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Summary of the First Quarterly Informal Briefing on the Global Compact on Refugees

26 March 2024, 15:00-17:00 hrs. CET

The First Quarterly Informal Briefing on the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) was held on 26 March 2024 to discuss the [Outcomes of the Global Refugee Forum \(GRF\) 2023](#) and the [Roadmap to the High-Level Officials Meeting 2025 \(HLOM\)](#). The UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection (AHC-P) Ms. Ruvendrini Menikdiwela opened the session by presenting the panellists and agenda. She then passed the floor to H.E. Mr. Jürg Lauber, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, for opening remarks. The UNHCR GCR Coordination Team then presented the GRF 2023 outcomes and the roadmap to HLOM 2025.

Summary of the opening of the meeting by Ms. Ruvendrini Menikdiwela, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection (AHC-P), UNHCR

Ms. Menikdiwela introduced the panellists and the agenda for the briefing. She invited feedback on the HLOM roadmap, as well as updates on pledge entities' plans for pledge follow up and implementation, during the session. She also thanked the International Labour Organization (ILO) for hosting the informal briefings on the GCR in 2024 and invited participants to visit an exhibition on the ILO premises entitled "Portraits from PROSPECTS," visualising change in refugee and host communities.

Summary of opening remarks by H.E. Mr. Jürg Lauber, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

Amb. Lauber welcomed participants to the first gathering of GCR stakeholders since the GRF 2023, which was also the first meeting chaired by UNHCR's new AHC-P, Ms. Menikdiwela, to whom he extended a special welcome. He noted that the briefing would be an opportunity to hear about the remarkable outcomes of the recent GRF, as well as giving a space to discuss the roadmap designed to guide stakeholders in carrying forward the pledges and commitments made at the GRF. Participants were invited to share their feedback on the roadmap, as well as their ideas and plans as leaders of multi-stakeholder pledges for implementation and follow-through. He reflected that the GRF 2023 was a resounding success despite the challenging global context. An example of "modern multilateralism in action", it brought together a diverse set of stakeholders to tackle the global challenge of displacement. He affirmed that the HLOM in 2025 will be a key moment to take stock of the progress of pledges and recognise new pledges and emerging good practices.

Summary of opening remarks by Ms. Ruvendrini Menikdiwela, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, UNHCR

Ms. Menikdiwela welcomed participants to this first of four informal briefings on the GCR to be held in 2024. She thanked Amb. Lauber for his insightful opening remarks and Switzerland's unwavering commitment as the co-host of the GRF. She also thanked hundreds of States and partners for their

invaluable contributions to the GRF, both in terms of participation in the event but also in the substantive and bold pledges that they advanced. She reflected that the GRF was a great success in terms of the diversity and dynamism of the event, pledges made, and partnerships forged. Despite a challenging geopolitical landscape, it built a stronger community in a spirit of constructive engagement and unity around a common purpose of improving refugee responses and easing pressures. The GRF demonstrated that the Global Compact on Refugees is a powerful tool for fostering international solidarity and effective cooperation. She then shared some notable highlights from the GRF, which were captured in the Outcome Document:

- The collective efforts of partners within the GCR resulted in 47 multi-stakeholder pledges.
- More than 1,700 pledges were recorded, surpassing the first GRF. Some 1,300 pledges were made to support one or more multi-stakeholder pledges.
- In a truly whole-of-society spirit, one-third of pledges were made by States and the remaining two-thirds by other stakeholders, including development actors, faith groups, private companies, foundations, civil society, UN agencies, and others.
- The number of non-State actors making pledges tripled since 2019, demonstrating a broadened base of support.

Ms. Menikdiwela emphasised that it is imperative to maintain the momentum built through the GRF, particularly in ensuring adequate support for host country policy commitments towards protection, inclusion, and solutions to be realised. She recalled the next milestone in the GCR process, the High-Level Officials Meeting in 2025, and indicated that the more than 100 policy commitments made by low and middle-income host countries and countries of origin should be a key focus of collective action and support. She stressed that leadership in the overall follow-up process is paramount after the GRF. Leveraging domestic and regional networks for follow-up activities and effectively communicating the impact of pledge implementation is crucial. She thanked Ms. Perveen Ali, Head of UNHCR's Global Compact on Refugees Coordination Team, for her tremendous work, noting that this would be her last briefing before completing her tenure in this role. She then passed the floor to the GCR Coordination team for presentations.

Summary of presentation on the Outcomes of the Global Refugee Forum 2023, Ms. Perveen Ali, Senior Policy Advisor and Head of the Global Compact on Refugees Coordination Team, UNHCR

Ms. Ali announced that the [Outcomes of the Global Refugee Forum \(GRF\) 2023](#) document has gone live and thanked all participants for their engagement in preparing for the GRF, noting that this collective effort is what really made it a success. Having been part of two GRFs and engaged in the GCR from the outset, Ms. Ali shared her sense of encouragement from what came out of the GRF 2023, which forms the building blocks to take the Compact's objectives forward. She shared that she is leaving the process on a good note and fully trusted everyone involved to continue in their joint efforts to take it forward. She then presented a summary of the outcomes of the GRF 2023 in terms of events, communications, and pledges.

