

## Update on GRF Preparations for Standing Committee – 14 September 2023

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are today only 90 days away from the opening of the second Global Refugee Forum. This great whole-of-society gathering is our opportunity, and our challenge: to make transformational pledges that ease the pressures on countries hosting large numbers of refugees; and to work towards durable solutions for refugee situations.

You are all aware of the scale of the refugee problem. Just as confounding is the fact that whereas in the past refugee situations began and were eventually resolved, today they seem to persist, leaving millions in protracted exile for years and decades.

It is urgent that we focus on the human lives that are wasted and squandered in indefinite limbo, and use the GRF to make a real difference to them, and to the societies that so generously and patiently host them.

The GRF is our platform, and pledges are the means by which we will achieve results. Our strongest message to all of you today is to focus on pledging. Pledging to operationalise international solidarity and burden sharing; pledging to unblock impasses and instigate action; and pledging to rally us all behind the concept that hosting and protecting refugees is a global public good.

Over these past months, in my function as the lead on diplomatic and external engagement for the GRF, I have had the privilege of working with many States and other stakeholder groups on identifying, conceptualising, and amplifying various pledge initiatives. It is deeply encouraging to see these maturing, and I hope that we can showcase more audacious and scalable demonstrations of international solidarity, drawing from the valuable lessons learned and successes of the inaugural Forum of 2019.

We hope to see these new and innovative pledges develop further. Whether financial, material, technical, or in the form of inclusive policies, these pledges should be quantifiable, needs-driven, and sustainable, forming a foundation for lasting engagement.

And for the Second GRF to be a true milestone, and worthy of our effort, we hope to see some of these pledges assume the level of a mega-pledge: a pledge that is truly transformational, inspirational, multi-stakeholder, multi-year and that measurably makes a difference to refugees and their hosts.

There are also topics of pressing importance that are in search of leadership. These include, for example, climate, housing/land/property, health, agriculture.

With time pressing, and a sense of urgency in the air, we would like to respectfully call on our distinguished ExCom Members to sincerely explore:

- Taking leadership of pledges that are as yet lacking this
- Advancing pledge matching. Matching amongst stakeholders is what gives our pledges unity of purpose, and the power to make a difference.

Our website provides information on how to most effectively make and match pledges.

It is equally important that we continue implementation of commitments made in 2019. While commendable progress has been made, there is more work to be done.

Distinguished Delegates,

La participation significative, des réfugiés et leur inclusion dans toutes les étapes et tous les aspects des processus décisionnels qui les concernent restent une priorité pour nous. Nous sommes également très heureux qu'au moins

deux tiers des événements parallèles en cours de développement prévoient la participation d'orateurs réfugiés, conformément à notre objectif commun de garantir que les réfugiés et les organisations dirigées par des réfugiés soient impliqués de manière significative tout au long du Forum mondial sur les réfugiés et des processus associés. Ces décisions sont le résultat de mois de consultations, reflétant notre engagement envers les quatre objectifs du Pacte mondial sur les réfugiés.

Distinguished delegates,

We have high hopes for a Global Refugee Forum that harnesses international solidarity, and mobilises political will towards our goal of addressing the global refugee situation. In concluding, I would like to leave you with some specific actions that you may wish to consider, to demonstrate sustained engagement in the Forum:

1. Implement pledges from the first Forum.
2. Develop new high-quality, ambitious, and measurable pledges; and amplify your ambition towards making mega-pledges
3. Contribute to or co-lead multi-stakeholder pledges
4. Prioritize pledge matching to support host country policies, including through multi-stakeholder pledges.
5. Adopt a whole-of-government approach.
6. Include a refugee advisor as part of your delegations.
7. Participate at a high-level in the GRF.

We look forward to your continued commitment.

We thank you.