

Press Release

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GFMD Civil Society Days 2018: Human mobility that works for migrants and society

The 2018 Civil Society Days that will take place in the first week of December (4-6) in Marrakesh will also symbolize the launch of “Marrakesh Migration Week” - eight days of events and activities that culminate in the intergovernmental conference to adopt the Global Compact for Migration on December 11th. This is a moment for civil society to come together around ‘Goals, Compacts, Action: Human mobility that works for migrants and societies’.

There is no doubt that the migration agenda has undergone many challenges since the 2017 Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) in Berlin. The expansion of populist and far right politics, anti-refugee/migrants sentiments and racism have grown systematically worldwide. As Stéphane Jaquemet, Director of Policy at ICMC, Civil Society Coordinating Office, Global Forum on Migration and Development, underlines ‘*Civil society has an important role to play in the implementation and should have a positive engagement and constructive but critical dialogue with States’.*

Continuing from the momentum gathered by civil society networks and partners during the negotiations of the Global Compact in early 2018, the focus of the GFMD Civil Society Days 2018 will lie squarely on how global commitments can support the work already being done at local, national and regional level for migrants and societies.

In this context, 300 civil society delegates from all regions of the world will come together to strategize, advocate, and engage with governments on critical issues in the areas of migration and development.

Discussions during this year’s Civil Society Days will serve a dual purpose: the first recognition that migration is, by definition, a phenomenon that requires cooperation, coordination and support across borders. The second, recognition of the vital role that civil society plays in the area of migration, often first as responders, as well as implementors, and watchdogs. In order to arrive at clear messages and recommendations, four key themes will be explored in detail: 1. drivers of displacement, 2. transit, entry, reception and return, 3. labour rights and recruitment, and 4. social, economic and political inclusion.

For the first time the event will be chaired by a three-person team, steered by Roula Hamati (Cross Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants), with Mamadou Goïta (Institute for Research and the Promotion of Alternatives in Development /PANDiMR) and Hamza Ibrahim of the Swedish Youth Council.



We are also pleased to announce our inspirational speaker, Sajeela Kershi, comedian, writer, activist and creator of the award winning “immigrant diaries”. In addition to getting the show up-and-running on our first day, Sajeela will be on hand throughout the event to shed some light on what is, at present, a very meaningful and serious topic.

Recognizing that internationally agreed commitments are an important starting point to ensure that migration governance frameworks are fit for purpose, we hope that this meeting will help civil society solidify the already important momentum moving into the future.

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