

Ms. Louise Arbour  
Special Representative of the Secretary-General  
for International Migration

Sent by email to: [eva.akermann-borje@un.org](mailto:eva.akermann-borje@un.org)  
and [christine.matthews@un.org](mailto:christine.matthews@un.org)

Your ref: SRSR Migration/2017/21/7

31 August 2017

**Business Mechanism input to the UN Secretary-General's report on the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration**

Dear Ms. Arbour,

We appreciate this opportunity to offer our input to the United Nations Secretary-General's report on the global compact for safe, orderly, and regular migration (GCM). The private sector has high stakes in the global migration debate, as global skills mobility is integral to business and economic growth. In the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, United Nations member states commit to engage in a multi-stakeholder process towards a framework for global migration management. In this declaration, the private sector was recognized as a key stakeholder that must be included in the process (para 15), clearly acknowledging however that states hold unique rights and responsibilities to manage their borders (para 24). The GFMD Business Mechanism stands ready to provide its expertise on business needs and challenges as they relate to global migration.

As the platform for business engagement on global migration issues, the Business Mechanism advocates for a GCM that addresses migration's contributions to and impact on labour markets, and seeks to lift practical barriers to accessing talent and skills, such as the recognition of qualifications and skills. Below we offer specific recommendations for each requested area of input, as per your Note Verbale dated 21 July 2017.

I. Structure

The GCM should be an aspirational document that sets forth best practices for governments on the management of migration. It should be a non-binding document that offers suggestions for governments to adopt on a voluntary basis. In general, the Business Mechanism recommends increased coordination among all stakeholders to identify and implement best practices that maximize the benefits of migration. The GCM should implement migration policies that meet labour market needs and promote talent mobility and migrant entrepreneurship. Refugees should not be addressed in the GCM, as specific protection for refugees is granted in the 1951 Convention, and will be further addressed in a second UN compact.

The consultations phase for the GCM, based on six specific topics, should pave the way to the format of the final document. The Business Mechanism is particularly keen on providing input to the topic of labour mobility. Specifically, we call for a migration framework that encourages greater mobility and the creation of new channels for low- and semi-skilled workers to access jobs overseas. As mentioned in the Sutherland Report, the GCM offers an opportunity to strengthen the architecture on labour mobility and maximize the many benefits of migration. A distinction between regular/legal and irregular/illegal migrants is necessary to develop effective migration policies.

It is imperative that the GCM includes concrete, measurable goals and targets to evaluate their results. Following the format of the SDGs, the GCM should offer implementation methods and indicators under each provision. Furthermore, a timeline can be a helpful structural tool to ensure the provisions are pursued expeditiously. It should be noted that some provisions could foresee a binary “check the box” assessment, based on definite compliance.

Finally, special attention should be paid to the language used in the GCM. Portraying migrants as beneficial societal agents and potential innovators can help tackle xenophobic attitudes. It is essential to remind governments of the development benefits and economic contributions that migrants can bring to host societies. We support Marta Foresti’s recommendation set forth at the fourth thematic session in New York: that the GCM can implement the three I’s – innovation, investment and inclusion – as a part of a standard language for the GCM that recognizes and reinforces the positive contributions of migrants.

## II. Actionable Commitments

The GCM is an opportunity to advance a regulatory environment in which labour migration policies support business to create job opportunities and economic prosperity in both sending and receiving countries. As stated in our policy paper, [Toward a Global Compact on Migration: Perspectives on Labour Migration from the GFMD Business Mechanism](#), the Business Mechanism recommends the GCM include five policy areas: skills mobility, innovations for migrants access to labour markets, irregular migration, responsible recruitment, and entrepreneurship. Please see our attached brief for our specific recommendations, as well as a summary, that provides insight on specific targeted actions to evaluate policies and practices.

## III. Means of Implementation

The implementation of best practices can be improved through the utilization of international frameworks, such the World Employment Confederation Code of Conduct, which serves as a standard on fair and ethical recruitment for the employment and recruitment industry. There is an abundance of existing frameworks and documents that can be useful if made widely available to states. These tools can supplement GCM provisions to provide greater detail and clarity on complex subjects such as ethical recruitment, and therefore improve the success of implementation.

It is imperative that the GCM’s provisions be as clear as possible so that businesses and other stakeholders can follow them to the best of their abilities. The GCM’s provisions will be most successful if they are not cumbersome. The GCM can provide an extensive menu of policy options, that serves as a flexible framework for governments and businesses to prioritize and adopt as appropriate. The GCM should recognize the different capacities of states and other entities, specifically those with fewer resources and means to adopt policies.

Collaboration and cooperation between governments, private sector and civil society will be necessary to facilitate implementation and ensure the efficacy of GCM provisions. Bilateral and multi-stakeholder agreements can improve policy coherence and create mutually beneficial arrangements that contribute to development in both sending and receiving countries. Public-private partnerships are proven to be positive contributors to development, and they can also be key assets in global migration management.

Although there is a tendency to look to the private sector solely for funding purposes, the private sector should be engaged in various dimensions of the GCM process. In addition to sharing expertise on the practical impacts of migration policies, the private sector can also provide trainings, jobs, internships and apprenticeships for migrants that aid directly in the integration process. Creating new opportunities

for innovation, development, and migrant entrepreneurship can also deter xenophobic attitudes that have led to violence and strict border control to date.

International dialogue must continue even after the adoption of the GCM. The Business Mechanism recommends the continuation of the GFMD process as a mechanism to review the progress and performance of the GCM. In addition, research and data collection should be an ongoing component of the GCM to develop and identify best practices.

We hope that these recommendations will be useful in the drafting of the report. We thank you for your hard work and diligence towards the GCM, and look forward to our continued collaboration throughout the duration of the GCM process.

Yours sincerely,

**Austin T. Fragomen**  
*Chairman, Business Advisory Group*

**Linda Kromjong**  
*Secretary-General, IOE*

Annexes:

- [“Toward a global compact on migration: perspectives on labour migration from the GFMD Business Mechanism”](#), policy paper published by the Business mechanism, June 2017 (27 pages)
- “Recommendations and targeted actions” by the Business Mechanism, August 2017 (4 pages)

Cc: H.E. Mr. Jürg Lauber, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations  
H.E. Mr. Juan José Gómez Camacho, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations