

Collective NGO Statement on the General Debate – Oral Intervention

Dear Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

This statement has been prepared in consultation with a broad range of NGOs, including organisations led by forcibly displaced and stateless persons.

We speak today as actors committed to upholding the rights, dignity, and agency of forcibly displaced and stateless people. We are humanitarians, and we cannot ignore the multiple, worsening humanitarian crises around the world. We are on the frontlines of this reality.

Political failures are pushing humanitarian responses, and our capacity, to their limits. In Sudan, we are witnessing one of the largest famines in modern history. In Gaza, for two years, famine, catastrophic mass displacement, and genocide. Today, we welcome the ceasefire agreement. It brings hope.

Yet, we still ask ourselves: **why is global suffering increasing rather than decreasing?** How many more times do we need to raise our concerns, urge States to uphold their obligations, and call for political action before we see meaningful change? As humanitarians, we have not forgotten why we are here. Have you?

Dear Chair, Excellencies,

This session takes place at a pivotal moment.

Humanitarian space is shrinking, asylum systems are under immense pressure, and displacement has reached record levels. At the same time, critical programmes are being undermined by unprecedented funding cuts.

Across camps and settlements, rations, health services, and education are being reduced. We are now seeing onward movements, as families are forced to move due to cuts in food assistance.

A few examples from NGOs illustrate the gravity of the funding situation:

- In Honduras and Guatemala, NGOs report they can no longer support individuals at extreme risk seeking asylum.
- In Kenya, one NGO reported a 72% reduction in protection services, affecting over 12,000 people. Six out of nine health facilities in Kakuma and Hagadera are at risk of closure, while education for over 112,000 learners is disrupted and safeguarding programmes suspended.
- In South Sudan, funding cuts forced an NGO to close its programme for children with disabilities, resulting in the deaths of seven children from severe malnutrition.
- In the Americas, the global reductions to resettlement, a legal pathway to lifesaving protection, have left 15,000 people in high-risk situations, including 2,000 at imminent risk of violence or persecution.

In this context, systemic change cannot be delayed. We put forward four key recommendations:

First, strengthen protection and inclusion. States must uphold the Refugee Convention, its Protocol, and regional instruments. Where essential services are lacking, forcibly displaced

people face heightened risks of violence and exploitation. UNHCR must be able to continue supporting governments hosting large refugee populations to adopt and implement robust legal frameworks for protection and inclusion.

Second, commit to a new multilateralism. Meeting diverse needs with limited resources requires new multilateralism. We urge States, the UN, private sector, civil society, and forcibly displaced and stateless persons to work together, collaborating for effective and inclusive planning and delivery. Humanitarian, development, and peace actors must collaborate, ensure accountability, and coordinate responses.

Third, support locally driven responses. Refugee-led organisations are stepping in where systems fall short. They provide services, advocate for inclusion, and build trust within communities. These organisations must be acknowledged as legitimate partners with the knowledge and capacity to design and implement solutions.

Fourth, ensure coherent responses and principled leadership. Resources must reach those most at risk, guided by participatory processes and standardized metrics. In crises such as Palestine, Sudan, and the DRC, humanitarian red lines have been crossed. Protecting civilians, upholding humanitarian principles, and safeguarding the rights of stateless persons must remain non-negotiable.

Dear Chair, this is a moment of choice. Words of solidarity are not enough. Commitments must translate into tangible action that protects rights, upholds dignity, and builds futures for displaced and stateless people, and for the communities that host them.

We stand ready to work with Member States, UNHCR, and all partners to turn these commitments into lasting, positive change.

Finally, we'd like to thank you, High Commissioner Grandi for your leadership over the past decade and wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

This statement is available on icvanetwork.org.

Thank you.