

## **Swedish Statement on International Protection, UNHCR ExCom 7-10 October 2019**

Thank you Mr Chair,

And thank you to UNHCR for the note on international protection. The note this year truly reflects the important work undertaken by UNHCR and its partners.

Sweden recognizes the growing need to find adequate responses to the challenges presented by forced displacement and statelessness, and the crucial importance of placing protection at the centre of humanitarian action. This must remain an important feature of the implementation of the Global Compact for Refugees, and as we step up our work on solutions.

In this regard, Sweden is proud to be a major resettlement country, a tool for offering both protection and solutions to refugees. Sweden also stands ready to make additional efforts to reach the equally ambitious and important goals regarding resettlement set out in the Compact. For that reason, we have taken active part in the consultations for the development of the three-year strategy (2019-2021) on Resettlement and complementary pathways as foreseen in the GCR.

Via the collaborative work in the **UNHCR Priority Situations Core Group** (Co-Chaired by Sweden and Ireland), the GRF workstream on Solutions-resettlement, and the implementation of the Three year Strategy, we strive to **promote increased resettlement and reach out to emerging resettlement states**. Supporting resettlement as an important area under the solutions workstream for and at the **Global Refugee Forum** will be one way for us to translate the principle of international burden and responsibility sharing into concrete action.

Sweden is also considering co-sponsoring the important GRF workstream on Protection Capacity with a focus on Asylum Capacity Support, where the Swedish Migration Agency has valuable experience and knowledge to share. The situation in Sweden has changed substantially compared to a few years ago when we received 163 000 asylum seekers, but we are still working on the integration of these refugees – a challenge that we are determined to succeed in. And as we said in our national statement yesterday, Sweden is also determined to make tangible improvements in our own work on statelessness, not least by withdrawing reservations to the 1954 Convention and corresponding reservations in the 1951 Refugee Convention.

In addition, Sweden is co-sponsoring the GRF workstream of Education which, as we know, is another important way of providing protection to children and youth, as well

as offering empowerment and hope of future solutions. Our focus within this workstream is on equity and inclusion.

On that note, we are pleased to see that UNHCR has strengthened the integration of age, gender, diversity and disability, and that the AGD-policy adopted a little over a year ago is now being put into practice. We trust that UNHCR will continue to strengthen these aspects in all its work, including by application of relevant accountability frameworks in relation to its partners, who are an integral part of providing protection to persons of concern to the UNHCR.

As the lead for the global protection cluster, UNHCR plays a key role in efforts at placing protection at the centre of humanitarian action. We welcome the commitment shown by UNHCR to strengthen SGBV prevention and response, for men and boys as well as for women and girls, and we encourage UNHCR to continue prioritising this matter at both the strategic and operational levels as well as in the allocation of resources in specific crisis responses. This is important not least throughout the ongoing transformation, decentralisation and regionalisation.

Finally, we welcome UNHCR's new policy on engagement in situations of internal displacement. We do not have a global compact on internal displacement, but ensuring that IDPs get adequate protection and solutions also requires constructive collaboration between a broad range of stakeholders. In this regard, we need to better understand the linkages between environment, climate and displacement and bear in mind Agenda 2030.

Mr High Commissioner,

Sweden remains a steadfast supporter of UNHCR, and I thank you for organising this important Executive Committee 2019.

Thank you.