REPORT OF 2017 ANNUAL TRIPARTITE CONSULTATIONS ON RESETTLEMENT

UNHCR APPEALS FOR SUPPORT TO ADDRESS REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT NEEDS IN AFRICA

The vast unmet need for refugee resettlement from Africa and the opportunities for communities to engage in the sponsorship of refugees were two of the key themes 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 2017 Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR).

Representation at the ATCR

Organised by UNHCR, the Government of New Zealand and NZ Red Cross, the 2017 ATCR took place on 12-14 June. It brought together representatives of 32 nations involved in resettlement, including 82 representatives of 28 governments and 74 NGO delegates from 23 countries, one refugee representative, 99 UNHCR staff, 13 staff of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and 6 representatives of the European Union and the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees.

The Australian Government was represented by three officials of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection while the Australian NGO representatives present were from Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), Settlement Council of Australia (SCoA), AMES Australia, Settlement Services International (SSI), Victorian Foundation of Survivors of Torture (VFST) and Amnesty International Australia. Arash Bordbar, a Sydney-based engineering student who was resettled two years ago as an Iranian refugee from Malaysia, was Australia’s refugee representative. The practice of making up to five places available at the dialogue for designated refugee representatives was introduced when Australia chaired the dialogue in 2012 but, for the third time in six years, Australia was the only country to send a refugee representative. Arash (pictured with other Australian delegates, from left, Violet Roumeliotis of SSI, Melika Sheikh-Eldin of AMES and Dewani Bakkum of SCoA) was active throughout the dialogue, highlighting the needs of young refugees, protection concerns in Asia and challenging delegates about their use of words which dehumanise refugees, including “burdens”, “resettlement pipelines” and “beneficiaries”.

Seeking new partners as resettlement need grows

Focusing on the theme of “New Partners – New Approaches”, the 2017 ATCR explored ways of increasing and broadening resettlement as a durable solution for refugees, in line with commitments...
made by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2016 as part of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Responding to the highest level of displacement since the end of World War II, delegates discussed strategies to involve new states in resettlement, build community-based sponsorship, increase the engagement of the private sector, introduce complementary pathways to traditional resettlement programs (including scholarship programs, family reunion and labour mobility programs) and broaden resettlement criteria. Noting that the New York Declaration provided a menu of options for the support of refugees, UNHCR’s Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, Volker Turk, said the challenge now was to move the declaration’s commitments from paper to reality. For this to happen, he said, the commitments needed to be translated to the national and regional level. UNHCR appealed for support from governments and NGOs to build a platform for action to put the Declaration’s draft Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework into operation as part of the planned Global Compact on Refugees.

The Declaration coincided with the largest international refugee resettlement response in more than 20 years. During 2016, with the help of 200 additional resettlement staff in the field, UNHCR referred 162,575 refugees for resettlement and saw 125,835 resettled through its referrals. Another 63,456 refugees were resettled through non-UNHCR processes, including Canada’s private sponsorship program and Australia’s Special Humanitarian Program. UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, said UNHCR had not expected to achieve a record level of referrals and such a high level of departures. He noted that in 2016 the number of countries engaged in refugee resettlement increased to 37 and more attention was paid to private and community sponsorship.

However, the news for 2017 is less positive. The United States refugee resettlement program, which has been the largest by far for many years, has been cut substantially following Donald Trump’s election as President. UNHCR expects the global number of resettlement places available for UNHCR-referred refugees to drop by 43%, falling to around 93,000 places. Mr Grandi emphasised the importance of resettlement as a protection tool, noting that many refugees referred for resettlement were survivors of violence and that there were also increasing numbers of referrals of refugees from LGBTI communities, detained refugees and people with critical medical needs.

**NGOs outline resettlement concerns and priorities**

NZ Red Cross delivered a joint statement on behalf of NGOs represented at the ATCR, urging governments to work closely with civil society and UNHCR as the Global Compact on Refugees proposed by the New York Declaration is refined and put into action. In their statement, the NGOs also:

- Expressed regret about the US Government’s cut in its refugee admissions target from 110,000 places per year to 50,000 and emphasised the need for greater engagement of European states in resettlement.
- Stressed the importance of the humanitarian role of resettlement, insisting that it “not serve political objectives of migration control and deterrence”.
- Pointed to opportunities to use resettlement strategically to enhance protection for refugees who will not be resettled, citing South East Asia as a region where continued engagement in resettlement could enhance options for other durable solutions.
- Highlighted the pressing need for greater commitment to resettlement of refugees from Africa, given the scale of need, and to Rohingya refugees and other cultural and religious minorities living in countries of asylum in the Asia Pacific region.
- Asked states to give greater priority to the resettlement of children at risk, noting that the US Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, the largest of its kind in the world, was under pressure because of the reduction in the US program.
- Commended new thinking about alternative pathways for refugees including a new Japanese initiative involving universities and the private sector.

The NGO statement also praised the expansion of Australia’s annual refugee program by 5000 places over two years but expressed concern that the extension of the Community Proposal Pilot will be included in, rather than additional to, the annual resettlement program. It criticised the Australian private sponsorship model as “prohibitively expensive, counterproductive and unfair”, encouraging states instead to examine the Canadian private sponsorship program and “its carefully designed distribution of cost and incentives”. The full text of the NGO statement is in Appendix B.
Global resettlement needs for 2018

UNHCR released its Projected Global Resettlement Needs document for 2018\(^\text{1}\) at the ATCR, nominating 1.195 million refugees as being in need of resettlement – a slight increase on the previous year and more than for any previous year. Of those identified as being in need of resettlement, 40% are Syrians, 12% are from the Democratic Republic of Congo and 8% from the Central African Republic. By region of asylum, 510,676 of the refugees are in Africa (43%) while most of the rest are in the Middle East (22%) and Turkey (25%).

Table 1: UNHCR projected global resettlement needs, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region or sub-region of asylum</th>
<th>Total 2018 projected resettlement needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Africa and Great Lakes</td>
<td>190,273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East and Horn of Africa</td>
<td>270,681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Africa</td>
<td>33,734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Africa</td>
<td>15,988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa total</td>
<td>510,676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americas total</td>
<td>1,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia and the Pacific</td>
<td>12,888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>1,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Asia</td>
<td>87,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia total</td>
<td>100,988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-Eastern Europe(^2)</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe total</td>
<td>302,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>262,238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Africa</td>
<td>17,617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East and North Africa total</td>
<td>279,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,195,349</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The greatest resettlement needs by country of asylum are in Turkey (300,000), Lebanon (120,000), Uganda (87,500), Iran (87,000), Cameroon (78,255), Jordan (72,125), Ethiopia (65,750), Chad (57,227), Tanzania (42,500) and Israel (38,050). By country of origin, the refugees most in need of resettlement are from Syria (478,170), Democratic Republic of Congo (148,554), Central African Republic (94,581), South Sudan (92,537), Afghanistan (86,940), Sudan (60,763), Somalia (55,158), Iraq (48,736), Eritrea (45,831) and Nigeria (22,008).

Africa: UNHCR appeals for greater support for host nations

The need for greater support for resettlement from Africa was strongly emphasised by UNHCR staff on several occasions during the 2017 ATCR. The halving of the US resettlement quota by the new Trump administration will have the biggest impact in Africa. In 2016, more than 90% of refugee referrals were to the US (39,777 of the 43,978 referrals). As the US has temporarily stopped receiving new referrals, UNHCR expects resettlement submissions from Africa to drop from 44,000 in 2016 to 7000 in 2017. Despite identifying 510,000 refugees in need of resettlement from Africa in 2018, UNHCR expects to refer fewer than 12,000 refugees unless additional places are offered by resettlement states.

The need for resettlement is growing more quickly in Africa than any other region, with 60,000 more refugees identified as being in need of resettlement for 2018 than for 2017. The region is experiencing diminishing resources for refugee support, despite the growth in the numbers of people displaced by the crises in Angola, Mali, Central African Republic, Burundi and South Sudan. In recent months in Uganda, 3,000 to 4,000 people have been crossing the border every day from South Sudan. While Uganda is still keeping its border open, it is challenging to preserve asylum space

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\(^2\) Turkey is included in South-Eastern Europe and hosts all of the refugees identified as being in need of resettlement from that sub-region.
under these conditions. UNHCR staff emphasised that even small contributions through resettlement would send a positive message of solidarity to Uganda and other host countries.

