



Refugee Council  
of Australia

## REPORT OF 2016 ANNUAL TRIPARTITE CONSULTATIONS ON RESETTLEMENT



*Daniel Gamboa Salazar of the New Zealand National Refugee Youth Council (second right) shares personal observations of resettlement as a young refugee with fellow panellists Elizabeth Lang of Australia (right) and Dilora Mukhtorova of Netherlands (left) and panel chair Paul Power of Refugee Council of Australia, during the 2016 Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement in Geneva. Photo: NZ National Refugee Youth Council.*

## RESETTLEMENT DIALOGUE FOCUSES ON SYRIAN CRISIS AND CHILDREN AT RISK

The global response to Syria's refugee crisis and the need to increase availability of durable solutions for refugee children and youth at risk were among the critical issues discussed when representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), governments and NGOs from resettlement states and other inter-governmental bodies gathered in Geneva for the 2016 Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR).

Organised by UNHCR, the Government of Netherlands and the Dutch Council for Refugees, the 2016 ATCR took place on 13-15 June. It brought together representatives of 30 nations involved in resettlement, including 86 representatives of 28 governments and 59 NGO delegates from 19 countries, three refugee representatives, 61 staff of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 10 staff of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and representatives of the European Union and the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees.

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Australia was represented by NGO representatives from Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), Settlement Council of Australia, AMES Australia, Settlement Services International (SSI), Victorian Foundation of Survivors of Torture (VFST), Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN) and Amnesty International Australia and refugee representative Elizabeth Lang, a former refugee from South Sudan who is now a youth worker with ASeTTS in Perth. The Australian Government was represented by four officials of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

## Main themes

The three-day meeting focused on a series of themes, including:

- Reporting on **trends in resettlement** in the past year and providing states and NGOs with an overview of UNHCR perspectives on **resettlement needs** in the coming year.
- Reviewing the international response to UNHCR's appeal for **resettlement places for Syrian refugees** and also **alternative admission pathways** for Syrian refugees under other migration programs.
- Highlighting the need to continue resettlement from other **protracted refugee situations** and to use resettlement strategically in these situations to support other durable solutions.
- Exploring options to increase access to resettlement and other durable solutions for **children at risk**, both unaccompanied children and those still with parents or guardians.
- Continuing resettlement of **refugees caught in conflict zones**.
- Strengthening **public confidence** in refugee resettlement.
- **Enhancing the success of refugees after arrival** in countries of resettlement, including through supporting their economic participation and assisting the effective integration of refugee young people.

As the ATCR opened, the Dutch Council for Refugees presented a joint statement on behalf of the NGOs present. Presented in an animated video, the NGO statement:

- Called for a significant increase in refugee resettlement, seeking greater pledges from governments in the lead-up to the US-led High Level Meeting on the refugee crisis on 20 September 2016.
- Emphasised the need for resettlement places to be supplemented by alternative or complementary migration pathways for refugees.
- Condemned the EU-Turkey deal to turn back refugees attempting to enter Europe and expressed concern about the Government of Kenya's plans to close refugee camps.
- Emphasised the need for resettlement of refugees from South-East Asia to have a much stronger strategic focus, with resettlement states also working to help develop options for safe voluntary return and local integration of refugees.
- Drew attention to the crucial nature of quality post-arrival support programs for resettled refugees, to enhance their opportunities for success.

The full text of the NGO statement and a link to the animated video can be found in Appendix B.

At the conclusion of the ATCR, 34 NGOs joined forces to issue a joint public statement which emphasised some of these key points and support the call of the United Nations Secretary-General for governments to set a collective goal of resettling 10 per cent of the world's refugee population each year. This statement can be found in Appendix C.

