



Refugee Council  
of Australia

REPORT OF 2018 ANNUAL TRIPARTITE CONSULTATIONS ON RESETTLEMENT

## UNHCR APPEALS FOR SUPPORT AS GLOBAL RESETTLEMENT PLACES CUT BY HALF



The sharp decrease in the number of resettlement places at the time of greatest need and protecting the core function of resettlement as a protection tool 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 2018 Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR).

### Representation at the ATCR

Organised by UNHCR, the German Government and Caritas Germany, the 2018 ATCR took place on 25-27 June. It brought together representatives of 29 nations involved in resettlement, including 85 representatives of 28 governments and 57 NGO delegates from 22 countries, 4 refugee representatives, 53 UNHCR staff, 13 staff of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 23 delegates from various international non-government organisations, 8 representatives of the European Union and the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees, and a representative from International Labour Organisation (ILO).

The Australian Government was represented by three officials of the Department of Home Affairs 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. Simon Sang Hre, a Melbourne-based member of the Chin community with experience in working with refugee communities, human rights organisations and the International Rescue Committee in Kuala Lumpur, was Australia's refugee representative. Simon was active throughout the dialogue, highlighting the issues faced by different refugee communities from Myanmar, from Chin to Rohingya communities.

### Towards expanded and effective resettlement

Focusing on the theme of "Towards Expanded and Effective Resettlement", the 2018 ATCR explored the challenges ahead and the best ways to respond to them. While in 2016 the number of countries

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engaged in refugee resettlement and the number of resettlement places increased, in 2017 there was a 54% drop in the number of available resettlement places. This, combined with an increase in the number of people in need of resettlement and their heightened vulnerability, presented one of the biggest challenges UNHCR has ever faced.

UNHCR raised concerns about the growing trend among many resettlement countries to favour refugees with particular profiles for resettlement. This places less emphasis on protecting the most vulnerable and deviates from resettlement's core function: saving lives.

UNHCR also asked resettlement countries to make collective efforts to ensure there is more diversity in the countries of origin of refugees. The Syrian conflict created a significant level of displacement and the recent resettlement statistics have reflected a global effort to provide protection to people fleeing this crisis. However, UNHCR pleaded with the countries not to forget refugees of other nationalities, particularly from smaller groups with no durable solutions. The projected resettlement needs of refugees on the African continent has increased substantially in the past year and yet the response has been disproportionate to the need. UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, voiced grave concerns about the stance of the majority of industrialised countries towards people seeking asylum, creating "more walls, more barriers and more push backs". He made a personal plea to the countries to equally respect all protection measures and step up their efforts in providing more resettlement places.

UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, Volker Turk, emphasised the importance of political leadership in the current environment and commended Germany for continuing its resettlement program in 2015, despite receiving an unprecedented number of people seeking asylum in that year. Mr Turk referred to a common refrain from countries, that they would increase their resettlement places if fewer people arrived spontaneously. Echoing the comments of Mr Grandi, Mr Turk underlined that governments needed to provide protection to people irrespective of their mode of arrival and warned about the long-term negative impacts of linking the two protection measures (resettlement and providing protection to people seeking asylum) together numerically.

Referring to the evacuation of refugees from Libya to Niger, to be resettled in a third country, UNHCR made an urgent and impassioned plea to resettlement countries to help make that process effective. Highlighting the immense protection risks that the refugees who were evacuated had faced in Libya, including almost all women in detention experiencing gender-based violence, UNHCR was disappointed at the lack of political will and solidarity to provide assistance, which resulted in a slow resettlement process and subsequent reluctance of Niger to continue the operation. Currently only Norway, Italy and Canada have pledged places and, for the operation to remain effective, UNHCR needs stronger solidarity and responsibility sharing by other resettlement countries.

In setting its strategic directions for 2019 and beyond, UNHCR will focus on expanding resettlement and complementary pathways, engaging in new partnerships, supporting flexible and protection-centred programs, and strengthening quality and integrity of resettlement processes. UNHCR also stated that, in the discussions on Global Compact on Refugees, many host countries relayed that they felt excluded from the conversations on resettlement, despite hosting large numbers of forcibly displaced people. UNHCR is looking at the best ways to include the feedback from those countries in future ATCRs.

