



## **STOCKTAKING PHASE FOR THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION IN PUERTO VALLARTA, MEXICO**

From December 4 to 6, the United Nations held the stocktaking meeting of the Intergovernmental Conference to adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. The participants were from 136 member states, with over of 400 delegates, 16 international Non-Governmental Organizations, VIVAT International among them, and UN specialized agencies.

The stocktaking phase considered the inputs received from five regional meetings, two multi-stakeholder hearings, seven regional civil society consultations, and around 70 national consultations. The co-chairs of the meeting were the Permanent Representatives of Mexico and Switzerland to the United Nations in New York, Juan Jose Gomez Camacho and Jürg Lauber, the co-facilitators for the Global Compact for Migration (GCM).

In the welcome ceremony, Louise Arbour, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for International Migration, gave an historical talk about the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) process, and expressed that there is a “lot of misperception in the migration field that needs to be addressed”. People need to change the narrative of migration, and this narrative needs to be based on facts and not on perceptions. Luis Videgaray Caso, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, who also participated in the welcome ceremony, stressed that Mexico believes in the construction of bridges and not in walls. He, as many participating States, lamented the withdrawal of the USA from the UN process of the GCM. However, Videgaray expressed, Mexico will continue to work together with the USA in migration issues, since millions of Mexican people live in the USA.

During the first day, in the retrospection session, looking back on phase 1, the panelists coming from UN agencies, academics, civil society, and parliamentarians stressed the importance of change narrative and misperceptions driving public opinion and public policies about migration. In order to change these narratives, the panelists also shared facts about the impact of migration in development. For instance, 3.5% of the migrant population has contributed 9% of global GDP. Also, the impact of remittances is high in the origin countries. Migrants have a positive impact on the development of the origin and destination countries.

The panelists also spoke against the detention of unaccompanied children and the criminalization of migration. They asked for regularizing migration, and having the GCM a gender perspective. They highlighted the importance to involve everybody in the process. Gabriela Cuevas, the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, expressed that the parliamentarians are the ones who realize how the community is changing for the migration flows, and they are the ones signing, ratifying, and implementing international treaties and agreements.

Mr. Luis Raúl González Pérez, the President of the National Human Rights Commission of Mexico, speaking on behalf of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), mentioned the importance of having an accountability mechanism for the GCM. This should have principles of

coherence and consistency, public access and transparency, responsibility for monitoring and oversight of the GCM, participation and integration of all the stakeholders, and results-based work with clear timeframe and targets.

The stocktaking meeting included a Ted-Talks lab, as a “platform to stimulate analysis with innovative initiatives, ideas, visions and concrete objectives”. The speakers were from the civil society and business sector. The topics were about data and evidence, the public perceptions and narratives about migration, and migration and identity.

In the second day, the participants were divided in action groups discussing and analyzing the six dimensions from different perspectives: human, community, local/sub-national, national, regional and global dimensions. The participants proposed “actionable commitments and means of implementation.” At the end of each session, the moderator and rapporteur summarized the discussion and main outcomes of the action group.

The human dimension group rapporteur said that migration is about people who decide to move, and the voice of migrants needs to be heard in the GCM. People are the center in the GCM, and protection to the people is a responsibility, especially the children and migrants in vulnerable situations.

The community dimension group highlighted that a better protection of migrants is two way process: to consider the needs of the migrants and the needs of the community. The communities can have a role in protecting migrants in vulnerable situations. It is needed to inform migrants and communities about their responsibilities and rights. The community should address xenophobia, provide language training to the migrants, and promote multicultural activities. The governments should support capacity building to the communities, especially the rural and indigenous.

In the local/subnational dimension, the rapporteur expressed that migration happens at local level, in the school, work, and churches, and it is here that the narrative of migration changes. There is a labor need, and the recruitment should be ethical. Women can be powerful contributors to development, and youth should be included in the migration agenda. The role of national human rights institutions should be considered. For the implementation of the GCM, the grassroots organizations, community and religious leaders should be involved in the process.

The national dimension group asked for a disaggregated data, a better analysis, and the inclusion of human rights protection for migrants. The States have the right to determine conditions of staying for migrants, and the return must be dignified and respectful to human rights. Also, the State has the commitment to fight trafficking in persons. The group urged to identify skills and facilitate employment creation. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) could help to identify gaps and provide capacity building to the States. The States can link migration policies to the 2030 agenda.

The action group about regional dimensions expressed the interest in regional mechanisms and the inclusion of a regional process in the GCM. The GCM should encourage regional mechanisms to come out with the best practices, policies, addressment of organize crime issues, and cooperation in fighting human trafficking and reducing human smuggling. Civil societies organizations participating in the group raised their voices asking for the need of a regional data base, and the addressment of the situation of missing migrants.

The global dimension group stressed the need of legal migration pathways and global standards for safe return of migrants. The participants expressed the importance that the GCM respects the sovereignty of the countries. Also, they suggested to have IOM leading the process and following it up.

In the follow up and implementation session, the panelists stressed that the GCM is the beginning of the migration process. The GCM should be transparent in finances and produce an annual report to the UN or expert panel, and be follow up through partnership. The IOM could have a leading coordinated role in the process, and following up the mechanism.

In the concluding session, Louise Arbour expressed that the UN Secretary-General's report on migration should be released before mid-January. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, the President of the UN General Assembly, alerted about "tough negotiations" will come for the GCM in 2018. Intergovernmental negotiations will begin in February 2018 and will conclude in July. The document will be complete around August-September, and the adoption of the Compact will be at the end of 2018 in a conference on international migration in Morocco.

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