

International Migration Review Forum: Policy Debate

Wednesday, 18 May 2022, 15:00 – 18:00 (EST)

Trusteeship Council Chamber, United Nations Headquarters

CONCEPT NOTE AND PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

Introduction

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 73/326¹ and based on consultations with Member States and stakeholders², the Coordinator of the UN Network on Migration (Network) will facilitate a policy debate focusing on challenges in the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), including links with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the capacity-building mechanism and contemporary and emerging issues related to migration. The policy debate will consider issues relating to the future of migration, and the opportunities and key challenges that governments and stakeholders will need to address in the years ahead, including in the context of inequalities and the threat of pandemics, food scarcity and challenges presented by climate change. The discussion will build on the lessons learned in facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background

Predictions in the field of migration are particularly difficult given the diversity of the migration processes, and the persistent gaps in the availability and quality of data contribute to an incomplete understanding of how migration drivers affect migration dynamics. At the same time, the drivers of international migration in countries of destination and origin are likely become more complex during the next several decades as economic and environmental pressures, population growth and population ageing, labour market realities, food insecurity and lack of livelihoods and decent work are projected to persist or intensify.

According to a recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC),³ climate change and environmental degradation in the coming decades are expected to contribute to the economic and social factors that drive migration. This will impact disproportionately those who are in the most vulnerable situations, who often have few resources to adapt to climate change and, if they are able to move, are likely to migrate in conditions of precarity.

¹ https://migrationnetwork.un.org/sites/g/files/tmzbdl416/files/docs/a_res_73_326_e.pdf

² <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/migration-dialogues>

³ https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_FinalDraft_TechnicalSummary.pdf, T.S.D.8

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the inconsistent and fragmented nature of migration governance, including the uneven application of health measures at borders, the precarious nature of much cross-border migration and the lack of accessible regular pathways, which are likely to continue impact migration, especially in the face of possible future pandemics. Many of the over 100,000 travel measures in place by the end of 2021⁴ have further exacerbated the existing situations of vulnerability faced by migrants and communities impacting the ability of people to migrate in a safe, orderly and regular manner.

Finally, the effects of global and regional crises – whether triggered by conflict, socio-economic shocks, or pandemics – are exacerbating challenges already faced by many countries as well as the risks and vulnerabilities faced by many migrants around the world.

The international community can build on lessons learned during the pandemic, as outlined in the report of Secretary-General for the first International Migration Review Forum, to promote international cooperation on migration for the protection and the benefit of all.

it is important to recall how the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes that international migration is a multi-dimensional reality of major relevance for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, which requires coherent and comprehensive responses, and commits to cooperate internationally to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration involving full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of migrants regardless of migration status.

The GCM's vision and guiding principles, including its recognition that a comprehensive approach is needed to optimize the overall benefits of migration are essential, as countries reimagine migration governance while recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Global issues, including climate change, require migration governance based on cooperation and partnership within and across countries.

Governments can use this policy debate to present challenges and offer promising practices, as well as pledges towards GCM implementation. Acknowledging the differing capacities amongst countries, pledges towards the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund could be sought to support projects to advance the implementation of the GCM.

Format

The policy debate will be for the duration of three hours and consist of a panel discussion followed by an interactive discussion. The co-chairs of the round tables will present the technical summaries of the four round tables at the start of the policy debate.

⁴ International Organization for Migration, "Human mobility impacts due to COVID-19". Available at <https://migration.iom.int/>

The panel discussion will be guided by the following questions:

- What lessons have we learned in terms of (a) migration governance, (b) border management and (c) protection of the rights of migrants, during the pandemic?
- What are some of the good practices that can be applied more broadly?
- What were some of the challenges?
- How can we enhance cooperation amongst Member States, stakeholders and the Network for more effective and rights-based cooperation on migration?
- How can the Migration Network Hub and the Migration MPTF help provide support?

Provisional Programme

15:00	Opening Welcome and opening remarks by Mr. António Vitorino, Director-General of the International Organization for Migration and Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration.
15:15	Presentation of the technical summaries of the round tables of the IMRF Roundtable 1: Egypt and Germany Roundtable 2: Ecuador and Tajikistan Roundtable 3: Thailand and Portugal Roundtable 4: Azerbaijan and Morocco
15:45	Panel discussion Moderator: Mr. António Vitorino, Director-General of the International Organization for Migration and Coordinator of the United Nations Network on Migration. Speakers: Dr. Linda Oucho, Executive Director of the African Migration and Development Policy Centre (AMADPC) Prof. Dr. Ronald Skeldon, University of Sussex Ms. Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr, Mayor of Freetown (TBC) Ms. Selina Leem, Youth climate activist (TBC)
17:00	Interactive discussion
17:45	Closing Remarks by Ms. Catherine M. Russell, Executive Director, UNICEF
