Senior Officials Meeting (SOM)

The first Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of the Almaty Process on Refugee Protection and International Migration took place in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 21 November 2014. The meeting was organized by the Chair of the Almaty Process, the Republic of Kazakhstan with the support and participation of IOM and UNHCR.

The purpose of the one day Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) was to identify and provide recommendations for responding to potential mixed migration movements from Afghanistan post 2014 in Central Asia and the broader region and to share experiences and good practices on emergency preparedness and border management; profiling and referral of migrants and asylum seekers; and regional cooperation on mixed migration flows.

Labour migration has been acknowledged as a fundamental factor of socioeconomic development by Central Asia governments. The second Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of the Almaty Process in Astana, Kazakhstan on 22nd September 2015, focus on new migration trends, opportunities and challenges in Central Asia and the wider region, addressing solutions for migrants and refugees.

Trends Analysis

IOM in Central Asia is committed to support states, migrants and communities in addressing the challenges of mixed migration flows, through analysis of trends and root causes as well as through sharing of information and dissemination of good practices.

“The Migration Crisis Operational Framework Central Asia, Compendium 2015” outlines the critical importance of ensuring that emergency/border authorities are prepared to respond appropriately to cross-border movements arising from nature or man-made disasters fully guaranteeing the rights of the vulnerable populations.

The IOM Development Fund report “Mapping on Irregular Migration in Central Asia”, 2014 offers a regional analysis on irregular migration flows, and provides recommendations on regional cooperation in addressing the issue of irregular migration. It also identifies country-specific issues and discusses measures as well as highlights future policy directions based on international standards.

Partnerships

IOM in Central Asia works closely with UN agencies (UNHCR, UNDP, WHO, OCHA, etc) as well as with other national and international stakeholders in addressing issues of common interest and concern. Synergies and complementarities of actions, for sustainability of results, are in the core of IOM’s approach in addressing mixed migration flows in Central Asia.
Addressing Mixed Migration flows through Capacity Building in Central Asia

What is Mixed Migration Flows?

Mixed migration flows are defined as complex population movements including refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants and other migrants. Across Central Asia, people engage in a variety of movements both with regard to their duration, geographical scope and purpose. The project pays specific attention to vulnerable groups within mix migration flows as many of them end up with irregular status which could jeopardize their rights and dignity (victims of trafficking, undocumented minors, re-entry banned migrants, etc.).

Capacity Building

IOM in Central Asia aims to strengthen the capacities of government and civil society partners for achieving sustainable results so that mixed migration flows can be managed in a humane manner, consistent with international law.

The Regional Forum on “International Cooperation in the area of Migration and Emergency Preparedness”, held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan (17-18 June, 2015), in cooperation with the Government of Turkmenistan, brought together forty government officials from Central Asian countries and Afghanistan to share good practices in Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Preparedness under IOM’s Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF). A regional training on Disaster Risk Reduction, Emergency Response and IOM’s MCOF took place in Almaty, Kazakhstan (14-15 September, 2015).

The event is regarded as a preparatory event ahead of the World Humanitarian Summit (Istanbul 2016). It also addressed key recommendations on how the humanitarian system must evolve to better tackle challenges of today including: protecting the human rights of all migrants, ensuring all migrants in a situation of vulnerability have access to humanitarian assistance, expanding partnerships within the humanitarian response to include affected populations, national civil society and the private sector, increasing focus on disaster risk reduction for resilience, and finally, promoting of coherence between humanitarian action and development planning.

Policy Dialogue and Regional Cooperation

IOM cooperates closely with the governments of Central Asia and neighboring states in promoting inter-state and regional dialogue and harmonization of policies between migrant receiving and sending countries. IOM, through bringing Central Asia government officials together, is facilitating dialogue on all aspects of migration so as to advance understanding of the opportunities and challenges it presents, identification and development of effective policies for addressing those challenges as well as comprehensive approaches and measures for advancing regional cooperation.

Almaty Process

The Almaty Process on Refugee Protection and International Migration was initiated in 2011 by the Government of Kazakhstan, IOM and UNHCR. The first Regional Conference on “Refugee Protection and International Migration” was held in Almaty in March 2011, which resulted in the unanimous adoption of the Almaty Declaration. On 5 June 2013, The Almaty Process”, was lunched as a Regional Consultative Process (RCP) reaffirming the countries’ commitment to regional dialogue and practical cooperation in the area of International migration and Refugee protection. Member states of Almaty Process are: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan. Iran and Pakistan hold Observer Status.