Statement

by

Delegation of Thailand

at the Third Committee

of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Agenda Item 62: Report of the UNHCR, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions

6-7 November 2013, New York

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68th Session of the UNGA, 6 – 7 November 2013

Mr. Chair,

Thailand wishes to thank the UN High Commissioner for Refugees for the presentation of the report and for his leadership in providing timely humanitarian responses, particularly in an ever challenging and evolving environment. Thailand notes with appreciation the comprehensiveness of both the report on the activities of the UNHCR in the past years and its first 10 years strategic review, prepared under this agenda item.

The reports reflect the UNHCR’s role in providing humanitarian assistance and protection challenges in multiple crises. All this while pursuing institutional reform, strengthening its protection and emergency responses, fostering closer cooperation with Member States in general and with host countries in particular, and enhancing partnerships with States, other UN and relevant international organizations, private actors and civil society organizations.

Mr. Chair,

On this note, we wish to commend the UNHCR, the Executive Committee and its member states for their hard work and efforts which has resulted in consensus on two important decisions.

The first is the Conclusion on Civil Registration adopted by the 64th Executive Committee. My delegation sees the conclusion as not only timely but it could do much assist states in improving their civil registration systems and could lead to a reduction of statelessness.

The second is the decision regarding the reform of the UNHCR Executive Committee bureau. We applaud the decision to review the designation of bureau members to equally reflect geographical distribution, and the diverse contribution made by Member States to UNHCR’s work. We believe that this decision would considerably contribute to the work and the conduct of the bureau.

Mr. Chair,

The UNHCR report has rightly noted the surge in numbers of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants in various parts of the world, as well as the dramatic increase in numbers of irregular maritime movements. Thailand notes that large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers live in protracted refugee situations, mainly in developing countries. This has weighed on these countries’ economic and social development. Hence, we join the call for international solidarity and continued support for the host countries, and emphasize the principle of burden-sharing.
Mr. Chair,

Regarding the need for closer cooperation at country and regional levels, including dialogues with countries of origin in resolving the migration question which is emphasized in the report, Thailand has always sought to foster cooperation at bilateral, regional, and international levels to efficiently manage migration flows. The Bali Process and its Regional Cooperation Framework, with the support of the UNHCR, is one such example of regional efforts to address cross-border dimension. The need for consultation with relevant actors in the search for comprehensive solutions to irregular movements in the region.

Finally, Mr. Chair, my delegation could not agree more with the High Commissioner's assessment on protection challenges. We are of the view that these challenges have to be tackled at its root cause to address the motivation of movements, ranging from economic, social, and political factors, in a sustainable manner.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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