



70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

High-level Side Event on Strengthening cooperation on migration and refugee movements in the perspective of the new development agenda

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Fernando Simas Magalhães, Vice-Minister for Political Affairs I

September 30th, 2015

Mr. Chair,

Allow me to extend our appreciation to the Secretary-General and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees for their efforts to assist the ever-growing population of refugees under the increasing strain of rising global forced displacement, involving the crisis in Syria and Iraq, conflicts in the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the Ukraine, as well as protracted emergencies, such as Afghanistan, Mali and Somalia, among others.

As stated by President Dilma Rousseff during her address to the 70th Session of the UNGA a few days ago, Brazil is a hosting country. We have received Syrians, Haitians, men and women from the around the world, just as we sheltered, over a century ago, millions of Europeans, Arabs and Asians.

We are pleased to note the increased collaboration between the Government of Brazil and the Office of the UNHCR, including through a cooperation agreement and a financial contribution of US\$ 3 million dollars intended to render more efficient the procedural mechanisms of the Brazilian National Committee for Refugees (CONARE). In recognition of the growing refugee flows into Brazil, UNHCR has recently opened a second office in the city of São Paulo, the main entrance hub for refugees arriving in the country, in partnership with state and federal authorities and civil society organizations, which play a key role in providing assistance.

Within the region of Latin America and the Caribbean, Brazil has accepted more refugees than any other country. Since last year, Brazil has granted visas to thousands of asylum-seekers for humanitarian reasons. Specific policies for Syrian, Syrian-Palestinians and Lebanese nationals have been adopted, including a decree aimed at expediting procedures for family reunification.

Similar measures have also been taken by other countries in our region, such as Uruguay, and more recently, Argentina. As a region, we are committed to the principles of solidarity and burden-sharing. Last December, Brazil hosted a Ministerial meeting to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the "Cartagena Declaration on Refugees", during which a Plan of Action on enhancing protection and solutions across Latin America was adopted, a further step to improve our regional framework regarding the protection of refugees, internally displaced and stateless people.

Brazil welcomes the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan, coordinated by both UNHCR and UNDP, which strives to build longer-term resilience amongst host communities and refugees, bringing together over 150 partners and host governments. This initiative contributes both to the protection of refugees as well as to durable solutions. We especially support refugee self-reliance, livelihoods and resilience-building mechanisms through the use of cash transfers, local purchases and social safety-nets as instruments which "bridge the divide" between assistance and development actions.

As noted by our President, the profound sense of indignation caused by the picture of a dead Syrian boy on the beaches of Turkey and by the news of the 71 people asphyxiated inside a truck in Austria must be translated into unequivocal acts of solidarity.

Let me also stress that all of those who leave their country of origin for another, be they refugees or migrants, are fully protected by the international human rights regime, irrespective of their migratory status. All States have a duty to respect and to ensure the human rights of all individuals within their territory and subject to their jurisdiction, without distinction of any kind.

Allow me to reiterate our Government's willingness to welcome those who, driven from their homeland, want to come live, work and contribute to the prosperity and peace of Brazil.

Thank you.