

**FIFTEENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON  
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

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Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
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**CONTRIBUTION  
TO THE FIFTEENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION<sup>1</sup>**

*United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)*

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<sup>1</sup> The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

## A. UNHCR, DISPLACEMENT AND THE 2030 AGENDA

1. Forced displacement is one of the defining humanitarian and development challenges facing the world today. A decade ago, some 37.5 million people were displaced worldwide. By the end of 2015, this number had reached 65.3 million, including approximately 21.3 million refugees and 40.8 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). The duration of displacement is also increasing: protracted refugee situations across the globe now last an estimated 26 years on average.<sup>2</sup> Unless the basic needs and rights of those affected by forced displacement are addressed, the central ambition of the 2030 Agenda to ‘leave no one behind’ cannot hope to be realized.
2. With this in mind, UNHCR is committed to ensuring that the needs of displaced persons are taken into account in implementation of the Agenda and in measuring progress towards its goals. UNHCR is encouraging and supporting UN Member States to disaggregate data under relevant SDG indicators according to migratory status, and in particular to ensure adequate disaggregation to reflect the protection environment and well-being of refugees, the internally displaced, and stateless persons.
3. UNHCR, together with Eurostat and Statistics Norway, is leading the work of an Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics. Among other activities, it will work towards mainstreaming SDG indicators for the forcibly displaced within the work of national, regional and international statistical systems. UNHCR is advocating for the inclusion of a refugee-specific indicator in the SDG Indicator Framework. The absence of such an indicator would mean that, contrary to the importance accorded to refugees and other displaced persons in the preamble to the Agenda, forced displacement is not adequately reflected or measured under it.
4. UNHCR has worked within the UN, as well as with national development actors and regional bodies, to ensure that guidance to all UN country teams highlights the needs of the forcibly displaced, and that those needs are embedded in humanitarian and development plans of the UN through the ‘leave no one behind’ principle. In addition, UNHCR has issued guidance to its field offices to ensure participation in the implementation of the SDGs at country level, with a specific focus on education and access to services; on the right to legal identity; and on the inclusion of refugees, IDPs and stateless persons in national development plans.
5. Many Middle Income Countries (MICs)—which are home to 73% of the world’s poor<sup>3</sup>—are now significant refugee-hosting countries. In recognition of this fact, UNHCR together with partners such as the World Bank has recently worked to mobilize greater development financing for MICs, notably by advocating for access to concessional terms from multilateral development banks and helping to leverage stronger private sector involvement.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> UNHCR, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2015*, 20 June 2016, [www.refworld.org/docid/57678f3d4.html](http://www.refworld.org/docid/57678f3d4.html), p 20.

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/mic/overview>.

<sup>4</sup> In December 2016, the WB’s Board of Governors approved US\$ 2 billion to support refugee-hosting countries within its next round of International Development Association (IDA) lending over the period 2017-2019. It also approved a US\$ 14 billion allocation for States affected by fragility, conflict and violence (FCV). In 2017, joint WB-UNHCR planning missions to countries eligible for support under the IDA allocation for the refugee sub-window will be conducted to prepare programmes. To date, missions to Chad, Niger and Pakistan have been completed with further missions to other major refugee-hosting countries to be completed in the next three months. This is particularly important in the context of stabilizing States on the front line of regional security challenges in the Middle East and Africa.

