



CLOSING REMARKS

**Laura Thompson, Deputy Director General
International Organization for Migration**

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION

19 April, UNHQ, New York

Mr. President of the General Assembly,
Madam Deputy Secretary General,
Honorable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'd like to begin this closing session by thanking all of you for your presence and contributions over the past two days. The informal, multi-stakeholder global dialogue afforded by the International Dialogue on Migration these past two days was the first as we collectively embark on the launch of the official consultations phase of the process to develop the Global Compact on Migration.

It was the first of the 2 IDMs scheduled in 2017 by IOM as part of its efforts in support of the elaboration of the Global Compact on Migration and in response to the call of the Member States in the modalities resolution to utilize this existing, principal policy dialogue forum on migration of IOM and its membership. It aimed at canvassing views of states and all other relevant actors on enhancing international cooperation on and the governance of migration and identifying core elements for the elaboration of the Global Compact. We have had two days of very timely and enlightening discussions on ways to better seize the opportunities and manage the challenges of migration.

Along these lines, we heard inspiring keynote remarks from the Special Representative of the Secretary General on International migration, Ms. Louise Arbour, and we had the opportunity to benefit from the presence and valuable expertise of distinguished representatives of many governments worldwide as well as of many renowned senior experts from civil society, academia and the private sector who together contributed significant views and recommendations. We just had the opportunity to hear two very important contributions from H.E. Peter Thomson and H.E. Amina J. Mohammed, the President of the General Assembly and Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations respectively.

I would like to touch upon 5 main takeaways from our discussions:

Takeaway 1 –Ensuring implementation of the commitments made

- Many of the panelists and speakers from the floor agreed that ensuring implementation of existing migration-related commitments found in the international normative framework, including importantly the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and requires **enhanced operational capacity and resources**. To facilitate the implementation of existing norms, the Global Compact requires the support of a coherent institutional structure for coordination, built within the logic of broader international cooperation that respects sovereign state prerogatives.
- Responding to the challenges of migration and empowering migrants through education, dialogue and inclusive development, skill enhancement, community stabilization and revitalization, is a complex task that requires adequate levels of resources and the combined and converging use of aid and public and direct investments. Establishing a Financing Facility for Migration to channel funding and technical assistance from these actors could help all States get equipped to fulfill migration-related commitments. This would also promote donor and UN coordination in supporting States affected by migration challenges.
- **Building a comprehensive approach to migration**, through the Global Compact on Migration, should ensure that **migration governance is consistent and coherent with humanitarian and development considerations**. Consequently, the global framework on migration will need to address migration as it relates to development, humanitarian and human rights issues. Our speakers from Italy and Ecuador, among others, recalled the huge contribution of migrants to development. Italy’s proposal in this regard is

based on 3 key aspects: investing in, protecting and valuing the contribution of migrants and migration.

Takeaway 2- Whole of government approach – national and local perspectives

- Another recurrent message we heard is **that global migration priorities and principles must be adapted to, and framed within, national contexts and specific laws, policies, and administrative structures.** In this sense, a unified vision on migration at the national level, as well as coordinated policies that are coherent and comprehensive are needed.
- An effective migration government plan requires the **involvement of all parts of government, from the national to the local level,** as well as all ministries with responsibilities touching on the movement of people.
- We heard calls for the establishment of coordination mechanisms to assist the various ministries and other relevant government partners to develop and implement a “whole-of-government” approach to migration. This would enable local governments to manage greater diversity and contribute to national, regional and global policies and migration governance.
- Speakers recalled that building institutional capacities to collect, store, analyze and disseminate migration data is key to supporting national coordination mechanisms on migration.
- **Development, security and protection perspectives on migration need to be integrated and mutually supportive elements of a whole of government approach to migration.** Moreover, countries need assistance to formulate comprehensive national plans based on principles of accountability, empowerment, knowledge and appropriate resources.
- Regarding the local level, **discussions underlined the need to enhance capacity, encourage horizontal cooperation and to engage both rural and urban administrations.** Moreover ‘localizing’ migration governance requires integrating it in education, social service delivery and rural development plans. To this end, local administrations must break down barriers to working with both international and internal migrants.

- Mayor Somers, awarded for his efforts to welcome and implement long-term integration mechanism for refugees in recent years, shared his 8 recommendations among which I'd like to recall a few: that the entire society needs to make efforts for integration to occur successfully, and that we need to encourage societies built on common values and universal human rights (using them to foster inclusion rather than exclusion or division).

