

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 12/12/2018

Making the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration a living commitment

“We are all people on the move - it's not a place that defines rights”

More than three hundred civil society organizations from around the world gathered in Marrakesh for the Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD)'s Civil Society Days last week, against the broader context of the “Marrakesh Migration Week” - a week of important meetings culminating in an intergovernmental conference to adopt the Global Compact on Migration. On the civil society front, an intense four-days of meetings resulted in ten clear commitments developed by civil society in engaging in the next phase of the Global Compact: its implementation. These messages were delivered to the intergovernmental conference by the GFMD Civil Society Days Chair, Roula Hamati.

In order to break the negotiated language down into concrete areas of action, civil society actors, along with a range of observers (included to facilitate a multi-stakeholder engagement), discussed a broad range of issues affecting migration; exploring good & bad practices, drawing up recommendations for states, and further points of follow up for the movement as a whole.

Joining our chair team for the first time, our youth representative –Hamza Ibrahim - brought an important perspective to discussions and maintained an important link between the “future and the present” of the movement. We are hopeful that this connection will be maintained in the coming year, notably through the incorporation of the Youth Forum into the GFMD programme for 2019.

Throughout the event, participants focused on the need to transform the Global Compact into a living document that will lead to real change in practice at the sub-national, national and regional levels. As Mamadou Goïta GFMD Civil Society Days co-Chair explains, it is the hope that this agreement will be implemented in a multidimensional way so it can accelerate the processes that currently exist. “We are hopeful that this will be a key instrument that will push the countries to engage in a dialogue among themselves, but also with other stakeholders that have something to say on the issue of migration.”

States were reminded of their commitments and were called to step-up to their responsibilities, ensuring that basic standards of human rights are respected. As Louise Arbour, UN Special Representative for International Migration, put it: the Global Compact is neither meant to stop nor increase migration, it is meant as a tool to facilitate greater cooperation, to ensure that migration can happen in a safer manner.

In closing, Ms. Hamati reminded participants that the voice of civil society is also the voice of migrants. “In light of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, let this Compact be a visible and tangible step towards a more just and secure world for everyone. We need to improve the situation of people on the move and make migration orderly, safe and regular.” This reflects the sentiments conveyed to States through a Joint Civil Society Statement, available [here](#).

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