

UNHCR Statement for Panel 1: Human rights of all migrants

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Thank you Mr Moderator.

UNHCR shares the interest of Member States and others, in safe, orderly and regular migration. Refugees and migrants travelling irregularly experience many of the same protection risks and dangers in their journey, from voyages in unseaworthy boats, through to risks of sexual and gender based violence.

Specific interests include better delivery of protection and assistance to refugees and migrants moving together, effective protection of human rights on arrival of mixed flows, and creation of a more tolerant and accepting environment for refugees and migrants. Enhanced and expanded regular pathways for admission will also, importantly, better ensure that the asylum avenue is not unnecessarily and inappropriately strained. It is thus crucial to identify challenges and protect the human rights of all refugees and migrants at all stages of migration, including by identifying and meeting the specific needs of all persons in vulnerable situations on arrival.

UNHCR's 10-Point Plan in Action for refugee protection and mixed migration, which was updated in December 2016, provides practical suggestions to assist States and other partners in developing and implementing protection and migration strategies that respect international refugee and human rights law, while acknowledging legitimate sovereignty and security concerns.

The protection of human rights, including at borders, is a commitment made by states in the New York Declaration, which is relevant to both refugees and migrants. Upon arrival and reception, it may not be clear if someone is a refugee or a migrant. The commitments in the New York Declaration and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework relating to the identification of needs and the provision of safe and dignified reception therefore cannot be realized unless they are integrated into migration management policies and processes that apply to all persons irregularly on the move.

In this context, UNHCR would therefore like to propose that the relevant elements of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, specifically on arrival in the context of mixed flows, be considered in the context of the development of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration to ensure complementarity and coherence between the two distinct processes. Saving lives and ensuring human rights protection for all people must be a priority. We look forward to continuing to be part of this conversation.