

# Roots & Routes

Vol 9, No. 11, November, 2020



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# Editor's Note



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Dear All  
Greetings!

The year is coming to an end, but still, there is no sign of an effective and affordable vaccine to counter the COVID-19. In such context, this year has proved to be unusually challenging for everyone in general but brought anguish and despair particularly for migrants across the world due to restriction in mobility, wage-theft, discrimination, stigmatisation, xenophobia and the list goes on. However, as a sign of unflinching hope in the darkest despair, humanity has shown its resilience by firmly coping up the challenges posed by the pandemic through various viable mechanisms through State and non-state actors by helping each other in their own ways. Continuing the legacy, GRFDT happily brings for you its Newsletter- Roots and Routes for November 2020 with the valuable content on the migration discourse.

November Newsletter contains multiple reports on webinars being held jointly by GRFDT, MFA and CCRM on various key objectives of Global Compact for Migration (GCM). Webinar on Objective 10: "Prevent, Combat and Eradicate Trafficking in Persons in the Context of International Migration" was reported individually by Ujjwala Lakhanpal and Inomusa Ndlovu, providing crucial policy perspectives spanning the globe. Similarly, Objective 11: "Manage Borders in an Integrated, Secure, and Coordinated Manner" was reported by Tashryn Mohd Shahrin to bring out the imperative insights from various perspectives. Webinar on Objective 12: "Strengthen Certainty and Predictability in Migration Procedures for Appropriate Screening, Assessment and Referral" was covered by Srija Mukhopadhyay to emphasise the structural nuances of migration. Objective 13: "Use Migration Detention only as a Measure of Last Resort and Work Towards Alternatives" was reported individually by Manjima Anjana and Michal Tengere, bringing out impactful insights from eminent experts.

The last section of our newsletter contains an insightful and interesting interview of Mr. Ismail Einashe, eminent journalist, who has written widely on migration and human rights, conducted by Ms. Paddy Siyanga Knudsen.

Do give a read to our newsletter, and we would be more than happy to know about your observations and insights on the content of the newsletter. You may access any of our social media profiles to see the relevant content.

Please feel free to mail us at [editorinchief@grfdt.com](mailto:editorinchief@grfdt.com) for any specific query or inputs regarding our work.

Happy Reading!

Abhishek Yadav

# Migration, Diasporas and Sustainable Development: Perspectives, Policies, Opportunities and Challenges

International e-conference titled “Migration, Diasporas and Sustainable Development: Perspectives, Policies, Opportunities and Challenges” was successfully organised from November 2 to November 5, 2020. It was jointly organised by Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT), India, Center for Research on North America (CISAN), UNAM, Mexico, and Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), Philippines.

The E-Conference brought together academics, migrant achievers, practitioners, and policy experts from various countries. It has helped in consolidating the research findings from researchers across the world, which will eventually help in understanding multiple emerging perspectives and migration policies to provide better insights. Various session reports have already been published by The Migration News, which is playing a crucial role in shaping the global migration discourse to ensure the safe, orderly and regular migration.



**Keynote Speech -Prof. Steven Vertovec,**  
Managing Director, Max Planck Institute for the Study  
of Religious and Ethnic  
Diversity, Göttingen, Germany



**Inaugural Address- Amb. William Lacy Swing,**  
Former Director General, IOM and former United  
States Ambassador, and United  
Nations Special Representative of the  
Secretary-General and Under Secretary General



# Addressing the Menace of Migrant Trafficking in the World

On November 3rd, 2020, a panel discussion was jointly organised by Migrant Forum in Asia, Cross-Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants (CCRM), Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT) and Civil Society Action Committee (CSAC), on the topic 'GCM Objective 10: Prevent, Combat and Eradicate Trafficking in Persons in the Context of International Migration,' considering the vital need to control and curb migrant trafficking in the world. The discussion was moderated by Ms. Paddy Siyanga Knudsen, Migration Governance Analyst.

The first speaker was Ms. Bandana Pattanaik, International Coordinator at Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women.

## Challenges within GCM Objective 10

Ms. Pattanaik broke down the complex subject of human trafficking to enable the audience to really understand the ongoing complexities regarding trafficking in persons and what the Objective 10 of the GCM really stands for in this context. Ms. Pattanaik also dissected and analysed the various action points within the GCM Objective 10, discussing their various advantages and limitations.

