

OPENING REMARKS

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INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION

18 April 2017, UNHQ, New York

Introduction and Workshop Context

Excellencies, Distinguished participants and panelists, ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honor and a pleasure to welcome you to this first workshop of the 2017 International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) -- a series of exchanges that IOM began in the year 2000.

This meeting is the first of two IDM workshops this year both dedicated to an exchange of views between Member States and a wide range of other actors on the “Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration”. The IDM’s focus this year on the Global Compact responds to the call of Member States -- endorsed in the modalities resolution--, for the IDM to contribute formally to the preparatory process of the global compact on migration.

Last spring, we held the first-ever IDM outside Geneva here in New York. It was devoted to discussing migration in the 2030 agenda. The purpose of this second New York IDM is to foster an open dialogue between the diplomatic and expert communities in New York and Geneva. Today’s IDM also the first major event IOM is organizing in New York since joining the UN system last September.

Discussions during these two days will provide important background context and perspective -- and an opportunity to strengthen international cooperation on all aspects of migration governance, as we embark on the consultation phase of the GCM preparatory process.

Thanks to your broad, strong support the modalities Resolution gives IOM a leading role in supporting Member States in developing the GCM. We are doing our best to fulfil the high expectations of Member States and other partners as we work towards the elaboration of the global compact for safe, orderly, and regular migration.

As part of its efforts to increase understanding of the issues and improve potential for a successful outcome of the GCM, IOM is -- making available, at the request of our Member States, a series of expert thematic papers addressing the 24 elements listed in Annex II of the New York Declaration. (All of these will be covered, in some form or another in the upcoming six thematic consultations foreseen in the modalities resolution. IOM's vision for the Global Compact, and relevant thematic papers prepared by IOM's technical experts, are available on the IOM website at www.iom.int.

IOM has also created a dedicated civil society liaison function in-house to help ensure regular engagement and participation of civil society throughout the process to develop the Global Compact, and am glad to have Colin Rajah here with us today.

Further, IOM has established dedicated outreach to key private sector entities, including through the Global Forum on Migration and Development Global Business Mechanism co-led by the International Organization of Employers and the World Economic Forum, all represented here today.

And, we have created a Migration Research Leaders Syndicate to tap into the

wealth of expertise from academia and experts from around the world and from multiple areas of migration thematic specialization, several of whom are with us today.

While States retain the sovereign discretion to determine which non-nationals may enter and stay in their territories, consistent with the requirements of international law, there is great scope for improving international cooperation on migration.

In IOM's view, the Global Compact presents an historical opportunity to achieve a world in which migrants move as a matter of genuine choice rather than necessity; a world of opportunity to migrate through safe, orderly and regular channels; and a world in which migration is well governed and is able to act as a positive force for individuals, societies and States. IOM envisions a global compact, therefore, that will place the needs, capacities and contributions of migrants at its core, with a view to ensuring their safety, dignity and human rights.

Central to this vision are four core elements:

- (1) protecting the rights of migrants;
- (2) facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration;
- (3) reducing the incidence and impacts of forced and irregular migration; and
- (4) addressing mobility consequences of natural and human-induced disasters.

To realize the development potential of migrants and the benefits of migration to home and host societies, the global compact is expected to put at the disposal of States a set of guiding principles and related tools to govern migration effectively and humanely. The global compact is also expected to serve as a framework for comprehensive international cooperation to address human mobility and all aspects of international migration.

I would like to share three reflections as we begin an eight months process of

consultations on the development of a Global Compact on Migration.

I. The Global Compact represents an historical moment

The process upon which we are embarked offers the international community a trail-blazing opportunity to develop a comprehensive global framework for the governance of global human mobility. We dare not miss this “rendez-vous with history.”

This moment has been long -- too long -- in coming, and is not likely to come again soon if we miss this opportunity.

We dare not fail.

Ironically, governments have managed to agree upon rules to govern the movement of capital, goods and services -- but not for people who make these movements possible.

- Countless migrants face exploitation and abuse at the hands of ruthless smugglers and traffickers all along the migratory route -- “travel agents of death” exploiting human misery and desperation – More than 5,000 migrants lost their lives in the Mediterranean last year -- and nearly 1000 this year.

And at destination, communities and workplaces are all too often ill-prepared to accept, protect, respect and value newcomers. Wide spread and growing xenophobia, racism and discrimination against migrants in so many parts of the world challenges our common values and critically needed solidarity.

- There are further 65 million persons who have been driven from their homes by unspeakable conflict and human rights abuses -- some 25 million across borders as refugees and some 40 million more displaced internally within their own countries. The drivers of displacement remain largely unaddressed; (a) an unbroken chain of

simultaneous, complex, protracted armed conflicts forming an “arc of instability and suffering” that stretches from West Africa to East Asia; demographic imbalance and deteriorating North- South socio-economic divergences.

