

**International Donors Conference in solidarity with Venezuelan Migrants
and Refugees in the countries of the region, amid COVID-19**

26th May 2020

**Written Statement by Alexander Schallenberg, Federal Minister for European and
International Affairs, Republic of Austria**

Excellencies, dear colleagues,

I would like to thank Arancha González and Josep Borrell for the initiative to convene this Donor conference.

The humanitarian situation resulting from the crisis in Venezuela is deeply worrying. 50% of the population of Venezuela are in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. The social, economic and political crisis in the country has driven 5,5 Million Venezuelans across the border to neighbouring countries and even further. I want to thank the governments in the region for receiving and sheltering so many people, especially Colombia, Peru, Chile, Ecuador and Brazil who are offering precious assistance to refugees and migrants.

The Covid-19 pandemic has put additional stress on the receiving countries and has substantially worsened the humanitarian situation.

Austria has lived up to its humanitarian obligations in past years and will continue to support the international efforts to alleviate the suffering of Venezuelans inside their own country and wherever they took refuge.

This year, we are supporting the UNHCR in Colombia and the ICRC in Venezuela with a total of 2 Mio Euros. Austria is continuously evaluating the fast changing situation with a view to increase its humanitarian assistance throughout the year.

Hopefully, one day Venezuelans will be able to return to their homes and live in dignity and prosperity. To this end, we remain committed to supporting a political solution to the current crisis including free and fair elections as a pathway to democracy and rule of law.