

Key Messages for a Human Rights Based Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Executive Summary

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration must be grounded in international human rights law.

This is the central message of a short paper produced by a group of Geneva-based non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who are interested in a human rights-based response to migration at the UN level. QUNO convenes this group of NGOs, with a particular focus on ensuring a human rights basis to this new international agreement on migration, which is due to be adopted in 2018.

Ahead of the first thematic consultation of this process, taking place in Geneva on 8th and 9th May, this group produced a set of key human rights messages for the Compact. These are:

- Ensure the full and active **participation** of migrants as primary stakeholders, including the participation of civil society organisations and NHRIs working directly with or on behalf of migrant and diaspora populations.
- Ensure respect for the principle of **non-discrimination** irrespective of a person's migration or residency status. Action must be taken to counter xenophobia and prevent hate crimes targeting people on the basis of their migratory or perceived migratory status.
- Ensure that migration is not criminalised and prohibit **all unlawful or disproportionate border measures**.
- Ensure the human rights of all **migrants who are particularly at risk**, paying particular attention to migrants with specific needs who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that heighten their vulnerability.
- Ensure that migratory status is not a bar to **access to economic, social and cultural rights**, particularly **essential services**, including healthcare.
- Develop and implement accessible, regular, fair, and **safe migration pathways**, facilitating the regularisation of migrants in an irregular
- Ensure that any **returns or removals** are carried out in full respect for the human rights of migrants, in safety and dignity, and in accordance with international law.
- Ensure that **protection of the human rights of migrants** is recognised as a legal obligation of States, and not only a matter of humanitarian assistance. International standards and national laws and practices must enable **judges and lawyers** to play their essential role in upholding the rights of migrants and the rule of law.

We hope to see these points, and the centrality of human rights, raised throughout the preparatory process towards the adoption of this agreement.