

SECRETARIAT
of
United Nations Secretary-General's
High-Level Panel on
Internal Displacement



SECRETARIAT
du
Groupe de haut niveau du Secrétaire général
de l'Organisation des Nations Unies chargé
de la question de déplacement interne

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Summary Note on Meeting with Member States on the Report of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, Tuesday 09 November 2021.

I. Introduction

1. The meeting was called by the Panel's Secretariat in collaboration with the Permanent Missions of Afghanistan, Mali and Norway, Co-Chairs of the "Group of Friends of the Panel" (GoF). The purpose of the meeting was to provide a briefing to the Member States on developments on the Panel's report since it was launched on 29 September 2021, hear their reactions and feedback on the Report and its recommendations; and answer questions the Member States may have.

2. Invitation to attend the meeting was extended to all the Permanent and Observer Missions in Geneva and New York. A total of 52 States attended the meeting: Afghanistan (PR), Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mali (PR), Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Palestine, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America and Venezuela.

II. Overview

3. Opening the meeting, Head of the Secretariat, Mr. George Okoth-Obbo, renewed his and the Panel's appreciation to the Member States for their strong engagement and inputs to the Panel which had made a vital contribution to the conclusions and recommendations which the Panel reached. With the launch of the Panel's report, attention was now focused on follow-up and implementation of the Panel's recommendations. In that context, it was important to hear the reactions of Member States on the report as a whole, including the Panel's recommendation that the Group of Friends should be continued to facilitate Member States' engagement in the follow-up process.

4. Making remarks on behalf of GoF Co-Chair Norway, Mr. Tom Eriksen, Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations Office in Geneva, said that Norway welcomed the Report as a catalyst of international and national efforts to find durable solutions to internal displacement. He expressed Norway's commitment to the follow-up of the report which

he said was still in the course of being reviewed by the Capital which would provide Norway's comprehensive reaction shortly.

5. Ms. Greta Zeender, Head of Research and Outcomes in the Secretariat, then provided an overview of the Panel's key recommendations and an update on developments that had taken place so far and/or were in motion since the report was submitted to the Secretary-General. Among the latter, she highlighted that the Secretary-General has called a meeting of the leadership of the United Nations which will take place before the end of the year to decide an overall Plan of Action and mechanism for follow-up of the report and its recommendations. The presentation provided by Ms. Zeender is attached to this note.

6. Speaking to the presentation by the Secretariat and the Report as a whole:

- i. Many States indicated that their Capitals are still studying the Report and they would thus revert back with more comprehensive reaction at a later time.
- ii. All however commended the work of the Panel and welcomed its comprehensive findings and recommendations. They reiterated the importance of national political will and responsibility as fundamental in addressing the issue of internal displacement and the plight of the internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- iii. In this connection, strong support was voiced for the Report's focus on nationally owned solutions; the importance to recognize IDPs as citizens of their countries with rights and agency; the shift called for by the Panel towards a development approach linked to addressing the root causes of displacement, peace, disaster risk reduction and climate change action; the essential role of local communities and civil society; and the importance of financing, capacity and reliable data.
- iv. One State emphasized that together with national responsibility and leadership, it was also important to have global solidarity, partnership and complementarity to address this issue as effectively as possible.
- v. Four States voiced their support for the Panel's recommendation to establish a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Solutions to Internal Displacement, highlighting the importance of this role to "promote coherence and complementarity among UN agencies," "serve as a focal point for Member States," and help "place the issue of IDPs as a priority."
- vi. On the other hand, one delegation said that his Government remained unconvinced that the "proliferation of bureaucracy is not the most effective solution." Another expressed preference to "build on existing capacities" rather than set up new systems.
- vii. A delegation supported the annual State of Solutions to Internal Displacement report proposed by the Panel saying that it would prove valuable in monitoring actions and progress on solutions.
- viii. On the Panel's recommendations for the establishment of a dedicated financing mechanism (Global Fund) for solutions there were different views, with two delegations expressing support (one saying, "having dedicated funding to address solutions is important") while another two were hesitant, with one stating that "there are already a number of funding mechanisms and a new one may not necessarily add value."
- ix. Turning to follow-up of the Panel's report and its recommendations, all delegations that took the floor reaffirmed their commitment to follow-up the Panel's report and recommendations and to continue their engagement at global level.

- x. The overarching need to sustain the momentum and ensure robust follow-up was underscored, with one delegation stressing that “swift implementation is key” and another stating that “it is time that, as States, we should come together, take responsibility and urge the Secretary-General to create practical follow-up and implementation mechanisms for this report... This is a silent crisis that has been neglected for too long.”
- xi. One delegation emphasized the need for follow-up mechanisms owned by national governments, in particular those who have demonstrated political will in driving forward recommendations in the vein of what the Panel is recommending. Another stressed the importance of a tailored approach that would allow concentration on individual contexts.
- xii. Several speakers expressed interest in the Plan of Action and mechanism for follow-up that the Secretary-General is developing and said they looked forward to being consulted accordingly.
- xiii. One delegation echoed the Panel’s recommendation on convening a high-level event on internal displacement in which States and other actors can make concrete commitments on the next steps and another said that a high-level meeting was “of interest.”
- xiv. The majority of delegations who spoke on the issue expressed support for either continuing the Group of Friends or establishing a comparable platform that would allow States to engage systematically in the follow-up action on internal displacement. The importance of establishing regional dialogues for the same purpose was at the same time also emphasized.

III. Close of meeting; action points

7. As the meeting came to a close, Ambassador Issa Konfourou, speaking on behalf of GoF Co-Chair Mali, said that that the Panel had “met our expectations.” He described the Panel’s report as an “important development” for all countries impacted by internal displacement and highlighted, in particular: (i) the priority placed on driving solutions forward; (ii) the need to institute a development – approach for these solutions; (iii) the recognition of IDPs as citizens; (iv) the importance of political will and national responsibility of Governments; and (iv) the importance of global solidarity. He urged Member States to act “beyond reactions” and implement relevant recommendations at the national level. To this end, he echoed the report’s call for national discussions at all levels of Governments including municipalities, civil society and IDPs themselves to work on ways forward. At global level, he expressed support for a mechanism in which States and other stakeholders can continue dialogue and, in this respect, expressed support for both discussions held at regional level and a global High-Level event as recommended by the Panel. On the Group of Friends, he reiterated Mali’s readiness to continue to serve as Co-Chair of Group and also that he would be equally delighted if other Member States were to step forward.

8. Closing the meeting, the Head of Secretariat thanked the Permanent Missions for having attended the meeting with such an impressive quorum. He reiterated that this was yet another of the information-sharing, feedback and follow-up consultations that the Secretariat was undertaking with the Member States and would continue to do so. Resuming specific action points:

- i. He assured the representatives that the feedback they had provided and suggestions they had made would be drawn to the attention of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.
- ii. All States that had made statements were requested to share the written version of those statements with the Secretariat (at email address: idpspanel@un.org).

- iii. Those who had not made statements were still welcome to elaborate their reactions to the report and share them with the Secretariat.
- iv. The statements/reactions would be placed on the Panel's website unless the submitting State wished that they should be dealt with only confidentially.
- v. A summary of the meeting will be prepared and shared with the participants. It will also be shared with the Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends and, as indicated already, with the Office of the Secretary-General.

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