The GRF 2023 was a truly whole-of-society event, with more than 4,000 participants in person – 50 per cent of whom attended at the high level – representing a considerable growth in stakeholder engagement compared to 2019. More than 320 forcibly displaced and stateless participants spoke in more than 88 per cent of the events, and many others were also actively engaged in the preparations and pledge development. Ms. Ali expressed her gratitude to Switzerland for financially

supporting refugees' participation. In terms of communications, there were some 80 million views of GRF content online, and a 600 per cent increase in content that featured refugee voices, ensuring that they were at the centre of the conversation. During the event, 47 multi-stakeholder pledges were launched, with leadership and contributions by some 30 States and 86 non-State actors. Of the 1,700 pledges submitted, 9 per cent have a financial component.

Ms. Ali ended her presentation by sharing some reflections and recommendations based on extensive consultations conducted internally and with all stakeholders on the way forward. She highlighted that the GRF and HLOM are more than events; they are key benchmarks in the GCR policy process. She presented the GRF 2023 key outcomes and enabling measures supported by the multi-stakeholder pledges, which set out common policy goals to work towards over the two years until the HLOM and also towards the next GRF in 2027. Low and middle-income host countries and country-of-origin policy commitments need to be at the centre of gravity for support. Complementarity between country, regional, and global-level follow-up should also be ensured, as well as ensuring pledge implementation is focused on achieving transformative policy goals and clear targets. The pledging timeline does not begin and end with the GRF event but will continue through 2025 in order to accommodate different budgetary cycles, and governments and other pledging entities are encouraged to continue submitting pledges when their budgetary cycles permit to enable us to understand and give more visibility to the full scope of engagement and support through the GCR process. She concluded by recalling the importance of sustainability and ensuring that the GCR is linked where relevant to other global multilateral processes such as the Agenda for Sustainable Development, High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the Summit of the Future, among others, given that forced displacement touches on many other global issues.

Summary of the presentation on the Roadmap to the High-Level Officials Meeting 2025, Mr. Ziad Ayad, Senior Policy Officer, Global Compact on Refugees Coordination Team, UNHCR

Ms. Menikdiwela announced that Mr. Ziad Ayad will serve as the GCR team's interim head following Ms. Ali's departure. Mr. Ayad then outlined a four-pronged approach to the roadmap to the HLOM that would be undertaken at the country, regional, and global levels: 1) Analyse and prioritise pledges for follow-up and matching; 2) Develop and implement a follow-up plan with targets, benchmarks, and modalities; 3) Communicate progress and good practices; and 4) Inform the HLOM programme. In line with feedback from stakeholders on next steps, he informed that reporting on pledge implementation would remain a light and voluntary process. Reflecting the need to ensure that pledges can continue to be submitted to accommodate different budget cycles, Mr. Ayad reiterated that the pledge submission and pledge updating systems are continuously open and that stakeholders can submit pledges or provide updates on pledge implementation at any time. Twice per year (May and October, in 2024), the GCR Team will communicate a "snapshot" of pledge progress to all stakeholders, and stakeholders will be notified in advance in case they wish to report on progress for the snapshot. Over the next two years, in-depth stocktaking on pledge progress will be conducted through the global multi-stakeholder pledges, regional roundtables, and country-level multistakeholder mechanisms, for which UNHCR will play a facilitation and support role.

Together with pledging governments and stakeholders, UNHCR country offices, regional bureaux, and divisions will facilitate:

- Follow-up at country level (for country-specific pledges), regional level (for region-specific pledges), and global level (for global thematic pledges)

- Work plans for pledge implementation and matching (linking country-specific pledges with global/regional multistakeholder pledges)
- Stocktaking on progress, opportunities, and needs
- Mainstreaming GCR and pledge follow-up in multilateral and regional processes, protection and solutions strategies, and reporting
- HLOM preparations to ensure strategic content, and regional and stakeholder diversity

Mr. Ayad also shared information about the role of pledge leaders in the roadmap, to:

- Engage in follow-up at the country level (for country-specific pledges), regional level (for region-specific pledges), and global level (for global thematic pledges)
- Co-lead work planning for pledge implementation and matching
- Co-convene stocktaking at country, regional, and global levels
- Mobilise further support and pledges
- Lead by example in pledge implementation
- Advocate for GCR and pledge follow-up in multilateral and regional processes and reporting
- Advise on HLOM preparations and content to demonstrate outcomes and impact

Lastly, Mr. Ayad presented the global timeline 2024-2025 for the roadmap to the HLOM, sharing that the remain three informal global briefings on the GCR in 2024 will be thematically focused, to enable stakeholders to update on their pledge follow-up plans in line with the key outcomes. The June briefing will focus on easing pressures, the September briefing on inclusion and self-reliance, and the November briefing on solutions. In 2025, there will be three formal preparatory meetings to consult on the HLOM programme and preparations, the launch of the next GCR indicator report in October, and a final briefing on HLOM logistics in November.