## Identified global resettlement needs for 2017

UNHCR released its Projected Global Resettlement Needs document for 2017<sup>1</sup> at the ATCR, nominating 1.19 million refugees as being in need of resettlement – a higher number than any previous year. However, as the number of resettlement places available in 2017 is expected to be only about 10% of this number, UNHCR will aim to submit 170,000 refugees for resettlement during the year. This number of submissions compares to the 2016 target of 143,000 and around 134,000

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<sup>1</sup> UNHCR (2016), *Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2017* - <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/resettlement/575836267/unhcr-projected-global-resettlement-needs-2017.html>

submissions in 2015 and 104,000 in 2014. Of those identified as being in need of resettlement in 2017, 40% are Syrians, 11% are Sudanese, 10% are Afghan and 9% are from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

“We are seeing resettlement taken to a new level and that enhanced resettlement can be an effective means of sharing the responsibility for refugee protection,” High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi said when launching the report. “But much more needs to be done to keep pace with the growing numbers of acutely vulnerable. Resettlement is now more important than ever as a solution, and we must grasp this opportunity to increase the number of refugees benefitting from it, as well as other avenues for admission.”

**Table 1: UNHCR projected global resettlement needs, 2017**

Region or sub-region of asylum	Total 2017 projected resettlement needs	UNHCR submissions planned for 2017
Central Africa and Great Lakes	128,643	17,130
East and Horn of Africa	262,718	30,367
Southern Africa	30,865	5,750
West Africa	19,297	2,140
<b>Africa total</b>	<b>441,523</b>	<b>55,387</b>
<b>Americas total</b>	<b>7,773</b>	<b>1,752</b>
East Asia and the Pacific	36,045	6,290
South Asia	3,413	1,210
Southwest Asia	113,900	1,700
<b>Asia total</b>	<b>153,358</b>	<b>9,200</b>
Eastern Europe	1,500	600
South-Eastern Europe <sup>2</sup>	305,450	52,350
<b>Europe total</b>	<b>306,950</b>	<b>52,950</b>
Middle East	262,910	42,490
North Africa	18,005	8,010
<b>Middle East and North Africa total</b>	<b>280,915</b>	<b>50,500</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,190,519</b>	<b>169,789</b>

To tackle growing needs UNHCR is also focusing on how complementary paths such as humanitarian visas, family reunion and scholarships could help bridge the gaps in terms of needs. At a high-level conference in Geneva in March, UNHCR called on countries around the world to provide admission through resettlement and other channels to 10 per cent of Syrian refugees, or 480,000.

## Resettlement trends in 2015

During 2015, 81,893 refugees from 70 countries of origin were resettled from 84 countries of asylum to 30 countries of resettlement through UNHCR’s referral processes. This figure does not include another 25,158 refugees resettled during the year by states without UNHCR making the initial referral. UNHCR’s 2015 Global Trends document records 107,051 refugee arrivals in resettlement states, based on statistics provided by those states. As Table 2 illustrates, the number of resettlement departures of UNHCR-referred refugees was 11% higher than in 2014. The number of submissions for resettlement from UNHCR to states increased in 2015 by 29% on the previous year.

<sup>2</sup> Turkey is included in South-Eastern Europe and hosts nearly all of the refugees identified as being in need of resettlement from that sub-region.

**Table 2: Summary of resettlement statistics<sup>3</sup>**

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
UNHCR resettlement submissions <sup>4</sup>	134,044	103,890	92,915	74,840	91,843
Resettlement departures	81,893	73,608	71,449	69,252	61,649
Countries of asylum	84	90	80	80	79
Countries of origin	70	70	69	79	77
Countries of resettlement	30	31	25	26	22

In 2015, the largest resettlement programs were from Malaysia, Turkey, Lebanon, Thailand and Nepal with the main beneficiaries of resettlement being refugees from Burma, Syria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and Iraq. The key resettlement states were USA, Canada, Australia, Norway and Germany.

