

GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM INDABA REPORT

Thursday 14 June 2023

Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre, South Africa



1. Background

In September 2016, United Nations Member States adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, which addresses the question of large movements of refugees and migrants. Following this Declaration, consultations with Member States, international organizations, refugees, civil society, the private sector and experts culminated in the [Global Compact on Refugees](#) (GCR) in 2018, which sets out a framework for more predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing to refugee situations.

A central arrangement of the GCR is the Global Refugee Forum (GRF), where States and other actors come together every four years to share good practices and pledge to contribute with financial support, technical expertise, material support, and policy commitments to help reach the goals of the Global Compact. In addition to the GRF, States and other stakeholders also have the continued opportunity to **announce concrete pledges and contributions** that will achieve tangible benefits for refugees and host communities.

The nine South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO) countries – South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, eSwatini, Madagascar, Mauritius, Comoros and Seychelles -, together with civil society, private sector stakeholders and municipalities in the SAMCO countries, have made a total of 54 such commitments, or “pledges”. Despite this high number of pledges, data from 2023 indicates that progress was reported on only 46% of pledges in the Southern Africa region. Indeed, of the 54 combined pledges in the SAMCO countries, only eight are officially reported as fulfilled as of April 2023.

2. Objectives and Outputs of the Indaba

Overall Objective:

The GRF in December 2023 envisages the announcement of concrete pledges and contributions, and will also consider the opportunities, challenges and ways in which responsibility-sharing in support of the objectives of

the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) can be enhanced. The GRF will take place at the ministerial level and include the participation of all United Nations Member States and other relevant stakeholders. In support of this, UNHCR South Africa Multi-Country Office held a Indaba preparatory event for the covered countries (South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini, Madagascar, Mauritius, Comoros and Seychelles) to take stock of progress made on previous pledges and concretize the ideas for new pledges during the 2023 GRF. It brought together a wide range of participants, including civil society, private actors, municipalities and refugee-led organizations, to exchange with government representatives.

Output:

Development of a Roadmap towards 2023 Global Refugee Forum.

3. Opening remarks

Mr. Nelson Muffuh, UN Resident Coordinator in South Africa, emphasized that the GRF is a framework for more predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing, recognising that a sustainable solution to refugee situations cannot be achieved without international cooperation. It provides a blueprint to ensure that host communities get the support they need and that refugees can lead productive lives. The Covid 19 pandemic, the inflation crisis, and the war in Ukraine have had significant ramifications worldwide and require even greater resolve from world leaders to find solutions. In a world short on peace, the next best thing is the chance for people to regain control of their lives. The chance for opportunities, to be self-reliant and use their talents and passions to contribute to the communities welcoming them. The cost of exclusion is far higher than the cost of inclusion. He encouraged all stakeholders to now to do more to give refugees more hope – and more opportunities – while they are away from home.

Ms Monique Ekoko, UNHCR South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO) encouraged participants to look back on the pledges made in 2019 with a critical perspective, and look to the future. It is essential to take stock of the challenges in implementing the pledges, including related to insufficient resources. She quoted UNHCR's annual report, [Global Trends in Forced Displacement](#), and its record-high number of people displaced by war, persecution, violence and human rights standing at 108.4 million, up 19.1 million on a year earlier. It is critical to increase concerted action to improve the lives of refugees and the displaced around the world. It is a collective and collaborative effort of not only governments, the UN, but also civil society, private sector, donors and importantly, refugees themselves.