- The needs of these vulnerable populations require urgent attention. Sustainable answers are to be found in developing – as we have been very specifically requested - a comprehensive framework for safe, orderly and regular migration; this, in turn, means developing policy options for planned and predictable movements. Failure to do so will trap us in the familiar predicament of having to make do with ad-hoc, hurriedly-designed and hastily implemented, fire-fighting measures.

We will need to be both ambitious and realistic - aware that the global compact is the best option we have. We must use this opportunity to create a unified, functional framework to enable us to govern the mobility of people humanely, effectively and in a true spirit of solidarity and shared responsibility.

II. The Global Compact already has a sound foundation on which to build.

In order to become the unifying framework guiding global migration governance, the global compact on migration must build on a sound and agreed foundation. The existing international normative framework and in particular the SDGs adopted in September 2015 are such a foundation.

The SDG’s recognize:

- (a) the positive contribution of migrants to inclusive growth and sustainable development;
- (b) that safe, orderly and regular international migration benefits both States and migrants; and

(c) that international cooperation is essential to making all of this a reality.

The process towards the GCM, therefore, has to be inclusive in three key ways:

- It needs to be comprehensive in its recognition of all aspects of international migration that require cooperation among States;
- It needs to involve and take into account all relevant actors – national and local governments, multiple ministries; civil society; the private sector, migrant and diaspora organizations; the academic world; the media and others;
- It needs to recognize the obligations of all actors and the commitments required from all of them in the field of international migration.
- The specific inclusion of migration in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda stands in stark contrast to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's), in which migration was totally absent – (a) the foundation for a Global Compact on migration was further strengthened through a series of other agreements in 2015. These include: the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015; the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in July and the Paris Climate Change Agreement in December 2015.
- In September the Special Summit adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants that contained important commitments on migration and migrants and launched the GCM process; and in addition, witnessed IOM's joining the UN system, thus cementing IOM as the leading global migration organization.

- Prior to all these actions, over a period of thirty years, a number of other migration building blocks were laid in the foundation upon which the Global Compact will now be built. These include:
 - The IGC in 1986 which has led today 17 other Regional Consultative Processes (RCP's);
 - The Bern Initiative in 2002;
 - The Global Forum for Migration and Development (2007), now in its tenth iteration;
 - The appointment of a Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for International Migration in 2007;
 - Two UNGA High Level Dialogues on Migration (HLD) in 2007 and 2013 with a third HLD scheduled for 2019;

All of these relevant milestones can prove useful in developing a Global Compact on Migration.

III. The Global Compact will need practical tools (some of which already exist)

In seeking to ensure migrants protection and to realize their development potential benefits to home and host societies, the global compact should produce a set of practical guiding principles and related tools. These will enable states to govern migration effectively and humanely; to facilitate regular migration, and to reduce the incidence and impact of forced and irregular migration. A critical milestone will have been reached when migrants are able to move as a matter of choice rather than necessity, and when migration is well governed and acts as a positive force for individuals, societies and States; when migrants'

rights are protected; forced and regular migration are reduced; and the mobility consequences of natural and human-induced disasters are effectively addressed.

To address current complex realities, however, principles must be supplemented by tools, facts and implementation. This necessitates:

- Being practical, pointing to remaining gaps in commitments and understandings and identifying barriers and challenges causing those gaps and resulting from them, as well as identify pathways forward to resolve them;
- Setting out ways and means of translating principles, commitments, and understandings into actionable objectives, laying out options for the governance of mobility, encouraging regular migration, addressing the mobility dimensions of crises, and offering innovative and practical solutions that can be applied widely;

On this point I would like to add that part of being practical is to draw on existing mechanisms, as clearly recommended by Sir Peter Sutherland in his recent report, drawing on his more than 10 years of exemplary service as Special Representative of the Secretary General on International Migration, which I commend to all of you.

IOM can help in this endeavor through debates and exchanges with states in its governing bodies meetings, with a wide range of actors at sessions of the International Dialogue on Migration, through support for Regional Consultative Processes and other inter-state cooperation mechanisms on migration around the world, and projects that bring governments together and capacity building projects for governments and civil society to help ensure the realization of international norms and standards in their migration governance processes.

IOM and its partners have fashioned a number of tools over the years in an effort to assist Member States and others to manage migration more respectfully and humanly.

These include:

- the Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF)
- the Migration Governance Framework (MiGoF)
- the Migrants in Countries of Crisis Initiative (MICIC)

Conclusion

I acknowledge that the time to consult, negotiate, and agree upon a Global Compact on Migration is very short.

I also acknowledge that the atmosphere for arriving at such a complete agreement is highly unfavorable -- taking place as it will amidst Brexit and a trend of populist nationalism and challenges to multilateralism.

On the other hand (1) such an opportunity is historically unique; (2) a strong foundation as well as; (3) some practical tools already exist. Too many lives and future depend on us. We cannot fail.