

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates,

Let me take this opportunity to thank the governments of the Great Lakes Region for their great efforts in welcoming, protecting and assisting refugees and indeed in integrating response to refugee crises in their development plans.

Indeed, addressing displacement is front and centre of the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework, which was adopted by the Security Council in 2016 following the open debate on peace and security in the Great Lakes chaired by Angola, and the implementation mechanisms for which were discussed in this same resort towards the end of 2016.

I am privileged to be here today with partners from UNHCR – we have been actively engaging in joint work with UNHCR in the region to address the protracted displacement situations:

Indeed, UNDP and UNHCR increasingly deliver joint programming across the region to fully realize a joint and integrated approach to Humanitarian, Development and Peacebuilding work - working closely with governments to create durable solutions for host communities, refugees, returnees and internally displaced on the basis of the principle of Leaving No-one Behind.

- The joint efforts have been highlighted and summarised in a booklet on joint programming between UNHCR and UNDP in the Great Lakes Region, published 16 January this year. The booklet focuses on work on the HDP nexus,

New Way of Working adding significant work on resilience and rule of law as part of the RRRP for the DRC situation.

- The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the principle of "Leaving No One Behind", as well as the Global Compact on Refugees and its Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) approach, provided an important framework for this collaboration.
- Getting Humanitarian and Development agencies together on the same projects and aiming at collective delivery represents a real operationalization of the theories of the Nexus and reflects in practical terms the new approaches described in the CRRF and Global Compact on Refugees and Migrants.
- This collaboration presents challenges for all of us as it calls for a different approach to responses our agencies are not necessarily used to and/or comfortable with. These challenges should be seen as a motivation to think out of the box, to move out of our comfort zones and find alternative and more comprehensive ways to respond to the needs of refugees, host countries and communities and other person of concern to UNHCR. It is significant that in order to include development concerns RRRPs are now over a two -year period, renewable and continually updated but not short term
- The collaboration between the two agencies in the framework of the RRRP has a significance that goes beyond the importance of the joint projects and of the

stronger resilience and development focus. It represents one of the first examples of operationalization of the New Way of Working and of the Humanitarian/Development/Peace Nexus in refugee operations in Africa.

**Let me give a concrete example of our joint work in Burundi** where we currently collaborate on two inter-agency projects between UNHCR and UNDP:

- “Peacebuilding for Sustainable Reintegration and Sustainable Reintegration for Peace in Burundi” a project that sees also the participation of FAO and UNFPA and
- “Preventing conflict and building peace through addressing the drivers of conflict and instability associated with forced displacement between Burundi and Tanzania”, which also has the participation of IOM.
- In these projects, the collaboration, funded through PBF, expands to three (Cross-border project UNHCR, IOM and UNDP) or even four agencies (Sustainable reintegration for peace project, FAP, UNHCR, UNDP and UNFPA) working on the same project. The projects link not only agencies in delivering towards the same objectives, it links delivery of peacebuilding, humanitarian and sustainable livelihoods outputs and activities closely in each local area of implementation, adopting a people centred approach.
- This ensures that beneficiaries (host communities, refugees, Burundian returnees and IDP’s) are assisted with services that not only address their immediate

needs, but also take in to consideration their medium to longer term needs; ensuring that the most vulnerable, independently of what community they belong to, can access the same forward looking livelihood activities, gaining skills which will be relevant in building economic resilience, building social cohesion in the community, - both of which contributes to reducing the risk of new displacement

- As such, this joint collaboration does not only interest UNHCR and UNDP but it expands to all agencies and organizations that have contributed to the Joint Refugee Return and Reintegration Plan and to the RRRP, along with the governments and peoples affected by the Burundi situation. For example the cross border project has recognized that children are returning without birth certificates so UNICEF is being engaged to assist on this critical issue.
- The collaboration on these two projects have been an opportunity to learn the dynamics of inter-agency work to support voluntary returns and will therefore facilitate the engagement of UNHCR and other humanitarian partners with UNDP and other development partners also beyond the Great Lakes Region

We commit to continuing these joint efforts to ensure no one is Left Behind and hope is given to the displaced.

Thank you