

**NGO intervention on areas in need of support: reception and admission**

**Agenda item 1**

Dear Chairperson,

This intervention has been drafted through wide consultations with NGOs.

To begin with, we commend the text's stronger emphasis on developing national capacities to manage arrivals, promoting a gender- and age-sensitive response, and attention to statelessness, victims of trafficking and SGBV.

However, NGOs consider that the draft could further mainstream a human-rights approach, especially for women, children, youth, elderly and people with disabilities. We also emphasise that data collection, its use and management should include confidentiality safeguards and adhere to international human rights standards.

Going into further details, we welcome a more developed section on **preparedness, contingency planning and early warning** and suggest those aspects should also guide efforts to measure the impact of hosting refugees. Conducting risk analysis is vital, including on the link between root causes, drivers of internal displacement and refugee flows. Such analysis should include local NGOs and community-based approaches to preparedness. When conducted collectively, this analysis should be shared, for example through a repository.

Under **immediate reception arrangements**, we urge inclusion of a training component for reception and admission staff, the police and military, and volunteers. This should encompass training in identifying international protection needs and in recognizing unaccompanied and separated children, survivors of SGBV, other trauma and trafficking. Moreover, reception and transit areas and services should be gender, age, disability and diversity sensitive and include safe spaces for women, children and youth.

We note that the section on **safety and security** now attempts to accommodate a human security perspective. However, this crucial section should have a stronger focus on people's safety and security. Protection safeguards and measures preventing misconduct and abuses by authorities should be strengthened, including access to legal assistance and highlighting the key role of human rights organisations. We also reject the suggestion that the military may have a role in applying exclusion criteria as this belongs to a civilian asylum process.

We are pleased to see references to statelessness under **registration and documentation**. A good registration process is necessary for a credible asylum procedure. We, however, recommend discouraging forced registration and encourage raising awareness about registration and documentation processes, taking into account people's cultural, linguistic and special needs. Moreover, women and girls must be registered individually, regardless of marital status, and interviewed by trained female and child interpreters. Rejected asylum-seekers should still have access to basic services, legal assistance and have their rights respected.

Under **addressing specific needs, including children at risk**, we welcome stronger references to developing alternatives to detention, noting that these must be non-custodial community-based arrangements that respect human rights including freedom of movement and rights to privacy. Family and community-based care alternatives for unaccompanied and separated children should be further promoted. We also consider that this section could emphasise the special needs of young people, elderly, torture victims and people with disabilities. We regret that the reference to inclusion of refugees in national child protection systems and social services has disappeared. We also reiterate that medical services for those with special needs must include preventive care, psychological services and sexual and reproductive healthcare for survivors of torture and other abuse.

Any response to forced displacement must prioritize the centrality of protection. We therefore welcome progress on **identifying protection needs**. The sentence describing who may be in need of international protection would, however, benefit from references to existing legal definitions and complementary protection regimes. The global compact should mention that international protection is not limited to persons meeting the 1951 refugee definition but also includes those who cannot return home because of other existing risks. We underline the importance of protecting people displaced across borders by disasters, including slow-onset events possibly linked to climate change. Host countries will also need support to identify, assist and protect those categories.

Finally, we strongly recommend that NGOs with capacity and expertise in asylum processes be included in the asylum capacity support group to increase independence of the expert pool. More details are also needed on how this group fits within the responsibility-sharing architecture.

A detailed version of this intervention is available on [icvanetwork.org](http://icvanetwork.org). We also encourage you to consult individual NGO comments and suggestions for the next draft.

Thank you.