A clear message at the ATCR to resettlement states was that refugees who did not receive a minimum level of help would be tempted to move on. UNHCR spoke about the situation in Kenya where the government was pushing for the closure of the Dadaab refugee camp, saying that refugees had been living there for 25 years and the international community was offering little assistance. UNHCR negotiated for 15,000 refugees to be resettled to USA, for others to be transferred to Kakuma refugee camp and for assistance to Somalis who could return home. However, with the US administration reducing its commitment to resettlement, the help of other resettlement states is needed, to demonstrate that the international community has not lost interest in the situation.

**Middle East: Situation unsustainable despite 250,000 resettlement pledges**

Director of UNHCR’s Middle East and North Africa Bureau, Amin Awad, told ATCR delegates that, with 40% of the world’s displaced people in the Middle East and Turkey (5 million refugees and 7-8 million internally displaced), the situation in the region was not sustainable. When international assistance did not come to the region’s refugees in 2014 and 2015, many people moved on to Europe. Mr Awad said resettlement was one of the most predictable solutions and needed to be supplemented with other pathways such as scholarships and private sponsorship. UNHCR’s aim is to find resettlement places for 10% of the region’s refugees – 500,000 places – but it still will not be sustainable even if this goal is achieved. As at February 2017, 34 states had pledged to admit 252,270 Syrians through resettlement and other admission pathways.

Mr Awad said UNHCR did include minorities in its resettlement priorities but its key criteria related to vulnerability. Minorities were targeted in Iraq and parts of Syria but churches also wanted to protect their heritage in the Middle East, he said. It was important to ensure that resettlement did not empty these regions of their minorities and also important that resettlement remained focused on the most vulnerable.

In response to RCOA’s question about the extent to which Palestinian refugees who had been displaced again by recent conflicts were included in resettlement priorities, UNHCR officials said that they were trying to include Palestinians who otherwise would not be provided protection where it was possible to do this within the provisions of the Refugee Convention. UNHCR is working closely with the UN Relief and Works Agency (which still has the principal mandate for assisting Palestinians refugees in some Middle Eastern nations) but is aware of the sensitivities of some host governments who continue to advocate for Palestinians to maintain the right return to Palestinian land. In its 2018 resettlement priorities, UNHCR has identified 782 Palestinians in Iraq and 110 in Indonesia as being in need of resettlement.

**Asia: Review of resettlement from Pakistan to result in fewer referrals**

UNHCR’s decision to review all resettlement from Pakistan has resulted in a significant drop in the number of refugees identified as being in need of resettlement from Asia. At the beginning of 2017, Pakistan was hosting 1.35 million refugees, making it second only to Turkey as a host nation. However, UNHCR has included none of these refugees in its resettlement priorities for 2018. As a result, the number of refugees identified as being in need of resettlement from Asia has dropped from 153,358 for 2017 to 100,988 for 2018. These refugees are in Iran (87,000), Malaysia (8185), Indonesia (2700), Thailand (1000), Sri Lanka (700), Bangladesh (610), India (400) and China and Hong Kong (393).

Acting director of UNHCR’s Asia Bureau, Bernie Doyle, said UNHCR believed that the advancing level of economic and social development in many Asian countries meant that their capacity to host and help refugees was also increasing. Some countries, however, were trapped in their own past, Mr Doyle said, believing, for instance, that other countries should step in to resettle refugees as they did previously through agreements such as the Comprehensive Plan of Action for refugees in the 1980s and 1990s. UNHCR is trying to maximise opportunities for refugee protection, focusing particularly on promoting opportunities for refugees to get legal status and access to employment.
In emphasising the need for resettlement to be more strategic, Assistant High Commissioner Volker Turk said that the perception that resettlement was the answer for refugees in South East Asia needed to change. Mr Turk spoke positively about some small changes occurring in the region, including commitments made by Thailand at the September 2016 Leaders Summit in New York which were now being followed through and some changes in regional thinking about solutions which had been demonstrated by the 2016 Bali Process ministerial declaration. A number of refugees have returned to Myanmar and UNHCR is having discussions with others who would like to return. Mr Turk said a more strategic approach to resettlement in Asia would involve host countries being held to pledges they have made and continuing to work together on an evolution of the situation in the region.

