



Informal interactive hearings  
with NGOs, civil society and the private sector

United Nations General Assembly  
15 July 2013

## **Civil Society's Five-Year Action Agenda for Collaboration & Change**

Mr. William Gois, Regional Coordinator, Migrant Forum in Asia

Opening panel: looking back and beyond the HLD 2013

Seven days ago, last Monday, July 8, Pope Francis on his first trip outside of Rome visited the island of Lampedusa where thousands of migrants from Africa and the Middle East reach in the quest for a better life, and often end up losing their lives at sea, or being detained and deported. Pope Francis called for an awakening of consciences. The culture of wellbeing makes us think about ourselves, and renders us insensitive to the cries of others. Pope Francis called for an end of the “globalization of indifference.”

Seven years ago, many of us came to this house for the first UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development and also participated in a parallel event across the road in the Community Dialogue on Migration, Development, and Human Rights. As civil society we came with governments to dialogue on the many issues of migration and development.

Today, coming back to this house seven years later, in conscience we must ask ourselves how much has changed in the world of the migrant? Indeed, while there has been some change, it has not been enough. For the last six years, globally civil society, migrants, and their allies have engaged in constructive dialogue in the GFMDs and the People's Global Action on Migration, Development, and Human Rights. From Brussels to Mauritius, we have called for change, and we ask ourselves in all the activity generated over the seven years, have we had any impact?

For the first time in preparation for the UNHLD; in this global space to interact and engage with governments, we have been preparing for more than a year in order to bring to this house a united message; one that has been carved out of a series of seven regional consultations and fine-tuned over the last two days. We come with an 8-point agenda that we want to work on with you over five years to bring about real change, substantial change to demonstrate our commitment to bringing an end to the globalization of indifference. Our global report is available online and is being circulated in this room. The points we have developed will be shared by colleagues in the course of the day.

We come together to be engaged in transformative dialogue. Eight points on which we have concrete policy recommendations to work on over five years—together we could develop in this HLD a workplan that is action oriented and that leads to concrete and meaningful change in the life of migrants.

From today until October 3, 2013, let us work at drawing up a work program, an action program, a collaborative program, so that in October we present in this house blueprints of an action program that this house will endorse to move forward over five years. Five years from now we come back to report on what we have accomplished together. Is this possible? For the sake of the millions of migrants and their families, we must say yes. As CSOs, we have come to this house to say, ‘Yes, this is possible.’ Eight points, five years. Make it happen.