***“GCM 10 does not contradict the OHCHR guidelines anywhere but it does not also explicitly mention or take any note of the rights of trafficked persons.”:Ms. Bandana Pattanaik***

Hence, Ms Pattanaik stated the need for an urgent international scrutiny into the rights of trafficked migrant workers and called for right steps to be taken to ensure stringent implementation of guaranteed basic rights. ***“What is awareness raising mechanisms actually achieving?”***, she questioned, acknowledging the fact that graver

complexities associated with human trafficking often get ignored during awareness campaigns. Hence, Ms. Pattanaik urged the international community to limit pouring entire resources on the awareness building programs that do nothing to alleviate the precarities, and pick up more important topics to work upon like understanding the linkages between internal and international trafficking. Ms. Pattanaik further shed light on marriage migration and the various community surveillance measures as part of GCM objective 10 that have made the lives of poor migrants, especially women, difficult.

Ms. Pattanaik concluded her address by stating that while the broad agenda of GCM Objective 10 to eradicate trafficking in persons is appreciated, how it plans to do so is not clear from the action points, hence reducing its impact value.

## Safety of Migrants in Peril

Ms. Anusha Abeywickrama Munasinghe, National Program Officer of UNODC, South Asia, looked at the GCM Objective 10 via the lens of UNODC framework for addressing trafficking, guided by the three-pillar approach of prevention, protection and persecution. Elaborating on how internal flows of trafficking can develop into international flows in the future, Ms. Munasinghe underlined the various complexities COVID-19 has brought to migration processes, and spoke about how there is a severe need to reconsider, retune, readdress and re-analyse existing mechanisms and international migration flows. Hence, Ms. Munasinghe called for ***“fine tuning the existing policies to address the vulnerabilities of migrant workers post COVID-19,”*** while focusing on the rights and safety of trafficked migrants. She concluded her address by stating that the international community needs to improve their collective security mechanism and forge consistent and

reliable methods to prevent trafficking in these precarious times, when it is relatively easier for traffickers to conduct their trade.

### **Challenges of Migrant Trafficking from Maldives' Perspective**

Ms. Moomina Waheed, Commissioner for the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives, presented an extremely well rounded perspective of the ground work being done by the Human Rights Commission in Maldives in addressing trafficking. She not only spoke about the importance of inter-ministerial coordination but also underlined the major issues plaguing Maldives in relation to trafficking, like insufficient human resources, an urgent need for capacity building, and limited knowledge of officers. She highlighted various programs Maldives has implemented to combat these issues and discussed the national Anti- Human Trafficking Act as well. By quoting World Bank statistics to support her statements, she further mentioned how the number of undocumented migrants have, and are further expected to, increase due to the COVID-19 crisis, posing the biggest challenge for the country.

Ms. Waheed further underscored the various existing challenges related to migrant trafficking and how the pandemic has exacerbated the situation. She said, ***“Problems of insufficient funds has only increased as even in the following year, sufficient budget seems unlikely for training purposes”***.

Since staff has very limited knowledge in providing victim support, it is a significant challenge to train front line officials in issues like differentiating between sex trafficking and sexual abuse. Ms. Waheed suggested online training as a remedy to overcome this challenge during COVID-19. She further explained how the pandemic has made things easier for traffickers since regular inspection of workers is not done due to social distancing norms and how there is an alarming need to focus on these issues to address human trafficking in guise of regular recruitment. Furthermore, Ms. Waheed emphasised on the government's efforts

to address the issues of undocumented workers.

***“To advocate for safe migration, the government has reviewed SOPs including quota recruitment, penalisation for illegal recruitment etc., since strengthening the implementation of these SOPs would allow the government to address the issues of human trafficking”: Ms. Moomina Waheed***

Hence, giving a holistic perspective of international migrant trafficking, Ms. Waheed concluded by stating that, ***“Governments must enforce basic training for victim identification and consequent referral to necessary organisations of victims of trafficking in the primary curriculum for border officials, police, nurses and all those personnel who could be the first point of contact for victims of trafficking.”***

### **Need for Alternative Mechanisms to Address Migrant Trafficking**

Ms. Chandrika Karunaratna, Policy Specialist and Head of Governance at UNDP, gave a very interesting perspective on the alternative mechanisms and remedies that governments can introduce to protect and assist victims of trafficking in the absence of specific laws and regulations. She expounded on the fact that it is the lack of effective enforcement of policies and difficulties in obtaining evidence to prove coercion or deception of fraud, that are some of the major hurdles in eradicating trafficking in persons.