## **NGOs outline resettlement concerns and priorities**

Caritas Germany delivered a joint statement on behalf of NGOs represented at the ATCR, emphasising the importance of resettlement as an indispensable protection tool for refugees and urging states, NGOs and UNHCR to safeguard it for the most vulnerable groups in need of protection. In their statement, the NGOs also:

- Welcomed the Global Compact on Refugees as an important step towards more equitable and predictable global responsibility sharing and urged the governments to live up to the commitments they made in the New York Declaration and provide resettlement places and other legal pathways on a scale that meets the resettlement needs identified by UNHCR.
- Invited the governments to engage with UNHCR and NGOs in finding ways to use resettlement strategically while working with other actors to improve the conditions in countries of asylum.

- Called on States to ensure that complementary pathways are additional and do not replace or undermine existing state-led resettlement programs.
- Emphasised the need to strengthen the refugee voices on different levels when discussing, developing, implementing or evaluating resettlement programs.
- Highlighted some of the current resettlement challenges. While NGOs encouraged the governments to maintain and expand their resettlement programs for those fleeing the Syrian crisis, they urged the states to rethink the composition of their intake and either expand or start resettlement from African countries, given the substantial increase in the resettlement needs in Africa this year.
- Welcomed the efforts of the European Union and its Member States to increase European resettlement places and called on them to ensure the Resettlement Framework they are negotiating is protection-centred and safeguards access to asylum.
- Expressed great concern and dismay at the drastic decrease in resettlement arrivals to the United States of America, the discriminatory travel and refugee bans and the slowdowns in resettlement processing.

The NGO statement also drew attention to some of the most pressing protection issues. NGOs expressed great concern at the detention of refugees and migrants in Libya, highlighted the serious situation of the Rohingya and urged UNHCR and States to look at how the resettlement could play a role in addressing this issue, including its strategic use in protecting the Rohingya refugees who fled to Bangladesh. Finally, the NGOs pointed to the “inhumane situation of refugees sent to Manus Island and Nauru” and called on “all responsible actors and the international community to resolve this situation”. The full text of the NGO statement is in Appendix B.

## Global resettlement needs for 2019

UNHCR released its Projected Global Resettlement Needs document for 2019<sup>1</sup> at the ATCR, nominating 1.428 million refugees as being in need of resettlement – a 17 percent increase from the year 2018 and more than any previous years. Of those identified as being in need of resettlement, 42% are Syrians, 11% are from the Democratic Republic of Congo and 11% from South Sudan (a 71 per cent increase from the projected needs in 2018). By region of asylum, 629,744 of the refugees are in Africa (44%) while most of the rest are in Turkey (29%) and the Middle East (19%).

**Table 1: UNHCR projected global resettlement needs, 2019**

Region or sub-region of asylum	Total 2019 projected resettlement needs	
Central Africa and Great Lakes	147,084	10.3%
East and Horn of Africa	434,710	30.4%
Southern Africa	32,978	2.3%
West Africa	14,972	1.0%
<b>Africa total</b>	<b>629,744</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Americas total</b>	<b>4,074</b>	<b>0.3%</b>
East Asia and the Pacific	12,806	0.9%
South Asia	2,340	0.2%
South-west Asia	87,000	6.1%
<b>Asia total</b>	<b>102,146</b>	<b>7.2%</b>
Eastern Europe	750	0.1%
South-Eastern Europe <sup>2</sup>	420,000	29.4%
<b>Europe total</b>	<b>420,750</b>	<b>29.5%</b>
Middle East	243,755	17.1%
North Africa	27,542	1.9%
<b>Middle East and North Africa total</b>	<b>271,297</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,428,011</b>	

<sup>1</sup> UNHCR (2018), *UNHCR Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2019* <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/protection/resettlement/5b28a7df4/projected-global-resettlement-needs-2019.html>

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

The greatest resettlement needs by country of asylum are in Turkey (420,000), Uganda (153,000), Lebanon (113,000), Iran (87,000), Ethiopia (84,000), Jordan (72,080), Chad (53,412), Tanzania (52,650), Sudan (51,583) and Kenya (47,000). By country of origin, the refugees most in need of resettlement are from Syria (601,152), Democratic Republic of Congo (163,448), South Sudan (158,474), Afghanistan (86,900), Eritrea (83,520), Sudan (77,623), Somalia (65,665), Central African Republic (61,722), Iraq (43,028) and Ethiopia (19,195).

