

## **UNHCR Executive Committee session**

### **Statement of the Republic of Lithuania**

2 October 2018

Distinguished High Commissioner, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour to address you on behalf of Lithuania. We fully align ourselves with the statement by the European Union and would like to add a few remarks in our national capacity.

As we witness new and continued conflicts over the past year that result in the growing number of forcibly displaced persons around the world, we share the concern of the High Commissioner regarding the increasing humanitarian needs and challenges in protection of the most vulnerable people. We praise the High Commissioner's and his staff work and dedication to solving displacement crisis from Bangladesh to Venezuela, especially in insecure working environments. Lithuania contributes every year to the alleviation of these humanitarian crises through UNHCR.

We highly value the activities of UNHCR in offering international protection and safeguarding the rights and well-being of refugees. Human mobility is a global phenomenon that requires global solutions to govern it in a humane, dignified and secure way. Regardless of the status of people on the move, countries must ensure effective protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while implementing policies that address their movement.

I would like to commend UNHCR for the inclusive, transparent and comprehensive process to develop the Global Compact on Refugees. I can affirm our strong support for the Global Compact as we look forward to its adoption by the General Assembly later this year. Improved coordination and coherence between all relevant UN agencies and other international and regional organisations that deal with asylum seekers and

refugees will contribute to the development of a more coherent, proactive and effective global policy based on responsibility sharing and cooperation.

Strengthening host country resilience, building their effective asylum systems, including mechanisms to assess other protection needs in the situation of mixed migration flows, as well as providing development assistance and support for local communities in the countries of origin, transit and first countries of asylum are of crucial importance for responsibility and burden sharing.

Lithuania reiterates its commitment to share the burden with those EU Member States that have been strongly affected by the refugee crisis. Lithuania continues to carry out relocation and resettlement programmes, with the latest arrival of Syrian refugee families being facilitated just last week.

We must also not lose from sight internally displaced persons who can often be even more vulnerable, due to security risks and lack of access in areas affected by conflict and instability. As an example, we note, in particular, the current situation in Ukraine with regard to IDPs fleeing the zone of conflict with Russia. The number and structure of displaced population there (mostly elderly and children, i.e. people in vulnerable situations) as well as their suffering continue to be a cause of great concern. We thank UNHCR for the support it has provided to IDPs through protection and legal assistance, policy development and capacity building, and through distribution of emergency shelter materials and non-food items.

Mr. High Commissioner,

Lithuania is committed and ready to follow your leadership in finding solutions for global refugee-related challenges we all face today.

Thank you.