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## “Towards a global compact on refugees”

### Thematic discussion four: Measures to be taken in the pursuit of solutions

14 November 2017

#### Panel two: How can we expand access to resettlement?

##### Summary

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Resettlement is a very important question on which to focus, with resettlement needs growing year-on-year. UNHCR has estimated that there will be 1.2 million refugees worldwide in need of resettlement in 2018.

The discussion benefitted from the contributions of a wide range of countries that are planning to resettle large numbers of refugees and to expand their resettlement programmes in the near future. There were a number of offers from the floor and from the podium to share experiences and provide assistance to new resettlement countries, and many ideas and proposals were put forward for the programme of action.

An overarching theme that emerged was the importance of cooperation, involvement and engagement with partners – including the refugees themselves and civil society actors – to strengthen and broaden resettlement opportunities. Expanding partnerships with actors such as academia, international organizations, civil society, private sector, refugee organizations and others are essential if we are to build welcoming communities and to achieve a coherent, strategic and quality resettlement response.

The aims and priorities set out in the concept paper were broadly welcomed, including:

- the need to expand resettlement opportunities, both through increasing the size of resettlement programmes and increasing the number of resettlement States;
- the importance of improving the responsiveness, quality and utility of resettlement, including through the development of a multi-year resettlement pledging process; and
- the necessity of strong partnerships in resettlement, including through adopting a whole-of-society approach to implementing resettlement programmes.

In addition, the specific suggestion to establish a **resettlement core group** in situations of large-scale displacement and protracted situations was broadly welcomed, with further information requested about the composition, functioning and objectives of such a group.

Furthermore, the following key themes emerged throughout the presentations and subsequent discussion:

1. Resettlement is an important protection tool and a durable solution for refugees, as well as an expression of international solidarity and burden- and responsibility-sharing.
2. The CRRF is ambitious when it comes to resettlement, with United Nations Member States aiming to provide resettlement places and other legal pathways on a scale that would enable the annual resettlement needs identified by UNHCR to be met.
  - In order for this level of ambition to be met in future, the programme of action must include proposals for how access to resettlement can be expanded. Such efforts should also be complementary with other solutions and other forms of support.

- The programme of action must also be practical, however. The voluntary nature of resettlement action and the need to keep national capacities in mind were also emphasised.
3. Expanding resettlement has both vertical and horizontal elements:
    - ‘Vertical’ expansion involves the growth of existing national programmes over time to meet the growing need, while ‘horizontal’ expansion involves growing the number of countries with resettlement programmes.
    - Emerging resettlement countries face a range of challenges, including in relation to resourcing and ensuring quality integration outcomes. The Emerging Resettlement Countries Joint Support Mechanism was highlighted as a valuable and practical tool to support the development of tailored programmes to strengthen emerging resettlement programmes, including through support to identification, referral, public awareness raising, network expansion, capacity-building, and integration activities.
  4. Expanding access to resettlement also involves ensuring the quality of the solutions that resettlement provides to those who need it, particularly those with specific needs.
    - The need to ensure that resettlement programmes retain their humanitarian and protection underpinnings was emphasized.
    - The specific needs of women and girls were highlighted in this regard, as was the use of emergency transit facilities, which ensure the safety of those who are most-at-risk whilst they await emergency resettlement.
  5. Whilst it was emphasized that efforts to expand access to resettlement must be tailored to the country in question, a number of common elements were evident, including:
    - the importance of whole-of-government approaches that embrace a wide range of ministries from national governments, but—crucially—also local authorities;
    - the role that civil society can play, both in terms of operational and case work, but also in the form of public awareness and sustaining public support;
    - the importance of communities in supporting resettlement, including through host families, community support structures, and private and community sponsorship programmes; and
    - the potential role for refugees themselves, including through employing them to work to improve national resettlement programmes.

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*UNHCR*  
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