## Resettlement trends in 2017

During 2017, 65,109 refugees were resettled through UNHCR's referral processes. This figure does not include another 37,646 refugees resettled during the year by states without UNHCR making the initial referral. UNHCR's 2017 Global Trends document records 102,755 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 48% lower than in 2016. Submissions for resettlement from UNHCR to states decreased in 2017 by 54% compared to the previous year.

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

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
UNHCR resettlement submissions <sup>4</sup>	75,188	162,575	134,044	103,890	92,915
Resettlement departures	65,109	125,835	81,893	73,608	71,449

In 2017, the largest resettlement programs were from Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Nepal and Kenya with the main beneficiaries of resettlement being refugees from Syria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar, Bhutan and Iraq. The key resettlement states were USA, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia and Sweden.

**Table 3: Top 10: UNHCR resettlement departures 2017**

Rank	Country of origin	Refugees resettled	Country of asylum	Refugees resettled	Country of resettlement	Refugees resettled
1	Syria	29,789	Turkey	14,911	United States	24,559
2	DR Congo	7,733	Lebanon	12,617	Canada	8,912
3	Myanmar	4,791	Jordan	4,995	United Kingdom	6,202
4	Bhutan	3,959	Nepal	4,287	Australia	4,027
5	Iraq	3,414	Kenya	4,141	Sweden	3,346
6	Eritrea	3,195	Thailand	2,655	Germany	3,005
7	Somalia	3,119	Malaysia	2,631	Norway	2,799
8	Afghanistan	2,053	Ethiopia	2,115	France	2,505
9	Sudan	1,228	Egypt	1,932	Netherlands	2,262
10	Ethiopia	1,054	Uganda	1,905	Belgium	1,294
	All others	4,774	All others	12,920	All others	6,198
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>65,109</b>		<b>65,109</b>		<b>65,109</b>

UNHCR's 2017 Global Trends document records that the 102,755 refugee resettlement arrivals through UNHCR and non-UNHCR processes were to: United States of America 33,368, Canada 26,600, Australia 15,115, United Kingdom 6,212, Sweden 3,412, Germany 3,015, Norway 2,821, France 2,525, Netherlands 2,265, Belgium 1,309, Finland 1,088, Spain 1,071, New Zealand 1,015, Italy 985, Switzerland 663, Austria 381, Ireland 273, Luxembourg 182, Chile 66, Lithuania 59, Iceland 48, Romania 43, Portugal 41, Croatia 40, Latvia 40, South Korea 30, Japan 29, Estonia 19, Malta 17, Uruguay 16, Denmark 5, Brazil 2.<sup>5</sup>

## Resettlement needs across regions

UNHCR Regional Directors provided an overview of regional resettlement priorities, achievements and challenges. The resettlement needs of various groups of refugees was then discussed in breakout sessions, focusing on protracted caseloads, situations of mass influx and refugees with specific needs. The role of NGOs in the identification of vulnerable cases was also discussed.

<sup>3</sup> The statistics in Tables 1 to 8 are taken from the public version of UNHCR's *Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2019*.

<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 2017 Global Trends*.

### ***Protracted caseloads***

UNHCR staff highlighted a number of protracted refugee situations,<sup>6</sup> the challenges they face and the best practices in working with these populations. The case of refugees who have been displaced multiple times in different periods, especially in Africa, was highlighted. Quality of registration in Africa is an ongoing issue. In the current context, when requesting a specific profile of refugees by resettlement countries is increasingly becoming common practice, the substandard quality of registration creates a highly complex challenge. UNHCR Representation Office in Ethiopia launched a comprehensive level 3 registration and Biometrics Identity Management System exercise in July 2017 and so far it has been successful in assisting UNHCR in identification of cases in need of resettlement and in providing assistance. The ultimate aim is to support the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), improve protection, provide targeted assistance, and provide effective durable solutions for the forcibly displaced population.<sup>7</sup>

