

# MIGRATION, COVID-19 AND A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT

Tuesday, 13 April 2021, 3 PM CEST

## CONCEPT NOTE

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic devastated millions of migrant workers across the globe, especially women, those in low paying jobs, and migrants in undocumented status given their vulnerable situation. Many were repatriated without access to justice, forced to take unpaid leave or lower wages (1) for the same amount of work, while others were dismissed and left stranded in destination countries with no means to go home. Even as migrants deal with issues concerning their jobs, they also have to deal with access to medical care and social protection in destination countries.

The pandemic, though, has underscored the grave issues faced by migrants since March 2020, it has by no means created new ones. These issues were not a direct result of the pandemic, but rather they have only been worsened and magnified in scale. Some of these issues are wage theft, lack/gaps in access to justice/remedy, lack of access to social protection, irregular migration, gender-based violence, freedom of association. On another note, the crisis has provided an opportunity for civil society and other stakeholders to assess policies, regulations, and laws on migration and its implication and find out where governments and other stakeholders have shortcomings and come up with solutions to address them. It is at this juncture that we call for a “New Social Contract with a floor of a Universal Labour Guarantee” (2). The New Social Contract between workers, governments, and businesses will ensure decent jobs for all workers with minimum living wages, universal social protection, access to justice/remedy, and social dialogues. (3)

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), a global migration framework that provides a 360-degree approach to migration, with its first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) scheduled in 2022 to review the implementation of its objectives at the global level, indicate in its objectives the commitment to promote and respect the rights of migrant workers, regardless of their status, throughout their migration journey.

Following the recently concluded 23-part webinar series on each of the GCM objectives and the virtual Celebration of the International Migrants' Day on 18 December 2020, the webinar on Migration, COVID and a New Social Contract is the first in the series of five conversations that will begin in preparation for the IMRF and in bringing the advocacy agenda of civil society to the IMRF and other intergovernmental conferences. This will be led by Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), the Cross-Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants (CCRM), the Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT), the Civil Society Action Committee, Alianza Americas, the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM), and Climate Migration & Displacement Platform (CMDP). While the webinar will run for two hours, the first and half hour will be dedicated to the issues, while the second part will focus on the strategies moving forward.

-----

1 Below the minimum living wages

2 Excerpt from Sharan Burrow's address during the 100th anniversary of ILO

3 <https://www.ituc-csi.org/a-new-social-contract>

## PEOPLE'S MIGRATION CHALLENGE

CIVIL SOCIETY PRIORITIES WEBINAR SERIES **from 13 April to 18 May 2021**