1. Status of the pledges made in 2019 in the SAMCO countries: Key achievements and challenges

COUNTRY	ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2019	CHALLENGES AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
COMOROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognised the children born in Comoros as Comorians Brought awareness to those who do not have any identity document and to recognise them as Comorians and not consider them as foreigners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an influx of people to Comoros from Eastern Africa, attempting to reach the island of Mayotte Comoros does not have a refugee camp and see citizens from other countries being ill-treated in Comoros Comoros is looking into neighbouring countries to assist citizens from other countries
MADAGASCAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aimed to resolve all issues related to nationality and statelessness There are many Malagasy nationals who do not have a birth certificate. Madagascar has a national plan to address this. The Ministry of Interior led a country-wide campaign on birth registration campaign in 2022. Madagascar undertook a qualitative study on Statelessness which was finalised and endorsed by the Ministry of Interior There has also been a law reform related to statelessness in July 2020 Madagascar has established an office for stateless persons and refugees within the Ministry of Interior. Madagascar has around 300 refugees and a/s, most of them originate from Pakistan Madagascar has ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention with reservations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial challenges and political tensions impact the progress that can be made under these pledges Madagascar needs technical and financial support from UNHCR and other countries
ESWATINI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eswatini made a total of six pledges. Four pledges were related to statelessness, and two were related to improving the lives of refugees. Eswatini has ratified the two statelessness conventions Eswatini has developed a national action plan in 2019 Eswatini pledged to develop a qualitative and quantitative study on statelessness. In June 2023, Eswatini validated the report on the qualitative study Eswatini conducted a mop-up exercise to issue documents related to birth registration and other vital events documents to citizens. Eswatini has conducted this exercise in two regions: Lubomboi, and Shiselweni, respectively On undertaking law reforms related to removing gender discriminatory provisions in the national laws of Eswatini, this is ongoing as it requires constitutional amendments Eswatini needs to come up with status determination procedures for the stateless migrants in 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eswatini's major challenge has been financial constraints. The implementation of these pledges, such as the economic inclusion of refugees, which intend to resuscitate the former Ndzevane Settlement to hold agricultural activities and host refugees from the congested Malindza Reception Centre requires financial resources Eswatini recommends increasing efforts on resource mobilization strategies
LESOTHO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopting a national law that would grant nationality to children of unknown origin or those found within Lesotho territory Lesotho has a Citizenship and Immigration Bill, which is awaiting cabinet approval and thereafter, parliament's review Lesotho has developed terms of reference for a study on statelessness that it will be undertaking Lesotho has completed a study on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and the report will be launched by the end of 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in governments that requires briefing of the new government and delay in processes; and outdated laws and regulations do not consider the new migration dynamics Funding and capacity building of the different stakeholders remains a challenge Lesotho recommends an urgent, high-level bilateral meeting between the Government of South Africa and

COUNTRY	ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2019	CHALLENGES AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesotho has included refugee children in higher learning institutions in the country, with some regions specifically allocating livelihood opportunities to refugees. 	<p>the Kingdom of Lesotho regarding the registration of Lesotho nationals to combat statelessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the study on internal displacement, Lesotho needs to urgently domesticate the Kampala Convention for the Protection and Assistance of IDPs in Africa, which is a growing issue in the country, especially development and natural disaster-induced. Lesotho is currently going through legal reforms, which presents an opportunity to include and integrate refugees and other people of concern. This could be strengthened and supported by UNHCR. Migration and refugee issues have been integrated into the National Strategic Developmental Plan for budget purposes and endorsement by government. Further support from UNHCR could strengthen these integration efforts
BOTSWANA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Botswana registered four pledges through the GRF in 2021 related to statelessness Birth registration in Botswana stands at 99% Home Affairs has enforced different practices to ensure efficient birth registrations including onsite registration which involves deploying officials from the Department of Civil and National Registration to the major hospitals or health institutions to register birth as it occurs and issue documents. This approach takes advantage of the fact that almost 99.7% of all births in Botswana occur at health institutions and allows for birth registration within 60 days Mobile registration – involves reaching out to outskirts communities Botswana has an encampment policy and there is a clinic with a resident midwife in the refugee camp. Birth registration for refugees stands at 100% There are livelihood projects in Botswana led by UNHCR and Skills Share International, including saloons, chicken farming and tailoring Botswana will make an additional pledge related to refugee travel documents recognizing that it forms a critical component to international protection Botswana pledged to accede to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness Botswana pledged to conduct a qualitative study on statelessness to determine the extent of statelessness in the country Botswana pledged to review the citizenship act to include provision that safeguard against statelessness Botswana pledged to issue identification documents to citizens and non-citizens, including birth registrations for the prevention of statelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Botswana plans to review the Citizenship Act specifically to introduce dual citizenship and amend the other pieces of legislation it affects. Botswana has been engaged in a constitutional review which has also affected the amendment of the Citizenship Act Very critical to expedite the study on statelessness and have reliable data on statelessness persons within the country in order to protect them Financial challenges were encountered during the qualitative study on statelessness, but funding have recently been secured for this Increasing livelihood projects that refugees can participate in
NAMIBIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Namibia committed to four pledges related to education, health, sport and statelessness. To end statelessness, Namibia has identified, registered and drafted a law on statelessness before the actual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All stakeholders were brought on board from the beginning which minimised the challenges

