

**Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme**  
**Seventieth Session**  
**Australian Intervention on International Protection**

Chair, your Excellencies, and distinguished delegates, Australia thanks UNHCR for its update on international protection.

Australia remains concerned by rising levels of displacement across the world. With more than 70 million people forcibly displaced globally, we acknowledge the significance of the Global Compact on Refugees as a tool to strengthen responsibility sharing for displacement crises. Comprehensive, whole of society responses are necessary for supporting both host communities and refugees, and we continue to highlight the importance of coordinated humanitarian responses which are context specific, and effectively identify the particular protection needs of those displaced.

Supporting the self-reliance and resilience of refugees and host communities is key to reducing vulnerabilities, and in this regard we encourage UNHCR to continue its coordination efforts with other humanitarian and development agencies. Education is an important tool for building self-reliance and we welcome UNHCR's continued focus on supporting access to education for refugee and host community children.

Chair, the international protection system remains under considerable strain. Australia is proud to be a consistent humanitarian donor and generous resettlement country, and we welcome ongoing collective action to address this global challenge. We encourage other states to maintain or increase their resettlement efforts and support the focus of the Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways on expanding

the base of actors engaged in resettlement and complementary partners. We are willing to share Australia's expertise with new and emerging resettlement countries as they develop capacity in this area.

We acknowledge UNHCR's ongoing efforts to find durable solutions for refugees and emphasise the importance of voluntary, safe and dignified returns where conditions are conducive.

Australia welcomes UNHCR's new policy on *Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement*. We thank UNHCR for continuing to work with governments to address the protection and assistance needs of internally displaced persons. We stress the importance of timely, safe, unimpeded and sustained access for delivery of humanitarian assistance, including protection interventions for the most vulnerable.

We continue to encourage UNHCR to ensure its operations in all contexts are inclusive of vulnerable and marginalised groups, and that UNHCR provides equal opportunities for participation and leadership for affected populations. The inclusion and leadership of women and girls; increased efforts to respond to sexual and gender based violence; and the protection of persons with disabilities remain of the utmost importance in all displacement contexts. We encourage UNHCR to deliver upon the objectives set out in the *United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy* and operationalise the *Charter for Disability Inclusion in Humanitarian Action*.

Chair, the shared challenge of forced displacement requires a shared response. We thank UNHCR for its leadership in this regard, and for continuing to place protection at the centre of humanitarian action.

Thank you.