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Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs  
The Secretariat

## BACKGROUND NOTE

### Inter-parliamentary Committee Meeting (ICM) with National Parliaments “The UN Global Compacts on refugees and migrants and the role of Parliaments”

Brussels, 27 February 2017

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants<sup>1</sup>, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2016, is a milestone for global solidarity with refugees and migrants, containing a set of principles and commitments to enhance the protection of Refugees and Migrants.

The New York Declaration provided in two annexes that negotiations in consultation with States and other stakeholders would follow. These negotiations and consultations aims at the adoption of two global compacts in 2018:

- A **Global compact on refugees** (GCR) (including the development of the so-called “Comprehensive refugee response framework”, CRRF) targeting to achieve a more equitable sharing of the burden and responsibility for hosting and supporting the world’s refugees, (Annex I).
- A **Global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration** (GCM) targeting to develop principles, commitments and guidelines on the treatment of migrants in vulnerable situations, (Annex II).

These two processes mentioned are “separate, distinct and independent” although very much related.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was tasked to develop the practical aspects of the **Global Compact on refugees**. The UNHCR will propose a final text of the Global Compact on Refugees for adoption by the UN General Assembly in 2018. The aim is to achieve a more equitable sharing of the burden and responsibility for hosting and supporting the world’s refugees. A ‘zero draft’ of the global compact on refugees was released on 31<sup>st</sup> January<sup>2</sup>. This ‘Zero draft’ provides the basis for the discussions, ahead of formal talks with UN Member States, which began in February in Geneva.

The discussions for the **Global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration** are conducted through intergovernmental negotiations<sup>3</sup>, chaired by the 2 co-facilitators (Mexico and Switzerland), while the UN Secretary General is responsible to provide appropriate support for the negotiations and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which provides technical and policy expertise. In spring 2017, the UN Secretary-General appointed Louise Arbour as his Special Representative for International Migration who will be also the

<sup>1</sup> Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 September 2016, A/RES/71/1 (New York Declaration).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/Zero-Draft.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> For more details see the modalities resolution (A/RES/71/280)

Secretary-General of the intergovernmental conference on international migration to be held in 2018.

On 11 January 2018, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres presented his report "Making Migration Work for All"<sup>4</sup> as an input to the 'Zero draft' of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration and related intergovernmental negotiations. On 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018, a 'Zero draft' of the GCM<sup>5</sup> was presented to UN Member States. The final negotiation phase will follow from February to July 2018 with the aim of submitting the GCM, during the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly, to the Intergovernmental Conference for adoption in December 2018 in Morocco.

The European Parliament has paid great attention to the processes leading to the Global Compacts, acknowledging that it represents a historical opportunity for achieving a range of principles and commitments regarding international migration in all its dimensions.

Already in September 2016, the European Parliament participated at the Summit for Refugees and Migrants<sup>6</sup>, which adopted the New York Declaration. In particular, the LIBE Committee<sup>7</sup> adopted a set of actions<sup>8</sup> aiming for an active involvement and contribution to the process leading to the Global Compacts. Since then, different meetings of the LIBE Committee have been dedicated to the Global Compacts in cooperation with other interested Committees.

The inter-parliamentary Committee meeting ("*The UN Global Compacts on refugees and migrants: the role of Parliaments*") which is to take place on 27 February in the afternoon, aims at bringing together Members of the National parliaments and the European Parliament to discuss about the content of the UN Global Compacts. Furthermore, in this significant final stage of the process, this meeting will provide the occasion for in-depth exchange on the positions of the different Member States and to foster the role of parliaments in this process. Finally, the inter-parliamentary committee intends to strengthen the parliamentary dimension of the EU position and to support the work of the EEAS and of the Member States in the final phase of the process leading to the adoption of the Compacts. The outcome of the conference will also contribute to develop an EP perspective on the negotiations, which will materialize in a plenary resolution to be adopted in March.

The UN agencies, the co-facilitators, the EEAS, the European Commission, the Council Presidency and different stakeholders from the civil society have been invited to participate into the discussions.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/SGReport>

<sup>5</sup> [http://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180205\\_gcm\\_zero\\_draft\\_final.pdf](http://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180205_gcm_zero_draft_final.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/121381/1116780EN-final.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> The LIBE Committee is in charge at the European Parliament of all the topics relating migration and asylum, the integrated management of common borders as well as police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters (i.e. smuggling of human beings).

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/136742/libe-set-of-actions-23-1-18.pdf>