

**Summary of the First Quarterly Preparatory Meeting
for the High-Level Officials Meeting in 2025**
10 March 2025, 11:00-13:00 hours CET – Palais des Nations, Geneva

The First Quarterly Preparatory Meeting for the High-Level Officials Meeting (HLOM) in 2025 was held on 10 March 2025 to present updates on preparations for the HLOM, including the zero-draft programme, and progress made in terms of pledge implementation. Following opening remarks by co-chairs of the meeting, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uganda to the United Nations Office and other international organizations at Geneva, Ambassador Arthur Sewankambo Kafeero and Assistant High Commissioner for Protection Ms. Ruvendrini Menikdiwela (AHC-P), the Head of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) Coordination Team, Mr. Nicolas Brass, presented updates on the roadmap to the HLOM and stocktaking process, followed by presentations from several multi-stakeholder pledges. Stakeholders then had the opportunity to intervene from the floor before closing remarks by the AHC-P.

Opening remarks by Ambassador Arthur Sewankambo Kafeero, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uganda to the United Nations Office and other international organizations at Geneva

Ambassador Kafeero co-chaired the first preparatory meeting as a representative of the Co-convenors of the second Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in 2023. He emphasized the importance of fulfilling and implementing the pledges made there, noting that the real success of the Forum will be measured by the impact of these commitments.

Ambassador Kafeero highlighted the severe refugee crisis globally and in Uganda, which is currently hosting 1.83 million refugees from 36 different countries, 79% of whom are women and children, and the pressure this places on the country's resources. Since January alone, over 30,000 refugees have been received in Uganda. Despite funding challenges, he noted that Uganda maintains an open-door policy for refugees, driven by a commitment to safety, security, and dignity, consistent with Uganda's international obligations and responsibilities. Ambassador Kafeero called for support to emergency operations which are critically underfunded, affecting delivery of key needs such as food and health services.

Ambassador Kafeero reiterated the need to address humanitarian funding gaps, highlighting related challenges around social cohesion and the environment, and expressed concern about the World Food Programme's challenges to continue providing support to refugee families in Uganda. He called for policy pledges announced by refugee hosting countries, such as Uganda's pledges on self-reliance, localization, climate action, among others, to be matched with financial and technical support to materialize their implementation. He also highlighted the importance of regional and sub-regional engagement to achieve meaningful and measurable progress on pledges.

Ambassador Kafeero called for urgent climate action, noting that refugees and host communities in rural areas largely depend on wood resources for energy, cooking, shelter and income generation. Regarding refugee resilience, Ambassador Kafeero highlighted that refugees can be agents of development and contribute positively to the sustainable development of host countries. He called for accelerated investments in refugee-hosting communities to generate jobs and build skills, empowering refugees and their host communities to find job opportunities and reduce dependence on humanitarian aid in the long run.

Ahead of the HLOM, Ambassador Kafeero stressed the importance of focusing on all four objectives of the GCR and leveraging this convening of partners as a platform for sharing success stories and emphasizing collective efforts in the spirit of solidarity and responsibility sharing. Finally, Ambassador Kafeero reaffirmed Uganda's commitment to doing its part in supporting

displaced people and urged all partners to fulfill their GRF pledges to ensure the success of the GCR.

Opening remarks by Ms. Ruvendrini Menikdiwela, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection

Ms. Menikdiwela expressed deep appreciation for the collective commitment of partners to the GCR during these politically and financially difficult times. She emphasized that despite increased challenges to the sustainability of humanitarian responses, the principles and objectives of the Compact remain central to our collective efforts leading up to the HLOM. Highlighting the volatile global financial landscape for refugee response, characterized by significant funding gaps amid growing humanitarian needs, Ms. Menikdiwela shared that UNHCR values its long-standing donor partnerships and remains engaged in dialogue to find solutions that uphold the protection and support of forcibly displaced people. She also stressed the importance of solidarity of all partners to ensure critical work for refugees is not disrupted.

