



THE NEW YORK DECLARATION FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS AND THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. *The New York Declaration: what is it, and why is it important for international cooperation on migration?*

On 19 September 2016, Heads of State and Government at the United Nations General Assembly adopted the [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#). As the first ever UN declaration on migration adopted at this level, the New York Declaration sends an important political message that migration and refugee matters have become major issues in the international agenda, and that there is a pressing need for a comprehensive approach to human mobility and to enhance global cooperation on migration.

The New York Declaration represents a watershed moment in the effort to improve international cooperation and governance of migration. Its Annex II set in motion a process of intergovernmental consultations and negotiations that will culminate in the adoption of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration (GCM) at an intergovernmental conference on international migration in 2018.

2. *What is a “compact”?*

The term “compact” refers to an agreement between states on matters of common interest or concern. Compacts are a useful way of giving voice to shared principles and goals, and encouraging parties to them to enact policies consistent with those principles and goals. The GCM will represent how Member States intend to conduct themselves in the future on migration governance.

3. *What role do the Co-facilitators of the GCM process have?*

The Co-facilitators of the GCM process are the Permanent Representatives of Mexico and Switzerland to the United Nations in New York. They were appointed by the President of the General Assembly (PGA) on 6 April 2017.

The [Modalities Resolution](#) for the New York Declaration states that the role of the Co-facilitators is to “lead the intergovernmental consultations and negotiations on issues related to the GCM, the intergovernmental conference as well as their preparatory process, in regular coordination and consultation with all Member States and regional groups”. This includes co-chairing six informal thematic sessions (described below) during the consultation phase of the GCM.

The Co-Facilitators will also co-chair a stocktaking meeting in Guadalajara, Mexico, on 4 – 6 December 2017, at which inputs received during the consultation phase of the GCM process will be presented and discussed. The Co-facilitators will draw heavily on the summary and outcomes of the stocktaking meeting in preparing the zero draft of the GCM, which will be used to initiate Member State negotiations on the text of the GCM starting in February 2018.



4. What is the role of the SRSG in the GCM process?

UN Secretary-General Guterres appointed Louise Arbour as the Special Representative of the Secretary General for International Migration (SRSG) and as the Secretary General of the intergovernmental conference on international migration in 2018. She is also tasked to lead UN system-wide preparations for, and input to, the intergovernmental conference and work with Member States in partnership with other stakeholders. The SRSG is tasked with ensuring that the GCM process benefits from the expertise of the UN system, including specialized and related agencies and the UN Regional Economic Commissions, and with facilitating their contribution to the Member State-led process.

In assisting the PGA with organizing the six thematic sessions, the SRSG is also responsible, with the support of IOM, for the development of inter-agency issue briefs for each thematic session, drawing on the expertise of the Global Migration Group (GMG) and other relevant entities. The SRSG also developed, in consultation with IOM, the [detailed workplan](#) which charts the various steps involved in each phase of the GCM process.

As part of the stocktaking phase of the GCM process, the SRSG, in close consultation with IOM, will develop a report with facts, figures, challenges and opportunities, to inform the zero draft of the GCM and the subsequent negotiations phase.

5. What is the role of the President of the General Assembly (PGA) in the GCM process?

In addition to appointing Co-facilitators to lead the intergovernmental consultations and negotiations on the GCM, the PGA is also responsible, with the support of the SRSG and by drawing upon the expertise of IOM in particular, for organizing the six thematic sessions that the Co-Facilitators are co-chairing during the consultations phase between April–November 2017. Moderators for each panel of each thematic session are Member State representatives chosen by the PGA. The PGA is also responsible for registering the participation in the GCM process of relevant non-governmental organizations, including civil society and the private sector, that do not already hold consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC).

The PGA will also organize and preside over a total of four days of informal interactive multi-stakeholder hearings between April 2017 and June 2018. These hearings will be attended by a variety of non-governmental stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, private sector representatives and academic institutions. The summaries of the hearings will be submitted as inputs to the intergovernmental negotiations phase of the GCM process.

6. What is IOM's role in the development of the GCM?

Although the development of the GCM is a Member State-led process, the Modalities Resolution envisions a prominent role for IOM throughout:

1. The preamble welcomes IOM into the UN system, and notes its “important role in jointly servicing the negotiations”.
2. Paragraph 11: IOM is to jointly service the full process, providing technical and policy expertise.
3. Paragraph 15: the PGA is to organize informal thematic sessions, “drawing upon the expertise of IOM in particular”.



