



Restoring Dignity, Inspiring Change.

ICMC Secretariat
1, rue de Varembe
P.O. Box 96
CH-1211 Geneva 20
Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 919 10 20
Fax: +41 22 919 10 48
Email: info@icmc.net
www.icmc.net

FOLLOW US ON:    

Global Compact on Refugees
High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges
12-13 December 2017

Interaction Between the Two Compacts is a Protection Solution

*Statement by the International Catholic Migration Commission
Mantalin Kyrou, Policy Officer*

/Check against delivery

The International Catholic Migration Commission would like to thank UNHCR* for wisely placing on the agenda this most important discussion about the interaction between the two Compacts¹. Few are doing that, and it's about time!

In fact and in practice, interaction is more than “complementarity”. “Complementarity” is too vague and remote. From our own and our members' experience working on the ground—often alongside UNHCR and with governments and other partners, we see that the reality of human mobility calls for much more than side-by-side complementarity. Last week in Puerto Vallarta², Mme. Louise Arbour, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on International Migration, pointed explicitly in this direction when she referred to the need for responses targeted for increasingly mixed migration flows, with refugees and asylum seekers moving, working and living with *and as* other migrants.

It is not “overlapping” of the two Compacts that we should be afraid of, but *under*-lapping. Underlapping reduces protection for refugees and asylum seekers, as well as for other migrants who also have *widely recognized and ratified* rights to protection measures in response to their specific vulnerabilities – for instance, children, victims of torture or human trafficking, victims of rape, other violence, or trauma, and those experiencing serious health challenges or crises.

The word “complementarity” is too timid. Cooperation is better, interaction best.

* Acronyms: NGOs = non-government organizations; IOM = International Organization for Migration; UNHCR = United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; UNODC = United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime

¹ In September 2016, all 193 Member States of the United Nations General Assembly agreed unanimously to develop, for adoption in 2018, two Global Compacts: one on Refugees and the other on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Although the timeline is basically the same, the processes to develop them are different and separate: the first led by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the second by states themselves.

² Puerto Vallarta was the site of two back-to-back « Stocktakings » in the process of development of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. On Saturday and Sunday 2 & 3 December 2017, some 80 leaders of civil society from around the world gathered for a regional and global *Civil Society Stocktaking and Strategy meeting*, convened by ICMC and also involving 60 representatives of selected governments in plenary and issue-specific small table discussions. On Monday through Wednesday 4 – 6 December 2017, some 600 representatives of governments, plus another 200 non-state actors including agencies, parliamentarians, civil society actors and the private sector convened in a states-led Stocktaking. Mrs. Arbour spoke at both, as did the Mexican and Swiss ambassadors serving as “co-facilitators” of the process to develop the Migration Compact.

Ten years ago, UNHCR actually “wrote the book”, so to speak, on such interaction—a small, but outstanding book—perhaps the very first one of its kind—called the [“10 Point Plan of Action for Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration”](#)³. In clear, brief and brilliant language, its very first point is cooperation: starting with States but also extending to UN and other international agencies, civil society, local authorities and other actors. Points 3, 4, 5 & 6 speak with common sense and purpose: of the real world of different migrants with different needs and rights, moving and arriving together. The points clearly call for needs-first responses to everyone encountered, followed by careful differentiation for referral to the appropriate agencies and processes for those who have further needs and concomitant rights to specific protection. We deeply appreciated that *10 Point Plan*. We also were inspired, and still are, by the way that other faith-based groups, NGOs*, the whole Red Cross system and agencies like IOM* and UNODC* also responded positively to its recognition of mandate- and competence-based, multi-actor interaction. A year later, ICMC again was grateful when UNHCR published a companion book of real-life practices, and again last December when UNHCR published an updated edition. This was perfect timing for considering concrete interaction in development of the two Compacts.

