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## 2023 Global Refugee Forum

### Preliminary considerations for the development of the programme

#### Introduction

This note sets out key considerations for development of the programme for the 2023 Global Refugee Forum (GRF), in line with the [Concept Note for the GRF](#). The GRF is envisaged to facilitate the announcement of concrete pledges and contributions, take stock of progress, and consider opportunities, challenges, and ways in which burden- and responsibility-sharing can be enhanced in support of the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).

The GRF will be convened at the ministerial level and above, and together with relevant stakeholders, in Geneva, Switzerland from 13 to 15 December 2023, with an advance day for side events on 12 December 2023. It will be co-hosted by Switzerland and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and co-convened by Colombia, France, Japan, Jordan, the Niger, and Uganda, as well as UNHCR. The United Nations Secretary-General is also expected to participate.

The programme for the GRF in 2023 will include a high-level discussion in plenary, as well as other opportunities for participation and engagement.

#### Desired outcome of the GRF 2023

Based on the recommendations from the GCR Indicator Reports, the 2021 High-Level Officials Meeting, and the 2022 High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges, the GRF aims to:

- (1) **Advance arrangements for burden- and responsibility-sharing** through support platforms, regional and national arrangements, financing arrangements and financial tracking, strengthened development cooperation, the inclusion of refugees in national data systems, and the more systematic application of the principles and tools of the Global Compact on Refugees in emergency responses (for example, in the context of displacement related to climate change and disasters, pandemics and conflicts).
- (2) **Ensure current pledges are brought to fulfilment and new pledges cultivated**, aimed at strengthening the engagement of governments and other actors, translating inclusive policy pledges into practice through [matching](#), investing in sustainable solutions, and ensuring concrete impact on the lives of refugees and host communities.

The programme for GRF 2023 will also provide opportunities for advocacy through social media and other communications channels, the engagement of prominent supporters and public figures to amplify key messages, and the publication of a co-convenors' summary of outcomes of the GRF.

## **Participation of key stakeholders**

A key principle of the GCR is employing a multi-stakeholder and partnership approach in support of comprehensive responses for refugee situations. Stakeholder groups that are part of this approach include governments, refugees and host community representatives, local authorities, cities and other local actors, international organizations within and outside the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations, regional organizations, humanitarian and development actors, international and regional financial institutions, parliaments, civil society organizations, faith-based actors, the private sector, media, academic representatives, and sport and cultural organizations (GCR, sect. 3.2, para. 3). In addition, UNHCR's prominent supporters and other public figures often play a supportive role in amplifying key messages to the broader public.

The programme for GRF 2023 will provide opportunities to demonstrate how the multi-stakeholder and partnership approach contributes towards the objectives of the GCR, for example through highlighting joint and matched pledges or initiatives and their impact on refugee situations. It will also be key to provide opportunities for exchange and learning on how to strengthen this approach at all phases of displacement, from preparedness, through the response, and towards solutions, and to give visibility to those partnerships and stakeholder groups that have made impactful contributions. The plenary and broader ecosystem of associated events will reflect the importance of this approach to achieving effective burden- and responsibility-sharing.

The GCR also calls for the meaningful participation of refugees and stateless persons in decisions affecting them. The programme for the GRF will ensure that refugees and stateless persons are meaningfully engaged and central to the discussions, including as experts and advisers on pledges and initiatives, and as speakers and participants.

## **Event modalities**

### **Plenary session**

The plenary session will be held in the Assembly Hall in the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, from 13 to 15 December 2023. The morning of 13 December will be dedicated to the opening plenary session by the co-hosts, co-convenors, and the United Nations Secretary-General. In the plenary, governments and other stakeholders will have an opportunity to make interventions and announce pledges in accordance with protocol.

To ensure that the different stakeholder groups feature in the plenary, modalities will be identified for them to announce impactful pledges. Panels, talks, or thematic or region-focused pledging events interspersed throughout the plenary discussion could be options for featuring strong pledges from the different stakeholder groups.

### **The GRF ecosystem**

In addition to the plenary session, the GRF in 2023 will also provide multifaceted opportunities for participation on 12 December and in parallel to the plenary from 13 (afternoon) to 15 December. Modalities for participation

may include panels, dialogues, talks, exhibitions, marketplaces, and innovation labs to maximize opportunities for multi-stakeholder engagement, provide further opportunities for announcing pledges, and facilitate stocktaking and learning through sharing good practices.

Due to ongoing renovations, there will be limited space for these events in the Palais des Nations. Therefore, additional venues will be booked to accommodate events outside of the plenary sessions. The Centre International de Conférences Genève (CICG) will be available, and further options for venue spaces are being identified and will account for proximity to the plenary session, transportation options, and accessibility.

The design of the programme will provide for clear links and transitions between the venues to ensure a coherent programme, as well as the participation of States and other stakeholders across venues. Tools to facilitate tailored itineraries based upon the interests of the participants will be developed.

It is envisioned that the [GCR initiatives](#) will serve as the main mechanism for proposing event modalities of engagement where they wish to feature the pledges that they are implementing or cultivating. These initiatives have emerged since the first GRF in 2019, and many are multi-stakeholder in nature and have a thematic or regional focus. There are currently nearly 50 initiatives developing roadmaps for pledge cultivation for the GRF. Based upon the available space, UNHCR will prioritise proposals for event modalities received from the initiatives.

### **Pop-up events**

Should insufficient space be available to accommodate all proposals, the GCR initiatives or other stakeholders may wish to organize pop-up events outside of the institutional arrangements for the GRF. Organizers will need to identify their own venue and assume all responsibility for preparing and funding the event. These events may feature in the GRF programme, if aligned with the objectives of the GCR and purpose of the GRF.

It is also envisioned that there will be public-facing events or exhibitions taking place throughout the city of Geneva as a part of the GRF ecosystem to build awareness and support for refugee matters. These events will be organized in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations Office at Geneva and the City of Geneva.