

UNHCR Statement for Panel 3: Appropriate identification, protection and assistance to migrants and trafficking victims

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Thank you moderator.

Persons moving irregularly, including those compelled to rely on the services of smugglers, may be particularly vulnerable to human trafficking and be unable to seek assistance from state authorities to escape a situation of exploitation.

For these reasons, among others, efforts to address trafficking in persons in the context of large movements of refugees and migrants, demands close coordination between relevant government agencies, and international and national organizations across a wide spectrum of activities spanning criminal justice, judicial engagement, human rights and development.

UNHCR has a particular role to play in relation to:

- (i) preventing asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons from becoming victims of human trafficking, and to addressing the protection and assistance needs of those who do;
- (ii) ensuring that potential international protection needs of trafficking victims are properly identified and that the latter are afforded corresponding rights; and
- (iii) assisting States in ensuring that trafficking victims who are without identity documents are able to establish their nationality status in order to prevent them from being rendered stateless.

As a lead protection organisation, UNHCR recommends that the following practical measures could be included within the scope of the global compact for safe orderly and regular migration to ensure that the needs of all victims of trafficking are met:

- All new arrivals are given information on how to report trafficking in a language they understand and, as required, in a child friendly and gender sensitive manner;
- Stakeholders, including NGOs, cultural mediators and health workers, are made aware of the risk of trafficking that migrants and refugees face, and are empowered to identify and refer possible victims to procedures that will assist and protect them;
- Registration of all new arrivals should be prompt, comprehensive and accurate, to facilitate the identification of victims of trafficking, including those who may be in need of international protection. Guardians should be rapidly appointed to unaccompanied and separated children in order to distance them from potential traffickers.

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- Adequate reception should be provided immediately to all persons moving irregularly, including separate spaces for women and children, confidential areas for discussions with case managers, access to emergency health care and access to education for children.

Practical suggestions on how to implement some of these measures can be found in UNHCR's recently updated 10 Point Plan in Action on Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration.

UNHCR looks forward to continuing to provide input to international efforts to address and develop frameworks to combat trafficking and protect its victims alongside its ongoing work on the ground, including with key partners, to identify, assist and promote solutions for victims of trafficking.

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