Connecting the Dots
A fresh look at managing international migration

A report of the
Conversations on the
Global Governance of Migration
Phase 1, October-December 2009

**International Catholic
Migration Commission**

Contents

*"Migration can no longer be looked at as business as usual.
This is one of the greatest emergencies we have ever seen.
We need to get our act together and address this
in a way that we have not done before."*

I. Introduction

Migration reflects our times: with globalization bringing new technologies and deepening international integration and dependency, the movement of goods, services, capital *and* people has been greatly increased and facilitated.

Three widely-evoked images convey the broad recognition of how much migration has changed in recent years: the number of migrants has doubled since 1980 alone, reaching more than 200 million people; stark demographic imbalance worldwide propels unprecedented growth—present and projected—in both labour and family/marriage migration; and nations can no longer be divided into strictly "sending" and "receiving" countries. Indeed, all nations now have migrants leaving from, arriving to and/or transiting through their territories.

Accordingly, while migration governance remains almost entirely national, there has been, over the course of the past decade, a significant increase in transnational efforts by governments, international organizations and civil society to maximize the opportunities of global migration while, at the same time, addressing its challenges. In connection to their domestic migration regimes and constituencies, governments have been active on the bilateral, regional, and inter-regional fronts. There has been a spectacular growth in the number of regional consultative processes.

From an international perspective, the UN has worked actively to integrate global migration into its agenda.[1] The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM),[2] the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other multilateral organizations continue to strengthen common approaches to migration policy through the implementation of their respective global mandates.

These and a growing number of other actors deeply engaged with global migration recognize the importance of achieving a greater level of international cooperation and collaboration. In effect, global challenges demand global solutions. Indeed, for many experts, it is not a question of *whether* a discussion of global governance of migration goes forward, but rather *when* and *how*.

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[1] There were a number of notable initiatives during the term of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, including the commissioning of the Doyle Migration study, which ultimately led to the creation of the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM); the tabling of the GCIM report of findings and recommendations; the convening of the UN General Assembly's High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development to discuss the report and other inputs; the establishment of the Global Forum on Migration and Development; the creation of the inter-agency Global Migration Group; and the appointment of a UN Special Representative on Migration.

[2] Established with a distinct migration mandate but independently of the UN, IOM works closely with the UN organizations and system as well as its own member states, NGOs and other actors in migration.

The *Conversations* initiative

As an international organization long involved with migration and working with migration actors at all levels, the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) [3] joins those who believe that the thinking and planning for a process that will ultimately lead to a more effective global governance of migration needs to begin now. We are also confident that a frank and engaged discussion of the possibilities and perspectives of such an approach will enhance our understanding of the dynamics involved, and how to make the shift one day to an improved and shared international response.

At the same time, we do not underestimate the formidable task that this represents for the international community. Trying to mobilize, develop and agree upon a global undertaking is never an easy task, regardless of the issue involved.

In a modest way and with its own funds, ICMC has sought specifically to facilitate an informal dialogue among leading migration actors to explore both process and policy-related issues of global governance. Launched simply as an exploratory "first phase" in October 2009, the initiative was entitled *Conversations on the Global Governance of Migration.*[4]

The objective of *Conversations* was not to propose a new, "super" international agency on migration, notwithstanding that such an option might well be considered by States one day. Rather, the aim was to openly explore perceptions of the value of global governance itself and any actions or commitments that seemed practical to pursue in the short to medium term, whose effect would improve the management of global migration.

Conversations process and report

This first phase of *Conversations* engaged 43 participants from a variety of migration fields, and consisted of two roundtables, a number of one-on-one meetings with heads of agencies most involved with the migration agenda, and a series of individual discussions with UN Ambassadors and migration actors, primarily based in Geneva. [See Annex for a full list of participants]. The roundtables were partnered with two Geneva universities: Webster University on 27 November and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies 8 December.

Participants strongly supported the *Conversations* initiative, greeting it as a timely and constructive undertaking that addresses a current vacuum in reflection and debate. Notably, all of the heads of agencies and Ambassadors with whom we met concurred. They welcomed the opportunity to offer their insights into the question of global migration governance, and engaged with courtesy and openness. Agency heads were also pleased that senior officials of their organizations were participating in the roundtables. Indeed, different representatives from three key agencies (UNHCR, IOM, and ILO) were invited to both sessions.

Discussions were informal, followed Chatham House Rules and were driven by three questions:
   a) How would you describe and evaluate the current level of migration governance, and how could these efforts be improved and deepened?
   b) What new and realistic ideas, proposals and recommendations do you think would facilitate a more globally unified response to migration challenges?

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[3] Formed in 1951 and granted ECOSOC status, ICMC works directly as well as through a membership network of bishops' conferences and other members worldwide, implementing and advocating for rights-based policies and durable solutions for refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants, regardless of their faith, race, nationality or ethnicity. ICMC currently has programmes and staff working in 40 countries.
[4] A pdf copy of a brief primer on the initiative is available at www.icmc.net/conversations-global-governance-migration.

c) Where can "we" go from here after this first phase of *Conversations*, and what kind of follow-up would you think is necessary and helpful in advancing this process?

Participants were open and frank with their views and assessments. The report that follows represents, without attribution, the responses to these three questions, and the interactive discussions that they generated. In doing so, the report attempts to capture the essential themes, issues and questions that participants raised. It builds on areas of common ground and consensus while at the same time giving voice to divergent views and tangents, in order to fairly reflect the different perspectives that people brought to the table.

We are thankful to all participants for their commitment, time and contributions. Their collective insights ensured that the *Conversations* process was a lively and constructive affair, providing a menu of observations, questions and recommendations that deserve careful consideration. We look forward to staying in touch and engaging them further in the coming months.
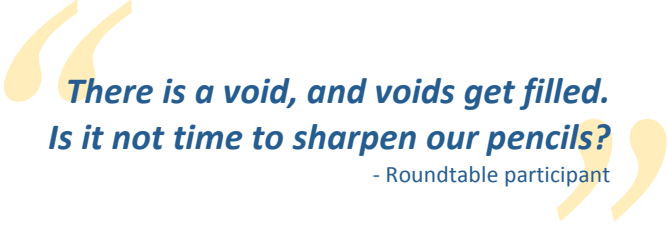
In a similar spirit, we would welcome your thoughts and feedback to the issues raised by this report. Please feel free to contact us, by email if you would like, at GGM@icmc.net.

Ambassador Sergio MARCHI
Special Advisor to the Secretary General, ICMC

Mr. Johan KETELERS
Secretary General, ICMC

II.   Convergence on the term and value of "global governance of migration"

All participants agreed that better approaches were needed to organizing contemporary migration, but there was immediate attention to the term "global governance."

A loaded term?

A number of participants observed that "global governance" could be interpreted as a "loaded" term: "frightening" and "intimidating" for some governments and agencies, as well as sometimes being negatively associated with "big government" or "unwieldy" bureaucracies. It was mentioned that global governance could be further "complicating" to the extent that it implied the requirement for some kind of international "enforcement"[5].

