

**UNHCR Statement for Panel 2:
International cooperation and governance of migration in transit, on entry and
at borders**

Delivered by Shahrzad Tadjbakhsh
Deputy Director, Division of International Protection, UNHCR

Thank you Mr Moderator.

Together with Member States and other participants, UNHCR is committed to supporting the development of frameworks and policies that can ensure effective, lawful and fair systems of entry and border management, including in the context of large movements of refugees and migrants.

UNHCR certainly appreciates that States have a legitimate interest in controlling unauthorized entry to their territory and in combating transnational organized crime, including the smuggling and trafficking of persons. States have the sovereign right to determine whom to admit, exclude and remove from their territory.

However, this prerogative must be exercised in accordance with international law. This can be achieved by implementing protection-sensitive entry systems that take into account the protection needs of individuals seeking access to State territory, and the duty of States to respect their obligations under international human rights and refugee law, including, and importantly, the principle of non-refoulement. Protection-sensitive entry systems ensure that legitimate measures to control entry are first and foremost humane, they are not applied arbitrarily, and that asylum-seekers and others with specific protection needs are identified and granted access to a territory where their needs can be properly assessed and addressed.

As the New York Declaration testifies, international cooperation is vital to achieving an effective system of global migration governance, of which protection-sensitive border systems are an integral component. Experience shows that unilateral measures that aim exclusively and indiscriminately to deter or to deflect arrivals run a high risk of failing, or simply displacing movements to other countries. This can provoke tensions and reduce shared interests in cooperation and consistent approaches. Safe, orderly and regular migration thus requires cooperation both within and between States, and with a range of stakeholders, including international organizations.

As we flagged in the first thematic consultations here, and as we've heard again today, migration governance has important ramifications for refugee protection and asylum systems. UNHCR thus stands ready to continue to assist States to achieve effective migration governance and protection-sensitive entry systems. We already support States in a number of areas, including by assisting the development of protection hotlines, training entry officials on how to identify groups in need of assistance, and providing advice on how to incorporate international legal obligations into domestic practice in real-life situations. We already made reference last time to UNHCR's 10-Point Plan in Action, which provides some practical suggestions, and we continue commend this to Member States.

I'd like also to take the opportunity to confirm unequivocally UNHCR's strong interest in working with States to develop, apply and raise awareness of protection-sensitive entry measures more widely, to achieve more effective entry, border and migration governance and management.

Thank you.