

# Media Update

9 July 2024

## UNHCR PRESS RELEASE

### UNHCR calls for greater efforts towards longer-term solutions for Afghans in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD – Wrapping up a three-day visit, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, has called for a bolstering of efforts towards longer-term solutions for Afghans in Pakistan, and support for their host communities.

Grandi visited Peshawar and Haripur in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, meeting with Afghan refugees in urban settings as well as in a refugee village. People he met shared a message of anxiety regarding their situation, but also of their desire to contribute to their communities in Pakistan, as well as eventually in Afghanistan.

In Islamabad, Grandi met with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for States and Frontier Regions Amir Muqam, along with senior officials from the Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs.

During his discussions, the High Commissioner called for the timely extension of the Proof of Registration (PoR) cards, a critical identity document held by over 1.3 million Afghan refugees. Grandi expressed appreciation that the “Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan” had been suspended and sought assurances that it would remain on hold. He called for Pakistan’s proud tradition of hospitality towards those Afghans with international protection needs to continue.

Recognizing the challenges facing the country and the admirable generosity of the Government of Pakistan over 45 years of hosting Afghan refugees, Grandi called for an urgent reset of the aid model towards solutions and responsibility

sharing, including fostering new partnerships and developing innovative approaches to addressing the protracted displacement situation.

“We need to seize this opportunity to accelerate solutions, and have a bigger, broader vision for the Afghan people in Pakistan,” he noted.

The High Commissioner offered to work towards a dialogue later this year, which will bring together key stakeholders (including government representatives, development actors, and the private sector) to develop a package of solutions that benefits both the Afghan population living in Pakistan and the host country itself.

Grandi also committed to redoubling efforts aimed at creating conditions conducive for returns to Afghanistan including from the perspective of material conditions, access to services, job opportunities, as well as rights – paving the way for sustainable voluntary returns in the future.

In the meantime, as Pakistan continues to host some 3 million Afghans, all solutions need to be explored in addition to voluntary repatriation, including third country resettlement and longer-term solutions within Pakistan.

For more information, please contact:

- In Pakistan, Qaiser Khan, [afridiq@unhcr.org](mailto:afridiq@unhcr.org) , +92 51 2600860
- In Geneva, Babar Baloch, [baloch@unhcr.org](mailto:baloch@unhcr.org) , +41 22 739 8098