



UN Headquarters 14 July 2016

**2nd Meeting with the UN Member States
co-facilitators and multi-stakeholders**

**Input on the “first revision” (dated 12 July) of the draft outcome document
for the UN General Assembly *Summit on Addressing large movements
of Refugees and Migrants* 19 September 2016**

Statement by ICMC / [MADE Network](#)
also on behalf of the civil society Action Committee for the Summit
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Check against delivery

ICMC, together with the **International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)** and the **NGO Committee on Migration** here in New York convene a self-organized civil society **Action Committee**: 22 leading civil society organizations around the world, about half working principally in refugee protection, about half on migrant rights, several both (many of us refugees, migrants and diaspora ourselves), and many partners with governments on the ground and in policy-making, at all levels. 5 of us are in the room.

2 weeks ago the Action Committee presented UN Member States with a “*New Deal for refugees, migrants and societies*”¹, as a set of starting points and baseline civil society perspectives not only for the first (“zero”) draft² but straight through to the final outcome of the Summit September 19th.

Last week we submitted a consolidated civil society feedback on the zero draft.

Congratulations on your first revision of the draft, which we received when it came around late yesterday. Last night some of us were able to review it with reference to our consolidated feedback last week.

I. Overall

Some of the change is quite good.

- In **1.20**: yes, reference to internally displaced persons (**IDPs**) is important to many of us in civil society, even in a Summit whose mandate is centered on refugees and migrants who cross international borders. This is most clear when we consider not just the often similar circumstances

¹ <http://refugees-migrants-civilsociety.org/civil-society-new-deal-document/>

²

of displacement, vulnerability and suffering of the people, but the similar root *causes* of internal displacement and the straight-line *connection* that internal displacement has to the movement of refugees and migrants across borders.

- The current **order** of the sections is better, with “commitments to migrants and refugees jointly” up front now.

Some of the change needs further work or strikes us as not so good.

- Addressing **root causes** to provide alternatives to forced migration (here again IDPs are relevant)
 - In **1.14**: the zero draft was better when it referred so clearly to the result of addressing root causes to “reduce the need to leave their homes in the first place. Migration, we believe, should be a choice, not a necessity.”
 - The document needs to say more on development approaches as alternatives and also solutions for forced migrants and forced migration
- We encourage continued care through the whole document on the **distinction between refugees and other migrants**
 - of course it is important to affirm the specific rights that refugees have
 - but the starting point is that all migrants have human rights, regardless of their status, motivation for migrating or circumstance; some have further rights specific to why they migrated or circumstance: refugees and asylum seekers, children, victims of torture, trafficking, etc. We appreciate that the document goes to great lengths on this, but it must be perfect in every case to avoid the implication that only refugees have a right to protection.
 - In **1.5**: refugees not just migrants contribute to development. Studies are so clear on this.
- In **1.6** and in a few other places: we are very concerned about language referring to people as “**burdens**”. Compared to the zero draft, the new language is quite graphic and rough: “brunt”, “breaking point”, “burdens”. The challenges can be referred to without such rough language, and more fruitfully, pointed to global responsibilities and global solutions. Among other things, repetition of burden language hardly encourages states and other actors to step in as needed!

Two big points for the whole document

1. Many of us in civil society believe that **existing conventions, together with the SDGs**, are for the most part adequate to the task, and that what is needed is implementation through the Outcome declaration, the Compacts and the Action Plans or campaigns, including against xenophobia. To be clear however I would say that there is strong convergence on this in civil society, not total consensus.
2. What there is total civil society convergence on is the **participation of civil society in both Compacts and all actions** coming out of the Summit. “States-led” should never mean “states-only” in these processes. For the processes to succeed as well as reflect proper democratic inclusion, the processes must fully engage civil society as subjects, actors and partners: as part of the solutions, every step of the way, from discussion and design to decision and implementation. This is especially true for engagement of refugees, migrants and the diaspora.

II. Specific points and sections

- The Outcome needs **more concrete timelines and benchmarks** for progress. For example, in **3.10**, we welcome the commitment to guidelines for non-refugee migrants in vulnerable situations who may need assistance, but the language was better in the zero draft. We also recommend a target date of September, 2017.

- The document needs more emphasis and greater consistency on **refugees and migrants with special needs**.
 - First, it is imperative to reaffirm—e.g., in **2.2**—that these are often not simply special *needs* but specific *rights* (most under the *widely ratified* international treaties)
 - These rights can be the broad human rights, e.g., to life and health, or the further, additional rights, e.g., of refugees and asylum seekers, children, victims of torture, trafficking, etc.
 - In this direction, we are glad to see the new reference in **3.6** to the work of the Global Migration Group on related principles and guidance.
- There are so many references to **return** in the document! Many—but not all—are careful to note the absolute prohibition against *refoulement*, and the imperative to respect international standards.
 - We are concerned about **3.1, 4.3** and **4.9**.
 - If ever there is need to be emphatic it is on possibilities of return, with regard to migrants of any kind—and especially those vulnerable or in vulnerable situations.
 - As we suggested in our input on the zero draft—coming from front-line, real-world experience working with human beings running for their lives: the text should add—possibly at the end of the second sentence in **4.3**: “*recognizing that irregular migration is sometimes the only option for asylum seekers and other forcibly displaced persons.*”
- References to **access of refugees to the labour market**—so important but currently crowded diminished in **4.17**—should refer to *decent work*, which is both the goal for all workers and the subject of a full range of international standards
- Greater emphasis should be put on the actual *fight* against **xenophobia**, with clear timelines and benchmarks, and reference to advancing social inclusion imperative. In ICMC, in all of the regional conferences that we have done with our MADE (Migration and Development) civil society network partners and others around the world, xenophobia has been raised as a dynamic underlying every single challenge of migration today: in labour migration, development, vulnerable migrants on the move and in the workplace, diaspora, integration and social cohesion. *We are so ready* to work with states much more on this.
- Finally, on the **Compacts**:
 - The Compact on Responsibility-sharing for **Refugees** [to be the annex to the Outcome declaration] must be ambitious and actionable. In the current draft we do not see clear timelines, triggers or other mechanisms that will activate responsibility-sharing—that is, solution-sharing—under the Compact.
 - We welcome the Compact on safe, regular and orderly **Migration**, including its clear, real-world timeline of two-years for development, leading to adoption at the international conference in 2018. Again we emphasize that “states-led” is not states-only; as we suggested in our consolidated feedback next week, for any such Compact to be truly “real-world” and effective, the process must structurally include “*direct and consistent involvement of civil society and representatives of refugees, migrants and diaspora, similar to the Nansen and MICIC initiatives*”. This will also help to ensure that the Compact on *migration* works coherently with the Compact on *refugees*. Above all, the Compact must be right-centered—not just demographic, labour market or utilitarian.

/ Thank you.