



# Geneva Reporter

## Flawed diamond, not flawless pebble: The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

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UN Photo/Mark Garten

The Global Compact on Migration is celebrated at the UN in New York.

*This July, the United Nations (UN) concluded negotiations on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). We asked Laurel Townhead, our Representative for Human Rights & Refugees, to share her perspective on the landmark agreement.*

**Since the New York Declaration in September 2016, you and QUNO have closely followed and supported the negotiations. Overall, what are your thoughts on the outcome?**

We welcome the outcome, in substance and in the message it sends on the value and viability of multilateralism on even the most contentious of issues. While the agreement does not say all that we would have wished, we nonetheless see it as an important achievement. As the representative of Papua New Guinea said in the meeting approving the text, “Better to have a diamond with a flaw than a pebble without.” The Compact reflects what UN Member States could agree to in writing, but the discussion and debate in the process of the negotiations created a further distance travelled.

**QUNO worked to support the adoption of a GCM that is *effective, ambitious* and *human rights-based*. How would you say the final agreement rates against those criteria?**

First, the scope of the agreement, “the 360 degree view of migration” is very ambitious, as are its aspirations. The reaffirmation of the potentially positive benefits of migration for all is a welcome statement in the current political context. Previous discussions in the UN have centred on the economic benefits of migration, more than on the migrants themselves. But the first guiding principle of the GCM is that it is “people centred,” re-orientating discussion to the human experience. This is coupled with a guiding principle on human rights, reaffirming that all migrants have human rights regardless of their status. We welcome commitments on access to services, better protection for migrants and safeguards on the use of detention and deportations.

**Those certainly sound like positive developments. Where do you see the agreement lacking?**

Flaws in the diamond, or rather ongoing concerns, include the lack of a clear prohibition on criminalization of irregular migration, and less than we would have wished on ensuring safe and enabling environments for those working with and for migrants (including migrants themselves), who are at the forefront of saving lives, providing assistance and working for realisation of rights. Also, the document could have called for a greater scale of data sharing among countries. However, we feel there is much to work with in regard to these issues of concern.

*(continued on page 2)*

## The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (*continued*)

How effectively do you think the GCM can address the significant challenges facing migrants and migration?

Implementation, follow-up and review have been a key area of focus for QUNO throughout the process, as these will be critical in determining whether the GCM is ultimately effective. The Compact establishes a global review conference every four years, as well as regional reviews. It also requests the UN Secretary General to report every two years on progress and calls for national plans and policies to implement the Compact and to undertake regular, inclusive reviews of these plans.

What are the next steps, both for the agreement and QUNO?

The negotiations have concluded, but it is not due to be adopted by heads of state until a high level conference in Marrakech in December. While this is a moment to reflect on progress, it is also time to begin communicating and implementing the agreement, so that States can come to Marrakech ready to demonstrate how this is already a living document. We look forward to the next phase of work that translates its promise into positive change for those on the move, the communities that receive them and the communities they leave.

## Nuclear disarmament or nuclear arms race: The world at a crossroads

*QUNO's Representative for Peace & Disarmament Florence Foster on the challenges facing international nuclear disarmament efforts.*

In recent years, global geo-political events have both added a sense of urgency to the nuclear disarmament discussions and a reality check of how surreal the path is we are currently on. These include the sudden onset of discussions towards the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, alongside the near simultaneous withdrawal of the US from the Iran nuclear deal. At the same time, policy changes and technological choices by all nuclear powers contribute to dangerously lowering the threshold for use of nuclear weapons, while the taboo against using weapons of mass destruction has arguably been eroded by the widespread use of chemical weapons in Syria.

In addition, all these developments are taking place against the back-drop of an increasingly multipolar world where consensus is ever more elusive, challenging the international system's decision-making ability. Indeed, nuclear multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament agreements have been threatened by growing divisions and challenges. All the while, bilateral arms control frameworks or negotiations towards arsenal reductions have offered little prospect of progress.

The Conference on Disarmament attempted to make headway on discussions this year. There are however few, if any, indications that a substantive outcome will ensue, nor that this will pave the way for anything to be negotiated in the near future. The controversies around the Syrian presidency of the conference this year only show how fragile it remains to distractions and time-old barriers that inhibit any sign of consensus building.

