



***Preparing for the
Ministerial Meeting
7-8 December 2011***



A year to commemorate...

- 60th Anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees – 28 July 2011
- 50th Anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness – 30 August 2011
- 150th Anniversary of the birth of Fridtjof Nansen, First League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – 11 October 2011



Objectives of commemorations

- 1) Strengthen the existing protection regime and promote a new protection dynamic
- 2) Achieve greater support for the statelessness conventions, better mapping of the problem and new ways to respond
- 3) Raise public awareness and build solidarity with refugees and stateless people



Major themes of commemorations

- New forms of displacement
- International cooperation and burden sharing
- Statelessness



Ministerial-level Meeting

- 7-8 December 2011
- Culminating event of the commemorations
- All Member States of the United Nations
- IGOs, UN agencies, NGOs and regional institutions as observers
- Desired outcomes:
 - Pledges by States (and possibly regional organizations and NGOs)
 - Ministerial Communiqué



State Pledges

- Voluntary, State-driven process
- Opportunity for States to identify issues and challenges of greatest importance to them
- Could be made individually and/or collectively
- Organizations/NGOs could also make pledges (e.g. OSCE)



Possible criteria for pledges

- Specific, action-oriented and to the extent possible, measurable
- Linked to the goals of commemorations
- Designed to impact concretely and positively the actual situation of refugees, stateless people and other people of concern
- Forward-looking when it comes to new challenges



Types of pledges envisaged

- Ratify or accede to the Conventions, or lift reservations
- Amend or introduce legislation or policies
- Resolve refugee or statelessness situations
- Respond to operational issues and challenges
- Address regional challenges
- Address issues facing women and girls (informed by Regional Dialogues)



Preparing the pledges

- Three preparatory meetings of all States:
 - 4 March, 24 June and 22 September
 - In June, all States were briefed in their regional groupings about, *inter alia*, the pledges process
- Additional Guidance Note to Support the State Pledges Process:
 - Sets out some areas in which States might consider making pledges
 - Available on UNHCR website in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish



Progress on making pledges

- Several States have already acceded:
 - Panama to 1954 and 1961 Conventions
 - Nauru to 1951 Convention
 - Philippines to 1954 Convention
- A number of other accessions are in the pipeline, particularly in Europe and Americas
- Regional pledge : Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia



Progress on making pledges

- States have indicated that they are considering pledges in areas such as:
 - Alternatives to detention
 - Vulnerable populations
 - Statelessness
 - Climate change and displacement
 - Documentation
 - Combating discrimination, racism & xenophobia
 - Improving RSD and asylum procedures
 - Addressing protracted refugee situations
 - Particular displacement situations (e.g. Afghans in Iran)



Pledges and 'Resettlement'

ATCR provide an opportunity:

- To reflect on a potential 'group' pledge around resettlement
- To consider potential individual State pledges regarding resettlement
- To give resettlement its proper place in the commemorations, especially by focusing on durable solutions.



Thank you