



ECOSOC

Special Meeting on Forced Displacement and Refugee Protection

CONCEPT NOTE

ECOSOC Special Meeting on Forced Displacement and Refugee Protection

24 April 2025, 3:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Trusteeship Council Chamber, UNHQ, New York

Background

The world is witnessing an unprecedented crisis of displacement. As of mid-2024, there were approximately 43.7 million refugees worldwide, highlighting the vast scale of forced displacement. Constrained and declining international funding has left millions of vulnerable people without access to life-saving assistance.

The protracted nature of many displacement crises necessitates new and more sustainable approaches to supporting the life-saving needs of refugees and supporting the communities that so generously host them. This includes enhancing refugee self-reliance, better integrating refugees into national systems, and expanding access to third-country solutions, all while achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

These efforts are in line with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), which emphasizes predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing, enhancing refugee self-reliance, and supporting host communities. Addressing the gender dimensions of forced displacement and refugee protection, particularly the risks faced by women and girls, is critical to implementing the GCR and achieving the SDGs.

The Economic and Social Council has addressed the issue of displacement mainly in the context of its Humanitarian Affairs Segment and the ECOSOC meeting on the transition from relief to development. Most recently, this issue was highlighted in the 2024 joint meeting of ECOSOC and the Peacebuilding Commission.

The issue of displacement has also been addressed by some countries in their voluntary national reviews (VNRs) at the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) by including references to refugees in their countries and assistance to refugee hosting countries.



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The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) will convene Member States, observers, the United Nations partners, and representatives from international financial institutions and civil society to discuss and explore sustainable approaches to providing assistance and protection to refugees and host communities, while pursuing durable solutions to the crisis of forced displacement. The event will showcase the practices of countries that have demonstrated leadership in hosting and integrating refugees.

Objectives

The ECOSOC Special Meeting aims to:

- **Advance** the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees;
- **Showcase** good practices in refugee hosting and inclusion in national systems, building on the commitments made at the Global Refugee Forum in Geneva in December 2023;
- **Highlight** efforts to address the needs of displaced persons and host communities, whilst furthering the achievement of the sustainable development goals.

Format

The Special Meeting will feature two panel discussions with Member States, observers, UN system entities and civil society organizations. Participants may request to take the floor during the meeting to ask questions to the panellists and other members of the Council. Interventions will be limited to three minutes. The event will be broadcast live via webcast.

The **first panel** will highlight the leadership of countries in the Global South in hosting and integrating refugees and underline the need for global solidarity. It will provide an opportunity to recognize and share best practices.

Guiding Questions:

- What are effective approaches to enabling access to education, work and healthcare promote self-reliance?
- How to balance national development priorities with refugee integration?
- How does refugee inclusion benefit local and national economies?



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The **second panel** will highlight the role of international support in meeting the life-saving needs of refugees and strengthening host countries' capacity to integrate refugees sustainably through humanitarian and development assistance as well as economic and complementary pathways.

Guiding Questions:

- How can humanitarian assistance respond to the needs of refugees and host communities? and how can donors support more sustainable approaches that recognize the increasingly protracted nature of refugee situations?
- How can longer term development investments, such as building infrastructure and creating jobs, integrate refugees into national economies?
- What role do initiatives such as UNHCR Sustainable Programming Approach, as well as IFI instruments such as the Global Concessional Financing Facility and the IDA Window for Refugees and Host Communities play in this process?
- What strategies can be implemented to expand resettlement programs and complementary pathways to reduce the burden on host countries in the Global South?

Outcome

The outcome of the meeting will be a “**Call to Action**” by the President of ECOSOC, with recommendations for further action by the international community.



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Forced Displacement and Refugee Protection**

24 April 2025

DRAFT PROGRAMME

15:00 Opening

Panel 1: Success Stories in Refugee Hosting and Integration

Interactive discussion

Panel 2: Solidarity and Sustainable Approaches

Video Message

Interactive discussion

17:30 Closing