

## **Global Refugee Forum 2019 – date/timing tbc**

Co-hosts, co-convenors, distinguished representatives,

I am delighted to be here today to at the inaugural Global Refugee Forum to confirm the New Zealand Government's strong support for the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the work we are all undertaking to develop and implement innovative and durable protection solutions for refugees at both a global and regional level.

The Global Compact on Refugees, adopted at the United Nations last year, recognised the nature and enormity of the refugee situation globally and the need for comprehensive, innovative and creative solutions.

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of the many States that are hosting refugees and the work they are doing in providing protection and much needed assistance. We also acknowledge the important role that refugees have in shaping solutions and supporting responses. We look forward to their contribution during the Forum.

The pledges we have made at this Forum are a tangible demonstration of New Zealand's strong commitment to the

system of international protection, which provides for the UNHCR and the international community to work together in sharing responsibilities and developing solutions to protect the most vulnerable people around the world.

New Zealand recognises the vital importance of providing early, predictable and flexible funding to support the work of the UNHCR. In February this year, New Zealand pledged NZ\$18 million in multi-year, un-earmarked core funding to support UNHCR's annual programmes from 2019 to 2021. In addition, New Zealand will continue to work within international institutions to encourage their commitment to innovative and creative protection solutions.

From July 2020, New Zealand's Refugee Quota Programme will increase to welcome 1,500 refugees annually.

To deliver this increase, additional funding has been provided for settlement support services and to work with communities across New Zealand to welcome refugees and support their successful settlement.

New Zealand is also expanding the Welcoming Communities Programme across New Zealand to further support newcomers, including refugees, to feel welcomed and have a feeling of belonging.

We acknowledge the skills and work experiences that refugees bring with them. Through the recently announced Government Employment Strategy, we are committed to deliver the action plan to support refugees into meaningful and sustained employment within the New Zealand labour market.

We will work closely with the UNHCR:

- To support new and emerging refugee resettlement countries in the Asia-Pacific region; and
- through the Asylum Capacity Support Group, to support the development of protection capacity in the Pacific region.

We are pleased to join and endorse the Joint Ministers' Statement, together with Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative States Network Countries, supporting refugee sponsorship programmes and pilots. These provide opportunities for broader active community engagement in supporting refugee settlement with benefits for both the community and sponsored refugees.

In conclusion, New Zealand reiterates our commitment to the system of international protection. Working together through the implementation of our collective pledges we will all

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contribute to delivering the goals of the Global Compact and the three year Resettlement Strategy.

Thank you, Co-chairs.

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