

Joint Civil Society Statement at the Conclusion of Negotiations on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration

New York, July 13, 2018

Co-facilitators, we are grateful for you and your staff's guidance and work over the past two years in producing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration. We appreciate your efforts to promote the voice and space for participation of civil society and migrant networks in a formal and diligent process.

We also acknowledge all participating Member States who have worked to create this agreement, particularly in a xenophobic political environment often hostile to understanding the realities of migrants and refugees. We express our strong hope that when properly implemented and with concerted efforts to address remaining gaps, the Compact provides Member States with a sound framework for governing migration in a manner which respects human rights and the rule of law.

We would like to highlight some of the significant achievements of the Compact:

- Working to end child detention;
- Expanding regular avenues for migration and measures for regularization as a way to increase safe, orderly, and regular migration and reduce vulnerabilities;
- Emphasizing community-based alternatives to detention, and not promoting detention as a deterrent to irregular migration;
- Protecting migrants in situations of vulnerability, including those fleeing slow and sudden onset natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change, and environmental degradation;
- Safeguarding the rights of children by adhering to the principle of the best interest of the child at all times and ensuring their protection and access to sustainable solutions;
- Ensuring decent work and labour rights
- Promoting concrete gender responsive policies and the empowerment of women as agents rather than from the lens of victims;
- Guaranteeing due process, individual assessment and effective remedy in return procedures, by upholding the prohibition on collective expulsion and the principle of non-refoulement;
- Strengthening the collection of data on migration in order to better inform humane policy responses, in a manner which respects the right to privacy;
- Investing in sustainable development at national and local levels in order to honour the right of migrants to live and support their families in their countries of origin;
- Cooperating to provide international protection to migrants in situations of vulnerability at borders;

Unfortunately, the Compact falls short in several important areas and in some aspects steps away from current international standards and regional practice. For example: we regret that no stronger language could be achieved on the non-criminalisation of migrants and of those who provide support to them, on firewalls, access to basic services and on full labour rights and freedom of association for irregular migrant workers.

Nonetheless, we will interpret such formulations in a way that fully adheres to international law. Indeed, we aim to strengthen them in their implementation and seek to hold governments and stakeholders accountable in the follow-up and review process. This is the beginning, not the end.

In this regard, we look forward to participating in the concrete next steps. We will continue to work on behalf of migrants and their communities around the world, with the goal of ensuring their human rights and upholding their human dignity.

Signatories:

1. Caritas Internationalis
2. Global Coalition on Migration
3. International Catholic Migration Commission
4. International Council of Voluntary Agencies
5. Instituto para las Mujeres en la Migracion, Mexico
6. Partnership for Global Justice
7. VIVAT International