COUNTRY	ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2019	CHALLENGES AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
	<p>ratification of the Statelessness Conventions. The drafted Bill on statelessness will sent to parliament for discussion once the consultant is done</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security through its directorate, Refugee Management was tasked to identify statelessness persons in 14 regions and to undertake a public quantitative study on statelessness with the goal of finding a durable solution to their situation by 2020. The identification and registration exercise of stateless and undocumented persons has commenced and stands at 141,048 and is being validated against the National Population Register (NPRS) to determine if all registered person were not issued with national documents before. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking at the current humanitarian issues that continue to face the world and affect UNHCR’s financial support to refugees and asylum seekers it is essential to consider mor innovative livelihood opportunities to form a more reliable existence
SOUTH AFRICA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Africa committed to eradicate the backlog on appeal cases. Ensuring that there is no statelessness in the country. The citizenship legislation ensures very low levels of un-documentation and statelessness. A High-Level Dialogue (HLD) was led by the Minister of Home Affairs and the UNHCR’s Assistant High Commissioner for Protection in 2022 and agreed on four areas including: a) a definition of statelessness; b) ensure that there is an invitation to the ministers in the region to establish the extent of statelessness among their nationals and possible documentation to reduce the level of statelessness South Africa is engaged with UNHCR and the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) to undertake a qualitative study on the extent of statelessness in the country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges encountered in adjudication and finalization of the backlog include consultation, strategies to deal with adjudication, involvement of members, litigation affecting processes and unavailability of interpreters Legislation requires proof of birth The protection of statelessness in the Citizenship legislation is an achievement further emphasised by the recent signing of regulations by the minister

5. Learning from the 2019 pledges: Best practices from Southern Africa Panel

The forum provided a platform for the pledging entities to review the following areas:

- a) What does refugee inclusion mean to the organization?
- b) What was the pledge registered by the pledging entity, including: i) what had worked in its implementation; ii) any obstacles in moving pledge/s forward; and iii) how the pledges are contributing to refugee inclusion
- c) What was the importance of the UNCT making joint pledges; specific to the Resident Coordinators' Offices in both Botswana and Namibia.

World Vision International (WVI) noted that access to services by asylum seekers and refugees on equal basis as other citizens demonstrated refugee inclusion. WVI had worked to support Eswatini government's pledge to donate 1000 hectares of land in Ndzevane by ensuring the project integrated the local host community and refugee community through forming a company and investing in bulk water infrastructure. This created employment opportunities for both the host and refugee communities. The profits from the agricultural enterprise had been invested back into the community by investing in community goods such as education.

Some of the challenges experienced were a lack of financial resources to invest in irrigation and mechanization of farming and access to loan opportunities from financial providers. There is need for legislation to provide an enabling environment for refugees i.e. right to operate business and access to banking/ financial services. The cooperation with the local host community has enabled refugees to go around the challenge of accessing loans. The project can potentially support the relocation of refugees from Malindza Refugee Reception Center to the settlement.

The Southern African Legal Advocacy on Asylum and Migration (SALAAM), represented by Lawyers for Human Rights observed that refugee inclusion meant their participation was fundamental: *'nothing about us without us'*. SALAAM had made a pledge to form the legal network to address issues around access to asylum, social cohesion challenges and general protection in the Southern Africa region. This was upon realizing that working in silos did not offer the benefits of coordination and cross-fertilization of experiences that came with a regional platform.

One major challenge experienced by the network, especially in the context of the financial crisis due to the socio-economic effects of COVID-19 was access to humanitarian funding. This had hindered efforts to invest in developing a website, drafting of TORs, provision of translation services, and appointing a facilitator to convene the network's activities. Investing in the foregoing would amplify the network's work and strengthen relationships with governments and other stakeholders. The network is actively involved in awareness creation and education for informed decision-making and collaboration in the region in relation to asylum seekers and refugees and is appealing to the private sector to promote active involvement of asylum seekers and refugees.

