

High level meeting of the plenary of the General Assembly to address large movements of refugees and migrants
19 September 2016

UN Women proposed language to strengthen the gender-specific references in the outcome document – in red, bold, underlined font

1. Introduction:

1.6. This is above all a moral and humanitarian challenge. We are determined, first and foremost, to save lives. Refugees, migrants and asylum seekers involved in these movements face a desperate ordeal. Many take great risks to reach safety and security, embarking on perilous journeys – frequently by sea – which they may not survive. Many fall prey to criminal groups. **Women and girls face the risk of sexual and gender-based violence, which is high** (SG Report, In Safety and Dignity...). If they reach their destination, they face an uncertain reception and a precarious future.

1.8. We are determined that large movements of refugees and migrants should be addressed in a humane, sensitive, compassionate **and gender-responsive** manner. All those affected must have the comprehensive policy support, practical assistance and legal protection which they need; their human rights must be fully respected; and they must be able to live their lives in safety and in dignity.

1.9. In adopting a year ago the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we all pledged that “no one will be left behind”. We declared that we wished to see the new goals and targets met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society. We also said that we will endeavor to reach the furthest behind first. **We stressed that the systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation of the Agenda was crucial** (para 20 of 2030 Agenda). These and other pledges made in the 2030 Agenda apply with particular force to the growing numbers of people around the world who, under a variety of pressures, are displaced from their homes. We will ensure that all provisions of the Agenda which bear, directly or indirectly, on refugees and migrants are fully implemented. Such implementation would address many of the root causes of involuntary movements of refugees and migrants and would reduce the need for migrants to leave their homes in the first place. Migration, we believe, should be a choice, not a necessity.

3. Principles to ensure safety and dignity for displaced persons

3(i). We are agreed that a comprehensive, holistic, **gender-responsive** and people-centered strategy is required for the handling of forced displacement and migration.

3(vi). All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. We reaffirm the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the core international human rights treaties. We reaffirm and will fully respect, the human rights of all those who leave their countries, regardless of their status. All migrants and refugees are rights holders. Our response to large movements of refugees and migrants will be

based on full respect for international human rights law and, as applicable, international refugee law and international humanitarian law.

3(vi) bis. We will pursue the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and their human rights in all our actions to address large movements of refugees and migrants.

3(vii). We will build on key commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit. . . . World leaders envisaged a new approach to address forced displacement **They called for gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights to become pillars of humanitarian actions** (WHS, Chair's summary). They envisaged providing host countries and communities...

4. Commitments for migrants

4(i). We commit to protecting the safety, dignity and rights of all migrants, regardless of status, at all times. . . .

4(iv). Adverse impacts of natural disasters and climate change are among these factors. . . . We will support efforts by Member States at risk to mitigate the effects **We note and will respond to the disproportionate impact of climate change and natural disasters on women and girls.** Migration will also help in meeting the challenges of adaptation.

4(v). We will ensure full implementation of the 2030 Agenda Fulfilling the Agenda will remove, or reduce, the need for vulnerable migrants to leave their homes in the first place. It will also mean planned and well-managed **and gender-responsive** migration policies

4 (v) bis We commit to addressing the rights and needs of migrant women and girls and their protection needs through gender-responsive policy making, programming and advocacy. We also recognize that women migrant workers are important contributors to social and economic development in countries of origin and destination, and underline the value and dignity of their labour, including the labour of domestic workers (Source: based on A/RES/70/147, December 2015, on 'Protection of migrants')

4(vi). We recall the emphasis in the 2030 Agenda on the positive contribution made by migrants to inclusive growth and sustainable development Migrants make a profound contribution to economic and social development in their host societies, **their home countries** and to global wealth creation. . . .

4(ix). We will ensure that all migrants, regardless of status and without discrimination, receive the protection, respect and fulfilment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

4(x). Reaffirming the importance of a strong normative framework to support migrants, we call upon States that have not done so to consider ratifying, or acceding to, the 1990 Convention We also call on States that have not done so to consider acceding to relevant ILO conventions, **such as ILO Convention on Domestic Workers (C189)**, as appropriate. . . .

4(xiv). We will develop **gender-responsive** guidelines, in accordance with the existing rules of international law on the treatment of vulnerable migrants who have not qualified for refugee status and who may need protection and assistance. . . .

4(xviii). We will develop more opportunities for safe, orderly and regular migration In developing such opportunities, we will pay special attention to, from a gender perspective, the needs of fragile states and countries and areas which are in crisis.

