



**Ceipa report on the Intergovernmental Conference  
to adopt the Global Compact on Migration  
in Marrakech  
10 - 11 December 2018**

Under the auspices of the UN General Assembly and hosted by the Kingdom of Morocco, 164 states adopted the Global Compact for safe orderly and regular Migration (GCM). During the two-day conference, which was opened by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, more than 150 state representatives as well as representatives of UN agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental civil society organisations, delivered statements in support of the GCM, and outlined implementation priorities with respect to the GMC 23 objectives.

As adopted by the General Assembly in September 2016 (A/RES/71/1) in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, the GCM is set to help the global community tackle the challenges and leveraging the positive potentials related to migration. While acknowledging its non-legally binding nature, respecting the sovereign right of states to determine its migration governance, it is clearly bound to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of which has been celebrated in the same event.

CEIPA, alongside other international non-governmental organisations, think tanks and other civil society as well as private sector stakeholders participated and contributed to the 18 months preparatory process, particularly in the course of thematic sessions (<https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/consultation-phase>). Outcome of the preparatory consultative process is – under the caption of full respect for human rights – the inclusion of 23 diverse objectives, reflecting the multifarious aspects of migration, including, inter alia:

- creating more pathways to regular migration, including labour migration,
- combating trafficking and smuggling in human beings,
- collecting and providing migration-relevant data and information,
- support migrants and host societies to integrate as well as to encourage diaspora engagement, facilitating remittances flows
- minimizing drivers for and developing responses to compelled migration, such as climate change induced displacement, and promoting equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from sustainable development
- to strengthening international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration,

(full list of objectives can be found in the GCM at <http://undocs.org/en/A/CONF.231/3>).

The draft GCM document having been agreed upon by almost all UN states in July 2018, just weeks before its adoption at the intergovernmental conference in Marrakech, criticism mainly from polemic and nationalistic voices spread myths of a GCM-based loss of state sovereignty. As a result, several governments, notably of Austria, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, opted out from adopting the GCM. The connected debate, the UN Secretary General Guterres stated, was built on a number of deliberately spread myths, the decomposition of which formed the introductory part of his opening remarks to the intergovernmental conference.

Even the more so, presence and speech of German Chancellor Angela Merkel underlined the importance of the Global Compact of Migration. Her clear stance for multilateralism in addressing the global phenomenon of migration at UN level yielded standing ovation by the audience. In the same vein, the Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel, stating the non-deviation from initial backing of the GCM was highly appreciated and applauded by the representatives of the international community. Just the week preceding



the conference, his government had lost majority in the Belgium coalition over this very adoption of the compact.

Worthwhile mentioning, not all sceptics of the GCM decided to turn their back to UN multilateralism. Using the platform of the intergovernmental conference, Prime Minister of Denmark, Lars Rasmussen, in alliance with Norway, the Netherlands and Lithuania, declared that the respective governments would issue a joint declaration stating that their states would not allow the GCM to impede on sovereign right of the state to determine its migration and border management. Other states, among them Iceland, Bosnia, Niger, had their adoption or provisional adoption of the GCM announced as late as at the conclusion of the intergovernmental conference.

The GCM resolution having been unanimously agreed on by the represented states, the president of the UN General Assembly, Maria Espinosa Garcés, announced its submission for formal endorsement at the occasion of the upcoming General Assembly, to take place 19 December 2018.

### **Not an end in itself**

Throughout the conference, reflected in many statements by state representatives and non-state and civil society actors alike, core message was that the GCM was not an end by itself.

Two dialogues accompanying the governmental plenary session gave floor to governmental and non-governmental representatives alike to share their vision of the priorities for the GCM implementation.

Dialogue #1: Promoting action on the commitments of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, was supported by keynote speaker Madeleine Albright who shared her own migration story of 70 years ago. Embarrassed by absence of US from the multilateral GCM scene, she highlighted the need to commit to maximising the benefits and number of beneficiaries of globalisation by ensuring equal access to development.

