



Statement by H.E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, Permanent Observer of the Holy See  
to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva at the  
**Third Formal Consultation towards a Global Compact on Refugees**  
**Statement 1 - Reception and Admission**  
*Geneva, 10 April 2018*

Thank you, Madam Moderator.

While States have the primary responsibility for reception and admission of refugees, the Holy See, by virtue of her mission and on the basis of her experience, wishes to remind the international community of the principles of humanity and solidarity which deeply underlie both social coexistence and international cooperation.

During the previous formal consultations, the Holy See Delegation has stressed the importance for the Global Compact on Refugees to be firmly centered on the human person, urging that the dignity of each and every human person and his/her fundamental human rights should guide and underpin all aspects of the Program of Action.

In this regard, we wish to reiterate the importance of keeping a holistic and integrated approach throughout the whole Draft, with a focus on the centrality of the human person. A holistic approach remains, indeed, the best way to detect and overcome harmful stereotypes, to avoid stigmatizing anyone in respect to a few specific aspects, and to take into account all dimensions and fundamental aspects of the person as a whole. This is of paramount importance for the protection of refugees but also for the respect of the local communities.

Madam Moderator,

The Delegation of the Holy See welcomes that the Draft acknowledges that the security of borders and the wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers should not be seen as irreconcilable, but rather as mutually reinforcing. Indeed, it is important to adopt inclusive and non-discriminatory national security policies that prioritize the safety and protection of citizens, as well as those of refugees and asylum seekers fleeing armed conflict, persecution or widespread violence to find safety quickly by ensuring an expeditious screening and admission process.<sup>1</sup>

An exclusively security-oriented approach ignores the tragedies that force people to seek protection elsewhere. Addressing the problem of identifying persons in need of international protection from the perspective of the uprooted can help the international community to devise a more comprehensive and humane program of action. The principle of “*non-refoulement*” has to be respected in every case.

In this regard, as a more specific comment, under the subsection 1.6 on “Identifying international protection needs”, the Holy See Delegation wishes to propose an addition to Paragraph 54, whereby the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Responding to Refugees and Migrants: Twenty Action Points*, Migrants and Refugees Section, Holy See’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

UNHCR could also “provide guidance to ensure access to justice for refugees and asylum seekers and guarantee their freedom and security to report abuse without fear of detention or deportation”.

Lastly, Madam Moderator, this Delegation also notes that the latest version of the Draft positively dedicates more attention to the concerning issue of unaccompanied children seeking asylum, and wishes to recall that, when assisting with initial registration and identification of specific needs for unaccompanied and separated children, these must always follow the best interest determinations for the child.

Thank you, Madam Moderator.