6. Sustainable Development Goal 4, on education, is of particular importance to displaced persons. Key policy documents associated with Goal 4<sup>5</sup> include specific policy commitments to education for refugees and internally displaced persons. In 2016, UNHCR consistently advocated for operationalization of these commitments through a wide network of global, regional and local partnerships. UNHCR participates in the SDG 4 Steering Committee, and has advocated with UN Member States for inclusion of refugee-specific issues in regional policy and guidance, and consequently in country-level Education Sector Plans (ESPs) and monitoring frameworks. UNHCR signed an MOU in 2016 with the Global Partnership for Education aimed at including refugees in multi-year ESPs in 65 least developed countries. The educational needs of refugee children and young people have now been considered in the ESPs of Chad, Cameroon, Eritrea, Kenya, Niger, Pakistan, Rwanda, and South Sudan.
7. Regional advocacy in Latin and Central America has resulted in the Buenos Aires Declaration, which acknowledges the need for system adaptability for refugees and migrants so that SDG 4 objectives can be achieved in fragile contexts. UNHCR sits on the SDG 4 planning committee in Pakistan. For the first time, the needs of refugees in protracted displacement in that country are being considered in multi-year planning endeavours.
8. UNHCR is a member of the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children and will implement interventions—in particular on family strengthening in the Americas region—linked to the INSPIRE package<sup>6</sup> in 2017, in line with SDG 16.2.
9. Ongoing work under UNHCR’s statelessness mandate is directed at supporting the implementation of a number of relevant SDGs. Notably, UNHCR’s work with Member States to address an important cause of statelessness by addressing gender discrimination in nationality laws will contribute to progress towards SDG 5.1.<sup>7</sup> SDG 16.9, which aims at providing legal identity to all by 2030, recalls the importance of dedicated statelessness determination procedures which can identify and provide a protective status to stateless persons so that they can access their rights. It also highlights the importance of ensuring that all migrant and refugee children, including migrants in an irregular situation, are registered at birth as birth registration provides proof of where a child was born and who his or her parents are—information needed to establish a child’s entitlement to nationality and to prevent statelessness. UNHCR continues to encourage and support States who have not done so to accede to and implement the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.
10. UNHCR has supported the development of policy guidance within the UN system on how to address those SDGs which concern the eradication of trafficking in persons, modern slavery, forced labour, the worst forms of child labour and violence against women and children (notably

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<sup>5</sup> Notably the Incheon Declaration and Education 2030: Framework for Action.

<sup>6</sup> See *INSPIRE: Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children*, July 2016, [www.refworld.org/docid/57878f5e4.html](http://www.refworld.org/docid/57878f5e4.html)

<sup>7</sup> Globally, more than 20 countries do not permit mothers to confer their nationality on their children on an equal basis as fathers. In a number of these countries (Iraq, Liberia, Kiribati, Malaysia, the Bahamas and Barbados), while mothers can confer their nationality to children born in the territory of nationality, they are prevented from doing so when the child is born abroad. This can have particularly serious consequences for children born to migrant or refugee mothers who are prevented from conferring their nationality, where the child’s father is stateless, missing or unable to confer his nationality for other reasons. Such children may be rendered stateless, with substantial impacts on their enjoyment of basic human rights. See UNHCR, *Background Note on Gender Equality, Nationality Laws and Statelessness 2016*, 8 March 2016, [www.refworld.org/docid/56de83ca4.html](http://www.refworld.org/docid/56de83ca4.html).

SDGs 5.3, 16.2, and 8.7), and is an active participant in interagency forums such as the Interagency Coordination Group Against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT) and Alliance 8.7.

11. In November 2016, UNHCR organized a One UN side event on SDG 10 at the 2016 UN Climate Change Conference (COP22), with a focus on Climate Change and Human Mobility. The event brought together diverse perspectives from across the United Nations family to consider the varied human rights implications of climate change for human mobility, and to discuss possible solutions such as planned relocation, as well as concrete recommendations to implement the Paris Agreement. UNHCR is a member of the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) Task Team to develop a UN System Wide Strategic Approach on Climate Change. The Strategic Approach aims to ensure coherence of the UN system with regard to Climate Change, and to link responses to the climate change issue with implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. UNHCR is contributing to the Strategy under the focus area on “Peace and Security and Humanitarian-Climate Nexus”.

