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Remarks for the UNHCR Thematic discussion three: Towards a global compact on refugees: Meeting needs and supporting communities (Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework Pillars 2 and 3)

Panel II: How can we support the inclusion of refugees in national systems and services through rule of law and governance development assistance?

[805 words/ approx. 6 min]

Excellencies, distinguished colleagues,

I am honored to join you today. Thank you indeed to UNHCR for convening this important dialogue.

Rule of law and governance are the foundations of society; they are therefore embodied in SDG 16, an enabling goal for the entire 2030 Agenda. They also form the bedrock of a comprehensive approach to prevention, response and solutions to major crisis, including the plight of refugees.

Pillars 2 and 3 of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) are under discussion today, and the case is clear: if national rule of law and governance systems do not include or account for refugees or have the capacity to do so, it

will not be possible for States to adequately deliver the protection and support services to both host communities and refugees, regardless of whether these services are economic, social, cultural or civil-political. This holds for all countries – the most as well as the least developed.

Pillar 1, on reception and admission, requires attention to planning, preparing and responding at local levels, which involves strong institutional capacity to deliver in line with international standards – on basic access to justice, [legal aid](#) and security and registration services targeting people, housing, land and property. **Pillar 4, on solutions**, also reminds us that breakdown of the rule of law and governance, which are root causes of refugees' flight, are at the heart of the solutions to enable host governments to respond and fulfill their obligations. Conflict prevention and sustaining peace appear here as essential assets, fundamental strategies to diffuse the problem.

In **Lebanon** UNDP has supported 100 municipalities to complete their mapping of risks and resources and trained

Government staff to enhance crisis response capacity in public institutions.

In Turkey, UNHCR, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF have developed a joint programme framework on protection and access to legal aid for Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey, to ensure complementarity of humanitarian and development support provided under the Protection sector on access to justice and legal aid. And allow for an increased focus capacity building of relevant institutions.

In the **Central African Republic**, UNDP is now, jointly with UNHCR, supporting the Ministry of Justice to include IDPs and refugees who are still in exile, into justice and security perception surveys. This is a key step in a participatory process to rebuild trust, peace and security. It is also an essential tool to work for them with them –not on assumptions and precedent.

At the 2016 UN Summit on Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, we pledged to step up our support to States and host communitiesThe Global Focal Point arrangement for rule of

law, co-led by UNDP and DPKO for an integrated response on justice and security in crisis contexts, is an example of a partnership that can be instrumental to the CRRF , an alliance now stronger since UNHCR joined. The same to be said on our partnership with the WB on methodologies for core government functions. These are vital recovery mechanisms for host countries to do their duty and extend protection, as international law establishes.

But together, we can do better.

- **First, we need to be more thorough in leaving no one behind:** “Improving the legislative framework in accordance with human rights” often features as a rule of law priority in national plans. However, this is rarely interpreted as including the rights of refugees and stateless persons, and rarely do we make the link between rights abuses and potential flight. Housing, land and property rights and the right to legal identity and civil documentation, also included in SDG 16, traditionally receive less attention in rule of law and governance assistance. The SDG 16 Global Alliance, with UNHCR, UNDP, UNODC and UNESCO as co-

facilitators, is looking into the most comprehensive implementation of what we mean by just, peaceful and inclusive societies.

- **Second, we should balance ‘lifesaving’ speed with appropriate investments in building national capacities:** Early recovery and resilience address the issue of parallel humanitarian and development assistance –saving lives and livelihoods for good. We are getting better in areas such as health, education, social protection and economic inclusion, but immediate attention to rule of law and governance systems tends to lag behind. We are risking sustainability and equitable inclusion in service delivery and Governments will continue to struggle to fulfil their protection responsibilities. UNDP has rule of law teams on the ground, often in emergency situations. Early engagement is key so that the way in which we address lifesaving simultaneously strengthens the national capacities needed to sustain the effort.
- **Third, we can exchange data and expertise:** Humanitarians have tremendous expertise on legislative and

institutional obstacles that refugee populations face when attempting to claim rights and access services. Development actors have sector expertise, across national sectors, on the labour market, educational inclusion, housing, cultural rights, governance, business creation, access to credit and financial services. Exchanging knowledge will facilitate joint assessments of needs and understanding of the bottlenecks to improve our response to forcibly displaced and stateless populations.

Thank you for your attention.