



United Nations

Terms of Reference

HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Rationale

Internal displacement due to conflict and violence has reached an all-time high with over 41 million people currently internally displaced. An estimated further 20-25 million people become internally displaced every year due to disasters. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are particularly vulnerable, often lacking adequate shelter and access to basic services and exposed to a variety of protection risks. In many contexts, internally displaced women and children in particular have been victims of violence and abuse, sexual and labor exploitation, trafficking in persons, forced recruitment and abduction. The current magnitude of internal displacement results from new displacements, but also stems from protracted crises and lack of durable solutions for IDPs. Host communities are also affected; beyond IDPs' humanitarian needs, internal displacement often has developmental and political impact on entire communities. Yet, the response remains overwhelmingly focused on addressing short-term emergency needs.

There is growing consensus that given the magnitude and complexity of the issue – more attention needs to be put on addressing internal displacement, supporting affected States and communities that host internally displaced people and improving the lives of millions of internally displaced persons. In May 2019, 57 Member States - representing every geographical group and including States directly affected by internal displacement – wrote to the UN Secretary-General calling for the establishment of a High-Level Panel on IDPs. This initiative builds on the 2017 UNGA Resolution on the protection of and assistance to IDPs (A/RES/72/182) and initiatives such as the GP20 Plan of Action for advancing the prevention, protection and solutions for IDPs, which promotes the exchange of lessons on internal displacement among Member States coping with internal displacement and other actors, and as well as the Platform on Disaster Displacement. United Nations entities, NGOs and academics working on internal displacement have echoed the call from Member States. The importance of addressing internal displacement through comprehensive policies and plans is highlighted in several global agendas, including the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework, and the New Urban Agenda. Underscoring the significance of these issues, the African Union designated 2019 as “The Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa” launched at the AU Summit in Addis Ababa in February 2019.

Based on the foregoing, the UN Secretary-General has decided to establish a High-Level Panel on internal displacement (henceforth the Panel), focusing primarily on addressing protracted displacement and achieving durable solutions for persons displaced in the context of armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations, as well as disasters and the adverse effects of climate change. The Panel will support and build on ongoing efforts related to internal displacement by Member States and relevant stakeholders within the humanitarian, development and peace communities. The Panel's

report is expected to identify innovative and concrete solutions for IDPs and help trigger tangible changes on the ground.

Purpose

The High-Level Panel will raise international attention to the issue of internal displacement and its impact and prepare a report to the UN Secretary-General with concrete and practical recommendations to Member States, the United Nations system, and other relevant stakeholders on how to better respond to internal displacement, in particular where it is protracted, and achieve government-led durable solutions to internal displacement, inter alia building on the letter and concept note that 57 Member States sent to the Secretary-General on 10 May 2019 and the response of the Secretary-General on 20 June.

In particular, the report shall make recommendations in the following areas:

- 1) Strengthening capacities of Member States, the UN system and other relevant stakeholders to ensure adequate protection and assistance for internally displaced persons, to prevent such displacement and reduce it in view of achieving durable solutions, in a manner that is in line with international law and standards, and as reflected in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and other relevant frameworks;
- 2) Advancing collaboration between humanitarian, development, and where appropriate climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and peace actors, to better support affected Member States in addressing and reducing internal displacement and facilitating the exchange of lessons and good practices among affected states and other relevant actors;
- 3) Advancing the participation and inclusion of IDPs and displacement-affected communities in the realization of the 2030 Agenda, and in doing so being conscious of the specific needs of those who may be particularly vulnerable, including women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities;
- 4) Improving the collection, analysis and use of quality data relevant to internal displacement taking into account gender considerations and age-sensitive approaches;
- 5) Innovative financing and funding mechanisms and strategies in support of addressing internal displacement.

Proposed Methodology

In undertaking its in-depth review and formulating its findings and recommendations, the Panel will be supported by a Secretariat and rely on the following modalities:

- *Panel meetings:* The Panel will meet as needed and at least four times in 12 months in Geneva, New York and other places of its choice. Individual panel members will also convene and participate in thematic and regional meetings and consultations.
- *Field visits:* The Panel will conduct field visits, on the basis of Member State invitations, to countries affected by internal displacement, undertaking a dialogue with relevant local and national stakeholders.
- *Consultations:* Through the abovementioned meetings and field visits, the Panel will engage in consultations and dialogue with the broad range of stakeholders: Member States, UN entities, IDPs and wider displacement-affected communities, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, regional and sub-regional organizations, international and regional financial institutions, civil society, academia, the private sector and ongoing initiatives and platforms such as the GP20

Plan of Action, the Platform on Disaster Displacement, global data centres and country-specific Durable Solutions Initiatives.

- *Expert Advisory Group:* The Secretary-General will establish and nominate members to a small group of leading experts on internal displacement, who will advise the panel in its deliberations.
- *Gender approach:* In its work, the Panel will consider the interconnected, varying effects of internal displacement on women, girls, men and boys.

Composition

The Secretary-General will appoint 8 members of the Panel. In doing so, due consideration will be given to relevant qualification, gender parity and geographic balance. Members of the Panel are to serve in their personal capacities.

Timeline

The Panel will provide a report with its findings and recommendations within one year of its first meeting, which will take place in Geneva in early 2020.

Staffing and Budget

The Panel will be supported by a full-time Secretariat funded by donor resources. The Secretariat shall seek to leverage existing platforms and partners, including UN agencies, working in the related domains.