#### B. NEW YORK DECLARATION FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS AND RELATED ISSUES

12. The New York Declaration outlines the elements for a comprehensive response to large movements of refugees based on principles of international cooperation and responsibility sharing. It calls on UNHCR to develop and initiate the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) set out in Annex I to the Declaration for particular situations, in close coordination with relevant States and involving other UN agencies and stakeholders, and to assess the CRRF’s impact with a view to further refinement.
13. The High Commissioner has established a dedicated Task Team to assist with the application of the CRRF to a range of specific countries and situations, through consultation, practical application, and assessment phases. UNHCR is convening regular briefings with Member States, international organizations, NGOs, and other UN agencies, and has begun consultations at the national level in relation to confirmed CRRF pilot countries and situations.
14. Based on the experiences of applying the CRRF, the General Assembly has committed to adopting a Global Compact on Refugees in 2018. The High Commissioner for Refugees is tasked with proposing such a Global Compact on Refugees in his 2018 report to the General Assembly for the consideration of Member States, in conjunction with the annual ‘omnibus’ resolution of the General Assembly on the work of UNHCR. In 2017, the annual UNHCR-NGO Consultations and the High Commissioner’s Dialogue on International Protection will be devoted to implementation of the CRRF and development of the Global Compact on Refugees.
15. Alongside its work implementing the CRRF and developing the Global Compact on Refugees, UNHCR will support the development of the distinct Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, notably by contributing its protection and operational expertise, including through its continuing participation in and support for interagency and multilateral forums on international migration.
16. UNHCR has been an observer of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) since its inception, and engages with GFMD to contribute protection and operational expertise, and to enhance complementarity between the GFMD and discussions on refugees where there are shared areas of concern. In 2017, UNHCR looks forward to supporting the German and Moroccan co-chairs, and in particular to contributing to discussions on climate and disaster displacement, trafficking in persons, and statelessness.

17. The New York Declaration envisages that the Global Migration Group (GMG) will contribute to the negotiation process through which the Global Compact on Migration will be elaborated. UNHCR is also indicated as one of the entities with significant mandate and expertise that will contribute to the negotiation process.<sup>8</sup> UNHCR looks forward to collaborating with and supporting the GMG to develop a meaningful and coordinated input to the Global Compact on Migration.
18. UNHCR will continue to contribute to the GMG's work to develop principles and practical guidance on the protection of the human rights of migrants in vulnerable situations.<sup>9</sup> It will also support the State-led process foreseen in the New York Declaration to develop 'non-binding guiding principles and voluntary guidelines, consistent with international law, on the treatment of migrants in vulnerable situations ... who do not qualify for international protection as refugees and who may need assistance'.<sup>10</sup>
19. UNHCR was a member of the core working group for the State-led Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative, which launched voluntary and non-binding Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster in 2016. UNHCR continues to work closely with IOM and other partners to promote these Guidelines widely, and to operationalize them through the development of tools and capacity-building projects. In this regard, UNHCR is sharing its protection expertise to contribute to the development of a checklist on *Special Measures for Child Migrants in the Framework of Humanitarian Evacuations*.
20. In December 2016, UNHCR published an updated version of the *10-Point Plan in Action: Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration*.<sup>11</sup> The revised and updated *10-Point Plan in Action* includes over 120 new practical tools and examples to assist States and other stakeholders in developing 'protection-sensitive' responses to mixed migration.
21. UNHCR considers that the tools, practices and examples compiled in the new edition of the *10-Point Plan in Action*—as well as the 10-Point-Plan framework itself, which continues to guide UNHCR's approach to mixed migration—will be a valuable resource for the implementation of the New York Declaration and the development of the Global Compact on Migration. In 2017, UNHCR will roll out the updated *10-Point Plan in Action*, and will draw upon it in its contributions to processes under the New York Declaration.
22. In these times of unprecedented displacement and migratory flows, detention has become too routine a response to arrivals in too many countries, as well as being in most cases prolonged. It often takes place in conditions that fall far short of international standards. UNHCR has worked for many years on this issue. During the past five years it has notably commissioned and published research; partnered with civil society organizations; and produced guidelines and other tools. This work has confirmed UNHCR's view that detaining asylum-seekers and refugees is harmful, costly and less effective than alternatives measures. In June 2014, UNHCR launched its *Global Strategy: Beyond Detention 2014-19*, which aims to support governments—through interventions at country and regional level—to end the detention of asylum-seekers and refugees. The approach taken under the Strategy encompasses both advocacy with governments to promote

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<sup>8</sup> Paragraph 13 of Annex II.

<sup>9</sup> New York Declaration, Paragraph 51.

