

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- On behalf of the State of Qatar, I would like to start by thanking Her Excellency Ms. Dina Kawar, Permanent Representative of Jordan, and His Excellency Mr. David Donoghue, Permanent Representative of Ireland, for their continuous efforts in co-facilitating open, transparent and inclusive consultations with Member States and for producing a draft outcome document that is a good basis for our deliberations.
- The draft outcome document is well written and inspiring. It communicates the vision and the “why” of the need to address the question of large movement of refugees and migrants, and urges us all to take action.
- I will focus my comments this morning on the sections reserved to Education. In our view the section reserved to tertiary education could be further improved.
- The draft outcome document highlights the role of tertiary education without providing the same level of commitment awarded to primary and secondary education.
- From my own country’s experience in supporting higher education programs and initiatives in many countries, we would like to highlight some of the reasons why tertiary education should receive the same level of commitment.
- First and foremost, the UN Declaration for Human Rights, Article 21 (1) speaks to the need for higher education to be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. This means refugees and non-refugees alike; only 1% of refugees are currently accessing higher education.
- Second, refugee learners have enormous potential to contribute positively to the economic development of their host or resettlement country, as well as their country of origin.
- Third, education has the potential to restore a sense of normalcy. Access to high level education improves one’s capacity to mitigate conflict without resorting to violence and is a critical contribution to protection, human rights and post-conflict reconstruction. It serves as a protective function, keeping more youth away from military recruitment and girls from early marriages.

- Fourth, access to high level education provides an incentive for refugee students to complete their secondary education.
- Finally, high level education for refugees and other emergency-affected populations is extremely important for capacity-building during post-conflict reconstruction, for which a pool of highly educated persons is a vital component.
- Thank you very much.