



**Comments on the Outcome Documents – Second Drafts
19 September 2016 Summit to Address Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants**

The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. (commonly known as “The Episcopal Church”) welcomes the distribution of the draft outcome documents for the UNGA Summit to Address Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants.

In a spirit of collaboration mirroring the “whole-of-society” approach, we are pleased to offer the following comments on these drafts in a line-by-line format below.

Our comments are based on our key advocacy points for this Summit:

1. Encourage campaigns and strategies to counter xenophobia and discrimination that prioritize building relationships between refugees and migrants and host communities.
2. Support resettlement as a critical component of responsibility-sharing and urge Member States to increase size of existing resettlement programs or establish resettlement programs if they do not have one. Affirm target to resettle at least 10 percent of the global refugee population annually.
3. Support the right to asylum and due process for all people.
4. Affirm a whole of society approach that includes civil society and namely faith based organizations.
5. Affirm the principle of Leave No One Behind and preferential treatment for the most vulnerable.

Second Draft of Outcome Document for 19 September 2016 Summit to Address Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants

- 1.1 We affirm the recognition of climate change as a cause of migration. Additionally, we applaud the recognition that migration is interwoven throughout human history. As a Christian faith-based organization, The Episcopal Church identifies strongly with the migration story in acknowledging that Jesus Christ himself was a refugee, as was the Holy Family.
- 1.5 We applaud the acknowledgement that migrants make a profound contribution to host societies. Migrants are vital members of our congregations and communities.
- 1.9 We affirm that large movements of refugees and migrants should be addressed in a humane, sensitive and compassionate manner. We affirm that the human rights and fundamental freedoms of refugees and migrants must be fully respected.
- 1.10 We affirm that the treatment of refugees and migrants must be rooted in the respect of the dignity of every human being because all human beings are born free and equal in dignity of rights.
- 1.11 The Episcopal Church heartily welcomes this focus on eliminating xenophobia, racial discrimination, and intolerance. The Episcopal Church condemns all acts motivated by hate and is committed to campaigns and initiatives that are aimed at uplifting the dignity of every human being. Thus, we are prepared to support the Secretary General’s proposal for a UN-led global campaign to counter xenophobia. In the U.S., Episcopal Migration Ministries, the refugee resettlement service of The Episcopal Church, offers varied programs that build direct personal relationships with refugees and host communities. Episcopal congregations participate in these programs by teaching English to refugees, partnering refugee youth with a tutor, and more. The



THE *Episcopal* CHURCH

Episcopal Church is a sponsor of Refugees Welcome, an interfaith campaign that aims to celebrate refugees' community contributions and promote refugee integration and leadership through events such as a community meal or an educational forum.

- 1.12 We affirm our support for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the administration of justice.
- 1.13 We strongly affirm the principle of "leaving no one behind." This principle builds on our faith values of preferential treatment for the poor and marginalized.
- 1.17 We are in favor of implementation of the Paris Agreement.
- 2.2 We applaud the recognition of the special needs of vulnerable populations.
- 2.5 We affirm the right of all people to seek asylum.
- 2.7 In both 2.7 and 2.8, we applaud the particular mention of women and girls and promoting their empowerment through gender equality, eradicating gender-based violence, and more.
- 2.9 We acknowledge the importance of birth registration as a first step in ensuring protection and access to resources for all, including refugees. As a member province of the Anglican Communion, The Episcopal Church upholds the Communion's emphasis on birth registration as a key priority in addressing the needs of children, migrants, and refugees.
- 2.10 We celebrate the reaffirmation that all persons seeking to cross international borders are entitled to due process. The Episcopal Church's legislative body calls upon its members to advocate for a just system of asylum and affirms the principles of international law regarding return and reintegration.
- 2.11 The Episcopal Church has collaborated with the UN community on many occasions to counter human trafficking. We recognize the important link between migration and human trafficking and strongly affirm its inclusion here.
- 2.13 We ask that faith-based organizations be included with civil society, the private sector, employers' and workers' organizations and other stakeholders working to combat discrimination and strengthening the inclusion of refugees in all spheres of life. For example, in the United States, The Episcopal Church, through its refugee resettlement agency Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM), works with 30 local affiliate partners to address discrimination and support refugee integration. EMM's partners work with refugees upon initial arrival in the U.S., assisting them to find housing, use local transportation, enroll children in schools, and find employment. EMM's programs are focused on engaging refugees in all parts of local community life, and often include opportunities to build friendships and relationships with host communities directly. As refugees are supported to engage their local communities, and become members of schools, religious communities, and the work force, they become known to their neighbor. Strengthening the inclusion of refugees in all sectors of society will then help combat xenophobia and discrimination.
- 3.1 We applaud the commitment to protecting the safety, dignity, and human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants, regardless of status, at all times.
- 3.3 We applaud the commitment to address root causes of migration, particularly the commitment to mitigate the effects of climate change, and the recognition of climate change as a cause of migration.
- 3.11 We applaud the inclusion of temporary protection as a tool to provide safety and opportunity to certain migrants that are not refugees.
- 4.1 We welcome the inclusion of a commitment to work to prevent or resolve crises that give rise to large refugee movements.



