



European Union

UNHCR

High Commissioner's 10th Dialogue on Protection Challenges

(12 – 13 December 2017)

Final Plenary Session

Statement by H.E. Mr Peter Sørensen

Ambassador, Head of the EU Delegation to the UN in Geneva

Geneva, 13 December 2017

– CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

High Commissioner's 10th Dialogue on Protection Challenges (12 – 13 December 2017)

Final Plenary Session

EU Statement

Thank you Chair,

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia*and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

We have actively contributed to and stand behind the New York Declaration. We therefore support the process led by UNHCR to prepare the Global Compact on Refugees. We also thank UNHCR for its leadership in rolling out the unanimously agreed Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, CRRF.

We wish to express satisfaction for the organisation of this High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges. We emphasise also the inclusive format with active participation of all relevant actors, including refugees, civil society and the private sector, in the thematic discussions and which helped providing the basis for developing the Programme of Action complementing the CRRF.

We would like to underline some core principles and key elements which we believe should be reflected in the future Programme of Action.

The EU and its Member States recognise that responses, in full respect of international human rights law and international refugee law, should be tailored to the specific contexts.

Coming to the discussions of yesterday and today, in relation firstly to session 1 with regard to reception and admission, the EU and its Member States deem it essential to enhance preparedness. Preparedness measures such as long-term local area and contingency planning can be beneficial for both host and forcibly displaced populations. The EU and its member States are committed to foster

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

international and regional co-operation, notably by increasing the capacity of host countries for providing sufficient protection, including through the development of effective asylum systems.

In relation to session 2, when it comes to "meeting needs", we recognise the significant efforts made by all countries hosting large numbers of refugees. We would like to recognise the importance of investing in the socio-economic inclusion of refugees in host societies including through measures addressing access to education as well as to the need to pay particular attention to the specific vulnerabilities of refugees in designing and implementing integration measures and programmes. We are also fully committed to strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus.

The EU and its Member States would like to recall the relevance of the Grand Bargain commitment to make the international aid system more efficient and secure. Host countries must be able to rely on the international community's sustained and predictable support, beyond an immediate crisis.

In relation to session 3, we recognise that more efforts are needed in search of "durable solutions". We reaffirm the primary goal of bringing about conditions that would enable refugees' return in a voluntary, safe, dignified and human manner to their countries, while respecting the principle of non refoulement. We would like also to recall that a large and increasing number of EU Member States are stepping up their resettlement efforts in the context of the EU initiatives taken in this area, notably through the implementation of the European resettlement scheme of July 2015 and the EU-Turkey Statement of March 2016.

In relation session 4, with regard to contemporary protection challenges, the EU and its Member States would like to stress that responses should also be guided by the "do no harm" principle and by conflict sensitivity, in addition to humanitarian principles. We would like to highlight the significant contribution and leadership of women in refugees' communities and their full, equal and meaningful participation should be recognised. We would also like to reaffirm the need to combat xenophobia, racism and discrimination against refugees in host societies.

In relation to session 6, we recall that the New York declaration applies to all States and requires more responsibility sharing across the globe. The EU and its member States further recall that responsibility sharing and solidarity for persons in need of international protection, both within the EU and within third countries, are an integral part of the Common European Asylum System.

The EU and its Member States would like to recall their commitment to tackle the root causes of forced displacement at source by stepping up efforts to prevent new conflicts, resolve the existing ones and address all major drivers of forced displacement.

The EU and its Member States will continue to actively engage in the upcoming formal consultations and remain committed and firmly united towards the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees in 2018.

Thank you Chair,