

## Third Preparatory Meeting on the Global Refugee Forum

Centre International de Conférences Genève – 14 November 2019

### Summary of discussions

#### Introduction

1. On 14 November 2019, UNHCR convened the third and final Preparatory Meeting for the Global Refugee Forum. The preparatory meeting was co-chaired by the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations Office at Geneva and the Assistant High Commissioner for Protection. It focused on the preparation of pledges for the Forum, as well as issues of programme, modalities and practical arrangements. A side event was also arranged, entitled *With Refugees: Recommendations for the Global Refugee Forum*.
2. Approximately 250 representatives from States, international and regional organizations, nongovernmental organizations, together with experts and refugees, participated in a constructive discussion.
3. This summary does not necessarily represent the views of individual participants or UNHCR, but reflects broadly the themes and understandings emerging from the discussion.

#### Agenda item 1: Preparation of pledges and contributions for the Global Refugee Forum

4. Mr Daniel Endres, Director of the Global Refugee Forum, outlined the ten high-level objectives that UNHCR is focusing on for the Global Refugee Forum, namely:
  - a broadened base of support for comprehensive refugee responses;
  - further support for the development of inclusive national policies;
  - the launch of Support Platforms for the MIRPS in Mexico and Central America, the Nairobi Process facilitated by IGAD in the East and Horn of Africa, and SSAR in the Afghanistan situation;
  - pledges and contributions of additional funding;
  - dedicated support to expand access to secondary, tertiary, and higher education programmes;
  - support for green energy and environmental conservation;
  - further engagement of the private sector in the form of investments, employment, innovation, advocacy, and philanthropy;
  - progress towards expanding the availability of solutions;
  - the launch of the Asylum Capacity Support Group; and
  - the launch of the Global Academic Interdisciplinary Network.
5. Mr Endres congratulated States that had already conducted intra-governmental and/or multi-stakeholder consultations on the Forum at the national and/or regional level, and noted that good progress was being made in ‘matching’ the pledges of different actors. He further noted that UNHCR had received indications of participation from more than fifty ministers.
6. In interventions from the floor (which were led by Switzerland in its capacity as co-host and Costa Rica, Turkey, Germany, Pakistan and Ethiopia in their capacity as co-convenors), a number of States and other stakeholders noted the building momentum for the Forum and gave preliminary indications

of the pledges that they were planning on making. A number of States indicated their intention to make pledges relating to all six areas of focus, and to be represented at the ministerial level.

7. States and other stakeholders also spoke about the multi-stakeholder consultations that they had conducted or were planning, as well as the ways in which they were working to build momentum for a particular area of focus through participation in the relevant co-sponsorship group(s). The value of working with a wide range of stakeholders—including through the development of joint pledges—was reiterated, as was the importance of ensuring that burden and responsibility sharing remains at the centre of the Global Refugee Forum. A number of delegations noted the historic opportunity presented by the first Global Refugee Forum to turn the principles of the Global Compact on Refugees into action.

### **Agenda item 2: Programme, modalities and practical arrangements for the Global Refugee Forum**

8. Ms Perveen Ali, Head of the Global Refugee Forum Coordination Team, outlined a range of developments relating to the programme and modalities for the Global Refugee Forum, including the following:

- **Programme:** The programme for the three days is constantly being updated, and the next public version will include spotlight sessions and other activities planned for 16 December.
- **Complementary events:** A number of events will take place in the City of Geneva around the Global Refugee Forum, including:
  - [MADE51](#), which will sell artisanal products made by refugees at the Parc des Bastions Christmas market from 4 to 21 December;
  - *Les Bains Solidaires*, which will include an advent calendar by refugee artists (15 December) and a meal offered to refugees and local communities by Bain des Paquis (16 December);
  - A football match at the ECOLINT Campus de Nations on the evening of 16 December;
  - The Solidarity Train, which will arrive from France on 16 December;
  - The lighting of the Jet d'Eau du Lac Léman on 17 December;
  - Flags on the Pont de Mont Blanc from 16 to 19 December; and
  - A conference concerning the Forum at UNIGE on 16 December (to be confirmed).
- **Plenary session:** The plenary session of the Global Refugee Forum will now run for the full two days of 17 and 18 December.
  - In the morning of 17 December, the opening plenary will include statements from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the co-hosts, and the Heads of State or Government from the co-convening States. These statements will be followed by a special session on Broadening the Base, showcasing the top pledges and contributions made at the Forum from a range of stakeholders.
  - Thereafter, the plenary debate on Burden and Responsibility Sharing will commence, during which high-level panels will be interspersed with statements made from the floor. The panels will be facilitated by a prominent personality and will involve three to four individuals in a 30-minute, Davos-style conversation.
- **High-level dialogues:** On the morning of 18 December, there will be four high-level dialogues around key areas of focus for the first Global Refugee Forum, which are open to all registered participants, as well as a continuation of the plenary on Burden and Responsibility Sharing.
  - In the interest of the limited available time, and in consideration of the expected 400 delegations, statements need be brief and stay within the time limit.