It was thought that a good part of the "fear" associated with the term stems from the assumption that it either immediately involves or inexorably leads to the creation of a new, supranational agency. While this could be one option that countries might ultimately consider, participants went out of their way to insist that this is by no means an automatic conclusion. In fact, participants thought that far short of such a decision, constructive global governance can be strengthened and achieved in many different ways.

The other part of the "fear" equation is the reluctance on the part of most governments to cede sovereignty over migration matters. Given that migration is about the movement of people and labour, and all that this implies, state authorities have largely preferred to maintain as much national control as possible. However, participants asked directly: what if governments took the time to calculate their net benefits if migration were to be subjected to global cooperation and collaboration? A number of participants advocated drafting a practical checklist of the benefits of such cooperation and collaboration, with supporting evidence, as part of these deliberations and for advocacy with governments and their representatives.

Alternate terms

Participants deliberated whether a more neutral term could be found; one that would convey positive intent without the problematic connotations. The word "management" was offered. Although it was noted that this too, had been burdened at times (in particular, with connotations of excessive "control"), participants seemed open to the accuracy and adequacy of the word, especially in its evocation of better organization and "facilitation" of migration.

Another alternative suggested was the phrase "improving the global mobility regime", which would evoke aspects of providing better and more information for both the migrant and the receiving States—a more inclusive engagement that would involve a variety of different actors, an integration

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[5] It was also pointed out, however, that an accountability mechanism has not prevented the international community from achieving its stated objectives in other disciplines (e.g. within various processes of the World Trade Organization.)

of normative frameworks that are already embedded in other international regimes (e.g. human rights and refugee conventions, GATS Mode 4[6]) and above all, more leadership on the part of States.

The discussion demonstrated that additional and focused reflection on alternative terms would be helpful. At the end of the day however, the vast majority of participants felt that the term "global governance" captures much of the task before the international community.

Agreement on overall definition and value

At the risk of oversimplifying multiple inputs, there was a wide sense of convergence on understanding global governance of migration as *methods of transnational cooperation to better manage migration,* though not necessarily with one specific process or institution for that purpose.[7] Put simply: building a global approach to a global phenomenon.

With that understanding of the term, there was also broad agreement on a number of factors justifying a fresh look at such cooperation: that global migration is increasing in both numbers and importance, further encouraged and facilitated by globalization; that the global marketplace and demographics are demanding ever greater mobility; that human-provoked and natural disasters which force people to move within and across national borders will continue and in all likelihood intensify (e.g. climate change); and that these phenomena are truly global in nature—with migrants leaving, arriving and transiting through developing and developed countries alike.

Participants recognized the potential of shared and coordinated global approaches to provide more effective responses to these phenomena. Yet migration governance remains largely national. Participants generally viewed this as a problem: a disconnect between current migration reality and appropriate responses. As migration and related issues become more and more prominent, participants felt that the international community had no choice but to address that disconnect—and the sooner, the better; not instead of, but together with actors, institutions and processes at national and regional levels.

It was acknowledged that any further process(es) of global governance would need to embrace an array of elements, often in stages, and in particular: building trust among countries and agencies, collecting data, building consensus, sharing experiences and practices, harmonizing approaches and positions, and building capacity.

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[6] GATS is the General Agreement on Trade in Services, the first binding multilateral agreement to explicitly address the movement of persons. An outcome of global trade talks and in force since 1995, GATS applies to all 148 members of the World Trade Organization (WTO). While Modes 1 -3 of GATS cover a range of services and related corporate entities that cross borders, Mode 4 covers certain individuals travelling from their own country to supply services in another, in particular highly skilled individuals moving via intra-company transfers of personnel and business visitors, typically for periods limited to 3 months to 5 years, according to the type of service work involved. Mode 4 does not cover labour migration in general or extend to matters of permanent residence, citizenship or asylum. IOM notes that even though the scope remains uncertain for GATS mode 4 to facilitate the orderly movement of persons, it is vital for migration policy makers to understand the nature of the agreement and its possible implications for migration policy making.

[7] A number of individuals referred to the general definition (i.e. not strictly related to migration) of global governance, provided by the 1995 UN Commission Report on Global Governance, and most felt that it was still relevant today: "Global governance means the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions—public and private—manage their affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action taken."

Questions surfaced for further reflection

- Is migration sufficiently perceived as a universal phenomenon so as to require a universal response? If so, then why do governments prefer that the responsibility for migration policy remains predominately at the national level, whereas many other global matters (e.g. labour, trade, health, human rights, etc.) have been commended, in substantial part, to international instruments and agencies?

- What would a more universal response actually govern? Who would be regulated, and how?

The future is built today.
We should be more proactive in connecting the dots.
- Roundtable participant

III. Pieces of global migration governance that currently exist

The first task however, is to identify the specific gap or gaps in current global governance. Participants took up the challenge of one in the group who observed that "each time there is a study, the question is raised that there is a big gap, but typically it is discovered that there are not gaps, just the need to implement what's already there."

5 pillars of current governance

Participants agreed that there are 5 pillars to the current governance of international migration:

1. National policies and programmes
2. Bilateral, regional, and global dialogues and exchange of practices, including the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) and regional consultative processes on migration
3. More formal regional structures and forms of cooperation, e.g. within the EU and many of the economic communities of African states
4. The multilateral system, including agencies[8] such as UNHCR, IOM and ILO[9]
5. The international legal framework, especially human rights law and refugee law

While all of these pillars govern aspects of migration in their own right, they also interact in a number of formal and informal ways. That interaction—which has increased significantly in recent years—represents important cooperation and indeed, critical elements of the governance (if a kind of "soft" governance) of international migration, but the sum of the parts has not to date resulted in coherent global governance.

As described below, participants devoted considerable attention to the newer instruments of regional and global cooperation on migration, namely the Global Migration Group (GMG) in the inter-agency context, the Global Forum on Migration and Development as a State-led global process, and the role and contribution of the UN Secretary-General and regional consultative processes of States.

The Global Migration Group (GMG)

Comprised since 2006 of some 13 UN agencies plus IOM, the Global Migration Group is seen by most participants as largely ineffective to date. Among agency heads and other participants there was a

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[8] It was noted that the multilateral agencies currently involved with migration policy are, in fact, governance tools that are directed by and on behalf of States. One concern repeatedly underscored however, was that agency mandates do not extend fully or with adequate clarity to today's migration trends and prospects. In short, institutional architecture and modes of operating need updating.

[9] Participants noted, for example, ILO's work in developing the *Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration,* a tool negotiated in a tripartite process of experts convened by the ILO and adopted in 2005. A comprehensive set of non-binding principles and guidelines for a rights-based approach to labour migration, the framework recognizes both the sovereign right of nations to determine their own migration policies and the "crucial role of social partners" in that policy making, and provides an extensive compilation of best practices pertaining to labour migration policies and institutions.

widespread impression that the GMG grew too big, too quickly.[10] This has made it more difficult to effectively bring together different agencies whose migration mandates, focus and resources vary greatly.

