

Delegation from Russian Federation
Position Paper for the United Nations Security Council

The topics before the United Nations (UN) Security Council (SC) are I. Environmental Migration as a Concern for Peace and Security; II. Preventing Violence towards Refugees and IDPs; and III. Partnerships between the United Nations and Relevant Regional Organizations in Peacekeeping Operations. In order to guarantee peace and security, the SC needs to know which regional organizations we can rely on as potential partners. Therefore, the Russian Federation suggests discussing topic III. Partnerships between the United Nations and Relevant Regional Organizations in Peacekeeping Operations first, followed by topic I and then topic II.

I. Environmental Migration as a Concern for Peace and Security

It is estimated that currently 20 to 30 million environmental migrants and refugees had to leave their homes driven by environmental impacts like climate change, the rise in sea levels, salination of groundwater and desertification. Although environmental change has not been recognized as a reason for flight in the General Assembly (GA) resolution 2198 (XXI) *Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, in some countries this followed and latest with the signing of the GA resolution 71/1 called *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* in 2016. This declaration is described by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as “a political commitment of unprecedented force and resonance. It fills what has been a perennial gap in the international protection system that of truly sharing responsibility for refugees.” The Russian Federation also supports this and has already drawn up its own plans to promote peace and prosperity by partnering with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Dealing with environmental protection and migration is part of this partnership. However, a clear distinction must be made between migrants and refugees. Both become threats if entry into the country of destination or countries on the flight route is illegal. Especially in small populations this can lead to a destabilization of people’s community. It is important to ensure that these people are accommodated in a coordinated way in spaces close to their own culture. This means a resettlement of affected persons in their home country or in a country with the closest possible cultural ties to the country of origin. For countries and migrants, this brings the advantages of less needed integration performance and common future-oriented work on the situation in the region. Migrants remain part of the community and can play their part in making affected countries or regions arable and habitable again. Besides, we would like to stress the necessity of shelter rooms being only a temporary option in an emergency. Therefore, fixed and permanent shelters must be quickly available at all times in regions where such a resettlement is possible. However, we are aware that this might be a major problem for developing countries. International law stipulates that host countries bear the primary responsibility for the humanitarian situation of refugees and migrants in their country. We feel committed to this principle and would therefore like to assist other states to fulfill this responsibility. The Russian Federation recommends the member states (MS) of the SC to instruct the GA and the UNHCR and thereby the UN Refugee Agency to establish a program within the UN Refugee Agency for the resettlement of affected populations in neighboring regions or countries. This Intracultural Shelter Program (ICSP) should not interfere with the day-to-day work of the UNHCR and should therefore be funded by another body. Since this project is also related to GA resolution 70/1 (2015) called *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and especially concerns Goal 10 *Reduced Inequality* and Goal 13 *Climate Action*, we think it is appropriate to finance the ICSP by the *Partnership Fund for the Sustainable Development Goals* (SDG Fund) of the World Bank (WB). Russia would like to seek the help of all MS in order to secure safety and future of all people in the world in their accustomed cultural environment.

II. Preventing Violence towards Refugees and IDPs

Never before so many people had to flee violence and wars as today. But the martyrdom of these people often just starts with the escape. Physical, sexual and mental violence await them on their route to safer places. Young girls, boys and women are particularly affected. Under these circumstances it is almost impossible for these people to live a peaceful life in dignity. A part of the problem is smugglers, people who bring refugees across international borders or seas for money. This type of business is closely linked to international organized crime where forced prostitution and human trafficking are part of the business model. In the meantime there is a whole series of measures that have been taken by the UN. GA resolution 72/182 *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* (2017) or SC resolution 1296 (1999) are only two of the documents adopted to regulate the humanitarian and development policy treatment of migrants and internally displaced persons, and the legal status of refugees. Despite its low domestic importance, the Russian federation has contributed to all mentioned documents and is eagerly working on the issue on a global level and researching on

