



Memorandum of Understanding

BETWEEN

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

AND

The Inter-Parliamentary Union

This Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter this “**MoU**”) represents an enhanced commitment to the strategic partnership between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (hereinafter “**UNHCR**”) and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (hereinafter “**IPU**”), hereinafter collectively referred to as “**the Parties**” and each individually as “**a Party**”. It has been developed in recognition of the Parties’ respective mandates, responsibilities, strategic objectives and mission statements, as well as the history of collaboration between the two organizations.

Whereas, UNHCR, a subsidiary organ of the United Nations, on the basis of its Statute of 1950, the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and subsequent resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, is mandated to provide international protection, assistance and solutions to refugees and other categories of persons of concern and to prevent and reduce statelessness.

Whereas, the IPU, the world organization of parliaments of sovereign States, promotes democratic governance, institutions and values and works with parliaments and parliamentarians to articulate and respond to the needs and aspirations of the people; this includes strengthening the institution of parliament; setting standards and guidelines for democratic parliaments; advancing gender equality and respect for women’s rights; protecting and promoting human rights; contributing to peace building, conflict prevention and security, promoting youth empowerment and mobilizing parliaments around the Sustainable Development Goals and the global development agenda.

Whereas, the Parties have collaborated in the implementation of initiatives and activities aimed at enhancing parliamentary action in the area of refugee protection and response, and efforts to end statelessness, with the organization of joint conferences, capacity building seminars and awareness raising events and campaigns, and the production of tools and publications, guided by IPU’s Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law.

Whereas, UNHCR and the IPU share common objectives with regard to providing comprehensive assistance and response to refugee situations and persons of concern to UNHCR, including stateless persons, and wish to collaborate to further these common goals and objectives within their respective mandates and governing rules and regulations.

Whereas, this MoU applies to the most substantive areas of the Parties’ collaboration and outlines current and future priority areas for cooperation where the respective and complementary tools, capacities and expertise of the two organizations can be optimised and assistance towards persons of concern to UNHCR improved. As such, it constitutes the basis for the further strengthening of a strategic and operational partnership between the two organizations.

Recalling the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and its Paragraph 39, which states that *“engagement by parliaments as appropriate under relevant national arrangements is encouraged, with a view to supporting the global compact”*.

Recalling the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness: 2014–2024 and its ten actions to end statelessness, particularly those which require law reform and legislative efforts.

Also recalling the pledges submitted by the IPU towards the December 2019 Global Refugee Forum (“GRF”) and the October 2019 High Level Segment (“HLS”) on Statelessness and recognizing them as grounds for further means of cooperation herewith.

Article I Purpose and Scope

1.1 The purpose of this MoU is to establish a general framework of cooperation and understanding and to facilitate collaboration between the Parties to further their shared goals and objectives in regard to the various frameworks and commitments mentioned in this MoU.

1.2 The framework of cooperation between the Parties directly correlates with the time frame of the pledges submitted by the IPU towards the GRF, through 2023, and the HLS on Statelessness, through the end of the #IBELONG campaign, 2024.

1.3 The Parties commit to further strengthening the strategic relationship between them, at the global, regional and national levels, to engage in mutually beneficial information sharing, consultations and knowledge exchange; and to cooperate on projects and events of mutual interest. The Parties agree to collaborate in the sensitization and technical support of parliaments and parliamentarians, strengthening the support for comprehensive responses to refugee and stateless situations, ensuring the active engagement of young and women parliamentarians in these processes, as well as the collection of best practices for dissemination throughout the parliamentary community.

1.4 This MoU is not legally binding and does not in itself give rise to any implications of commitment of resources, financial or otherwise, for either of the Parties. The objectives of this MoU shall be achieved through regular dialogue and meetings between UNHCR and IPU and the implementation of joint activities and initiatives.

Article II Areas of Cooperation

2.1 The Parties may invite each other to send observers to meetings or conferences convened by them or under their auspices in which, in the opinion of either Party, the other Party may have an interest. Such invitations shall be subject to the procedures applicable to such meetings or conferences.

