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First Informal Briefing on the Global Compact on Refugees

**16 March 2026
9:30 – 11:30 CET**

INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

- **Interpretation is available in English and French.**
 - Select your preferred language using the Interpretation button in Zoom.
 - Click 'View Options' at the top of your screen, then in the drop-down menu click your chosen language for viewing, either "ENGLISH (UNHCR)" or "FRANCAIS (UNHCR)".
- To **view captioning** go to the meeting controls toolbar, click the Show Captions icon .
- Please raise your nameplate to make a **request to speak**.
- **Written statements** to be posted online can be sent to hqgcr@unhcr.org.
- The **presentation and summary** of the briefing will be made available on the Informal Briefings and Meetings 2026 site, access here → 
- For any **technical issues** during the meeting, please contact hqgcr@unhcr.org.

Agenda

Opening Remarks

H.E. Mr. Atsuyuki Oike, *Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations Office at Geneva*

Ms. Ruven Menikdiwela, *Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, UNHCR*

Presentation of the GRF Progress Review 2025 Outcome Document and update on plans related to the 75th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention

Mr. Nicolas Brass, *Chief of the Global Compact on Refugees Section, UNHCR*

Discussion and Interventions

Closing Remarks

Ms. Ruven Menikdiwela, *Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, UNHCR*

Opening remarks

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Presentation of the GRF Progress Review 2025 Outcome Document

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GRF Progress Review in Numbers

- **Participants (non-UNHCR):** 1,486
- **Participants with lived experience:** 260
- **Speakers:** 299 (regional, stakeholder balance)
- **New modalities: spotlight sessions (4), strategic dialogues (6), workshops (13)**
- **New pledges:** ~30 pledges valued at USD 1.37 billion



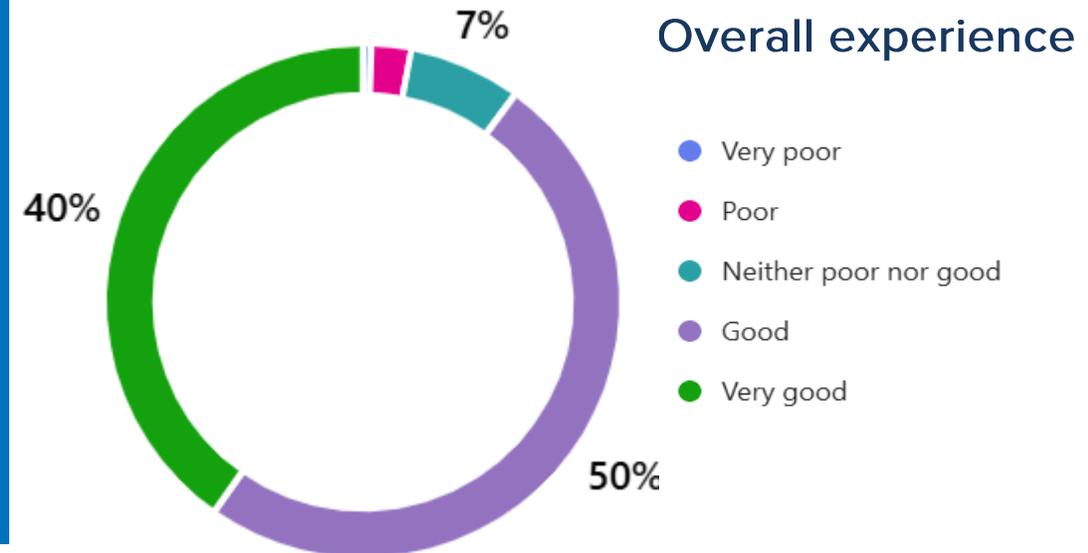
GRF Progress Review Participant Survey

37% delegations responded to the survey

90% found their overall experience at the GRF Progress Review very good/good

67% said the event achieved its objectives very well
30% said it somewhat achieved its objectives

86% shared that the topics and discussions were highly relevant and reflected urgent policy priorities for refugee responses



Overall Feedback

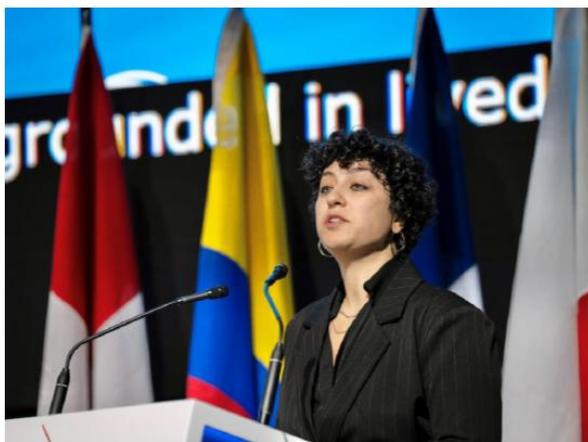
What worked well

- The event's whole-of-society and multi-stakeholder nature
- High-quality, diverse, evidence-based sessions, with valuable learning, good practices, and cross-regional exchange.
- Strong and diverse meaningful participation of refugees and refugee-led organizations.
- Rich networking opportunities.
- Effective mix of policy and practical implementation discussions, with visibility of lived experience.
- Organization, logistics, and coordination, incl. pre-arrival support, training, and communication – “safe space”

What can be improved

- More engaging sessions (less speeches, more Q&A), with practical, solutions-oriented discussions in formats that create real exchange.
- Fewer parallel events and improved scheduling to transition from one session to another.
- Stronger refugee and local actor leadership and more opportunities for diverse refugees and civil-society representatives to speak.
- Absence of formal speakers' list for the plenary made it hard for delegations to plan interventions.
- Greater inclusion and transparency in invitations and event access for stakeholders.

