

Brussels, 24 November 2014

**Open letter to the European Commission,
the European Parliament and EU Member States**

To: President of the European Commission, Mr. Jean-Claude Juncker
First Vice-President of the European Commission, Mr. Frans Timmermans
European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Mr. Dimitris Avramopoulos
DG HOME, Director of Dir. B - Migration & Asylum, Mr. Laurent Muschel
European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Mr. Neven Mimica
DG DEVCO, Director of Dir. B- Human & Society Development, Mr. Luis Riera Figueras
President of the European Council, Mr. Herman Van Rompuy
Head of Cabinet of the European Council, Mr. Didier Seeuws
Italian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Mr. Matteo Renzi
President of the European Parliament, Mr. Martin Schulz
Members of the European Parliament on the DEVE Committee
Members of the European Parliament on the LIBE Committee
Members of the European Parliament on the DROI Committee
Members of the European Parliament on the EMPL Committee
All Permanent Representatives to the European Union

CC: Members of the Cabinet of Commissioner Mr. Dimitris Avramopoulos
Members of the Cabinet of Commissioner Mr. Neven Mimica
DG HOME, Members of the Unit 'International Affairs, Mobility Partnership
DG DEVCO, Members of the Unit 'Employment, Social Inclusion, Migration'
DG DEVCO, Members of the Unit 'Civil Society, Local Authorities'

Subject: EU Member States must include migrants and migration-related targets in the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals agenda

Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

The civil society organisations signing this letter would like to urge the European Commission (EC), the European Parliament (EP) and EU member States to take migration and migrants into account in the negotiations on the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals agenda.

Although 232 million migrants contribute to the economic and social well-being of their countries of origin/heritage and destination worldwide - some 72 million in Europe, they are not yet fully recognized as actors and subjects of sustainable human development. In that respect, we particularly welcome the statement made by Commissioner Avramopoulos during his hearing, recognizing the important contribution of migrants to development and look forward to the European Commission's full engagement on EU policies regarding development and migration.

In that direction, and as civil society organisations working in both migration and development in Europe and beyond, we very much hope that the new EC will remain fully committed to its efforts to ensure the integration of migrants and migration in the post-2015 UN Sustainable Development

Goals agenda, as expressed in the EC Communication on post-2015¹. We also hope that the European Parliament will support the EC in working in that direction.

In particular, we believe that the Communication's emphasis on human rights and safe, orderly and regular migration makes only more and more sense as part of the remedy to increasing tragedy across Europe's sea and other borders and an obvious response to the region's growing demographic and labour imbalance. We further note the consensus on this approach in the Outcome Document of the states' Open Working Group on the post-2015 sustainable development goals (SDG's).

We are concerned however that a protectionist agenda, driven by narrow economic and national interests, would prevail over an EU-oriented human-rights based approach to migration policy that would benefit countries of origin, transit and destination (i.e., in Europe) as well as migrants themselves.

As an input to the UN and Council negotiations on post-2015, we would like to share with you attached **Civil Society Stockholm Agenda** on migrants and migration in post-2015 development agendas². The 'Stockholm Agenda' is a set of migrant-centered, rights-based goals and targets that support development that is human, economic and sustainable. The agenda is a direct product of the recent Global Forum on Migration and Development and parallel civil society processes in Stockholm. 270 civil society organisations around the world³ have signed it so far, one of the largest numbers of sign-on's we've ever seen, showing a strong convergence among civil society organizations worldwide.

We would like to see these targets included in the post-2015 global and national development agendas. In that regard, although we acknowledge the inclusion of some of the targets in the Outcome Document of the States' Open Working Group⁴, we would like to encourage the EU and member States to continue their efforts in the current negotiations and insist on targets which have not yet been considered (see targets 6, 7 and 8 listed below).

You will see on the agenda that, framed around nine goals, the targets call for, among other things:

1. Decent working conditions and social protection for all migrants, regardless of migration status, that conform to international labour standards;
2. Reduction in the cost of sending remittances and reduction in the cost of labour migration and recruitment;
3. Access to social and legal protection, and decent work for migrant women and girls, including domestic workers;
4. Access to education for all migrants and migrants' children, regardless of migration status;
5. Access to adequate and quality healthcare for all migrants, regardless of migration status;

¹ EC, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, A Decent Life for all: from vision to collective action, 2 June 2014.

² The Civil Society Stockholm agenda is also available online in English <http://gfmcivilsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Civil-Society-Migration-Stockholm-Agenda-June-2014.pdf>, in French http://gfmcivilsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Civil-Society-Stockholm-FR_16.6.14.pdf and Spanish http://gfmcivilsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Civil-Society-Stockholm-ES_16.6.14.pdf

³ See list of signatories: <http://gfmcivilsociety.org/stockholm-agenda-and-post-2015-sustainable-development-goals/signatories/>

⁴ e.g. labour rights and safe and secure working environments for all workers, and especially for migrant women (OWG 8.8); safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility, including through implementation of planned and well managed migration policies (OWG 10.7) and reducing transaction costs of migrant remittances (OWG 10.c)

6. Increased migrant participation and contribution in public policy planning and implementation;
7. Institutionalized mechanisms that embrace, integrate or reintegrate migrants and their families into their countries of origin, heritage and destination;
8. Full engagement of migrants and diaspora members as partners in development;
9. Facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration, through enhanced international cooperation

To ensure a genuine human rights and migrant-centred approach re-affirmed by the EC on multiple occasions, the undersigned civil society organisations urge the European Commission, the European Parliament and EU member States to take our recommendations into consideration when negotiating the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goal agenda. We believe that the current negotiations around the post-2015 development agenda are the opportunity for the EU - as a major development stakeholder - to re-affirm that no one should be left behind and to fully recognize migrants as actors and subjects of sustainable human and economic development.

