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Statement submitted by United Nations Association of the United States of America, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Submitted on behalf of the United Nations Association of the United States of America

As the international community seeks to alleviate the global refugee crisis, we must accelerate awareness about and advocacy and funding for refugees. Furthermore, we must expand opportunities for governments, civic society and the private sector to collaboratively produce sustainable solutions that are domestic and international. This crisis is overwhelmingly affecting women and girls and action must be taken now.

The United Nations Association of the United States of America, the largest grassroots network of United Nations advocates in the world, believes major strides can be made to help the over 65 million people forcibly displaced, which includes over 17 million refugee women and children. Without these initiatives, refugee women and girls are more at the risk to exploitation and trafficking and do not have access to good health, education, equality and financial resources.

United Nations Association of the United States of America is meeting the appeal to make a difference through diverse programming. On a domestic level, United Nations Association of the United States of America members partnered with Yoobi, a Los Angeles based company dedicated to supporting children, and Alpha Kappa Alpha, the largest and oldest African American service sorority, to provide school supplies to resettled refugee children in the United States, welcoming new neighbours to their communities. On an international level, United Nations Association of the United States of America has recently partnered with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to launch the Adopt-a-Future initiative, which enables partners and supporters to raise funds to support either refugee education worldwide or to build a classroom for a specific refugee serving school.

Through special events, like United Nations Day, United Nations Association of the United States of America members are joining forces with local partners to educate their communities on the massive global refugee problem and the benefits of welcoming resettled refugees. Members are also reaching out to their Congressional members to encourage them to support UNHCR and the United Nations' Education Cannot Wait initiative, which mobilizes the private sector and governments to meet the educational needs of refugee children.

While these activities alone will not solve the refugee crisis, we must continue to collectively create opportunities so that cumulatively a difference can be made in the lives of refugee women and children.
