

Global Forum on Migration and Development

Friends of the Forum

Geneva, 3 September 2018

Civil Society Statement delivered by Stéphane Jaquemet, Director of Policy, ICMC

I first would like to thank the Co-Chairs, Secretary General El Habib Nadir and Ambassador Goetz Schmidt-Bremme for their constant and, I must add, exceptional support and for always creating space and opportunities for civil society. This is deeply appreciated.

As you know, ICMC has been tasked to coordinate the various inputs from civil society and to contribute to the designing of the Common Space agenda, but also to ensure a fair and diverse civil society representation in the Marrakech Summit. I will explain a little bit later how we do all of that in full consultation with other members of this very diverse Civil Society and under the guidance of our own International Steering Committee.

With the final decision to have Common Space on the first day of the GFMD, the Civil Society Days will be on 3rd December, so the day before the GFMD starts, in order for civil society to prepare itself for Common Space, and on 5th December, to take stock of what we will have been discussing with governments, and indeed to ensure that we all move towards the proper implementation of the GCM.

This GFMD Summit in Marrakech is, in many respects, a turning point. First, because of the adoption of the Global Compact. The final draft of the Global Compact, at its para. 51, does recognize that the GFMD should play an important and special role in the implementation of the GCM and, if you allow me the expression, "give substance" to the International Migration Review Forum. This is both a testament to all the achievements of the GFMD during the past 11 years, but also an urgent call to the GFMD to rejuvenate itself. Secondly, and this is directly linked to my comment about rejuvenation, the members of the GFMD themselves, under the leadership of the current Co-Chairs, took the decision to conduct a review process and make the GFMD "fit for purpose". And thirdly, from a civil society's perspective, because the successive Co-Chairs, but also member States, have encouraged a full and creative partnership with us. So, in the short history of the GFMD, there will clearly be a pre- and a post-Marrakech.

Regarding the focus for Common Space, we have shared some ideas with the Co-Chairs and there are very little surprises in what we have proposed, given that the Marrakech migration week symbolizes the interface between the GFMD and CCM and invites us to discuss how concretely the GFMD can contribute to the implementation of the Global Compact.

Ahead of us are opportunities, golden opportunities, for governments, both at the central and local levels, for civil society and for the private sector to move on and give a concrete

content to the GCM. But more importantly to ensure that the well-being of migrants and those hosting them remain at the center of our interventions. We profoundly believe that civil society should not limit itself to asking governments to implement the GCM and then measuring progress. We do have a duty to contribute ourselves to its implementation. How many NGOs, how many volunteers, how many faith-based - from all faiths - individuals or organizations are the frontline service providers for vulnerable migrants across the globe. How many clinics or schools in poor suburbs, servicing both citizens and migrants, are run by civil society? Very often, we do operate next or in coordination with government structures. What a formidable way to start this dialogue on how to implement the GCM! When we are together, closer to points of delivery, in direct contact with migrants, listening to their problems, but also to their successes, the commitments of the GCM do become reality, and the GCM truly becomes a living document.

The GFMD, through its flexibility and informality, but also through a history of exchanging good practices, of having an open, respectful and frank dialogue, as well as a culture of consensus building, can be the place where we can make progress and move forward. But to achieve that, the GFMD needs to make some adjustments.

As civil society, we have made some concrete proposals in a document called "12 Civil Society Recommendations for the Future of the GFMD", a document which must have been shared with you by the Support Unit. Beyond those recommendations, we believe that a few changes may be necessary in order to turn a non-UN informal intergovernmental process into the principal "feeder" of the new International Migration Review Forum, which will take place every four years. That may require a four-year agenda / vision, with each yearly GFMD Summit building on the previous one, with a consolidation of all the yearly outcomes into a set of concrete recommendations, directly linked to findings, best practices and innovative approaches.

Coming back to Marrakech, I would like to inform you that the deadline we have set for civil society organizations and networks to apply for participating in the GFMD, was meant to expire on 31 August. It has been extended for a few days, until Wednesday this week. So far, we have received over 600 applications. Now, we will have the delicate task to select, through a very transparent process, 250 participants representing 250 organizations or networks. We will ensure diversity and equality, whether related to geography, thematic approach or gender, but also migrant, youth and diaspora participation, inter alia.

We indeed would like to have some 100 participants from developing countries to be sponsored and financially supported. This is so important in order to avoid that civil society ends up being exclusively represented by Western NGOs. Diversity of backgrounds and views is precisely what makes civil society unique and it is only through ensuring a real diversity, that the dialogue in Civil Society Days and in Common Space takes all its significance.

We very much count on your generous financial support to respect this diversity and ensure a meaningful dialogue.

At this stage, I must unfortunately report to you that we have received very little financial contributions and if the trend continues we may have difficulty to get the minimal resources to organize the Civil Society Days and co-organize Common Space and ensure diverse civil society representation. Our gratitude goes to Morocco, which has generously committed to support most of the costs in Marrakech, to Bangladesh, Canada, Germany and Sweden, which have asked us to submit a project proposal, and to the Netherlands and Switzerland, which have indicated a strong interest to fund us. We are also in dialogue with some of the Member States which contributed during the previous years and may be willing to help us this year. So it is an appeal to you. If States, who did not contribute previously, were making a small contribution, mainly to pay air ticket and per diem for sponsored participants, and minimally to provide some support cost to organize the event, we could precisely have the very special GFMD event, which we all deserve: the first step towards the implementation of the Global Compact, with all stakeholders contributing to it in a spirit of shared responsibility.

Thank you.