Throughout the discussions, participants remarked that it was difficult to see the added value of the GMG thus far, especially since there was a prevailing wisdom that each of the institutions played principally to narrower, individual interests.[11] There was a strong view that competition and rivalry between the member agencies has created an environment of mistrust, which works against shaping a collective and unified GMG vision. One participant put it bluntly: "This lack of common purpose has been paralyzing. If agencies are concerned about competition, something is definitely wrong."

In the face of these criticisms, it was suggested that despite the evident growing pains of the GMG, the concept of bringing together the leading agencies engaged with migration policy is still a good one, and should not readily be abandoned. There is appreciation for the different, but intersecting, expertise of each agency, and for the fact that the GMG is "the only" group of UN agencies that meet regularly for exchange. Could the GMG become however, more than simply a forum for exchange— perhaps a group for joint advocacy, for example?

GMG leadership and process

It would be helpful if the "core" group of agencies most engaged on migration would provide the necessary leadership to "pull the rest of the pack forward."

Some felt that the chairmanship of the GMG should be for a one-year term, rather than for the current six months. Such an extended term would better permit a credible work plan to be realized during the mandate of the chair, rather than running the real risk that the quick turnover in chairs would disrupt the agenda. In this regard, some of the agency heads expressed that the recent creation of a "troika" chairmanship, (i.e. past, present, and future Chairs) would improve the overall management.

> *This lack of common purpose has been paralyzing. If agencies are concerned about competition, something is definitely wrong.*

It was further suggested that the GMG need not always deal at the heads of agency level which, given schedules and responsibilities, renders it unrealistic to envision more than one or two meetings per year. Instead, a working group of senior officials could meet more regularly to carry on the work, and prepare the ground for decisions to be agreed upon by the Heads.

To build greater political collaboration among the agencies, one participant suggested that the governing bodies of each GMG member agency nominate one official, perhaps its Chair at first, and that this group of delegates should meet from time to time. It was thought that this could help mobilize political will and commitment among the agencies.

One participant felt that the GMG should consider meeting with outside stakeholders, since its ways and work are something of a "mystery." Greater visibility would lend the GMG more credibility.

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[10] As recounted by one of the participants, in one of his immediate responses to recommendations in the GCIM report of 2005, former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan simply transformed the existing Geneva Migration Group, of some 6 Members, into a global formation, encompassing some 14 agencies. The Geneva Group however, had never had ambitions or plans to become a global entity. In fact, the original formation was quite straightforward and informal, organized around their common location in Geneva, with no aim other than to meet occasionally and exchange information.

[11] One observation was that the GMG is doomed to fail if it continues to be allowed to "run only as slowly as the slowest and as deeply as the least deep."

GMG focus and future

One participant thought that the GMG worked best when it focused its energies on a single project. The issue of workers' rights was offered as an example. Should the GMG therefore try to be constructing a more focused work plan?

In reference to coordination, one participant suggested that everyone talks about it, but no one likes to be "coordinated". The recommendation therefore, was for the GMG to instead focus on the function of "cooperation".

> *"The GMG is doomed to fail if it continues to be allowed to run only as slow as the slowest, and as deeply as the least deep."*

Some felt that the GMG's effectiveness and efficiency was also a function of available resources, but most believed that its ultimate success will depend on whether the member agencies are willing to coordinate and cooperate with one another, to the benefit of a more integrated and coherent migration policy approach at the inter-agency level.

It would also be helpful, now that the GMG has been in place for several years, if the UN Secretary-General could revisit the situation, and offer his guidance and leadership towards improving its operation. As a bottom line however, unless a shared vision emerged, there was a healthy dose of skepticism among participants regarding the GMG's future.

Questions surfaced for further reflection

- Is the GMG taken seriously at present by the heads and senior management of its member agencies, or is a different approach needed?
- If there is consensus that the GMG will not be effective without substantial change, who has the will and authority to direct that change?
- What is the GMG's relationship—actual or potential—with the GFMD?

The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)

Despite certain weaknesses, and quite different from the GMG, the Global Forum on Migration and Development is viewed quite positively overall.

Participants strongly believed that the GFMD provides a useful opportunity for discussing migration from an international perspective—in fact, offering the only global process on migration to date. They also felt that it provides a venue for countries to "educate" themselves on the many facets of the migration reality, as well as highlighting the need for capacity building.

As a particular sign of progress, participants noted that the GFMD has thus far been able to largely avoid the marked polarization that occurred along north-south lines in the earlier years, including at the UN Population and Development Conference held in Egypt in 1994. Participants welcomed the fact that a senior US Washington-based official attended the November 2009 GFMD in Athens. They felt that this was a positive and helpful sign of engagement by the Obama administration, and a contrast from the indifference that characterized US policy regarding previous Forum meetings. It was hoped that this would not only continue with Mexico chairing this year's Forum, but that the US would deepen its participation.

There was a broad consensus on further strengthening the Forum. Even as it was noted that the GFMD process could stillbe seen as "young and fragile", there were suggestions that it was time to "reappraise" that fragility and/or that the Forum is "too big to fail." In any event, participants were adamant about encouraging the Forum to move forward, incrementally at least.

Broadening issues and action

Several participants argued that the GFMD needs to move beyond being a predictable "talk-shop". Indeed, some expressed concern that a sense of fatigue had crept into the GFMD; that the Forum

> *Some may like the GFMD just as it is: non-binding, little-to-no follow-up and a venue merely for exchange.*

may be "losing momentum".[12] More than one participant referred to the process as too "exclusive" a dialogue: at times too constrained to issues where migration and development intersect, often to only certain issues even there, and broken over time by the lack of continuity between Forum meetings.

With respect to dialogue, several participants said that the Forum must be prepared to consider issues which, until now, have been "taboo." For example, some thought that the issue of circular migration has become somewhat of a "mantra," when in fact they were of the opinion that the Forum needs to deal "honestly" with issues such as irregular migration, and the root causes that lead people to be placed in a "forced" migration straightjacket.

It was further suggested that notwithstanding its name, the GFMD cannot afford to view migration merely from a development perspective, as important as that is. The Forum must consider a fuller range of migration issues if it is to provide global guidance. There was spirited debate on this proposition; among others, one head of agency insisted that the GFMD should refrain from discussing a broad agenda of migration issues, for fear that this would only lead to general statements. His preference would be for each Forum meeting to focus on one or two issues, in an effort to generate specific and practical outcomes.

While dialogue is crucial, some participants stressed that this should not be the Forum's only role[13]. Many felt that the pivotal challenge facing the GFMD's future agenda was the degree to which States would usher in some form of implementation mechanism, based on issues, lessons, and policies discussed and learned during the Forum meetings.

Outcomes, follow-up and continuity

Participants placed importance on GFMD outcomes. Several pointed to distinct outcomes of the recent Forum in Athens, in particular its endorsement of the working group on policy coherence, data and research, and the EU-IOM project of migration profiles.

