



## OPENING STATEMENT

**H.E. Workneh Gebeyehu, IGAD Executive Secretary**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Ministerial Stock-take Meeting of the IGAD Support Platform**

27<sup>th</sup> November 2025 | Nairobi, Kenya

#### **When One in Five is Ours: *Leading Through Crisis with Conscience***

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- Your Excellency, **Kipchumba Murkomen**, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Interior and National Administration, Republic of Kenya and our generous hosts,
  - Your Excellency, **Said Nouh Hassan**, Minister of Interior, Republic of Djibouti, representing **H.E. President Ismaïl Omar Guelleh**, the IGAD Chair,
  - Your Excellency, **Ali Yusuf Ali Hosh**, Minister of Interior, Federal Affairs, and Reconciliation, Federal Republic of Somalia,
  - Your Excellency, **Hon. Albino Akol Atak**, Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, Republic of South Sudan,
  - Your Excellency, **David Muhoozi**, Minister of State for Internal Affairs, Republic of Uganda,
  - **Representatives** of UN agencies, the World Bank, African Development Bank, EU, Germany, Sweden, UNHCR, UNDP, civil society, the private sector, and refugee-led organisations,

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Good morning.**

1. **Let me begin with a stark, simple truth:** in a region where 26.3 million people live away from their homes not by choice but by circumstance, we can no longer treat mobility as an exception. It is woven into our history, our economies, our very geography. As we gather here in Nairobi for this Ministerial Stock-take of the IGAD Support Platform, **our responsibility is to address this reality with clarity, unity, and seriousness of purpose.**
2. I take this opportunity to express our sincere **gratitude to our host country the Republic of Kenya**, whose longstanding leadership in regional



cooperation and refugee inclusion continues to anchor our shared work. We also deeply appreciate the **Republic of Djibouti** and host country of the IGAD secretariat, which under the steady chairmanship of **H.E. Ismaïl Omar Guelleh**, continues to bring coherence and direction to our regional agenda.

**Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

3. Consider this: **there are 123 million displaced people worldwide. Enough to circle the earth twice.** If they formed a country, it would be the world's tenth largest in the world, yet without land or a voice of their own.
4. Now let us bring it closer to home. **This is the equivalent of half our IGAD population.** Half of our brothers and sisters losing their homes overnight, with no shelter, no protection, no certainty of return. Unthinkable, yes. Yet we are not far from living that reality.
5. Right here in the IGAD region, we host **5.1 million refugees**, 70% of whom are women and children. That means one in every five refugees on earth has sought shelter here with us. When we widen the lens to the whole of Africa, the picture becomes even more striking: more than 70% of our continent's displaced population either originates from or is hosted right here in the IGAD region.
6. **Displacement at this scale is not a temporary condition.** It is a reflection of structural pressures that demand long-term vision rather than short-term reaction. **This is a challenge that no country, no region, no matter how generous or well-meaning it is, can handle alone.**



7. This is precisely why, since 2017, the Nairobi Declaration and its thematic action plans adopted in Djibouti, Kampala, and Mombasa have driven a decisive shift toward durable, development-oriented approaches to displacement.
8. **IGAD Member States and host communities have strengthened access** for refugees and displaced populations to national systems in education, health, livelihoods, and improved policy environments that link humanitarian response with development planning. **With strong support from you, our Core Group partners**, IGAD has built credible regional systems for harmonized data, policy alignment, and cross-border cooperation.

**Excellencies, Distinguished colleagues,**

9. The IGAD Support Platform, which I was privileged to be part of its launch during the 2019 Global Refugee Forum, has been pivotal in sustaining this momentum. It brought us together as Member States and united us with partners here and around the world.
10. **The two regional pledges we made in 2023** focus on the core issues at the heart of displacement: **comprehensive solutions** and **climate action**. These pledges signal that **IGAD is determined to match political commitments with measurable reforms and evidence-based policies**.
11. Africa has long stood at the forefront of progressive protection norms, from the OAU Refugee Convention to the Kampala Convention. **The Nairobi Process under IGAD** continues this leadership, and it is something for which all of us should be proud. **It is an African-designed, African-led framework grounded in solidarity, responsibility-sharing, and state capacity**.



12. **The IGAD Refugee Engagement Forum** and our **regional monitoring framework** reinforce this direction by bringing greater accountability and structured inclusion into our regional work.

**Excellencies, dear colleagues,**

13. As a result, **we are seeing tangible progress across the IGAD region, one day and one nation at a time.** Djibouti is strengthening asylum systems. Ethiopia and Kenya are integrating refugees into national development strategies. Uganda is advancing self-reliance models that inspire the world. Somalia is driving reintegration efforts. South Sudan and Sudan are coordinating across borders despite immense challenges.
14. **These efforts demonstrate the power of regional action anchored in national ownership by our Member States.** Our partners, most notably the EU, the World Bank, Germany, Sweden, UNHCR, UNDP, and many others, have been indispensable in translating this political will into practical results.
15. Yet, as we meet here today, **the pressures on our region continue to intensify.** Climate events are accelerating displacement. Fiscal constraints strain national service delivery. Conflict dynamics continue to uproot communities. **Without strengthened and coordinated systems, these pressures will only grow.**
16. Our climate-action pledge and our work under the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus reflect our readiness to adapt. **But adaptation requires sustained political support, predictable financing, and a shared commitment to regional coherence.**



**Your Excellencies,**

17. As we embark on this stock-taking exercise, **I encourage us to focus our unity around three priorities** that are pivotal to the continued success of this vital Support Platform.

**First, sustained political leadership.** By adopting a clear communiqué that affirms Member States' commitment to ongoing inclusion and protection reforms ahead of the Global Refugee Forum 2025 Progress Review.

**Second, stronger regional coordination.** By agreeing to use the IGAD monitoring framework as our common reporting tool, enabling us to present one credible regional narrative in December 2025 rather than fragmented national narratives.

**Third, enhanced and diversified partnerships.** By expanding participation in the Support Platform and mobilizing multi-year investments for education, livelihoods, basic services, and climate resilience.

**Excellencies, Distinguished colleagues,**

18. **A region that manages displacement effectively is a region that strengthens its stability, enhances its resilience, and deepens its integration.** The decisions we take in this room will shape IGAD's contribution to Africa's broader aspirations for peace, prosperity, and shared security.
19. **Let this be our legacy:** a region where mobility is well-governed, a region where solutions are genuinely shared, and **a region where the resilience of each of our countries strengthens the resilience of all.**

**I Thank you.**