**Table 3: Top 10: UNHCR resettlement departures 2015**

Rank	Country of origin	Refugees resettled	Country of asylum	Refugees resettled	Country of resettlement	Refugees resettled
1	Burma	18,503	Malaysia	12,547	USA	52,583
2	Syria	13,816	Turkey	7,577	Canada	10,236
3	DR Congo	10,701	Lebanon	7,109	Australia	5,211
4	Somalia	8,406	Thailand	6,716	Norway	2,220
5	Iraq	7,590	Nepal	6,646	Germany	2,097
6	Bhutan	6,332	Jordan	6,331	Sweden	1,808
7	Afghanistan	3,412	Kenya	5,001	UK	1,768
8	Eritrea	2,533	Lebanon	3,815	Finland	964
9	Iran	2,297	Ethiopia	2,991	New Zealand	756
10	Sudan	2,092	Egypt	2,924	France	700
	All others	6,211	All others	20,236	All others	3,550
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>81,893</b>		<b>81,893</b>		<b>81,893</b>

UNHCR's 2015 Global Trends document records that the 107,051 refugee resettlement arrivals through UNHCR and non-UNHCR processes were to: United States 66,517; Canada 20,010; Australia 9,399; Norway 2,383; Sweden 1,902; United Kingdom 1,864; Finland 1,007; New Zealand 808; Austria 758; Switzerland 641; Denmark 592; Germany 481; Belgium 276; Ireland 176; Italy 96; Luxembourg 46; South Korea 22; Japan 19; Liechtenstein 18; Iceland 14; Belarus 14; Cambodia 5; Philippines 3.<sup>5</sup>

## Global response to Syrian crisis

UNHCR's March high-level conference on Syrian resettlement prompted pledges of around 15,000 new places. As of April 2016, the overall total of places cumulatively offered for Syrian refugees was 201,049. In addition, up to 72,000 Syrians will be admitted to the European Union from Turkey.

The focus on Syrian resettlement has resulted in some encouraging increases in global resettlement programs – but still short of the goals being sought by UNHCR. USA has pledged to increase its overall annual resettlement target to 100,000 in the 2017 fiscal year (from 70,000 in 2015 and 85,000 in 2016). Australia's increase in its annual refugee program to 18,750 places in 2018-19 will, with the additional one-off allocation of 12,000 places, see up to 74,500 places over four years. Canada will resettle 44,000 Syrian refugees in 2016, with a yet-to-be determined additional number of refugees from other countries. Despite the large numbers of refugees who have sought asylum there, Sweden plans to increase its resettlement program to up to 5,000 a year by 2018. Romania is considering up to 80 new resettlement places (number and nationality to be confirmed).

During the ATRC, Argentina announced plans to re-establish its resettlement program, matching a previous pledge from its neighbour Chile to do the same, both countries offering places for Syrian refugees. The United Kingdom committed in April to resettle children at risk from the Middle East

<sup>3</sup> The statistics in Tables 1 to 8 are taken from the public version of UNHCR's *Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2017*.

<sup>4</sup> The number of resettlement submissions from UNHCR to states, and the number of refugees departed reflect the number of persons involved rather than cases or families.

<sup>5</sup> Statistics from Table 23 of the data table annexes published with *UNHCR 2015 Global Trends*.

and North Africa region. Other resettlement pledges included 1,980 places in France and 725 in Spain.

Other forms of admission for Syrian refugees confirmed so far have included:

- Humanitarian Visas: France has pledged 1,500 new visas and Switzerland, Argentina and Brazil have indicated they will continue to grant humanitarian visas to Syrians.
- Family Reunification: USA has established a new program that allows its citizens to file refugee applications for their Syrian relatives in the region; Italy will introduce a special facilitated family reunification visa procedure; and Bahrain is considering the establishment of a family reunification procedure for Syrians.
- Scholarships and student visas: Many States confirmed scholarships and student visa regimes for Syrian refugees. France pledged 1,000 academic scholarships and Germany pledged 1,900. Canada pledged to work with the World University Service of Canada to explore opportunities to expand the Student Refugee Program. Qatar will finance 100 Syrian students to study at the Sorbonne. Countries considering scholarship programs are Costa Rica, Japan and Morocco. Italy and Russia are also examining increased study opportunities for Syrians.
- Private or community sponsorship: Canada pledged to offer an additional 10,000 private sponsorship places for Syrians. The UK announced plans to develop a community sponsorship scheme and Iceland is exploring a similar program. Italy confirmed that 100 Syrians have arrived through its recently established “Humanitarian Corridor” program, involving private and community resources in cooperation with religious communities.
- Streamlined and accessible procedures: Countries which have pledged to introduce accelerated admission processes for refugees or to simplify administrative procedures include Canada, USA, Argentina and Chile.

