

The Position of the Russian Federation on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

We positively assess the results of the UN GA high-level plenary meeting to address large movements of refugees and migrants, held on 19 September 2016. We believe that the implementation of the provisions of the New York Declaration adopted as a result of this meeting and with the combination of efforts of the entire international community will make it possible to improve the situation with the reception of refugees and migrants on the borders and in the receiving countries. We expect that the Global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, stipulated by the Declaration would make an important contribution to the regulation of migration in the world and serve as a basis for a long-term and comprehensive international cooperation on issues related to migrants and mobility of persons.

We proceed from the understanding that the Global compact on migration would have a character of a political declaration. It should not be a legally binding instrument, which would ensure its universality. Certainly, it could provide for certain political commitments and the programme of actions. The subsequent compliance monitoring of the Global compact is not appropriate, but this does not exclude the possibility of voluntary self-reporting of States in any form on its implementation. The compact should not go beyond the framework of issues directly related to its main subject matter.

During the multi-phase preparatory process with the participation of States, NGOs, civil society, scientific institutions, private sector, parliaments, bodies of local self-government and migrant organizations it is necessary to preserve the modalities of involvement of non-state actors that were used during the preparation of the final document of the General Assembly high-level meeting to address large movements of refugees and migrants, held on 19 September 2016. The non-governmental entities should take part in this process with an observer status.

We believe that the Global compact should ensure the understanding that in order to normalize the migrants' situation it is necessary to establish appropriate control over migration flows, prevent unlawful acts on the part of the migrants, set up the readmission mechanisms, and create additional channels of regular migration. It is no less important to facilitate the creation in the mass exodus States of lasting prerequisites for reestablishment of life in peace and return of people to their homes, as well as prevention and political settlement of conflicts that are the main reason for forced migration.

It is necessary to do everything possible to prevent the possibility of infiltration of foreign terrorists into the migrant receiving countries together with people who really need assistance. It is inadmissible that the migrants become the subject of political manipulation by forces that instigate ethnic, religious and social hatred.

We proceed from the understanding that the approaches to overcoming migration problems cannot contradict the basic principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, independence or violate sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, or implemented without their consent.

Moreover, the Global compact should also cover the following aspects of migration issues:

- Importance of regulated employment of foreign workers and signing of international treaties, providing for their organized recruitment and pre-departure training;
- Adaptation and integration of migrants with the engagement of interested parties, and developing constructing interaction between migrants and receiving communities;
- Implementation of humanitarian commitments with regard to forced migrants;
- Differentiated approach to the regulation of migration flows depending on the purpose, duration of stay, social and demographic or professional qualification characteristics of migrants;

- Combating illegal migration with an emphasis on unified approaches to readmission of foreign citizens;
- Promotion of international cooperation to exchange information on migration issues of mutual interest;
- Response to situations of sudden mass influx of foreign citizens;
- Promotion of information exchange on migration issues.

We note that when the New York Declaration was adopted, the Russian Federation made an interpretative statement regarding the concept of "responsibility/burden sharing".

We regard the pressure for 'responsibility sharing concept' as an attempt to shift responsibility on somebody else's shoulders, since the current complex migration situation in Europe is, in many respects, the result of irresponsible interference of a number of Western countries into internal affairs of sovereign MENA States to destabilize and forcibly change unsuitable governments there. Therefore, the States which actively participated in that interference must bear primary and heaviest responsibility for assisting victims – refugees and forced migrants.

We strongly believe that the term "responsibility sharing" *per se* does not fully reflect the existing realities at the current stage. Naturally, it is not the matter of any legal responsibility. Under international law, the international responsibility of a State arises from an international unlawful act committed by that State, and "sharing" such responsibility implies complicity in such an unlawful act. It is even more unsuitable to talk about political responsibility since the primary cause of the existing migration situation is the practice of interference into internal affairs of sovereign States. The countries that abetted the emergence of crises must bear the main responsibility for overcoming their migration consequences.

Russia's contribution to addressing migration problems finds its expression in large-scale humanitarian activities in many countries and regions of the world, and political efforts to prevent and overcome crises.

We assume that any type of "sharing" does not entail additional international legal and/or financial obligations for the Russian Federation.