

Statement by Denmark

First draft of the Global Compact on Refugees

Agenda item 1: Introduction (goals, background, root causes)

Check against delivery

Mr. Chairman,

- Aligning with the statement by the EU let me start by thank the UNHCR for a very good revised first draft with many improvements fully in line with the New York Declaration and the agreed CRRF and also reflecting the fruitful discussions during the first formal consultation on the refugee compact. It is indeed an iterative process, we have engaged in.
- The revised draft maintains a balanced approach while adding, in our view, a more ambitious approach to what was in the zero draft – as requested during the first formal consultations. In short, the draft is well done and we want to compliment UNHCR for their efforts. We are not there yet, but we are moving forward.
- We strongly welcome the goal of increased responsibility and burden sharing being more clearly set out in the text and that the revised draft goes further in outlining how governments can commit themselves to building the necessary predictable and comprehensive responses.
- We especially welcome the more committal and inclusive language that encompasses all UN member states as well as other stakeholders such as development actors and international financial institutions. We also welcome the focus on including more countries in the equitable responsibility and burden sharing with a view to more comprehensive responses.
- We welcome the reference to the existing legal framework, including the cardinal principle of *non-refoulement*. We do feel that the centrality of protection and humanitarian principles could still be emphasized more.

- We welcome the explicit reference to the GCR being legally non-binding – also to ensure that it is clear that we are not setting new standards but building upon the existing legal framework for the protection of refugees.
- We warmly welcome that the draft is strengthened in regards to gender, age and diversity, incl. persons with disabilities – this approach should be streamlined throughout the text.
- We find it important with the clear statement of goals for the GCR in para. 5, incl. the highlighting of solutions, the right of refugees and the need for enhanced socio-economic conditions for refugees, particularly women and girls – who are disproportionately affected when crisis hit.
- We particularly note the clear reference to a stronger and more predictable humanitarian AND development response (in para. 7) consistent with national development strategies and also in line with the overall goal of *leaving no one behind* as set out in the 2030 agenda and the sustainable development goals.
- We strongly welcome the focus on increasing the resilience of host communities and refugees through education livelihoods etc. as well as the focus on root causes. This is critically important and will also be an important factor in ensuring durable solutions for refugees, not least in facilitating the prospects of voluntary repatriation in safety and dignity.
- We acclaim the strong recognition of the need for sustained, nationally led, inclusive approaches supported by development actors with additional, flexible and multiannual funding as well as the references to and focus on preventing and addressing root causes.
- The inclusion of a reference to the ongoing UN reforms in the areas of prevention, peace, security, development and peacebuilding and to the Grand Bargain, is important, but we would like to see a reference to the New Way of Working added. The CRRF is NWOW in practice and we need to acknowledge that ‘doing business’ the way it has always been done will not provide solutions to the plight of refugees nor better responsibility sharing. We need to embrace – wholeheartedly – the humanitarian-development nexus also in this context to ensure a better outcome, incl. stronger protection, for the refugees of this world and indeed for the communities that host them. At the same time we

are cognizant of the need to factor in application of the CRRF given the specific context of any given country as well as an appropriate timeline for implementation of the CRRF.

- There is a balance to be struck, but it is important that the level of ambition remains high.
- We recommend that the document could still be strengthened in terms of 1) a description of roles and responsibilities, including space for other stakeholders, involvement of development actors and an approach which is government led, 2) stronger accountability, 3) Stronger focus on involvement of civil society and refugees themselves, including in the follow up.
- Let me wind up by once more stressing that we look forward to engaging in the process towards the global compact on refugees.
- I thank you.