

Joint Civil Society Statement at UNGA 73 High-Level Event: “The Global Compact on Refugees: A Model for Greater Solidarity and Cooperation” on 24 September 2018



Excellencies, distinguished delegates:

I am honored to deliver this statement on behalf of Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN), CARE, Disability Rights Advocacy Center, International Planned Parenthood Foundation (IPPF), National Forum of Women with Disabilities Pakistan, Network of Women with Disabilities in Nigeria, Norwegian Church Aid, National Union of Women with Disabilities of Uganda (NUWODU), Oxfam, PLAN International, Refugees International, Save the Children, Special Talent Exchange Program (STEP), the UNSW Forced Migration Research Network, the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, Women Challenged to Challenge, Women Deliver and my own organization, the Women’s Refugee Commission.

We want to thank UNHCR and Member States for their constructive efforts over the past two years and for their active commitment to **ensuring that the consensus of the New York Declaration is not forgotten**.

We warmly welcome the **consistent mainstreaming of gender, age and disability considerations throughout the final draft**.

While the Compact is an important starting point, we are disconcerted that crucial gaps to address the rights and lifesaving needs of women and girls remain, specifically the lack of an explicit reference to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

We take this opportunity to underscore that **comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services are lifesaving, demanded by refugee women and girls, and feasible to deliver**, even in the most complex emergency situations. The New York Declaration, adopted unanimously by Member States at the General Assembly two years ago, recognized this right and we call on all actors to uphold this commitment.

Further, **we appreciate the inclusive and collaborative approach** taken thus far in the process to respond to large movements of refugees as an international community. We urge UNHCR and Member States to continue with this inclusive approach moving forward, particularly in the development of an indicator framework for measuring and evaluating progress against our commitments.

Women and girls, including adolescents, youth, LGBTIQ+ people, and people living with disabilities, must be given the resources and opportunity to meaningfully participate in follow-up processes.

We call on world leaders to **uphold their commitments to gender equality** and to do all that is necessary to **ensure that women’s and girls’ voices are heard, their rights are respected, and their distinct needs are met**.

For questions or contact details of signatories, please reach out to Stephanie.J@wrcommission.org