### **Strengthening the strategic use of resettlement**

UNHCR noted at the ATCR that, separate to the 4.8 million refugees displaced into neighbouring countries by the civil war in Syria, there are another 6.5 million refugees in protracted situations in 156 countries. Change can only come if there is UN, government and civil society action to promote peace building, reconstruction after conflict, increased access to livelihoods in countries of asylum, more resettlement places and alternative pathways for more people. Jackie Keegan of UNHCR’s Comprehensive Solutions Unit said that the strategic use of resettlement wasn’t optional but must be the way forward. Officials involved in resettlement must work more closely with partners involved in aid and development, immigration and political and diplomatic advocacy.

Asked by RCOA about the strategic role of resettlement in South-East Asia, Ms Keegan said that UNHCR agreed that resettlement needed to remain on the agenda in the region with stronger links to other durable solutions. UNHCR is working on housing, land and conflict issues in Burma to help create opportunities for refugees to consider returning voluntarily. One possibility which could be explored is allowing people to maintain their nationality and remain where they are under a regional citizenship model similar to that operating in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

### **Resettlement of children at risk**

With the number of unaccompanied children seeking asylum at its highest ever level – more than 98,000 children in North America and Europe – UNHCR is focusing attention on strategies to support children on the move. UNHCR’s 2016 High Commissioner’s Dialogue in Geneva in December will examine why children move, their survival mechanisms and what to do to address this increasing movement.

The UK Government’s decision to resettle 3,000 people from the Middle East and North Africa region under a new Children at Risk program will offer an opportunity for some new thinking about the role of resettlement in supporting vulnerable children. The program will resettle not only unaccompanied children but also children being accompanied by parents or guardians. This reflects UNHCR’s position that the definition of children at risk must be broader than that of unaccompanied children. UNHCR believes it is important to consider the best interests of the children, family unity options, the question of local integration and the child’s own views before making a decision about

resettlement. If resettlement is chosen, consideration must be given to what will happen to the family. UNHCR is concerned that, if it focuses only on resettling unaccompanied children, it will create the circumstances in which families believe their children need to be separated from them in order to get access to resettlement.

### **Refugees caught in conflict zones**

To facilitate resettlement of Iraqi refugees from Syria, UNHCR staff based in Syria have been trained by Australian Government officials in the gathering of the biometric data required for the processing of resettlement applications. As Australian officials are denied entry to Syria, interviews are conducted by video conference with help from UNHCR staff in Damascus. The introduction of mobile gathering of biometric data will enable applications, mostly under the Special Humanitarian Program, to be finalised. Switzerland, Italy, Sweden and Canada are also still involved in resettling refugees out of Syria which, as at 1 January 2016, was hosting 21,113 refugees and 5,251 asylum seekers.

### **Sharing successful strategies to post-arrival support**

The ATCR session on the integration of refugee youth, coordinated by RCOA and MYAN, featured three people who resettled as refugees while in childhood, teenage years or young adulthood:

- Elizabeth Lang, born in South Sudan and resettled from Egypt to Western Australia, where she now works as a youth worker with [ASeTTS](#), a torture and trauma support service in Perth.
- Daniel Gamboa Salazar, born in Colombia and resettled from Ecuador to Wellington, New Zealand, where he has become the founding president of the [New Zealand National Refugee Youth Council](#), the first national youth network founded and run entirely by former refugees.
- Dilorra Mukhtorova, born in Uzbekistan and resettled from Kyrgyzstan to the Netherlands, where she is studying, working as an intern with the Ministry of Security and Justice and has served as an [Ambassador for Europe's SHARE Network](#) on refugee resettlement.

