



QUNO

Quaker United Nations Office

# Migration Justice: Delivering on the Promise of the Global Compact for Migration

## Paper 7: Using the Outcomes of the International Migration Review Forum for Migration Justice

Our vision of migration justice is grounded in human rights and puts the dignity of migrants at the centre. The Global Compact for Migration (GCM or Global Compact) contains a promise of a people-centred and human rights-based approach to migration policy. The 2022 International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) was the first global reflection by States on implementation of the GCM so far. The IMRF was a steppingstone in delivering on the promise of the GCM, not an endpoint. Follow up to the IMRF and continued work on GCM implementation can provide further steps on the path towards migration justice. See our [briefing paper](#) for more detail on what the IMRF is and what we hoped it would achieve.

The number of participants and the level at which governments participated demonstrates that the event was taken seriously. Pledges for national action and international cooperation indicate how the Forum drives concrete actions. The adoption of the Progress Declaration by consensus reflects the strength of interest in finding a multilateral agreement on migration, despite substantial differences in position.

While the IMRF succeeded in demonstrating a commitment to human rights-based multilateralism on migration within the United Nations, it did not deliver on all the demands and concerns of those working for migration justice. This sentiment was echoed by several Member States who voiced their view in Explanations of Position after the adoption of the Progress Declaration that they would have liked a stronger agreement on human rights. Further work is needed to make the best use of this steppingstone by building on its outcomes to bring us closer to fulfilling the promise of the GCM for people-centred migration governance.

## Outcomes and How We Can Use Them To Work For Migration Justice

### Pledges

Pledges are measurable commitments to advance the implementation of one or more GCM guiding principles, objectives, or actions. So far, over 210 pledges have been made by a range of stakeholders covering specific policy actions or resources. There is a [pledging dashboard](#) to record and follow up on the pledges.

Although not all pledges are human rights-based, they remain useful for seeing the priorities of States and for seeking to hold them accountable for those commitments. Pledges can also be useful to identify allies and partners to work with nationally, regionally or on a specific issue.

### National Reviews and Statements

The GCM encourages voluntary national reviews (VNRs) and calls for these to be regular and participatory, so this should be an ongoing process and governments should be engaging with migrants, NGOs, and other stakeholders. Whilst the reports represent governments' own assessments of their progress, they can be useful to help identify priorities and may contain information about their plans and processes for GCM implementation. So far, over 75 voluntary GCM [reviews](#) have been submitted. Many of the statements made at the IMRF are also available [online](#).

#### Ideas for action

- ▶ Check what pledges your country made and advocate for specific actions as part of delivery of the pledge or offer support for implementation of the pledge
- ▶ Check to see what pledges States or other organisations made on the topics you work on and support implementation or use these to support your advocacy
- ▶ Monitor implementation of pledges in your country or on your priority topics and prepare reports on progress (or lack of progress)
- ▶ You can still submit pledges of actions you can take alone or in collaboration with others or advocate with governments to make pledges

#### Ideas for action

- ▶ Check what your government said to identify their priorities and plans to inform your advocacy and action
- ▶ Monitor and report on progress (or lack of progress) on any commitments made in the national report including any replicable good practice
- ▶ Plan to prepare your own response or assessment of implementation, alone or in collaboration with others
- ▶ Analyse reports to identify common challenges within regions and suggest these as topics for focused discussion in the upcoming regional reviews

## The Progress Declaration

The [Progress Declaration](#) reaffirms the GCM and was adopted by consensus, effectively bringing all States on board with the GCM (although the dissociations from a small number of States indicate a continuing hesitancy from some to fully commit to the Compact).

The Progress Declaration is made up of three sections: an introduction (paras. 1 to 20); a section on progress, challenges, and gaps in the implementation of the Global Compact (paras. 21 to 50); and a set of recommended actions to accelerate implementation (paras. 51 to 77).

In addition to reaffirming that all migrants are rights holders and the obligation of States to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants, regardless of their migration status, some key points that were agreed upon include:

- Mandates for Secretary-General to provide in his 2024 report on GCM implementation:
  - i. a limited set of indicators (para. 70)
  - ii. actionable recommendations to strengthen cooperation on missing migrants and providing humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress (paras. 76);
- A commitment to providing all migrants safe access to basic services, regardless of their migration status, as well as continuity of care, COVID-19 vaccinations, testing and treatment in line with universal health coverage, (para. 51);
- Commitments to promoting the meaningful participation of migrants in policy discussions and their contribution to policy development on issues affecting them (paras. 51, 53, and 56);
- A commitment to eliminating all forms of discrimination, including racism, systemic racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerances including through reviewing policy (para. 54);
- A commitment to developing national gender-responsive and child-sensitive migration policies and legislation (para. 56).

### Ideas for action

#### Global level: Engaging through the UN Network on Migration

- › Follow up on the mandate to develop a limited set of indicators through the UN Network on Migration by preparing indicators you would like to see included and the reasons they should be included; engaging with the dialogues proposed to help shape these indicators
- › Follow up on the mandate to develop actionable recommendations on missing migrants and humanitarian assistance through the UN Network on Migration; a broad consultation and dialogue process has been proposed, consider not only how you can engage but how can you support those with direct relevant experience and expertise to engage

#### National & Regional level: Engage with regional platforms & national advocacy

- › Arrange follow-up dialogue with those leading on GCM implementation at the national level focussing on commitments in the Progress Declaration
- › Advocate with and support governments to improve migrant participation in policy making including by enabling and supporting engagement of those with direct relevant experience and expertise
- › Provide an assessment of the human rights impacts of national migration policy and practice, including a racial justice analysis to inform review of policy and practice and next steps for GCM implementation
- › Advocate for and support peer learning within and between governments, for example on how firewalls enable safe access to services or how a child-sensitive and gender-responsive approach can be guaranteed

We have published a brief analysis of [our reflections on the Progress Declaration](#).

## What Happens Next?

National implementation is primarily the responsibility of States and should be the focus, incorporating the commitments in the Progress Declaration and pledges and utilising [tools from the UN Network on Migration](#). The UN Migration Network will continue to support States with GCM implementation at national level and through work on thematic priorities including, climate change and migration, smuggling, enhancing the application of anti-discrimination dimensions, enhancing regular pathways for migrants in vulnerable situations, and promoting alternatives to immigration detention.

Work will begin in 2023 to prepare for the 2024 regional reviews, which can be seen as a process rather than a set of single events. This offers opportunities for by civil society and other actors to engage to use the outcomes of the IMRF to further migration justice.

For information about these and other entry points, sign up for [our monthly e-bulletin](#).