coming back home and assisting those in need.

Rwanda has always kept its borders open to human beings seeking international protection despite a number of challenges linked to shortage of humanitarian funding, limited livelihoods opportunities, limited space for camp extension and environment degradation among others. In the same vein, Rwanda has opened doors and given the freedom of movement to refugees. The Government of Rwanda reiterates its commitment to respect its international obligations, equally The Government of Rwanda constantly reminds refugees of their obligation to respect local laws and regulations.



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**Madam Chairperson,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

Allow me to conclude my statement by thanking UNHCR Leadership once again for the support extended to the Government of Rwanda in assisting refugees hosted in Rwanda despite a number of challenges related to their increasing number which is far beyond the available resources to cater for their needs.

We look forward to your continued collaboration and firm commitment towards the smooth implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework which will enable all of us to overcome those challenges and contribute in the long run to the self-reliance of refugees.

I thank you for your kind attention.