Lack of quality information about vulnerabilities and risk factors was also an issue in Turkey, predominately involving the refugees fleeing the Syrian crisis. UNHCR believes the recorded information in Turkey was substandard as the initial perception was the conflict would be short lived. UNHCR is now working with the Turkish authorities to update the data. The selectivity of resettlement countries has created numerous challenges for this operation as well, with UNHCR having to balance the need for resettling the most vulnerable and selecting those who match the specific profiles resettlement countries are willing to accept.

The situation of Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan was also discussed. Despite some of the positive policies of host countries, such as inclusive social programs on healthcare and education by the Iranian Government, many in this group remain in need of resettlement, especially those who have experienced sexual and gender based violence. UNHCR raised concerns about the decreasing number of Afghan refugees who have been resettled out of Iran in recent years and highlighted the need for international solidarity especially in recognition of positive efforts of host countries.

### ***Refugees with specific needs***

Refugees with medical needs, refugees in detention, LGBTI refugees, and children at risk are the groups who are exposed to particular vulnerabilities and are frequently in need of urgent or emergency resettlement. Notably in Africa, LGBTI refugees have fewer opportunities to access support, such as medical treatments, and are much harder to reach out to. In countries like Malawi they are more vulnerable to threats from locals. In Malaysia, many refugees and people seeking asylum are detained in overcrowded detention centres where children and adults are often co-located. Lack of access to people in detention by UNHCR makes addressing their needs and referring them for resettlement extremely challenging. Vulnerable children are particularly exposed to many protection risks. Currently one of the most troubling situations is that of vulnerable children in Libya who are exposed to human trafficking and other risks. Those who have been evacuated to Niger remain in limbo as the number of emergency resettlement places fall far short of the need, putting the viability of that operation at risk.

### ***Resettlement needs following mass influxes***

Mass forced migration in the past year has been one of the main challenges for UNHCR and has presented complex resettlement needs. South Sudanese fleeing to Uganda and the Rohingya fleeing to Bangladesh created an unprecedented level of need at a time when the number of resettlement places is in sharp decline. While UNHCR is referring South Sudanese for resettlement, in Bangladesh the focus is on addressing the urgent protection needs and providing humanitarian assistance for the time being.

### ***NGO's role in identification***

NGOs have a key role in identifying the vulnerable cases. Some of the NGO panellists shared their best practices as well as the challenges they face in advocating or finding durable solutions for

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<sup>6</sup> UNHCR defines a protracted refugee situation as one in which 25,000 or more refugees of the same nationality have been displaced in the same country of asylum for five years or longer.

<sup>7</sup> To read more about Comprehensive Level 3 and BIMS Registration in Ethiopia and the number of refugees registered under this process, see: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/64043.pdf>

specific populations. Some of the best practices highlighted were the use of drop-in clinics, shared databases and the use of 'refugee navigators' with inside knowledge of the communities who can assist in the identifications of the most vulnerable members of their communities.

### **Expanding resettlement and other pathways to enhance responsibility sharing**

As a country that has shown strong leadership in expanding resettlement through complementary pathways, Canada spoke about what it sees as success factors in enhancing global responsibility sharing: governments and decision makers working in partnership, recognising that the resettlement is a tool that can also be used strategically; building flexibility in resettlement programs, for example through multi-year projections, to be able to respond to new challenges and mass influxes; working on public support and engaging with the private sector.

One of the important and less discussed topics is also the role of regional governments in supporting the expansion of resettlement. The representative of Basque country in Spain drew attention to this issue and the importance of involving regional governments from day one in planning, design, implementation and evaluation of resettlement programs. Some of the newer resettlement countries like Argentina also spoke at ATCR about the importance of working in partnership and learning from the countries with longer history of providing resettlement. Argentina, for example, has been working with civil society in Canada and Australia on effective models for community sponsorship and with the United Kingdom on pre-arrival orientation and preparation.

