

Position Paper #4-5

Measures to be taken in pursuit of solutions and issues that cut across all four substantive sections of the comprehensive refugee responses and overarching issues

Republic of Korea

Support for voluntary and sustainable return

The Republic of Korea reaffirms that fostering the re-establishment of conditions that would allow refugees to return in voluntary and sustainable way is crucial. States and other relevant stakeholders should support countries of origin to achieve development and restore essential public services, social infrastructure, the rule of law, and legal and institutional frameworks ensuring the enjoyment of fundamental human rights. As a specific measure to fulfill this end, establishing a support group would be helpful in identifying challenges, pooling technical and financial assistance to overcome these barriers, and seeking ways to facilitate participation of refugees and returnees in the reconstruction processes.

Expanding access to resettlement

Resettlement programmes can be sustainable in the long-run if social, cultural and historical contexts as well as possibilities of successful social integration of refugees in the hosting counties are properly considered. In this regard, the Korean government believes that it is more desirable to establish a general guide allowing each state's flexible application depending on their circumstances than to apply a single standard or a quota to each state's distinct resettlement programmes. This approach will deter one-size-fits-all solutions and help engage more countries introduce resettlement programmes.

The Republic of Korea upholds the importance of expanding partnership with various stakeholders. With regard to refugee resettlement, the partnership facilitates social inclusion of refugees by engaging actors at the local level where the refugee resettlement actually takes place, and allows hosting countries to share their burden with their partners. For instance, multinational corporations can make contribution not only by offering financial assistance but also by providing refugees with training programmes, sponsorship and employment to increase the refugees' self-reliance.

Expanding access to complementary pathways for admission

The Republic of Korea believes that states and other relevant actors should discuss how to design and expand complementary pathways including medical evacuation and humanitarian admission programmes, family reunification and opportunities for skilled migration, labour mobility and education that benefit refugees, countries of origin and countries of asylum. Sharing best practices of each country and drawing lessons from them will be helpful to identify ways that are beneficial for all of those involved in the solutions.

The Republic of Korea also encourages the UNHCR to establish a basic guideline for complementary pathways. There are no international standards or modules yet unlike the existing traditional resettlement programmes. If the UNHCR sets a general direction or principle on complementary pathways by collecting and analyzing cases of different countries, it can raise awareness on alternative ways for admission, thereby enabling states to expand complementary pathways.

Addressing root causes of large movements of refugees

The Republic of Korea reaffirms that addressing the root causes of large movements of refugees should be one of the priorities in the programme of action. Preventing conflict and building peace are of utmost importance, considering the gravity of conflict as a primary driver of forced displacement, as indicated by the UNHCR in its Strategic Direction 2017-2021. In this regard, taking measures to link conflict prevention, peacebuilding and refugee assistance is helpful. These measures can include: providing assistance to maintain civilian character of refugee camps and promote democracy, and good governance and human rights in countries of origin and countries of asylum.

Protracted refugee crisis requires mid and long-term solutions. States, the UNHCR and other relevant stakeholders should assist countries of origin and those of asylum to achieve sustainable development and facilitate integration of refugees to national development plans. Complementary pathways for admission are one of the effective ways to empower refugees and enhance their capacity to contribute to the development of their homeland.

Taking an integrated approach to link peace and security, protection and development will be conducive to better addressing the root causes of the refugee crisis. We expect that this will allow a more comprehensive and effective response to forced displacement. /END/