Each of the panellists shared their personal experiences of refugee resettlement and their observations of the particular challenges faced by refugee youth in making the transition to life in a new country. They each shared their advice for resettlement states looking to improve support to young people, with the key advice being to consult young people and engage them actively in the development of responses to the needs or ideas they identify. NGO representatives were invited to share information on their youth programs and policies, with MYAN showcasing its [National Youth Settlement Framework](#) and VFST outlined its UCan2 program which offers work skills, psychosocial support and social connections for refugee young people.

In the ATCR session on economic participation of resettled refugees, Violet Roumeliotis and Dor Akech Achiek of SSI shared their organisation's programs which support refugees to establish small businesses or social enterprises and SSI's pilot youth employment program.

### **New Zealand takes over as chair of resettlement dialogue**

At the end of the ATCR, the Government of the Netherlands and Dutch Refugee Council handed over the chairing of the ATCR and the Working Group on Resettlement (which meets between ATCR gatherings) to the New Zealand Government and NZ Red Cross. The program for the year is now being finalised but is expected to include a Working Group in Geneva late in 2016 and another in Auckland in February 2017 to focus on post-arrival settlement support. The 2017 ATCR will take place in Geneva in June or July.

*Paul Power  
CEO, Refugee Council of Australia  
August 2016*

APPENDIX A

## UNHCR STATISTICS ON RESETTLEMENT SUBMISSIONS

In its *Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2017*, UNHCR provides a series of statistics on resettlement submissions and departures in 2015. These provide insights into how resettlement states are responding to UNHCR requests to resettle refugees.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 4: Acceptance rates of UNHCR submissions in 2015, by country of origin**

Country of origin	Cases submitted <sup>7</sup>	Cases accepted
Syria	10,372	92.6%
Democratic Republic of Congo	5,114	95.9%
Iraq	4,199	85.5%
Somalia	3,515	85.2%
Burma	3,082	98.0%
Eritrea	1,765	95.3%
Iran	1,740	91.6%
Afghanistan	1,689	84.8%
Bhutan	1,500	98.3%
Sudan	1,329	94.8%
All others	3,080	84.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37,385</b>	<b>91.8%</b>

**Table 5: UNHCR resettlement by priority category, 2015**

UNHCR priority category	Persons submitted	% cases	Persons departed
Normal	118,719	90.3%	74,037
Urgent	14,727	9.0%	6,770
Emergency	548	0.6%	281
Unspecified / Other	50	0.1%	805
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>134,044</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>81,893</b>

**Table 6: UNHCR resettlement by submission category, 2015**

Category	Persons submitted	% cases	Persons departed
Legal and/or physical protection needs	52,260	34.3%	32,153
Survivors of violence and/or torture	34,206	23.9%	18,094
Lack of foreseeable durable solutions	24,321	22.2%	18,517
Women and girls at risk	12,174	11.8%	8,369
Medical needs	6,589	4.2%	2,404
Children and adolescents at risk	3,171	2.2%	613
Family reunification	1,268	1.4%	1,360
Others / Unspecified	55	0.1%	383
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>134,044</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>81,893</b>

<sup>6</sup> Note that submissions, acceptances and departures do not necessarily occur within the same calendar year.

<sup>7</sup> "Cases" refer to an individual or a family unit, with many cases involving more than one person.