The Fruit Basket works on addressing issues around discrimination, social inclusion of LGBTIQ+ community by providing amongst other things food, shelter, medical care and engaging in research and sustainable skills development to increase visibility. Some of the challenges that affect the LGBTIQ+ community include attacks by operation *Dudula*, lack of employment opportunities and the need for the members to prove their identity.

Herbert Smith Freehills - a law firm, informed the meeting that the organization had pledged to raise awareness and pursue the pro bono agenda by providing refugee legal clinics, and assisting in citizenship applications and documentation. It acknowledged that it could improve its communication with RLOs. It noted that lawyers have an obligation to assist the indigent by making legal services available. One challenge in pursuing its work around citizenship is existing administrative related challenges.

The South Africa Refugee- Led Network – emphasized the importance that refugees from other parts of the region are represented in such platforms and also to ensure that RLOs are meaningfully involved at all stages of implementation. Supporting RLOs through financial inputs was a critical way of ensuring their active and

meaningful participation. Some successful examples of such support, from UNHCR, were the innovation grants received from RHFD and PASSOP.

Redeeming Hope for the Disabled - involved in refugee community work since 2008 following the xenophobic incident during that period. Its work focuses on working with those living with disabilities by integrating them into the communities and creating spaces of safety for them by pursuing a sustainable integration model that ensures the host communities value their contributions.

Botswana Resident Coordinator's Officer - observed that refugee inclusion meant that refugees and present and participating in a meaningful way in the national system. The UNCT has worked together to develop a joint pledge, this was extremely important given their 5-year partnership with the Government of Botswana with the national development plan incorporating s marginalized groups including refugee. The refugee context in Botswana (a small camp population, strict detention policy, restrictions on the right to work and freedom of movement as a result of the encampment policy leading to significant protection concerns e.g. GBV, obstructed livelihood opportunities and food security concerns) is a model that can be used to advance the development agenda with favourable outcomes on access to tertiary education and health services.

Namibia Resident Coordinator's Officer - noted that refugee inclusion meant leaving no one behind especially addressing unemployment and poverty. Refugees being vulnerable, are at risk of being left behind, and the joint pledge is an opportunity to collaborate with the government to accelerate the SDGs and feed refugee matters into government priorities using an area-based strategy, with the Osire refugee camp being an excellent model to use to spearhead the pledge.

6. Thematic Sessions

Participants were assigned to thematic groups to foster reflections for new pledges in GRF 2023. The thematic groups were the following, in due attention to strategic areas of refugee inclusion: sports and child protection; livelihoods, local integration and social cohesion; statelessness; legal assistance; role of local governments; asylum system buildings; and durable solutions and complementary pathways.

Sports and child protection

What would a pledge look like:

- As part of Sports for Development initiative committing to create mandatory safeguarding courses for all coaches working with forcibly displaced children and youth
- As part of Sports for Development initiative clubs commit to background checks on coaches and inclusive approaches to refugees using AGD
- Advocating for governments to implement the policy/law on child safeguarding
- As part of Sports for Development initiative committing to hold the Sports for Development festival once a year

Support required:

- Forums to share coaching and training resources
- Additional programming and social assistance
- Ensure safe and accessible spaces (access to transport for girls in dangerous areas)

Role of different actors

- Private sector funds checks, courses and coaches and open resources for training
- Coach training, education and leadership led Nike (Free and adaptable)
- Units to support children in sports

Livelihoods, local integration, inclusion and social cohesion (Matlotleng Matlotleng, Jenny Beth Bistoyong)

What would a pledge look like

- Access to Land for the people we serve proffered in Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa
- Stakeholder meetings in the different nations to occur by 11 July 2023 and draft pledge submitted to SAMCO latest on 25 July 2023
- Pledge to be made in December 2023 and implementation continues until 2027

Capacity:

- Land in Dukwi Refugee Camp in Botswana
- Land in Malindza Refugee Reception Centre and Ndzevane locality of over 1,000 hectares in Eswatini
- Land in Mohalalitoe Refugee Reception Centre, Masowe and Thaba Bosiu

Role of different actors:

- Government, **Foreign Government Representatives, UN Agencies, Non-Governmental Organisations**

Statelessness (Graham Pote)

What would a pledge look like

- Committing to undertake a national qualitative study to be published by a set date, supported by UNHCR, which analyses statelessness domestically and in the broader SADC context; reviews domestic legislation and makes recommendations for reform to achieve compatibility with the Stateless Conventions, also making recommendations for a National Action Plan for the eradication of statelessness and interim protection measures.
- The Governments jointly commit to undertake a qualitative study to be published by supported by UNHCR, which analyses statelessness in the broader SADC context and in each participating State; reviews domestic legislation and makes recommendations for reform to achieve compatibility with the Stateless Conventions, also making recommendations for both Regional and Country-specific Action Plans for the eradication of statelessness and interim protection measures.

