



Security Council Briefing by Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 30 May 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Mr Darren Camilleri

Political Coordinator of Malta to the United Nations, New York

President

I begin by expressing our deep appreciation for the efforts of the UNHCR and its dedicated partners, who continue to operate under increasingly challenging global conditions.

The numbers speak for themselves. Today, more than 100 million people are displaced. This stark figure reflects to the urgent need to prevent, contain, and resolve conflicts.

The vicious cycle of conflict and displacement necessitates the prioritisation of conflict prevention. This entails combating impunity against those who violate human rights, which are at the root of conflict and forced displacement. Promoting good governance, inclusive and sustainable development, and building resilience against food insecurity are also critical.



Effective prevention also means addressing the root causes of forced displacement beyond conflict. The undeniable link between climate change and displacement also necessitates our urgent attention and action.

Climate change is causing more frequent and extreme weather events like floods, cyclones and droughts. The International Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) estimates that such weather-related hazards triggered a record 32.6 million internal displacements in 2022.

Furthermore, climate change exacerbates the impact of other factors that contribute to the displacement of people, making it a threat multiplier. We must scale up targeted support for these communities to ensure their safety and well-being amidst a changing climate.



We cannot meet the needs of millions of displaced people without ensuring the UN and its partners have the humanitarian resources, expertise, and access they require. The denial of humanitarian access, along with the use of arbitrary bureaucratic and administrative impediments, has severe and lasting impacts on all civilians trapped in conflict, particularly on children.

The Security Council has a responsibility to act and exert influence to overcome barriers preventing safe, timely, and unimpeded humanitarian access. There must be no impunity for those who deny humanitarian aid, target UN and humanitarian actors, or use starvation as a weapon of war.

The dire humanitarian situation for thousands of Palestinians in Gaza has reached a catastrophic level and leading to mass displacement. We greatly appreciate the work of humanitarian agencies on the ground. We again reiterate our demand for an immediate and permanent ceasefire as the only way of out of this human tragedy.

The war in Ukraine spurred the greatest displacement of people on the European continent in decades.



Neither can we forget about the ongoing Rohingya refugee crisis, which has been further intensified by recent reports of renewed violence in Rakhine State.

Women and girls remain disproportionately affected by the various factors leading to displacement. In Afghanistan, the measures imposed by the Taliban restricting the rights of women and girls have led many to leave the country. We must ensure that refugees are protected from all forms of violence, including exploitation and sexual and gender-based violence. We commend UNHCR's gender and age responsive approach that promotes gender equality as an integral part of its protection mandate.

I conclude, President, by reiterating Malta's support for the work of UNHCR. As a country in the Central Mediterranean, a region at the crossroads of migratory movements, we are committed to continue fulfilling our responsibilities in coordinating rescue activities, in a manner that fully respects international law, including the Law of the Sea.

I thank you.