



League of Arab States
General Secretariat
Social Sector
Refugees, Expatriates
& Migration Affairs Dept.

**Extraordinary Meeting of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration
and Refugee Affairs (ARCP)**

*In preparation for the consultations of “the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)”
and “the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)”*

**General Secretariat of the League of Arab States
Cairo, 25-26 July 2017**

**Contribution of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs (ARCP) in
the Global Compact for Refugees**

The Representatives of the Arab States participating in the Extraordinary Meeting of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs - ARCP (List of participants enclosed), organized by the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States (Refugees, Expatriates & Migration Affairs Department), in its capacity as the secretariat of the ARCP, at its headquarters in Cairo, 25-26 July 2017¹:

- Believing in the importance of concerted regional and international efforts to deal with the refugee crisis, the principle of shared responsibility and burden-sharing by various actors in the international community and finding viable practical solutions to address the root causes that have increased refugee flows;
- Emphasizing that the issues of migration and asylum, and the conditions and rights of migrants and refugees, have many political and security implications at the regional and international levels and are no longer limited to the effects they have on the economic, social and humanitarian conditions;
- In the interest of Arab coordination in the international forums that discuss the issues of migration and asylum in general and especially at the current time in which the Arab region is undergoing unprecedented developments at this level;
- Emphasizing the importance of balancing the legitimate security concerns of States with the protection needs of refugees and asylum-seekers;

¹ The meeting was organized in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM); having the first day of the meeting dedicated to the Global Compact on Refugees, and the second day dedicated to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, in the framework of the ARCP efforts to prepare for the ongoing consultations on the two Global Compacts to be adopted by 2018. This is in accordance to the final declaration of the ARCP Extraordinary Meeting which was held in preparation of the High Level Plenary Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, and in line with the outcomes of the previous ARCP regular meetings (April 2015, May 2016 and May 2017).

- In accordance with the resolutions adopted by the Arab Summit in Amman (March 2017) on Syrian asylum²;
- In recognition of the efforts exerted to update the “Arab Convention on Regulating Status of Refugees in the Arab Countries”;
- In affirmation of the specificity of each region and every country in the world, especially the Arab region and the neighbouring countries of Syria, which must be taken into consideration when drafting the Global Compact on Refugees , putting it in a flexible manner that respects this specificity;
- Emphasizing the positive role of the Arab Regional Consultative Process on Migration and Refugee Affairs (ARCP) in unifying the Arab position towards international issues and presenting it during the international fora; as well as the importance of supporting this process and enhancing its role as one of the important existing mechanisms;
- Having perused the presentations made and listened to the ideas and proposals of the participants, and to interventions and discussions that took place during the meeting;

They recommend the importance of taking into account the following items in the development of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF):

I- Reception and admission:

1. To work towards the creation of conditions for proper, safe and dignified reception in accordance with the national laws of each State and in cooperation with international agencies working in this regard;
2. To establish a system for the registration of birth, death, marriage and divorce, and the documentation for refugees and displaced persons in accordance with the national laws of each State;
3. Taking the necessary measures in the case of refugee camps to preserve the civilian and humanitarian character of the camps, and to ensure they are not penetrated by armed groups; as well as ensuring the security and protection of host States and host communities and their social peace;
4. Respecting the human rights principles of all persons leaving their countries to destination or asylum countries for forced reasons regardless of their legal status accompanying their journey to the destination country;
5. To develop programs to deal with women, children, elderly, persons with disabilities, victims of human trafficking and violence against women commensurate with their vulnerability and provide them with the protection and assistance they need in accordance with national legislations and laws in cooperation with States, international organizations, civil society organizations and others.

II- Support for refugees’ immediate and ongoing needs:

1. To facilitate and coordinate the role of international and regional organizations, civil society, the private sector, various donors and other relevant actors in accordance with national laws and legislations to identify refugee needs and providing them access to basic services;
2. To strengthen education, training and skills development for refugees to reduce their reliance on humanitarian assistance, and preparing them for employment, with the support of the international community and in a way that doesn’t lead to competition with the labour market in the host country and in accordance with national priorities;

² Amman Summit Resolution number 681 issued at the 28th Ordinary Session on 29/3/2017 on the issue of the Syrian refugee crisis.