solutions. The problem so far, however, is the growing lack of respect for international law. The GA resolution 217A called *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) or the *Geneva Convention* seem to have been repealed in crisis areas. To work on that, it is necessary to create awareness that MS must comply with international law and that non-compliance will be punished. We also have to raise awareness in the civil society, that refugees and IDPs are not human resources or low-grade humans. We need a response to the growing popular rejection of the reception of these people. In order to address these problems, the Russian Federation proposes to hold a conference on this issue. We should bring all affected and participating states, NGOs and experts together to discuss. In the first step, a UNHCR report on the current situation should be submitted and presented. Furthermore, essential questions have to be asked and dealt with: What can be done against local smugglers? How can sexual harassment and abuse against migrants be prevented and who are the perpetrators? How far could the mandate of the UNHCR be extended to further the protection of refugees? Such a *Refugee Protection Conference* (RefProCon) must first be held once, probably every two years in the future. UNHCR Funds and voluntary donations should finance this conference. The Russian Federation hereby offers to hold the first of these conferences in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 2020. Additionally, we demand issuing a Presidential Statement focusing on aspects like reminding all MS of their signification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and emphasizing towards those MS and their population that the UN Security Council is willing to issue sanctions against any member state which mistreats or do not protect legally recognized refugees and IDPs as a last resort. Together we can reach the goal, that every person in the world, whether at home or at a distant place would be able to live in dignity.

III. Partnerships Between the United Nations and Relevant Regional Organizations in Peacekeeping Operations

Chapter VIII of the UN Charta provides with the Peacekeeping Operations (PO) the most important instrument available to the UN to ensure international peace and security. In the past, the Security Council has had good experiences with cooperation with regional organizations. We are recalling GA resolution 49/57 *Declaration on the Enhancement of Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional Arrangements* (1994) in which the UN has highlighted the importance of cooperation with regional organizations and created important framework conditions for such partnerships, which were legally binding specified in SC resolutions 2033 (2012) and 2167 (2014), which draw a picture on how to implement such partnerships (especially with the African Union (AU)) in accordance with the SCs peacekeeping goals. The Russian Federation promotes such efforts towards good partnerships in order to benefit from the regional view of conflicts, receive information at an early stage, and to ensure quick intervention. In 2018, UN Secretary General António Guterres launched the initiative *Action for Peacekeeping* (A4P) and the *Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN POs*. It is intended to renew and consolidate the mutual commitment to protect peace between troop contributing countries, financial contributors and local partners. Russia is also part of this initiative, but our participation is subject to certain conditions. Like our honored permanent representative at the UN Vassily Nebenzia already mentioned in the letter A/72/110 to the Secretary General, we reserve the right, with regard to relevant regional organizations, to decide ourselves which organization we want to work with and which not. The most important organization with which the UN works is the AU as most of the operations currently take place in Africa. Following the *Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN POs*, all MS participating in the initiative have committed themselves to recognize and promote the AU as a partner. In addition to the AU, there are other organizations with which we can collaborate in any case. These include the European Union, the Organization of American States, the ASEAN, and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. Other partners in crisis regions must be decided on a case-by-case basis. For most other, often smaller organizations, we are not able to make a binding statement as to whether they are useful in a respective peacekeeping situation, especially in terms of economic and military strength and the humanitarian situation on the ground. The attitude towards our projects or the situation in these organizations may change over time. It would be negligent for us to recognize more than the organizations mentioned as binding permanent partners. The Russian Federation therefore requests the support of the SC in entrusting the SCs subordinate Working Group on POs with the task of observing all organizations (including suborganizations) that may be potential partners and monitoring their current development. In such way the SC can be quickly informed in the event of a crisis on which partners we can rely in the region concerned. The observation will be carried out in cooperation with the troop and financial contributors and experts from the WB and the UN Military Staff Committee. This plan will enable the UN SC, to quickly have reliable partners at our side in every phase of a conflict, preventatively or to restore peace.