

Oral update on the outcomes of the High Commissioner's Dialogue
Remarks by the Director of the Division of Resilience and Solutions,

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meeting)

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Vice-Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 2022 High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges brought us together at the end of a challenging year. A year marked by new and unresolved conflicts, frequent and severe climate shocks and emergencies, chronic food insecurity, and crippling economic instability.

The latest figures on forcibly displaced individuals are alarming. In 2022, 103 million people were displaced worldwide. 1 in 77 people globally. Most refugees, IDPs, and stateless people live in low and lower-middle-income countries more susceptible to political and economic fragility. Considering these challenges, traditional humanitarian responses simply aren't enough. Instead, agile and nimble shifts in our approach are needed to advance protection, inclusion, and solutions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

One of the ways UNHCR hopes to achieve this is by deepening our engagement with other more non-traditional actors to build long-term support and secure durable solutions. In this regard, last year's Dialogue was a particularly timely one. Well-aligned with UNHCR's Strategic Directions, it sought to identify opportunities to broaden and bolster development cooperation between humanitarian, development, peace actors and international financial institutions as well as host countries and countries of origin in displacement settings.

To prepare for the Dialogue, UNHCR convened seven regional roundtables to explore and advance development cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement on a specific situation or country.

More than 500 stakeholders from various sectors, including States, international organizations, development actors, international financial institutions, peace actors, NGOs, the private sector, and refugee-led organizations came together to discuss three thematic pillars: early action, inclusion, and solutions – all underpinned by protection as the central objective.

The High Commissioner and the Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) kicked off the Dialogue by highlighting how development partnerships can support the realisation of protection and solutions. During the Dialogue, the High Commissioner stressed that development approaches **are not a substitute for humanitarian action and protection**. Instead, it should be viewed as a **complementary and essential tool that can be used to create new opportunities for protection**.

Two spotlight sessions followed, exploring each thematic pillar. Close to 200 interventions from the floor were made, all of which provided valuable insights and ways forward. States emphasized the role of development assistance in meeting their protection obligations and need for greater collaboration and burden-sharing.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to highlight the cross-cutting policy and operational messages which emerged from the Preparatory Regional Roundtables and the High Commissioner's Dialogue:

First, **national leadership is critical to spearheading development initiatives that address the causes and impacts of forced displacement and statelessness**. Refugees, IDPs, returnees, and stateless people need to be included into national development planning, emergency response, and climate adaptation strategies from the outset.

Second, **a need flexible and multi-year financing to support transitions from humanitarian to development assistance and support rights-based and protection-sensitive coordination between humanitarian, development, and peace actors in protracted displacement situations is imperative**.

Third, there was also a **strong call to ensure displaced and stateless communities meaningfully participate in policy and programme design as well as the implementation, and evaluation processes affecting them**. Although refugees were represented at the Dialogue and provided policy and programmatic interventions, **enhancing the depth and quality of the meaningful participation of this group during the preparations for and at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum (GRF) was seen as essential**.

Finally, in **all sessions, participants recalled the importance of collecting and analysing quality data to enable evidence-informed responses, programmes, and policies**. In this regard, inclusion in national data and statistical systems and disaggregated population data is critical. We continue to make good progress through the work of the World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The primary outcome of the Dialogue was to see how early action, inclusion, and solutions should be enabled and supported through meaningful and multi-stakeholder partnerships ahead of the GRF. There were many takeaways, but here are some of the important messages and proposed actions:

With **regards to early action**, stakeholders **proposed supporting local governments and communities with accessible financing, technical assistance, and consultative planning**. They emphasized the need to **revise flexible financing tools to boost local governments' access to financing and link local public service provision to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. Critically, local governments should be included in emergency response and development planning – as first responders.

At the national level, **we need to better integrate refugee and IDP emergency preparedness into risk reduction and resilience strategies and protection functions in national systems, such as asylum, birth and civil registration, social welfare, and justice**. Finally, the **link between climate action and preparedness and response planning was repeatedly highlighted, emphasizing the need to increase the coverage of climate risk analysis and improve access to climate finance**.

Regarding refugees' economic inclusion and inclusion in national systems, **stakeholders have emphasized the need to improve the development and utilization of the World Bank's**

Refugee Policy Review Framework and other policy analysis tools. These tools can be used to **identify policy bottlenecks and monitor progress thereby improving policy coordination** among actors. To facilitate inclusion, it was also suggested that host countries pair their policy pledges with donor pledges to provide financial, material, or technical support. This can be done through UNHCR's efforts to facilitate Pledge Matching.

The **need to build conducive ecosystems for financial and economic inclusion by removing barriers that prevent refugees from accessing to formal labour markets** was also highlighted. This includes **improving freedom of movement, legal rights to work, documentation, access to finance, and entrepreneurship**. The launch of the IFC-UNHCR Joint Initiative on Creating Markets in Forced Displacement Contexts is a promising step towards stimulating private sector engagement for refugees and their host communities.

On solutions, stakeholders focused on how to **promote sustainable returns and reintegration, by scaling up support for localisation and area-based approaches**. They also underscored the **importance of building refugees' skills while they are in host countries and integrating human rights, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention objectives into programming to address the root causes of displacement**. **The regional support platforms were highlighted as ways to support reforms led by governments to enable solutions**. Additionally, **fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships across sectors to advance complementary pathways was emphasized**.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Dialogue served as a useful springboard for preparations for the 2023 GRF. At the Dialogue, **stakeholders announced nine development cooperation initiatives to advance on key issues and address ongoing challenges**. These initiatives cover **academia in low- and middle-income countries advancing development policy, refugee education and employment, self-reliance, development & statelessness, data and statistical inclusion, youth participation, interfaith alliances, UN Common Pledge 2.0 and UNDP-UNHCR partnership**.

UNHCR plays a facilitative role, and we warmly invite you to join an initiative that best aligns with your areas of regional or thematic expertise and interest.

An outcome document is forthcoming and will provide greater insights on proposed policy and operational actions to drive country, regional, and global efforts towards the 2023 GRF.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for your continued and crucial engagement. We look forward to working together to build on the Dialogue's momentum towards the 2023 GRF.