Emphasising the positive role of education, both to increase self-reliance of refugees and as a complementary admission pathway, a Canadian NGO spoke about its new initiative, in partnership with Kenya, to provide online education for refugees based on the areas of skill shortage in resettlement countries. Refugees can then have access to alternative pathways like skilled migration. Having a certificate from a Canadian training organisation also addresses the issue of skills recognition. In a breakout session on complementary pathways, several other initiatives focusing on education were presented. They included scholarships offered by Germany to Syrian refugees to do tertiary education in that country and the United World Colleges' Refugee Initiative which is in partnership with UNHCR.

Simon Sang Hre referred to the discussions about the importance of education and asked UNHCR why funding for community education programs in Thai-Burma border camps and in Malaysia are being cut. UNHCR acknowledged the challenges that arise as a result of fluctuations in funding and how they can negatively affect the programs that were progressing well. Referring to the conversations about the use of technology and distant learning, UNHCR talked about the value of being innovative and seeking ways to provide quality education with less funding.

### ***Leveraging the strategic use of resettlement – impact and future opportunities***

During the two days of ATCR, leveraging the strategic use of resettlement in line with the objectives of the CRRF was discussed. UNHCR staff highlighted some of the positive impacts that resettlement has had for refugees remaining in host countries. For example, UNHCR's Asia Director referred to the case of Nepal and mentioned that the resettlement of refugees from Bhutan paved the way for the Nepalese government to provide better assistance to those who remained in Nepal. He also mentioned that the resettlement of 200,000 refugees out of Thailand from 2005-2015 was seen by the Thai government as a concerted effort to help the situation which played a role in the government's decision to work towards enhancing the identification and protection of refugees.

There have also been cases where the plans to use resettlement strategically did not work; for example the recent developments in Israel whereby UNHCR presented a plan to Israel to resettle the refugees from this country in return for the immediate cancellation of deportation orders. Unfortunately the Israeli government, despite initially supporting the plan, cancelled the agreement a few hours later.

NGO representatives also emphasised on the fact that, if strategic use of resettlement is to work, resettlement countries need to increase the number of refugees they receive each year.

In response to RCOA's suggestion about the use of forums like ATCR to encourage better partnership between decision makers in charge of foreign aid and those working on resettlement and concrete discussions on the role of foreign aid in strategic use of resettlement, Canada referred

to the situation of the Rohingya in Bangladesh and how the Canadian Government is working on offering assistance through a whole-of-government approach. This is done by close collaboration between immigration and foreign affairs departments. With respect to the Rohingya refugees, Canada highlighted the importance of showing willingness to engage in strategic conversations around settlement out of this region when the conditions are right (acknowledging the current UNHCR's assessment that currently such conditions do not exist).

### **Safeguarding resettlement as a protection tool and durable solution**

A great emphasis of this year's ATCR was on safeguarding resettlement as a protection tool. UNHCR staff and NGO representatives discussed the best ways to maintain and safeguard resettlement while ensuring it continues to offer high-quality and effective solutions to those refugees who are most in need.

UNHCR emphasised the fact that with the current number of resettlement places, less than 0.5% of refugees have a chance of being resettled. As the number of vulnerable refugees and the protection risks they face increases, this small number of places needs to be safeguarded for the most vulnerable. Highlighting the current worrying practice of many resettlement countries 'cherry-picking' the refugees who match a specific and narrow profile, UNHCR raised concerns that such selectivity might gain some short-term local support for politicians but will be detrimental in the medium and long term. It risks ignoring the diversity of needs among refugee population and failing to protect the most vulnerable.

The United Kingdom spoke about its Gateway Protection Program which resettles up to 750 refugees per year mostly from protracted situations, its Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) which plans to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees by 2020, and its Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme which aims to resettle up to 3,000 refugee children at risk by 2020. The underpinning principle in all of these programs is the vulnerability of refugees referred for resettlement as identified by UNHCR. The programs are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain flexible and respond to the realities refugees deal with. Recently, for example, the scope of the UK's VPRS was expanded to include other refugees who have fled the conflict in Syria but do not have Syrian nationality. Both the UK Government and UNHCR see this flexibility and maintaining a focus on the most vulnerable as crucial to achieving high quality resettlement outcomes.

