



PRIORITY SITUATIONS CORE GROUP

Joint Statement to the Global Refugee Forum

The Priority Situations Core Group (PSCG) – co-chaired by the Governments of Ireland and Sweden, with support from UNHCR – held its inaugural meeting on 13 September 2019 in Brussels. The PSCG replaces the Syrian Core Group and the Central Mediterranean Core Group. Its purpose is to help optimise, coordinate, promote, and ensure support for resettlement and complementary pathways for admission of refugees in these specific priority situations, and potentially other emerging regional or situational priorities that may arise. In particular, the PSCG seeks to maximise the strategic impact of resettlement.

The Priority Situations Core Group (PSCG) wishes to make the following joint statement to the Global Refugee Forum (GRF), on behalf of the co-chairs and participating States:

Recognising that the resettlement of refugees, and the implementation of complementary pathways for admission of refugees to third countries, is a collaborative venture that requires the participation of many actors, including resettlement and refugee-hosting States, UNHCR, IOM, NGOs, civil society, receiving communities and other actors, as well as refugees themselves;

Recalling that this joint responsibility is reflected in the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), and embodied through the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR) and the Priority Situations Core Group, among a number of other fora aiming to promote solutions, international solidarity, and more predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing;

Noting that global resettlement needs are expected to increase to a record 1.44 million refugees in 2020, far exceeding the limited availability of existing opportunities for refugees in dire need of this solution as a means to ensure that their specific protection needs are addressed;

Observing that the movement of both refugees and migrants throughout the Sahel and North Africa continues to take a devastating toll on human life – particularly during dangerous journeys through the Sahara desert and at sea – and that women, men, and children undertaking such movements are exposed to heightened protection risks including human trafficking, sexual violence, forced labour, slavery and other forms of exploitation, arbitrary detention, torture, and extrajudicial killings;

Noting that millions of refugees who have fled the conflict in Syria remain in host countries in the Middle East and Turkey with no end in sight to their displacement, and that their prolonged period in exile is increasing pressure on humanitarian assistance programs and services, exhausting the resources of refugees and host communities and increasing the risks of refugees;

Recognising the three-year Strategy (2019-2021) on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways, developed collectively by the international resettlement community, as a key vehicle to increase the number of resettlement spaces globally, expand the number of resettlement countries, and improve the availability and predictability of complementary pathways for the admission of refugees;

The Priority Situations Core Group commits itself, and invites support from all participants at the 2019 Global Refugee Forum, to meeting the following objectives:



1. *Expanding opportunities for resettlement and complementary pathways for admission of refugees*, through the engagement of new and emerging resettlement States including the provision of financial, technical, and political support for the UNHCR-IOM Sustainable Resettlement and Complementary Pathways Initiative (CRISP); capitalising on the strategic use of resettlement such that the protection impact of a collective effort by the international community is greater than the sum of individual contributions; increasing support for complementary pathways for the admission of refugees to third countries by way of education, employment, family reunification, community-based sponsorship, humanitarian evacuation, and humanitarian visa programs; and promoting a positive narrative in public communication and the media which demonstrates the benefits of refugee inclusion in receiving communities.
2. *Promoting positive outcomes*, by strengthening the quality and delivery of programs with technical and operational collaboration; sharing expertise from experienced States, UNHCR, and other actors; building an evidence base for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programs; and improving efficiency to reduce processing timeframes through information management, analysis, and innovation, ensuring that refugees who are most in need of third country solutions to address their individual protection needs can be identified and received as quickly as possible, and that they are appropriately supported before and after their arrival.
3. *Building sustainability*, by promoting and facilitating exchanges among technical specialists, practitioners, service providers, and other actors with global, regional and local perspectives; and through meaningful engagement with refugees with due regard for age, gender, and diversity considerations.

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