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Governing Council
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Reports on recent IPU specialized meetings

(e) Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations

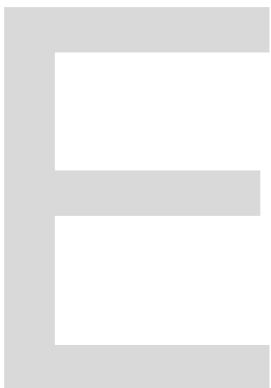
New York, 22-23 February 2018

The 2018 Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations, from 22 to 23 February, brought together over 190 parliamentarians for a discussion about the emerging Global Compact for Migration (GCM). The meeting was opened by the President of the UN General Assembly, Mr. Miroslav Lajčák and IPU President, Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron.

The Hearing provided further evidence that a Global Compact for Migration is needed to dispel a number of misconceptions about migration while creating a practical framework to manage migration more effectively at the national, regional and global levels. Migration was a reality everywhere, yet global migration governance remained weak, relying heavily on ad hoc solutions by individual nations. The Hearing drew from concrete examples of national migration policies and local responses to migration. It looked at questions of social cohesion, human rights, regularization, root causes, political participation, and international cooperation.

The discussions highlighted a number of actions parliamentarians could take to help make migration safe, orderly and regular, in keeping with the main objectives of the GCM, such as:

- Ensure migration laws and policies comply with international standards, are migrant-centered, gender-sensitive, respect human rights, and were anchored in inclusivity and cooperation;
- Ensure migration policies provided for special protections against exploitation and abuse for vulnerable groups such as women, children and people with disabilities;
- Ensure public discourse about migration and migrants was informed, and based on facts and data;
- Strengthen coherence between national policies and local responses to migration, including by providing sufficient resources for community integration and employment creation;
- Ensure public services were available to all residents, including migrants, regardless of status;
- Review national security policies to ensure they did not single out migrants unfairly, and develop alternatives to detention as a penalty for irregular migration, particularly children;
- Work to eliminate human trafficking through stronger bilateral and multilateral cooperation as well as stronger enforcement of existing laws;
- Partner with the private sector, business, media and civil society to share information about migrants and migration, and to ensure migrants were appropriately integrated into economic development and labor market policies;
- Systematically call out and condemn xenophobia, racism and hate speech, including discourse cloaked in the language of national security, economic and national identity concerns.



#IPU138

Ultimately, the best solution to irregular migration, a major concern in many countries, was to create more regular pathways to migration, such as work visas, portable social security benefits and other measures and allow people to migrate or return to their home countries as needed.

Parliaments would have a key role to play in the implementation of the Global Compact once it was adopted. Parliaments needed to hold governments accountable for their commitments. Many parliaments would need stronger institutional capacities to ensure effective migration policies and oversee their implementation.

The final report of the Hearing will circulate to all UN Member States under cover letter of the President of the General Assembly. Together with the Outcome Document of the 138th IPU Assembly and other inputs over the past year, the report would provide a strong political contribution to the Global Compact on Migration negotiations underway. The Compact would be formally adopted at a UN Conference to be held in Morocco on 10 and 11 December 2018.