



**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN
Geneva**

Statement

90th Session of the Standing Committee of UNHCR

Statement on Behalf of the OIC Group¹

**Agenda Item 3 (a) : International Protection -
Note on International Protection**

(1st July 2024)

Chair,

The OIC Group expresses its concern that the number of people displaced across the global has reached an alarming 117 million, with conflict being the primary driver of their precarious situations.

More than half of refugees are hosted in the OIC member States. Several other member States of the Group are countries of origin, transit points, and donors.

It is an established fact that despite compounding pressures on their security, social, economic, fiscal, environmental and other sectors, the OIC member States are sharing the largest share of the global refugees.

Therefore, the OIC member States have a major stake in the normative and operational aspects of the work of UNHCR and broad international refugee regime.

The Group supports UNHCR's efforts to promote partnerships for equitable burden and responsibility sharing for refugees.

In this spirit, the Group urges international community to commit additional flexible and unearmarked funding, including through grant based as well as concessional financing tools for effective implementation of national and regional refugee responses in OIC member States.

¹ Except Albania

The OIC Group emphasizes that voluntary repatriation to countries of origin is a solution preferred by most refugees. We underscore the importance of assistance to countries of origin for the reconstruction and development to create conditions for sustainable returns.

Expanding refugee access to resettlement and other pathways of admission to third countries is another expression of solidarity and burden and responsibility sharing.

Chair,

The Group deplores the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza that is causing immense civilian suffering. We reiterate the OIC's call for immediate ceasefire, urgent and unfettered access of humanitarian aid, and lifting of the unjust siege on the occupied Palestinian territories.

While recognizing that UNHCR does not have the mandate to respond to the special needs of Palestine refugees and displaced persons, the Group reaffirms that there is no alternative to UNRWA. We call upon the international community to continue supporting UNRWA's mandate of assisting and delivering relief to Palestinians.

The situation in Sudan remains dire with 10 million displaced in just 14 months. Additionally, the 2024 Regional Response Plan for Sudan remains severely underfunded. The OIC Group calls upon UNHCR, donors and other international partners to intensify their funding and more efficient resource allocation to address the urgent needs of Sudanese refugees, ensuring their safety, dignity, and access to essential services.

Lastly, the OIC Group would like to register its objection on the use of non-consensual SOGI or related terminologies in the Note by High Commissioner contained in document E/75/SC/CRP.13.

The language as drafted in para 12 of the Note appears to convey a negative normative judgement on certain member States' legal jurisdictions without any tenable basis under international law.

The Group has taken note of a verbal explanation by Assistant High Commissioner that “*the Note does not reflect views of member States*”. (if necessary)

Last year, the Group had engaged in a dialogue in good faith to resolve the contentious use of SOGI terminologies in UNHCR texts. Based on which a

disclaimer clarifying that “*the Note does not represent the views of all member States of the Executive Committee*” was introduced in the Note.

The Group calls upon UNHCR to address the concern by re-instating the disclaimer that “*the Note does not represent views of Member States*”.

We emphasize the need for continued dialogue and cooperation among all members of the Executive Committee to reach common ground and understanding regarding politically sensitive and controversial issues.

I thank you!
