



Statement on the refugee situation

**by the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations
„CoNGO“ ngocongo.org**

70 Years United Nations and Cooperation with NGOs „Shared Ideals, Shared Values, Shared Futures“

War and civil war in the Near East, Syria, and Iraq as well as in Afghanistan has forced millions to flee their countries and to seek refuge elsewhere. For the most part, the refugees are staying in the region in the hope that one day they can return to their homes. Their hopes have been dashed, while conditions worsen by the day. Families have abandoned all hope. In desperation, they seek security and peace in which they and their children can live.

Every day for the past few months thousands have been pouring into Europe under extremely dangerous and exacerbating conditions. National governments are reacting reluctantly and ambiguously. Communities, NGOs and civil society are trying to take care of the refugees and find ways of offering them a fresh start and some prospects for the future. Living as we do in a globalized world, everybody, including those in the 'rich' and developed countries, are witnessing anew the consequences of war and conflict, violations of human rights and gross economic inequalities. The plight of the refugees puts in question our credibility on our basic principles.

NGOs and civil society have assumed a leading role in organizing relief and care for refugees. Were it not for the commitment and support of NGOs and thousands of volunteers on a daily basis, the past few weeks would have seen an even more disastrous humanitarian crisis. We know that NGOs will continue and not slacken in this task.

The ultimate goal is to help find durable solutions that will allow the refugees to rebuild their lives in dignity and peace. Successful inclusion means providing full heartedly every kind of professional support, securing chances for development, well-being and self-sustaining livelihoods in receiving countries and their home regions alike.

We urge the international community to bring pressure to bear on the countries involved in conflicts to undertake every effort to start peace talks or, at least, enter into negotiations for a ceasefire.

The Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO) and many civil society groups in compliance with United Nations Development Goals, Human Rights and the aims of UNHCR, appeal to governments in Europe and worldwide to make special and sustainable efforts to deal with the crisis, while acknowledging and drawing on the experience of NGOs in creating humane and sustainable solutions for the people, families and children who have fled violence, inhumane conditions and death.

Statement by the members of the CoNGO Board meeting, Vienna, Austria October 7, 2015