UNHCR is asking states to focus their resettlement from Asia on refugees with acute protection needs, to be fast and flexible in managing resettlement cases and to base decisions on protection needs, not on favourite nationalities or religions. UNHCR appealed to resettlement states to assist in advocating for increased protection in countries where refugees are living, particularly greater access to survival. Asked by Australia’s refugee representative Arash Bordbar about the priority given to refugees in detention, Mr Doyle said UNHCR wanted resettlement to focus more on immediate and acute cases, where refugees were detained or at risk of deportation. UNHCR’s approach to improving protection included working with states using detention as a management strategy, Mr Doyle said.

Other information shared by UNHCR Asia Bureau in its briefing on resettlement needs in the region included the following:

- UNHCR has identified 610 refugees in Bangladesh as being in priority need of resettlement despite no shift to date in the Bangladesh Government’s attitude. Resettlement has been shut down since 2010 apparently because of government fears of “pull factors” if Rohingya refugees are resettled. UNHCR will continue its dialogue with Bangladesh.
- Of the 7480 Myanmar-born refugees identified as being in need of resettlement from Myanmar, the largest number are Rohingya. While Rohingya refugees are part of the ethnic minorities group resettlement to the United States from Malaysia, that program is coming to an end. The Australian Government has indicated that it is not accepting Rohingya submissions but UNHCR hopes that may change as the 2017-18 program is discussed. New Zealand is continuing to resettle Rohingya refugees.
- Thailand last year closed the final round of its fast-track PAB (Provincial Admissions Board) registration process for separated immediate family members of refugees who had already been resettled from the Thai-Burma border camps. Of the 1,000 refugees in Thailand identified as being in need of resettlement, 700 are in the border camps and 300 are urban refugees. Around 100 of these urban refugees are currently in detention.

**Resettlement trends in 2016**

During 2016, 125,835 refugees were resettled through UNHCR’s referral processes. This figure does not include another 63,456 refugees resettled during the year by states without UNHCR making the initial referral. UNHCR’s 2016 Global Trends document records 189,291 refugee arrivals in resettlement states, based on statistics provided by those states. As Table 1 illustrates, the number of resettlement departures of UNHCR-referred refugees was 54% higher than in 2015. Submissions for resettlement from UNHCR to states increased in 2016 by 21% on the previous year.

**Table 2: Summary of resettlement statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR resettlement submissions&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>162,575</td>
<td>134,044</td>
<td>103,890</td>
<td>92,915</td>
<td>74,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resettlement departures</td>
<td>125,835</td>
<td>81,893</td>
<td>73,608</td>
<td>71,449</td>
<td>69,252</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2016, the largest resettlement programs were from Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Kenya and Tanzania with the main beneficiaries of resettlement being refugees from Syria, Democratic Republic of

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<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.
Congo, Burma, Somalia and Iraq. The key resettlement states were USA, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom and Norway.

Table 3: Top 10: UNHCR resettlement departures 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Refugees resettled</th>
<th>Country of asylum</th>
<th>Refugees resettled</th>
<th>Country of resettlement</th>
<th>Refugees resettled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>47,930</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>19,502</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>78,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>DR Congo</td>
<td>21,911</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>19,303</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>21,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>13,234</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>15,581</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>7,502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>10,540</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>9,286</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>5,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>7,346</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>8,873</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>3,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>6,297</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>8,106</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>4,544</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>6,765</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>1,328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>2,640</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>6,299</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1,229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>2,252</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>5,890</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>1,714</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>4,035</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All others</td>
<td>7,427</td>
<td>All others</td>
<td>22,195</td>
<td>All others</td>
<td>3,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>125,835</td>
<td></td>
<td>125,835</td>
<td></td>
<td>125,835</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNHCR’s 2016 Global Trends document records that the 189,291 refugee resettlement arrivals through UNHCR and non-UNHCR processes were to: United States of America 96,874, Canada 46,702, Australia 27,626, United Kingdom 5,181, Norway 3,291, Sweden 1,890, France 1,415, Germany 1,239, Finland 943, Netherlands 700, Switzerland 621, Italy 537, Belgium 452, New Zealand 404, Ireland 356, Denmark 309, Spain 289, Austria 201, Iceland 56, Luxembourg 52, Korea South 41, Czech Republic 32, Lithuania 25, Japan 18, Hungary 15, Estonia 11, Latvia 6, Monaco 4, Cambodia 1. \(^5\)

Lessons from private sponsorship programs in Canada, Italy and the UK

As part of the discussion about new models of refugee resettlement, representatives of the Canadian Government and NGOs shared information about the Canadian private sponsorship program. Professor Jennifer Bond of the University of Ottawa spoke about the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative her university had formed with the Canadian Government, Open Society Foundations, UNHCR and Radcliffe Foundation to share information about community-based sponsorship and support community and government bodies interested in introducing sponsorship programs in their countries. The initiative’s three goals are to: increase resettlement numbers globally and improve the refugee resettlement experience; strengthen local communities involved in welcoming refugees; and improve the political and public narrative about refugees and newcomers. Professor Bond believes that exposing people to the humanity of refugees is a catalyst for social and political change.