Meaningful Refugee Participation



From Access to Influence: How forcibly displaced and stateless people participated in the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review 2025

March 2026

From report on meaningful participation in GRF Progress Review

- **260 participants** with lived experience of forced displacement and statelessness and local actors > **17.5% of all participants**
- **7 State delegations** included refugee advisors
- Speakers with lived experience across **100% of events**
- Dedicated **side event** on meaningful participation with **280 attendees**
- **Speakers' Corner** entirely dedicated to lived experience
- Linked events across Geneva, including **R-Space** with **27 refugee-led panels**
- **166 participants** with lived experience joined debriefs/surveys on lessons learned and contributed to define the way ahead



GRF Progress Review Recommendations

- **Access to asylum**
Protect access, non-refoulement, fair procedures
- **Solutions**
Operational inclusion, self-reliance, solutions
- **Pledge framework**
Quality, accountability, matching
- **Multi-stakeholder engagement**
Local leadership, area-based, whole-of-gov
- **GCR as global anchor**
Country-level delivery, UN80, Humanitarian Reset
- **Refugee participation**
Systemic, safe, resourced participation
- **Data & digital**
Reviewed indicators, responsible AI, inclusion
- **Predictable financing**
Multi-year, system-aligned

Reinforce access to asylum and protection as foundational to responsibility-sharing

Safeguard asylum as a *global public good*

Build consensus around a new Agenda for Protection & Solutions

Cooperative, practical lawful responses to contemporary challenges; guiding pledges toward GRF 2027.

Pledge to strengthen national asylum systems

Legal status, documentation, and access to rights and services.

Respond to shrinking protection space

Predictable, lawful border practices; avoid externalization; manage mixed movements and onward routes; address AI-related risks, politicization, and disaster-driven displacement.

Protect people along routes

Ensure rescue at sea/land, safe disembarkation, protection-sensitive entry systems, and humanitarian assistance.

Ensure protection for stateless people

Identification, determination, documentation, prevention and reduction measures integrated in national systems.

Advance gender equality & GBV Protection

Scale up commitments; safeguard services; support women-led organizations.

Resource protection adequately

Bring renewed focus on refugee inclusion to help foster self-reliance and enable solutions

Operationalize a new approach to refugee self-reliance

Promote inclusion across sectors and reduce reliance on humanitarian assistance.

Strengthen national leadership for sustainable reintegration

Ensure safe, voluntary, and dignified returns with access to services, livelihoods, and housing, land and property rights.

Build policy, legal and operational infrastructure for scaled third-country solutions

Predictable resettlement, community sponsorship, family reunification, skills-based pathways, and machine-readable travel documents.

Deepen engagement with multilateral development banks

Support labour market integration and unlock flexible, blended financing for inclusive policies.

Expand private-sector collaboration to mobilize investment, innovation, job creation, and labour mobility pathways.

Optimize the GRF pledge framework as a high-impact delivery mechanism for protection, inclusion, and solutions

Reinforce pledge quality and results

Simplify pledge submission

Strengthen follow-up and accountability

Develop outcome-focused reporting template capturing achievements and constraints.

Archive dormant or inactive pledges

Introduce positive incentives

Review existing multi-stakeholder pledges

Scale up pledge matching and targeted support

For host-country policy pledges aligned with national development plans.

Mobilize donors, development banks, and the private sector

Invest in multi-stakeholder engagement, local leadership and partnership brokerage

Deepen structured engagement

With local NGOs, private sector, academia, foundations, religious leaders, philanthropists, and city/local governments to translate commitments into measurable results.

Strengthen support to local authorities and area-based approaches

Promote humanitarian-development-peace nexus and whole-of-government approaches

Link protection with national development plans and strengthen inclusion through national systems.



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Use the GCR as a practical anchor for coherent global, regional and national action in line with the UN80 and Humanitarian Reset

Reground GCR delivery at country level

Elevate advocacy to reinforce refugee protection and inclusion, leveraging GCR partnerships across UN development processes and major arenas

Expand adoption of the UN Common Pledge 2.0

Use the GCR as a practical framework

To advance system-wide coherence, efficiency, and reform efforts, including UN80 and the Humanitarian Reset.

Sustain cooperation with regional organizations and development banks

Activate GCR mechanisms rapidly in emerging crises to mobilize political engagement, development partners, and predictable financing earlier.