***“The absence of limited reporting by the victims of trafficking or even the witnesses due to the fear of reprisals or limited access to judicial mechanisms is something to pay attention to.”: Ms. Chandrika Karunaratna***

Hence, Ms. Karunaratna urged the international community to devise an effective mechanism that will allow even trafficked or undocumented migrants to approach legal organisations when they

are in danger. Moreover, Ms. Karunaratna also stressed on the importance of spreading awareness regarding the gravity of the offense of trafficking since it is a lack of understanding that is aggravating the crisis for the general populace.

Highlighting how existing vulnerabilities have exacerbated in the backdrop of the COVID-19 scenario, Ms. Karunaratna stated that despite the laws, enforcement agencies find themselves paralysed and unable to effectively intervene due to COVID-19 related safety measures.

***“The International community must effectively address the risk of prolonged exploitation since the exploiter is aware that the chances of detection under these scenarios (induced by pandemic) is very slim.”: Ms. Chandrika Karunaratna***

In the context of above-mentioned vulnerabilities, strategies should be tailor made to meet the needs of the victims of trafficking. “We must find new ways to look at obstruction of justice and aggravated offenses,” Ms. Karunaratna concluded.

### **Challenges of Migrant Trafficking from the Philippines’ perspective**

Mr. Jerome A. Alcantara, Executive Director, Blas F. Ople Policy Centre and Training Institute, spoke about migrant trafficking from the Philippines’ perspective and elucidated how his organisation works with the government in Philippines to combat trafficking.

***“It is a common notion that if we come up with adequate regulations, pass sufficient laws and monitor the movement of labour, trafficking will slowly decrease and ultimately cease to exist. However, this is not the case.”: Mr. Jerome A. Alcantara***

Philippines has been badly struck by COVID-19 and with more than half a million already repatriated back to the country, the biggest challenge is figuring out a way to detect and identify possible victims of trafficking from amongst that half

a million who have already returned home. This is indeed a daunting challenge, which gets even tougher to overcome when the State is still under a national lockdown.

Mr. Alcantara also explained how his organisation assists families who have been victims of trafficking, ensures transparency and accountability in handling rescue, repatriation and reintegration services, and also helps the government to work within a particular time frame needed for rescue operations, legal assistance or other related services for victims of trafficking. Mr. Alcantara further spoke about the post pandemic impact on migration, the various challenges ahead and how we must prepare for the future. ***“We must influence governments across the world to start looking at these problems because they will be biting us sooner than we expect,”*** Mr. Alcantara warned.

Mr. Alcantara also shed light on how the pandemic has changed the face of labour migration forever. With millions unemployed in the country, the labour migration system will indeed kick start again but at a controlled capacity, which will consequently lead to rising employment costs, inability of employers to shoulder the expenses of their workers, lower levels of protection for migrant workers and diminished capacities of companies.

Mr. Alcantara also underlined how the legal migrant recruitment agencies have been worst hit, with 17% of them have already declared bankruptcy. Thus, he concluded his address by urging international governments to not only think and act as a response to present challenges, but also devise a strategic plan for the future that will help combat trafficking.

**Ujjwala Lakhanpal** is a final year student of International Relations and Economics at Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University, Gandhinagar. Her areas of interest include Conflict Studies, Asian Geopolitics, International Migrations and the Middle East. Ujjwala is also fond of History, Culture and Religion and you will often find her constructing travel plans to explore the same.

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# International Cooperation is Paramount in Combating Human Trafficking

On the 3rd of November 2020, Global Research Forum on Diaspora Transnationalism [GRF-DT], Migrant Forum in Asia [MFA], Cross-Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants [CCRM] and Civil Society Action Committee (CSAC) hosted a joint virtual panel discussion on Global Compact on Migration [GCM] Objective 10: Prevent, Combat and Eradicate Trafficking in Persons in the Context of International Migration.

The discussion was moderated by Ms. Paddy Siyanga Knudsen, Migration Governance Analyst. Ms. Bandana Pattanaik, International Coordinator for Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women, Ms. Chandrika Karunaratna, Policy Specialist and Head of Governance at UNDP, Ms. Anusha Abeywickrama-Munasinghe, National Program Officer of UNODC South Asia, Ms. Moomina Waheed, Commissioner for the Human Rights Commission for Maldives and Mr. Jerome A. Alcantara, Executive Director, Blas F. Ople Policy Centre and Training Institute, were the panelists in the virtual discussion.

