

Consultation on the 2021 High-Level Officials' Meeting 27 January 2021, 15:00-18:00 hours (CET)

Summary of Discussions

Introduction

This virtual consultation between Member States and other key stakeholders was an opportunity to present and discuss UNHCR's concept for the High-Level Officials' Meeting provided for in the Global Compact on Refugees, preliminary considerations for preparatory activities, and the 'proposed orientations' for the first Global Compact on Refugees Indicator Report. The event was chaired and moderated by Ms. Ellen Hansen, the Head of UNHCR's Governance Service, with opening remarks by UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for Operations, Mr. Raouf Mazou.

Opening remarks

Mr. Raouf Mazou, Assistant High Commissioner for Operations

In opening, Mr. Mazou noted that, despite the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and a range of other escalating crises, 2020 was also a year in which so many rose to meet these challenges. Of the 700 Global Refugee Forum pledge updates that have been received formally and informally, for example, more than three-quarters are reported as being 'in progress', and 15 per cent have been fulfilled. Mr. Mazou thanked those pledging entities that have adapted or accelerated their pledges to support the response to the pandemic.

Mr. Mazou introduced the considerations for the High-Level Officials' Meeting, noting that it will be an opportunity to review how far the international community has come in strengthening support for host countries, increasing opportunities for refugees to become self-reliant and participate actively in their community, and in making progress on solutions, including the resolution of statelessness. It will be both a moment for reflection amongst senior officials, including heads of line ministries responsible for refugee matters, and an opportunity for action.

In introducing the first Global Compact on Refugees Indicator Report's 'proposed orientations', Mr. Mazou noted also that it will be an important element of building the evidence base for discussion at the High-Level Officials Meeting by showing the progress that has been made and the work that remains still to be done.

Preliminary considerations for the 2021 High-Level Officials' Meeting

Ms. Perveen Ali, Head of the Global Refugee Forum Coordination Team

Ms. Ali introduced the [Preliminary Considerations](#) for the High-Level Officials' Meeting, which had been circulated in advance. The key objectives for the Meeting will be to take stock of the work that has been done towards the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees and to maintain momentum towards their achievement. Participation is envisaged at the senior official level, and it is expected that many States will be represented by the head of the line ministry responsible for refugee issues. Given the ongoing pandemic, the possibility of a hybrid in-person/virtual modality is being explored to enhance opportunities for participation.

A detailed process throughout 2021 is envisaged to prepare for the High-Level Officials' Meeting. Regional, thematic, and stakeholder-specific stocktaking opportunities—culminating in the Meeting itself—will aim to assist States and other stakeholders to:

- identify progress, challenges, and areas for further engagement;
- take into consideration the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- identify next steps, including directions for the next Global Refugee Forum.

The key tools for stocktaking will include the Global Compact on Refugees Indicator Report, the ongoing follow-up on pledges made at the first Global Refugee Forum in December 2019, the implementation of mechanisms and initiatives contained within the Global Compact (including Support Platforms, Asylum Capacity Support Group, Global Academic Interdisciplinary Network and the Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways), the

implementation of comprehensive responses, and the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The timeline for stocktaking and preparations is envisaged as follows:

Tentative dates	Topic
January-December	Regional, thematic, stakeholder-specific stocktaking
27 January	Consultation on the HLOM and orientations for the Global Compact on Refugees Indicator Report
May	Request for updates on progress through the pledges dashboard
23 June	Informal briefing on preliminary outcomes of stocktaking to date
October	Request for updates on progress through the pledges dashboard
27 October	Consultation on the modalities and programme for the HLOM
November	Issuance of the background paper for the HLOM
14-15 December	High-Level Officials Meeting at the CICG in Geneva

The following elements are being considered for the Meeting:

- Multi-stakeholder panels focused on the GCR objectives – drawing on outcomes of the indicator report, stocktaking, and lessons learned from COVID-19 response
- General debate – updates, announcements, and next steps
- Closing session – summation of key outcomes, areas in need of action and support, and next steps
- Side events to address cross-cutting issues
- Possibility for virtual exhibition space

[Proposed orientations for the Global Compact on Refugees Indicator Report](#)

Mr. Nicolas Fasel, Senior Statistician, Global Refugee Forum Coordination Team / Global Data Service

Mr. Fasel introduced the [Proposed Orientations](#) for the Global Compact on Refugees Indicator Report, which had been circulated in advance. Grounded in the Global Compact's emphasis on the role of data and evidence in comprehensive refugee responses and the Indicator Framework developed in 2019, the Report will draw upon data from national administrative records, surveys implemented by national statistical offices (with the support of partners), and international partners.

The Report's main purpose will be to measure progress in the achievement of the four objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees. It is expected to support stocktaking at the High-Level Officials' Meeting and the setting of strategic directions towards—and the development of pledging guidance for—the second Global Refugee Forum.

Key features of the Report will include:

- The use of existing data wherever possible, so as to minimize the data-collection burden on all relevant stakeholders, in particular States;
- The use of international standards for data collection, definitions, and good practices;
- Linkages with the ongoing efforts to track the implementation of GRF pledges and to measure the impact arising from hosting, protecting and assisting refugees, as well as complementary indicators, targets, and benchmarks (such as those associated with the Sustainable Development Goals);
- Trend analysis dating back to 2016, where possible, so as to better understand changes since the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants;
- The inclusion of personal stories and complementary analytical studies to illustrate further impact on refugees and host communities;
- The public and online accessibility of all data utilized in the report; and
- Guidance for the way forward.

Mr. Fasel gave an overview of the fifteen GCR indicators, the international partners involved in data collection, and an assessment of the availability of relevant data. Whilst there are a number of data gaps, UNHCR is working with relevant partners (notably the OECD, the World Bank, UNICEF, and ILO) to fill these where possible. UNHCR is also exploring the use of a number of complementary indicators to fill data availability gaps.

Discussion

Following the presentations, there were twenty interventions from the virtual floor from eleven States and nine other stakeholders.

Intervenors noted their commitment fully to engage in the **High-Level Officials' Meeting** and its preparatory processes, which were described as important opportunities to take stock of achievements and challenges, as well as to chart the way ahead to the second Global Refugee Forum.

UNHCR was encouraged to ensure a truly multi-stakeholder Meeting—in particular with the meaningful participation of refugees—that integrates age, gender, and diversity considerations throughout.

Interventions encouraged the inclusion of a number of specific topics in the agenda for the Meeting, including statelessness, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, root causes and the importance of unearmarked humanitarian contributions.

A number of interventions expressed an interest in the organization of side events at the Meeting, and UNHCR clarified that it would work in consultation with co-sponsors and pledging entities in developing these. UNHCR will also share a schedule of preparatory events.

The Global Compact on Refugees **Indicator Report** was eagerly anticipated, with interventions highlighting its importance in setting a baseline at the global, regional, and country levels, and in identifying challenges and gaps that could be addressed through pledges at the second Global Refugee Forum.

Interventions further called for a methodologically sound report that was nonetheless easy for a lay audience to read, and there was also a call for the inclusion of insights from the effort to measure the impact of hosting refugees. It was stressed that the Report should enhance data collection efforts and promote access to more disaggregated data.

A number of intervenors also noted progress made in implementing the **pledges** they made at the Global Refugee Forum in December 2019, as well as their engagement in the three **Support Platforms**. Further efforts to match pledges were encouraged.

Finally, a number of intervenors expressed their eagerness to receive the **Background Paper** and the Global Compact on Refugees Indicator Report well in advance of the High-Level Officials' meeting so as to allow time for adequate preparation of engagement and interventions.