

Statement by Denmark

Zero draft of the Global Compact on Refugees –

Support for the application of the CRRF - Reception and admission, Meeting needs and supporting communities, Solutions

Check against delivery

Aligning with the statement made on behalf of the EU and its member states, Denmark commends UNHCR on having reflected the thematic consultations so well in this part of the draft Programme of Action. In particular, we are happy to note the focus on strengthening protection through support for national policies, systems and capacities. Similarly, we welcome the call for host governments and donors along with other relevant stakeholders to ensure efficient emergency response while also promoting a focus on self-reliance and resilience through the sustained inclusion of refugees in national systems and frameworks. These two elements are potential cornerstones in an improved response to sudden and protracted displacement situations.

Having noted this, there is nevertheless a risk that the Programme of Action is being set up for failure when referring to “meeting needs”. Almost by definition, needs can never be met – so instead, it would be meaningful and relevant to establish clear targets with a strong reference to the SDGs, based on which progress in responses can and should be monitored – in terms of both refugees and host communities.

Furthermore, Denmark should like to point to a few areas in which the draft Programme of Action could be improved.

The Programme of Action could usefully set forward an ambition for internationally agreed minimum standards and formats for registration and documentation of refugees. This would allow for concerted efforts to improve data compatibility as well as systems and procedures for planning, implementation and monitoring of operational activities.

We appreciate the mainstreaming of gender throughout the Programme of Action. The section on Gender ought however to recognize a broader range of gender-

specific vulnerabilities with regard to both women and men. Women and girls are disproportionately affected when crises hit, not only because of the risk of SGBV but also because of the prevalence of basic socio-economic and structural inequalities. Boys and men also face gender-specific vulnerabilities that needs to be factored into overall response programmes. They are particularly at risk when subjected to socio-economic exclusion, and when being demobilized, for instance. Similarly, there is a need to highlight age-specific and physical vulnerabilities, affecting handicapped and elderly people as well as unaccompanied minors and children forced to work, issues that are often prevalent in protracted displacement situations.

Finally, we would recommend that the section on voluntary repatriation is strengthened in two regards: First, instead of simply recommending that particular measures for voluntary repatriation and reintegration are to be included in peace settlements and crisis recovery strategies, the Programme of Action should call for an explicit commitment to this. Experience from, for instance, Afghanistan and similar situation demonstrate that return processes involving a significant share of a national population may indeed create social and economic instability and lead to further displacement.

Secondly and in line with this, development actors should commit themselves to incorporate support for return and reintegration in general plans, and not only as a separate humanitarian activity as is so often the case.

Finally, Denmark looks forward to contributing to the further development of the Programme of Action and Global Compact of Refugees.

Thank you.