On behalf of the organisations listed:



NB: For more information please contact Sophie Ngo-Diep, ICMC Europe: europe@madenetwork.org

Civil Society

"Stockholm Agenda"

on migrant and migration-related goals and targets

in post-2015 global and national development agendas

Point 1 of the "5-year 8-point Plan of Action" that global civil society presented to the UN High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in 2013 (HLD) calls for the integration of migrants and migration into the post-2015 development agenda *"to address not only the contributions that migrants make to development in countries of origin and destination, but also the possibilities for better policy planning and coherence that can make migration more genuinely a choice and not a necessity, and greater gain than drain."*

Before, within and in follow-up to the 2014 Global Forum on Migration and Development in Stockholm, civil society came together to assert the following framework and a set of goals and targets that connect migrants and migration with human and economic development that is decent, sustainable and transformative.

Many of these goals and targets match and take forward important emphases of the consensus Declaration of Member States at the HLD and the work of a range of post-2015 processes, including the UN member states' Open Working Group and the April 2014 Dhaka recommendations.

Civil society proposes to collaborate with UN member states to ensure that the forthcoming post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and national development agendas reflect these goals and targets, and to together achieve, monitor and measure progress on them over the 15 years through 2030.

I. Over-arching framework

Migrants and migration belong in international and national post-2015 development agendas, as both actors and subjects of human and economic development that is sustainable.

As a first matter, SDGs must address root causes and conditions that force people to migrate, especially surging global inequalities driven by current development and economic paradigms. We must move towards people and nature-centered, rights-based development. This is an urgent practical matter, but also a clear moral imperative, not least so that migration can be a choice, not a necessity. In this direction, the SDGs must include strong goals for:

- decent work for all, with labour rights, as a goal for all countries but with explicit reference to protection of migrant workers regardless of status
- universal publicly-funded and delivered social protection in critical areas of community well-being

Migrant earnings and remittances are important contributors to family and community development. Remittances however, are private transfers: they should not be diverted or used as the "answer" or substitute for development policy or assistance.

The SDGs must point to and incorporate full participation of migrants and diaspora as partners in public policy planning and implementation, development and data collection.

As described on the next page, a number of migrant and migration-related targets may fit either under broader SDGs (such as ending poverty; fair, accessible and adequate healthcare, education and governance; empowering girls and women, etc.) or together as a logical set for transformative human and economic development, including:

- decreasing remittance transfer costs
- reducing risks to migrants on the move, in particular: recruitment costs; lack of fair, regular and orderly channels of migration; criminalization of migrants; and risks to women and to children in contexts of human trafficking, transit and crisis
- portability of social security, pension and skills, including recognition of qualifications

II. Targets under goals similar to the current MDGs or focus areas of the Open Working Group.

GOAL 1

Create jobs, sustainable livelihoods and equitable growth

- Create and preserve decent work opportunities in countries of origin which make migration and re-migration an option instead of a necessity and mitigate brain drain
- Ensure that migrants enjoy decent working conditions and social protection that conform to international human rights and labour standards
- Ensure portability of skills and benefits

GOAL 2

End poverty

- Reduce costs of labour migration, with priority to abolishing debt bondage and recruitment charges to migrant workers
- Reduce the cost of sending remittances
- Protect and promote the private use of remittances for family and community development

GOAL 3

Empower girls and women and achieve gender equality

- Provide access to social and legal protection and decent work to migrant women and girls, including domestic workers

GOAL 4

Provide quality education and lifelong learning

- Ensure migrants' access to education, particularly for children who are migrants themselves or the children of migrants

GOAL 5

Ensure healthy lives

- Ensure that all migrants have access to adequate and quality healthcare

GOAL 6

Ensure good governance and effective institutions

- Ensure that all migrants have access to justice and due process equal to nationals
- End policies and practices that criminalize and detain migrants based upon their migration status
- Increase participation and contribution of migrants in public policy planning and implementation
- Ratify and implement core UN and ILO instruments

GOAL 7

Ensure stable and peaceful societies

- Increase public awareness of cultural, social and economic contributions of migrants and diaspora
- Institutionalize mechanisms that embrace and integrate or reintegrate migrants and their families into their countries of origin, heritage and destination

GOAL 8

Create a global enabling environment for development with new partnerships

- Ensure that migrants and diaspora are fully engaged as partners in development
- Expand collaboration on and access to migration and development data

III. Targets under a stand-alone goal for multi-actor global and national collaboration.

Civil society believes that this goal uniquely frames four targets to remedy inefficiencies and obstacles that block migrants and migration from achieving greater human and economic development.

GOAL 9

Enlarge human security and human development benefits of migration

- Prevent and address international human trafficking and violence against migrants
- Improve systemic responses to forced migration, including migrants uprooted by crisis and climate change
- Facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration, through enhanced international cooperation
- Reduce inefficiencies that generate large numbers of migrants lacking proper documentation

IV. Measurable indicators for all of the above targets are being developed separately.