4. Paragraph 18: IOM is to support the Secretary General (SRSG) in the development of the inter-agency issues briefs for the thematic sessions.
5. Paragraph 22: calls on the Secretary General (the SRSG) of the conference, to develop a work plan, in close consultation with IOM, and make use of existing processes, mechanisms and initiatives on migration, including:
 - a. The Regional Economic Commissions and sub-regional bodies, with IOM in particular and others, are to organize discussions on regional aspects;
 - b. Member states are to contribute, including through the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), IOM's International Dialogue on Migration (IDM), the Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) on migration and others;
6. Paragraph 26: The Secretary General of the conference, in close consultation with IOM, is to present a report as input to the zero draft of the GCM.

IOM is working very closely with the SRSG, the PGA, and the Co-Facilitators, on the GCM. This has included seconding two staff members to the Office of the SRSG and providing regular and ongoing policy and technical expertise and substantive support through IOM staff in New York, IOM Headquarters, and IOM field offices.

7. What does the GCM aim to achieve?

The GCM will aim to enhance international cooperation on the governance of migration, by establishing a framework to address the challenges and opportunities posed by human mobility and all aspects of international migration. It will set out a range of principles, commitments and understandings among Member States regarding all aspects of international migration, including the humanitarian, development, human rights, climate change and peace and security dimensions. It is expected to articulate actionable commitments on migration as well as means for their implementation. While neither the New York Declaration nor the Modalities Resolution expressly state whether the GCM will be binding, it is unlikely that a binding instrument could be achieved in the time available. Member States could, however, choose to be bound by some or all commitments laid out in the GCM.

8. How can we expect the GCM to make a difference to migrants around the world?

The GCM presents a unique opportunity for the international community to move away from reactive approaches to migration governance, and to determine the steps to be taken to reach a common future in which migration is safe, orderly and regular. Ultimately, the GCM will be about people, and could identify concrete measures to facilitate implementation of the existing normative framework for migrants, and help improve migration governance in pursuit of a world where people move out of genuine choice, and not necessity. It could accomplish this by encouraging States to take actions that would be beneficial for them and migrants alike, such as establishing and facilitating access to regular migration channels, improved recognition of migrants' skills and credentials, increased opportunities for family reunification, enhanced cooperation on return, and stronger measures to counter racism and xenophobia. How the GCM will make a difference to migrants will ultimately be up to States, as they will negotiate what it will include and exclude.



9. What difference will the GCM make for States?

The GCM will ideally identify key areas of action to which States will commit in their efforts to improve migration governance. Much like the 2030 Development Agenda, the GCM has the potential to make clear to States and other migration actors what areas of migration governance need improvement to achieve safe, orderly and regular migration.

The GCM will include a series of principles, commitments, and understandings that will necessarily strike a balance between the perspectives of origin, transit, and destination countries, recognizing that each of them have responsibilities and a crucial role to play in governing international migration, to ensure it benefits all. While ambitious, the GCM is intended to be grounded in reality, and will reflect an approach that combines the pursuit of tangible outcomes based on robust evidence with the need to develop and maintain strong partnerships between and amongst States, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders.

10. Is there a role for civil society organizations and other non-government actors?

Civil society organizations and other non-governmental actors play a very important role in the migration process, and their contribution will be of immense benefit to the GCM. The Modalities Resolution specifically recognizes that non-state actors, including civil society organizations, NGOs, the private sector, and academia, have a role to play in the GCM process. They have opportunities to contribute to the GCM process through numerous consultative mechanisms, including the thematic sessions, the regional consultations convened by UN Regional Economic Commissions (RECs), national multi-stakeholder consultations convened by national governments, and dedicated regional civil society consultations supported by IOM.

While the Modalities Resolution does not explicitly foresee regional civil society consultations, IOM has established a consultancy arrangement with a civil society liaison focal point, who is coordinating civil society organization and helping ensure that civil society has adequate opportunities to feed into the GCM process.

Although IOM is lending its substantial migration policy and technical expertise to the GCM process, we recognize the value of ensuring all voices with relevant migration knowledge and experience should be heard during the development of the GCM, not least that of academia. To facilitate the effective inclusion of academia's wealth of migration expertise in the GCM process, IOM has established the Migration Research Leaders Syndicate, comprised of the world's leading migration researchers, who will join in sharing their expertise and knowledge in support of the GCM. More information on the Syndicate can be found [here](#).

