



For Immediate release:

20 June 2024

World Refugee Day 2024: CoRMSA Calls for Solidarity and Comprehensive Refugee Protection

Johannesburg, South Africa – The Consortium for Refugees and Migrants South Africa (CoRMSA) joins the global community in observing World Refugee Day on the 20th of June 2024. This year's theme, "**Solidarity with Refugees – for a world where refugees are welcomed,**" underscores the critical need for collective action to address the global refugee crisis.

World Refugee Day serves as a vital platform to recognise the remarkable resilience and contributions of refugees in communities, advocate for policies that uphold refugee rights and provide opportunities for a dignified life, promote local integration, equal opportunities and access to basic services and address existing challenges faced by refugees.

CoRMSA expresses concern regarding the recently published White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration and Refugee Protection which proposes the regression of human right protection suggesting discriminatory restrictions to the right to education, right to work and freedom of movement. It also proposes to withdraw from the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol with the intention to assert them with reservations on the above-mentioned rights. This could significantly weaken South Africa's refugee protection framework and exacerbate existing vulnerabilities.

In light of these concerns, CoRMSA urges the Department of Home Affairs to withdraw the White Paper and undertake a more inclusive process towards refugee policy reform., implement migration policies that align with South Africa's international obligations and the principles and values enshrined in the Constitution and provide adequate protection for refugees. CoRMSA further calls for the strengthening of Border Management Authority and enhanced capacity within the Border Management and Refugee Reception Office (RRO) to ensure effective border management and efficient processing of asylum and refugee permits. This includes addressing institutionalised xenophobia and promote a society-wide approach that fosters unity and integration.

CoRMSA, in collaboration with the UNHCR, City of Johannesburg, Department of Home Affairs, Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, and other member organisations and partners, will commemorate World Refugee Day in Johannesburg and Limpopo on the 20th and 21st of June, respectively. These events aim to promote solidarity with refugees, address the refugee crisis, advocate for solutions, and foster social cohesion.



CoRMSA remains committed to working with all stakeholders to ensure a more inclusive and welcoming environment for refugees in South Africa and globally.

For more information, contact: CoRMSA team at communications@cormsa.org.za