**UNNM 5th Annual Meeting (30-31 January 2024)**

**Protecting Migrants’ Rights and Saving Lives – Looking Forward Strengthening Advocacy at Global, Regional & Country Levels**

What we have heard is distressing and frustrating. I am reminded when I hear stories or statistics about loss of migrant lives of a question from British journalist Daniel Trilling:

People develop attachments to places, they move, they develop attachments to new places, and to new people. If you think people have a right to do that, then the question is how to support it. If you don’t, then you need to ask yourself: what level of violence are you prepared to tolerate to keep people in their place?[[1]](#footnote-1)

Both elements of this question are reminders of agency - we do not all have the same level of power and influence but all in this room have some power and some influence.

So how can we stop admiring the problem of the lack of political will and move into addressing it?

Drawing from what we've heard throughout the Annual Meeting and strongly in today’s session’s, I suggest:

1. Collectivities
2. Coherence
3. Convening
4. Courage
5. Collectivities
* Coming together, working together under the big umbrella of the Network but also smaller groupings within that, for example the workstreams, the country Networks, the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund projects, and along specific routes.
1. Coherence
* Coherence and complementarity drawing on the comparative advantage of the different organisations involved.
1. Convening (conversation)
* Convening the conversations that need to happen – building on those we have, like this here today but also the conversations we don’t have enough or don’t have yet: a clear message throughout this Annual Meeting has been for more conversation with migrants to centre their expertise and experience. And asking who and how we can convene the conversations we need to engage political will – thinking specifically about the follow up to the actionable recommendations on missing migrants and humanitarian assistance covered in the previous panel. These must be more than words on a page – who could have the convening power to bring together conversations to engage political will and the highest level? We would suggest a group of eminent experts or a high level panel to enable that.
1. Courage
* Having the courage not just for small changes here and there but for the transformation we have heard the need for across these two days.

And I have hope for this – from the way States keep coming together to make commitments, from the ideas, examples and commitment there is in this room and in the wider community around Network.

(Check against delivery)

Delivered by Laurel Townhead

Representative, Human Rights and Refugees

1. <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v39/n14/daniel-trilling/should-we-build-a-wall-around-north-wales> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)