



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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## IPU Statement

**Hon. Ms Paddy Torsney  
Permanent Observer to the  
United Nations**

**Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and  
Regular Migration  
Informal meeting with stakeholders  
New York, 18 May 2018**

Distinguished co-facilitators,

As everyone here can appreciate, migration is the subject of intense discussions in nearly every parliament around the world.

To build common ground on this issue among parliamentarians, this year the IPU held a major debate on migrants and refugees at its 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly in March, in Geneva. The result is a Declaration entitled *Strengthening the global regime for migrants and refugees: the need for evidence-based policy solutions*, copies of which are available in the room.

This Declaration is the culmination of a four-day debate featuring over 140 interventions by parliaments across the world. It includes input from a survey questionnaire in which 239 members of parliament participated. It builds on the outcome of other IPU consultations on migration over the past two years, including most notably the recent Parliamentary Hearing here at the United Nations in February 2018.

We are very gratified that the Declaration shows near total convergence with the draft GCM on the breadth of the issues covered and on the people-centered perspective that is advanced.

Parliamentarians agree that the *narrative* about migration needs to change from one that sees migration as a threat to societies to one that recognizes the positive benefits of migration *when properly managed*. Parliamentarians are strongly supportive of the GCM and its companion Global Compact on Refugees as much needed tools to coordinate action on the ground. They look forward to a GCM that identifies practical ways to strengthen the current migration regime to reduce as much as possible ad hoc, unilateral solutions.

Critically, parliamentarians recognize their unique role in ensuring that the GCM is properly implemented.

The IPU really appreciates the many important references in the draft GCM to parliamentarians, specifically, in the paragraphs that refer to the “whole of society” principle, to political participation, and to implementation. We further welcome the emphasis on the need for legislative reforms to promote labor mobility, penalize

hate crimes, limit migrant detention, reduce the risk of migrants going missing and so forth – all of which are in line with the spirit, and often the letter of the IPU Declaration.

This said, we wish to make a few suggestions to more clearly delineate the *institutional* role of parliaments, as State actors, in implementation and follow-up.

Since parliaments as key *institutions* of oversight and legislation are not explicitly mentioned in the document, we would propose a separate paragraph on the role of parliaments in implementation that would read as follows:

***“We call on national parliaments, as key institutions of oversight, to ensure that national migration policies conform to the commitments made in this Global Compact, facilitating its full implementation through enabling legislation and budgetary appropriations.”***

Secondly, with respect to the follow-up and review section in the draft GCM, we would suggest that parliamentarians be clearly mentioned in para 46 b, which refers to the multi-stakeholder nature of the proposed International Migration Review Forum. As you know, other than through a small IPU group, parliamentarians can only participate in UN meetings as members of their national delegations.

To help ensure the Forum is inclusive of members of parliament, we would like to propose the addition of the phrase “***including through the participation of parliamentarians***” at the end of paragraph 46 b.

As member States move toward the adoption of a new GA resolution on *Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU* next week, let me reassure you of the IPU’s strong commitment to work closely with the United Nations to facilitate dialogue on migration amongst parliamentarians as well as to facilitate their engagement implementing the Global Compact in the years ahead.

Thank you.