Fraser Valentine from the government agency Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada said his country’s private sponsorship program had provided protection for 280,000 refugees over the past 40 years. In 2015, 9300 refugees were resettled under this program but this grew to 18,000 in 2016. The 2017 target is 16,000. Mr Valentine said that, while government had an essential role in creating the right legislative and regulatory framework, it also had to release some level of control to civil society. The roles, responsibilities and expectations of the government and the civil society sponsors needed to be very clear for the program to work successfully, he said. One of the Canadian Government’s challenges with the program was dealing with the size of the demand for program – “a good challenge to have”.

Bryan Dyck, national migration and resettlement coordinator for Canada’s Mennonite Central Committee, said those involved in private sponsorship were motivated by a range of factors including: a family or ethnic connection with people who are refugees; a particular affinity for certain populations affected by persecution, such as the LGBTQ community; a deep commitment to volunteering; and a faith commitment. Over 40 years, private sponsorship has become part of the Canadian identity. Sponsorship is conducted by community networks organised through Sponsorship Agreement Holders, by groups of five individuals and by some community organisations. The sponsors are responsible for all financial support for sponsored refugees for the

\(^5\) Statistics from Table 23 of the data table annexes published with UNHCR 2016 Global Trends.
first year after arrival. It is recommended that this sponsorship be equivalent to at least C$12,600 for a single person or C$27,000 for a family of four. Airfares are covered by a loan which refugees are expected to pay back in the future. Any cost associated with visa processing is borne by the Canadian Government.

Dr Monica Attias of the Community of Sant’Egidio shared information about the Humanitarian Corridors program it has established in Italy and France with Federation of Evangelical Churches and the Waldensian and Methodist Churches. The program, the first of its kind in Europe, enables Syrian, Syrian Palestinian and Iraqi refugees to travel legally to Italy to seek asylum there and to France after resettlement screening in Lebanon. Initially, 1,000 places are available in Italy and 500 in France. The Italian program, which does not require refugees to have formal refugee status before their flight to Italy, is particularly useful for Syrian refugees who cannot register in Lebanon because UNHCR is prevented from formally registering any refugee who arrived from May 2015. The Humanitarian Corridors program is funded by private, non-government and business organisations. Volunteer groups involved in supporting refugees as part of the program are asked to provide housing either in an apartment or a religious house and 7000 euros per person per year for two years. Once every month or two, Alitalia charters an aircraft at its own expense to bring refugees from the Middle East to Italy. Once the refugees arrive in Italy, the Community of Sant’Egidio and its coordinating partners arrange legal assistance to help the refugee through the process of having refugee status confirmed. As pre-screening has taken place prior to departure, this process takes about three months, a quarter of the average time for processing of asylum claims in Italy. The coordinating organisations support the local groups of volunteers, monitoring their work and reviewing their local settlement plans, which must include language and vocational training. To date, more than 800 refugees have settled in 17 towns in 17 regions. The Community of Sant’Egidio is now involved in discussions about taking the idea to Andorra, Poland, Ireland and Spain.

Gregory Manaitis, special program advisor for the Open Society Foundations, spoke about how refugee sponsorship reanimates community life, addressing the breakdown of community and the sense of individual loneliness. Reflecting on the early development of private sponsorship in the United Kingdom, Mr Manaitis said: “When sponsors talk they really impress you that they have found an outlet for their compassion and a meaningful way to connect with their neighbours and do something in common with them. They are identifying long latent skills in the community: the graduate student who hasn’t used their Arabic language skills, the retiree who can help a family with their health or other issues. Being in a sponsorship group makes people feel relevant, to feel that they are part of something larger than themselves. In a world that is atomising that is incredibly important. The civil society effect of sponsorship is that, when you create sponsorship groups, those groups become active actors in their community. Those groups also connect with each other. You see faith-based groups connecting with groups of other faiths – Muslim, Catholic and Jewish groups undertaking a sponsorship effort – and faith-based and non-faith-based groups working together. These groups then have to build a relationship with local government. Then driving the experience in the UK, which is new to this effort, those local actors then also have to align and communicate well with the national government. So you then start to build up the relationship between local and national and you create a big tent where there is shared responsibility and shared purpose. Instead of stratifying society, you are finding ways of bringing it together.”