2.2 The Parties will collaborate on internal and external awareness raising activities, advocacy and communications campaigns, as appropriate, by undertaking joint actions as exemplified below:

- i. The Parties agree to collaborate on developing institutional capacity building through awareness-raising workshop(s) and joint publications; and
- ii. The Parties agree to support relevant communications campaigns such as the #IBELONG campaign and respective annual awareness days such as World Refugee Day and the International Day of Parliamentarism.

2.3 Subject to the relevant internal approvals, the Parties seek to collaborate, cooperate and interact through initiatives and activities. The Parties agree to prioritize collaboration outlined in the pledges submitted by the IPU in support of the work carried out by UNHCR, during the HLS on Statelessness and the GRF.

2.4 The Parties agree to collaborate on the work outlined by the IPU's pledges towards the HLS on Statelessness, hereinafter noted as:

- i. Raising political awareness of parliaments, monitoring progress and drawing attention to legislative and other reforms to address statelessness at each IPU Assembly;
- ii. Engaging young parliamentarians and women parliamentarians in efforts to address statelessness, in particular in addressing gender-based discrimination in nationality laws; and
- iii. Providing support for parliaments concerned in reforming nationality laws to prevent statelessness and addressing discrimination in law.

2.5 The Parties further agree to collaborate in interventions and actively support the achievement of the IPU's pledges towards the 2019 inaugural GRF, hereinafter noted as:

- i. Raising awareness of parliaments, at each IPU Assembly, on progress and challenges in developing comprehensive refugee responses;
- ii. Engaging parliamentarians, and in particular young parliamentarians and women parliamentarians, and assist them in taking action in support of refugees and host countries;
- iii. Collecting good parliamentary practices and disseminating them to the parliamentary community; and
- iv. Organizing training and capacity building initiatives for parliamentarians in legislative work complementary to national pledges to the GRF.

Article III Modalities of cooperation

3.1 The implementation of activities under this MoU by the Parties will be carried out in accordance with each organization's applicable regulations, policies and procedures. Each Party shall bear its own costs and expenses generated as a result of this MoU or any project initiated under this MoU, unless otherwise specifically agreed by the Parties.

3.2 Both Parties will disseminate this MoU to their respective offices and field operations and will take steps to promote implementation, including through providing field operations with appropriate guidance.

3.3 The Parties each designate one senior lead who takes responsibility for the overall vision, strategic direction and delivery of this partnership; for the IPU, Kareen Jabre, Director of the Division of Programmes and for UNHCR, Safak Pavey, Senior Policy Advisor to the Assistant High Commissioner for Protection.

Article IV Monitoring and Review

The Parties shall annually review progress of work in the priority areas of cooperation and discuss policy, technical and operational issues related to furthering the objectives of the cooperation.

Article V Use of Name and Emblem

5.1 Neither Party shall use the name or emblem of the other Party, or any abbreviation thereof, in connection with its activities or otherwise, without the express prior written approval of the other Party.

5.2 The Parties agree to recognize, acknowledge and publicize this cooperation as appropriate. To this end, the Parties will consult with each other concerning the manner and form of such recognition and acknowledgement.

**Article VI
General Provisions**

6.1 This MoU shall enter into force on the date of its signature by the duly authorized representatives of the Parties. It shall remain in force until December 2024, unless terminated earlier by either Party by providing the other Party with prior written notice of 90 days and can be modified or its duration extended in writing at any time by mutual consent of the Parties.

6.2 The Parties will use their best efforts to settle amicably any disputes or controversy arising out of or in connection with this MoU. Any such dispute or controversy which is not settled amicably may be referred by a Party to arbitration in accordance with the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules in force. The Parties shall be bound by any arbitration award rendered as a result of such arbitration as the final adjudication of any such dispute or controversy.

6.3 Nothing in or relating to this MoU shall be deemed a waiver, express or implied, of any of the privileges and immunities of the United Nations, including its subsidiary organs and/or of UNHCR (as a subsidiary organ of the United Nations), and the privileges and immunities of the IPU.

In Witness Whereof, the duly authorized representatives of the Parties affix their signatures below.

For UNHCR

For the IPU

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Gillian Triggs
Assistant High Commissioner for
Refugees (Protection)
UNHCR
Geneva, Switzerland
dd/mm/2021

Martin Chungong
Secretary General
IPU
Geneva, Switzerland
dd/mm/2021