

**ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH NGOS**  
**14 – 16 JUNE 2017**  
International Conference Center Geneva

***DISCUSSION PAPER***

**Session title:**            ***Regional session EUROPE***

**Date:**                      ***Thursday 15 June***

**Time/Room:**            ***10h30 – 13h00 – Room 5/6***

**Background:**

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (UNGA Resolution 71/1), tasks UNHCR with developing a comprehensive refugee response (CRR) for situations where there are large movements of refugees. In particular situations, a CRR should be in place which requires an overall framework for an improved global protection regime. Thus, work has begun on the development of a comprehensive refugee response framework (CRRF). The New York Declaration states clearly that the CRRF is based on existing international legal frameworks, specifically the 1951 Convention, human rights and international humanitarian law.

The CRRF is comprehensive in two main senses. First, all actors should look beyond the humanitarian field, to address root causes and seek solutions in countries of origin, transit and destination. Second, responses should involve all relevant actors including, local, national and regional authorities and organizations; other UN agencies; international organizations; development actors; civil society; academia, media; the private sector; refugees and the host communities. The New York Declaration also envisages consultation and stakeholder involvement in the development of the CRRF and the global compact on refugees which should embody the CRR approach and which will be developed now and adopted in 2018.

Thus, the Regional Session for Europe at the UNHCR-NGO Consultations will look at the role of Europe in the CRRF and the use of the CRRF in Europe.

**Objectives of the session**

There are two main objectives:

First, to assess how European states and other actors can play a stronger role in the development and implementation of the CRRF, and in the development of the related global compact on refugees. Second, to explore how the CRRF, as part of a strengthened global protection framework, could have a positive impact on policies and practice in Europe and encourage the development of more safe and legal pathways to access protection in Europe. Overall, the session will analyse the impact of developments in Europe on the global protection regime and the risks and opportunities arising from the ongoing political challenges Europe faces.

**Desired outcome of the session:**

The session's desired outcome is to gather civil society recommendations on the role of European states, regional organizations and European civil society in the CRRF. It will further gather recommendations from civil society on how the CRRF and the global compact can serve to improve levels of protection in Europe and increase safe and legal pathways to access protection in Europe. Recommendations can also cover the operational elements of the CRRF.

### **Methodology**

The regional session will be divided into two parts, and will follow the suggested format to ensure consistency of all regional sessions.

The first part, 10h30 to 11h15, will start with a presentation by the Bureau Director (Vincent Cochetel) on the state of play, the role of Europe in the CRRF and the impact of developments in Europe on the global refugee protection regime more broadly. His comments will be followed by a response from ECRE' Secretary General, Catherine Woollard, and an open discussion.

The second session, 11h15 to 13h00, will gather civil society recommendations on the role of European states, regional organizations and European civil society in the CRRF. It will further gather recommendations from civil society on how the CRRF and the global compact can serve to improve levels of protection and access to Europe. It will cover the main substantive aspects of the CRRF including access to asylum, admissions, reception, resettlement, family reunification, assistance, and resilience/solutions. Recommendations can also link to good practices in Europe, as well as to EU-supported programmes in countries of origin and transit. Recommendations may also cover the operational elements of the CRRF, including the support for a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder approach in Europe at a time when, on the one hand, many new actors are emerging to support refugee rights in Europe, but, on the other hand, civil society faces severe restrictions and even repression in an increasingly number of European countries, and a return to nationalism in parts of Europe is undermining regional organizations and legal orders.

### **Agenda:**

#### **10.30 – 11.15: The CRRF in Europe and Europe in the CRRF: the state of play**

*Vincent Cochetel, Director for the Bureau for Europe and Regional Refugee Coordinator for the refugee crisis in Europe, UNHCR*

*Catherine Woollard, Secretary General, ECRE*

*Q and A*

#### **11.15 – 13.00: Civil Society Recommendations:**

##### **1. How can the CRRF and the global compact improve protection standards in Europe?**

Inter alia: reinforcing the institution of asylum, access to asylum and admissions, reception and assistance; sharing responsibilities in a fair and efficient way; a comprehensive framework to address large scale influx

Recommendations: *Eleni Takou, Solidarity Now; Eero Janson, Estonian Refugee Council*

##### **2. Europe's global role: what role should European actors (states, regional bodies, civil society) play in the CRRF and the Global Compact?**

Inter alia: the CRRF process; a meaningful Global Compact; the role of the UN; resettlement and family reunification other forms of admission; effectiveness of development and humanitarian aid; tackling root causes of displacement.

Discussants: *Tine Jacobsen, Global Protection and Policy Advisor, Danish Refugee Council; Alexandra Segenstedt, Swedish Red Cross*

Two civil society panellists will kick off the discussion in each of the panels, with their recommendations in five-minute presentations. The discussion will then be open to all other participants. Participants will be asked to specify to whom the recommendation applies. They are also encouraged to share good practices.