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**Statement by**

**H.E. Mato Škrabalo, Ambassador, Acting Director-General for  
Multilateral And Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign and  
European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia at the  
Global Refugee Forum,**

**United Nations, Geneva, 18 December 2019**

- Let me start by **thanking the co-conveners**<sup>AND CO-HOSTS</sup> for organizing this first Global Refugee Forum.
- I am pleased for being able to participate in this debate, and I look forward to **exchanging views** with other stakeholders on good practices and experiences for the wellbeing of the refugees across the world.
- My country Croatia retains a **dedicated and active role** in implementing the comprehensive responses envisaged in the Global Compact for Refugees.
- Our history and recent practice have shown that **we do not shy away** from offering protection and help to those in need.
- We have been building our **reception and protection system** for refugees and asylum seekers since the 1990-es, when we hosted around 1 million refugees and internally displaced persons.
- We believe that in order to truly influence and transform the lives of refugees and host communities it is important to **act together** and create **inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships**.
- Precisely this approach is interwoven within our **three pledges** that we have announced for the Global Refugee Forum.
- The **first** pledge is within our co-sponsorship for **Jobs and Livelihoods** theme. The **second** pledge falls under the **Education theme**, and the **third** pledge under **Solutions**, more precisely **resettlement and relocation**.

- As part of this comprehensive approach, Croatian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs in collaboration with UNICEF is implementing the **project for Syrian children refugees in Jordan**, which will be finalized in April next year.
- The aim of the project is to improve learning conditions in refugee camps in Jordan - **Azraq** and **Za'atari** - by building five inclusive playgrounds with access for children with physical disabilities. Total cost was 200.000 EUR.
- Likewise, we are implementing another project worth 200.000 EUR in cooperation with **UN Women**. This project **targets** 110 women – Syrian and Palestinian refugees and vulnerable Lebanon nationals; **provides** them with high quality and market-based ICT skills training, and **supports** their access to temporary or full-time employment at the local market. The aim is ensure **economic empowerment** of women thereby influencing the change in perception of the role of women in the society.
- Moreover, Croatia actively implements program for resettlement of applicants for international protection, and has **fulfilled its commitment** to resettle 250 Syrian refugees from Turkey.
- In this context, in February 2019, Croatian Government adopted a decision to resettle **additional 100 Syrian refugees from Turkey**, and to make available the possibility to relocate, as a matter of solidarity, 50 applicants for international protection from other EU Member States.
- I believe that these examples clearly demonstrate that, even in times of pressing challenges, Croatia is **firmly committed** to providing assistance to refugees, in particular by addressing root causes and creating conditions in countries of origin for voluntary return of refugees in safety and in dignity.

Thank you.