In the past years, the Non Proliferation Treaty's (NPT) capacity to facilitate favourable conditions for nuclear disarmament has been limited, which galvanized momentum among non-nuclear-weapon States, resulting in the development and adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in July 2017. For some, the fact that transparency was proposed

as a show of good faith from nuclear weapon States, was seen as a somewhat disparaging and minimal trust building measure. Furthermore, the notion aired by others that there was such a thing as a "responsible" nuclear weapon State horrified many, not least supporters of the TPNW.

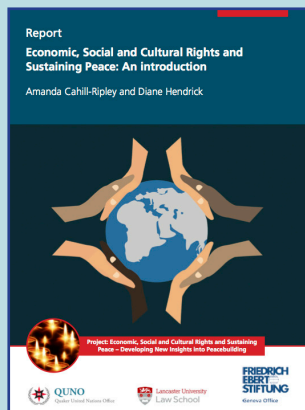
Navigating these various forums has also shown how divided even seemingly homogenous groups are: there is no single "pro-TPNW group," nor is there a united "nuclear weapon State group"—the shades of grey muddy complex diplomatic waters even more. But beyond these issue-based disagreements and stalling multilateral interactions, there is a commonly voiced need for constructive dialogue and trust building. Importantly, there is a clear need for inclusive spaces for that to happen in, not least as some nuclear weapon States are not party to the NPT or other disarmament forums.

To build a collective whose differences are managed, if not reconciled, there needs to be a greater will to remove suspicion and cynicism and open hearts and minds to listen and understand respective points of view. This is the first step towards substantive discussions on reducing our current reliance on nuclear weapons, and eventually reducing, if not abandoning our nuclear arsenal altogether.



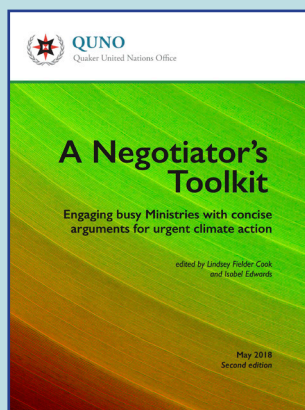
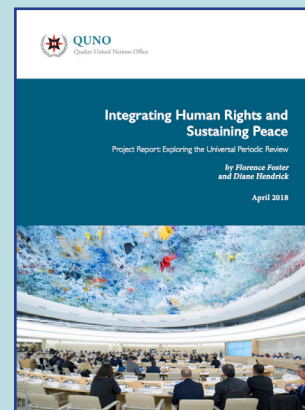
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## Recent publications



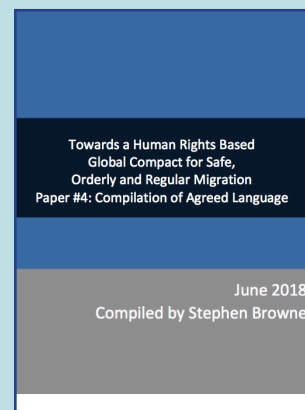
**Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Sustaining Peace: An introduction**  
*A joint publication with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and Lancaster University (March 2018)*

**Integrating Human Rights and Sustaining Peace**  
Project report: Exploring the Universal Periodic Review. *Florence Foster and Diane Hendrick*  
(April 2018)



**A Negotiator's Toolkit, Second Edition**  
Engaging busy Ministries with concise arguments for urgent climate action. *Edited by Lindsey Fielder Cook and Isobel Edwards* (May 2018)

**Towards a Human Rights Based Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration—Paper 4: Compilation of Agreed Language**  
*Compiled by Stephen Browne* (June 2018)



All publications are available at: [quno.org/recent-publications](http://quno.org/recent-publications).

## Honest conversations on effective climate action

*An update from Lindsey Fielder Cook on QUNO's work supporting ongoing international climate change negotiations.*

At the international climate change negotiations in May, QUNO co-hosted a side event, *Why Aren't We Really Mitigating? Honest Conversations on Effective Climate Action*. The event brought together experts from within faith and scientific communities to discuss approaches to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In addition to fossil fuel reduction, panelists discussed ways to rapidly decrease GHG emissions, including dietary change, nature restoration, sustainable economic systems, and cherishing a “sacred” relationship with nature.

It is of concern that few negotiators, at either the climate change negotiations or the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC), appear confident to press politically for action on unsustainable lifestyle or consumption, and the economic and social paradigms which promote them. There is increasing interest in as yet unproven geo-engineering fixes, such as solar engineering, or large-scale use of bioenergy and carbon capture storage, fixes which might address some symptoms but fail to address the root causes of climate change.

