



9 September 2020

Excellencies,

We have the honour to write to you in our capacities as co-hosts and co-conveners of the first Global Refugee Forum, which was held from 16 to 18 December 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Forced displacement remains a global challenge, with more than 79.5 million people displaced at the end of 2019, including 26 million refugees. Some 85 per cent are living in developing regions, in countries often facing their own socio-economic challenges and environmental impacts. With a decline of 46 per cent in voluntary repatriation between 2018 and 2019, and an estimated 1.45 million refugees in need of resettlement next year, the growth in displacement continues to outpace solutions.

Addressing these trends require concrete acts of international solidarity and operationalizing the principle of burden- and responsibility sharing – including through support to establish conditions conducive to voluntary repatriation, increased resettlement opportunities, complementary pathways and other durable solutions and long-term investments in prevention and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The COVID-19 pandemic also has disrupted the lives of people all around the world, particularly affecting refugees and people who are internally displaced or stateless. Host countries are contending with the health and socio-economic consequences of the pandemic and require both immediate and longer-term support to ensure protection of refugees while working towards their inclusion and engagement in national responses. The Global Compact on Refugees provides an important set of tools and arrangements that can help facilitate such support, and your continued contribution to these efforts is vital.

The 1,400 pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum (GRF), including those from the high-level segment on statelessness at the seventieth session of UNHCR's Executive Committee, provide a strong basis for action that can help to address these pressing concerns. We encourage matching of pledges with the needs of refugees and their host countries. We further urge States to accelerate the implementation of their pledges to address the current challenges posed by the pandemic, in particular those related to health, education, jobs and livelihoods, social protection, and easing economic pressures on host countries. We also encourage States to engage refugees in contributing to the response to the pandemic, as exemplified in many parts of the world where refugees who are doctors, nurses, and social workers are working together with nationals on the front lines.

Many pledging entities have already reported encouraging progress in this regard, and we look forward to receiving further updates through the [digital platform](#) for the Global Compact on Refugees. We also encourage States and other stakeholders to benefit from the good practices shared by many countries and other stakeholders and to remain engaged in the follow-up through the thematic groups and initiatives launched at the Forum.

all Permanent Representatives of the United Nations Member States
and Permanent Observers of the Non-member States
to the United Nations Office at Geneva

As co-hosts and co-convenors of the first Global Refugee Forum, we remain committed to realizing progress towards the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees. We continue to advance our own pledges and invite States and other stakeholders to strengthen their engagement, as we move towards the high-level officials meeting in December 2021, which will take stock of progress.

Please accept, Excellencies, the assurances of our highest consideration.



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Mr. Filippo Grandi
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