



Women in Migration Network Statement

UN Network on Migration meeting with Member States to launch road map to the International Migration Review Forum, October 19, 2021

The Women in Migration Network, WIMN, welcomes the UN Network's roadmap in preparation for the International Migration Review Forum and the vision shared by the President of the General Assembly and DG Vittorino. We echo the affirmation that the IMRF is part of an ongoing process and we commit to being an active part of that process.

WIMN was an active civil society actor in negotiations for the Global Compact for Migration. In 2018, we launched the [Marrakech Women's Rights Manifesto](#) which affirmed the importance of the Global Compact while also addressing gaps. We have been active in UN Network working groups, where we currently are part of [2021-2022 workplan](#) work on Thematic Priorities 6 & 7 on gender and race anti-discrimination. With the Network and UN Women, we hosted a listening session in 2020 on COVID impacts on migrant women. Through the [Expert Working Group](#) for Addressing Women's Human Rights in the Global Compact for Migration we have provided input to UN Women's [Policies and Practices Guide](#) on Gender-Responsive Implementation of the Global Compact and its [launch](#) in 2021. We support the [Gender & Migration Hub](#), created by the International Migration Research Centre and supported by the Canadian government. We participated actively in Regional Reviews.

As many member states noted, the IMRF will take place in the context of efforts to emerge from the COVID pandemic. We underscore the fact that women in migration, particularly migrant women workers, have shouldered much of the burden of keeping economies going during the pandemic—delivering healthcare, care work, agricultural work and more, yet continue to be underpaid and boxed into precarious and highly exploitative jobs. Many other migrant women workers had to return to countries of origin or were stranded in countries of destination, and many experienced wage theft. The pandemic made visible the existing inequalities and flaws in global migration governance which must be addressed in the IMRF process and beyond. Rather than seeking to “build back better,” this is a moment to boldly confront migration policies that have systematically undermined the rights of women at all stages of migration.

In preparation for the IMRF and our ongoing work for the human rights of women in migration, in 2021, WIMN has done a [global mapping](#) of organizations working on gender and migration, a series of regional intersectional and intersectoral dialogues, and participated in a six-part [Feminist Fridays](#) series on migrant women workers. We will build on these to bring recommendations for intersectional migration policy that affirms the dignity and rights of all women in migration and all migrants. As a member of the

Global Coalition on Migration we are preparing a global spotlight report centering migrant voices and migrant human rights in all regions.

As we embark on the IMRF process we urge that:

- Gender and race be central to all aspects of the review process in all 23 objectives, and in forward-looking recommendations. We recognize the important work done by member states in a Gender Caucus during the GCM negotiations and look to their leadership in negotiations for the IMRF outcome declaration as well.
- That the IMRF address key priorities for future work, as noted by DG Vittorino. These should include
 - Expanded pathways for humanitarian resettlement for migrants and refugees must be the centerpiece of a rights agenda, regardless of the status or “category” of migrants. There must be coherence and complementarity between refugee (GCR) and migration (GCM) policy frameworks. States must honor asylum commitments and the principle of non-refoulement. They must end detention of asylum-seekers and increase their capacity for resettlement, extending full rights and social protections to migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers without discrimination. There cannot be an honest assessment of GCM implementation without addressing the realities of both refugees and asylum-seekers.
 - Regularization of migrants, including extending full civil and labor rights to migrant workers, must be at the top of the agenda. There is an urgent need to reassess current bi-lateral labor migration pathways which disenfranchise migrants and frequently place migrant women workers in precarious and dangerous situations.
 - A new social compact that offers full inclusion of migrants in robust public health care (including vaccines and COVID treatment) and services regardless of status. This includes social inclusion of migrant women workers in countries of destination and return without discrimination, including end to wage theft, access to social security and services and end to stigmatization.
 - Protection of migrants in transit and at international borders, recognition of the important role played by humanitarian agencies in rescuing migrants, and assistance to families who have lost loved ones along irregular migration routes
 - A focus on climate and migration with a gender lens as a priority concern. Climate change is already impacting the livelihoods and food security of migrant women.

Regarding the preparatory process, we recommend that:

- That the IMRF elicit concrete pledges by member states and other stakeholders, in the model of the GCR process, to make the Forum tangible and effective.
- That member states engage with national and local civil society in preparing national reports for the IMRF. We echo the QUNO’s recommendation that Member States host listening sessions with migrant organizations to understand current realities.
- That member states include migrants and civil society actors in their delegations to the IMRF, contribute to the special fund for both state and civil society (including migrant) participation in the IMRF, and contribute to the MPTF.

We look forward to working with the President of the GA, the UN Network on Migration, Member States and all stakeholders, particularly migrants, in building a bold and forward-looking IMRF and beyond.

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