



Ms. Louise Arbour
Secretary-General of the Intergovernmental Conference

**Third Informal Thematic Session on
International cooperation and governance of migration in all its dimensions, including
at borders, on transit, entry, return, readmission, integrations and reintegration.**

19-20 June 2017

Dear Co-Facilitators,

**Ambassador Juan José Gómez Camacho of Mexico, and Ambassador Jürg Lauber of
Switzerland,**

Excellencies, esteemed colleagues and friends,

I am pleased to present the issue brief for this session, which provides facts and trends as well as suggestions for ways forward for member states to consider. It was prepared with the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and reflects the experience, expertise and analysis from across the UN system, particularly from the Global Migration Group (GMG).

International cooperation and governance of migration are essentially the vehicles and tools that will allow us to implement the global compact for migration once it has been established.

The issue brief endeavours to set forth some of the complexities of international cooperation and governance. It notes, for example, that the very term “governance” has sometimes been controversial in that it may suggest “control.” We tried to show in the brief, however, that this term should not cause alarm. While migration governance remains a predominantly national issue, cross-border migration by its very nature is an international phenomenon – thus states will always need, and in fact desire, to find good ways to cooperate.

The pursuit of our objective is not new: to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration. While expressly articulated as such in the 2030 Agenda and the New York Declaration, it stems from many previous initiatives on which we can now build. It is fair to

say that interest in migration has exploded in the years since the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development first addressed it in a significant way. In the UN, there have been two productive High Level Dialogues on International Migration and Development. Many state-led initiatives have complemented these efforts – most notably the Global Forum on Migration and Development, but also a host of Regional Consultative Processes and targeted initiatives like the Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) and Nansen Initiatives.

But as important as those efforts have been, today’s endeavour should be of a different kind. Indeed, the Global Compact should bring together what has come before – and augment it in a smart way - as a comprehensive framework for international cooperation on international migration, a framework that reconciles individual states’ own responsibilities and interests with those of the international community more broadly. The New York Declaration recognized that with a topic as far-reaching as migration, no one state can operate in isolation.

As the issue brief notes, such a comprehensive framework should rest on the key elements of well-managed migration. It should address border management, labour and skills mobility, orderly migration, return and readmission, social inclusion and integration, gender dimensions, crisis-related large movements, and the protection of migrants in vulnerable situations.

Gathering, and adding, to the accrued wisdom in this way – and putting it in one place - would go far toward resolving the immense challenges states are facing today. The international community simply cannot afford to start anew every time a big crisis or unforeseen policy issue comes about. Even though the compact is not meant to be binding, you have actually *decided* to come together to address these complex issues in a positive way and in a collaborative spirit , for the net benefit of all involved: migrants themselves, host societies, communities of origin and of transit, and the all government entities who need the trust of the public to discharge their mandates.

To summarize, what is needed is more cooperation, not less; more trust, and a genuine commitment to sharing ideas, experiences, solutions, and, above all, responsibilities. Of course these responsibilities and interests need to be balanced. For example, the willingness of some to facilitate regular migration by increasing a variety of legal pathways to domestic labour markets would need to be matched by concrete measures to facilitate orderly return and readmission where appropriate.

Smart, responsible and implementable cooperative arrangements would then trigger a virtuous cycle in which the public trust in states’ ability to control their borders would be restored, resulting in more acceptance of migrants. This in turn would foster a climate of both enhanced security and reduced suspicion of migrants, in which the benefits of migration can most effectively be realized. Doing so will also support an effective asylum regime by providing alternatives to those who do not have asylum claims.

In short, international cooperation should be grounded in the pursuit of the many interests that must converge in the spirit of compromise, efficiency and fairness. Fair processes lead to increased compliance, without which no law, however stringent, can effectively be enforced.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The way forward section of the issue brief is intentionally somewhat open-ended. There are two reasons for this: First, we are still in the consultation phase of this process. Second, on governance, more than any other issue, it will be up to states to determine the way forward.

The very fact that states came together at a high level to address these issues last September demonstrates that it is not enough merely to reaffirm and update existing frameworks. Instead, the task now is to launch a program of action with real operational commitments and robust follow-up mechanisms.

Equally critical will be ensuring proper financial support for a functioning cooperation framework, whether global or regional. State political will has to be matched by adequate capacity. This is true on issues ranging from better data collection, analysis and sharing, to, for example, the economic consequences of the loss of remittances upon return.

I urge you, therefore, to consider the recommendation in my predecessor's, Peter Sutherland's, report to create a Financing Facility for Migration for the implementation of the SDGs and the broader international agenda. Only with adequate resources can we ensure that the commitment made in the compact can be fully implemented.

Just as important is the need at the national level to address migration with a whole of government approach – that is, policy coherence. This cannot be done by any one part of government alone, since a host of agencies and ministries have a piece of the large, cross-cutting issue of migration – those involved in immigration, development, labour, human rights, emergency and disaster response, health, education, crime, trade, and others. This is true for the implementation of the Agenda 2030 in its entirety, and will certainly hold true for the global compact on migration. And finally, the UN system must consolidate its own capacity and develop ways to achieve greater effectiveness and leadership on migration and human mobility more broadly. Drawing on the potential presented by IOM's entry into the system, the UN is now well-positioned to offer robust support to this unique opportunity for member states to engineer a global framework for international cooperation on migration. I look forward to working with all of you in the next two days and beyond towards this worthy objective.

Thank you.