Ms. Menikdiwela emphasized that the HLOM will be a critical moment of unity, highlighting this new form of new multilateralism by bringing together whole-of-society partners. As the mid-way point in the GCR cycle, it will also be a key moment of impact, where stakeholders present the results of their pledges, and a moment of action, for stakeholders to reaffirm collective commitments and to galvanize and inform the way forward to the next GRF in 2027. Ms. Menikdiwela commended ongoing stocktaking efforts and encouraged greater engagement with refugees and the organizations they lead, recalling practical guidance on meaningful participation of forcibly displaced and stateless people in pledge implementation issued by UNHCR last fall. Reflecting on the Sustainable Responses approach, Ms. Menikdiwela highlighted how this reinforces the operationalization of the GCR, in which States recognized the need for sustained efforts and investment across the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus, and the need to integrate forced displacement into development actions and policies.

Ms. Menikdiwela called for all pledging entities to submit updates on pledge implementation, emphasizing the importance of documenting progress, challenges, gaps, and opportunities. She reiterated the importance of delivering on pledges and leveraging GCR tools and mechanisms, including multi-stakeholder pledges, GCR initiatives, and Support Platforms. Ms. Menikdiwela closed by thanking all participants for their unwavering support, critical to ensure that the Compact is acted on as a blueprint for hope, solidarity, and solutions.

Opening remarks by Mr. Nicolas Brass, Senior Policy Adviser and Head of the Global Compact on Refugees Coordination Team, UNHCR

Mr. Brass presented the key elements in the roadmap leading towards the HLOM and guiding parameters informing the stocktaking process. He reminded all stakeholders of the call for updates on pledges that have yet to be fulfilled, to ensure that all the important work being done on the ground is captured on the GCR Digital Platform to inform discussions at the HLOM.

Mr. Brass highlighted the role of the preparatory meetings to identify trends, gaps, challenges, and offer an opportunity to correct course, as need be, and to look forward in preparation for the next GRF in 2027. Mr. Brass echoed that in these challenging times, it is essential to tell the stories highlighting good practices happening on the ground, and called for more efforts to communicate impact, noting the importance of pledge matching in this regard.

Mr. Brass emphasized that the HLOM will be a global stocktaking event, looking backward to better look forward. He reminded that the discussions at the HLOM will be informed by the findings of the third GCR indicator report, to be launched at November's final preparatory meeting. After the HLOM, UNHCR will issue an outcome document of key takeaways and recommendations to the next milestone in the GCR process, the GRF 2027.

Mr. Brass emphasized that the HLOM discussions will also be informed by the findings of the ongoing stocktaking process and pledge updates. He encouraged stakeholders to join forces, especially across multi-stakeholder pledges that can cross-fertilize and support each other with stocktaking and pledge matching. He informed that a calendar of regional and multi-stakeholder stocktaking events will soon be accessible on the GCR Digital Platform (now available [here](#)).

On the HLOM event, Mr. Brass informed that it will be a three-day meeting, on 15-17 December 2025, at the CICG in Geneva, and expressed gratitude to the Government of Switzerland for co-hosting. Mr. Brass reiterated that the HLOM is not another GRF, with a different purpose, scale and tone. While maintaining the multi-stakeholder spirit of the GCR and featuring dynamic discussions in plenary sessions and parallel/side events, the level of participation is senior officials of states and multi-stakeholder partners. In addition to the preparatory meetings, different stakeholder groups will be consulted on the preparations, including NGOs, multi-stakeholder groups and refugee-led organizations. Mr. Brass clarified that there will not be a global call for event proposals and encouraged stakeholders seeking to get engaged to do so through the multi-stakeholder pledge groups and by working with UNHCR at country level. Mr. Brass presented key considerations that will guide the development of the HLOM programme, such as the whole-of-society approach, regional balance and meaningful refugee participation.

In conclusion, Mr. Brass shared updates on pledge implementation, highlighting that 89% of GRF 2019 pledges are fulfilled or in progress, while 22% of GRF 2023 pledges are also fulfilled or in progress. Calling for a focus on implementation, Mr. Brass noted that the results of the last pledge reporting campaign in October 2024 were encouraging, and urged all stakeholders to submit updates, both in terms of results as well as sharing the various challenges faced.

