

IOM International Dialogue on Migration :

Strengthening international cooperation on and governance of migration towards the adoption of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration

Panel 6 – Implementing the Global Compact on Migration: existing and envisaged cooperation and follow-up mechanisms

18-19 April 2017, New York

Intervention by Ambassador Jürg Lauber

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Colleagues,

At the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the IOM for the organization of this international dialogue on migration and for inviting me to participate on this panel.

We are now at the very beginning of the GCM consultation phase. In this crucial phase Member States and other stakeholders will collect and discuss substance, look at a broad spectrum of topics from different angles and develop concrete recommendations on all topics relevant to migration. Since implementation, cooperation and follow-up depend very much on substance, I believe this discussion will gain all its importance during the Stocktaking Conference in Mexico, in December 2017. As I mentioned in other occasions, I firmly believe that it will be of utmost importance that we are guided by a spirit of curiosity, and an openness to unfamiliar and innovative ideas elaborated from all stakeholders – I am therefore eager to hear from the other

panelists but from all participants present today in the room as well, your views on this topic. Ultimately, the credibility and impact of the global compact will depend on its practicality as an instrument to deal with the challenges ahead – to ensure both, we depend on the common understanding and foresight that can be achieved in fora such as this one.

Guidance on the implementation of the global compact for migration can be drawn directly from the New York Declaration. I would therefore like to bring to the table today some principles outlined in the Declaration, paired with examples on how my country, Switzerland, is already implementing them as part of our foreign migration policy. I will then conclude with some reflections on what I believe are some of the existing gaps in cooperation.

The Declaration highlights the importance of policy coherence and the relevance for policies to promote holistic approaches. Switzerland develops and implements its foreign migration policy following a *whole of government approach* – this means that all federal agencies concerned by the phenomenon of migration work together to define and implement the Swiss foreign migration policy. This cooperation mechanism, endorsed at the highest political level, guarantees a balance between different interests and increases the coherence when it comes to implementing projects and defining priority areas of engagement. But it also ensures follow-up: each year, a progress report drafted by all agencies is submitted to the Federal Council, and subsequently, to the Parliament – this report enables foreign migration policy priorities to be set for the following year or for the medium-term and it provides an important platform for discussions between the administration and parliamentarians.

Paragraph 11 of the Declaration states and I quote “International cooperation and, in particular, cooperation among countries of origin or nationality, transit and destination, has never been more important”. In 2008, Switzerland developed the instrument of migration partnerships that we have since established with a number of States. These partnerships give the possibility to develop a shared understanding of the issue while joining forces to fight the negative aspects that might be part of it, such as trafficking in human beings. The concrete projects supported in the context of migration partnership are also accompanied by a regular dialogue with the respective authorities. This is an indispensable part in building trust and better understanding the different but at times also very similar realities.

In addition to bilateral government-to-government partnerships, multi-stakeholder alliances as mentioned in paragraph 15 are of equal importance for the implementation, not only of the commitments taken last year but also for the global compact. I am glad to see Mr. Fragomen on the panel, representing the GFMD Business Mechanisms, an initiative strongly supported by Switzerland. Knowing that he will address much more substantially the role of the private sector, I can limit myself to one point. The majority of people migrating do so for work and the vast majority of refugees and displaced persons want, once they and their families feel safe and protected again, access to jobs. The private sector is thus a pinnacle partner. Having them at the table, as we do through the GFMD Business Mechanism, is critical for the way forward. Equally important are civil society organizations. In Switzerland we have a civil society platform that does not only help strengthening the voice of civil society but acts also as a permanent interlocutor for my government to foster a constructive dialogue.

One final example taken from the Declaration is the call for enhanced global and regional dialogue and deepened collaboration on migration, particularly through exchanges of best practice and mutual learning and the development of national or regional initiatives. The GFMD has played and is currently playing an important role with regard to the follow-up of the migration related targets of the 2030 agenda. Switzerland presented the idea at the GFMD Summit in Istanbul for the creation of an ad hoc working group on this matter. This group, currently co-chaired by Germany and Bangladesh, has after the Summit in Dhaka, integrated discussions relating to the elaboration of the GCM and we should certainly consider them in our future reflections. Switzerland is also engaged and supporting various regional consultative processes. We have the honor for example of being invited as an observer to the Abu Dhabi Dialogue. The fourth ministerial consultations held earlier this year in Colombo, endorsed the proposal for the Abu Dhabi Dialogue to play an active role in the GCM process. We need this political commitment and leadership in the coming 18 months but also beyond.

Finally, allow me to make some considerations on some cooperation gaps that I can observe and where I believe the international community could make some progress, especially when it comes to implementation:

- First, the interlinkages between the different levels, regional, sub-regional to global, but also local, national to global should be encouraged and reinforced, to ensure that realities on the ground and the global discussions are synchronized – to ensure complementarity between dialogue and practice, and more importantly to translate commitments into practice.

- Second, international migration divides into a range of different policy categories and each of these is regulated differently at the global level. We need however to avoid the silo approaches and make more systematically the links between policy areas such as development, human security, humanitarian issues, trade, human rights, to mention just a few.
- Third, governance of migration is based on a range of different formal and informal institutions, operating at different levels, sometimes inside of the UN, sometimes outside – governance assumes a variety of forms including migration policies and programmes of individual countries, interstate discussions and agreements, multilateral fora and consultative processes, the activities of international organizations as well as the laws and norms. And the governance of migration also involves a wide range of actors including, but not limited to States – in this complex landscape, we now need to find a way to make all the pieces better work together.

I thank you for your attention.