THE *Episcopal* CHURCH

- 4.3. We welcome the reaffirmation of respect for the institution of asylum and the right to seek asylum.
- 4.5. We strongly affirm a "whole-of-society" approach and note the particular role of faith-based organizations not simply as first and often last responders to crises, but also key agents of education and transformational thinking that encourages people to love, value and welcome the stranger, their neighbor. The Episcopal Church's Episcopal Migration Ministries provides an excellent example for how UN member states, UN agencies and civil society organizations can collaborate for the benefit and well-being of refugees. EMM partners with the United States to resettle refugees that have been referred to the U.S. for resettlement by UNHCR. EMM then works with local resettlement agencies and local communities to resettle these refugees. In the past year, EMM has resettled over 5,000 refugees.
- 4.6. We welcome the mention of "accelerating refugee admission procedures," as we acknowledge refugee resettlement as a life-saving and life-giving solution for many vulnerable refugees who will not be able to return home.
- 4.8. We affirm the acknowledged connection between forced displacement and statelessness. The Episcopal Church asserts the right of every human being to a nationality and our church wide legislative body urges the international community to work to end discriminatory practices that leave women and children vulnerable to statelessness. These include efforts to ensure equality between women and men in nationality laws and access to documentation, the promotion of birth registration as a basic step toward the protection of children and the prevention of statelessness, and greater efforts in the identification of stateless persons to be able to start addressing their needs.
- 4.11. We celebrate the commitment to expanding the number and range of pathways available to refugees for admission. We affirm that resettlement and other legal pathways for admission are tools for global responsibility-sharing, and that admission programs such as student or work visas or family reunification efforts are means to enriching host communities with refugees.
- 4.12. The Episcopal Church urges Member States who have not yet established resettlement programs to take concrete steps to do so at the earliest opportunity and encourages those who have already done so to significantly increase the size of their programs. We affirm the target of resettling 10% of the global refugee population annually. We offer the work of EMM as an example of successful partnership between a Member State and a civil society organization for resettling refugees. EMM has resettled more than 50,000 refugees since 1988 in partnership with the US federal government, local affiliate offices, congregations, and host community volunteers. EMM serves as one of nine refugee resettlement agencies that partner with the US federal government to resettle refugees. Resettlement in the US is focused on self-sufficiency through employment, allowing refugees to contribute to their communities and to integrate quickly after arrival. Resettlement is a critical solution that offers new life and opportunity to vulnerable populations.
- 4.19. We believe it is important to include "faith-based organizations" within the mentioned range of humanitarian groups working together.
- 4.20. We welcome the acknowledgement of civil society as a "key partner in every region of the world" and note the many ways in which civil society makes important contributions: providing aid to refugees, building interpersonal networks between refugees and host communities, offering programs for education or employment training.
- 5.1. We support the establishment of an annual assessment. Accountability and implementation plans are vital to ensure proper follow-up, management and transparency for all UN processes.



THE *Episcopal* CHURCH

Global Compact on Responsibility Sharing for Refugees

2. We affirm a whole-of-society approach, and especially applaud the inclusion of faith based organizations.
5. We affirm the particular emphasis on the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence.
6. We affirm the inclusion of “civil society, religious and private-sector partners.”
11. We strongly affirm the full participation of refugees in peace and reconciliation and all other processes in which they are implicated.
12. The Episcopal Church affirms efforts to encourage self-reliance and opportunities for refugees and asylum-seekers as well as support for host communities. We strongly agree that “empowered refugees are better able to contribute to their own and their communities' protection”. Here are some examples of how this has been done through EMM's work in resettlement: In Buffalo, New York, EMM's affiliate partner offers interpretation services for refugees, but also for local schools, hospitals, and businesses, empowering refugees and the community by creating opportunities for relationship building. In Austin, Texas, EMM's affiliate partner hired a refugee to serve as an employee, providing skills training and opportunity for leadership. Now, that person serves as the director of the resettlement office, assisting other refugees as they come to the U.S. and serving as a community business leader in Austin. Several other EMM partners provide civic engagement training for resettled refugees, offering an opportunity to become elected leaders engaged in their local community.
13. We applaud the commitment to enhancing or facilitating complementary admissions pathways for refugees. We applaud that UN Member States who have not yet established resettlement programmes are encouraged to consider doing so and that those who have already done so are encouraged to significantly increase the size of their programs. From its experience with resettlement in the US, EMM recognizes some of the benefits of resettlement: vulnerable refugees are able to receive specialized mental health and physical medical care, host communities experience a wide range of economic benefits such as a dedicated and reliable workforce, stimulation for local business, revitalization of neighborhoods, and more. We affirm the commitment to resettlement to reach at least 10 percent of the global refugee population annually.

In addition to the above comments on the current draft, we request the reinstatement of paragraph 24 in the first draft of the Global Compact which reads “States, international and national partners and the private sector would: Encourage all sectors of society to foster positive and respectful attitudes towards refugees, focusing on the positive economic, social and cultural contributions that refugees can make, in order to promote tolerance, pluralism and common values; Take measures necessary to address xenophobia, racial discrimination and religious intolerance as both causes of conflict and barriers to solutions, noting that the concept of sanctuary and asylum is embedded in diverse religious and cultural traditions.”

