



AUSTRALIA



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Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme Sixty-eighth session

Madam Chairperson, High Commissioner, your Excellencies, distinguished delegates.

Displacement continues to be one of the defining circumstances and challenges of our time and we commend the UNHCR's efforts in responding to this significant global challenge.

Australia is pleased to see the momentum generated by the 2016 New York Declaration, including through the various thematic consultations and practical implementation of the CRRF. We remain committed to contributing to a strong and practical outcome for the Refugee Compact. We look forward to working together, particularly with partners in the Asia-Pacific region, to ensure the Refugee Compact addresses the humanitarian and longer-term needs of those displaced, while more equitably sharing the responsibility for refugees globally. We also recognise that the Refugee and Migration Compacts, while distinct, should be complementary.

We do not underestimate the immeasurable pressure placed on the countries and communities that continue to host large numbers of asylum seekers and refugees. Australia strongly supports the UNHCR in their work with host governments to implement the CRRF and to expand access to resettlement in third countries. We share High Commissioner Grandi's concern to increase the number of resettlement places globally.

Australia is proud to be a global leader in refugee resettlement with a generous and growing annual resettlement program. Our program has increased to 16,250 places this year and will grow to 18,750 in 2018-19. The program remains focused on groups most in need of resettlement, including vulnerable women and children. It will also provide dedicated places over three years for people displaced in protracted situations. Most of the UNHCR global resettlement places are offered by 3 countries, including Australia. We encourage other States to strengthen their commitment to resettlement as a durable solution and welcome the opportunity to share our resettlement experiences.

Global refugee challenges cannot be addressed by any one State alone, but require the ongoing commitment of the entire international community. Australia's track record on refugee resettlement and generous humanitarian assistance is representative of our longstanding contribution to responsibility sharing, and reflects our ongoing focus on achieving more equitable and predictable responsibility sharing outcomes.

Australia is particularly supportive of the UNHCR's commitment to a "whole of society" approach. We understand the critical value of all stakeholders in effectively delivering support, building long-term resilience, inclusive local leadership and empowering women to lead. We encourage the UNHCR to continue to prioritise gender equality and inclusivity, and to recognise the specific needs of other particularly vulnerable people such as those with disabilities. As a strong supporter of the *Charter for Disability Inclusion in Humanitarian Action*, we encourage the UNHCR to strive to find practical ways to operationalise the Charter in all its responses.

We commend the UNHCR for the complementary partnerships it has fostered with other development actors, including the World Bank and other UN agencies, to provide better humanitarian and development dividends, whilst also driving efficiencies.

Australia is pleased to support the UNHCR's efforts in implementing the CRRF in Uganda and Ethiopia. We look forward to continuing discussions on how the experiences and lessons from the Asia-Pacific region can be better reflected in the CRRF.

We recognise the key importance of cooperation among countries of origin and destination, both at technical and policy levels. Such collaboration, through bilateral and regional frameworks, and including South-South exchanges, plays a crucial role in improving States' ability to address the root causes of displacement and manage displaced populations. The Bali Process, which Australia is proud to co-chair with Indonesia and of which the UNHCR is a key member, is a good example of the positive contribution of such regional frameworks.

We recognise the daunting challenges faced by our humanitarian partners. Australia is thus a generous donor of humanitarian funding, providing nearly A\$400 million in FY2017-18, including A\$25 million in core un-earmarked funding to the UNHCR. Australia remains committed to providing multi-year core un-earmarked funding, and we encourage other donors to also do so.

We look forward to the continued commitment from the UNHCR to ensure multi-year funding is matched with multi-year planning. We also continue to promote the value of cash, where appropriate, and efforts to coordinate through common cash platforms. We encourage UNHCR to continue to drive enhanced effectiveness and efficiencies through implementation of agreed reform priorities across the sector, including the Grand Bargain.

Mr/Madam Chairman, we look forward to continuing to work closely with the UNHCR, and to participating fully in the development of the Global Compact on Refugees.

Thank you.