

**Statement by H.E. Dr. Mohsen Naziri Asl,  
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran  
in the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges:  
Towards a global compact on refugees**

**Session Six:**

**Strengthening burden- and responsibility-sharing arrangements**

**Geneva, 13 December 2017**

At the outset, I would like to appreciate UNHCR for the invitation. It is a pleasure for me to be a part of this panel and share with you some views in a very candid manner.

Let me start by saying that refugee protection as a humanitarian intervention should be secured through humane and decent ways and means. In this context, it cannot be justified that refugee protection provided with compromising different rights of host communities and countries including right to development. It cannot be justified at all that several developing countries host majority of refugees of the world for decades. The reality is that refugee protection is an international responsibility which should be taken internationally, but since the 1951 convention does not set out an explicit framework for burden and responsibility sharing, different stakeholders have been able to resort to burden-shifting to pass their responsibilities for refugees on to others. So what is missing here is equitable burden and responsibility sharing, nothing more, nothing less. The process of development of a global compact on refugee is an opportunity to fix this problem through creating a robust mechanism for such a purpose and I would like to underline some views and observations in this regard:

- Burden- and responsibility-sharing should not be reduced to financial aspects only, since it refers to a broad notion across the full cycle of forced displacement, including prevention, protection and solutions;
- Bringing justice to refugee protection system and stopping the unjust practice of maintaining majority of refugees in several developing countries should be at the core of any reformulation of the current arrangements. The current situation not only encourages responsibility sharing, but also is a recipe for evading such a responsibility.
- One might recognize the possible advantages of whole-of-society approaches in refugee protection, however promoting this notion will be

constructive, when we have a whole-of-globe approach in place beforehand. The same argument is valid about the role of regional bodies and institutions, since in absence of a global division of work, regional bodies cannot perform any miracle;

- Strengthening burden and responsibility sharing cannot be realized by fragmented arrangements and inconsistent procedures. We have one convention and we need one mechanism for early warning and prevention as well as assisting Member States to comply with the convention;

- What is expected from the process of development of a global compact on refugees is a firm decision for realizing fair and equitable burden and responsibility sharing among different stakeholders. While there's no more fundamental manifestation of burden and responsibility sharing in practice than hosting large numbers of refugees, a mechanism should be in place to address the impacts of the unequal distribution of refugees and achieve an equitable distribution of the refugees across the globe;

- The new mechanism or arrangement should take into account the overall protection provided for refugees by different countries and measure the equivalent value of this global public good offered by each of them;

- The work of UNHCR to provide comparable data and map of burden sharing for every major refugee situation is requisite and key in order to give us a clear image of the current situation and the fair and appropriate scenario for the future;

- The widening gap between norm and reality is a source of serious concern and we have to strike the right balance between norm setting and burden sharing in refugee protection;

- Such a mechanism or arrangement should be rule-based and rational rather than deal-based and charity-like in order to bring more discipline, trust and predictability to the system;

- The mechanism should depoliticize refugee protection and pave the way for giving the reasonable visibility and adequate support to each stakeholder in proportion with the international protection it provides;

- Burden sharing should be fair and proportionate with the absorbing capacity, the level of development and the demographic situation of any country and in this context, developed countries are expected to host more refugees than others.

Thank you