



UGANDA Solidarity Summit on Refugees

Translating New York Declaration Commitments into Action
22nd – 23rd June, 2017



KAMPALA DECLARATION ON REFUGEES

The President of the Republic of Uganda and the United Nations Secretary General, in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, have brought together, at the Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees held in Kampala on 22-23 June 2017, Heads of State and Government and High-Level Representatives as well as other representatives from the national, regional and international organizations to pledge support and demonstrate solidarity with the people and government of Uganda who are providing protection and assistance in the midst of great challenges, to refugees.

I. PREAMBLE

1. **Welcoming and applauding** the initiative by the President of the Republic of Uganda, His Excellency Yoweri Museveni and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. António Guterres in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Filippo Grandi, to convene a Solidarity Summit on Refugees in Uganda.
2. **Recalling** that the 19 September 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants¹, especially its Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other relevant frameworks demonstrate the political will of world leaders to pursue a comprehensive and predictable refugee response based on the principles of international cooperation, solidarity, and responsibility sharing.

¹ <http://refugeesmigrants.un.org/declaration>

3. **Noting** that Uganda is currently hosting the third largest population of refugees in the world comprising more than 1.2 million women, men and children. 58 per cent of refugees are children under the age of 18, while 59 per cent are female.
4. **Recognizing** that Uganda has a long history of hosting refugees, and has during the past decade witnessed unprecedented influxes as a result of instability and conflict in the region.
5. **Cognizant** that the trend of refugee flows seems set to continue in the face of recurring cycles of conflict, violence and instability in some countries exacerbated by the impact of climate change, extreme weather events and drought.
6. **Condemns** in the strongest terms the violence and armed conflict that continues to be perpetrated by government forces as well as all other armed groups in South Sudan targeting defenceless civilians and causing huge loss of lives, destruction of property, and uprooting millions of South Sudanese from their homes to take refuge in the neighbouring states or suffer as internally displaced persons within their country.
7. **Cognizant** that Uganda continues to live up to its international obligations towards refugees, through its generous asylum regime, notwithstanding the multifaceted refugee context with concurrent emergency and protracted situations.
8. **Paying tribute** to Uganda's exemplary refugee policy for its impressive aspects including, *inter alia*, refugees in national development plans, granting refugees land as well as rights to work and freedom of movement in order to empower them to become economically self-reliant and participate in society.
9. **Appreciating** that the bulk of the refugee population in Uganda currently resides in settlements (out of camp locations) alongside Ugandan citizens, while nearly 100,000 refugees live in urban areas.
10. **Commending** the host communities' exemplary role on the frontline of refugee response, receiving new arrivals, sharing land, available public services and natural resources like water and wood.
11. **Noting that** the Government of Uganda is investing significant resources in the protection and management of refugees, including in the areas of security, public administration, infrastructure and social services including health and education amounting to over USD 323 million annually.
12. **Recognizing and applauding** the solidarity displayed so far by Uganda's development partners in dealing with refugees flows.

13. **Appreciating** the role being played by the United Nations system, humanitarian and development actors as well as international financial institutions in particular the World Bank, in supporting the provision of protection and assistance to the large numbers of refugees in Uganda most notably under the Government's Settlement Transformation Agenda and the UN-World Bank Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) Initiative.
14. **Commending** the role of UNHCR in supporting the Government of Uganda to protect and assist refugees in its territory including the pursuit of durable solutions.
15. **Noting** the immense pressures placed by the presence of large numbers of refugees on overstretched state and host community services and socio-economic and environmental resources.
16. **Deeply concerned** that the respective inter-agency plans for the refugee response in Uganda are chronically and severely underfunded, seriously undermining the capacity of humanitarian actors to provide vital life-saving assistance to refugees and support the Government to uphold its progressive refugee policy.
17. **Recalling** that Uganda's refugee policy and refugee settlement approach are in line with and build on relevant national, regional and international refugee instruments, strategies, frameworks and initiatives, including the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework linked to the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants; 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the commitment by states to "Leave no one Behind" and the outcome of the World Humanitarian Summit, which emphasizes the need to employ New Ways of Working.

Do hereby solemnly declare that:

II. ON GENERAL PRINCIPLE

1. Uganda cannot handle the present massive refugee crisis alone and maintain the progressive policies and the asylum space that safeguard refugee protection without urgent support and a more equitable responsibility sharing between Uganda and the international community.
2. The situation in Uganda underlines the need to support a comprehensive approach which is being applied to provide protection and seek durable solutions for refugees in Uganda and support to their hosts, in line with the New York Declaration.
3. There is an urgent need for enhanced regional and international support and commitment to address the root causes of refugee crises, and work in every way possible for the peaceful settlement of disputes, the prevention of conflict and the achievement of long-term peaceful solutions in order to create conditions that are conducive for voluntary return of refugees in safety and dignity.

III. ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE REFUGEE RESPONSE FRAMEWORK IN UGANDA

1. **Commend** Uganda's proactive step in establishing a Government-led multi-stakeholder Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) Secretariat to oversee the implementation of the current approach in order to achieve greater efficiency, operational effectiveness and system-wide coherency with a view to fully implementing the commitments outlined in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.
2. **Commit** to maintain protection and asylum, while striving to identify appropriate solutions for the refugees currently in Uganda, through the enhanced application of a comprehensive refugee response.
3. **Call** upon the international community to strongly support the comprehensive refugee response requirements of USD 2billion annually for the period 2017-2020 computed by the Government of Uganda and United Nations partners to meet the needs of refugees and the communities that host them.
4. **Take note** that broad-based stakeholder engagement is required, in the spirit of responsibility-sharing, to mobilize resources and support for refugees and the communities that host them in line with the five CRRF Pillars as outlined below:
 - a. **Admissions and Rights:** appreciating that the admission rate for refugees in Uganda is one of the highest in the world and that the country is one of only a few in not following a policy of refugee encampment:
 - i. Support Uganda to maintain and promote asylum space, and acceptance by host communities and promote peaceful co-existence.
 - b. **Emergency and ongoing needs:** recognizing that the presence of large numbers of refugees is placing inordinate pressures on state and host community resources:
 - i. Reduce refugees' vulnerability through robust predictable support for life-saving and protection activities through the refugee response plans including approaches or services adapted to the specific needs of women and children.
 - ii. Assist the Government to ease the burden of delivering integrated services to both refugees and host communities through relevant line ministries and refugee-hosting district authorities including health, education and protection services and programs to prevent environmental degradation and rehabilitating degrading ecosystems in refugee hosting areas.

- c. **Resilience and self-reliance:** recognizing that refugees can be agents of development who positively contribute to the sustainable development of their host districts as a means to strengthening and expanding asylum space, and that in the long term refugees who are educated and skilled will be better prepared to engage as agents of positive transformation as and when durable solutions are realized:
 - i. Support the Government's Settlement Transformative Agenda (STA), in order to enhance the socio-economic integration of refugees taking into account the impact on host communities and the protracted nature of displacement.
 - ii. Invite humanitarian and development actors, including bilateral partners, International Financial Institutions, regional development banks and the private sector to combine their efforts and strengthen collaboration and inter-linkages to strengthen systems of delivering integrated services to refugees and host communities as well as unlock the potential for sustainable development and a diversified economy in refugee-hosting districts.
 - d. **Expanded solutions:** considering the need to increase the number and range of legal pathways that are available to refugees:
 - i. Encourage resettlement countries to consider increasing the size of their programmes and identify new resettlement countries and enhance opportunities for family reunification.
 - ii. Explore creative solutions to support the social integration of refugees in line with the Government's Settlement Transformative Agenda.
 - e. **Voluntary Repatriation:** appreciating that for the majority of refugees this will be the most practical and desirable durable solution when conditions are conducive for eventual safe, dignified and sustainable return:
 - i. Invest in developing human capital of refugees to become agents of positive economic and social transformation in the host districts and in their home countries when conditions become conducive for safe return.
 - ii. Create an enabling environment for the voluntary return and reintegration of refugees in the countries of origin.
5. **Ensure** that the financial and technical resources committed will be utilized through systems that have robust risk management practices in place to ensure accountability and efficiency in the use of the resources along with robust monitoring and evaluation systems to inform learning and management decisions.

IV. ON THE WAY FORWARD

Noting that the application of the CRRF in Uganda is a major opportunity for the implementation of the commitments made in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, we hereby:

1. **Acknowledge** that Uganda's refugee protection and management model is progressive.
2. **Underline** that the magnitude and challenges of the refugee situation in Uganda call for a multifaceted comprehensive refugee response.
3. **Pledge** to support Uganda to maintain its transformational refugee policies.
4. **Call upon** the international community to fulfill the commitments contained in the New York Declaration and the needs articulated in the Government's STA by providing additional resources to support the Government and host communities.
5. **Further call upon** regional and financial institutions, the private sector and other actors to support Uganda by enhancing basic services and developing human capital in refugee-hosting districts through funding, investments and innovative initiatives.
6. **Resolve** to work in every way possible to prevent conflicts, address root causes of refugee crises, enhance coordination of humanitarian and development response and achieve long-term political solutions including through support to regional initiatives.
7. **Encourage** the international community to demonstrate solidarity and responsibility sharing through considering enhancing resettlement opportunities as well as expediting the availability of complementary pathways for third country admissions.
8. **Call upon** UNHCR to continue developing, in consultation with the Government and relevant partners, modalities for the enhanced application of the CRRF to a range of specific refugee situations. In this respect, also look forward to the proposal for a Global Compact for Refugees by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as requested by the New York Declaration.