

GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM 2023

Refugee Travel Documents: The 21st Century Nansen Passport

Analysis of individual multi-stakeholder pledges (MSP)

OVERVIEW

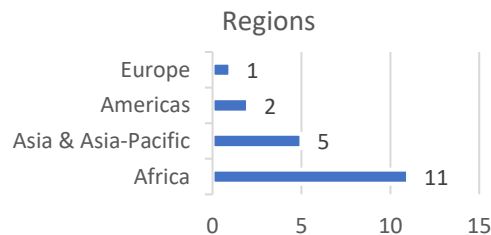
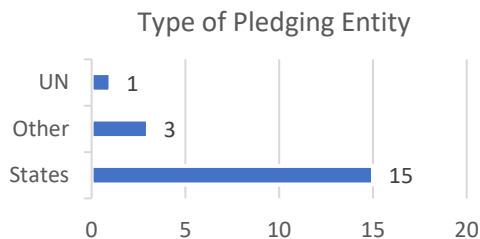
- Calls for at least **15 States**, along with other stakeholders, to support and/or implement the issuance and acceptance of machine-readable travel documents for refugees and stateless persons **by 2027**.
- Current leadership is being organized under the Group of Friends on Refugee Travel Documents.
- Link to GCR Objectives 2 - Refugee Self-Reliance and 3 - Third Country Solutions.



Figure 1 - Examples of MRCTD specimens

KEY STATISTICS

- **19 pledges** have been made towards the MSP on Refugee Travel Documents (RTD) with an additional 10 pledges under follow-up to potentially be added.



HIGHLIGHTED PLEDGES

- The following **nine States** made pledges to start issuing machine readable RTDs that do not currently have a system in place: Botswana, Chad, Chile, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kyrgyzstan, and South Sudan. When implemented, **this will unlock access to travel documents for over 2.5 million refugees**.
- **Three States**, Burkina Faso, Uganda and Kenya, made pledges to improve their travel document systems for the over 2 million refugees cumulatively living in these countries.
- Another **three states** made pledges to support others in issuing machine readable RTDs: Australia, Canada, and New Zealand.
- Secure Identity Alliance (SIA) and ID4Africa both pledged technical support.

MATCHING

- Discussions around funding needs from host countries are ongoing. In particular, **Chad** and **South Sudan** have flagged the need for matching support.

PLEDGE ANALYSIS

- There was strong engagement on the pledge, and the target of 15 States pledging on travel documents was successfully met.
- A majority of pledges on travel documents were from African States, indicating political willingness for inclusive and modernized travel documents for refugees.



Figure 2 - Bella Nshimirimana presenting the pledge

- Additional support was noted from destination States supporting complementary pathways.
- At the GRF, the multi-stakeholder pledge on refugee travel documents was introduced by Bella Nshimirimana, co-Founder of Mirror Group Network and 2017 refugee of the year in Uganda. Bella travelled on a convention travel document to reach the GRF, highlighting the impact that access to a RTD can make.

There were a number of pledging areas that have linkages with travel documents, including meaningful refugee participation, economic inclusion and social protection, sports and skills-based complementary pathways which need to be further explored.

- Within MENA and Asia regions, there are a number of countries where the issue of refugee travel documents remains unsolved and will need future attention.
- An information and photobooth on the importance of refugee travel documents was also featured at the GRF with a total of over 1,400 photos with advocacy messages shared.



Figure 3 - High Commissioner Grandi at photobooth

NEXT STEPS AND FOLLOW-UP ARRANGEMENTS

The next steps will focus on the following tasks: 1) direct engagement with State actors to understand specific needs and plans, 2) convening of the Group of Friends on Refugee Travel Documents to develop a foundational support network, 3) organizing a series of technical discussions to address challenges and share good practices, 4) utilize key actors (e.g. ICAO, ID4Africa, SIA, etc) and events to further synergize efforts.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND MILESTONES

EVENT/MILESTONE	WHEN
Technical Engagement with pledging entities to develop workplans	Q1-Q2 2024
Group of Friends on Refugee Travel Documents convening	Q1-Q2 2024
ICAO Facilitation Panel Conference & presentation of working paper	February 2024
ID4Africa Conference with UNHCR workshop including RTDs	May 2024
Consultations on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways	June 2024
Series of Technical Discussions on Refugee Travel Documents	Q3-Q4 2024
ICAO Trip Symposium and engagement on RTDs	November 2024
Technical Engagement with pledging entities to track status	Q1-Q2 2025
High-Level Officials Meeting	December 2025



Interested to know more, use the QR code or contact hqdirpcps@unhcr.org for any questions or to link up with ongoing work around refugee travel documents.