

## **Stocktaking phase in the development of a Global Compact for migration ends**

Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, 6 December 2017: The three-day preparatory (stocktaking) meeting of the intergovernmental conference to adopt a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration concluded today in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

The meeting, which opened on 4 December, provided a forum for UN Member States, civil society and other stakeholders to review and analyze all the data and recommendations gathered during the consultation phase, with a view towards advancing and informing the process for the development of a first-ever Global Compact for international migration.

Over 400 delegates from 136 Member States and 16 international Non-Governmental Organizations and UN specialized agencies participated in the three-day intensive discussion.

In her closing remarks, Secretary-General's Special Representative for International Migration, Ms. Louise Arbour, in her capacity as the Secretary-General of the Intergovernmental Conference that will adopt the Global Compact at the end of 2018, spoke of the challenges rooted in migration, including changing demographics, stresses in the environment, poverty and conflict.

She noted the benefits that human mobility presents, such as the promise of more sustainable development, more attuned to international labour market needs and improved working standards. To overcome these challenges and maximize the benefits of migration, she emphasized that commitment and cooperation from the global community is critical.

“We stand today tasked with the mandate to weave these challenges and opportunities into a global effort to enhance state cooperation in the management of migration,” she said.

The next step in this process, Ms. Arbour said, will be the UN Secretary-General's report on migration, which should be released before mid-January and will contribute to the shaping of the Global Compact.

Ms. Arbour argued for steering discussions wisely, which will require avoiding dehumanizing language about those we wish to protect; striving to ground discourse in facts, not perception; and ensuring that policies are inclusive. Here, she underscored the importance of gender. “Equality and empowerment of women and protection of their rights should be core principles of any emerging Compact,” she asserted.

Another crucial issue, Ms. Arbour said, is “the tragedy of large mixed flows of people on the move and how to deal with those who are ineligible for international refugee protection yet for whom humanitarian assistance and longer-term solutions are no less urgent.”

Ms. Arbour expressed the determination of the United Nations system to support all Member States in the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration. “As migration finds its home in the United Nations, we will rededicate ourselves to ensuring that our

support for you is the best that it can be; that it maximizes all the contributions that the system can bring to bear; that it takes full advantage of the migration capacities and expertise of IOM [International Office of Migration], alongside others; and that its focus is squarely on delivering.”

“What is certain above all else are the legitimate demands of all migrants that the words of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights apply to them as to all others: ‘all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights’,” concluded Ms. Arbour.

Speaking in the closing ceremony of the meeting, the President of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, stressed the results achieved so far in the Global Compact process, which he defined “the most comprehensive and inclusive international discussions on migration in history.” However, he alerted, “tough negotiations” on migration await the UN Member Countries in 2018.

The way ahead, Mr. Lajčák suggested, is to focus on the “strong common positions,” the first of which is the acknowledgment that the current response to international migration is not sustainable and this is a global phenomenon that needs an international response.

“The United Nations is the best – and, in fact, the only – forum in which this response can be formulated,” Mr. Lajčák said. This does not mean a diminution of state sovereignty, as “Member States will determine their own migration policies.”

There is a diversity of positions in the international community and the national negotiators will have to find a middle ground. “It will be a test of the UN’s capacity to respond to the most pressing global issues. And, in the words of Pope Francis, it will be a ‘test of our humanity’,” admonished Mr. Lajčák.

The meeting in Puerto Vallarta was co-chaired by Mr. Juan José Gómez Camacho, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, and Mr. Jürg Lauber, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations, who serve as the co-facilitators of the Global Compact process.

Intergovernmental negotiations are expected to begin in February 2018 and conclude in July. The Compact will be presented for adoption at an intergovernmental conference on international migration that will be held in Morocco at the end of 2018.

*For further information please contact: in Puerto Vallarta, Giancarlo Summa ([giancarlo.summa@un.org](mailto:giancarlo.summa@un.org), +52 55 4820-0151)*

<http://refugeesmigrants.un.org/migration-compact>

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