

Concept Note High Level Event, UNGA 73

The Global Compact on Refugees: A model for greater solidarity and cooperation

24 September 2018
10:00-12:00 (ECOSOC Chamber)

Background

In September 2016, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (New York Declaration) with a clear imperative: to forge comprehensive and predictable responses to large-scale movements of refugees, while easing pressure on host countries. To that end, the New York Declaration called upon UNHCR to move forward in two ways. First, they requested that UNHCR develop and initiate the comprehensive refugee response framework (CRRF), contained in annex I of the New York Declaration, in close cooperation with States and other relevant actors, and in a range of specific situations. Second, they agreed to work towards the adoption of a global compact on refugees in 2018, based on the practical application of the CRRF and consultations with all relevant stakeholders in the intervening two years.

As we near the close of this two year period, refugee numbers have continued to rise. At the same time, there has been notable positive developments in responding to large movements of refugees. These have contributed to the articulation of the global compact pointing the way for more predictable support to host countries and refugees, and sustainable responses overall.

Issues and Significance

In the face of new and ongoing conflicts, and consequent increasing and prolonged forced displacement, comprehensive responses remain critical. Over 85% of all refugees are located in low and middle income countries. Humanitarian budgets are stretched, addressing often less than 50% of urgent needs. As recognized in the New York Declaration, new approaches and broader sources of support are needed as ever before that are sustainable over time and that strengthen resilience of refugees and also of the communities where they reside.

The consultations on the global compact have underscored the importance of this. They have also illustrated significant agreement and willingness of member states to embrace global mechanism for international cooperation that aims to: ensure sustained political support; enhance accountability for commitments made by States and other stakeholders; link up humanitarian and development responses; and, draw on the expertise and contributions from a wide array of stakeholders from the outset of displacement.

Outcome and Format

This high level event will provide an important opportunity to take stock of developments over the past two years and highlight what is anticipated in terms of responding to large movements of refugees in the future. Specifically, it will illustrate how the application of the CRRF has shown substantial progress towards the objectives of the New York Declaration. It will also provide an opportunity to show how the proposed global compact will take these and other positive developments to scale.

The event will be moderated by the High Commissioner for Refugees. The panel members will include State leaders from refugee hosting countries who will speak on their specific challenges and the potential of the global compact to measurably enhance responses on the ground. Subsequently, the floor will be opened for interventions and questions.

The event will be held at Ministerial level.