Asked by RCOA to comment on the high-cost new Community Support program being introduced by the Australian Government to replace the Community Proposal Pilot, Professor Bond said the Canadian Government remained a partner in private sponsorship and was not engaging in a full privatisation of refugee resettlement. The three resettlement options offered by Canada – the Government Assisted Refugees program, the Blended Visa Office-Referred program and the private sponsorship program – each involved differing levels of commitment from government and civil society but in no case did the government withdraw. “I throw a challenge to our Australian colleagues,” Professor Bond said. “I think the model is bad and the challenge is how to take the narrative back on this type of program because I think Australia has a lot of potential. The civil society infrastructure is strong, the people are welcoming, it’s got the resource base to do this kind of model and there are lots of opportunities to do good integration in Australia. The opportunity for success is very high. The challenge is: with a bad program design being out first, how do you take back this idea in a way which will be of interest to government and community partners?”
New public portal for resettlement data

At the 2017 ATCR, UNHCR unveiled the new resettlement data portal on its website. The portal, which can be found at [http://www.unhcr.org/resettlement-data.html](http://www.unhcr.org/resettlement-data.html), provides resettlement data going back to 2003. It is updated on the fifth day of each month, to provide the latest data.

Germany takes over as chair of resettlement dialogue

At the end of the ATCR, the New Zealand Government and NZ Red Cross handed over the chairing of the ATCR and the Working Group on Resettlement (which meets between ATCR gatherings) to the German Government and Caritas Germany. The 2018 ATCR will take place in Geneva in June or July.

Paul Power  
CEO, Refugee Council of Australia  
August 2017

Some resources shared at ATCR

UNHCR Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2018  

UNHCR’s visual summary of 2016 resettlement outcomes  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXSXnjryY3w&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXSXnjryY3w&feature=youtu.be)

Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative website  

Canadian businessman sponsors over 200 Syrian refugees  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=de4uc_F7qVc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=de4uc_F7qVc)

Community of Sant’Egidio brings Syrian refugees to Italy  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4XF01aRI6c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4XF01aRI6c)

A Jewish family open their Berlin home to a Muslim refugee:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEA-Ed4VIEY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEA-Ed4VIEY)

UNHCR resettlement data portal  
UNHCR STATISTICS ON RESETTLEMENT SUBMISSIONS

In its Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2018, UNHCR provides a series of statistics on resettlement submissions and departures in 2016 which provide insights into how resettlement states are responding to UNHCR requests to resettle refugees.\(^6\)

### Table 4: Acceptance rates of UNHCR submissions in 2016, by country of origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Cases submitted</th>
<th>Cases accepted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>15,948</td>
<td>94.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
<td>6,142</td>
<td>97.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>3,988</td>
<td>83.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>3,533</td>
<td>97.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>3,186</td>
<td>83.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>1,972</td>
<td>95.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>1,602</td>
<td>88.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>1,455</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>1,294</td>
<td>89.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>1,139</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All others</td>
<td>3,264</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>43,523</strong></td>
<td><strong>92.2%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that submissions, acceptances and departures do not necessarily occur within the same calendar year.

8 “Cases” refer to an individual or a family unit, with many cases involving more than one person.
APPENDIX B

ATCR 2017 NGO STATEMENT

1. Much has happened since the 2016 ATCR. Some developments have been encouraging, others a cause for concern. Beginning on a positive note, in September, at the margins of the United Nations General Assembly, the first ever summit for refugees and migrants was convened by the Secretary General. This was followed by the Leaders’ Summit on Refugees in New York, hosted by the United States and co-hosted by the leaders of Canada, Ethiopia, Germany, Jordan, Mexico and Sweden. In these meetings, the heads of state and foreign ministers of 52 countries made concrete commitments to do more to meet refugee needs, including the doubling of annual resettlement spaces to 360,000 globally. We strongly support this.