3. To take into consideration the needs of women in all plans, policies and programs of action aimed at protecting and supporting refugees and displaced persons, and designing policies that are appropriate to their circumstances, needs and problems;
4. To support the campaign "Together: Ensuring Respect, Safety and Dignity for All", launched at the High-level Plenary Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, held on 19 September 2016 in New York, bringing together organizations of the United Nations System, United Nations Member States, the private sector, civil society, Academic Foundations and individuals, that values diversity, discard discrimination and accept refugees and migrants.
5. To establish a team of concerned national authorities and relevant international organizations, including UNRWA, to identify and address the protection gaps faced by Palestinian refugees as a result of the lack of provision for the protection of Palestinian refugees in the Mandate of UNRWA.

III- Providing support for host countries and communities

1. To emphasize the principle of international solidarity with host countries and the importance of concerted efforts by all parties of the international community in dealing with large movements of refugees and increasing migration flows, in a manner that preserves the security, stability and vital interests of States and at the same time preserves the human dignity of these refugees and migrants;
2. To develop mechanisms at the national and regional levels to assess the burden of asylum and to achieve the principle of shared responsibility and burden-sharing by various actors in the international community;
3. To encourage cooperation between the governments of host countries, and international and regional organizations, States and other donors as well as various actors to build the national capacities of host countries to develop programs at the national level commensurate with each country's priorities for the assistance required to provide basic services and provide funding for this purpose, so as to benefit not only refugees, but also host countries and communities, in line with the principle of shared responsibility and burden-sharing by various actors in the international community.
4. To encourage joint planning between humanitarian and development actors to promote long-term development assistance in support of the economy and national development plans;
5. Emphasis is placed on taking into consideration the specific situation of Arab countries hosting refugees, especially those that bear the brunt of the current refugee crisis, with many economic challenges, social tensions, demographic changes, and security and political turmoil in some countries resulting from the situation in the region since 2011 and its repercussions; in addition to the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian and Arab territories, which requires special support for the countries of the region and providing them with the necessary assistance to enable them to deal with the large numbers of refugees in a sound manner. This will serve to achieve social stability and reduce tension between refugees and their host communities;
6. The support of the international community to the League of Arab States' Project to establish a specific mechanism to assist the Arab States neighbouring Syria as well as the other Arab countries hosting Syrian refugees and forcibly displaced, in a manner that enables them to shoulder the burden from various aspects.

IV- Finding Durable Solutions

1. The need to identify the real causes of asylum and work to address them;
2. To pay attention and support Palestinian refugees, including calling upon the international community to continue to provide the necessary support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to enable it to continue to shoulder its full responsibilities under the relevant UN Resolutions, and to affirm the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland according to UN Security Council Resolution 194, and to work on providing greater support to the countries that receive them, especially with the new state of asylum for Palestinians from Syria, and to call upon the international community to exert pressure on Israel (the occupying power) to respect the international law, including the Geneva Conventions and Resolutions issued by the United Nations, and to stop the aggression, siege, ethnic cleansing and racial discrimination policies aimed at continuing the displacement of Palestinians from their homeland;
3. To call upon international actors to respect the international commitments that have been given and to translate them into concrete support for Syrian refugees;
4. To involve refugees in efforts to achieve national reconciliation in countries of origin;
5. The creation of conditions for the voluntary return of refugees to their countries with safety and dignity, which requires funding for reconstruction and development in countries of origin, encouraging the investment in these countries and the rehabilitation of refugees to contribute to the reconstruction projects of their home-countries;
6. To support the gradual return of refugees to their countries of origin where possible in accordance with paragraph 76 of the New York Declaration;
7. Assisting countries of origin to integrate the special needs of returning refugees into the national development planning, so as to ensure that their displacement is not renewed when the situation stabilizes;
8. To expand access and resettlement opportunities of refugees to third countries in accordance with relevant international conventions and commitments to reduce burdens on countries of first asylum by developing programs to engage the private sector, families and communities through private sponsorship programs, grant humanitarian visas, and to expand the scope of scholarships and study visas granted to students in countries in crisis, taking into account humanitarian considerations and non-discrimination when developing such programs in accordance with the national laws of each State;
9. Transit Countries are not necessarily considered in expanding refugee resettlement as third countries.