<sup>10</sup> Paragraph 52.

<sup>11</sup> The full updated *10-Point Plan in Action* is available at <http://www.unhcr.org/the-10-point-plan-in-action.html>.

respect for international law, and technical assistance to government stakeholders (such as enforcement agencies, child protection actors, and national human rights institutions) on setting up alternative care arrangements for children and alternatives to detention.

23. In August 2016, UNHCR took stock of progress under the Global Strategy through two reports: the *Baseline Report* and *Progress Report*.<sup>12</sup> The reports are based on quantitative and qualitative information gathered by UNHCR in the focus countries, informed by regular dialogues with all stakeholders, including immigration and other government departments, national human rights institutions, civil society, asylum-seekers, refugees and others. The reports compile actions undertaken under the Strategy, and highlight positive practices identified in the 12 participating countries. They are intended to serve as a basis for further constructive dialogue with national authorities and concerned stakeholders, and to guide decision-makers and practitioners in identifying and remedying any shortcomings in national frameworks relating to detention, as well as supporting policy design, especially in the area of reception and alternatives to detention.
24. In 2017, UNHCR will expand the number of countries engaged in the Global Strategy, with eight new countries committing to work closely on these goals and a number of others willing to engage on different aspects of the strategy, in line with paragraph 33 of the New York Declaration.
25. UNHCR has played a pioneering and instrumental role in highlighting protection gaps relating to cross-border disaster displacement, culminating in the endorsement of the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda for cross-border disaster displacement by 109 States in 2015. Since March 2016, UNHCR has supported the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) to implement the recommendations of the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda, in particular through the promotion of policy and normative development in gap areas. UNHCR, together with the PDD, will support the mainstreaming of climate-change and disaster-displacement issues in both the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.
26. In December 2016, building on the 19 September Summit on Refugees and Migrants, the High Commissioner for Refugees held his annual Dialogue on Protection Challenges on the theme of ‘children on the move’, including thematic sessions on pursuing regional approaches to protecting children on the move, operationalizing children’s rights, and securing solutions for children on the move. Areas identified for priority action included ending immigration detention of children and implementing alternatives, ending childhood statelessness and ensuring documentation and birth registration for all children, ensuring access to education and learning opportunities for children on the move, facilitating family reunification, and strengthening inclusive national child-protection systems. The outcomes of the Dialogue will inform application of the CRRF and work towards the Global Compact on Refugees.
27. In 2017, UNHCR will establish a Global Youth Advisory Council, to ensure that the voices of young people are heard in the development of the CRRF and the Global Compact on Refugees, as well as in UNHCR’s broader work. UNHCR will also strengthen its collection and production of specific, disaggregated data on refugee children and youth.
28. UNHCR has been active at the global, regional and national level to mobilize public support and empathy for people forced to flee. In March 2016, UNHCR held an expert meeting to discuss

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<sup>12</sup> See *Beyond Detention Baseline Report: Detention situation as of end 2013*, August 2016, [www.refworld.org/docid/57b851874.html](http://www.refworld.org/docid/57b851874.html) and *Beyond Detention Progress Report mid-2016*, August 2016, [www.refworld.org/docid/57b850dba.html](http://www.refworld.org/docid/57b850dba.html).

common strategies and approaches against racism and xenophobia. Much of what was agreed at the meeting is reflected in the Secretary-General's recently launched anti-xenophobia campaign, "Together". In 2016, UNHCR launched its #WithRefugees campaign. Over 1 million signatures gathered under the campaign were handed to the UN Secretary-General immediately before the 19 September 2016 New York Summit for Refugees and Migrants. The campaign aims by the end of 2018 to collect five million signatures; to mobilize a coalition of 500 organizations; and lend support to the adoption of a Global Compact for Refugees by the UN General Assembly.

29. The #WithRefugees campaign will continue until 2018, with the petition remaining as its central call to action for empathy and solidarity with refugees. In 2017-2018, through its growing coalition of supporters, the campaign will also aim to showcase grassroots efforts which support refugees and provide local examples of shared responsibility, amplifying a more positive narrative about refugees and inclusion.