

First Preparatory Meeting of the Global Refugee Forum

Centre de conférence Genève (CICG), Geneva - 29 March 2019

Summary of discussions

I. Introduction

1. The Global Compact on Refugees, affirmed by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2018, called on the High Commissioner for Refugees, in consultation with States and other stakeholders, to convene a periodic Global Refugee Forum for all United Nations Member States, together with relevant stakeholders, to announce concrete pledges and contributions towards the objectives of the Global Compact.¹
2. In line with UNHCR's "roadmap" document,² on 29 March 2019 the Office convened the first 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 for the Global Refugee Forum, the draft indicators for progress towards the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees, and the areas of focus for the pledging and contributions process and the sharing of good practices for the first Global Refugee Forum.
3. Almost 300 representatives from States, international and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, together with experts and refugees, participated in a constructive discussion. A number of written contributions were also received.
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 discussions

5. It was recognized that the Global Refugee Forum would be a key opportunity to create, develop, and strengthen the architecture and arrangements needed to implement the Global Compact over the longer term, translating the principles of increased solidarity and more equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing into concrete action. The Global Refugee Forum would advance the objectives of the Global Compact through pledges and contributions and the exchange of good practices.
6. The presentation of the organizational arrangements of the Global Refugee Forum, including multi-stakeholder co-sponsorships, contained in the background paper was broadly welcomed as a basis on which to proceed. Further elaboration on these at the second preparatory meeting on 25 June was welcomed.
7. The commitment and interest on the part of the international community to collectively define and measure progress against the objectives of the Global Compact was unequivocal. The draft

¹ Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Part II, Global Compact on Refugees (A/73/12 (part II), paragraph 7.

² UNHCR, "Towards the first Global Refugee Forum: a roadmap of the preparatory process, 26 February 2019, available via: <https://www.unhcr.org/global-refugee-forum.html>.

indicators were broadly recognized as a strong starting point for the monitoring and evaluation of the Global Compact's implementation. Several participants noted the importance of disaggregating the data by age, gender and diversity; of collecting both qualitative and quantitative data; of looking at both immediate and longer-term issues; of finding the right balance between global and national/local indicators, noting that context is important; and of engaging Member States and other stakeholders throughout the process.

8. The presentation of the areas of focus for the first Global Refugee Forum, described in more detail in the background paper, was broadly welcomed.³ Further information on the Support Platforms was requested by a number of participants. The mobilization of a broader range of States and other stakeholders was recognized as key to broadening the existing base of support in terms of financial, material, and technical support, additional resettlement opportunities and complementary pathways, as well as other actions, such as policy commitments.
9. The multi-stakeholder and partnerships approach set out in the Global Compact on Refugees was recognized as providing a useful framework for the engagement of a broader set of actors in the preparations for the Forum – including through the development of multi-stakeholder contributions and by taking on a co-sponsorship role – as well as the Forum itself.
10. In particular, the commitment to ensuring the involvement of refugees in the processes that affect their lives was unequivocal. Host community and refugee involvement should be central to the Global Refugee Forum, and would need to be guided by gender, age and diversity considerations.

III. Follow-up

11. UNHCR continues to welcome feedback on the preparations towards the Global Refugee Forum. This can be sent to the Global Refugee Forum Coordination Team at hqgrf@unhcr.org.
12. The next preparatory meeting will take place on 25 June 2019, with a focus on the content and format of the Global Refugee Forum.

³ The areas of focus for the first Global Refugee Forum consist of arrangements for burden- and responsibility-sharing, education, jobs and livelihoods, energy and infrastructure, solutions and protection capacity.