2. NGOs urge UNHCR and each host country of the summit – four of whom are in this room – to work together to deliver on these pledges for refugees. NGOs ask those countries to specify: which government or governments will assume responsibility for follow up to the summit, and what is the role of UNHCR in tracking the pledges? We also believe that there needs to be meaningful engagement with civil society to ensure that the global compacts benefit from the knowledge and expertise of our organisations. We strongly support the push to provide resettlement places for 10% of the world’s refugees as was originally pushed for in the lead up to the New York Summit in 2016.

3. As NGOs we are willing and able to be partners in the global compact on refugees. As experienced resettlement agencies we know that for this resettlement challenge, realistic and achievable solutions can be found that will bring benefits to both host and resettled communities.

4. Unfortunately, other actions embarked upon by some governments have become increasingly matters for concern. We are particularly worried that the USA, a key leader on resettlement, is dramatically changing course. NGOs around the world watched with dismay as the new President of the United States, shortly after taking office, signalled the intent of his Administration to turn away from America’s historic leadership in refugee resettlement. This intent was manifested not only in the declaration of a moratorium on all refugee resettlement for 120 days, but also by plans to reduce the US annual resettlement commitment from 110,000 to 50,000 refugees for 2018. This would be the lowest admissions level set by any Administration since the passage of the 1980 Refugee Act. The implementation of these new policies has been on hold pending legal challenge in US courts, but if they were to move forward would come at a tremendous human cost for the tens of thousands of refugees denied or delayed in their resettlement in the US – as well as at a significant moral cost as the world faces the largest global refugee crisis since the Second World War.

5. As NGOs who work in host countries and in resettlement countries, we resoundingly dispute policies based on the premise that refugees fail to integrate and pose a security risk, or that it would be more “cost-effective” to keep people where they are, rather than resettling them. Firstly, we believe that security vetting of refugees is already appropriately robust and sophisticated. Secondly, the history of resettlement globally demonstrates that when a warm welcome is provided alongside appropriate integration support, refugees of all ethnic and religious backgrounds successfully integrate and become productive, contributing members of society. Finally, resettlement is a crucial safety-net which functions alongside humanitarian assistance; it is not an either-or situation. NGOs urge the United States to continue to demonstrate the global leadership that has made the US resettlement program one of the most dynamic and successful in the world, providing a positive model for other states in overseas processing, reception and long-term integration. We urge this nation to continue to shine its’ light.

6. Resettlement to Europe has come a long way over the last few years, with larger numbers and more countries offering resettlement places. These efforts need to be encouraged and strengthened. Yet, Europe can do much more to take a fair share of the global needs. We welcome current initiatives to establish an instrument for a European Union Resettlement Framework, as this has the potential to strengthen the participation of European states and the quality of programmes offered. However, it is important to ensure that resettlement maintain its humanitarian function and not serve
political objectives of migration control and deterrence. Resettlement must stay a durable solution. Therefore resettled refugees should be granted a permanent and not a subsidiary status in all EU states. We call on Europe to create a Regulation that increases both the quality and quantity of places, while maintaining access to asylum for those reaching the European Union’s territory. UNHCR should maintain a primary role in the referrals under the EU Resettlement Framework. Any additional efforts by European States should complement their resettlement contributions via the EU resettlement framework.

7. A key to fighting hostility and xenophobia is strong government leadership in recognising the importance of refugee resettlement for the protection of people. In a year marked by the cynical conflation of refugees and terrorists for political purposes, very few world leaders stepped forward to resolutely reject the scapegoating of refugees. Yet we see in many contexts the difference when governments choose to show leadership to fully support resettlement. As NGOs we know that as host communities work together to welcome the newcomers, social connections are created that combat fear and intolerance and that these links are by far the strongest foundation for a more inclusive and cohesive society that benefits all members. We want to see governments show leadership in working towards positive solutions that are ambitious enough to deliver protection at the right scale, while creating confidence in all parties and drawing on the expertise of civil society.