Multi-stakeholder pledge presentations moderated by Ms. Ruvendrini Menikdiwela, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection

- **Mr. Peter Holland**, Lead Education Specialist at the World Bank, speaking on behalf of the [Education Inclusion Multi-stakeholder Pledge](#), reported that in November 2024, 50 officials convened at Wilton Park to review progress on the pledge, with refugee voices playing a central role. The [discussions](#) touched upon key shifts in the education sector, including a move from temporary to sustainable solutions, a perception change from refugees as burdens to assets, and a transition from host-country responsibility to a globally shared effort. Currently, 14 country grants under the INSPIRE Initiative, funded by the United Kingdom Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and implemented with UNHCR and the World Bank, are supporting host governments to integrate refugees into national systems. A Guide for Refugee Inclusion will be launched in April 2025. In May, a gathering hosted by the Government of Zambia will bring together representatives from the 14 participating countries with UNHCR, World Bank and FCDO, and will include school visits in a refugee camp.
- **Ms. Njoud Abdeljawad**, Manager of International Relations and Technical Support Development at the Greater Amman Municipality (Jordan), spoke about the [Call to Local Action for Migrants and Refugees](#) and highlighted the vital role of local and regional governments, noting that 70% of displaced individuals seek refuge in cities. The Local Coalition for Migrants and Refugees, co-led by the Mayors Migration Council and United Cities and Local Governments launched the Call in 2022 to enable local governments to support implementation of the Global Compact on Migration and the GCR. At the GRF 2023, over 70 pledges were made reinforcing local commitments to migration governance and refugee inclusion. A new campaign aims to mobilize further commitments ahead of the HLOM, the International Migration Review Forum in 2026 and the Global Forum on Migration and Development in 2025, linking both Compacts with the Sustainable Development Goals. Preparations for the HLOM focus on evaluating pledge implementation, identifying best

practices, and addressing challenges. Increased recognition, resources, and partnerships are essential to maximize local actors' impact in refugee protection and durable integration.

- **Ms. Yesim Oruc**, UN Resident Coordinator in Moldova, reaffirmed the UN Country Team's commitments under the [UN Common Pledge 2.0](#) to advocate for an extension of temporary protection in Moldova; to integrate refugee responses in national education, health and social protection systems; to ensure refugees are included in a decent and dignified manner in the labour market; and to include refugees in all national strategic plans and documents. The Government of Moldova has demonstrated strong international responsibility by welcoming and supporting Ukrainian refugees and three years into the crisis, host communities remain supportive of refugees. The UNHCR-led response prioritizes working through national systems and local partnerships, with international support ensuring sustainable humanitarian and developmental efforts. The National Development Strategy (NDS) Moldova 2030 Agenda, and other national strategies refer to migrants and asylum-seekers, and the Government is preparing a complementary national programme for the inclusion of refugees in various sectors – initiatives guiding the UN Country Team. The UN urges continued humanitarian and development funding commitments to sustain these efforts.
- **Mr. Sofiane Kadmiri**, Counsellor for the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations Office at Geneva and Co-lead of the Group of Friends of Health for Refugees and Host Communities, presented on the [National Health Inclusion](#) and **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) multi-stakeholders pledges**. Led by Morocco and the EU, Germany, the Amal Alliance, the Global Fund and UNICEF, the pledges have garnered 240 commitments, including 18 new pledges. Key achievements include Cameroon's integration of 90,000 refugees into its universal health coverage platform and the Netherlands, Germany, and partners supporting the [WHA77.3 resolution](#) on strengthening MHPSS before, during and after armed conflicts and other emergencies. Morocco continues to enhance healthcare access and hosted a side event at the 76th World Health Assembly to advance the Rabat Declaration. Two upcoming roundtables will focus on accelerating pledge implementation on health inclusion.
- **Mr. Nourou Macki Tall**, Senior Liaison Officer for Emergencies and Resilience of the Food and Agriculture Organization, presented the Multi-stakeholder Pledge on [Agriculture, Food Systems, and Food Security](#), which aims to enhance support for displaced people and host communities through sustainable agriculture and food systems. The initiative aims to provide both immediate and long-term food security, resilience, and self-sufficiency. Examples of successful projects include South Sudan's farmland allocation for refugees and Chad's pledge of 30,000 hectares for refugee farming. Donors like Norway, Japan, Finland, and Ireland have contributed funds and initiatives, while FAO collaborates with UNHCR, the World Bank, and others on projects to boost agricultural productivity and resilience, including climate-smart agriculture and private sector investment in displacement contexts.
- **Ms. Boriانا Benev**, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations Office at Geneva, provided an update on the [Cartagena +40 Chile Declaration and Plan of Action](#), highlighting consultations held in Mexico, Brazil, and Colombia. She underscored that ensuring protection throughout the displacement transition process, achieving durable solutions, and addressing protection needs during displacement caused by disasters, are key areas of focus. The Declaration and accompanying Plan of Action, which covers the period from 2024 to 2034, were adopted and a follow-up mechanism for implementation will be launched in July, with the primary goal of fostering regional discussions on priorities. Ms. Benev expressed hope for establishing a Support Platform and ensuring coordination with other subregional and regional mechanisms to strengthen collaborative efforts.

