

**Statement of the Scalabrini International Migration Network and
the Center for Migration Studies**

**Intergovernmental Conference on the Adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly,
and Regular Migration**

Marrakech, Morocco

December 10, 2018

The Scalabrini International Migration Network (SIMN) and the Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS) offer the following statement on the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration in Marrakesh, Morocco.

We commend the overwhelming majority of member states who have committed their nations to the implementation of Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration, particularly at a time of rising xenophobia around the world. Time will prove that your commitment and forward-looking vision, focused on multi-lateral cooperation, is the just and appropriate response to the record movement of people around the world.

The Global Compact represents a solid framework for managing migration flows in a humane and fair manner, consistent with the protection of human rights and international law. We encourage you to interpret and implement its provisions broadly and robustly, many of which are already part of your nation's immigration laws and policies. Governments and political movements come and go, but unless we work together as a global community, these issues will remain and grow more challenging in the years ahead.

In our view, the Compact encourages governments to achieve safe, orderly, and regular migration by increasing the pathways available to persons to migrate legally and safely and by facilitating their integration. Such an approach advances national security and sovereignty interests by ensuring the appropriate screening of those seeking admission.

The Compact also recommends the use of regularization programs, legal pathways and temporary legal measures to protect migrants in vulnerable situations, rather than returning them to danger. This is perhaps the most important initiative of the Compact, as it attempts to bridge the growing gap between an increasingly limited refugee definition and the protection needs of the majority of persons on the move.

We understand, however, that legal immigration reform cannot be implemented in a vacuum, and that enforcement is a necessary component of any immigration system. In other words, despite some claims, we are not opposed to enforcement or to the right of the sovereign to manage and control its borders.

We are opposed, however, to enforcement policies that weaken, if not eliminate altogether, human rights principles and the right to due process. And we are opposed to enforcement-only policies which forsake protection for the sake of political expediency. An effective and fair immigration system should contain a mixture of policies, all of which comply with international human rights law. This is the vision and principles put forth by the Global Compact.

Unfortunately, we see rights being eroded around the world through enforcement practices that effectively deny due process to migrants and asylum-seekers and cause them suffering, abuse, and even death. It is our fervent hope and determined goal that the Global Compact will reduce the perceived need for deterrence policies and help restore balance to the global immigration system, so that protection is the primary concern for member states, not a secondary one.

In the end, the long-term solution to irregular migration is sustainable human development; it is the most humane and effective antidote to the erection of virtual and concrete border walls. As such, the Global Compact should be implemented as an integral component of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and seen as essential to meeting their objectives.

We strongly encourage you to work with civil society, including faith-based organizations, in making the Global Compact operational on the ground. Civil society can serve vulnerable populations, provide particular services, and offer life-sustaining support in ways that governments often cannot.

The success of the Global Compact will be measured one migrant life at a time. But it will also be judged by how member states work together to govern migration in a manner which upholds the human rights of all and saves lives. We stand ready to work with you in reaching these goals.