

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION

PANEL-5: The Global Compact on Migration: an opportunity to synergize the efforts of the international community

(19 April 2017, Conference Room 1, UNHQ, 11:30-13:00 hours)

Thank you Ambassador Schmidt-Bremme.

It is a pleasure to be here today. I thank IOM for organizing this dialogue meeting dedicated to the Global Compact on migration (GCM).

I know very well that our Moderator is very disciplined, so I will try to be very brief.

The mass movement of people is one of the most significant challenges the world faces today. We must bear in mind that active conflicts have almost tripled over the last decade, where it led to mass migration to neighbouring countries and beyond creating pressure on economies, social life and politics. We believe that proximity to the place that caused the problem should not mean responsibility. Therefore, the need for a new approach to manage the challenges of global mobility, built on reasonable responsibility sharing is ever more pressing. We should be able to “put in place policies to manage the flows of people in ways that benefit countries of origin, route and destination while ensuring the wellbeing of the migrants themselves”.

I believe that the Global Compact on migration provides the international community with the opportunity to create a more coherent, comprehensive and better coordinated approaches to the migration, as well as strengthening international cooperation among all stakeholders.

It has the potential to make a real difference to the lives of some of the world’s most vulnerable people and inject the necessary hope to those, who are concerned for their future and may in end fall in the hands of the smugglers and traffickers. We should exert every effort to make this historic opportunity a success.

In this respect, **first and foremost**, we need an open and honest dialogue that will pave the way for a strengthened cooperation. This will enable us to coordinate and harmonize our efforts. Given the complex nature of migration, cooperation among all stakeholders with a “whole of society” approach is a *sine qua non*. Governments, international organizations, civil society, private sector, local authorities and migrants themselves have joint responsibility to address migration challenges and the plights of migrants. In order to respond these challenges properly, we should unify our efforts.

As you all know, Turkey is now hosting the largest number of refugees. We have more than 2.9 million Syrians in our country. We have spent nearly 26 billion US Dollars in order to provide shelter, food, non-food items, education as well as meeting their medical needs. This huge responsibility is shouldered by our Government, together with municipalities, civil society and citizens themselves. We believe that this exemplary cooperation gave us the chance to better respond the tragedies. However, we could have done more together with the international community to address the needs of Syrians, especially in the field of education, like achieving 100% in schooling of the Syrian children, if adequate responsibility sharing was provided.

Moreover, as the Chair of the GFMD in 2014-2015, we had an opportunity to witness how a platform can bring together various stakeholders to discuss different issues with success. Indeed, some of the topics elaborated at the GFMD are sensitive ones that are mostly avoided to be discussed at the international fora. But in the end, we saw that governments, international organizations, civil society and private sector can create a synergy to address contemporary challenges.

I believe that we can make use of the experience accumulated by the GFMD at the GCM process. It has fostered the sharing of countless ideas, programs and policies. At the GFMD platform, we discussed nearly all the themes that are mentioned in the modalities resolution. We can distill the ideas, practices and recommendations that were discussed during its meetings. The GFMD dialogue on GCM that was held last week in Geneva was very successful to this end. Taking this opportunity, I would like to praise the work of the GFMD and congratulate Ambassador Bremme-Schmidt and our Moroccan colleagues for the excellent Co-Chairmanship. We are looking forward to continue our discussions at the Berlin Summit.

Another good example of successful dialogue is the Budapest Process that we have been chairing since 2006. With the participation of over 50 governments and 10 international organizations, this consultative Process aims at developing comprehensive and sustainable systems for managing migration. We held a special meeting of it on 2 March 2017 in İstanbul to assess the contribution it can make to the GCM process. We will convey our input in due course.

Besides GFMD and the Budapest Process, we are aiming to exploit every opportunity generated by other existing platforms. To this end, within the framework of our 2017 MIKTA Chairmanship, we are planning to host a MIKTA migration and refugees meeting in May 2017, in İstanbul, in order to discuss the issues related to migration, as well as work on the ways to develop a common MIKTA input to the GCM.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to call on all countries and relevant stakeholders to redouble their efforts, in order to keep the migration issues at the top of the international agenda.

Secondly, many of the migration challenges now confronting us have resulted from a piecemeal approach. We know that this approach is no longer sustainable. Therefore, we aim to strengthen our coordination on migration management at the Governmental level. In accordance with our landmark legislation “The Law on Foreigners and International Protection”, we hold regular meetings of the Migration Policy Board with the high level participation from all government institutions. During the Board meetings, we assess migration related issues in depth, discuss ways and means to respond challenges and elaborate on possible solutions for the problems we face.

Based on our experience in this respect, I would like to urge all the countries to strengthen their coordination among the Government institutions in the field of migration management. This will no doubt serve the interests of both countries themselves and migrants.

Thirdly, at the international level, we need to break down the silos. Most of the global challenges are intertwined today. Nearly all of our problems are embedded to each other, creating layers of complexity which neither a country nor an international organization can address solely. This is an ambitious aim to achieve. However, we believe that international community can create a unified vision and equip itself with the necessary tools to reach this goal. We can work together to build cross-sectoral, global multi-stakeholder partnerships.

In this regard, GFMD Business Mechanism stands as a unique example. It is established during our Chairmanship together with Switzerland. Today, it gathers a large number of representatives from private sector, government officials, civil society and international organizations. We aimed this Mechanism to be a platform to exchange ideas on how to strengthen the cooperation to overcome the difficulties we face in different sectors. That is to say, on how to break the silos and create a holistic approach with the participation of relevant stakeholders.

I would also like to commend the valuable work carried out by the Global Migration Group (GMG) in creating synergy among 22 UN entities. I am looking forward to hear more about their work.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The global compact should be shaped around a strong human rights perspective. We must uphold the human rights of migrants and refugees – especially in the face of rising anti-migrant sentiment, xenophobia and discrimination. Recognising that right-wing extremism can have an impact on that radicalisation we must also consider ways of addressing prejudice against and the social stigmatization of migrants to promote tolerance, and respect for all migrants.

On the other hand, I believe the goals and targets in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda serve as important starting points to destroy the bricks among different sectors. I am confident that with the guidance of the UN organizations, acting as one voice, we will achieve to realize these goals. In this regard, as migration with its various aspects is covered in several goals and targets, it will be useful to reflect our work on the GCM to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and create synergy among these highly intertwined processes.

The global compact should be seized as an opportunity –by states and all other stakeholders– to ensure that the global compact for migration should not be regarded as the end of the process, but rather a beginning. Turkey attaches great importance on a framework for the follow-up and review of implementation of the compact.

Before concluding, let me shortly express our appreciation to the IOM for its valuable work in the field of migration. As a UN related agency and also as it was called to jointly service the GCM process in the modalities resolution, I am confident that it will continue to guide us through this period, by organizing consultations and meetings as well as preparing policy and research papers. We count on its support.

We have nearly 17 months to finalize our efforts towards preparing a GCM. In this process, we need a climate of understanding and enhanced cooperation in order to

develop innovative and more forward-looking policies to address the challenges migrants face.

Thank you.