Regret was expressed that GFMD outcomes are not always readily visible or followed-up. Participants widely underscored that the GFMD needs to better define actual outcomes, which would have the effect of providing some leadership and "guidelines for action" helpful to both States and the multilateral agencies—even if only informal guidelines.

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[12] One participant speculated that there actually may be a certain level of contentedness with this among some countries; namely, that some may like the GFMD just as it is: "non-binding, little to no follow up, and a venue merely for exchange."
[13] The Forum's operating modalities also state that it should "foster practical and action-oriented outcomes."

Participants further regretted that there is little or no institutional memory from one Forum meeting to another, which runs against the very objective of sustaining a coherent thematic context for the ongoing discussions. One consequence is that the GFMD is unable to *methodically* define and delve into the major issues and problems confronting migration.

It was strongly felt that each GFMD meeting should produce a public report and follow-up work plan, so that the migration-serving community would be more aware of their deliberations and intentions and prepare more efficiently their participation. Thematic focus not only at the Forum meetings themselves but also in meetings between them would promote such efficiency. Such steps would provide greater transparency and accountability, and help build an integrated framework and context for future Forums.

Many participants suggested that a modest Secretariat would help the GFMD provide greater stability, thematic focus, and follow-up. In this regard, some individuals found it quite ironic that significant amounts of monies are procured for the Forum and yet there seemed to be enormous contention over resourcing a small administrative support unit. Participants asked if this was due to a fear of formalizing the process too much, of giving any one organization too much of a role, or even concern with the Forum becoming too effective?

In an effort to strengthen the follow-up action to each Forum meeting, many agreed that a better coordinating role should be performed by the UN Secretary General's Special Representative on Migration, as a focal point and catalyst for greater action among agencies and governments.

While participants were generally ambitious for the GFMD, they were not holding their breath for a "big bang". Some called for patience regarding the issue of achieving tangible outcomes, and that time is required to build trust among governments and agencies. In this sense, the GFMD is viewed as a "gradual process" which, with the appropriate guidance, may yet be the "embryo" for an eventual global migration regime.

Mexico and future Forum meetings

There was considerable interest and discussion on this year's Forum, to be hosted and chaired by Mexico. Most participants felt that this fourth meeting needed not only to advance the discourse, but move into a more "active" mode—among other things, to begin looking at the long term (i.e. 20-30 years) implications of migration policy, with a view towards supporting practical cooperation among States in planning for and managing for those realities.

> *The GMG is a UN-led process; the GFMD is a member-driven process. You cannot have global governance without both.*

In moving the Forum towards a more active stage of its development, people felt that while each GFMD meeting belongs to the collectivity of countries, the Chair has sufficient latitude to make an appreciable difference on the agenda and the outcome of the meeting. It was felt that, given their well-known interest in migration matters, Mexico can provide the necessary leadership to make this happen.

It was suggested that a more thematic approach should be undertaken for the Mexican meeting, and that a number of lead-up meetings be held well in advance of Forum. In this way, the process would help streamline the issues and build consensus among the different parties.

Beyond Mexico, and with regard to the second UN General Assembly High Level Dialogue (HLD) on Migration and Development, scheduled for 2013, the question of how to ensure a true and interactive dialogue was also raised. It was openly recognized that the last such HLD was more a

series of individual, independent statements than a dialogue. Participants therefore felt that some thoughtful consideration should be given to how we are to avoid the same fate from befalling the second HLD.

In this respect, there was a suggestion that the UN Secretary-General appoint a special chair for the HLD, reporting directly to him. The chair would become the catalyst for the process, and the "rallying point" for ensuring that the right dynamics are created well in advance of the HLD. Otherwise, in the current environment, the HLD runs a serious risk of being a flat affair. Such an appointment might best be sought by the troika chairs of the GMFD putting their request directly to the Secretary-General, as this would, among other things, signal support in the Americas, Africa and Europe.

Questions surfaced for further reflection

- How do outcomes and policy coherence run from one Forum meeting to the other?
- Who is assessing the GFMD, and are they making progress in shaping a more global approach to global migration issues among other migration processes and structures?
- How can the GFMD in Mexico and beyond advance the discussions from "talking" about migration issues to a more "active mode"?
- How can the High Level Dialogue in 2013 be organized to be genuinely interactive and action-oriented?

The UN Secretary-General (SG)

It was strongly felt that the UN Secretary General needs to advance the migration agenda left by his predecessor. The various elements of that agenda—the Global Commission on International Migration, the appointment of a Special Representative on Migration, the GMG, the GFMD, and the UN High Level Dialogue—taken together, represented a serious effort to address migration from an international perspective.

Some felt, that for a variety of reasons, the issue of global migration is not adequately on the UN radar screen today. Participants emphasized the importance of the SG providing the leadership in moving this issue forward. The SG and his staff should reflect on the various priorities at hand and, after engaging States, agencies, and civil society, determine and actively support concrete next steps.

It was widely expressed that the SG's Special Representative on Migration (SRM) needs to be more active, and his role better defined. The office of the SRM can play a very useful role in rallying a more effective global approach to global migration, possibly including responsibility to promote follow-up between Global Forum meetings. However, some participants felt that without a stronger definition and sense of purpose, the contribution of the SRM would continue to weaken and, by extension, undermine the effectiveness of the Secretary-General.

Towards this end, participants felt that the Secretary-General and his officials should:

1. Evaluate and clarify the objective for the SRM;
2. Determine how the SRM should work with the States and agencies;
3. Establish a clear relationship with the GMG and the GFMD; and
4. Outline how the SRM should engage other actors in the migration constituency, including civil society, academia and business.

Question surfaced for further reflection

- How can the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Migration be more of a connector and driver of these multiple pillars and processes (so many of them relatively new) of migration governance?

Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs)

As mentioned earlier, there has in recent years been a pronounced growth both in the number and activities of RCPs. There was a strong feeling that these processes were very practical, possibly even "building blocks" of migration governance though they were not set up for that purpose. While there are many differences among them and not all are of equal success, it was generally felt that a greater level of coordination and cooperation among them (e.g. inter-regionally) would be a positive development.

A good number of participants advocated for more opportunities to bring together representatives from each of the RCPs, with the objective of exploring areas for collaboration, and for greater involvement of non-state actors, including NGOs and the private sector, as appropriate. It was felt that the potential net effect of this would be to identify useful lessons, best practices, and possible joint actions, all of which would contribute to enhancing migration governance beyond regional borders.

Question surfaced for further reflection

- How to promote, beyond dialogue and single region focus, practical and rights-based cooperation among the numerous RCPs, especially between regions that share significant movements or other challenges of migration.

IV. Divergence and gaps:
A look at contradictions, false opposites and intersections

Throughout the discussions, participants repeatedly raised the many contradictions that are part of the migration discourse.

Existing *versus* new

Multiple participants referred to recommendations that the Global Commission on International Migration, among others, had made to revise the architecture of international agencies with principal responsibilities regarding global migration, including the possibility of designating one agency for all aspects of global migration. [14] It was emphasized however, that this should not be the initial goal of global governance efforts. A number of participants further asserted that in their view, attention needs to be paid to building this governance from the bottom up, and ideally by deepening existing processes and practices.