Recent climate modeling shows significant potential via a reduction of meat in human diets, yet few governments

appear willing to engage citizens with these kinds of individual climate actions. For this reason, QUNO is now serving on the *Expert Group for Living the Change—Faith Initiative on Sustainable Living*, which seeks to promote “leadership by example” to urge governments to implement policies consistent with the Paris Agreement.

In October, States will negotiate the content of an IPCC Special Report exploring on ways to hold a global temperature rise to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels. At the climate change conference in December, negotiators must agree on guidelines to implement the Paris Agreement. To support these negotiations, we published a second edition of *A Negotiator's Toolkit*, which outlines concise, referenced, cases for urgent, rights-based climate action.

QUNO will continue to encourage sufficient focus on the role of renewable energies, sustainable economic models, lifestyle behaviour, consumption and nature restoration in reducing GHG emissions. These approaches also empower citizens to transform their activities at the root cause of dangerous climate change. Courage, compassion and a sense of the sacred are needed to overcome fear, even apathy.



## QUNO Q & A with Rhiannon Redpath



2018 Geneva Summer School participants lift Rhiannon Redpath (centre) while gathering for a photo.

*In QUNO Q&A, we feature interviews with alumni about their perspectives and experiences. For this issue, we spoke with 2014-15 Peace & Disarmament Programme Assistant (PA) Rhiannon Redpath. Since leaving QUNO, she has worked on community-building in Greater Manchester (UK), particularly with young people and children who have been excluded from mainstream education. This year, Rhiannon returned to QUNO to support participants of the 2018 Geneva Summer School (GSS).*

### How were you introduced to QUNO?

Raised amongst Quakers, I had been aware of QUNO's work for many years. After working in research, policy and campaigning for UK Quakers, I became interested in exploring change-making and peacebuilding at an international level, which led me to attend GSS in 2013 and apply for a Programme Assistantship.

### How do you recall your time as PA?

One of my key memories was the tangible moment that used to happen when I introduced myself as working for QUNO. As a 20-something PA, finding your voice at summits and UN meetings can be daunting. Countless times, delegates somehow softened when they heard that I worked for QUNO. There was a noticeable shift, as though a little humanity had been added to the space. Preceded by the strong reputation of

my colleagues at QUNO and Quakers worldwide, this recognition from other NGOs and diplomats began to teach me the deeper impacts of QUNO's work—and how reputations, trust and relationships are built over time.

Through experiences like this, I began to understand the impact of QUNO's work, and the impact of working carefully, diligently and purposefully, building relationships over decades and earning respect. In a world increasingly chaotic with shouting voices, it became clear to me that I was working for an organisation whose work, approach and discretion was deeply trusted.

### What a wonderful memory! Has your PA experience influenced your current work?

Absolutely. One of the best things about being a PA was that I had the opportunity to take on a range of responsibilities and different tasks—writing, researching, facilitating, public speaking, organising, and representing QUNO at different UN mechanisms, meetings and events. The brilliant Diane Hendrick, formerly QUNO's Representative for Peace & Disarmament, really supported me to find what I was good at and develop my skills in that area. Today, my work is focused on facilitation, training, leadership and conflict resolution—all skills that were grown and empowered during my time at QUNO.

### Tell us more about your current community-building effort.

Directly engaging with interpersonal conflict and community work—which can often feel like the sharp edge of conflict—has offered a uniquely different perspective to my policy work at QUNO. This continues to inform my understanding of what peace means to different people, what conflict can look like, and the many ways in which “change” can manifest.

### Clearly your experience at QUNO was a positive one. Why else would you recommend GSS or our PA positions?

Every time I hear a young person share interest in international politics, or diplomacy, I signpost them to the Geneva Summer School. It is an entirely unique programme. Also, hundreds of young people flock to Geneva every year to take on unpaid internships at large UN agencies. Such internships—though immensely valuable for those people at the start of their careers—limit the access to these programmes by class and access to wealth. By contrast, QUNO values the input of its PAs, who bring fresh ideas and energy every year, by paying them an annual salary, giving them serious responsibilities, and training them to contribute to the world.

### The 2018 GSS just ended. Describe your role. How was your return to QUNO?

I really enjoyed the opportunity to return to Geneva as “House Mum” for the QUNO summer school participants. Working with such an inclusive group, and introducing them to both the professional and personal opportunities Geneva has to offer has been a pleasure, balanced alongside the occasional trip to the doctors, and frequent checks of the engine to make sure the wheels are turning smoothly!