**Table 7: Submissions under the Women and Girls at Risk Category, 2015**

Asylum country	Persons submitted	Proportion of submissions from asylum country	Persons departed
Turkey	1,520	10.3%	886
Egypt	1,314	27.2%	665
Kenya	1,426	16.6%	777
Ethiopia	1,348	22.0%	678
Pakistan	897	40.3%	682
Lebanon	738	8.0%	380
Burundi	636	23.6%	403
Jordan	447	3.5%	174
Uganda	521	13.6%	654
Malaysia	155	6.5%	351
All others	3,172		2,719
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,174</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>8,369</b>

**Table 8: Protracted refugee situations where resettlement takes place, 2013-15**

Comparison of UNHCR resettlement submissions and departures 2013-15			Submissions			Departures		
Country of origin	Country of asylum	Registered refugees, 2015	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015
Syria	Jordan	628,223	373	6,084	22,273	184	1,539	4,776
	Lebanon	1,062,690	4,769	7,318	18,476	983	4,903	6,547
	Turkey	2,503,549	59	5,457	8,091	22	284	1,141
	Egypt	117,635	0	1,581	3,074	0	187	889
	Iraq	244,642	3	429	1,027	2	31	329
Democratic Republic of Congo	Tanzania	55,803	362	3,823	6,638	433	221	1,168
	Uganda	201,782	3,206	4,032	4,247	898	917	2,705
	Burundi	53,029	1,064	3,776	3,310	348	549	1,824
	Rwanda	73,864	2,606	2,699	2,568	922	2,569	1,382
Iraq	Turkey	24,135	7,145	6,852	6,611	4,253	5,803	4,073
	Jordan	33,256	1,793	1,078	1,913	3,000	1,602	1,436
Somalia	Kenya	417,920	3,996	4,325	3,908	2,612	3,562	3,143
	Ethiopia	256,669	2,308	1,977	3,459	1,782	3,070	2,613
Burma	Malaysia	88,637	14,441	10,814	6,190	8,072	10,566	11,962
	Thailand	53,233	8,790	4,064	3,315	8,208	6,632	6,276
Afghanistan	Pakistan	1,560,592	1,405	2,075	2,338	990	876	1,110
	Iran	951,142	2,185	1,063	737	1,900	1,255	878
Bhutan	Nepal	17,134	7,070	5,566	4,477	10,665	8,395	6,332
Sudan	Egypt	11,296	1,262	1,043	1,943	1,253	37	1,098
Eritrea	Ethiopia	155,231	1,580	1,588	1,946	663	1,122	1,054



## NGO STATEMENT #ATCR16

### ***On behalf of all 42 NGOs and International NGOs attending the ATCR 2016***

*This statement was prepared by the Dutch Council for Refugees in consultation with the NGO representatives participating in the ATCR meeting. To increase the impact of the statement, the Dutch Council for Refugees developed the content into a short animated film, which was shown in the opening session of the ATCR. This film can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/KZXkRFlakdw>*

**Resettlement saves lives.** We are gathered here in Geneva for the 2016 ATCR because we fervently believe in this statement. And there are lives to be saved - more than ever.

The number of refugees in need of resettlement far exceeds the available number of resettlement places – and has done so for many years. For 2016 the number of refugees estimated by UNHCR to be in need of resettlement for the first time exceeds **one million**.

With this number in mind, NGOs continue to call on States to **introduce sizeable and quality resettlement programmes or significantly increase the quota** of existing resettlement programmes. States have the capacity to collectively ensure that resettlement needs are met.

NGOs strongly call upon States to increase their pledges at the upcoming **US-led high level meeting on the refugee crisis on 20 September**. Also, States should aim towards the goal to support the Global Compact on Responsibility-Sharing for Refugees called for by the Secretary General in his report for the **UN General Assembly meeting of 19 September**, in particular increasing their resettlement pledges with a view to collectively aiming towards the goal of “providing resettlement spaces or other legal pathways for admission to at least 10 per cent of the global refugee population annually.”

The **conflict in Syria** is now in its sixth year and there are unfortunately no signs that it will end any time soon. Out of over five million Syrian refugees, UNHCR estimates that 480.000 are in need of resettlement and this number keeps growing. The outcome of the 30 March high-level meeting has been disappointing in terms of pledges.