Takeaway 3- Whole of society approach – including civil society and private sector stakeholders in migration governance

- Effective, strengthened governance of migration cannot be achieved without the sustained engagement and contribution of key stakeholders involved in managing the daily realities of migration or personally touched by the experience of migration.
- Participation of civil society, the private sector, diaspora communities, migrants themselves, schools, academia, among others, in migration efforts is imperative. A common framework outlining principles and objectives of sound migration policies could facilitate genuine dialogue, and a spirit and ethos of solidarity.
- Efforts are needed at international, national, local and community levels to **raise awareness about migration, present accurately the reality of migration** and engage communities in adopting a conscious approach towards it. It is important to act with awareness towards migration, and in particular recognizing the enormous contributions that migrants and migration make to societies, without feeding fear of foreigners.
- International organizations, civil society, academia, media and diaspora actors already play an important role in **informing the debate about the realities of migration and in fighting erroneous, dehumanizing public discourse about migration**. The Representative of the Inter-Parliamentary Union recalled yesterday that the role of parliaments in promoting honest debate in society and proper legal frameworks is essential.
- Specifically, mass media needs to take responsibility to generate informed public opinion on the causes and consequences of migration. This approach could break down the barriers of fear and indifference which currently characterize many societies. We have seen, including through IOM's *Migrant's Voice* and *I am a migrant* campaign, that by talking about migrants and refugees and introducing them into people's homes

via their real stories, presented in its human aspects, stereotypes are broken down, fear is overcome and welcoming attitudes become spontaneous.

- Also, as Ambassador Camacho underlined very well in his statement yesterday, we need to refresh our migration terminology. Today the language about migration is influenced by negative emotions and associated incorrect narratives. The negotiations of the Global Compact must be based on an accurate description of migration supported by reliable data and not influenced by negative stereotypes. As suggested by the delegate of Colombia and several others today, language and terminology are important, and I very much hope that IOM's Glossary on Migration could be of assistance in this regard.

Takeaway 4 - Synergize efforts of the international community

- Many of you in your statements called for **strengthened and synergized UN leadership and capacities on migration, and noted the opportunities and expectations that IOM's entry into the United System provides in this regard.** The Global Compact is an opportunity to share best practices to develop cooperation and improve system-wide coherence.
- The international community needs **to validate and take concrete steps to ensure the effective implementation of existing normative frameworks, including as a necessary step towards advancing common goals for international cooperation.** The development of voluntary, non-binding, targeted suggestions to promote improved migration governance in specific areas can facilitate the attainment of these goals.
- In their *Now Joint Statement and Scorecard*, the Civil Society Action Committee urged a strong multi-stakeholder participation in the development of the Compact, engaging all governments in urgent responses to the challenges posed by large migration movements – not simply those that are receiving or transit countries, not simply those with significant financial resources – but the entire international community.
- Discussions underlined as well the need to encourage exchange of information and best practices among practitioners to allow the identification of synergies and scaling opportunities. Implementation of joint actions at the transnational level, promoting evidence - based programming by encouraging long-term, systematic and comprehensive data-collection and monitoring and evaluation schemes, will be pivotal in this regard. The Regional Consultative Processes on Migration, the Global Forum on

Migration and Development, and the IOM International Dialogue on Migration provide good examples of how to use existing mechanisms, dialogues, and initiatives in the field of migration to exchange practices and create or strengthen collaboration. Her Excellency Isata Kabia highlighted yesterday the relevance and the meaning of having the IDM in New York where the Global Compact will be negotiated.

Takeaway 5 – Way forward: Implementing and following-up progress on the Global Compact on Migration

- Many of you underscored that the Global Compact on Migration should focus on their effective implementation rather than on restating principles. The way forward requires the elaboration of a set of practical, actionable commitments, articulated within a multi-lateral and human rights-based framework, with ways and means of translating them into practice as well as proposing a framework for follow-up and review of implementation.
- Cooperation mechanisms at regional and other levels –between states of origin and destination and with civil society, private sector and other critical actors must inform the development of the Global Compact as well as its implementation, including reviewing and taking stock of progress achieved.

Conclusion

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- The Global Compact on Migration should bring about a paradigm shift, acknowledging the value of migration as contributing to development, but also orienting development toward overcoming the imbalances and disparities that drive desperate journeys.
- While the concept of “safe, orderly and regular migration” has been mentioned in multilateral discussions for decades, its definition and full application is now, more than ever, a high priority for the international community.
- We must work together in a true spirit of solidarity and shared purpose to make this a reality for migrants and their families worldwide, as well for all of our societies of migration. This is our moment, and we must not fail.

For your information, a more elaborate summary of the discussions and recommendations put forward in the past two days will be shared with you in the coming days.

I hope that you will join us for the second International Dialogue on Migration that will take place on 18-19 July in Geneva, focused on ensuring practical protection and assistance for migrants in vulnerable situations, as part of IOM's work to contribute to your efforts to elaborate and adopt a meaningful Global Compact by 2018.

I thank all panelists and all of you once more for your participation and important contributions to this debate, the outcome of which will inform the coming stages of the development of the Global Compact on Migration.

I would also like to thank all those who contributed to making this event a successful one. My sincere thanks go to the interpreters for their work and understanding and last but not least to all my IOM colleagues who worked tirelessly to prepare the event.

Thank you.