

**UNHCR ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH NGOS
27 – 29 JUNE 2018**

International Conference Center Geneva

DISCUSSION PAPER

Session title: *Finding solutions in Europe*

Date: Wednesday 27 June

Time/Room: 14h00 – 16h00 – Room 5/6

Background:

'Finding solutions in Europe' remains a priority for UNHCR, and the session will discuss a number of ongoing challenges while making concrete recommendations on the way forward. Some of the issues to be discussed and taken into consideration include:

- Integration requires a 'whole-of-society' approach which, *inter alia*, involves the refugees themselves, the State, civil society, the private sector, cities/municipalities and the host community;
- There is no 'one-Europe' reality - refugees face vastly different contexts and opportunities for integration in different European countries including within the EU;
- Onward movements considerably impact integration potential including the commitment to integration – these vary considerably from one country to another including the fact that some states and refugees have the perception that they are merely 'in transit';
- The availability of integration strategies and financial support to implement them also varies considerably most particularly as regard the capacity of cities and municipalities to access these;
- Addressing public perceptions and contributing to integration and social cohesion through adapted communication campaigns/strategies especially in negatively-charged political environments.
- "Putting people first" – ensuring that local voices are engaged including the role of refugees in furthering and implementing their own integration and the support that civil society can bring to this process.

The session will be opened by Ms. Pascale Moreau (Director, UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe). The invited speakers will address the society inclusion and the current state of affairs with regard to solutions/refugee integration in Europe, by sharing their experiences from Turkey, Ireland and Denmark.

Speakers:

- 1) Ms. Duygu Yildirim, Human Resources Development Foundation, Turkey**
HRDF is providing counselling, psychosocial support and assistance to persons of concern from different countries of origin through its protection offices/community centres throughout Turkey. HRDF's protection work has demonstrated an institutional commitment to the theme "Putting People First".

- 2) Ms. Margaret Allen, Places of Sanctuary, Ireland**
Places of Sanctuary is a grass-roots network of groups in towns, cities, universities and schools that share the objectives of promoting the integration, inclusion and welfare of refugees, asylum-seekers and vulnerable migrants, by encouraging every sector of society to make a practical commitment to becoming places of welcome and safety. Refugees are also encouraged to lead individual projects. The network has been a leading force for positive change in Ireland and has played a central role in the establishment of scholarship programmes for refugee students in National Universities of Ireland.

- 3) Ms. Mina Jaf, Founder and Director of Women Refugee Route, Iraqi-Kurdish refugee, Denmark**
Ms. Jaf is a refugee from Iraq and a founder of Women Refugee Route (WRR), a non-governmental organisation based in Denmark that seeks to empower refugee women by providing them with tools they can use to find employment and integrate in their host countries.
in 2017, Ms. Jaf was selected to address the UN Security Council on behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. She has been a 2018 Forbes Top 30 under 30 honoree and a recipient of the 2017 Women of Europe and the 2017 Voice of Courage awards.

Desired outcome of the session:

Based on their cumulative experience and expertise, the session seeks civil society views and recommendations that will help further inclusiveness and integration of refugees in the broad European context.