Many further recognized that the current political reality is such that there is little appetite for establishing new agencies. Generally, the preference among States continues to be to reform the existing ones.

As well, some suggested that, quite the opposite of fusing migration responsibilities, there may instead be a need to "break down" migration into more manageable parts. One participant offered the view that interagency work sometimes functions best when it is focused on very specific issues, like counter trafficking. In such cases, leading institutions could be assigned specific tasks, then be brought together, and things would move forward.[15]

One participant strongly questioned however, whether the migration challenges that might warrant new institutional approaches, frameworks or other tools have been defined well enough by the international community. Indeed, it could be more a case of how existing regimes can better be used, sharpening and improving existing tools.

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[14] Specifically, Chapter 6 of the Global Commission's report, entitled *"Creating coherence: The governance of international migration"* concluded that "in the longer term a more fundamental overhaul of the current institutional architecture relating to international migration will be required, both to bring together the disparate migration-related functions of existing UN and other agencies within a single organization and to respond to the new and complex realities of international migration." Asserting further that there is "some logic in proposing a single organization to deal with both voluntary and forced migration", the report noted three basic options: "creating a new agency, possibly by merging IOM and UNHCR; designating a 'lead agency' from among existing agencies, such as UNHCR or ILO; or bringing IOM into the UN system to take a lead on issues of voluntary migration." As a more immediate step however, the report proposed the establishment by the UN Secretary-General of "a high-level inter-institutional group to define the functions and modalities of, and pave the way for, an Inter-agency Global Migration Facility" to "ensure a more coherent and effective institutional response" to international migration (recommendation 33.)

[15] Recent collaboration between UNHCR and IOM on joint protocols in the area of human trafficking was cited as a positive example in this regard.

This perspective provoked long discussion. There was support for the perspective that "just focusing on different pieces of migration" has actually worked to reduce leadership and prospects for much-needed development of more multilateral governance. Several participants asked: if the tools exist today—and are adequate to the task, then why are States and/or agencies not fully using them, or to greater effect? Moreover, who or what system ensures that these tools are fully employed? And how do these get "sharpened?" In considering the question "what organized process makes all of this happen?"—participants suggested that the answer, in part, is found in the two words, *global governance.*

One person remarked: "It is all well and good to talk about the tools that we have, but if we do not have the machinery, the user's manual, and the motivation to put this all together, we are nowhere."

Global *versus* national, regional and interregional

It was suggested that while good governance begins at home, one of the most glaring and obvious contradictions in the governance of migration is that most States do not have comprehensive national migration policies.[16] It is rare to find migration policies that incorporate all of the critical, inter-related disciplines such as human rights, economic, trade, security, environmental, integration and developmental considerations. Several participants felt that without a critical mass of national migration policies, a commitment to global policies and approaches is yet more difficult to envision.

Complicating the matter, the responsibility for migration policy within most governments is shared among a number of different ministries, which are not always on the same page. In this regard, participants noted the profound need for capacity building. Countries must be encouraged to establish and implement transparent and coherent migration policies at the domestic level. One participant described the challenge as an effort "to build a national mindset" for migration, and that without such a mindset, a more concerted global effort would continue to be elusive.

There was a wide recognition that countries cannot act and cope alone: global problems ultimately need global responses. Yet one agency head framed the political contradiction: on the one hand, there has been no demand or push by the leading countries for a system of global governance; on the other hand, he constantly receives complaints from the same countries about this vacuum, and the problems it creates. Indeed it was remarked that as long as the more powerful States, both developed and developing, may feel that they are advantaged by an avoidance of international bindings in the field of migration, they will continue to resist more formalized, multilateral cooperation. What was needed was a recognition that a better international approach or framework would not be about "them doing more" but rather building cooperation and capacities among States that address migration challenges more effectively than going at it alone.

Participants were clear that nothing affects global responses to migration more than the exigencies of political and power structures at national levels. Migration is an emotional and controversial issue for many governments and societies, which contributes to a reluctance to delegate away related authority[17]. Furthermore, exercising control over the movement of labour, in an ever-more integrated market place and during times of financial and economic strain, provides governments with some political consolation and manoeuvrability. One agency head indicated that the current

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[16] Whether developed or developing, many countries have asylum, labour and family immigration or even so-called "labour export" policies, but few have policies integrated across the board.

[17] There was strong consensus on the need to confront the deep political and emotional overtones that are part of the migration discourse which, among other things, make it difficult to have a rational debate, especially (though not exclusively) at the national level.

economic crisis does not at all help to advance global governance on migration, with global unemployment compounding an already tricky political situation regarding migration policy-making.

At the same time, some participants queried whether the recent creation of the more inclusive G-20, the need to modernize international institutions that were built in the post-WWII era, and the more positive disposition to multilateralism shown by the new US Administration, creates a window of opportunity for pursuing improved forms of global governance.

Moreover, historic shifts in economic and political power involve among others, high migration countries including Brazil, China, India, Indonesia and South Africa; some participants asked how this could affect migration patterns and approaches to transnational governance. Participants recognised that these emerging countries are integral to the migration dialogue.

Finally, several participants argued that it would be desirable, and in many cases more effective, to broaden governance on regional levels and build it outwards. In response, some asked whether it is logical to assume that the different regional processes can be brought together like a puzzle, and a global, or even regional-plus framework would emerge? That is, if the differences between the regional pieces—like the different agencies comprising the GMG—would instead delay or make a coherent outcome extremely difficult.

In a similar vein, participants asked whether bilateral arrangements between States on migration could be brought together to give shape and guidance to other States. Clearly, greater discussion would be welcome and worthwhile on whether—and how—the bilateral and regional fronts could provide for a more international application.

Framework *versus* implementation

The vast majority of participants expressed the view that contemporary migration requires more of an international framework.

Currently, there are important gaps in either frameworks or implementation or both. For example, it was pointed out that while there is both an accepted convention for refugees and an agency charged with its operationalization, there is no similar regime for migrants. The existing, internationally recognized treaties and protocols created to ensure human rights for all are far from being enforced on a universal basis, in particular with respect to non-nationals.

In an ideal sense, a framework of global governance would be of benefit to all concerned:
- For States, it would permit countries to better share the burdens associated with migration, thus improving the effectiveness of their own domestic actions
- For citizens of those States, who would likely be more reassured and confident about their own national government's ability to adequately manage migration pressures, now that they formed part of an international framework
- For migrants themselves, a world committed to harmonizing its approach would likely provide a system that is more transparent and fair in relation to their needs.

"Hard" *versus* "soft law"

Part of the discussion centered upon the need or desirability of creating "soft law" approaches in addition to or as more readily achievable alternatives to "hard law" regimes or new institutions. More than one participant warned of danger in casually embracing such suggestions. Elaborating further, the term "soft law" was characterised as an oxymoron: procedures and practice may be

softer than law, and enormously helpful, but there are great risks in referring to law itself as "soft." In this direction, participants underscored the imperative of preferring and operating with scrupulous respect to international conventions that are "hard"—i.e. binding, recognised, longstanding and key to existing governance—rather than risk or indulge their circumvention.

