

Concept note

Assisting Member States in preparations for the 19 September High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants - Multi-stakeholder Interactive Panels

Introduction

On 19 September 2016, the General Assembly will hold a High-level Plenary Meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants (A/70/L.34). The Global Migration Group (GMG), an inter-agency cooperation mechanism consisting of 17 entities of the United Nations system and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), is organizing a series of interactive, multi-stakeholder meetings in New York in order to assist representatives from Member States, international organizations, and civil society in preparing for the 19 September 2016 event.

The half-day meetings will feature panels of experts from international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the research community. Each of the meetings will focus on a particular substantive area covered by the report of the Secretary-General A/70/59 “In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants”, prepared for the high-level event. The meetings will be informal in nature, providing ample space for an interactive dialogue with the panellists and the audience. A short report, summarizing the discussions, will be made available after the meeting series.

Background and justification

The subject of addressing large-scale movements of refugees and migrants is complex, requiring a solid understanding of the underlying substantive issues. The subject requires a multi-faceted approach, given that it addresses all three pillars of sustainable development and relates to several of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). What makes the 19 September High-level Plenary unique, however, is that it seeks to narrow the gap between emergency humanitarian responses and longer-term development approaches while identifying actions needed to make responses to large-scale movements more predictable and effective.

This event series is inspired by a similar set of meetings, organized jointly by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), in advance of the 2013 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. At these meetings, experts from the United Nations, IOM, other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and academia provided delegations with the latest findings and recommendations on the themes that had been selected for the High-level Dialogue. Delegates considered these meetings to be very useful in preparing for the High-level Dialogue. In the same spirit, DESA organized a technical symposium in preparation for the first High-level Dialogue in 2006, contributing to the substantive understanding by delegations of key issues and challenges.

Format

The four meetings will last one half-day. Each half-day meeting will consist of interactive, multi-stakeholder panels, addressing different but complementary themes. It is proposed that each meeting will be co-chaired by one developing and one developed country.

Topics

25 April 2016 (10am-1pm) - Understanding large movements of refugees and migrants

First panel: Migration, displacement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Second panel: Impact of large movements of refugees and migrants in countries of origin, transit and destination.

Organizers: DESA, IOM and UNHCR. Co-Chairs: Kingdom of the Netherlands and Kingdom of Thailand

30 June 2016, 10am-1pm, Conference Room 5, UNHQ - Protecting the human rights of all people in vulnerable situations within large movements

The interactive panel discussion will include: the need to operationalise standards of human rights protection for migrants in vulnerable situations within large movements; defining what is migrant smuggling and highlighting the importance of protection measures as an essential component of a comprehensive approach to counter-smuggling; and the critical need for evidence-based public narratives on migration that uphold the dignity and human rights of all migrants and refugees without discrimination.

Organizers: OHCHR and UNODC. Co-Chairs: TBC

13 July 2016, 10am-1pm, Conference Room 6, UNHQ - Strengthening responsibility sharing for refugees

First panel: Increasing legal pathways for admission and stay of persons in need of protection.

Second panel: Promoting coherence between humanitarian and development financing

Organizers: UNDP and UNHCR. Co-Chairs: TBC

20 July 2016, Time and Conference Room TBC UNHQ - Preparing a global compact for migration

First panel: Responding to large movements of refugees and migrants: Labour market options

Second panel: Responding to large movements of migrants: A global compact for migration

Organizers: ILO and IOM. Co-Chairs: TBC

Venue

The meetings will be held in the Conference Building of the United Nations in New York.

Outcome

A succinct report of the key outcomes of the meetings will be made available in advance of the 19 September event.