



GFMD Friends of the Forum

Geneva, Switzerland, 9 October 2017

A “sneak preview”:

**Towards a Global Compact worth agreeing to:
*A civil society vision for a UN global Compact for Human Mobility and Migration
in TEN ACTS***

Presentation by Wies Maas, Chair GFMD Civil Society Days 2017
-accompanied by three power point slides (see attachment)

Excellencies and partners,

Can you believe it has only been a little over three months since we commemorated the 10th Anniversary of the GFMD? Does it not feel like an eternity has passed since then? ...with so much that has happened since, on the ground, in meeting rooms and at drawing boards.

Now and How: Ten Acts for the Global Compact – A civil society vision

Globally, we have also not stood still within our civil society movements. One of the initiatives that we moved on, was the development of a unified civil society vision on the Global Compact for Migration – certainly not the only civil society vision, and absolutely not the last one – but a vision that expresses convergence among a wide diversity of non-governmental organizations on what we think are essential elements for a meaningful Compact for migrants, refugees and societies – for a Compact that is worth it.

The document, which is called *Now and How: A civil society vision for a UN Global Compact on Human Mobility and Migration* - was drafted by a group of 10 civil society organization and networks in consultation with close to 50 organizations that are part of the civil society Action Committee (established in 2016 for the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants and its follow up) and the International Steering Committee of civil society for the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD).

The document will be official released in the course of next week, for global sign world-wide. Today, we thought to share with you a “sneak preview” of the TEN ACTS document, as it is, like so much of the work around the Global Compact, a direct outcome of our last GFMD meeting, and quite relevant for the meetings ahead of us this week.

The document puts forward a set of 10 goals – called ACTS, and corresponding actions and targets. All of these ACTS build directly upon existing commitments, in particular those made in Sustainable Development Goals and the New York Declaration – the 10 ACTS put forward ways to make these commitments specific for migrants and refugees. The document also builds directly upon collective civil society initiatives taken over the years, including the 5-year 8-point Plan of Action that global civil society presented at the UN High-level Dialogue in 2013, and the New Deal and Act Now! documents from last year. It also supports and builds upon the Child Rights in the Global Compact Initiative, which has put forward practical mechanisms and achievable timelines to include child rights across *both* Global Compacts. The TEN ACTS reiterates that indeed all policies and decisions concerning migrant children, whether accompanied or unaccompanied, including decision that may involve return, should ensure that the best interest of the child is always the primary consideration, and that ending the immigration detention of children is absolute top priority. A priority that cannot wait.

So, without stealing too much, or your time, and trusting there will be plenty of opportunities to share perspectives) allow me to now share with you a five highlights of the document.

1. Renaming and reframing: a Global Compact on Human Mobility and Migration

To do justice to the complex realities on the ground for migrants and refugees alike, to recognize that all people on the move have universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, and that issues of safe movement, labour rights, decent living conditions, family reunification, inclusion, discrimination, reintegration needs and voluntary returns are critical for migrants and refugees alike, we urge you to reframe and rename the Compact, as a Compact for Human Mobility and Migration. And to ensure complementarity with the Compact on Refugees, which above all should define better and more equitable for responsibility-sharing for refugees.

2. The principles of purpose, progress and participation – implementing, not restating rights

The Now & How document puts forwards a set of three starting principles we believe are essential if we are to get to a meaningful Compact that is worth all our time, energy and focus:

- i. **The principle of purpose** – the Compact must first and foremost directly benefit migrants, refugees and societies. It cannot become a Global Compact for Human Deportation.
- ii. **The principle of progress** - The rights framework, conventions and agreements exist. The Compact should focus on ratification, expanding and implementing these; not simply restating, and not backsliding or undercutting them.
- iii. **The principle of participation** - Civil society, including migrants, refugees and diaspora organizations, must be meaningfully part of the discussion and solutions.

3. TEN ACTS for immediate actions AND graduated timelines

The document proposes the Global Compact to be an “SDG type” of covenant that clearly set goals – called ACTS in this document - as well as targets, graduated timelines, review mechanisms and means of implementation. Some of the ACTS and actions are marked with urgency, to be acted upon immediately, for example ending the detention of children for immigration purposed [ACT 3.6], immediate access to education for all children [ACT 6.1] and individual procedural safeguards and due process for asylum seekers, and migrants, including strictly upholding the principle of *non-*

refoulement and the prohibition against collective and arbitrary expulsion [ACT 9.1], to name a few. But other ACTS are proposed on a longer term timeline, up until 2030.

4. Four multi-stakeholder groups to work on implementation, guidelines and norms

In the spirit of such graduated timelines, the document proposes to authorize with the adoption of Compact four groups to take forward multi-actor reflection and frame actionable recommendations on some of the more challenging-- but essential mobility and migration issues of our time:

- i. migrants in vulnerable situations (ACT 3.3),
- ii. regularization and pathway out irregular status and towards secure residency (ACT 2.3)
- iii. alternatives and cooperation on return and reintegration, including post-return monitoring (ACT 9.6)
- iv. protection norms and cooperation mechanisms on disaster and climate-change induce displacement [ACT 3.4]

5. A UN Architecture equipped for implementing, monitoring and improving the Compact

Finally, ACT 10, puts forward a set of proposals on strengthening the UN architecture, and linking in the GFMD, to ensure follow up, implementation and monitoring of the Compact with the aim to improve performance on commitments made – and thus to improve the lives of migrants, and refugees. So for example we propose to elevate the SRSG to Assistant Secretary-General for Human Mobility and Migration, and further integration of the IOM into the UN-system, by empowering it to align its mandate and operations explicitly in line with the UN Charter.

What is next?

That is as far as the sneak preview will go today. We will be sharing the final version with you very soon, and look forward to discussing it further. The document will also be translating it into French and Spanish, perhaps other languages.

Allow me to reiterate, that the vision presented is not the only civil society vision, and certainly not the last one. Many civil society groups are organizing at local and national level to work for a Compact that is worth it in local realities. We invite you to meet and work with that local civil society in a safe and enabling environment.

Finally, we do realize some of the proposal may come across as too aspirational. Of course we too are not blind to realities on the ground, in fact we are daily witnesses of those realities, and we are all too well aware of tense political discourses and sentiments that exist. BUT, we believe that, that is all the more reason why we need bold leadership, fierce aspirations and a global moral Compass, or moral Compact really that raises the bar, and truly protects and empowers migrants, refugees and societies.