A useful alternative might be for States and agencies to establish or affirm a set of international principles that would assist and guide the development of any international approaches to governance—law as well as procedures and practice.[18] Participants recalled that the Global Commission on International Migration included precisely such an elaboration in its report in 2005[19].

Formal *versus* informal

Participants differ widely on the insistence by a number of States on maintaining the GFMD as an informal, State-run process outside of the UN. A contradiction was noted in that some of those same States are actively moving to institutionalize the process, including with support structures similar to those of the UN. There was strong agreement however, on establishing a permanent international forum for migration discussion and debate as an essential component of enhancing international cooperation on migration.

> *Migration can no longer be looked at as business as usual. This is one of the greatest emergencies we have ever seen. We need to get our act together and address this in a way that we have not done before.*

It was noted that national ministers responsible for migration, unlike most of their Cabinet colleagues in finance, health, labour, environment, trade, etc., are virtually alone in not having a regular, annual international meeting of fellow ministers (e.g. in the International Monetary Fund/World Bank, the World Health Organization, the ILO, United Nations Environment Programme and Climate Change Conferences of the Parties, and the WTO, respectively). Given the need for international guidance, multiple participants felt that a regular forum designated specifically for ministers responsible for migration should be established, and that it could prove quite instrumental in creating much needed leadership internationally. In such a forum, ministers from both developing and developed countries could come together regularly to share their views and practices, and contemplate undertaking collective and collaborative initiatives.

Similarly, it was felt that organizing opportunities for parliamentarians to meet and discuss migration policy would also be important. Such sessions could assist elected representatives to formulate different and improved approaches and strategies with which to constructively engage their respective publics on matters of migration policy.

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[18] The distinction that was implied was rather soft *governance* (based on a mix of hard law plus principles, procedures and practices) than soft *law.*

[19] Specifically, the report articulated six broad "Principles for Action" which participants agreed were still valid today: principles on migrating out of choice, reinforcing economic and development impact, addressing irregular migration, strengthening social cohesion through integration, protecting the rights of migrants, and enhancing governance: coherence, capacity and cooperation. Many of these principles make explicit reference to "hard law" frameworks, including the human rights and refugee conventions. It was in connection with its articulation of the last principle that the Global Commission framed its set of recommendations on improving the global governance of migration with, among other things, new institutional structures with international scope over migration.

Incremental *versus* immediate

The growing role of the European Union in migration offers an example of shared migration governance … but it has followed years of negotiation. A participant noted that for all of its faults, the EU's success in collaboration is "proof that it can be done."

A number of other participants noted that the increasing inter-State collaboration on migration matters within the EU may owe as much to the current moment and context of migration as to long preparation or negotiation. Moreover, the evidence and speed of collaboration on migration matters in any number of other regions and contexts has increased beyond all expectations, including the development of the GFMD, the GMG and so many new regional and inter-regional processes in recent years.[20]

But while many participants emphasized that global governance of migration was a matter of some "urgency", there was an overall sense that its development would likely be more of an incremental, step-by-step process, especially given current world economic stresses.

> *You don't need to be a Marxist to see that win-win-win does not work.*

Among the first steps, it was recognized that strengthening cooperation and coherence will require a more concerted effort, and that this alone will take time. There is also a long way to go towards achieving the trust among nations, agencies and other actors that is needed for their collaboration to be effective; this too will take time.

And so, most participants felt that there is absolutely no time to waste. In this regard, one of the participants was emphatic: "Migration can no longer be looked at as business as usual. This is one of the greatest emergencies we have ever seen. We need to get our act together and address this in a way that we have not done before."

Migration *versus* development

It was stated that among the rights most missed in the current migration discourse was the "right not to migrate", i.e. the right of people to stay at home if they so choose. The actualization of this right depends on countries addressing the root causes that compel the movement of their peoples. In developing countries and as well as in many of the countries affected by conflict, addressing the root causes of migration calls for international assistance expressly targeted for sustainable development.

In this line of thought, a number of discussants advocated that developed countries must better situate migration issues in their foreign and development policies. Official development assistance for instance, must provide for building capacity in national migration policies. In turn, education, economic and poverty reduction strategies in developing countries must also be designed for durable job creation and other opportunities that give people a genuine option to stay at home. There was wide agreement that taken alone, the approach in which migration policy is treated as a substitute for development, by countries of both immigration and emigration, was a "perverse" understanding of the role of migration in development.

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[20] Indeed, one participant cautioned against not only "underestimating the momentum of these processes" but "overestimating how a new mechanism could get us there faster."

Win-win-win *versus* losers

Several participants also differed with too casual a characterization of migration schemes and structures as "win-win-win" scenarios. In fact, the "win-win-win" scenario is not so easily achieved. In the words of one participant, "you don't have to be a Marxist to see that win-win-win does not work." Instead, the reality is often profoundly conflictual, with clear "winners" and "losers." For good global governance, questions that need to be addressed more honestly include: who truly "benefits" and who "forfeits" in contemporary migration? Do poor countries subsidize the rich with the immigrants they need, whether high or less skilled? Are migrants finding a better life in their countries of destination?

Questions surfaced for further reflection

- Who can conduct a gaps analysis that will sharpen the appreciation and implementation of existing tools of migration governance and ensure that attention is actually devoted to gaps where new approaches may be needed?
- How can States be encouraged to consider a more global strategy in developing their migration policies, including demonstrable evidence that benefits outweigh risks, real or perceived?
- What lessons, and what prospects can bilateral and regional engagements of States regarding migration offer to the improvement of global governance of migration?
- Why is there no permanent, formal forum providing countries a regular opportunity to discuss and act on global migration issues, e.g. a regular meeting for ministers responsible for migration?
- To what extent should or can better global governance of migration reinforce the right to *not* migrate?

V. Gaps in vision and leadership

The issues of "vision" and "leadership" were recurring themes that made for animated comments and discussions.

What vision and who will lead?

Participants mourned the absence of a shared vision and leadership for migration policy-making at the international level. There was a clear sense, for example, that the GMG and GFMD processes have, to date, lacked firm, shared vision and leadership, and they continue to reflect numerous contradictions. This was a major vacuum, which participants thought required urgent redress.

Multiple participants attributed the leadership vacuum not necessarily to the lack of an institution with migration as the sole focus, but to the constraints of mandate or capacity, real or perceived, on existing institutions and processes. As one participant put it, "IOM is projectized, UNHCR is on the outskirts of migration, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights is not operational in many places of the world, and the Red Cross is strictly humanitarian. There is no corresponding organization to take up the required action and leadership."