5. Commitments from migrants and refugees jointly

5(i). Underlining the importance of a comprehensive approach to the issues involved, we will spare no effort to ensure humane, sensitive, dignified and gender-responsive processing of all persons arriving in large movements, whether migrants or refugees.

5(ii). We will implement border management procedures, including disembarkation procedures, which are in conformity with international human rights standards and, as applicable, international refugee law. These procedures will be ~~sensitive~~ responsive to the needs of women, children, persons with disabilities . . .

5(iii). We will take measures to prevent violations of the human rights of all persons in transit and arrival. We will ensure that the immediate needs of persons who have been exposed to physical or psychological danger while in transit are addressed on their arrival. Towards this end, we will provide shelter, prevention and protection services to address sexual and gender-based violence, access to health-care services including sexual and reproductive health-care services, psychosocial support and legal advice, without discrimination and without regard to legal status or means of arrival.

5(v). We express our profound concern at the large number of people who have lost their lives at sea trying to reach safety. . . . We will also work to improve the availability of accurate data disaggregated by sex and age on the whereabouts of migrants and vessels stranded at sea. . . .

5(vi). We recognize the particular vulnerabilities of women and children during the journey from country of origin to country of arrival. This includes their potential exposure to discrimination and sexual and physical abuse, gender-based violence and exploitation. . . .

5(x). We will, with full respect for the rules of international law, vigorously combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling We will establish or upgrade, as appropriate, national and regional anti-human trafficking policies, with particular attention to women and girls. . . .

6. Commitments for refugees

6(i). Recognizing that conflict and instability are among the factors which give rise to large refugee movements, we will work to prevent or resolve conflict We will build on a range of legal obligations and on policy agreements already reached on these issues, including the 2030 Agenda

6(vi). We believe that a comprehensive response should be developed, under UNHCR leadership, for all situations involving large movements of refugees that takes into account the rights, needs and contribution of women refugees. This should involve a whole-of-society approach

6(xviii). We will ensure that the health needs of refugee communities are met; we will support, for example, community-based projects and will reinforce local health systems, including those related to

sexual and reproductive health, and mental health, so as to ensure that they have the capacity to response to large influxes.

6(xix). We will develop national strategies for the protection of refugees that respond to the specific needs of women and girls and within the framework of national social safety nets. . . .

6(xxiii). We note with concern a significant gap between the needs of refugees and the available resources. . . .Building on discussions at the World Humanitarian Summit, . . . we encourage support from a broad range of donors, both traditional and new. We reiterate our commitment to increased investment to close resource gaps for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and will provide adequate and targeted financial resources to address the specific needs of women and girl refugees and migrants. UN agencies

Existing gender equality references in the zero draft (27 June ver) of outcome document for the high-level meeting on migrants and refugees

3. Principles to ensure safety and dignity for displaced persons

- 3(viii) We recognize, and will address, the special needs of vulnerable people travelling within large movements of refugees and migrants, including **women** and children at risk; the elderly; persons with disabilities; and victims of trafficking and smuggling.

5. Commitments for migrants and refugees jointly

- 5(ii) We will implement border management procedures, including disembarkation procedures, which are in conformity with international human rights standards and, as applicable, international refugee law. These procedures will be sensitive to the needs of **women**, children persons with disabilities, the elderly and others who may be at risk. We will ensure that public officials who work in border areas are trained to behave with respect towards all persons crossing, or seeking to cross, international borders.
- 5(vi) We recognize the particular vulnerability of **women** and children during the journey from country of origin to country of arrival. This includes their potential exposure to discrimination and sexual and physical abuse, violence and exploitation. We will develop additional guidance for their protection, regardless of status.
- 5(vii) We will ensure that our responses to large movements of refugees and migrants promote **gender equality** and the **empowerment of women and girls** and fully respect the **human rights of women and girls**. We will combat **sexual and gender-based violence** in every way possible. We will tackle the multiple forms of discrimination to which **migrant and refugee women** are subject. And we will work to ensure **women's leadership and full and equal participation** in the development of local solutions and opportunities.
- 5(xiii) We will invest in data collection, including **sex** and age-disaggregated data, as well as information on both regular and irregular flows, the vulnerability of migrants and the economic

impacts of migration. The data should be analysed to plan for future migration and to promote the inclusion of migrants.

6. Commitments for refugees

- 6(xvii) We highlight also the role of tertiary education: during crisis situations, higher education protects a critical group of **young men and women**, helps to build resilience, fosters inclusion and non-discrimination and provides a foundation for the rebuilding of war-torn societies.