NGOs strongly **condemn the EU-Turkey deal** that has made resettlement of Syrian refugees from Turkey to the EU conditional on individuals being returned from Greece to Turkey. This deal results in a shameful one-for-one trading in human beings and implies large-scale returns between countries that do not ensure refugee protection. NGOs are also extremely concerned that this deal creates a precedent of using resettlement as a reward to states for introducing deterrence measures – something that NGOs strongly condemn. Resettlement is a humanitarian, life saving tool and a durable solution which should be offered irrespective of political agendas. NGOs caution against the EU-Turkey deal setting a precedent for other States to follow.

Syrians are not the only group of refugees in need of resettlement. **Other groups of refugees** such as Somalis, Afghans and Rohingyas who are in protracted refugee situations should not be overlooked when it comes to opening up resettlement places. Also in **other regions** of the world such as the Africa region (particularly Chad, Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania) and South West Asia (predominantly Iran and Pakistan) resettlement needs remain high. Access to resettlement should be equitable – reaching refugees in need regardless of location or degree of media attention.

The recent **announcement by the Government of Kenya to close the camps** is of deep concern and will no doubt lead to tragic consequences if carried through. Far greater commitment is needed from resettlement countries to support hosting States in Africa, such as Kenya. As such, NGOs strongly echo UNHCR’s appeal for a wider number of resettlement States to engage in Africa, noting that the United States and Canada between them received 92% of all refugees resettled from Africa.

In **South East Asia**, a much sharper focus on the strategic use of resettlement could be critically important in finding durable solutions for many of the region’s 300,000 refugees, especially now that political change is occurring in Myanmar. States which remain committed to resettlement could bring

the region's States together to explore options for dignified and voluntary repatriation to Myanmar while increasing pressure for better protection of refugees who remain in countries of asylum.

**Timely resettlement** must remain a priority. States need to achieve consensus on and put in place less time-consuming and more expedited procedures to process refugees for resettlement. Combining refugee status determination (RSD) and resettlement interviews is one way to do this. Otherwise delays will only force vulnerable people into the hands of smugglers and traffickers.

Given the current global need, States should provide **alternative or complementary pathways** beyond resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes. Other pathways include extended family reunification, medical evacuation and also humanitarian visas, labour mobility schemes, work visas, student scholarships and private sponsorships. These pathways can be crucial for refugees who are unable to access resettlement, providing them with a route to safety so they are not compelled to embark on life-threatening journeys in the hands of smugglers.

While NGOs strongly encourage the increase of resettlement and the opening up of alternative pathways, it is crucial that **quality integration programmes**, that support refugees to rebuild their lives, always remain an integral part of resettlement programmes and alternative pathways. Moreover, specialist integration services should always be available to all refugees, regardless of how they arrived. Integration into their host community is critical if refugees are to contribute to the society that has provided them with protection.

For European resettlement countries, it is a worrying development that resettled refugees are **not necessarily receiving a permanent legal refugee status** as the EU-Turkey deal leaves states the possibility to provide only a temporary permit for one year and some states have already shortened permits for resettled refugees.

**Public support for the settlement of refugees** is a crucial part of the provision of durable protection. Being an active part of civil society, NGOs contribute to strengthen public support. NGOs call upon States to actively contribute to promoting a welcoming society for refugees.

**NGOs play an invaluable role** in making resettlement and other pathways work. NGOs are active in all phases of resettlement from identification to the successful settlement of refugees. At a time when we are facing the worst humanitarian crisis since the Second World War, strengthened and new partnerships are necessary among all actors, at all levels. That will help to ensure that greater numbers of refugees are successfully resettled and lives continue to be saved.