Interventions from the floor

Amb. Lauber moderated the discussion session of the briefing, during which a number of interventions were made from the floor by States and other stakeholders.

Several State and non-state actors commended the success of the GRF, reiterated their support for the Roadmap to the HLOM 2025, and emphasised that a strong focus on follow-up at country level is pivotal for the successful implementation of pledges. Many stakeholders also offered words of praise and appreciation for Ms. Ali's leadership and steer of the GCR process and preparations for the first and second GRFs.

France highlighted the importance of linking the GCR to other multilateral processes and events, highlighting how the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris will feature refugee participation. At the same time, France noted that the role of UNHCR cannot be underestimated and that more needs to be done to ensure adequate funding is attained for UNHCR's operations.

Jordan stressed the urgency of increased collaboration and responsibility sharing to achieve third-country solutions, peacebuilding, and voluntary return, and for viewing refugees as a collective, global responsibility. Jordan recommended, in line with the Roadmap, that the HLOM focus on strengthening and showcasing impact and reinforcing international collaboration.

Uganda pointed to the importance of reporting and pledging guidance, and a clear breakdown of the multi-stakeholder pledges to ensure that individual pledging entities are reminded of their duty

to implement their pledges. The importance of strong follow-up from UNHCR operations was emphasised.

Japan expressed their willingness to continue to support and make a difference through the multi-stakeholder pledges that they are involved in, such as the [Humanitarian-Development-Peace-Nexus pledge](#), [ReResolve: Resilience and Solutions pledge for the Afghanistan Situation](#), and the [Rohingya pledge](#).

The **International Labour Organisation (ILO)**, which generously hosted the meeting, spoke to the importance of decent work and self-reliance in any durable solution, as set out in ILO Recommendation 205. The ILO, through its pledges in the [Economic Inclusion and Social Protection pledge](#), offered its assistance to States seeking to improve self-reliance. ILO will further align with the Roadmap to the HLOM 2025 through the ILO-UNHCR Joint Action Plan and ongoing work with the Dutch PROSPECTs partnership.

The **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights** spoke to the [UN Common pledge 2.0](#), as a mechanism that will allow the UN to follow up on pledges at country level with States and ensure that pledges translate into real outcomes and impact on the ground. Further, it highlighted the newly launched Platform of Independent Experts on Refugee Rights (PIERR) through which human rights experts aim to enhance protection and promotion of refugees' human rights.

Asylex presented progress made on the [Legal Community pledge \(PILNET\)](#) which currently has 116 signatories, includes a range of civil society organisations, law firms, refugee-led organisations (RLOs), States, and UN agencies. The pledge leaders estimate that they will be able to reach 1 million forcibly displaced persons by the time of the next GRF.

The **UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the Violence Against Children** spoke to the importance of the [Child Rights pledge](#), and noted that refugee child rights were brought in to [the 55th session of the Human Rights Council's Interactive Dialogue](#).

Newcomers with Disabilities in Sweden, an RLO, encouraged States to include refugees in their delegations to the HLOM. They further thanked UNHCR, the Age, Gender, Diversity Group of Friends, and UNHCR's Advisory Board of Organizations led by Forcibly Displaced and Stateless Persons, for their support in mobilising refugee participation in preparations for the GRF 2023.

Mosaico Azioni per i Rifugiati, an RLO based in Italy, pointed to the importance of refugee integration, and suggested that a mechanism for further resourcing grassroots RLOs be established to enable this. A platform for sharing good practices among RLOs was also recommended.

In closing the discussion, Amb. Lauber expressed appreciation for Ms. Ali's stewardship of the GCR process and collaboration over the years before passing the floor to the AHC-P.

Closing remarks, Ms. Ruvendrini Menikdiwela, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, UNHCR

Ms. Menikdiwela thanked stakeholders who intervened from the floor for their updates on the multi-stakeholder pledges and for their helpful comments and suggestions on funding, reporting requirements, and refugee participation. She reminded participants of the importance of addressing statelessness and informed of the launch of the [Global Alliance on Statelessness](#) at a high-level



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segment to be held during UNHCR's next Executive Committee meeting and encouraged States who are not yet members to join. Ms. Ali complemented in responding to some of the floor interventions, reiterating that the HLOM Roadmap outlines the follow-up process for the multi-stakeholder pledges, including workplans that focus on support for policy commitments at the country level to achieve real impact on the ground. As part of this, the 2019 pledges which are not yet fulfilled will be considered a part of this follow-up process. Ms. Menikdiwela expressed her deep appreciation for Ms. Ali's role and commitment and closed the informal briefing.