## Integrating Human Trafficking Legal Efforts

Ms. Bandana Pattanaik began her address by stating that for an easy understanding of the GCM objective 10, it is important to look at it in conjunction with two other international instruments: The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, otherwise known as the Palermo Protocol, and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking.

The Palermo Protocol seeks to address the transnational organized crime while the OHCHR document is a set of strong recommendations that closely follows the Palermo Protocol. The GCM

Objective 10, on the other hand, seeks to achieve its objective by strengthening capacity and international cooperation to investigate, persecute and penalize trafficking in persons to discourage the demand to foster such exploitation and impunity of trafficking networks. It also enhances the identification and protection, and provision of assistance to migrants who have become victims.

Ms. Pattanaik reckons that the narrow scope of GCM objective 10 is the reason why it fails to mention in any form, the OHCHR guidelines anywhere, nor does it make an explicit mention of the rights of trafficked persons. This is in sharp contrast with the Palermo Protocol article 11(1) which explicitly formulates an obligation upon its state parties to strengthen border controls.

***‘Stringent border control has done nothing to prevent human trafficking; it has only aggravated the vulnerability of working-class migrants and has put many of them in harm’s way.’: Ms. Bandana Pattanaik***

The mild and vague action plan of Objective 10 to monitor irregular migration routes can be seen as migrant friendly. However, Ms. Pattanaik cautions against making these formulations become a sugar-coated legitimization of the ongoing policing and surveillance of migrant workers.

The second part of the action point 3 of GCM objective 10 on monitoring migration routes also mentions cross border cooperation. Ms. Pattanaik warns that if the actions of the European member states of funding the countries of origin and transit to strengthen their border patrol and prevent migrants and refugees from crossing over, for instance their support of the Libyan coast guards and providing them with surveillance equipment and intelligence, are anything to go by, then it is



bound to backfire. Ms. Pattanaik concluded her presentation by stating that covert support for policing of borders by states, lets them out of the hook of human rights obligations; so, we need to be careful that GCM-10 does not give further endorsement to such measures.

### **Impact of COVID-19 on Migration policy**

Ms. Anusha Abeywickrama-Munasinghe began her presentation by solidifying Ms. Pattanaik's assertion that the Palermo Protocol is the most important protocol embraced in respect to issues related to trafficking in person. The Palermo Protocol has strengthened efforts to prevent trafficking. The UNODC framework, on the other hand, is guided by three pillars of prevention, protection and prosecution. Ms. Abeywickrama-Munasinghe asked two important questions in her presentation: How do you address internal inflows of migration if you only look at GCM-10? How do you fine-tune policy to address trafficking concerns in both international and internal migration? Ms. Anusha emphasized that there is a need to not only focus on GCM.

***“We also have to look at how the scenarios have changed due to COVID-19”. For instance, return migrants are facing a wrecked job market, while many migrants continue to be held up in the host countries. “They are having different set of problems, while people who have come back have different set of problems,” Miss. Anusha Abeywickram-Munasinghe highlighted.***

Ms. Anusha further observed that it is important not to use the same policies in addressing these diverse issues. There is also a need to frame policies from the perspectives of return migrants due to COVID-19 and those stuck in the host nations, as well as those who intend to travel regardless of the pandemic.

### **Capacity Building in Combating Human Trafficking**

Ms. Moomina Waheed addressed how the govern-

ment of the Maldives has been regulating migration, and their efforts in curbing trafficking. The Maldives have ratified the Anti-Human Trafficking Act as a way to combat trafficking, although the Act needs amendment to be in line with the UN protocol. The World Bank estimates an increase in inbound migrants to the Maldives with 60% of them from Bangladesh. Over the past 5 years, traffickers have exploited migrants from Maldives and into Maldives through the confiscation of documents and non-payment of wages. The Maldives Stakeholders National Steering Committee formed under the Anti-Human Trafficking Act has the mandate to deal with the issues of human trafficking.

The government however faces budgetary constraints as well as resource crunch to implement anti-trafficking policies. COVID-19 has also made it hard for training of staff to help in capacity building. However, efforts to conduct awareness campaigns among migrants are promoted and the government of the Maldives is working to deal with issues of undocumented migrants.

