

Observations by the Islamic Republic of Iran on the Draft (12 July 2016)

1. Defining the challenge

- 1.1 Since earliest times, humanity has been on the move. Some people move in search of new opportunities and horizons. Others move to escape conflict, persecution, terrorism, **military intervention**, or poverty. Still others do so in response to natural disasters, climate change or other environmental factors **such as desertification, water crisis and sand storms**. Many move, indeed, for a combination of these reasons
- 1.6 Large movements of refugees and migrants present a range of complex challenges and are at the heart of our deliberations today. Such movements of refugees and migrants have political, economic, social, developmental, humanitarian and human rights ramifications which cross all borders. These are global phenomena which call for global approaches and global solutions. No one State can manage such movements on its own. Neighbouring or transit countries also carry unfair burdens. A relatively small number of countries, usually developing countries who are in the immediate vicinity of a conflict zone, have borne the brunt for too long. Their capacities have been stretched to a breaking point, threatening their own social and economic cohesion as well as their development and security. In addition, protracted refugee crises are now commonplace, with long-term repercussions for those involved and also for their host countries and communities. ~~These burdens must be shared with such countries on an equitable basis.~~ **International community must share these burdens with such countries on an equitable basis.**
- 1.7 We declare our profound solidarity with, and support for, the millions of people in different parts of the world who, for reasons beyond their control, **including military interventions, conflicts, coercive measures, poverty, hunger and inequality** are forced to uproot themselves and their families from their homes and to seek refuge and safety elsewhere.
- 1.8 Refugees and migrants in large movements often face a desperate ordeal. Many take great risks to reach safety, embarking on perilous journeys ~~—frequently by sea—~~ which they may not survive. Many fall prey to criminal groups. Even if they reach their destination, they face an uncertain reception and a precarious future.
- 1.10 All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. International law prohibits discrimination of any kind on the basis of race, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. History has taught us, regrettably, many lessons about the destructive legacies of hatred. Yet in many parts of the world we are witnessing increasingly xenophobic, **Islamophobia**, and racist responses to refugees and migrants.
- 1.11 We strongly condemn such responses. Diversity enriches and strengthens every society. Demonising refugees or migrants offends profoundly against the values of dignity and equality for every human being to which we have committed ourselves. Gathered today at the United Nations, the birthplace and custodian of these universal values, we declare all manifestations of xenophobia, **Islamophobia**, racial discrimination and intolerance directed at refugees or migrants to be utterly unacceptable. We will take a range of steps to counter such attitudes

and behaviour, in particular hate speech and racial violence. We support, and will help to implement, the Secretary General's proposal for a UN-led global campaign to counter xenophobia, with Member State, private sector and civil society engagement. This campaign will emphasize direct personal contact between host communities and refugees and migrants and will highlight the positive contributions made by the latter as well as our common humanity.

- 1.13 In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we 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 said also that we will endeavour to reach the furthest behind first. And we made a number of commitments which relate to the specific needs of migrants or refugees. The Agenda makes clear, inter alia, that we will “facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”. The needs of refugees, ~~internally displaced persons~~ and migrants are explicitly recognized. Its targets deal with issues of specific concern such as education, labour standards, human trafficking, exploitation of children, access to justice and the building of self-reliance and resilience.
- 1.15 We ~~welcome~~ **take note of** the ~~extremely valuable~~ report from the Secretary-General, entitled “In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants”, which was published in May 2016 (pursuant to GA Decision A/70/L.34) in preparation for this High Level Meeting. ~~We recall also the contributions made by the London Conference on Supporting Syria and the Region (February 2016), the High Level Meeting on Global Responsibility Sharing through Pathways for Admission of Syrian Refugees (March 2016) and the World Humanitarian Summit (May 2016).~~

2. Commitments

We have agreed today on a set of commitments covering migrants and refugees jointly and also on commitments for refugees and migrants as distinct categories. Some commitments, while mainly relevant to one category, may also be applicable to the other. Furthermore, while they are all framed in the context of the large movements we are considering today, many may be applicable also to regular migration. In addition, we have adopted a Global Compact on Responsibility **and Burden**-Sharing for Refugees.

Commitments for migrants and refugees jointly

- 2.2 We recognize, and will address, the special needs of people in vulnerable situations who are travelling within large movements of refugees and migrants, including women and children at risk; older persons; persons with disabilities; **LGBTI persons**; and victims of exploitation and abuse in the context of trafficking and smuggling.
- 2.3 Recognising that States have rights and responsibilities to manage and control their borders, we will implement border management procedures, including disembarkation procedures, which are in conformity with international human rights **law standards and**, as applicable, international refugee law. We will ensure that public officials and law enforcement officers who work in

border areas are trained to behave with respect towards all persons crossing, or seeking to cross, international borders.

- 2.13 We will take steps to combat discrimination in our societies against refugees and migrants ~~and to strengthen their inclusion in all spheres of life~~. National policies will be developed to this end in conjunction with civil society, the private sector, employers' and workers' organizations and other stakeholders. We also ~~note the~~ **emphasise the** obligation on refugees and migrants to observe the laws of their host countries.

4. Commitments for refugees

- 4.9 We recognise that refugee camps should be the exception and, to the extent possible, a temporary measure in response to an emergency. Further, we will actively promote durable solutions, particularly in protracted refugee situations, with ~~a focus on~~ **the priority of** sustainable and timely return ~~where possible~~. We underline the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements.
- 4.10 Welcoming the extraordinarily generous contribution made to date by countries which host large refugee populations, and the global public good which this constitutes, we ~~will work~~ **commit** to increase the support needed for these countries and call for pledges made at recent relevant conferences to be disbursed promptly. We commit to sharing in an equitable manner the enormous burden these countries have been carrying. **In this regard, we commit to the target of funding at least 90% of the resources required by countries hosting large number of refugees to meet the objectives of paragraphs 4.14 to 4.18 of the present document.**
- 4.12 We ~~encourage~~ **urge** Member States who have not yet established resettlement programmes to consider doing so at the earliest opportunity; those who have already done so are encouraged to consider increases in the size of their programmes. We are setting as a target the provision of resettlement places and other legal pathways for admission on a scale which would enable the annual resettlement needs identified by UNHCR, **or at least 20% of the total** refugee population, to be met.
- 4.14 We commit to **take all necessary measures towards** providing humanitarian assistance to refugees so as to ensure essential support in key life-saving sectors, e.g. food, water and sanitation, shelter.
- 4.15 We ~~commit~~ **call upon international community** to providing quality primary and secondary education for all refugee children and to do so within a few months of the initial displacement. We recognize that access to education gives fundamental protection to children and youth in displacement contexts, particularly in situations of conflict and crisis.
- 4.17 We ~~will~~ **call upon international community to** ensure that the health needs of refugee communities are met. We will also develop national strategies for the protection of refugees within the framework of national social safety nets. Welcoming the positive steps taken by individual Member States, we encourage host governments to open their labour markets to refugees. We will work to strengthen host communities' self-reliance and resilience, assisting them, for example, with employment creation and income generation schemes.

5 **Follow-up and review of our commitments**

- 5.2 In addition, **a role in monitoring and reviewing relevant** aspects might be envisaged for the periodic High Level Dialogues on International Migration and Development, for the annual ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment and for the annual report of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to the General Assembly.