11. What are the next steps for the GCM?

The process of developing the GCM will consist of three components:

1. Phase I: April—November 2017: Consultations

This phase provides the opportunity to open the discussion to all relevant stakeholders at global, regional, national and local level. The principal consultation mechanisms for the GCM process are six thematic sessions under the banner of six themes outlined in the [modalities resolution](#) of the New York Declaration:



- May 8-9 (Geneva): Thematic session 1 – human rights, social inclusion, cohesion, discrimination, including racism, xenophobia and intolerance.
- May 22 – 23 (New York): Thematic session 2 – addressing drivers of migration, incl. climate change, natural disasters & human-made crises, through protection and assistance, sustainable development, poverty eradication, conflict prevention and resolution.
- June 19 – 20 (Geneva): Thematic session 3 – international cooperation and governance of migration in all its dimensions, including at borders, transit, entry, return, readmission, integration and reintegration.
- July 24 – 25 (New York): Thematic session 4 – contributions of migrants and diasporas to development, including remittances and portability of earned benefits.
- September 4 – 5 (Vienna): Thematic session 5 – smuggling of migrants, trafficking in persons and slavery, including identification, protection and assistance.
- October 12 – 13 (Geneva): Thematic session 6 – irregular migration and regular pathways, including decent work, labor mobility, recognition of skill and qualifications.

Regional consultations

In addition, the Modalities Resolution asks the UN Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) to organize regional GCM consultations to capture regional perspectives on migration. IOM is working with and supporting each of these regional consultations. More information on the Regional Consultations, including indicative locations and dates, is available [here](#).

Multi-stakeholder hearings

The Office of the President of the General Assembly will also preside over four days of informal interactive consultation hearings for NGOs. Indicative dates for these hearings can be found [here](#).

National multi-stakeholder consultations

In line with the Modalities Resolution, which encourages the hosting of national GCM consultations, IOM has reached out to governments around the world to encourage them to host multi-stakeholder consultations at the national level. The aim of these consultations is to ensure that the migration governance realities facing states, as distinct from those faced by wider regions, can inform the development of the GCM.

Regional civil society consultations

IOM has established a civil society liaison focal point, who will coordinate a series of dedicated regional consultations for civil society organizations, to help ensure that civil society has adequate opportunities to feed into the GCM process. This reflects the important roles civil society and NGOs play in migration governance at the national and regional levels. More information on the Regional civil society consultations, including locations and dates, is available [here](#).



Regional Consultative Processes

The Modalities Resolution invites Member States and other relevant stakeholders to contribute to the preparatory process of the global compact through, inter alia, regional and sub-regional consultative processes.

IOM is working worldwide with regional consultative processes on migration (RCPs) to help those that are interested in developing inputs to the GCM. Many RCPs have had, or are planning, dedicated discussions on the GCM. IOM's annual Global RCP (GRCP) meeting, in Geneva on 10-11 October 2017, will be dedicated to the GCM. Participants will include the chairs and secretariats of more than 20 RCPs and inter-regional fora on migration from across the world; representatives from the UN RECs; the co-chairs of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD); the SRSG; and the GCM Co-facilitators.

International Dialogue on Migration

The International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) is IOM's primary policy dialogue forum for Member and Observer States and partner intergovernmental and non-governmental entities. In line with the Modalities Resolution, which identifies IDM as one of the fora through which Member States and other relevant stakeholders are invited to contribute to the preparatory process of the global compact, IOM devoted both of its 2017 to the GCM.

The April 2017 IDM on strengthening international cooperation and governance of migration, and the July 2017 IDM on migrants in vulnerable situations were attended by more than 400 participants from all regions and perspectives. The summary conclusion documents from both IDMs can be found [here](#), and will be submitted to the Office of the SRSG and the Co-facilitators as input to the GCM preparatory process.

2. Phase II: December 2017—January 2018: Stocktaking

The stocktaking phase will begin with a meeting in Guadalajara, Mexico planned for 4 – 6 December 2017. The aim of the meeting will be to pull together and analyze all relevant input received during the consultations phase. The outcomes of the stocktaking will feed into the zero draft of the GCM that will be prepared by the Co-facilitators, which will provide the basis for the third phase: intergovernmental negotiations.

