



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
Second Formal Consultation towards a Global Compact on Refugees – Part III.A

Geneva, 21 March 2018

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

The Delegation of the Holy See wishes to share some brief reflections on Part III.A of the Program of Action, which sets out mechanisms to achieve more equitable and predictable burden and responsibility sharing.

As Pope Francis recently noted, “the Holy See trusts that these efforts [...] will lead to results worthy of a world community growing ever more interdependent and grounded in the principles of solidarity and mutual assistance. In the current international situation, ways and means are not lacking to ensure that every man and every woman on earth can enjoy living conditions worthy of the human person.”¹

Mr. Moderator,

To welcome and to protect refugees are common responsibilities of the international community. When responding to their needs, we are well aware that this solidarity does not happen without sacrifice. In some instances, refugees even outnumber the local population, thus presenting obvious challenges.

Countries that receive and host refugees, often for extended periods, make an immense contribution to the collective good and to the cause of humanity, and do so from their own limited resources. Thus, my Delegation is pleased to note that the Draft recommends the distribution of financial resources for development on the part of international institutions, with special consideration to projects, in refugee-hosting countries, that benefit refugees and reward the generosity of local families and communities. After all, these are “investments” in humanity and peace, for the sake of the common good.

At the same time, however, it has to be kept in mind that refugees are not numbers to be distributed and allocated, but persons with a name, a story, with hopes and aspirations for an integral human development, who have been forced to flee their country and need protection and assistance.

The distribution of funds and resources should not serve as a pretext for “subcontracting” the responsibility for protection to certain countries simply because of their geographical proximity to unstable areas. Nor should it be a justification for the “containment” of movement of refugees, but truly an expression of genuine international cooperation and solidarity with the clear objective of

¹ Pope Francis, Address to the Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Holy See, 8 January 2018.

achieving durable solutions.

Mr. Moderator,

Lastly, my Delegation welcomes the reference, in paragraph 12, that links the Program of Action to “broader United Nations efforts to end discrimination based on race, color, religion or creed, and to promote and protect human rights”. Indeed, it is important that the Global Compact be firmly centered on the human person, avoiding any ideological considerations, including those dealing with “age, gender and diversity”. In this regard, we wish to propose 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.

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.