## APPENDIX C

### JOINT NGO PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED AT CONCLUSION OF 2016 ATRC

*NGOs make urgent call:*

#### **‘Dramatic increase in refugee resettlement urgently needed’**

**Geneva, 15 June 2016 --- The world is facing** the largest refugee crisis since WWII. At this year’s Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATRC), 34 NGOs made an urgent call on all parties to support the UN Secretary General's goal: for States to provide resettlement spaces and additional legal channels for at least 10 per cent of the global refugee population annually. This is the kind of bold responsibility sharing needed to respond to this historic challenge, the NGOs say.

#### **Humane solution**

“There is no doubt about it: resettlement saves lives. It prevents deaths at sea and it makes it harder for smugglers to exploit refugees for profits”, according to Jasper Kuipers, deputy director of the Dutch Council for Refugees and NGO co-chair of this year’s ATRC. Resettlement provides a humane solution for the most vulnerable refugees. It is also crucial that quality integration programs remain part of resettlement and alternative pathways.

#### **Increase pledges**

In the run up to the Leaders’ Summit on Refugees in September in New York, efforts are underway to double the number of resettlement slots to 340.000 for next year. This still falls far short of the 1.2 million refugees currently in need of resettlement according to UNHCR. ‘The Summit is a critical opportunity for States to show leadership by committing to resettle significantly more refugees. Given the staggering size and scope of the global refugee crisis, the time for action is now. Greatly increasing resettlement is fundamentally the right thing to do’, adds Naomi Steinberg, director of Refugee Council USA.

#### **Other safe and legal channels**

In order to move towards the much needed ten per cent, sizable and quality resettlement programs should be introduced by those countries who haven’t already, the quotas of existing resettlement programs should increase significantly, and complementary safe and legal channels should be dramatically expanded. For example, refugees should be able to access extended family reunification, labour mobility schemes, student scholarships, private sponsorships, as well as medical evacuation and humanitarian visas. These additional pathways can be crucial for refugees who are unable to access resettlement.

#### **Resettle other refugee groups besides Syrians**

The NGOs stress that other groups of refugees besides Syrians, such as Somalis, Afghans and Rohingyas, who are in protracted refugee situations, should not be overlooked when it comes to opening up resettlement places. Also in other regions of the world such as the Africa region and South West Asia resettlement needs remain high. Access to resettlement should be equitable – reaching refugees in need regardless of location or degree of media attention.

#### **EU-Turkey deal: a bad example**

Resettlement should be offered irrespective of political agendas. NGOs strongly condemn the EU-Turkey deal that has made resettlement of Syrian refugees from Turkey to the EU conditional on individuals being returned from Greece to Turkey. Catherine Woollard, Secretary General of ECRE, European Council on Refugees and Exiles: ‘This deal is nothing more than a shameful one-for-one trading in human beings and implies large-scale returns between countries that do not ensure refugee protection. We cannot let this EU-Turkey deal set a precedent for other States to follow’.

#### **Involvement of NGOs**

NGOs play an invaluable role in all aspects of the resettlement process, from identification to the successful settlement of refugees. Partnerships between States and NGOs should be set up or strengthened to make sure that lives can continue to be saved through resettlement. We as NGOs stand ready to help our governments receive these newcomers into our communities.

*This joint press release is supported by the Dutch Council for Refugees, Refugee Council USA , European Council on Refugees and Exiles, AMES Australia, Amnesty International Australia, Auckland Refugee Community Council, British Refugee Council, Canadian Council for Refugees, Caritas Austria, Caritas Internationalis, Danish Refugee Council, Ethiopian Community Development Center USA, Finn Church Aid, Forum Réfugiés, Foundation House, HIAS, International Catholic Migration Commission, International Council of Voluntary Agencies, International Rescue Committee, Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia, Japan Association for Refugees, Mennonite Central Committee Canada, Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (Australia), Refugee Action UK, Refugee Consortium of Kenya, Refugee Council of Australia, Refugee Rights, Refugees as Survivors, RefugePoint, Romanian National Council for Refugees, Settlement Council of Australia, Settlement Services International, Swiss Refugee Council, World University Service of Canada.*