

**TENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON  
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
United Nations Secretariat  
New York, 9-10 February 2012

**INPUT OF THE HAGUE PROCESS ON REFUGEES AND MIGRATION TO THE  
TENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION<sup>1</sup>**

*The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration*

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<sup>1</sup> The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

## A. ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO THE HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE

On June 4-5, 2012, The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration is hosting a high-level conference in the Peace Palace in the Netherlands. The conference will host approximately 250 participants from local, national and regional governments, international bodies, intergovernmental organisations, the private sector, academia, faith communities, and civil society organisations; all with an interest and influence over dimensions of the broad field of refugees and migration policies and an eagerness to accelerate positive change.

We will address the trends, advances and challenges that have defined the field of refugees and migration in the last ten years. The Global Hearing will focus in particular on the role of businesses and cities as key actors in the process of realising the potential of people on the move. The Global Hearing will be different from usual meetings, will add value and will not avoid to discuss in-depth dilemmas, obstacles and even controversial issues. But foremost, the event will present a rare opportunity to meet with representatives of the broad community of stakeholders and to work together on creating a roadmap for the decade to come.

The programme will feature parallel working sessions on the main themes of Demographics and Labour Migration, Political Changes, Global Economy, Rural-urban Contexts, and Environmental and Climate Change.

Prominent key note speakers and participants will include DG IOM Bill Swing, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres, Netherlands Minister for Migration and Asylum Gerd Leers and European Commissioner Home Affairs Cecilia Malmström. Chairman of The Hague Process, HRH Prince Constantijn of the Netherlands, will open the event.

The Global Hearing connects the GFMD in 2011 and the High-level Dialogue in 2013. The scope of the Global Hearing goes beyond intergovernmental and civil society debates and will transcend the theme of migration and development: the debate includes interaction with the fields of refugees and IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons).

The added-value of this conference is mainly located in the diverse range of participants. The multidisciplinary debate will cement global cooperation and forge bonds between actors that otherwise might not meet around these themes. By including local leaders from businesses and cities, we strive to enrich the debate and include more stakeholders in order to formulate and develop better policies. All within a human rights framework.

The outcomes will be published and disseminated to our stakeholders and the public at large and will inform the agenda setting for the High-level Dialogue.

## B. CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

THP has commissioned its “State of the Art” report as a first step towards a stocktaking exercise to review major international initiatives on international migration, contributing to our organisation’s long-term mission to promote more evidence-based migration and refugee policies. The lack of coherent institutional framework has so far prevented a systematic review of the outcomes of global initiatives taken by governments. The State of the Art Review provides such a study, and formulates a set of research-based recommendations.

This report offers for the first time an overview and an assessment of the recommendations and conclusions of the intergovernmental initiatives on migration of the last 15 years, including three

meetings of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). As such this research project reflects on the outcomes of earlier GFMD meetings and hopefully helps advance the GFMD process. Above all, it intends to trigger further research, review and action by relevant stakeholders.

Pursuant to this review, THP has made the following recommendations:

### *1. On ensuring continuity*

On ensuring continuity, the GFMD should prepare a compendium of terms, to ensure consistency and common understanding of terminology. In addition to that, a more permanent operational and secretarial capacity is required for the GFMD, to ensure continuity between meetings and avoid overlap and repetition. Our analysis has also identified a number of examples that appear to indicate a lack of ‘institutional memory’. It is to be hoped that the support structure that has been developed for GFMD addresses this issue in that particular context, although whether continuity also extends to the next HLD in 2013 remains to be seen. Certainly there is a role for non-governmental stakeholders – in particular research institutions – to continue this analysis and help develop an institutional memory.

Where possible preparatory meetings for the GFMD should take place in public, or at least be reported in a public forum, to increase trust in the process and ensure the relevance to all stakeholders of the agenda and program.

### *2. On quality*

The review notes that conclusions and recommendations are mostly vague, inspirational, and do not identify clear objectives, responsibilities, or actors. In order to create ownership, conclusions and recommendations from international initiatives on international migration should be as concrete as possible, identifying specific actions and actors.

The overall quality and quantity of the evidence on international migration remains weak. National and regional statistics offices should be mandated and supported actively to gather migration-related data, based on commonly agreed indicators to allow comparability. The extension of Migration Profiles has important potential in this regard.

What is more, existing data, evidence, and knowledge could be gathered, aggregated, and analysed more systematically, and made available to international forums on international migration.

### *3. On governance*

The GFMD, along with future intergovernmental meetings on international migration, should involve more meaningfully and systematically other major stakeholders in international migration, including city governments, global businesses, unions, and civil society. Umbrella organizations like the World Economic Forum or THP could provide initial contributions by organizing preparatory sessions.

THP, and its partners, shall undertake a systematic review of models for multi-stakeholder engagement in international arenas, and recommend more effective approaches. Overall, the role of non-governmental stakeholders requires greater attention in the conclusions and recommendations from such initiatives, either as targets for recommendations, or potential implementing partners.

### *4. On setting the agenda*

In order to find lasting solutions to pressing migration issues GMFD should not avoid controversial issues, and give due attention to gender mainstreaming. If necessary it should establish supplementary mechanisms such as commissioning third parties or mandating a small group of countries to conduct exploratory meetings and report back.

### C. NEW INITIATIVES IN INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

THP has taken the initiative to include more stakeholders in refugee and migration debates, a process we seek to continue in the years to come. The voice of cities and businesses enrich the debate, as they have vast and powerful experiences with migration and reap the benefits of people on the move.

Cities often have a more realistic experience on migration than governments at a higher level. Social inclusion of newcomers is of the utmost importance for the future of cities. Cities now host more than half of the world's population. As local and national demographics continue to undergo rapid change, sustainable policies will increasingly require a shift towards looking at opportunities and challenges from a collective perspective rather than isolating populations and focusing on the concern of national citizens.

The specific role of city governments derives from their being ultimately responsible for the successful social cohesion and inclusion of all at the local level. Cities are “social ladders” and crucial agents for change, with legitimate and central positions to set and advance the agenda and proactively engage and support inclusive policies and programs.

Cities' unique assets and experiences should be widely shared and influence national and international migration and integration policies accordingly. The international agenda remains by and large shaped by national governments, and resources allocated to cities do not level up to the responses they are required to provide. To strengthen their voice, cities should not limit their activities to common declarations and advocacy but look to assert themselves as reliable and enduring partners in a structured international dialogue.

Businesses are engaged in a global competition for talent and increasingly acknowledge the desire for cultural diversity off their staff. At the World Economic Forum (WEF) the business sector specifically called for stability and compatibility, which they regard to be important for government, society and the private sector.

Businesses have a major role to play in attracting migrants, through recruitment strategies and integration processes. Their cooperation with NGOs and other stakeholders in this field is increasing and should be nurtured. The cooperation and dialogue on these matters should be even tighter with cities, since they can provide businesses with crucial information about the labour market, while businesses can share their needs. Despite an existing partnership between these actors and recognition of mutual dependence, further concrete improvement is to be done (improving mechanisms for recognising skills, credentials and competencies, etc.).

An efficient collaboration leading to practical and concrete solutions in this field would benefit all parties. Businesses and big cities, if they join their efforts, have the capacity to create substantial changes in the field of human mobility. Progress could also be achieved with increased investments in the education and training of migrants, with an easier access to entrepreneurship for migrants, or with more flexible regulations.

All in all, the experiences of businesses and cities with migration can not only facilitate governing bodies formulate better policies, but also take an active stand in the public debate on this contested issue. In a time of global crisis and the rise of new political leaders who seek to limit or fully stop migration, it is essential to explain how migrants enrich our societies and economies. Cities and businesses have a lot of undiscovered potential to tell this story. To achieve this, THP actively works to spur these actors in educating the public at large on why migration – when managed properly - is both inevitable and desirable.