

*Permanent Observer Mission  
of the State of Palestine  
to the United Nations*



البعثة المراقبة الدائمة  
لدولة فلسطين  
لدى الأمم المتحدة

**Statement by the Delegation of the State of Palestine at the first consultations on the zero draft declaration to be issued by the 19 September High-Level Meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants:**

I thank the Co-Chairs and Special Adviser Karen Abuzayd and her team for the efforts exerted in preparing the zero draft Declaration for the 19 September Summit. As noted by several delegations, we believe the draft constitutes a good basis for our negotiations towards articulating, strengthening and promoting the endorsement of such essential and lofty commitments regarding refugees and migrants in line with international law, including human rights law, humanitarian law, and refugee law. This must also be pursued in accord with the political, socio-economic and developmental responsibilities and commitments undertaken by the international community in other relevant declarations and agreements, including, inter alia, as in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other relevant UN resolutions.

Palestine is reviewing the draft Declaration and will propose relevant amendments with a view to clarifying and enhancing certain elements, in particular with regard to the plight of refugees, including in specific those enduring protracted displacement, as is the situation of the Palestine refugees for nearly seven decades.

In this connection, we concur with the delegations of Lebanon, Kenya and Pakistan that the return of refugees should be emphasized as a central goal, with a call on the international community to exert efforts to promote and ensure the conditions necessary to facilitate and ensure the safe and dignified return of refugees to their places of origin. This in turn would require, inter alia, a reinforced commitment by the international community to engage proactively in conflict resolution, on the basis of international law and UN resolutions, and tackling the root causes of forced displacement and protracted displacement. Conflict resolution and prevention must be made a priority in the global efforts to redress the plight of refugees worldwide. The solutions are not only humanitarian and developmental, but also political and require political will and courage. Otherwise we will face the continued plight of millions of refugees, many languishing in camps for decades, for decades more to come, as has been the tragedy of Palestine refugees and other refugees in protracted situations around the world.

Lastly, we look favorably on the elements regarding responsibility and burden sharing and sufficiently supporting the capacities of host countries and communities. This is vital for numerous reasons for both the well-being of refugees and the well-being and stability of host communities. However, we wish to see added emphasis in this connection on the need to provide predictable and sustained support and funding to UN agencies and other international humanitarian organizations and implementing partners commensurate with refugee needs and in line with global humanitarian and developmental obligations and commitments.

If the humanitarian agencies providing services and assistance to refugee communities are not properly and sufficiently funded, the consequences are manifold, not least unfulfilled basic human needs and gaps in protection for refugee families, including the most vulnerable such as children, women, elderly and disabled persons, which in turn undermine their well-being and dignity, create added burdens and demand for services from host countries, and do often propel subsequent movement or displacement of refugees in search of a better life, as we witness in the current global realities.

I thank the Co-Chairs once again and we will submit our comments today and any future draft proposals in writing.