Similar to previous ATCRs, the community sponsorship model was discussed, not just as a means to resettle more refugees but to create robust citizen engagement and build stronger support for government supported resettlement. The principle of additionality was discussed as an important principle to uphold when advocating for implementation of community sponsorship. However, Canada encouraged the NGOs to look at this more strategically. While additionality is extremely important, the engagement of civil society and the subsequent avenues it will offer to counter xenophobia and toxic language are equally important. Canada suggested that if the local advocacy to make community sponsorship places additional has stalled but the governments are open to the idea of overall increase of resettlement places, civil society might consider that as a better advocacy tool, given the final outcome is protecting a larger number of refugees while engaging the citizens in the process.

### **Amplifying the refugee voice in the resettlement process**

Two Australian advocates were featured in a panel discussion on amplifying the refugee voice in resettlement – Arash Bordbar, Chair of UNHCR Global Youth Advisory Council, and Melika Sheikh-Eldin, International and Community Development Manager of AMES Australia. They emphasised the value that refugee perspectives can bring to resettlement processes, from program design to evaluation.

Arash Bordbar spoke about the process that led to the formation of Global Youth Advisory Council, its achievements and the value it has added to discussions since its formation in 2016. He highlighted the work of Advisory Council members in bringing views from refugee communities to their discussions with UNHCR's leadership, ensuring this feedback is incorporated into UNHCR's decision making. Arash also talked about the importance of investing in young people.

Melika Sheikh-Eldin spoke about AMES Australia's Community Guides program. Emphasising that the best solutions come from the people who receive the services, she explained that the program started based on the feedback AMES Australia received from the refugee community members who believed they could benefit from getting assistance from people who themselves have been through the refugee and settlement experience. Over years, the Community Guides program benefited a range of people, it created employment opportunities for refugee community members, provided a better settlement experience for the newly arrived refugees and created a more inclusive and diverse workplace.

Other speakers talked about the UK Government's efforts to incorporate the feedback from refugee communities in their decision making and strategic planning, various communication tools used by UNHCR to engage with refugees in host countries, and the importance of inclusion of refugee voices in the monitoring and evaluation stage, given the unique perspective they bring.

### **The United Kingdom takes over as chair of resettlement dialogue**

At the end of the ATCR, the German Government and Caritas Germany handed over the chairing of the ATCR and the Working Group on Resettlement (which meets between ATCR gatherings) to the Government of the United Kingdom. The UK NGO working with the Government is yet to be selected. The 2019 ATCR will take place in Geneva in June or July.

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July 2018*

## UNHCR STATISTICS ON RESETTLEMENT SUBMISSIONS

In its *Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2019*, UNHCR provides a series of statistics on resettlement submissions and departures in 2017 which provide insights into how resettlement states are responding to UNHCR requests to resettle refugees.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 4: Acceptance rates of UNHCR submissions in 2017, by country of origin**

Country of origin	Cases submitted <sup>9</sup>	Cases accepted
Syria	8,114	91.7%
Democratic Republic of Congo	3,468	93.1%
Myanmar	2,163	96.0%
Eritrea	1,114	95.3%
Iraq	873	81.7%
Somalia	847	89.8%
Afghanistan	770	86.4%
Sudan	704	89.2%
Iran	480	88.2%
Ethiopia	306	89.7%
All Others	1,609	89.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,448</b>	<b>90.8%</b>

**Table 5: UNHCR resettlement by priority category, 2017**

UNHCR priority category	Cases submitted	% cases	Persons submitted	Acceptance rates
Normal	18,359	89.8%	69,554	91.3%
Urgent	1,799	8.8%	4,765	85.9%
Emergency	290	1.4%	869	86.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,448</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>75,188</b>	

**Table 6: UNHCR resettlement by submission category, 2017**

Category	Cases submitted	% cases submitted	Persons submitted
Legal and/or physical protection needs	7,997	39.1%	27,122
Survivors of violence and/or torture	5,020	24.6%	20,632
Lack of foreseeable durable solutions	3,082	15.1%	11,088
Women and girls at risk	1,962	9.6%	5,513
Medical needs	629	3.1%	2,624
Children and adolescents at risk	1,468	7.2%	7,434
Family reunification	187	<1%	459
Others / Unspecified	103	<1%	316
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,448</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>75,188</b>

