FAQs on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)
Prepared by the Permanent Representatives of Mexico and Switzerland to the United Nations, as co-facilitators of the GCM

On 13 July 2018, negotiations among Member States of the United Nations on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) were concluded. It is up for formal adoption by Heads of States and Governments at an Intergovernmental Conference scheduled for 10-11 December in Marrakech (Morocco).

What the GCM is

The GCM is the first ever negotiated global agreement on a common approach to international migration in all its dimensions. While respecting State sovereignty, it is a political commitment to improve cooperation and governance on international migration and to address associated challenges. It sets out a common understanding, shared responsibilities and unity of purpose regarding migration. The GCM outlines a cooperative framework with 10 guiding principles and 23 objectives for better managing migration on local, national, regional and global levels. It follows a people-centred approach, focusing on the needs and the rights of migrants, while at the same time addressing the concerns of communities and reinforces the national interests of States. It emphasizes the principle of shared responsibility between countries of origin, transit and destination to cooperate. The GCM compiles principles, rights and obligations from existing international law instruments relevant in the context of migration, identifies best practices in all areas of migration policy and establishes a space for dialogue on migration at the United Nations.

What the GCM is not

The GCM is not a treaty or a convention and has no legally binding power. Governments neither sign nor ratify. The GCM does not prescribe how States implement its objectives. States are free to choose how to pursue implementation in line with their priorities. The GCM does not impose any new obligations on States regarding who can enter their territory. The GCM is neither about refugees nor about internally displaced persons (IDPs).

What is the state of migration in the world?

Out of the world's 7.6 billion people, over 200 million are international migrants, representing 3.4% of the global population. Data shows that most migration takes place in a safe, orderly and regular manner. Migrants move mainly within the same region, and most migration takes place between developing countries. Such migration is a net benefit for societies and harbours economic and cultural potential. Migrants produce nearly 9% of global GDP (roughly $6.7 trillion USD). However, migration can put societies under significant stress and can create political and social tensions, especially when it is irregular, unplanned and poorly managed.

Why is the GCM needed?

Research suggests that migration movements will increase in the decades to come. This calls for rational, evidence-based, policies and greater international cooperation. Since no State can manage migration movements on its own, managing migration in a coordinated manner is one of the most important tests of international cooperation of our time. The GCM provides guidance on how to pass this test.

How did the GCM come about?

Recent movements of people in various parts of the world have highlighted the need for international cooperation. In 2016, at the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants, the Member States of the United Nations adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, which mandated two separate and parallel

processes: one to elaborate a Global Compact on Refugees, led by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the other a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to be negotiated and agreed by Member States. The Permanent Representatives of Mexico and Switzerland led the negotiations as co-facilitators. At the beginning of the process, Member States, local governments, the private sector, trade unions, civil society, parliamentarians, academia, and migrants themselves all engaged in broad-based substantive consultations during the year 2017. These consultations were based on national best practices and evidence. Between February and July 2018 intergovernmental negotiations took place among UN Member States in six rounds at UN Headquarters in New York, resulting in an agreed outcome document that reflects the priorities of all participating Member States.

Why is the GCM an achievement?

- **Novel**: First intergovernmentally agreed global framework for cooperation on international migration after decades of global dialogue and incremental steps

- **Global**: Recognizes that migration is a global phenomenon and transnational in nature, and balances the realities of countries of origin, transit and destination

- **Comprehensive**: Addresses the phenomenon in all its dimensions and takes into account the needs of migrants, communities and States

- **Cooperative**: Acknowledgment that no State can address the challenges and opportunities of migration alone and that concerted international cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination is required to effectively respond to migration

- **Realistic**: Recognizes migration as a reality of humanity and calls for evidence-based approaches to migration

What is in the GCM?

In the GCM, Member States make a political commitment to work together on migration. The GCM establishes 10 guiding principles and defines 23 objectives covering all aspects of migration along the whole cycle of migration. Each objective is comprised of a general commitment and a catalogue of possible actions that States can draw from to develop their national and international responses. These actions are based on internationally recognized best practices and lessons learned that were collected in the preparatory process.

Guiding principles:

The 10 guiding principles are cross-cutting and interdependent:
- People-centred: The GCM reflects the human dimension of migration
- International cooperation: Recognition of the transnational nature of migration and the need for collaborative action
- National sovereignty: Reaffirmation of the right of every State to determine national migration policies
- Rule of law and due process: Recognition of their fundamentality to all aspects of migration governance
- Sustainable development: The GCM is rooted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and recognizes the relevance of migration to sustainable development
- Human Rights: International human rights law is the basis of the GCM
- Gender-responsive: The GCM mainstreams a gender perspective, promotes gender equality and empowers women and girls
- Child-sensitive: The GCM upholds the principle of the best interests of the child at all times
- Whole-of-government approach: The GCM promotes horizontal and vertical policy coherence across all sectors and levels of government
- Whole-of-society-approach: The GCM promotes broad multi-stakeholder partnerships

Objectives:

23 objectives are the core element of the cooperative framework:
1. Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies
2. Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin
3. Provide accurate and timely information at all stages of migration
4. Ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation
5. Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration
6. Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work
7. Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration
8. Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants
9. Strengthen the transnational response to smuggling of migrants
10. Prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration
11. Manage borders in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner
12. Strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures for appropriate screening, assessment and referral
13. Use migration detention only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives
14. Enhance consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle
15. Provide access to basic services for migrants
16. Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion
17. Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration
18. Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences
19. Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries
20. Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants
21. Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration
22. Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits
23. Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration

What is next?

On 10-11 December 2018, Heads of States or Governments will formally adopt the GCM at an Intergovernmental Conference taking place in Marrakech, Morocco. The Intergovernmental Conference in Marrakech will serve to galvanize ownership by States and all relevant stakeholders for the GCM and herald the implementation phase. For this purpose, States may start devising national roadmaps for implementation and come to the Intergovernmental Conference with initial deliverables.

After formal adoption of the GCM, an International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) will be held every four years at the United Nations and serve to review accomplishments and identify future opportunities for implementation. Alternating with the global level, regional reviews will be organized at a four-year interval by relevant regional platforms and institutions beginning in 2020. The United Nations will realign its internal structures to assist countries in the implementation of the GCM by establishing a UN migration network, coordinated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM).