



Fourth Round of Formal Consultations
on the Draft Two of the Global Compact on Refugees
Geneva, May 8, 9 and 10, 2018
CONTRIBUTIONS OF LEBANON

Items 2 and 4: “Mechanisms for burden and responsibility sharing” and “Meeting needs and supporting communities.”

- At the outset, we would like to thank the UNHCR for all the efforts and the hard work deployed, in order to reflect to a large extent most of the concerns that we have expressed during previous formal consultations. We are cognizant that this is not an easy task, given the divergences on some of the issues.
- In the new GCR draft, we notice a substantial improvement in the overall structure of the text. The text is very clear in emphasizing the core principles that should constitute the backbone of the international cooperation: the predicament of refugees being a concern for human kind, international solidarity and cooperation, the need for burden and responsibility sharing and the support to host countries in dealing with the consequences of refugees’ crisis. And we are encouraged by the fact that a large consensus have emerged around these principles.
- Hence, and as exposed in the GCR text, the part dedicated to burden and responsibility sharing needs to respond to the sense of urgency, and to meet the high expectations resulting from these principles.
- The mechanism of burden and responsibility sharing which is predicated and contingent upon the interplay of different building blocks is carefully crafted and aims at keeping the centrality of the refugees’ issues on the international scene.
- After a close examination, it remains to be seen how the operative paragraphs, and the concrete steps envisaged are going to live up to the expectation in terms of: regularity, mobilization of good will, universality and predictability. We consider that these aspects need to be reinforced in the text, if we are aiming at tangible results.
- On regularity, we think that convening a high-level forum every 4 years is not in accordance with the urgent aspects of refugees’ issues.

- On mobilization of goodwill, we welcome the language on the GCR future success that hinges on “the willingness of all to share burdens and responsibilities” through “voluntary but dedicated contributions”, as stated in the new draft. But the reliance on goodwill alone is insufficient. We need to see a clear engagement in favor of international solidarity.
- On universality, the emphasis is rightly put on the fact that dealing with refugees issues, within the framework of the GCR, should engage all States. The formal consultations carried out so far leave us with the impression, that the stakeholders are mainly two sides: host and donor countries. So how will it be possible to overcome this situation and to enlarge the interest and solidarity base in a way to see more engagement from countries that are neither host nor donor?
- On predictability, and despite the progress in shaping mechanisms for burden and responsibility sharing, we still don’t detect, in the GCR new draft, tangible means for mobilizing commitments, resources and funding that would be robust and predictable enough. Having said this, we nevertheless commend the efforts for shaping the proposed Support Platform that would, among its multiple objectives, “enhance cooperation” and “build trust and predictability.”
- We express concerns on the mention of “grants” in paragraph 33: what impact this can have in host countries that are already heavily in debts? Such measures would prove unpopular and would expose governments, in any country, and moreover in economically fragile ones, to public discontent that could translate, among other social and political consequences, into rejection, hatred, racism and xenophobia against refugees.
- On the other hand, and while the future of the part dedicated to burden and responsibility is shrouded with uncertainty, the part on the support to refugees and host countries, in contrast, tend to expand and to be more and more prescriptive and heavy, and to bring in new stakeholders and obligations. At that stage, we would like to reiterate that the GCR should not, in any way, add to the burden and obligations that host countries are already carrying and assuming, in support of refugees.

- A few more comments on the GCR new draft:
- 1- Focusing on measuring impact of hosting refugees, as stated in paragraph 16, is crucial in the GCR context. So we welcome the linkage made between such a mapping and regular meetings and follow-up of the GCR implementation. In that sense, paragraph 48 is of utmost importance.
- 2- We think that paragraph 38 on the support at local levels would gain more precision if we could replace “national arrangements” by “national policies.”
- 3- In paragraph 41, about faith-based organizations, we would seek the deletion of the following sentence: “they could also support private sponsorship programmes or other pathways for admission to third countries.”
- 4- Finally, since we think there is a need for developing safeguards for any intervention of the private sector, we welcome the inclusion in paragraph 42 of the notion of the responsibility of the private sector in various sectors, and especially in advancing “standards for ethical conduct.”

Items 5 and 6: Programme of action: SOLUTIONS/FOLLOW UP ARRANGEMENTS:

- We fully support UNHCR in its future role in following up on the GCR implementation, when adopted.
- For that purpose, we note the mention made in paragraph 107 to the “set of broad indicators” that will be developed. And as other delegations have already stated, we think that such indicators should be negotiated by States.
- On a more global level, is there any plan to enhance the UNHCR’s personnel and technical capacities, in order to help the Organization fulfill this additional task of implementing the GCR?
- We appreciate the optimistic tone that concludes the new draft in paragraph 110. But how can we ensure that donors’ fatigue as usually witnessed in the humanitarian assistance as we know it, will not affect the GCR implementation as well, since any momentum, however strong it may be, won’t last forever?
- On the part dedicated to solutions, Lebanon would also like to make some comments

- We are satisfied to see that the overall structure of this part has expanded and has become more detailed, especially the paragraphs on repatriation. We nevertheless still have concerns regarding the capacity of the GCR to be a real catalyst for durable solutions of acute refugee crisis.
- We welcome the emphasis in paragraph 89 on the “mix of solutions”, and the mention that such a mix of solutions should be adapted to the specific level of development, and to the demographic situation of countries.
- We also welcome the linkage operated by the new draft, between the mechanisms of burden and responsibility sharing and the search for durable solutions.
- We fully agree with the mention made in the GCR draft to local integration as being a State’s sovereign decision.
- Of course, we note the novelty in the GCR new draft that consists in introducing more detailed paragraphs on the support that should be provided by multiple stakeholders, to countries of origin, in order to help them create suitable conditions for sustainable repatriation. This support is no doubt crucial, moreover in war-torn countries.
- However, the host countries should not be left alone, once the process of repatriation is launched. Therefore, it is important not to interrupt the support to the host countries, during the refugees’ repatriation phase.
- We are not comfortable with the sentence in paragraph 91 on “recognizing the complexities of large-scale voluntary repatriation and the difficulties which the country of origin may face in this regard.” Such a statement is a negative prejudgment that doesn’t sound useful in the GCR draft.
- In the same paragraph, when talking about “voluntary repatriation”, we would like to seek more clarity on the mention “where and when feasible”, since it could be misused in order to set unnecessary and artificial obstacles in the way of the safe and dignified return.
- One last concern on repatriation: the GCR draft should be able to introduce the understanding that, sometimes, even when the global conflict is not over yet, some areas of stability in the country of origin could nevertheless be available for refugees to go back. Such a third way of progressive repatriation should also be envisaged in the GCR.
- On resettlement, we note with satisfaction the wording that is gaining strength. We also commend the linkage made once again between efforts for resettlement being both a durable solution and a tool of

burden and responsibility sharing, and the mechanisms of burden and responsibility sharing.

- Since the GCR draft is painstakingly trying to set such a robust mechanism that allows for enhanced predictability, it remains necessary to strengthen the wording about resettlement further. The success of the whole mechanism hinges on its capacity to act as a catalyst for more significant and important resettlement measures.