

GMG-OHCHR-ILO-PICUM High-level Dialogue on

“Responding to large movements of refugees and migrants: human rights protection, labour market options and a global compact for migration”

20 July 2016 | 13:00-15:00 | PDR 1-3 Delegates Dining Room | UN HQ New York

Formal sit-down lunch event

First discussion topic: Labour market options and ideas for a Global Compact for Migration

DG Talking Points

- I am pleased to be taking part in this important conversation in connection with the upcoming **General Assembly Summit on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants** on 19 September.
- ILO provided inputs to the Secretary-General’s Report for the Summit and participates in the high-level Steering Committee chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General.
- The Summit may be a turning point for member States in demonstrating their commitment to a shared responsibility in addressing the global crisis, which affects us all.
- The ILO welcomes the emphasis of the current draft Declaration on an action-oriented approach, and through a new global compact for refugees. We strongly support the further agreement for member States to develop a similar compact for large movements of migrants.
- It is an important that the Summit outcome foster a bridge humanitarian and development actions. Job growth can help to build that bridge.

- A commitment to taking positive steps on increasing access to productive employment and decent work is essential to making this outcome durable, as is attention to adopting fair and effective labour migration and mobility policies. ILO standards and good practices provide a basis to support these efforts.
- **I had the opportunity to see first hand our work with Syrian refugees in Turkey.** Just before the World Humanitarian Summit, I visited the refugee camp in the Harran District in Turkey's southeastern Sanliurfa Province. In listening to the men and women refugees there, a common theme I heard was their deep desire to find work. They told me that work gives purpose to their lives, earns them an income and helps them to move forward from their tragic circumstances. At the same time, I also understand the real challenges for Turkey and other frontline States hosting large populations of refugees to provide access to the labour market. Some of these countries are facing high unemployment rates and have received little international assistance. Yet, the accident of 'geography' should not determine responsibility for refugee protection. This has to be shared.
- I can report two very important events that will deepen ILO's commitment in this regard. On 2 July, we concluded an MoU with UNHCR to rededicate our agencies to close cooperation, and by end of September we will produce a detailed workplan of immediate and longer-term priority actions for joined-up work in the field, and across the world.
- I am also pleased to share that ILO has now adopted Guiding Principles on access to the labour market for refugees and other forcibly displaced persons. This was not without its challenges, or a diversity of views on the subject. But it was adopted, and ILO looks forward to working with the international community in using this guidance to help chart our collective responses in this area.
- We believe this can also guide international cooperation and assistance to those countries in need, particularly targeting employment creation for nationals and refugees, enterprise development, vocational training

and recognition of skills, as well as admission pathways for refugees through labour mobility channels, something I know the Declaration has highlighted.

- The employment dimension should feature more prominently across the Global Compact on Refugees, particularly in those aspects of the current draft dealing with self-reliance, support for host countries and communities, voluntary repatriation and reintegration on return home.
- It must be underscored, that the UNGA Summit outcome needs the input of all stakeholders. This includes meaningful participation of business and trade unions. Their voices are not only critical to sound programming, but to diffusing tensions between refugees and migrants, and their host communities. We must enhance their role, not diminish it, if our responses are to be truly durable.
- Turning to discussions of the **Global Compact on Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration**, we would encourage that fair, safe and regular channels for labour migration and mobility be a key consideration. ILO global estimates indicate work is at the heart of most international migration today. Migrant workers comprise 150 million or around 73 per cent of the migrant population of working age (15 years and over) of 207 million—and 44 per cent of all migrant workers are women.
- Yet, we still see fragmented governance, poor cooperation across migration corridors, and weak labour rights protection. We have the tools to strengthen our migration management systems in ways that can meet the needs of business while also ensuring a positive experience for migrant workers.
- Stronger bilateral and regional cooperation are central. The sharing of standards and good practices in this area is implicit in our obligations under the SDGs, and we hope this will feature as a key component of the intergovernmental conference anticipated for 2018.
- Toward this end, the ILO is organizing in the early part of September a tripartite meeting of experts to develop guidelines on fair recruitment that applies to national workers, migrant workers and refugees alike,

and speaks to all relevant actors (governments, business, employers, labour recruiters). This guidance can directly assist the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees and the preparation of the Global Compact on Migration. It can also contribute to the international commitment to reduce the costs of labour migration anticipated by the 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development).

- We welcome partnership with the international community to implement these guidance tools. In cooperation with other GMG agencies, we are already building new UNDAF guidance related to migrants and refugees.
- It is clear that solutions will require solidarity – solidarity around implementing recognized human rights and labour standards, and around inclusiveness in our dialogue processes to engage all relevant actors and stakeholders, including the migrants themselves.
- Thank you.