***“The Human Rights Commission is conducting human trafficking awareness trainings for police and border patrol officers but the problem is when new officials get into power, policies get stalled.”: Ms. Moomina Waheed***

Therefore, there is a need for inter-ministerial co-operation to facilitate tangible progress in the efforts to combat trafficking in person.

### **Coordinating Efforts on Human Trafficking**

Ms. Chandrika Karunaratna started her presentation by stating that the effective enforcement of the adopted provisions is one of the challenges faced in any effort to combat human trafficking. There is a need for effective prosecution of perpetrators through obtaining evidence to prove the essential elements of trafficking. However, Ms. Karunaratna was quick to assert that there is limited reporting of trafficking because of fear of reprisals, and there is lack of appreciation of the gravity of the offense



by the perpetrators. COVID-19 has stalled the efforts to curb human trafficking as officials are not able to detect and intervene in vulnerable societies because of the regulations such as lockdowns currently in place.

***“Where the formal processes, specific trafficking legislations, are not proving effective, it is critical to explore alternate provisions or mechanisms for assisting and protecting victims of trafficking...an alternative way to persuade law enforcement bodies to take action to investigate, persecute, and to identify, protect and assist victims (of trafficking)”*: Ms. Chandrika Karunaratna**

It is pertinent to demonstrate the importance of confirming the rights of the victims of trafficking, and to draw laws that ensure a punishment for perpetrators of trafficking while providing compensation for the victims. Ms. Karunaratna concluded her presentation by reiterating the importance of coordinated efforts by legal aid organizations in both receiving and sending states to ensure that protection and re-integration efforts are made in a holistic manner. Ms. Karunaratna also observed that limited reporting is not an indication of non-existence of the problem. There is a need to go beyond the reported cases in order to ascertain the magnitude of the problem.

### **Importance of Migrant Protection**

Mr. Jerome A. Alcantara was the final panelist to speak, and he began his address by highlighting that the Philippines has one of the most strictly regulated labor migration management system in the world, with very strict requirements for Fili-

pinos going out of the country. But despite that, there is still trafficking of Filipino overseas workers who pass through legal migration channel. His organization helps the families of trafficked individuals navigate through the legal process due to strict and complicated nature of migration management system, which makes it hard and confusing for agents and families to navigate through the system. With COVID-19, all processes have shifted to online platforms, making it harder for families dealing with trafficking, due to the lack of accessibility.

***“Government’s diminishing capacity due to COVID-19 means migrants are locked out and there is dependency on the host state government to assist.”*: Mr. Jerome A. Alcantara**

The overseas Filipino workers are hard hit by the pandemic as the pandemic has changed the face of labor migration forever.

The discussion was concluded by acknowledging the challenges that COVID-19 has brought on the state’s ability to detect and prevent human trafficking, due to lockdown measures and limited manpower. With the current setbacks caused by the pandemic, panelists stressed the need for international cooperation and a coordinated mandate in the efforts to combat human trafficking.

**Inomusa Ndlovu** is a student of M.A. in Political Science at Lucknow University, India, a feminist, and creative writer, with focus on social activism. Her academic and professional interests are in migration and International Relations. She can be reached on Twitter @InomusaCN

## Human Rights at the Heart of Borders

A panel discussion on the Objective 11 of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) was jointly organized by Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT), Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), Cross-Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants (CCRM) and Civil Society Action Committee (CSAC), on 10 November 2020, where various migration experts gathered to engage in a dialogue on how to 'Manage Borders in an Integrated, Secure, and Coordinated Manner', with the session moderated by Mr. William Gois from MFA.

### **Lack of governance at the India-Nepal open border**

Ms. Shristi Kolakshyapati from the Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC) in Nepal, opened the session with a depiction of the irregularity of movement at the India-Nepal migration corridor. The 150 km open border that these two countries share sees migrants commuting for mostly work very frequently, without the need for passports or visas. Without a tracking system of movement on top of the absence of labour policies for migrants, there is virtually no documentation or data to manage this border space. Ms. Shristi emphasises the negative impacts on Nepali women migrants who are especially affected due to the discrimination they face in wanting to migrate. Their movement is already restricted by Nepali policies that serve to so-called protect them but in fact control their movement, and the migrants are further disadvantaged by the lack of migration policies to govern the open border.

### **How do migrants themselves perceive borders?**

As someone who works closely with migrants crossing the Mekong so often, Ms. Reiko Harima from the Mekong Migration Network and Asian Migrant Center, is very familiar with the porous

and informal channels that migrants take. