

Concept note

Addressing women's human rights in the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration

New York City, 17 February 2017 | 1:15pm-2:30pm

UN Headquarters, Conference Room (CR) 12

Women make up approximately half of the 244 million international migrants worldwide. Migration has the potential to positively impact equitable, inclusive and sustainable growth for countries of origin, transit and destination. When women migrants' rights are protected, migration can be an expression of agency, positively impacting their position in their family and community.

However, as stressed in the recent report of the UN Secretary-General "In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants", women face high risks of sexual and gender-based violence, psychosocial stress and trauma, health complications, physical harm, injury and exploitation. Migrant women are commonly subject to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, as women, migrants, and often on additional grounds such as race, ethnicity or belonging to a minority group. Such gender-based discrimination limits women's decision-making and agency in the household and in the labour market, as well as their mobility and limits economic opportunities – within and outside their countries of origin.

The development of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration presents a unique opportunity to ensure that migrant women's human rights are promoted and protected at all stages of migration. UN Women is resolved to work towards a global compact that is gender-responsive and contributes to achieving gender equality in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To this end, in November 2016 UN Women hosted an expert meeting in Geneva to develop recommendations for addressing women's human rights in the global compact. These recommendations were devised in collaboration with experts from the Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW), the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee), the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), OHCHR, ILO, UNHCR, IOM and civil society.

On 26 and 27 January 2017, UN Women facilitated a two-day multi-stakeholder meeting to formulate strategies for addressing women's human rights in the global compact. During this meeting, which brought together experts from CEDAW, CMW, CERD, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), UN agencies and civil society, participants developed a joint action plan to ensure a gender-responsive global compact on migration.

Paragraph 20 of the draft resolution submitted by the President of the General Assembly on modalities for the intergovernmental negotiations of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration "Invites Member States to also take into consideration in phase I their perspectives with regard to...gender equality and empowerment of women and girls". Building on this paragraph, this event aims to highlight the importance of mainstreaming gender in the global compact and discuss concrete ways to address and promote the rights, contributions, voices, participation, and leadership of migrant women and girls. Participants will include representatives from Member States, treaty body experts, UN agencies and civil society.

Draft Agenda

1:15-1:25 Opening remarks (10 min)

- Lakshmi Puri, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director, UN Women

1:25-1:55 Panel discussion (30 min)

Moderator: Parvati Nair, Director, Institute on Globalization, Culture and Mobility, United Nations University (GMG Chair 2017)

- Tarik Sissou, Head of Division of Cooperation and Studies, Ministry in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs, Morocco (GFMD Co-Chair 2017-2018)
- Meg Jones, Chief, Economic Empowerment, UN Women
- Brian Grogan, Senior Adviser to the UN Special Adviser on Follow-up to Summit for Refugees and Migrants
- Michele Klein Solomon, Senior Policy Adviser to the Director General, International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Eva Richter, NGO Committee on Migration

1:55-2:30 Interactive discussion – Q/A (35 min)

Moderator: Parvati Nair, Director, Institute on Globalization, Culture and Mobility, United Nations University (GMG Chair 2017)