Many also questioned whether the issue of global migration is currently on the UN agenda in any significant and serious way. Some felt that it was being crowded out by other global priorities, while others suggested that there was a lack of will to tackle the issue head-on. It was mentioned that the significant growth in IOM membership in recent years clearly reflects an interest on the part of States to deal with migration.   If so, the question was how to act on this heightened interest and engagement.

> *IOM is projectized, UNHCR is on the outskirts of migration, OHCHR is not operational in many parts of the world and the Red Cross is strictly humanitarian. There is no corresponding organization to take up the required action and leadership.*

With respect to cooperation, it was strongly emphasized that a *"rapprochement"* was essential between UNHCR and IOM, as the two leading migration agencies. Clear movement in this direction this past year was noted.   In a similar vein, participants expressed the desire for greater coordination and collaboration between the GFMD and the GMG. It was felt that a solid bridge between the two would be mutually reinforcing, given that the GFMD represents the only process of global consultation on migration issues, while the GMG group of agencies are engaged directly in the day-to-day implementation and management of a variety of transnational migration policies. One participant described the relationship as follows: "The GMG is a UN-led process; the GFMD is a member-driven process. And you cannot have global governance without both."

There was also a disposition that national leaders need to involve themselves more with the issue of global migration. Unlike in the past, today all countries are

impacted by migration one way or another. Leaders need to be able to provide direction to the range of their ministers responsible for matters affecting or affected by migration, as well as to their delegations that drive the UN and other multilateral agencies involved with migration policy and programming. It is incumbent upon political leaders to go beyond their national borders, and to account for migration challenges when meeting in regional and international settings. Such occasions are invaluable in mobilizing a more international awareness and resolve when it comes to the migration agenda.

Non-state actors and decision-makers

It was asserted that for any global governance of migration to be "good" governance, it would need inclusive decision-making processes—quite concretely involving the NGOs and other civil society actors, the private sector and migrants themselves. Participants at the roundtables and among the agency heads pointed to the civil society component of the GFMD as important, but "needing to be worked on" to deepen its mobilization and contribution and to mature its role as an actor essential in migration discussions and decision making. More effective public-private partnerships would ensure stronger initiatives, and a more convincing argument in the face of public opinion.

The importance of engaging the private sector was especially emphasized, given the increasing demand for labour mobility in the internationally integrated economy.

Public advocacy

A suggestion was made to deepen "soft" public advocacy and diplomacy for more pro-active political leadership on the migration dossier—soft, in that it should be a constructive effort that focuses attention and further deliberations on the reasons and benefits for galvanizing international efforts.

Put quite simply, decision and policy makers should be made more aware of the benefits of responding to migration as a global phenomenon, and the perils of not doing so. In this regard, the migration "issue" also needs to be managed as it twins with issues of security, social cohesion, economic sustainability, health, education, poverty, and environment that confront governments worldwide.

Questions surfaced for further reflection

- What is the vision of our leaders when it comes to global migration?
- Can—or why can't—current actors work more effectively together?
- Where is the political will and commitment to improve upon current structures?
- How can the role and contribution of NGOs and other civil society actors be better organized within the major migration structures and processes?

VI. Moving forward

Participants strongly urged and welcomed a sustained follow-up to the *Conversations.* They argued that the issue of global governance is complex, and thus requires continued attention, enhanced awareness, and a greater level of public appreciation and support.

Where do we go from here?

A number of suggestions were proposed as options for follow-up, in four categories:

1. **Circulation of this report** on the first phase of the *Conversations,* to past and prospective participants

2. **Continuing the *Conversations***—with specific follow-up on the questions surfaced for further reflection—including:
   - A session (or several ongoing meetings) with UN Ambassadors in Geneva and elsewhere, to build a broader base of understanding and support
   - A further set of roundtables, engaging other stakeholders as well, such as ministers, parliamentarians, business, and civil society actors, in at least a few different centers of migration governance (e.g. Washington, New York, Brussels, developing country capitals), picking up on and deepening the reflection in the first phase conversations
   - Using this report for follow-up meetings with key heads of agencies, the GMG, the Chairs of upcoming GFMD meetings
   - A meeting/retreat of ministers responsible for migration. It was thought that between 10-20 ministers from developing and developed countries, would provide an adequate critical mass with which to start

3. **Limited public presentations,** opportunities where participants would focus on the report of the first phase of *Conversations*, and engage on where and how to build additional synergies and momentum

4. **Strategic advocacy**
   - Publish focused briefs, papers, position statements and/or recommendations to broaden this discussion of global governance, proposing for example, improvements for existing instruments (e.g. GFMD, GMG, UN Special Representative on Migration); a checklist of benefits and advantages that countries would be expected to receive in exchange for an international framework for migration; alternate terms for "global governance", etc.
   - Efforts to encourage the establishment of comprehensive migration policies at the national level, including support for capacity building
   - A targeted outreach campaign that would engage policy and decision makers, media and the public on the importance of considering more global responses to migration
   - Work with the Mexican authorities in their capacity as Chair of the 2010 GFMD
   - Identify scheduled migration forums/conferences/meetings, whereby the report of the *Conversations* might be put on the agenda, and where the different participants could offer their views

- Consider organizing a meeting of representatives of the governing bodies of international organizations whose principal mandate is migration-related, for the purpose of building greater political collaboration on these issues
- Pursue a meeting between different migration actors and the UN Secretary General as well as with his Special Representative, to discuss the issue of global governance, and what next steps they could support or take

Immediate next steps

At the request of participants, and beginning with this report, ICMC is committed to engaging together further in the coming months. As a first set of activities and in the same spirit of partnership that characterised phase one of the *Conversations,* ICMC will prioritize the following during the coming months, i.e. "Phase two" of this initiative:

1. **Circulation of this report** to further the public discourse, and follow up with the participants.

2. **Hold further roundtables with a variety of migration actors in New York, Washington, Brussels and Vienna.**
Similar to the Roundtables organized during the first phase of *Conversations,* ICMC will seek to replicate the sessions in a number of key capitals, and reach out to an additional and important number of stakeholders, including civil society. When visiting various capitals, ICMC will organize meetings with government officials responsible for migration policy. In New York, ICMC will also seek an opportunity to meet with the UN Secretary-General and his officials.

3. **Establish on-going meetings with UN Ambassadors in Geneva**
A number of Ambassadors are committed to organizing an ongoing series of working luncheons/dinners to discuss migration and the issue of global governance. The first is scheduled for February.

We will also explore the possibility of an initial meeting with UN Ambassadors in New York.

4. **Organize an initial meeting/retreat for ministers responsible for migration**
Many participants felt strongly about creating such an opportunity. ICMC agrees, and will seek to convene a meeting of some 10-15 ministers from both developing and developed countries.

An agenda will be drafted in cooperation with the ministers. Moreover, as part of their agenda, ICMC will incorporate meetings with some of the leading member agencies of the Global Migration Group, Ambassadors, the Mexican Chair of the next GFMD and other senior migration actors, as appropriate.