3. Phase III: February 2018—July 2018: Intergovernmental negotiations

This phase will be initiated with the submission to Member States by the Co-facilitators of the zero draft of the GCM. The zero draft will serve as the starting point for negotiations, with the final GCM to be adopted in 2018 at an intergovernmental conference on international migration. The Modalities Resolution envisages 3 – 5 days of intergovernmental negotiations on the GCM each month from February through June 2017. A second Modalities Resolution will be developed in the second half of 2017 to agree on the particulars of the 2018 intergovernmental conference on international migration at which the GCM is expected to be presented for adoption, including dates, duration, location, and structure of sessions.

12. *Can anyone contribute to the consultations?*

The Office of the SRSG has created a mailbox to receive contributions to the GCM process. Any Member State, organization, private entity, or indeed, private citizen, can have their say. To be most useful,



contributions are encouraged to be brief, to the point, and to contain specific recommendations for action related to one or more of the six thematic areas. Contributions should be received before the end of the consultations phase, and can be sent to gcmigration@un.org.

13. How will the outcomes of the various consultation processes feed into the GCM?

The consultation phase of the GCM process will culminate with the stocktaking meeting in Guadalajara, Mexico, on 4-6 December 2017. The stocktaking meeting will be the opportunity to present inputs from all relevant processes during the consultation phase, to engage in discussion and analyze the inputs received, and to discuss potential means of implementation, as well as follow-up and review mechanisms for the GCM. It is envisaged that the outcome statements from each thematic session, as well as those from all the other consultation processes, will feed into the discussion at the stocktaking meeting.

On the basis of discussions and recommendations expressed at the stocktaking meeting, the Co-facilitators will prepare a stocktaking summary, which will feed into the zero draft of the GCM. IOM will also work closely with the SRSG to draft the Secretary General's report to inform the zero draft. This report will include facts and figures, as well as challenges and opportunities, based on the full range of inputs available, and will provide Member States with recommendations before the commencement of the negotiations phase.

The Global Compact on Refugees

14. What is it, and how will it differ from the GCM?

While recognizing the common challenges faced by refugees and migrants in large movements, the New York Declaration launched the process for the development of two separate compacts—one for refugees, and one for migration, in recognition of the distinct legal framework for refugees. The processes for developing the two compacts are also distinct. The GCM is being developed through a Member State-led process, in which IOM has a supporting role through the provision of policy and technical expertise. In contrast, the development of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) is being led by UNHCR, albeit through a multi-stakeholder approach that includes national and local authorities, international organizations, civil society, and academia, amongst others.

The New York Declaration also directs UNHCR to inform the GCR by utilizing the comprehensive refugee response (CRRF) framework, as outlined in Annex I of the New York Declaration, in a variety of scenarios. The text of Annex I, which contains the CRRF, is broken down and organized around four elements or pillars. These pillars largely track the stages of refugee movements: Admission and Reception; Support for Immediate and On-Going Needs; Support for Host Countries and Communities, and Durable Solutions.

What is new or different about the CRRF is its emphasis on how these stages should be implemented. The CRRF's stated objectives are that implementation should be done through a lens of easing pressures on host countries; enhancing refugee self-reliance; expanding third country options, and supporting return. The CRRF is also intended to engage a wide range of stakeholders; encourage investment and innovation; involve both humanitarian responses and development actions early on; support local services in hosting refugees; and link national and local humanitarian and development strategies.



More information about the GCR and the CRRF pilot projects can be found [here](#).

15. Does IOM have a role to play in the Global Compact on Refugees?

IOM and UNHCR are consulting closely throughout the development of both Compacts. In the New York Declaration, Member States ask UNHCR to consult with relevant stakeholders on the development of the GCR. Given that the issues of migration and international protection for refugees are inextricably linked, IOM is in good stead to contribute its significant migration policy and operational expertise to the development of the CRRF, and to help ensure coherence between the two compacts.

16. How will the compacts be complementary?

Despite the differences in the processes to develop the two compacts, both IOM and UNHCR are committed to working to help ensure complementarity and coherence between the two compacts. Migrants and refugees face many common challenges, and close attention will need to be given to those issues that have relevance to both. The fundamental premise that migrants and refugees are all people and should be treated with dignity and respect for their fundamental human rights will be central to both compacts.

Noting that the process for the GCM is led by Member States, IOM and UNHCR are already in close discussion on how best to work towards complementarity between the two compacts.