Capacity and support required

- This study has already been undertaken in Namibia and Eswatini. Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa have indicated their willingness for a study to commence.
- Participation is still to be confirmed in next meeting for Comoros, Madagascar, Seychelles, Mauritius.
- The costs of a study has not been budgeted by States, who may be able to provide limited contributory funding.
- Funds for studies in Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa have been budgeted under Pillar 2.
- Single regional study conducted through a regional mega-pledge, while comprehensive in its focus, may be the most cost efficient and expeditious approach to develop a Regional Action Plan to eradicate statelessness

What would a pledge look like for Compatibility with (or accession to) the Conventions on Statelessness

- With the support of UNHCR, commit to pass legislation by [DATE] which aligns domestic law with the provisions of the 1954 and 1961 Conventions on Statelessness.
- Committing to the domestication and implementation of the provisions of the 1954 and 1961 Conventions on Statelessness.
- Committing to accede to the 1954 and 1961 Conventions on Statelessness and domesticate the provisions of the Conventions by [DATE].
- Committing to passing a regional Eradication of Statelessness Act which aligns domestic law with the provisions of the 1954 and 1961 Conventions on Statelessness.
- The Governments of with the support of UNHCR, jointly commit to accede to the 1954 and 1961 Conventions on Statelessness and domesticate the provisions of the Conventions by

Capacity and support required

Regional high-level consultation and sensitization workshops will facilitate the process of legislative reform. Funding from the UNHCR SAMCO statelessness budget is possible and may be supported by UN sister agencies.

What would a pledge look like for Sensitization and education

- Acknowledge the need to conduct sensitization and education on participation in civil registration, access to rights, and ending statelessness, and with the support of UNHCR and civil society organizations, commits to i) convening

- a sensitization meeting for high-level officials; ii) producing a training manual for civil registration officials; iii) undertaking a nationwide education campaign to promote public participation in the civil registration system
- Acknowledge the need to conduct sensitization and education on participation in civil registration, access to rights, and ending statelessness, and with the support of UNHCR and civil society organizations, jointly commit to i) convening a regional sensitization meeting for high-level officials; ii) producing a regional training manual for civil registration officials; iii) undertaking regional education campaigns to promote public participation in civil registration systems

Capacity and support required

- These interventions will be facilitated through joint coordination by Government focal points, UNHCR, and civil society. Funding for high-level meeting/s may be provided by Governments and the UNHCR statelessness budget. National or regional public education interventions may be funded jointly by governments and UNHCR. Government focal points have indicated that their ability to fund public outreach is limited.

What would a pledge look like for Civil registration and documentation exercises

- With the support of UNHCR and civil society actors, commits to undertake a national documentation exercise to register and issue civil registration documentation to those with entitlement to it, to be (commenced/completed?)
- Jointly commit to undertake and coordinate on SADC regional documentation exercises in their respective countries, to register and issue civil registration documentation to those with entitlement to it, to be (commenced/completed?)

Capacity and support required

These interventions will be facilitated through joint coordination by Government focal points, UNHCR, and civil society. Funding would need to be budgeted in advance, with support from Governments, NGOs, and UN agencies.

Legal assistance (Sarah-Jane Savage)

What would a pledge look like: A commitment to strengthening the interaction and collaboration of legal community actors, public and private, across Southern Africa, towards an expansion of legal services that are informed by and benefit, directly or indirectly, those with lived experience of forced migration and/or statelessness (or risk of).

Support required: Assistance with networking and bringing actors together, including mapping of needs on the ground vs expertise on offer; human and financial support to this end.

Role of different actors: (link to global/mega pledge) In the context of the [planning of the 2023 Legal Community Pledge](#), UNHCR, PILnet and its Core Group to play coordinating/support function bringing together public and private interest legal actors and Refugee Communities in Southern Africa who will contribute their knowledge of legal needs, expertise and human and financial resources available to support this work.