5. **Work with and support the Mexican Chair of the upcoming Global Forum**
The next GFMD meeting in Mexico later this year will be important in terms of initiative and momentum in moving to a more "active" mode. The Mexican Ambassador in Geneva and his officials have already shown enthusiasm and commitment to reaching out and building partnerships en route to hosting the Forum. They also made valuable contributions to both roundtables. ICMC looks forward to further collaboration.

6. **Secure donor support** to deepen and broaden reflection and engagement in these processes.

VII. Executive summary

Five years after the publication of the report of the Global Commission on International Migration, is there interest in revisiting the question of the global governance of migration?

Between October and December 2009, 43 leading actors in migration today came together in multiple conversations on this question: heads of UN and other intergovernmental agencies, Ambassadors, senior representatives of government missions and international organizations based in Geneva, academics and NGOs. Their answer was yes.

While the full report of those conversations attempts to capture the broad range of issues, questions and perspectives that participants raised, both in common and divergent, the main highlights and recommendations were as follows.

Context

1. Thanks in part to the process of globalization, the movement of people is and will continue to be increasingly facilitated. As an issue, international migration will only gain in political and policy importance.

2. Currently, migration governance remains almost entirely national, thus creating a significant gap and vacuum.

Key convergence

3. Participants in the *Conversations* recognized that as a global phenomenon, migration requires a global response and approach, if the international community is to effectively address both its opportunities and challenges.

4. "Timing" was seen as important: given the existing and potentially new challenges on the horizon, it was felt that governments do not have the luxury of inaction on the international level.

5. There was some concern expressed that the term "global governance" is seen as a "loaded" or "intimidating" issue for some governments and/or agencies. Further reflection on a more neutral term could be helpful.

6. Neither the objective nor the consensus of the *Conversations* was to propose a supra, multilateral agency responsible for both forced and voluntary migration.

7. The principal underlying assumption was that a shared and coordinated international approach would be a benefit for all parties concerned: for States, for their citizens and for migrants.

8. It was suggested that effective global governance can benefit from bottom-up approaches, and extended outwards from national and regional processes.

9. Indeed, participants identified five pillars that currently intersect with one another and increasingly provide important elements of global governance of migration: 1] national policies and programmes; 2] bilateral, regional, and global dialogues; 3] formal regional structures and cooperation (e.g. the EU); 4] multilateral agencies and 5] international legal frameworks.

10. It was felt that a set of broad migration principles could further assist and guide the development of international measures of governance, and that the report of the Global Commission on International Migration had articulated a coherent set of six such principles that are still relevant and helpful.

11. Mandates, resources and/or architecture of the international agencies most involved with migration are in need of some updating; participants made repeated references to better utilizing "existing" tools and "sharpening" these tools.

12. It was strongly felt that the migration issue could be a more central component in the agenda before the UN, including in the work plan and priorities of the Secretary-General.

13. A number of key contradictions which form part of the migration discourse were identified, among other things the importance of developing a clear vision of, and leadership on, migration policy-making.

14. With respect to some of the existing processes:
   o The Global Migration Group was viewed as important but disappointing in its current form, and there were many recommendations for reform.
   o The Global Forum on Migration and Development was regarded more positively, notwithstanding a number of limitations. There was a strong disposition that the next Forum in Mexico, later this year, needs to shift from a purely "talking" mode into a more "active" mode.
   o The substantial increase in regional consultative processes in recent years was noted, and despite the differences in focus and outcomes, it was generally believed that there was considerable scope for closer collaboration and cooperation.

Principal recommendations

15. In sum, there was a prevailing disposition that an improved and strengthened international framework of migration governance is required; that this is a rather timely issue for governments and agencies; and that this building process was likely to occur in incremental steps.

16. Towards this end, a variety of ideas, actions, and improvements were suggested.

   On *conceptualising governance*, these included:
   ▪ Developing a shared vision for migration, and mobilizing the political will and leadership to move on migration internationally

   ▪ An improved institutional framework is required, complete with normative foundations and coherent regional processes

   ▪ Finding common drivers/platforms that would assist in broadening migration governance

- Articulating and documenting the specific advantages that would benefit countries in adopting an international framework to migration policy-making

- Establishing a constructive public advocacy campaign that would help focus on promoting the importance of global governance for migration, with political leaders, policy makers, targeted media and the public

On **building governance**, *recommendations included:*

- Building on bilateral and regional agreements and processes

- Given that in a sense, global governance starts at home, there is a need to focus on establishing coherent and comprehensive policies at the national level, including better integrating migration issues into countries' foreign and development policies and supporting capacity building for migration policy-makers both in developed and developing countries

- Creation of a formal and permanent international forum that would regularly discuss migration policy, and take appropriate actions

- Establishing a regular, international meeting for ministers responsible for migration

- Creating more opportunities for parliamentarians to discuss migration related issues, and formulating better strategies for engaging their respective citizens

- National leaders should be more engaged on migration policy, and provide the leadership and direction for their ministers, as well as for their respective delegations in multilateral agencies that deal with migration

With respect to **intergovernmental and other migration actors,** recommendations included:

- Improved governance must incorporate a much better capacity and commitment to engage in long term planning, as well as nurture improved partnerships with civil society and the private sector

- Reinforcing the "*rapprochement*" of better cooperation between the leading migration agencies

- Improving the functioning of both the GMG and the GFMD, including enhanced collaboration between the two entities

- A more active and strategic engagement on migration issues by the UN Secretary-General and clarifying the role of his Special Representative on Migration

- Efforts should be made to ensure that the next UN High Level Dialogue, scheduled for 2013, is an interactive, results-oriented dialogue, and not just a series of independent statements

- The appointment by the UN Secretary-General of a special chair for the High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in 2013, as a catalyst and rallying point to ensure real interaction and outcomes

■ Greater attention to and support of the role of civil society as an important component of the GFMD

Next steps

17. Participants strongly felt and urged that the *Conversations* continue, and build upon its first phase. Accordingly, a number of concrete proposals for potential follow-up were highlighted.

18. Based on the discussions and input of all participants, and in a continued spirit of partnership, ICMC plans to move on the following six priorities:

1] Circulate this report to further the public discourse, and follow up with the participants.

2] Hold roundtables with a variety of migration actors in New York, Washington, Brussels and Vienna.

3] Establish on- going meetings with UN Ambassadors in Geneva.

4] Organize an initial meeting/retreat for ministers responsible for migration.

5] Work with and support the Mexican Chair of the next GFMD.

6] Secure donor support to deepen and broaden such engagement.

Annex: Participants list

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Ms. Michele Klein SOLOMON Director of Migration Policy, Research and Communications
International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Mr. Juan SOMAVIA Director-General
International Labour Organization (ILO)

Mr. William Lacy SWING Director General
International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Archbishop Silvano TOMASI Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Geneva
Holy See

Dr. Alexandre VAUTRAVERS Professor and Head of International Relations Department
Webster University

Hon. David WHEEN Former Commissioner
Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM)

Mr. Michael WINZAP Deputy Head, Political Affairs Division IV
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland

*** *Including a number of other informal meetings with United Nations Ambassadors in Geneva, Switzerland*