- **Good practices:** States and other stakeholders are encouraged to continue submitting good practices for inclusion in the digital portal for the Global Compact on Refugees.
- **Pledges and contributions:** States and other stakeholders are also encouraged to submit their pledges and contributions as early as possible, preferably using the online submission tool. Those received before 30 November will be able to be visualised at the Forum. Those received after that date will be included in the outcome document for the Forum.
  - There will also be a pledging booth at the Forum for those who wish to submit their pledges and contributions during the three days of the Forum.
  - Pledges made by States to UNHCR should be made at the annual UNHCR pledging conference in early December, and they can also be mentioned as a part of the commitments made during the Global Refugee Forum.

9. Ms Ellen Hansen, Head of UNHCR's Governance Service, outlined key practical arrangements for the Forum, including the following:

- **Registration:** All participants are requested to confirm their participation by 6 December in accordance with the instructions contained in the information note.
- **Security:** Due to the presence of a number of Heads of State or Government in the opening plenary, additional security will be put in place for the morning of 17 December. Further information will be provided in due course.
- **Bilateral meetings:** UNHCR will set up a virtual desk for booking rooms for bilateral meetings. Further information will be provided in due course.
- **Webcasting:** The plenary session and high-level dialogues will be webcast and livestreamed on the GRF webpage.
- Relating to the **plenary session** in the Assembly Hall on 17 and 18 December:
  - **Seating:** Due to the large number of participants, the Assembly Hall is expected to be full, including the balconies. In case of need, additional seating and video of the plenary will be available in Room XIX.
    - States will have two seats at the table and two behind. Intergovernmental organizations and UN entities will be allocated one seat at the table and one behind. All other participants will be allocated a minimum of one seat, in accordance with capacity.
  - **Speaker's list:** the Secretariat will be preparing one list of speakers for the plenary session over the course of 17 and 18 December, in order of protocol. The speaker's list will be opened on 15 November 2019 and closed on 10 December 2019.
    - The plenary session has been extended, so that it runs throughout 17 and 18 December, with the High Commissioner chairing. However, the number of speaking slots will be limited. There will be other opportunities for engagement, including in the high-level dialogues, spotlight sessions, speakers' corner, and exhibits.
    - Statements in plenary will be interspersed with short panel discussions to keep the debate dynamic; however, there will be no dedicated debate on those panel themes.
    - In view of the number of delegations and the limited time available, there will be no group statements during the plenary session.
  - **Speaking time:** given the expected large number of requests for speaking slots, and in order to give the opportunity to as many delegations as possible, a 3-minute time limit has

been proposed.

- **Interpretation:** for the plenary, interpretation will be provided in all six UN languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).
- Relating to the parallel **high-level dialogues** on the morning of 18 December:
  - **Speaking arrangements:** speaking arrangements for the high-level dialogues will be more flexible, and there will not be a formal list established. Statements will be interspersed among participants, allowing room for a range of relevant stakeholders to take part in the discussions. The Secretariat will endeavor to ensure that participants who did not get a speaking slot in plenary will have an opportunity to speak in the high-level dialogues.
    - States and other stakeholders with a specific interest in making an intervention in a particular high-level dialogue, including to announce a pledge relating to the subject matter of the dialogue, should inform the co-sponsorship focal point at UNHCR for that dialogue.
  - **Seating:** Given that there will be two parallel sessions running concurrently, in addition to the plenary, seating should not be as difficult. The modalities are still to be determined, but a mix of formal seating for States and an à la carte approach for other participants will most likely be applied.
  - **Interpretation:** for the high-level dialogues, interpretation will be provided in English and French.
- The **Information Note** for the Forum will be updated on the GRF webpage shortly.

10. A number of States took the floor to ask further questions relating to the matters addressed. For ease of comprehension, answers have been integrated into the summaries above.