**Table 7: Submissions under the Women and Girls at Risk Category, 2017**

Asylum country	Cases submitted	Rate of submissions (% per asylum country)	Persons submitted
Turkey	213	5%	522
Egypt	163	17%	375
Lebanon	151	5%	490
Kenya	150	22%	399
Uganda	146	18%	449
Ethiopia	134	18%	493
Burundi	117	35%	364
Iran	111	72%	402
Chad	95	28%	316
Sudan	93	20%	278

<sup>8</sup> Note that submissions, acceptances and departures do not necessarily occur within the same calendar year.

<sup>9</sup> "Cases" refer to an individual or a family unit, with many cases involving more than one person.

## ATCR 2018 NGO STATEMENT

We are gathered here in Geneva for the 2018 ATCR because we strongly believe in resettlement as an indispensable protection tool for refugees. The ATCR and its related fora serve the common goals of States, UNHCR, NGOs and humanitarian organisations to further the expansion and quality of resettlement. Sadly, global resettlement departures have seen a dramatic decrease in the last year. In some countries, we are simultaneously witnessing unfortunate tendencies to steer away from the original concept of resettlement as a durable solution and humanitarian tool. In these crucial times, we urge States, NGOs and UNHCR to live up to our collective responsibility by safeguarding resettlement as an important **protection tool for the most vulnerable groups in need of protection**. Resettlement is meant to be a durable solution for those who cannot return to their country of origin and who have no prospect of living life in dignity and peace in the country of refuge. Their profile, medical needs, age, gender, sexual orientation or other factors prevent them from finding adequate protection. Resettlement is for those with the fewest options. It is our common responsibility to support these especially vulnerable persons.

In this spirit, we highlight the value of close cooperation with **UNHCR as an indispensable partner** in the resettlement process. UNHCR together with governments and NGOs has worked to secure a high quality and protection centred resettlement response. Against this background, we are eager to engage in a productive conversation around the **strategic use of resettlement** at this year's ATCR. The strategic use of resettlement aims at enhancing protection for those refugees who will themselves not be considered for resettlement by ensuring that the use of resettlement facilitates States' ability to support other durable solutions. We invite governments to actively engage with UNHCR and NGOs in finding ways to use resettlement in a strategic manner while better coordinating their resettlement response with regional and local protection strategies to enhance protection conditions in countries of first refuge on a broader scale.

With the expected finalisation of the **Global Compact on Refugees**, this year marks the beginning of an intensified and more concerted international response to the ongoing displacement crisis. NGOs highly welcome the Global Compact on Refugees as an important step towards fairer, more equitable and predictable global responsibility sharing. We urge governments to **live up to their commitments** made in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and provide resettlement places and other legal pathways on a scale that meets the annual resettlement needs identified by UNHCR. The projected 1.2 million people currently in need of resettlement make up only about 0.1 % of the population of over 900 million people of the European Union, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand taken together. We urge governments to keep recognizing the importance of expanding resettlement as one important instrument. Resettlement needs to complement effective asylum systems, regional humanitarian relief and support of political efforts to end conflicts that lead to flight and displacement.

With regard to the implementation of the commitments made in the Global Compact on Refugees, NGOs are ready to support and actively contribute to the development of **complementary pathways** so long as such pathways include minimum protection safeguards. We call on States to ensure that such alternative pathways are additional and increase the overall capacity for permanent legal admissions and do not replace or undermine existing state-led resettlement programmes. Particularly for Private or Community Sponsorship to become a success story, the ownership and expertise of NGOs as well as diaspora and refugee communities are needed. We therefore call on States to make use of this rich expertise and ensure broad community engagement when designing, implementing and monitoring such programmes. We point out that financial responsibilities have to be shared in a fair, appropriate and time limited manner between governments and sponsors to avoid overburdening them. Efforts to support refugees in their integration have to be equally shared in an appropriate way.