Discussions and interventions, moderated by Ambassador Arthur Sewankambo Kafeero, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uganda to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

States and stakeholders shared the following updates on pledge progress and other key issues:

- **Switzerland** expressed gratitude to UNHCR, co-convening States, and all participants and highlighted the success of the GRF in 2023, the historic participation of forcibly displaced individuals, and emphasized the importance of implementing the multilateral commitments made there amid the current context of global turbulence and challenges for humanitarian response. Switzerland reiterated that the HLOM should aim toward the following objectives: maintaining momentum in political, technical, and financial mobilization around the GCR, and uniting around shared values such as multilateralism, the rule of law, humanity, and solidarity. Switzerland reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring that the HLOM proceeds under optimal conditions and expressed support for the participation of refugee representatives, noting that the greatness of a nation is judged by the way it treats its most vulnerable.
- **UNICEF** highlighted the important support for children demonstrated at the second GRF in 2023, with over 90 pledges made toward child rights. Emphasizing that conflicts and natural disasters are driving record levels of displacement, UNICEF informed that 40% of displaced persons are children and stressed the need to enhance support for displaced children and invest in systems that ensure their survival and well-being. UNICEF's approach focuses on sustainable, systematic support for refugee and host community children through strengthening government systems and partnerships, such as with ILO, UNHCR, and the World Bank in countries like Jordan and Kenya. Notable examples include the Cash Plus model in Jordan and increased investments in child protection services in Kenya.
- **Save the Children** updated on the Initiative for Child Rights, a coalition of over 30 organizations dedicated to ensuring that children remain central to the implementation of the GCR. The initiative reaffirms its commitment to placing children, who represent nearly half of the world's displaced, at the heart of refugee responses. At the GRF in 2023, the Initiative pledged to convene annual meetings to bring together stakeholders aligned with child rights. Over 288 pledges targeted children or prioritized them. Save the Children urged stakeholders to align actions, pool resources, and empower children to actively participate. The Child Rights Pledge will reconvene in the autumn to continue this work.
- **ILO** discussed the establishment of a Technical Working Group on Sustainable Development Solutions for Forced Displacement, aimed at enhancing ILO's engagement in key UN processes, particularly the GCR. This initiative seeks to improve ILO's approach to decent work in displacement contexts. Additionally, building on a 2016 memorandum of understanding, ILO and UNHCR released a joint publication for 2023-2025, highlighting their collaboration in over 35 countries. This includes projects like the Dutch-funded Prospects Partnership, which focuses on improving labor market access, working conditions and social protection for displaced communities.
- The **Refugee Advisory Board** expressed gratitude to UNHCR for their partnership over the past two years and highlighted the increased refugee leadership at the GRF in 2023. Emphasizing the importance of continuing to champion meaningful participation of refugees and refugee-led organizations as equal partners in shaping solutions, the Board called for concrete steps to close gaps in meaningful refugee participation, urging stakeholders to involve refugees as experts and contributors in policy discussions. Amid the alarming rise in forced displacement, including minorities and indigenous groups, the Board highlighted the negative impact of shifting global humanitarian priorities on RLOs, who rely on humanitarian funding and are essential first responders, and called on humanitarian actors and states to prioritize RLOs in their efforts to support displaced and stateless communities.

Responses and closing remarks by Ms. Ruvendrini Menikdiwela, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection

Ms. Menikdiwela expressed her gratitude to all the speakers. She thanked Switzerland for co-hosting the HLOM 2025 and appreciated the interventions by UNICEF and Save the Children for shedding light on the disproportionate impact that forced displacement has on children. She also thanked all those involved in fulfilling pledges, particularly in enhancing access to child protection systems and supporting family reunification programmes. Furthermore, she fully endorsed the remarks made by the Refugee Advisory Board representative, stressing the vital importance of involving refugees in shaping opportunities and programmes that directly affect them. Finally, she welcomed ILO 's remarks for underscoring the critical role that development actors play in the displacement cycle, especially in driving sustainable solutions for affected populations.