Summary of Discussions:

Further meetings of the Legal Community will be welcomed to continue to brainstorm possible synergies/pledge ideas. To start, in the next month UNHCR will coordinate a call between the Legal Community and Jasmine Simpering Ham of PILnet who is based in Geneva. This may lead to another face-to-face half/full day local meeting. The needs on the ground are not only in Refugee law nor just direct legal services It remains important to keep the connection between the refugee and legal communities to ensure pledges are informed from ground up. There is a desire to ensure the Legal Community in Southern Africa is engaged, even if initial efforts are led by key actors based in South Africa (“if you build it, they will come”) There is a need/desire for the legal community – civil society and private – to collaborate to foster synergies, complementary expertise and strengths.

Local governments (Meshack Hobwane)

What would a pledge look like:

- Since the City of Joburg strives to promote food security and enhance urban agriculture while creating economic opportunities through various projects, such as Aquaponics (*growing fish and other aquatic animals, and hydroponics, which is growing plants without soil*); Agri-Resource Centres (*established in all regions across the City to provide tractor services, access to land, cooperative registrations, training and workshops, advisory services and agricultural inputs*); and Hubs and Spoke (*used as processing and market day centres for smallholder farmers and for selling different vegetables to the community*), the plan will be to explore possibilities to see if this initiative could be used as a possible pledge.

- This Agricultural Project for Food Security is linked to a climate change initiative aimed at including forcibly displaced people to play a role on matters relating to climate change.
- Another possibility is to use Migrant Help Desk as possible pledge as it is Joburg's long-run migrant policy.

Support required:

- CoJ will need a support from UNHCR to assist with providing detailed reading information/materials on the GRF pledges.
- Support would also be needed in assisting CoJ representative with drafting a presentation to canvass buy-in from the principals.
- If political principals are to agree to make a pledge, some additional financial support could be needed to implement the pledge.
- Currently, CoJ has a funding from the Mayoral Migration Council (MMC) which aims to accelerate ambitious global action on migration and create a world where urban migrants, displaced people, and receiving communities can thrive.
- UNHCR and SARLN might be needed to assist with encouraging forcibly displaced persons to come on board, including supporting the project with possible technical skills where available.

Role of different actors:

- This would still be dealt with internally first, provided that the principals are in favour of making a pledge.
- Since CoJ does not have its own land to implement this agricultural project successfully, the plan is to use some of MMC funding to acquire private land for the project.
- SALGA indicated that it can also come on board and see how they can assist with acquiring a private land for this project.

Summary of Discussion

In concluding the discussions, participants agreed on a need for in-depth discussions around GRF so that CoJ is assisted in framing a pledge for the GRF in December. Unfortunately, City of Cape Town, City of Tshwane and eThekweni were unable to attend the breakaway session, hence no inputs recorded from them. Also, SALGA has committed to support in every possible way to assist with collaboration beyond GRF pledges as there is a need to build and strengthen relations with more municipalities through SALGA's involvement. They emphasized that rural municipalities should not be left behind as these municipalities also host forcibly displaced persons.

Asylum building (Guillaume Potie)

What would a pledge look like:

- The Government of Comoros commits to accede to the 1951 Convention
- The Government of Madagascar commits by 2025 to adopt legislation that incorporates the refugee definitions and refugee law obligations in line with international and regional standards and norms for refugee protection.
- The Government of Madagascar commits by 2025 to provide asylum-seekers and refugees with government-issued documents and to develop interoperability between systems.
- The Refugee Appeals Board of South Africa commits to implement an adjudicative strategy
- The Refugee Appeals Board of South Africa commits to capacitate its country-of-origin researcher staff

The importance of a fair and efficient asylum system, the three asylum-capacity related pledges made by Eswatini, South Africa and Madagascar in 2019 and the four strategic focus areas on asylum capacity (strong institutional capacities; legislative and regulatory frameworks that facilitate asylum processing; procedures, systems and practices that enhance efficiency and quality; and quality and efficiency through diverse expertise, innovation and research) were explained to the participants. The participants had some questions about the distinctions between the four different focus areas. Especially focus area 1 (strong institutional capacities) was not very clear to the participants. This focus area concerns pledges at the institutional level that support the asylum system rather than the processes and individuals working in it. An example was given where the Belgian government has a COI unit and legal department which drafts inclusion analyses for the Refugee Status Determination Officers. If that is something governments would consider to pledge, it would fall under the 'strong institutional capacities' focus area.

