

NGO Intervention on follow-up arrangements

Agenda item 3

Distinguished delegates,

This intervention has been drafted following wide consultations with NGOs.

We appreciate UNHCR's commitment to mobilise support for the application of the Global Compact on Refugees. Inviting Member States and other stakeholders to make concrete pledges and provide updates on follow-up is positive. Pledges and actions, however, should not hinge on the goodwill of stakeholders and must respond to specific, measurable, assignable and time-bound targets. Concrete commitments will also allow for in-depth, critical research to be conducted to assess the Programme of Action's effectiveness, coherence and feasibility.

This links to the monitoring and evaluation framework that UNHCR has proposed to develop in order to track progress and outcomes of the Global Compact on Refugees. Aligning indicators with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as the Programme of Action suggests, is welcomed as it can ensure that the welfare of refugees remains a priority in the 2030 sustainable development agenda.

Yet more details are needed on when and how the monitoring and evaluation framework will be developed. Outlining a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Global Compact on Refugees that identifies a set of collective goals, targets, indicators and benchmarks should be an urgent priority. As such, a clear timeline for developing the framework must therefore be proposed in the forthcoming drafts. We, therefore call for this evaluation and monitoring framework to be developed, with concrete targets and benchmarks, by the time the Global Compact is endorsed, or shortly thereafter, for example by the end of 2018.

NGOs and refugees must be consulted in the development of the framework, which should actually be a living document, which takes into consideration evolving circumstances and remains open to contributions from refugees. Subsequent consultations, for example, could foresee a specific session designed to receive suggestions. UNHCR could also consider organizing other events on the side-lines to solicit multi-stakeholder feedback. NGOs, refugees and stateless persons are eager to contribute throughout the process.

With regard to assessing the application of the Global Compact on Refugees, we also acknowledge UNHCR's proposal to hold, in 2021, a ministerial-level meeting as a first opportunity to assess the Global Compact's application. This gives the Compact a three-year,

concrete timeline. But without actual concrete commitments, we worry that this would further shift the goal post. We therefore recommend that the Programme of Action includes provisions for a bi-annual independent implementation review, in addition to details provided in the High Commissioner's annual report. We also suggest that a thorough stocktaking of responsibility sharing should coincide with the SDG reviews in 2025 and 2030, where a day could be set aside to evaluate the inclusion of displaced populations in the SDG implementation.

A clear monitoring and evaluation framework also bolsters accountability claims. As it is, the zero draft provides little on this fundamental dimension aiming to hold the international community as a whole to account, and specifically, those responsible for achieving the goals and objectives of the Global Compact, except for activities that merely serve as vague indications.

Accountability for the Global Compact will need to be set at different levels. At the global level, it should be defined in terms of sustainable, predictable and equitable responsibility sharing. This, for example, could take the form of equitability indices measuring stakeholders' contributions to a fair share. Other examples may include a 'State of Protection Report', which the Global Platform could be mandated to monitor and produce, in addition to following up on contributions.

At the operational level, accountability will have to be set in relation to the practical application of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework. Most importantly, accountability will have to be defined towards refugees themselves. Including them in policy and practice as well as equipping them with tools to hold decision makers and service providers to account will contribute to combatting potential abuses, exploitation and corruption. The Programme of Action should include clear reference to the importance of Accountability to affected populations and should reinforce refugee participation in responses. This will involve including them in policy and practice as well as equipping them with the tools that will allow them to hold decision makers and service providers to account.

In addition, we believe that it is essential for the Programme of Action to identify and address issues of complementarity between the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration. Refugees, stateless persons and migrants face many similar challenges, and we strongly feel that the current approach compartmentalises the two Compacts, preventing important intersections from being identified and effectively addressed. Now that the two zero drafts have been released, NGOs, refugees, stateless persons and migrants are eager to provide inputs on how to maximize constructive coherence. We hope that Member States and UN Agencies will also engage in this necessary discussion.

To this end, we recommend that a mechanism be established to enable structured and periodic sharing of information and ideas between the two Compacts. This, we believe, could foster complementarities and convergence during development and implementation. Other options to promote complementarities include involving stakeholders in the Global Platform from various backgrounds working on refugee, statelessness and migration issues.

Finally, dear Chairs and distinguished delegates, we must constantly remind ourselves that we are here because people's lives are at stake. While we speak, people continue to flee their homes in search of safety, even as others remain stranded for years with bleak prospects. There is real urgency to act, seize this moment and – together – resolve to take concrete steps to ensure people fleeing persecution, conflicts, disasters and violence find safe and secure space where they can claim their rights and blossom

On this note, we thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on the zero draft of the Programme of Action. The NGO community look forward to subsequent consultations and we will continue to collaborate with UNHCR, Member States, and other stakeholders to ensure that we all deliver on the important commitments of the New York Declaration and the expectations of refugees and host communities. Ensuring the adoption of a meaningful Refugee Compact and improved, predictable, sustainable and equitable responsibility sharing is in everyone's interest.

A detailed version of this intervention is available on icvanetwork.org We also encourage you to consult the many NGO comments on the zero-draft.

Thank you.