

**Eritrea' Delegation Statement (Ms. Nadia Michael)
at 75th Session of UNHCR Executive Committee**



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United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Filippo Grandi

Excellencies

Honorable Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Being the last of a long line of speakers bears a unique set of challenges and opportunities. The challenge is that I am speaking when all has been said. However, the opportunity lies in synthesizing and building upon the messages of the preceding speakers, a benefit that far outweighs the challenges. Let me now build upon those successive statements.

The first question that comes to mind is: Why have we witnessed such a surge in emergencies in recent years? What drives this relentless escalation of crises? Furthermore, what implications does this widening global peace deficit have for the future of humanity?

The straightforward answer is that we are undergoing a global transition. The contours of global power are shifting, and we are living in an era where geostrategic tectonic plates are in motion. Such transitions inherently carry significant risks alongside potential rewards, deeply impacting nations, economies, and societies. These transitions, and especially attendant potential

changes to the prevailing power equilibrium are marked by uncertainty, unrest, chaos, conflict, and a profound sense of disruption and loss; and more ominously, a tendency to pursue destabilizing policies predicated on zero-sum geopolitical calculus.

To mitigate the risks associated with these global transitions, coordinated action, foresight, and a commitment to equity and sustainability are crucial. Distinguished delegates in this dialogue, we must demonstrate the political will to resolve conflicts peacefully and forge stronger global partnerships that support sustainable development.

Madam Chair,

The ongoing global crisis of forced migration is a poignant reminder that narrow geopolitical agendas often overshadow the humanitarian imperative to address the root causes of displacement. Rather than exploiting these crises for political gain, it is essential for us all to commit to a sustainable and equitable approach that confronts the underlying problems.

To address this crisis, we must intensify our efforts to combat and eradicate human trafficking and smuggling. This can best be achieved by promoting international migration in a regular, non-discriminatory, and orderly manner. Adding to the complexities of migration, it is crucial to highlight illegal unilateral coercive measures, which are increasingly employed by some countries as alternatives to direct military interventions. These measures result in severe economic and social disruptions, leading to increased displacement and suffering. The international community must recognize and address the impact of these measures as part of a broader strategy to mitigate the root causes of migration.

Madam Chair

Ladies and gentlemen,

While recognizing the UNHCR's efforts in addressing global displacement, it is essential to critically evaluate its performance and identify gaps in its approach. The generosity of least-developed countries in hosting refugees, often with minimal external support, stands in stark contrast to the approach of wealthier

nations that seek to outsource their responsibilities. This disparity calls for a reassessment of global responsibility-sharing mechanisms and the need for more equitable support for host countries.

The UNHCR's reliance on donor governments, many of which are involved in the geopolitical conflicts that cause displacement, has, at times, compromised the agency's impartiality. Major powers frequently leverage organizations like UNHCR as tools to advance their self-serving geopolitical interests, diverting focus from the real needs of displaced populations. As the Director General pointed out, the conflict in Sudan is "a crisis that commands little media attention and enjoys inadequate financial support." This overreliance on a few wealthy countries is a broader issue facing many global institutions.

Eritrea is one of the nation's hosting our Sudanese brothers and sisters who have fled the unfortunate and tragic conflict in their country. In Eritrea, we do not use the word 'refugee'; they understand that Eritrea is their second home, and that's how we welcome them. Our support for them is an emergency measure while we actively work to help bring peace to Sudan.

The testimonies given by the two girls at the beginning of this session were deeply moving. Eritrea, a country that does not permit orphans or refugees to be excluded, has ensured that there are no stateless persons within its borders. Every individual in Eritrea is either recognized as a citizen or belongs to a nationality, thus receiving the legal protection and rights that accompany citizenship without any precondition.

By eliminating the issue of statelessness, Eritrea demonstrates its commitment to providing equal opportunities and access to essential services for all its residents. This ability to avoid issues of statelessness reflects Eritrea's policies and efforts to ensure that all residents are granted the rights and protections associated with nationality.

Eritrea knows all too well the pain and hardship our own people have experienced, particularly due to the UNHCR's biased and illegal Eligibility Guidelines. These guidelines have been primarily influenced by political agendas "of strategic depopulation" pursued by certain hostile powers to wean the youth from the

exigencies of nation-building in its defense/developmental dimensions at a critical juncture in its history rather than humanitarian principles, unfairly portraying our nation and misrepresenting the realities on the ground. Therefore, as we extend our solidarity to those seeking shelter in Eritrea, we also strive to challenge those who seek to manipulate the narrative for their own agendas.

However, the State of Eritrea remains committed to collaborating and engaging with international initiatives aimed at promoting and facilitating the safe, regular, and dignified movement of migrants, regardless of their legal status. However, the UNHCR must ensure full adherence to the core principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and operational independence, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/182.

I thank you.

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