



GENEVA CONFERENCE ON
AFGHANISTAN

27 – 28 November 2018



Side Event Concept Note

People on the Move

Return and Reintegration (Whole of Community Approach)

27 November 2018, 14:30 – 16:00

Council Chamber

BACKGROUND

After nearly four decades of conflict, Afghans remain one of the largest displaced populations in the world with approximately 6 million Afghans residing in Iran and Pakistan; over 850,000 residing in the EU; and an estimated 2 million internally displaced. Afghan refugees constitute almost 15 per cent of the global refugee population and more than half of the 4.1 million refugees in protracted forced displacement of 20 years or longer. With almost 2.4 million registered refugees (some 1.4 million in Pakistan and 950,000 in Iran), Afghanistan remains the second largest country of origin of refugees after Syria. In addition, some 3 million undocumented Afghans are estimated to be living in Pakistan (879,000 applied for Afghan Citizenship Cards and approximately 400,000 did not register) and 2 million in Iran.

The September 2016 signing of the New York Declaration laid the foundation for the Global Compacts on Refugees (GCR) and Migration (GCM). Afghanistan has officially announced its support for the implementation of the GCR and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF).

While the ongoing insecurity in Afghanistan presents challenges for large scale, sustainable return, some Afghans do return to their country of origin to rebuild their lives and raise their children as citizens of Afghanistan. Despite economic decline and other challenges, the GoIRA's commitment to creating the political and socio-economic conditions for dignified and safe return of Afghans has not wavered. At the highest levels, the GoIRA has identified return and reintegration of its citizens as one of its key priorities and building blocks of its peace and reconciliation plan. The GoIRA and the international community have achieved some level of success in recent years toward addressing the problems associated with so many Afghans on the move.

A number of large-scale, multi-partner reintegration programmes are being implemented around the country in line with the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF). These efforts have been appreciated by the principal countries hosting Afghans, which have long maintained that voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration is the preferred solution for Afghans residing on their territories. However, given the current humanitarian context and systemic development challenges facing Afghanistan, return and sustainable reintegration of Afghans is a task that will require long-term interventions and investments, and which cannot be accomplished by the Governments in the region alone.

OBJECTIVES

The side event aims to:

- Mark the 40th year of Afghan displacement and highlight the tangible progress and remaining gaps in implementing various plans towards solutions since 2016;

- Encourage support and solidarity for more equitable responsibility-sharing to address mixed migration flows and implement lasting solutions with focus on return and sustainable reintegration;
- Align the SSAR+ and the Global Compacts on Refugees and Migrants with a regional perspective to support Afghanistan as well as host countries in the context of the global development and peace-building discourse;
- Identify innovative ways to link humanitarian, development and private sector actors, bridging the humanitarian-development nexus, to support gradual, voluntary and dignified repatriation and sustainable reintegration of Afghan people on the move;

FORMAT

The side-event will consist of two components:

Central to the event will be a high-level panel thematic discussion focusing on, inter-alia:

- How to advance reintegration efforts, the humanitarian-development nexus and better migration management systems while maintaining protection space for refugees.
- Highlight the GoIRA commitment to the CRRF and its alignment with the National Unity Government's progress on reforms and on reintegration initiatives for returnees, SSAR+, and the Solidarity Approach.
- Explore how to translate the global commitments of greater burden- and responsibility-sharing to better support the GoIRA as well as GoI and GoP in efforts to facilitate voluntary, gradual and dignified return and sustainable reintegration of Afghan populations.
- The main challenges and formulate recommendations for new approaches and solutions to the Afghan protracted displacement situation.

Visual component (photo exhibition and video clips):

- Visual components aim at giving the discussion a human face and a focus on the resilience, hopes and strengths of the refugee, returnee, and mixed migration populations. This will include video footage and a photo exhibition with content from the region.

PROPOSED AGENDA

Time	Agenda	Speaker
14:30	Welcome	Moderator: Mr. Filippo Grandi, High Commissioner for Refugees
14:35	Keynote Address	H.E. Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, CEO of National Unity Government, GoIRA
14:45	Opening Remarks	H.E. Mr. Neven Mimica, European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development
14:55	Panel Discussion	Tentative Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Alema, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation • Ms. Laura Thomson, Deputy Director-General, IOM • Islamic Republic of Pakistan (TBC) • Islamic Republic of Iran (TBC) • Mr. Khybar Farahi, Senior Advisor to the President of Afghanistan on Migration & Returnees
15:30	Open Discussion	
15:57	Closing	Moderator: Mr. Filippo Grandi, High commissioner for Refugees