ICMC also wrote a small book on this, [Mayday: Strengthening Responses of Assistance and Protection to Boat People and Others Arriving to Southern Europe](#)⁴. We wrote with full objectivity: not about ICMC activities, but about the 10 Point Plan, and UNHCR, and IOM, and about other State, local authority and civil society actors that in a specific time and place actually implemented such cooperation and interaction. There, the [Praesidium project](#)⁵ (the so-called “Lampedusa model”) was operationalized with support from the European Union and government of Italy. It provided needs-based assistance and differentiated between that protection and the need to respect and promote further rights. The Italian Navy and Red Cross worked to save lives and provide food, water and emergency aid. UNHCR provided needed additional protection for refugees; IOM aided victims of human trafficking and smuggler violence and Save the Children Italy assisted and protected children. Hopefully, Points 3, 4, 5 and 6 of UNHCR’s *10 Point Plan* will inspire emphatic and identical points in both Compacts, by urging assistance and protection to a mix of refugees and migrants. The full mix of mandate- and competence-based responses is urgently needed for mixed migration. Such action must be concrete, based in reality and uncompromisingly focused on the dignity of human persons. Such actions must be undertaken by States, agencies, local authorities, faith-based organizations, and all of civil society.

More than complementarity, this is the essence of concrete interaction. At the nexus between the two Compacts, and on borders and beaches everywhere, we need more of such interaction: not less. And to be fit for purpose, up to the challenge, the two Compacts must jointly reflect and catalyze this interaction.

In conclusion, interaction between the two Compacts also is a prerequisite for the full range of issues to be addressed in the Compact on Migration. Hopefully, this will include such issues as drivers of forced migration and the journeys; legal and other alternative pathways that respond to needs, vulnerabilities, and specific rights, especially of children; inclusion and integration; work; access to education, healthcare and justice; and elimination of xenophobia. This is what we learned from the more than 1,000 civil society participants in the 7 regional civil society consultations, and in five major global processes that we and civil society partners organized around the world since last December. Half of us have been migrants, refugees or members of the diaspora, including in the civil society convening last Saturday and Sunday in Puerto Vallarta. In fact, every one of the issues we discussed were profoundly important to both migrants and refugees. *Recognizing this increases* rather than diminishes the protection of refugees.

In short, *interaction* between the two Compacts is a protection solution.

/Thank you.

³ <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/migration/4742a30b4/refugee-protection-mixed-migration-10-point-plan-action.html>

⁴ <https://www.icmc.net/sites/default/files/documents/mayday-report-2011.pdf>

⁵ <https://reliefweb.int/report/italy/praesidium-project-recommendations-and-good-practices-management-mixed-migratory-flows>

The International Catholic Migration Commission is a Catholic Church-inspired, international non-governmental organization which protects and serves uprooted people, including refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people, victims of human trafficking, and migrants, regardless of faith, race, ethnicity or nationality.

Founded in 1951 by Pope Pius XII, ICMC facilitates a network of national Catholic Bishops Conferences and other Catholic-inspired institutions worldwide. Headquartered in Geneva, ICMC has staff and programs in more than 50 countries, affiliated offices in Brussels, Washington DC and Boston, and operational offices in Greece, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Pakistan and Turkey.

In Syria, ICMC provides lifesaving assistance to internally displaced Syrians, as well as vulnerable Iraqis. In Jordan, ICMC delivers humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities. In Greece, ICMC works with the UNHCR to provide help to incoming refugees and migrants and to support the Greek government in its asylum reform. With funding from the US State Department, ICMC runs the Resettlement Support Center for Turkey and the Middle East, processing the application of refugees referred by UNHCR for resettlement to the US. ICMC also works with UNHCR on a separate program to deploy resettlement experts worldwide. In 2016, ICMC deployed 210 experts to 63 UNHCR offices in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America.

ICMC Europe convenes a broad range of stakeholders to promote welcome and integration to refugees across the continent. In March 2016, ICMC Europe published *“Building a Resettlement Network of European Cities and Regions - Experiences of the SHARE Network 2012-2015”*, a detailed summary of best practices, policy recommendations, resources and tools developed by ICMC Europe and SHARE Network members. The SHARE Network includes 1,200 local and regional resettlement and integration actors in over 27 European countries, including municipalities, NGOs, public services, churches and private sector actors.

Since 2011, ICMC has served as international coordinator of civil society activities in the Global Forum on Migration and Development since 2011, and in similar functions towards the UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in 2013 and the UN High-level Summit on Refugees and Migrants in 2016. ICMC initiated and is co-convenor of the civil society Action Committee, which brings together 24 leading refugee protection and migrant rights NGOs from around the world for joint follow-up to the 2016 Summit’s *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants*.