



Statement at Press Conference on Uganda Solidarity Summit Refugees

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The Prime Minister, Right Honourable Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda,
Minister of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, Honourable Hillary Onek,
Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Honourable Henry Okello Oryem
Minister of State for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, Honourable Musa
Ecweru
UNHCR Representative, Mr. Bornwell Kantande,
UN Colleagues
Members of the Media,

Acknowledging the Summit and leading role by Government

The Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees which will be held in 44 days will be co-hosted by President Yoweri Museveni and UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

Over the past few weeks the Government of Uganda has led preparations for the Uganda Solidarity Summit with support of the UN System in Uganda. I would like to acknowledge the leadership of the Prime Minister, Right Honourable Ruhakana Rugunda who chairs the Apex/Cabinet Level of the National Organising Committee where the Minister of Foreign Affairs and President of the 69th session of the UN General Assembly Honourable Sam Kutesa plays an important role in the preparations. I would also like to thank the National Organising Technical Committee Co-Chairs the Permanent Secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister, Ms. Christine Guwatudde Kintu and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Patrick Mugoya. I would also like to thank my UN colleagues, the Representatives of UNHCR and WFP, who along with me are members of the National Organising Technical Committee.

The objectives of the summit are to showcase the Uganda model in relation to the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and to mobilize international support to meet the immediate humanitarian needs of refugees as well as address the longer-term needs of refugees and the communities that host them.

Let me start by thanking the international community for the current assistance and support being given to Uganda to address peace & security as well as humanitarian and development needs.

Over view of Humanitarian and Development Indicators in the country

Humanitarian Situation in Northern Uganda:

Uganda is now home to over 1.2 million refugees and asylum-seekers, a number greater than at any time in the country's history; and this is projected to increase by an additional 400,000 by the end of 2017, given the average daily influx of about 2,000 refugees from South Sudan. Uganda's settlement model is globally acclaimed as it guarantees the protection of refugees and host communities dwelling side-by-side in peaceful co-existence by ensuring that the resilience capacities of both refugees and host communities are strengthened in the spirit of solidarity, safety and dignity. This model is the manifestation that there is a thin line between humanitarian actions and sustainable development, and that both must be addressed together to have lasting impact.

Vulnerability of the 12 Refugee Hosting Districts

Most of the 12 districts hosting refugees in Uganda are in its Northern region. Over the last few years following the insurgency, through the Government focused attention and the interventions of development partners, Northern Uganda has registered considerable social economic development.

However, the ongoing influx of refugees in West Nile is undoubtedly placing an enormous strain on host communities. Uganda cannot and should not handle Africa's largest refugee crisis alone. Underfunded humanitarian programmes are leaving refugees extremely vulnerable on all fronts. Refugee hosting areas and associated public services are completely overwhelmed, for example in some areas

health centres are now handling four times the capacity they are meant to serve and a similar situation can be found in local schools. It is imperative note that the refugee 12 hosting districts have some of the country's highest levels of poverty and lowest levels of Human Development Indicators. To help ensure we maintain the asylum space, their voices and contributions are being documented.

Highlight the support the UN System in Uganda is providing to the refugees and Host Communities.

The UN supports the Settlement Transformative Agenda primarily through its United Nations Development Assistance Framework, and collectively spent an estimated \$150 million USD in 2016 in refugee-hosting districts, including both humanitarian and development support.

The UN and World Bank's Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) strategy provides a platform to mobilize humanitarian and development resources to support the Settlement Transformative Agenda, and aims to strengthen the capacity of local authorities to build self-reliance, resilience and enhance social service delivery for refugees as well as host communities. This is key for the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework. The UN supports local sectoral and inter-sectoral coordination through UN Area Coordinators and specialized agencies who work closely with local authorities and line ministries at district level. UN Area Coordinators enables the UN family to leverage our existing footprint in close collaboration with local authorities.

The UN is providing services in public health; water, sanitation and hygiene; and livelihoods, to refugees and asylum seekers from South Sudan and host communities through UNHCR, which is leading an effective humanitarian response in a challenging environment.

The World Food Programme not only provides life-saving food assistance to refugees but also supports refugee and host community livelihoods by supporting farmers to become more self-reliant helping to reduce post-harvest losses and improve their access to markets.

UNICEF is strengthening Government systems to provide holistic Early Childhood Development interventions such as antenatal care, birth registration, parenting programmes, nutrition, immunization, water, sanitation and hygiene and early learning, all of which support the optimal development of young children within the settlements and host communities.

UNICEF is also supporting holistic Adolescent Girls interventions such as life skills/vocational skills training and adolescent health services – nutrition, HIV/AIDS, etc – to improve the health and well-being of adolescents and empower them to have a brighter future.

The UN is providing business skills training and start up grants for micro-enterprise development; and refurbishing vocational training institutes through UNDP. At its core, UNDP's strategy works to strengthen national ownership of refugee hosting, particularly for districts, and places people at the centre of their development.

New UN initiatives such as the Joint Programme with Border Communities for Peace & Development, will help reinforce capacities at local level to lead conflict prevention and transformation. Such innovative approaches contribute to protecting the asylum space and the CRRF objective of supporting conditions in countries of origin.

Summit a transformative Moment for Uganda

As I conclude, I would like to point out that the Summit is a transformative moment for Uganda, an opportunity to reinforce existing partnerships and to create new ones. I would like to invite governments, private sector leaders and citizens to stand with Uganda shoulder to shoulder by mobilizing support, contributions and raising awareness about the situation.

Please join us in creating awareness of the Summit and engage us to contribute to the Kampala Declaration being developed to capture outcomes of the Summit.

This afternoon (morning in New York) the UN Secretary - General's Spokesperson will announce the Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees to the press corp. The UN Secretary- General and President Museveni will confirm the dates of the Summit to the press on the margins of the London conference for Somali refugees.

Thank You.