Regional Conference on Migrants in Crisis

21-23 March 2015
Metro Manila, Philippines

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Background

Since 2011, governments and intergovernmental organizations have focused their attention on situations in which migrants are adversely affected by emergencies and disasters that strike their countries of destination or transit. This global focus on what was then referred to as "stranded migrants" emerged in response to the large-scale evacuations of migrants during the Arab Spring uprisings and subsequent natural disasters in Japan (earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster), Thailand (unprecedented flooding), Haiti (earthquake), United States (Hurricane Sandy), among others. These disasters and emergencies exposed significant deficiencies in the policies and procedures of both origin and destination countries in responding to the particular needs of migrants—documented and undocumented—to ensure their safety and to facilitate equitable access to assistance.

The "stranded migrant" concept gained political traction through efforts of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on International Migration, Peter Sutherland, at the 2012 Global Forum on Migration & Development (GFMD), who cited addressing the challenges of "stranded migrants" as a priority. Likewise, global civil society included stranded migrants in its 8-point, 5-year action agenda[1], expanding the concept to include migrants in distress. Point 3 of the action agenda calls for:

> …reliable, multi-actor mechanisms to address the assistance and protection needs of **migrants stranded in distress**, beginning with those trapped in situations of war, conflict or disaster (natural or man-made) but with the same logic and urgency with respect to migrant victims of violence or trauma in transit. This should include specific attention to egregious gaps in protection and assistance for migrant women who are raped, and the thousands of children that are unaccompanied and abused along the major migration corridors in every region of the world. Benchmarks could include further work and multi-stakeholder capacity-building on frameworks developed by agencies with such responsibilities including the international organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the consolidation of relevant principles and practices under existing refugee, humanitarian and human rights laws.

The 8-point, 5-year action agenda served as the cornerstone of civil society advocacy at the 2013 UN High Level Dialogue on Migration & Development (UNHLD), and the "stranded migrants" priority was reflected in the UN

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[1] http://hldcivilsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/0261-HDL_The-5-year-Action-Plan-GB-web2.pdf

Secretary General's report during that process; the situation of stranded migrants was one of eight points of the Secretary General's action agenda.[2]

An important outcome of the UNHLD was the establishment of a new state-led initiative to address the plight of stranded migrants, following the narrow interpretation of migrants caught in crisis situations. The newly formed "Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative" (MICIC) is led by the United States and the Philippines with the participation of Australia, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, and the European Commission in partnership with the IOM, the UNHCR, Professor Susan Martin, and UN SRSG Peter Sutherland.[3] The MICIC initiative

> …aims to complement IOM's Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF) by establishing principles and guidelines to define the roles and responsibilities of countries of origin and destination, neighbouring states, employers, international organizations, and civil society for the purpose of protecting migrants affected by acute-onset crises like civil conflicts, natural disasters, and man-made disasters.[4]

While civil society welcomes the initiative of governments to address the issues affecting migrants caught in crisis situations through the creation and implementation of sound procedural frameworks and response mechanisms, states must recognize that their responsibility extends to *perpetual crises* affecting migrant workers. State-led initiatives must also be in place to address these urgent situations.

Regional Conference Objectives:
- To provide an orientation for civil society on the MICIC Initiative and activities that form part of the initiative
- To formulate recommendations to the MICIC Initiative on rights-based, migrant-centred emergency response mechanisms
- To develop our advocacy strategy on expanding the MICIC framework to include perpetual crises affecting migrant communities

Organizers
Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA)- MFA is a membership network of migrant organizations, migrants rights advocates, trade unions, faith-based organizations, and individuals working to protect and promote the rights of migrant workers and members of their families. MFA currently has more than 200 members in 16 countries in Asia. www.mfasia.org

Global Coalition on Migration(GCM) - The GCM members represent regional and international networks of migrant associations, migrants rights organizations and advocates, trade unions, faith groups and academia, covering every region around the world. The concept of the GCM was born out of the collaborations of its initial member organizations around the Global Forum on Migration (GFMD) and the corresponding People's Global Action on Migration, Development & Human Rights (PGA) processes.

Migration and Development Civil Society Network (MADE) - MADE connects and strengthens civil society's capacity to work with governments and to advocate for such policies and practices on a global regional and national level. The MADE network has evolved out of years of civil society organizing for the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) and officially launched during the 2014 GFMD Civil Society Days.

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[2] http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/genericdocument/wcms_243383.pdf
[3] http://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/What-We-Do/docs/MICIC-Concept-Note-Final-2-14-14.pdf
[4] http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/genericdocument/wcms_243383.pdf

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Day 1 — Migrants in Crisis: Expanding the Framework

Registration	8:30-9:00

Opening Remarks & Introductions
   • Welcome, objectives of the Program, agenda setting
   • Introduction of Participants
	9:00 – 9:30
	Migrant Forum in Asia

Discussion: Civil Society and Government Response to Migrants in Crisis
Sharing of CSO and government initiatives on migrants in crisis.
Perspectives from South East Asia and East Asia:
   • Thailand
   • Philippines
   • Malaysia
   • Indonesia
	9:30 – 11:00

Coffee/Tea Break	11:00-11:15

Discussion: Civil Society and Government Response to Migrants in Crisis
Sharing of CSO and government initiatives on migrants in crisis.
Perspectives from South Asia:
   • India
   • Nepal
   • Bangladesh
	11:00-01:00

Lunch Break	1:00 – 2:00

Discussion: Civil Society and Government Response to Migrants in Crisis
Sharing of CSO and government initiatives on migrants in crisis.
Perspectives from West Asia and East Asia:
   • Lebanon
   • Jordan
   • Israel
   • Korea
	2:00:3:30

Coffee/ Tea Break	3:30-3:45
Presentation of Global Position Paper on Migrants in Crisis	3:45-5:00

Closing Day 1	5:15-5:30

Day 2 — Responding to the Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative

Opening Remarks & Recap from Day 1 • MFA	9:00 – 9:30

Introduction to the MICIC Initiative • Secretary Imelda Nicholas, Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO)	9:30- 10:15–
Open Forum	10:15 – 10:45
Coffee / Tea Break	10:45-11:00
Work Shop The session will focus on sharing of initiatives and programs that governments and stakeholders have implemented or are planning to put in place	11:00-1:00

Lunch Break	1:00 – 2:00
Plenary Discussion: Strategy Session The session focused in discussing the government agenda and the interventions of CSOs in the process.	2:00-3:30
Coffee / Tea Break	3:30-3:45
Strategy Session Continued	3:45-5:00
Closing of Day 2 • **MFA**	5:00-5:30

DAY 3: Lobbying Session / inter-phase with government process and Internal Partners meeting on other Advocacy campaigns in Asia

Note: 3 representatives from the Parallel event were invited to the official government process

Partners Discussion of other Advocacy Campaign Priorities in Asia: Focus on Recruitment Reform The discussion focused on the aspects of the RecruitmentReform campaign in Asia highlighting the following: - Research - Online Platform - Priority themes for Campaign: zero fees, zero tolerance for contract substitution, ethical recruitment and transparency in	9:00-10:45

government to government recruitment	
Coffee / Tea Break	10:45-11:00
Continuation of Partners Discussion on Recruitment Reform	11:00-1:00
Lunch Briefing on Government Process	1:00-2:00
Workshop Discussion on Lobbying Strategies for Inter-phase with Government MICIC process Participants discussed strategies for dialogue with their government representatives in the MICIC process.	2:00-3:30
Inter-phase / Dialogue with Government Representatives in the MICIC program	