

Informal Briefing on the Global Refugee Forum

Centre de conférence Genève (CICG), Geneva - 25 June 2019

Summary of discussions

I. Introduction

1. On 25 June 2019, UNHCR convened the second in a series of three meetings to prepare the Global Refugee Forum. The preparatory meeting was co-chaired by the Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations Office in Geneva and the Assistant High Commissioner for Protection. It focused on the organizational arrangements (including co-sponsorships) and the structure for the first Global Refugee Forum.
2. Two side events were also organized, one in the morning on a gender, age, and diversity approach to pledges and good practices in the Global Refugee Forum and one during the lunch break on the inclusive implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees.
3. Almost 300 representatives from States, international and regional organizations, nongovernmental organizations, together with experts and refugees, participated in a constructive discussion.
4. This summary does not necessarily represent the views of individual participants or UNHCR, but reflects broadly the themes and understandings emerging from the discussion.

II. General discussion

5. The description of a successful Global Refugee Forum was widely endorsed. The key outcomes would include broadening the base of support by involving States and other actors that have not traditionally been engaged to a significant extent in large-refugee responses as donors, hosts, and partners; and developing a wide range of impactful pledges and contributions, especially those made jointly by States and other actors in the spirit of partnership that is central to the Global Compact. These contributions – including financial, material, or technical support, places and programmes for resettlement and complementary pathways, and policies of inclusion – would be forward-looking and put in place the architecture needed for the sustained implementation of the Global Compact over the longer term, including sustainable support for refugee-hosting countries.
6. The presentation of the important and differentiated roles for co-hosts, co-convenors, and co-sponsors was well-received. Switzerland was announced as a co-host, alongside UNHCR, and Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Germany and Turkey were confirmed as co-convenors. A number of Member States and other stakeholders expressed their interest or intention to co-sponsor one or more of the areas of focus.
7. Several participants underscored the importance of refugee participation in the Global Refugee Forum, including in national delegations and through the co-sponsorship groups.
8. The importance of concrete, action-oriented and impactful outcomes was underlined by many delegations. The Global Refugee Forum's role in mobilizing support to meet the needs of major refugee-hosting countries was highlighted. It was stressed in this context that the contributions, indicators, and tracking tool would all need to be aligned.

9. It was recognized that the success of the Global Refugee Forum will depend, in part, on the engagement of a wider range of actors, including development organizations; increased resettlement places and complementary pathways; and greater refugee inclusion. The key role of the co-sponsorship groups in mobilizing support and progress in these different areas was clearly communicated.
10. The presentation of the draft programme of the first Global Refugee Forum, including the modalities through which the contributions and good practices could be shared, was well received. A balance between an innovative and interactive format on the one hand, and time and space for the participants to meaningfully engage on the other, was encouraged by several delegations. Many welcomed the multi-stakeholder nature of the programme and emphasized the importance of concrete outcomes.
11. It was noted that all of the stakeholders in the room – including the Permanent Missions based in Geneva, but also participants from capital – would play a key role in advocating for the Global Refugee Forum, and ensuring a successful outcome, including through consultative processes that engage the whole of society and facilitate the development of impactful, multi-stakeholder contributions.
12. Several delegations noted the importance of focusing energy and attention on the implementation of the contributions post-Forum, and identified the Senior Officials Meeting in two years' time and the second Forum in 2023 as key opportunities for ensuring that displacement and comprehensive responses remain on the table for the improvement of the lives of refugees and host communities around the world.

III. Next steps

13. An informal briefing will be organized in early September 2019.
14. The next formal preparatory meeting will take place on 14 November 2019.