



STATEMENT BY MRS. KIRSTEN HAGON

First Formal Consultation on the Global Compact on Refugees

February 13th and 14th 2018

Geneva, Palais des Nations, Room XVIII

Madame Chair,

Thank you for giving the floor to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

Let me start by congratulating UNHCR for their leadership of the process thus far, which culminates today with the first formal consultation on the Programme of Action of the Global Compact on Refugees.

The IFRC wishes to highlight the unique opportunity which is given to us today, as an international community, to do better at sharing our global humanitarian responsibilities towards refugees and asylum seekers, enhancing refugee self reliance and easing the pressure on countries that welcome and host them.

The Global Compact on Refugees should ultimately be about greater cooperation and solidarity among States, including through additional funding and efficient use of resources. We support the call for **flexible, unearmarked, multi year funding** as a key part of this, however we would also suggest it is important to add that funding needs to **equitable, predictable and principled**.

We would therefore recommend that these additional elements are added.

Madame Chair,

The Zero Draft is ambitious, as it should be, in providing a programme of action that asks that refugees have **better access to health, education and livelihood opportunities and that refugees are included in their host communities from the very beginning**. This is vital for refugee self reliance. We all know from

experience that any **international assistance must benefit host communities as well as refugees, and particularly marginalized groups within them.**

Local and national actors – including governments, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, refugee-led organizations and communities themselves – play a key role in meeting the needs of refugees and host communities. These actors have a distinct added value in a refugee response: local actors are fast because they are close, they have a strong understanding of local circumstances, politics and culture and they are there for the long haul.

When designing the Global Compact on Refugees, it is essential that we - as a humanitarian community – recognize, promote and commit to do more to support this essential role of civil society and communities, of local and national actors in support for refugees.

We therefore recommend that acknowledgement of the critical role of local actors is strengthened throughout the *Zero Draft*, recognizing their distinct added value as well as the importance of supporting their capacity to provide a quality, sustainable and principled humanitarian response.

We do hope that these comments will be taken into consideration in the revised version of the draft and we look forward to further engaging and contributing to the formal consultations.

Thank you for your attention.