According to the statement of the EU-representative delivered in the frame of this dialogue, GCM is to form integral part of EU cooperation with partner countries. CEIPA acknowledges particularly that addressing the root causes of migration and breaking the business model of smugglers and traffickers was highlighted by EU-representatives. At the same time, no mention was made of the failure to align EU Member States in favour of viewing the GCM as providing the relevant building blocks for a common and accorded approach to migration governance.

Dialogue #2: Partnerships and innovative initiatives for the way forward, was supported by keynote speaker Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. She reminded the audience of the benefits that arise out of migration, particularly when an area of open-border movement created an area of safety as achieved in some African countries which she underlined have a major role in shaping partnerships on migration governance.

Acknowledging the fears and uncertainty that existed among Europeans with regard to migration, the EU-representative declared the adoption of the GCM as victory of multilateralism in spite of post-facts-times. Again, CEIPA is supportive to the declared priority on observing a gender perspective in addressing migration governance, on combating trafficking, and on upholding a child perspective that prevails regardless of the respective migration status. The EU representative declared commitment to go from words to action, together with the international community, the European parliament and involving civil society, the observance of which CEIPA is ready to follow-up on.

During the two-days plenary and dialogue intervention, the clear and strong commitment to multilateralism with respect to addressing migration in a coherent and human-rights-based manner was voiced by state and non-state representatives alike. At the same time, not all states seem equally ready for full GCM implementation, due to political constraints, prevalent pressing issues or post-fact public polemics. The



pressing and challenging task hence appears to be to localise and, simultaneously, to join forces at the regional policy level to diligently pursue and follow-up on efforts to achieving GCM objectives.

As president of the UN General Assembly took up in her concluding remarks, the implementation phase is now to be considered crucial, not least to improving the situation of migrants worldwide. CEIPA commends the formation of the global migration network and stands ready as civil society actor to contribute as well as to involve in the IOM stakeholder consultation initiative as planned for 2019.

CEIPA, as stated in its GCM declaration, clearly backs the understanding that the GCM represents a momentum, conducive to a multilateral approach to migration governance, while its value is determined subject to its meaningful implementation. Aiming at fostering political will, determination and political coherence, CEIPA will – particularly focussing on the context of the European Union and its Member States – lend its expertise, experience and resources as laid out in its GCM-declaration, in support of this ambitious endeavour.

Anna Goos, Senior Migration Policy Advisor



### **Ceipa declaration on the Global Compact on Migration**

CEIPA (Centre for European and International policy Action) is a leading think tank in the field of migration, international security and humanitarian affairs. Through its leaders, CEIPA has been involved in migration policy formulation since decades, particularly within the scope of the European Union and its institutions and professional agencies. Its board members have facilitated governmental and non-governmental consultations on policies focusing on regular, labour and irregular migration, on protection of human and civil rights, on strategies combating and preventing international organized crime, terrorism, smuggling and trafficking in human beings. Numerous CEIPA initiatives and actions are promoting multilateral cooperation and dialogue between countries of origin, transit and destination of migrants and refugees, while enhancing the implementation of relevant provisions of international, UN, and European conventions, covenants and directives and conventions.

CEIPA fully subscribes to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to be adopted in the frame of the Intergovernmental Conference in Marrakech on 10 and 11 December 2018. It appreciates the Migration Compact as a new flexible and effective platform for the identification and adoption of viable solutions towards humane, safe and orderly movement of people beyond national borders. Moreover, CEIPA fully endorses its cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles as essential to the international migration policy framework.

CEIPA is convinced that, when professionally and consequently managed, the Global Compact will give a positive impetus to improved coordination amongst governments, NGO as well as UN agencies fully and partly mandated to deal with migration policy and action. The Global Compact may create conducive conditions for enhancing existing, and initiating new, regional and global dialogues and bring viable solutions for governments, migrants and their families. Transparent exchange on and coordination of fresh, innovative and practical approaches in the field of migration under the UN umbrella along with expertise from governments, academia, and NGO's will definitely help to reduce the risks and the negative impact of migration.

