

First formal consultation on the global compact on refugees – Agenda Item Two

Statement by the Government of Canada

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As we reflect on measures to support the application of the CRRF, UNHCR should ensure that the tasks outlined for it within the Programme of Action do not detract from the Agency maintaining focus on its core protection mandate.

We are pleased to see a focus on preparedness, contingency planning and early warning, as such measures, when well-implemented, can reduce human suffering and save significant resources. This section, however, should be strengthened in particular by encouraging other stakeholders (such as development actors, private sector actors, and civil society) to play an active role in this area and should include measures to foster such contributions.

The section on safety and security could be strengthened by including a focus on preventing sexual and gender-based violence as well as smuggling and trafficking.

We believe that the section on education could be strengthened by emphasizing the importance for all children to have access to safe, quality education. Furthermore, we would encourage a specific action be included for partners to work with governments to strengthen national capacity for data collection and analysis, enabling refugees' education needs to be captured in national statistics and inform national plans.

In terms of the focus on solutions, we would recommend that the text affirm the importance of a human rights-centered approach, regardless of the solution being advanced. The individual dignity, capacities and agency of refugees should be affirmed and supported.

We are supportive of UNHCR establishing an asylum capacity support group and look forward to hearing how this group will function and how it builds on previous similar initiatives.

We welcome the emphasis on the establishment and expansion of third country solutions. We feel this is an area where Canada and other established and emerging resettlement countries can make a tangible contribution to responsibility sharing. In doing so, we would encourage states to take forward and report on the commitments made in this area in Annex 1, and encourage more comprehensive reporting on their work in this regard.

We support the strategic use of resettlement, calling for commitments to be established as part of comprehensive responses. We would encourage effective alignment of existing multilateral resettlement architecture with any actions in the Global Compact to increase responsibility, including the Global Platform and Solidarity Conferences.

We would encourage UNHCR to better integrate statistics into its reporting on third country solutions so as to provide a more accurate picture of solutions and their impact, including as relates to non UNHCR referred resettlement places and Complementary Pathways.

In terms of growing protection space, we were pleased to see clear reference to the GRSI initiative – which highlights the private and community sponsorship model to the world, as well as reference to support for new and emerging resettlement countries, including through the Emerging Resettlement Countries Joint Support Mechanism.