



Statement by H.E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, Apostolic Nuncio,
Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations and Other International Organizations
in Geneva at the **Sixth Formal Consultation towards a Global Compact on Refugees**
Part I “Introduction” and Part II “Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework”
Geneva, 3 July 2018

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

As we gather for the last round of formal consultations, the Delegation of the Holy See wishes to thank the Assistant High Commissioner and his team for their dedicated leadership in this important effort.

While the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) is not intended to serve as a legally binding instrument, it contains action-oriented commitments and arrangements that can be considered as morally binding on the international community as a whole. To gauge the prospective effectiveness and concrete practicability of the current draft of the GCR, we must assess it in relation to the objectives listed in Paragraph 7. In this regard, please allow me to contribute a few considerations to the discussion:

First, we wish to stress once again the importance for the GCR 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 recall Pope Francis' words that “a person's dignity does not depend on them being a citizen, a migrant, or a refugee.”¹

Second, we welcome the reference to the fundamental principles of humanity and international solidarity, as well as the reference to the non-politicization of the GCR, including its implementation, and we encourage that this also be applied to the proposed Support Platforms. Indeed, the existence of the international refugee framework and protection system is a testimony of the common patrimony that binds the human family.

Third, this Delegation appreciates the acknowledgement that population movements may be of a composite character, involving both refugees and others on the move, and that natural disasters and environmental degradation contribute to these mixed movements.

Fourth, given the overarching purpose of the GCR and in order to ensure better protection of refugees, particularly in those countries affected by large refugee movements or by protracted refugee situations, this Delegation wishes to reiterate that it would be more useful and effective to refer, in Paragraph 13, to “diverse needs” rather than to the more abstract “diversity” considerations. The reference to “diverse needs” better captures the whole spectrum of displacement, including those in need of protection, and takes into account all dimensions and fundamental aspects of the

¹ Pope Francis, Tweet, 21 June 2018, <https://twitter.com/Pontifex/status/1009400469314138112>.

human person, as well as respect for the local communities. Thus, it is commendable that the GCR intentionally refers to “diverse needs” throughout its various paragraphs and subsections, for example in Part III.B in the subsections “Addressing specific needs”, “identifying international protection needs”, “meeting needs and supporting communities” and the like.

Lastly, we welcome the recognition in the GCR of the role of faith-based organizations (FBOs). We recall that religious communities have an enduring presence in the field, which usually predates the joint efforts of the international community, since they are based in local communities. Thus, they often serve as the first providers of protection during emergencies and continue their service after international agencies leave the affected areas.

Thank you.