BRAZIL

Third Committee – Item 62– Report of the UNHCR, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions

68th General Assembly

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations

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(Please check against delivery)
May I convey to the High Commissioner the deepest appreciation of the Brazilian Government for his leadership ahead of the United Nations' efforts to address the plight of refugees, but especially in this very challenging year, in light of the increasingly insecure and unpredictable operating environment for UNHCR.

The humanitarian crisis in Syria is cause for great indignation. Brazil, where numerous descendants of Syrian and Lebanese origin have contributed to our identity as a Nation, is profoundly sensitive to this dramatic situation.

In this regard, Brazil has been cooperating with UNHCR's humanitarian response in Syria since the end of 2012, having contributed approximately US$ 1 million to support assistance to refugees in neighboring countries. We believe the principles of international solidarity and burden sharing also entail enhancing opportunities for admittance of refugees from the Syrian conflict in countries outside Syria's immediate vicinity. For this reason, the Brazilian National Committee for Refugees recently decided to allow the facilitation of the processing of Brazilian visas for those refugees from Syria who wish to apply for refuge in Brazil.

We commend the efforts of neighboring countries, in particular, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, for their generosity in hosting the largest numbers of Syrian refugees. As the UNHCR has stated, it is crucial that the international community heeds the call for strengthening support and assistance to refugees from the Syrian conflict and to the countries and communities hosting them.

The end of the plight of these refugees, however, still depends on a negotiated political settlement to the Syrian conflict. In the face of their tragedy, it is crucial that we remind ourselves that there is no military solution to the Syrian conflict, and that we renew our commitment towards diplomacy and negotiation. Furthermore, as the Chairman of the
In this regard, we commend the High Commissioner's reduction of expenditure in staffing at headquarters and the outsourcing of services to implementing partners in the field and acknowledge the dedicated work of UNHCR's staff to assist refugees all over the world.

Brazil welcomes, in particular, UNHCR's efforts to increase its capacity to ensure nutrition and food security of refugees through joint collaboration with the World Food Programme, underscoring the centrality of food security as part of refugee protection.

We especially commend UNHCR's operations that prioritize locally purchased food. To this effect, the Brazilian government has financially supported UNHCR pilot projects in Sudan, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Namibia and Pakistan geared towards implementing local procurement schemes as part of durable solutions with real prospects for rebuilding lives. Brazil encourages UNHCR to mainstream nutrition and food security of refugees as a regular component of its planning and programming cycle. We believe UNHCR can play a key role in assisting the UN system to meet the "Zero Hunger Challenge" launched by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the Rio+20 Conference.

In concluding, this past October, the Brazilian Ministry of Justice signed a cooperation agreement to help render more efficient the procedural mechanisms of the Brazilian National Committee for Refugees. We hope this mechanism will help strengthen Brazil's role in welcoming refugees who wish to apply for refuge in Brazil.

Thank you.