



**ZIMBABWE**

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER  
OF PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR AND SOCIAL WELFARE  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE,  
HONOURABLE SEKAI NZENZA**

**AT THE 69<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF  
THE PROGRAMME OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH  
COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES**

**1-5 OCTOBER 2018**

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**GENEVA SWITZERLAND**

**Excellency Chairperson of 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee**

**High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr Filippo Grandi**

**Honour Ministers**

**Excellencies**

**Distinguished delegates**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

I am deeply honoured to be addressing this 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNHCR Executive Committee on behalf of my delegation. This also happens to be Zimbabwe's maiden speech following its admission into the Executive Committee. In that regard, my delegation would like to thank all member states that supported Zimbabwe's application when it was considered by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in April 2018. We are delighted to join this family of nations that pay a close attention to the situation of the world's refugee population.

Chairperson,

Let me join others in welcoming your chairpersonship to steer the deliberations of this 69<sup>th</sup> session of Excom. Allow me to also thank the High Commissioner for his comprehensive statement.

Zimbabwe aligns itself with the statement delivered by Uganda on behalf of the African Group but would also like to make additional remarks in its own national capacity.

Mr Chairperson, Zimbabwe has taken note of the draft Global Compact on Refugees that the High Commissioner compiled after 6 rounds of formal consultations with member states and civil society organisations as

mandated by the United Nations General Assembly at its 71<sup>st</sup> Session in 2016, which was also the occasion of the adoption of the New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants. Accordingly, Zimbabwe like other member states looks forward to the draft's consideration by the General Assembly.

The Global Compact on Refugees should be an instrument that delivers to refugees and host countries. It should also deliver to donor countries and to organisations that support refugee programmes and projects including the World Bank that has come on board. Lastly, it should deliver to the whole international community because forced removal is a global problem that needs collective interventions.

To this end, the Global Compact on Refugees ought to be responsive to refugee host country needs. However, Africa, as the largest refugee host continent has over the years witnessed reductions in resources for financing refugee protection and solution programmes. My delegation hopes that the final Global Compact on Refugees will address the real or perceived financing deficiencies in the current draft so that going forward we will talk of genuine burden and responsibility sharing.

Chairperson, the same can be said of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Frameworks (CRRFs). These also depend on the mobilisation of resources. Although some host countries and some regional blocs are rallying behind the CRRFs, they are to a large extent dependent on resources. Some of the evaluations that have been undertaken have already shown the effect of insufficient funding on the implementation of CRRFs notwithstanding the political will exhibited by the host countries and regional blocs.

The global statistics of forcibly displaced people and indeed refugee population is on the increase. Today, there are around 68.5 million people that have been forced out of their homes world-wide, of which 25.4 million are refugees and 3.1 million are asylum seekers. As I speak now there are people fleeing from war situations or conflict-ridden environments. The numbers are invariably increasing each day. We are therefore grateful to the Office of the High Commissioner for its relentless efforts to alleviate the suffering of refugees.

Nevertheless, although we need international protection, which is the *raison d'être* of UNHCR, it is not the panacea. As members of the United Nations, we ought to invest in actions to end wars and conflicts. Clearly, the increasing numbers of refugees is not a desirable indicator insofar as sustainable development is concerned. Instead, it shows our collective failure in ending wars and providing peaceful environments.

Finally, Chairperson, I wish to assure, the Executive Committee, that the new political dispensation in Zimbabwe is geared towards playing its role in international protection by providing for the refugees in the country working with UNHCR and other partners. To this end, my government is considering the implementation of some of the durable solutions including integration and access to the labour market.

Although Zimbabwe hosts to a small refugee population, it nevertheless, abides by its international obligations to take care of them. Zimbabwe remains committed to promote and safeguard the rights of refugees and asylum seekers. Special attention is given to the women, the elderly and children in these categories.

I thank you