8. NGOs continue to advocate for a more strategic use of resettlement, exploring how resettlement quotas can be used as part of a suite of strategies to enhance protection for refugees who will not be considered for resettlement. Resettlement states should use the dynamic of cooperation with host states generated by resettlement to advance the argument that it is better for everyone if people are granted the rights and opportunities to contribute fully and positively to a host society. In South East Asia, for example, most refugees remain without any legal status or permission to work, despite resettlement states collectively resettling more than 180,000 refugees over the past decade from Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. We call on states to improve support for host countries through continued diplomatic engagement and targeted aid to bring about long term change. Resettlement states can also play a significant role in supporting longer term voluntary repatriation, for example to Myanmar, particularly by insisting that refugees must be centrally involved in this process if repatriation is to succeed.

9. The increasing scale of response in the Middle East should not decrease the response to other areas of deep concern. NGOs are concerned about the decreasing number of resettlement places, specifically in Africa and parts of Asia. Any significant reduction in the U.S. Resettlement Programme will worsen this. There is disproportionately little attention given to African refugee situations – both in terms of humanitarian aid and resettlement quotas. Likewise, Rohingya refugees and other cultural and religious minorities living in countries of asylum in the Asia Pacific region are highly vulnerable to exploitation. Any further reduction in access to protection for these groups may encourage onward and dangerous journeys. NGOs therefore strongly encourage resettlement states to increase their quotas from Africa and parts of Asia.

10. We are particularly concerned that recent trends in key resettlement countries will result in a decrease in overall spaces for the resettlement of children at risk, including unaccompanied minors. The US Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program has been the largest of its kind and we urge the government to continue leading by example. NGOs strongly believe there is a role for other resettlement states to play in increasing resettlement to this highly vulnerable group. NGOs in different countries have developed expertise in supporting the integration of children and young people, and are willing and able to work with states to increase programs for the resettlement of children at risk.

11. Protection for refugees means permanent resettlement solutions and providing full access to family reunification schemes, as we know that keeping families together is key to successful resettlement and integration. NGOs call on both resettlement countries and UNHCR to do much more to preserve family unity in the resettlement process. In cases where states do not facilitate this under national and regional family reunification laws, this should be through resettlement – including nuclear families and all first degree relatives, adult children with their parents, and siblings with one
another. This particularly important when there are indications that in the country of origin, or the country of first asylum, the family formed an important support network for one another.

12. NGOs welcome initiatives in some states to increase alternative pathways for refugees outside of established resettlement programs – including through labour mobility schemes, student visas and family reunion pathways. We affirm support for community sponsorship models and would like to see strong government and UNHCR support in ensuring that these become stable and accessible complementary pathways. We call on states to ensure that these alternative pathways increase the overall capacity for legal permanent admissions and not replace or undermine existing state-led resettlement programs. We commend the Japanese initiative to work with communities, Universities and the private sector to provide resettlement spaces for Syrian refugees. We congratulate the Australian government for increasing its humanitarian program by 2,500 places in the 2017/18 program year. However, it is regrettable that the recently announced Australian extension of its Community Proposal Pilot to become an annual program of 1000 places will be allocated within this scheduled increase. We are also concerned that the up-front costs to be borne by sponsors, as required by the Australian Government, are prohibitively expensive, counterproductive and unfair. We believe that in all cases such places should be in addition to scheduled increases to refugee programs. Economically and socially, there is considerable potential for all resettlement countries to increase its humanitarian intake by tapping into direct support available from the community at large, the private sector and refugee diaspora communities. We urge Governments to pursue this without reducing the planned intake of the most vulnerable under its general program. We encourage resettlement countries to examine the Canadian community sponsorship program as an effective model for advancing this as a tool for resettlement including its carefully designed distribution of cost and incentives.

This statement has been endorsed by the following organisations: AMES Australia, Foundation House (Australia), Migrant and Refugee Resettlement Services (Australia), Refugee Council of Australia, Settlement Services International (Australia), Caritas International Belgium, Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia (Canada), National Settlement Council (Canada), World University Service of Canada, Action Réfugiés Montréal, Canadian Council for Refugees, Danish Refugee Council, Forum réfugiés – Cosi (France), Amnesty International Germany, German Caritas Association, Amnesty International Australia, European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), Organization for Refuge, Asylum and Migration (ORAM), RefugePoint, International Rescue Committee, International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP), Forum for Refugees Japan, The Sasakawa Peace Foundation (Japan), Dutch Council for Refugees, Refugee,pl Foundation (Poland), Romanian National Council for Refugees, Caritas Sweden, British Refugee Council, Refugee Action (UK), Church World Service, The Refugee Centre (USA), Refugee Council USA.