

# WRITTEN CONTRIBUTION

## OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF MEXICO TO THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEE'S SECOND AND THIRD THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS

Geneva, October 17th and 18th, 2017

### Introduction

- As we all know, the number of people forced to leave their countries is the highest since World War II.
- Today, more than ever, we have a clear responsibility to **increase international solidarity**, and expand and strengthen our capacity to provide **timely and dignified protection** to refugees.
- It is essential that our response to this global humanitarian situation is based on a **comprehensive and long-term vision**, in which **human rights** are placed at the center. A vision based on **share responsibility** between countries of origin, transit and destination, and enhanced by **regional and international cooperation**.
- Last year, at the Conference to Address the Large Movement of Refugees and Migrants, which resulted in the New York Declaration, we recognized the urgency of adopting new understandings to face this reality that is and will continue to be present in our societies.
- This is why we committed to adopt a Global Compact on Refugees that could provide **better tools** for responding to the large movements of refugees or protracted refugee situations, through the development of a **Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework** and a **Program of Action**.
- Mexico joined the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework for the Americas, convinced that it will allow us to identify what has worked in the past and to try new tools to address protection needs in the sub-region.
- We expect that the implementation of the CRRF in different countries will provide concrete results that can inform and enrich the discussions of the Global Compact on Refugees.

- We reaffirm our commitment towards an instrument that **reflects the best practices**, taking into consideration the **individual context** of each country.

October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### **Panel 1: How can we better prepare for and respond rapidly to large movements of refugees?**

- In parallel to the adoption of the New York Declaration, last year Mexico cohosted the Leaders' Summit on Refugees, in which we announced **seven new commitments**, aimed at strengthening our national refugee system and provided the basis for the implementation of a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.
- These commitments intend to improve Mexico's **ability to respond** in a timely and comprehensive manner in situation involving large-scale movements of refugees.
- With a long-term vision and the support of international organizations and agencies, such as UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM and the ICRC, and the valued participation of civil society, Mexico has promoted concrete actions to implement these commitments, which can become positive experiences and good practices for other countries facing similar challenges. Allow me to elaborate on some of these commitments:
  1. To strengthen the **political dialogue** with countries in the region, including Central America, as well as with the United States and Canada in order to promote collaboration and better coordination vis-à-vis refugee situations.
  2. To promote the **socio-economic inclusion** of people recognized as refugees, with the aim of supporting their empowerment. In collaboration with UNHCR, last June, Mexico conducted a first survey applied to the refugee population, whose purpose is to identify their specific needs to be able to develop well-suitable programs and action.
  3. **Strengthen eligibility procedures** based on international standards. We developed guidelines for migration officers and other government official in better carrying out the refugee status determination. These guidelines promote a fair and efficient decision-making process that complies with due process.

4. Strengthen the presence of Mexico's refugee protection agency (COMAR) in the most frequent migration corridors, with the aim of expanding its **ability to intercept, assess and provide timely and adequate assistance** to people on the move with international protection needs.
  5. Promote **alternatives to the administrative detention** for asylum seekers applicants, in particular children, based on the principle of the best interest of the child, and family unit.
  6. With the support of UNHCR and civil society, we have implemented information campaigns to disseminate information regarding the **right to seek international protection**.
  7. In collaboration with UNICEF and UNHCR, we developed a protocol to assist migration officers in **identifying children with international protection needs**, as one of the most vulnerable populations in refugee situations.
- Therefore, Mexico has gradually implemented actions to create a **humane and more efficient system** to process asylum seeker's applications, **facilitate adjudication proceedings** and **promote the integration of refugees**.

#### **Panel 4: Addressing specific needs within large movements:**

##### **Ensuring the protection of children.**

- There is no doubt that refugee children require special attention by the simple fact of being children.
- When they are in need of international protection, they are more exposed to physical and mental violence, exploitation, illnesses, food insecurity and many other situation that attempt against their fundamental rights.
- This is why refugee children need to be among the first populations to receive protection and assistance in any refugee situation.
- Any response to the movement of refugee children in origin, transit and destination countries must be equally **consistent** with the rights and principles that are in accordance with **international human rights law, humanitarian law and refugee law**, especially those safeguarding children.

- Mexico has experienced a considerable increase in the number of unaccompanied children coming from Central America, some of which are in need of international protection and are granted refugee status.
- The Mexican Government has strengthened its legal framework to address this challenge by adopting a **new law on the rights of children and adolescent in 2014**.
- This law has helped my country to **integrate fully the rights of children and adolescents** into policies and programs aimed at responding in a **humane and comprehensive** manner to refugee situations.
- For example, in collaboration with UNICEF and UNHCR, we developed a protocol to assist migration officers in identifying children with international protection needs.

October 18th, 2017

### **Panel 1: How can we mobilize more resources for humanitarian and development assistance to host States?**

- The process towards the adoption of a Global Compact on Refugees is an excellent opportunity to reinforce and put in practice the goal of **reinforcing the links between the humanitarian and development realms**.
- Even though the CRRF has been conceived as a prominent tool to provide protection, there is an important level of involvement for humanitarian actors through the **promotion of strategic partnerships**.
- Mexico would like to see greater participation from **development regional stakeholders**, such as the Inter-American Development Bank and other mechanisms from Central America, to support the roll-out process of the regional chapter of the CRRF.
- The adoption of a **preventive approach** could also lead to channels to address the **root causes of displacement**, not only in host countries, but also in transit and origin communities, reducing long-term burdens.

- The “beyond aid” approach suggested in the concept paper for this thematic consultation can be strengthened by incorporating support to the development of infrastructure, capacity building, etc.
- The participation of the **private sector**, not only as a donor, but also as a proactive actor is an essential component. Reinvigorating the local economy by supporting local Small and Medium Enterprises could generate new jobs, sources of income and diversification, while also providing better opportunities to local communities and refugees themselves.

**Panel 4: How can we bring innovation to humanitarian assistance to achieve greater efficiency, effectiveness and accountability?**

- Mexico welcomes the suggestions provided for discussing the **role of innovation in humanitarian settings**, to make the most of the limited resources the humanitarian field has today.
- In addition to those elements, we would like to emphasize the need to invest in building and strengthening national and local **capacities on preparedness and response**, in cases of humanitarian emergencies, including displacement.
- Ensure resources and support to prevention and resilience-building in origin and destination countries, with a focus on host communities.
- Facilitate needs assessments to improve humanitarian programming.
- Improve coordination and communication of the stakeholders deployed in the field, under the leadership of the concerned governments.
- It would be useful to take into account the lessons learnt from the **World Humanitarian Summit** in this regard, in terms of needs identification, partnerships, investment and management.