

Dear Distinguished Representatives,

Years ago, I left Syria for Europe to seek safety.

Since then, not a day has gone by when I have not thought of my loved ones and other fellow Syrians left behind, in dire situations in different countries, deprived of safety, robbed of their futures, and of their voices. These overwhelming thoughts triggered my sense of responsibility to dedicate the past years to empowerment of refugee communities around me. I cofounded a refugee-led organization which engages and serves hundreds of thousand fellow Syrians.

Throughout these years, I've also met other refugees working to empower our peers, to organize and assume our responsibility to address the global refugee crisis and to engage our host communities. We formed a "Network for Refugee Voices" to remind the world community that refugees have agency and that our contribution is key to develop solutions that are effective and sustainable.

Today, we come to appeal to you to not leave us to do this work alone, and we address you with three calls to action:

- 1- First, we call on you to commit to the UN General Assembly New York declaration that states all refugee policy must contain direct refugee input.
- 2- Second, we call on you to develop coordinated burden sharing procedures, by disclosing resettlement criteria, recognizing regional sensibilities of both refugee and host communities, and fostering regional ownership of refugee assistance and having responsibility towards good governance.
- 3- Finally, we call on all actors to include refugees in their commitment towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in line with the commitment to Leave No One Behind policies.

Hearing me, a refugee voice, in this room, is only a step in the right direction. I hope that we will continue to inform this process with concrete proposals. Thank you!