The participants were reminded that old pledges can be updated, that new pledges can be made which speak to old pledges but are more specific and that plans which have already been made and/or initiated could also become a pledge. The example was given that South Africa, who has already made a pledge in 2019 to eliminate the appeals backlog, could make a pledge to introduce an adjudicative strategy that would increase the output of the Refugee Appeals Authority. While the Chairperson mentioned that an adjudicative strategy has already been implemented, she was open to the idea.

Durable solutions (Gideon Muchiri, Kelvin Sentala)

What would a pledge look like for Resettlement

- Expand resettlement opportunities by bringing in more resettlement countries on board.
- Increasing resettlement opportunities from traditional countries USA, Canada, and Australia.

What would a pledge look like for Voluntary Repatriation

- Enhancing cooperation to facilitate volrep movements out of SAMCO countries.
- Increase financial and political support for voluntary return in safety and dignity.
- Increasing opportunities for humanitarian admission programs for countries like the USA.

What would a pledge look like for Complementary Pathways

- New opportunities that have been put forward recently: [The Welcome Corps](#), which is a new service opportunity for Americans to welcome refugees seeking freedom and safety and, in turn, make a difference in their own communities. Sponsor groups welcome refugee newcomers by securing and preparing initial housing, greeting refugee newcomers at the airport, enrolling children in school, and helping adults to find employment.
- New complementary pathways, a suggestion was made for complementary pathway for sports talent. Under the proposed program, talented refugees could be linked with sports opportunities in resettlement. How to increase linkages, support, scouting etc.
- Suggestion for a UNESCO education passport which has the potential to standardize education globally for refugees.

SAMCO countries have not yet made pledges on resettlement, voluntary repatriation or complementary pathways, but this should not discourage SAMCO countries from producing new pledges in this area.

6. Next steps: Roadmap towards 2023 Global Refugee Forum

Date	Action
30 June	Final report on SAMCO GRF Indaba
June–July	Concretization at country level and national consultations through national arrangements led by the Government delegates
July	Meeting of Thematic Groups to refine pledges 2023
1 August	Submission of country pledges to regional leads (UNHCR, SADC)
End August	Virtual follow-up meeting called by UNHCR SAMCO
1 September	Presentation in Geneva of SAMCO pledges at formal GRF meeting
12-15 December	Announcement of pledges by SAMCO-pledging group at the GRF 2023

7. Closing remarks

Mr. Igor Ciobanu, SAMCO Deputy Representative in the closing remarks was pleased to note that the event gathered a diverse group of stakeholders, including governments, UN agencies, civil society, the private sector, donors, academia and others, who demonstrated their commitment and solidarity with refugees and stateless persons in this region and beyond. It was also well noted that the forum reviewed the achievements and challenges of implementing the pledges and initiatives that were made at the first Global Refugee Forum in 2019, as well as the High-Level Segment on Statelessness that followed. Nine countries in this region made a total of 54 pledges, covering various areas such as legal protection, education, health, livelihoods, energy, environment and solutions. The event reaffirmed the commitment to the Global Compact on Refugees, which provides a comprehensive framework for responsibility-sharing among all actors involved in refugee response. It also highlighted the good practices and achievements, as well as the gaps and needs that require further support and collaboration. UNHCR and the UN family stand ready to assist in preparing for the second Global Refugee Forum and to facilitate participation and engagement with other stakeholders at the global level. The event thanked the hosts: Tali and her Team, and the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre for providing this unique and significant space for the meeting including the very emotional tour; the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) and the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) of South Africa for their leadership and hospitality. Also, thanks have been extended to the UN Resident Coordinator, SAMCO Representative; the Members of the Diplomatic Corps; Representatives from the nine

countries who attended the event in person or online; our partners from civil society, refugee-led organizations, the private sector, academia and donors; as well as UNHCR colleagues from SAMCO, HQs and RBSA.

Immediately after the event, one of the pledges received a match on potential funding. Therefore, all institutions that have made pledges should follow up on the link: <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/pledges-contributions/matching-pledges>.

Attached as Annex 1

1. GRF Presentation

END