Use regional support platforms and situation-specific multi-stakeholder pledges as delivery accelerators linked to State-led inclusion and solutions priorities.

Enhance meaningful refugee participation toward greater policy influence across all stages of the GCR

Increase and strengthen refugee and stateless participation across all GCR processes and events.

Work directly with refugee- and stateless-led organizations to sustain active involvement throughout the GCR cycle.

Expand refugee inclusion in State and stakeholder delegations
Institutionalize sustained participation.

Ensure participation is safe, well-resourced, and impactful

Address systemic barriers

such as language obstacles, digital divides, visa and travel document limitations, and unequal access to funding.

Strengthen data, evidence, and digital inclusion for more impactful GCR implementation and refugee policy informed by the Indicator Report

Ensure regular statistical inclusion of refugees, displaced, and stateless people

Promote harmonized methodologies and definitions

To enable comparable and interoperable data across regional and national statistical systems.

Review and reinforce the GCR Indicator Framework

Fully leverage digital tools

Such as UNHCR's Refugee Data Portal and the Statistical Inclusion Navigator to increase comparability, transparency, and joint action.

Promote responsible and ethical use of AI in asylum and refugee-related data systems

Advance digital inclusion

Secure predictable multi-year financing aligned with national leadership

Increase predictable, multi-year and blended financing

For refugee-hosting countries, aligned with national development plans and systems, including support for local organizations and refugee- and refugee women-led groups.

Shift from fragmented, short-term humanitarian projects

Work toward structural, system-compatible investments that benefit both host communities and refugees.

Embed climate adaptation and resilience financing in refugee-hosting areas

Ensure refugee inclusion in national adaptation plans.

Improve aid effectiveness and coherence

Reduce duplicative reporting and lowering transaction costs for host governments and partners.

Next steps...



Update on plans related to the 75th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention

Mr. Nicolas Brass

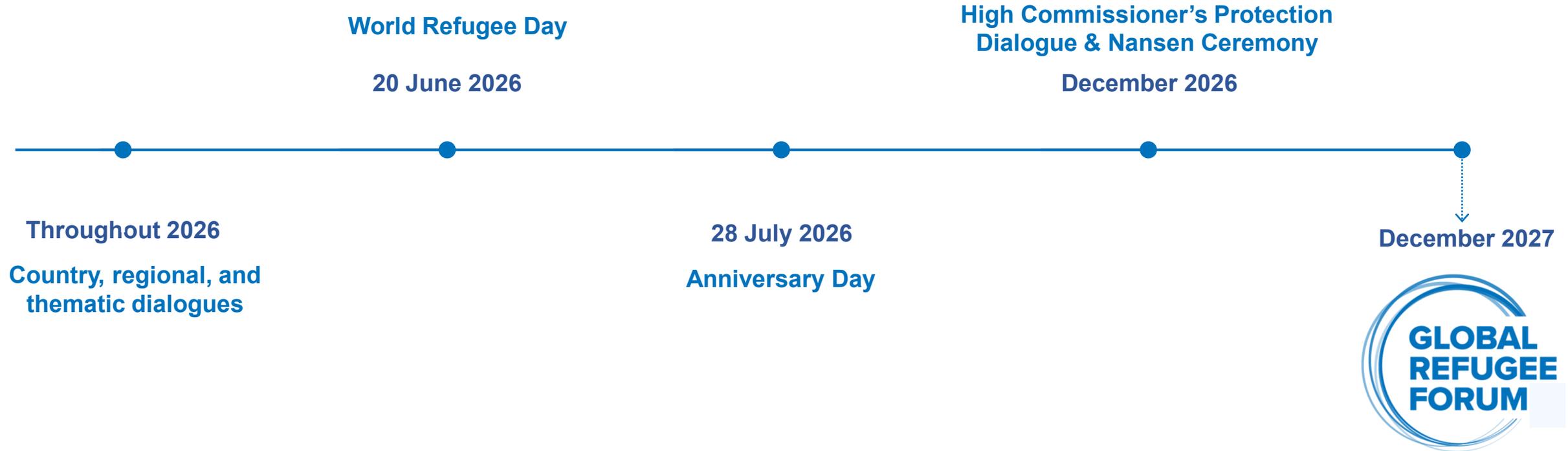
Chief of the Global Compact on Refugees Section, UNHCR



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1951 Convention 75th Anniversary

A year of mobilization, dialogue and commitment



Areas of Focus

- 1. Safeguarding and strengthening asylum systems.**
- 2. Upholding refugee rights and enabling self-reliance** to reduce dependence on humanitarian assistance and enable refugee contributions to host communities and economies.
- 3. Advancing solutions:** repatriation, resettlement, integration, and complementary pathways.
- 4. Addressing contemporary challenges** through lawful and cooperative approaches
- 5. Informing pledge development** in the lead up to the GRF 2027



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Discussion and interventions

Closing remarks

Ms. Ruven Menikdiwela

Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, UNHCR



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Thank you