Recognizing that orderly and managed migration and well-set rules for cross-national human mobility may bring multiple benefits for developing as well as industrialized countries, CEIPA fully supports the process initiated by the Global Compact.

### **CEIPA contribution to objectives of the Global Compact on safe, orderly and regular Migration**

At the occasion of the adoption of the GCM, CEIPA reconfirms its devotion to contribute to a strengthened international cooperation framework with respect to migration policy and action. As based on its vision and portfolio, CEIPA supports the further development of migration policies and action, and the exchange and growing awareness on complex aspects of migration. The process initiated by the Global Compact will facilitate new and viable solutions for a number of cross-cutting issues at the core of migration policies. At the center of CEIPA's activities range promoting international cooperation by way of establishing pragmatic and flexible pathways for orderly and regular migration; enhancing economic and social development; reducing and preventing irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking in human beings. More specifically, CEIPA will continue to initiate dialogues and round table discussions among diverse institutions and entities in countries of origin, transit and destination, by full participation of experts, governments and NGOs. Migration and human mobility shall be seen in the holistic way and fully take into consideration the need for economic and social development as well as the specific skills and potentials of the migrants. Fair and balanced migration policy implies respect for human and civil rights, respect for laws and duties to be fulfilled by migrants in the host country. Means to leveraging the potential of



migrants' transfer of knowledge as well as flexible mobility of skilled and highly qualified migrants will continue playing an important role in CEIPA's future activities (objective 5, 16, 19). Facilitation of labor permit agreements, protection and safety, civil liberties and human rights of the migrants with special attention given to optimizing gender balance and family unity, will remain a priority.

Furthermore, CEIPA will undertake efforts to increase awareness on the link between economic development, demographic imbalance, and market availability when promoting labor mobility and transparent channels of remittances established according to specifics of each individual region and state in question (objective 18, 19, 20). CEIPA furthermore envisages to organize a number of structured dialogues focusing on standards of protection of civic and human rights of migrants on international as well as national levels with special attention given to the issue of trafficking in human beings (objective 7, 9, 10). Migrants' associations as well as NGO's, regional and national authorities will be convened to discuss and identify common grounds and possible concerted measures strengthening the impact of the provisions set by Global Compact.

While assisting existing NGO networks dealing with assistance to victims of trafficking and aiming at preventing and combating trafficking, CEIPA will conduct research and dialogues between international and national entities, law enforcement officials, law makers, researchers and experts. Based on its long-term experience, CEIPA will design awareness raising projects for NGO and the public sector in countries of origin, transit and destination of migrants/victims of trafficking.

Intending to enhancing efficacy in implementing norms and laws of UN, intergovernmental and national bodies and authorities, CEIPA will initiate consultations with of experts involved in the counselling of victims of trafficking and law enforcement officials assigned to combating perpetrators from countries of origin and destination. CEIPA will undertake efforts to create focal points at national and regional levels, dealing with the implementation of UN, intergovernmental and regional standards of preventing and combating trafficking, and of protecting victims of trafficking. Special attention will be given to treatment and protection of women and children.

### **General Principle for the Implementation of the Global Compact of Migration**

As a matter of principle, CEIPA will involve representatives of the relevant UN organizations, intergovernmental agencies, regional bodies, NGO, as well as governmental experts. CEIPA has a particularly strong and meaningful affiliation and network with the area of the European Union, its agencies as well as with its civil society. At the same time, it strives for exchange among diverse stakeholders beyond national and regional boundaries and institutional belonging. It generates and draws on multidisciplinary expertise, promoting the translation of different perspectives and lessons learnt into good practices. It intends to feed into evidence-based policies (objective 17), to contribute to the empowerment of migrants and societies of origin and of destination (objective 16, 19) and hence, in the frame of its scope, to contribute to the overall aim of coherent international cooperation (objective 23).

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