NGOs also want to draw attention to the need to further the inclusion of **refugee voices** on the local, national and international level when discussing, developing, implementing or evaluating

resettlement programmes, as highlighted in the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Refugee self-representation should be a given as it allows for and is an essential part of a self-determined life. Moreover, the inclusion of refugee voices is essential in ensuring that policies and programmes actually meet the needs of refugees. We are looking forward to discussing concrete ideas for and experiences in facilitating refugee participation in different ways in one of tomorrow's sessions and hope they will inspire all actors involved in planning and implementing resettlement responses. We highly welcome the participation of seven refugee representatives and their active contributions to this year's ATCR.

Resettlement needs of Syrian refugees remain at a particularly high level. We ask governments to maintain and expand their programmes to resettle refugees who have fled the Syrian crisis and share responsibility with major refugee-hosting countries in coping with the repercussions of this ongoing and tragic war. There are also other groups of **refugees in protracted and acute situations**. NGOs are highly concerned about the situation of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria who have the highest projected resettlement needs on the African continent. We urge governments to rethink the composition of their intake and actively engage with UNHCR to explore ways to either expand or start resettlement from African countries as resettlement needs are substantially increasing. We are appalled by the detention of refugees and migrants in Libya and urge all actors to work closely together to prevent future detention and human rights violations and ensure access to protection. NGOs also want to draw attention to the ongoing serious situation of the Rohingya refugees. We call on UNHCR and States to look closely at the role resettlement could play as part of a support strategy and to explore how resettlement could be used strategically to protect the Rohingya refugees who fled to Bangladesh. We furthermore draw attention to the inhumane situation of refugees sent to Manus Island and Nauru and call on all responsible actors and the international community to resolve this situation.

NGOs appreciate the efforts of the **European Union** and its Member States to increase European resettlement places, thus taking promising steps towards a more equitable international responsibility sharing in resettlement. As negotiations on the Union Resettlement Framework progress, NGOs call on the EU Council and the European Parliament to create a Resettlement Framework that ensures a protection centred, high quality resettlement response and increases the quantity of places, while ensuring access to asylum for those seeking to reach the EU's territory. The right to claim asylum and international protection for refugees must be safeguarded worldwide and remains independent from the existence of resettlement and other admission pathways. We call upon the EU and the Member States to focus efforts on becoming a leading actor in ensuring a global humanitarian and protection centred resettlement response.

The **United States** has a long and valued role as a leading resettlement country and its actions have a great impact on resettlement as a durable solution and protection tool. NGOs are aghast at the drastic decrease in resettlement arrivals to the United States. We are highly concerned about the discriminatory travel and refugee bans, the extraordinary slowdowns in resettlement processing and the resulting devastating effects on certain refugee populations in acute or protracted situations. While we recognize the need for high quality vetting procedures, NGOs are concerned that additional security checks and information-collection requirements, combined with reduced processing capacity have resulted in a significant slowdown in refugee processing. We urge the US to continue to demonstrate the global leadership that has made its resettlement programme one of the world's most successful.

NGOs welcome the **Canadian** government's multi-year immigration levels plan which provides a basis for planning. However, we are concerned about the low numbers of government-assisted refugees to be resettled according to this plan, and the imbalance between privately-sponsored and government-assisted refugees. We call on the Government to increase its commitment to UNHCR resettlement while continuing to resettle robust numbers in the Private Sponsorship Program which is an important vehicle for family reunification in Canada.

Migration has been, and will always remain part of our common reality. It is our shared responsibility as States, civil society and international organizations to work together in building inclusive and welcoming societies that empower citizens as well as newcomers. We call on each and every one to **counter and condemn xenophobia** and to take steps to foster a society that decisively stands up against hatred.

We look forward to the discussions of today and tomorrow. We hope that these discussions can take place in a constructive atmosphere of transparency and trust and with a shared commitment to the common cause.

*The German Caritas Association would like to thank UNHCR and the German Federal Ministry for their cooperation and support during the German chairmanship of the ATCR. We look forward to continuing our partnerships with States, UNHCR, and NGOs in order to further expand and enhance refugee resettlement opportunities for some of the world's most vulnerable groups.*