

Global Migration Group Working Group on Human Rights and Gender and  
Global Coalition on Migration

GFMD 2015 Common Space: Side Event

**Route causes: protecting the human rights of migrants in transit**

Wednesday 14 October – 18:00-19:00

Contemporary mobility patterns are increasingly complex and multi-causal, with people moving within so-called 'mixed migration' flows due to political and social instability, lack of protection of human rights including economic and social rights, discrimination and poverty. For many migrants and refugees the journey towards their intended destination could take weeks, months or even years. The route, means of transportation, and even the intended destination can change as they move through the various phases of their journey.

In leaving their country of origin in search of peace, security and a safe livelihood, migrants can put themselves into debt, accept the services of unscrupulous labour recruiters, fall prey to smugglers and traffickers and increase their vulnerability to abuse and exploitation. In transit, children are particularly vulnerable to physical, psychological and/or sexual abuse and exploitation, whether travelling on their own or with caregivers. Women also face specific gendered forms of discrimination and abuse, including sexual and gender-based violence, and may be compelled or forced to exchange sex for transportation, food or accommodation.

Promotion and protection of the human rights of all migrants in transit is paramount, including during crisis situations as we are seeing today. Migrants whose rights are protected are better able to secure their own development and make positive economic, social and cultural contributions to the development of countries of origin, transit and destination.

This side event will explore the human rights situation of migrants and refugees who are in transit, recalling the international legal framework as it responds to the need inter alia to address violence; facilitate access to adequate health care and decent work; and ensure that the terms and conditions of detention and deportation promote the dignity and human rights of migrants. The event will highlight the importance of partnership and cooperation in this respect based on the principle of shared responsibility and solidarity.

**Speakers:**

- Esen Altug, Deputy Director General for Migration, Asylum and Visa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, on behalf of the GFMD chair;
- Rosarie Tucci, Deputy Director, Center of Excellence for Democracy, Human Rights and Governance, U.S. Agency for International Development;
- Ingibjorg Gisladottir, Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, Representative to Turkey, UN Women;
- Berenice Valez, Instituto para las Mujeres en la Migracion (IMUMI);
- Dr Cavidan Soykan, Ankara University;
- Pia Oberoi, Advisor on Migration and Human Rights, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.