



PERMANENT MISSION OF FINLAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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Strengthening cooperation on migration and refugee movements
in the perspective of the new development agenda

Statement by
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(check against delivery)

I want to thank the Secretary-General for organizing this event. Migration and refugee movements are at the very heart of the international agenda - the United Nations agenda.

Migration has always been a part of our shared history. It has made a positive contribution to development and shaping the world. Seeking opportunity, freedom and a better life is a natural part of humanity.

However, what we are witnessing today with refugees is something else. A growing number of people are forced to flee because of war, persecution and intolerable living conditions. A human tragedy.

This places the United Nations development agenda at the forefront - addressing the root causes of forced displacement by improving living conditions and working for development. In essence, giving people hope.

Addressing climate change is an important dimension of this work. If we do not make significant efforts with climate change, more people will be forced to flee, because climate change will make life harsh, if not impossible in many parts of the world.

Development is crucial, but it goes hand in hand with another core United Nations mission - peace and security. Resolving conflicts, stopping wars, is one of the most direct ways in addressing the refugee crisis.

The United Nations is making great efforts in this field by focusing on peace building and mediation. Stopping wars is paramount. Preventing them is even better.

Europe now faces a major increase in refugee flows. But we need to remember that many developing countries have been shouldering a bigger responsibility already for a long time. They deserve our help and respect.

Refugees are sometimes met with prejudice and even hostility. There is no place for hate or extremism. And I have said that clearly in my country.

Let me finish by saying that human rights are at the core of solving the refugee issue. The right to asylum is fundamental. With the challenges ahead we must ensure that this right can be respected and realized.

The United Nations has a special mission to take care of refugees. But we need to ensure that the United Nations has the resources to meet this enormous task.

Managing refugee flows through the UNHCR is the most efficient way to protect the most vulnerable people.

Helping refugees in the UNHCR camps ensures that help is given to those in most urgent need. Close to the conflict zones.

We need to work through the UN system, because the alternative means that people are risking their lives and paying smugglers just to get a fair hearing about their rights.

We already have a good system in place, the United Nations. Let's use it!

Thank you.