



European Union

GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES

Fourth Thematic Session

Fourth Panel: How can we make local solutions work for refugees and the communities in which they live?

Geneva, 14 November 2017

– CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

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Mr./Ms. Chairperson,

I speak on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its Member States recognize that solution strategies for displacement should be part of the overall peace and crisis solution processes. Designing "solutions packages" need to include local integration, as appropriate, as well as third country options including through resettlement, in addition to support for voluntary return.

We strongly appreciate the willingness of countries and host communities to facilitate local integration and stand ready to support host countries. We also underline that local integration includes economic, social, cultural and political aspects broader than acquiring citizenship. The EU and Member States' action on integration addresses a wide range of issues such as employment, education, civil orientation, access to services, sports and culture, intercultural dialogue and partnerships with the private sector, social actors and civil society.

The EU and its Member States reaffirm the necessity to promote an inclusive approach, taking into account vulnerabilities of both refugees and host communities, based on comprehensive assessments.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

Investing in building human capital, self-reliance, early labour market integration and transferrable skills is an essential step towards long-term solutions. Socio-economic integration and inclusion are key to improve refugees' lives and create conditions for mutual benefits and social cohesion, irrespective of ultimate durable solutions.

The EU and its Member States recommend early integration and inclusion of refugee children, including unaccompanied children both for their development and for social cohesion. We encourage the promotion of a positive approach to diversity, combating racism, xenophobia, hate speech and discrimination against refugees.

Thank you, Mr./Ms Chairperson.