

NGO statement on Agenda item 1 on Organisational Arrangements

Dear Chair,

This statement was drafted through a wide consultation with NGOs.

NGOs continue to see the first Global Refugee Forum as a crucial milestone to translate the Refugee Compact into actions. We greatly appreciate the amount of additional information provided by UNHCR since March. This is very helpful to reach a shared understanding of the scope of the event, and how all can contribute. We are committed to making the Forum a success.

With this additional information and following a series of exchanges with various stakeholders, we wish to share the following recommendations.

On pledges and contributions:

The guidance note on pledges, contributions and good practices is helpful and we particularly commend the emphasis on AGD and disability considerations. We call on all actors to visibly integrate these in their pledges and contributions. In keeping with the GCR commitments and supported by UNHCR's 5 Commitments to Refugee Women, this should include a focus on the needs and rights of refugee women and girls.

Moreover, we wish to reiterate that pledges must be *matching* collectively identified needs, gaps and opportunities in *existing* refugee situations so that they lead to concrete changes in the lives of refugees and host communities. We also call for national preparations to ensure pledges and contributions can match hosting countries' priorities, are owned by national stakeholders and accountable to affected population.

We welcome the fact that, in some national contexts, UNHCR has taken initiatives to convene consultative meetings with key stakeholders, aiming to initiate discussions on possible pledges and contributions for the Forum. We also hope that the outcomes of national consultations will be taken forward by the co-sponsors of each focus area.

We are fully supportive of the primary objective of the Forum which is to mobilise new and specific pledges and contributions, avoiding repackaged commitments. Real advances in international responses to refugee protection will only be achieved if we commit to *change* and *additionality*.

On co-sponsorship:

The appointment of focal points for each focus area is welcomed and we thank UNHCR for the recent clarifications on their vision and scope. We are eagerly waiting for focal points to arrange the first meetings of co-sponsors so that details regarding pledges, sharing of good practices and arrangements for the Forum can be further discussed.

Noting that co-sponsorship groups are envisaged as platforms for *contributors*, and contributors only, we are concerned that this format will not offer space for stakeholders to express and showcase their specific gaps, and encourage contributions to match these needs. We strongly encourage UNHCR to address this disconnect, which may lead to pledges and contributions that will not target existing needs and gaps.

On the importance of refugee participation at the Forum:

NGOs believe that refugees, both resettled and in host countries must speak for themselves and play a key role in determining how to prioritize policies, programmes, implementation and financing processes. Equal number of refugee women and men should be included, with representation of young people, disability organisations and other communities.

We strongly encourage *all* States to consider inviting refugees as part of their delegation. We also encourage States to support refugee-led networks in their preparations for the Forum. Finally, co-sponsors should coordinate with these initiatives to enable them to assess, inform or contribute to pledges and contributions.

On tracking and monitoring pledges:

While we do not want to discourage good contributions with a burdensome accountability mechanism, we also stress the importance of having a tracking system structured around the focus areas *and* connected with the GCR objectives and indicators. Unless the pledging process quickly aligns with the GCR monitoring system, we risk seeing a plethora of pledges impossible to track. A tracking system can also help stakeholders fulfil their commitments and support responsibility-sharing.

We therefore call for a credible and AGD sensitive accountability framework to track pledges and contributions, to be finalized before the Forum. While we recognize the ‘iterative process’, major revisions in the framework after the Forum would jeopardise the credibility of the GCR monitoring by continually changing the goalposts and related baselines.

NGOs look forward to continuing a fruitful exchange ahead of the Forum.

A detailed version of the statement is available on icvanetwork.org

Thank you.