

**Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)
Dhaka, Bangladesh
10 December 2016**

2016 GFMD CIVIL SOCIETY CHAIR'S REPORT

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Chair, Civil Society Days of the 2016 GFMD

Honorable Prime Minister, your excellencies, my fellow migrants, and other colleagues:

- Over the past 2 days, more than 200 civil society delegates from over 50 countries, and over 60 observers, guests, and governments, have met here during the Civil Society Days of the GFMD. These also included many of the 350+ participants of the People's Global Action on Migration, Development and Human Rights (PGA), held in the previous 2 days.
- Under the title "***Time for Action: Doing rights-based governance of migration in our communities and across borders***", we have looked at how we can implement people-centered, needs-first, rights-based policies in migration and human development, in work we do as civil society, and with you – governments, agencies and the private sector.
- I have highlighted the key outcomes from these:

Protection of Migrant Workers

- Migrant workers must be empowered to defend our labor rights. This requires effective complaints mechanisms for labor exploitation, and access to effective remedy. We should not face negative repercussions, and should have the opportunity to find employment, regularize, and access unpaid wages in a timely manner. Inspections should be carried out by social and labor authorities, in partnership with trade unions and workers' associations, and separate from immigration controls.
- The Business Mechanism in the GFMD could be used to increase cooperation with employers, to strengthen implementation of standards for ethical and transparent recruitment, and sourcing throughout the supply chain.

Protection of Migrants on the Move

- We applaud the New York Declaration for containing strong language for protection of ALL migrants, regardless of immigration status.
- Deterrence and migration “control” policies are ineffective, and deprive us, of our fundamental human rights. Instead of externalizing deterrence and migration “control,” we should externalize migrant “protections.”
 - One participant described, “...Deterrence policies in times of crisis, have the equivalent effect of fire-fighters rushing to a burning house, and then locking the doors!”
- The Global Compact must include binding commitments to address the root causes of forced displacement, and the human rights and humanitarian needs of migrants. These should be accompanied by financing and technical support for implementation.
- Women in migration are not “vulnerable populations,” in need of “rescue”. They are advocates for their rights, and agents of change. Immigration policies that create the contexts of exclusion, inequality, and rights violations, put women at risk and in a situation of vulnerability.

Social Inclusion

- National and local authorities, civil society, migrants and diaspora associations, should move away from ‘preaching to the converted’ when combating xenophobia. Instead we should promote social inclusion by targeting groups that buy into populism, or who fear migrants. This will address the irrational fear of the other, through genuine dialogue.
- We should work together to recognize and support cities, and local authorities, as first responders to migration. They are best placed to combat xenophobia and ensure social cohesion, as well as tap into the diaspora’s development potential.
- The UN-led Together Campaign must seek to address structural inequalities that either give rise to xenophobic attitudes, or allow them to take hold, rather than focusing on perceptions and narratives.
- In today’s increasingly xenophobic political climate, we must acknowledge the role that restrictive migration policies and political discourse have, in contributing to

the rise of xenophobic attitudes, and take action to shift the paradigm away from politicized discussion of migration.

Inclusive Development

- We should work together to ensure follow up, consistent support, realistic business planning, and mentoring, when promoting entrepreneurship and investment. We should focus on ‘formalization,’ especially for low skilled diaspora who might remit less than the highly skilled, but are more numerous, face considerably more challenges, and yet hold great development potential.
- We should ensure that remittance and diaspora investment has a whole community approach, to maximize their community development potential.

Global Governance and the Global Compact on Migration

- The Global Compact must have practical effects on the ground, improving the lives, opportunities, and respect for the human rights of all migrants. This is never more important than today, International Human Rights Day. It is critical that the Compact focus on policy coherence within a broad framework protecting migrant rights and mobility opportunities, as well as having goals, targets, and indicators, to facilitate implementation of that framework.
- In the Global Compact process, states should draw on multi-stakeholder processes, building from the local level up:
 - Civil society and local authorities have already been working together on strategies to make protection of human rights of all migrants a reality on the ground, through the use of firewalls, and enabling access to basic services.
- We should incorporate the **Guidelines and Principles on the human rights protections of migrants in vulnerable situations**, into the Compact.
- We pledge to strengthen civil society focus, and expression, of red-lines on return and readmission, towards the two Global Compacts.
- A child is a child. As such, children are a link between the 2 Global Compacts. Vertical discussions of children are not sufficient, but instead they should be cross-cutting.

- We must apply the **9 recommended principles to guide actions concerning children on the move**, and other affected children, and apply monitoring mechanisms to track change.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- Future GFMDs could link to monitoring achievement of migration-related SDGs.
 - Civil society can bring results of its own efforts, as well as partnerships with states. Next year's GFMD CSD could already have inputs from national or regional civil society actors.
- We must connect the SDGs' monitoring and achievement, to the Compact.
 - These should explicitly connect to the full range of migrant-related SDGs, and graduated over 2, 5, and 15 years.
- States should be “funding” ways, instead of just “finding” ways – they should support civil society efforts and partner with them.

Excellencies and colleagues, these are just a few highlights of the extensive discussions we engaged in over the past 2 days. We urge all governments to review the full reports of each of our sessions, which we can make available.

In the past few days, we have also been reminded countless times of how critical civil society is as a stakeholder and partner to states. We are encouraged to have unity of voice, and clear focus in our recommendations. We hope we have delivered on all those today. And we thank the government of Bangladesh for your leadership and partnership with civil society.

As we enter into the next phase of Global Compact deliberations, our resolution and commitment to each other will be fully tested. We believe, that only with real engagement and partnership, rooted firmly in the principles of rights and justice, can we reach a Compact that can bring real meaning, and change, to migrants' lives. Indeed, the Time for Action is upon us, and we look forward to embarking on that during this GFMD and beyond, in partnership with you. Thank you.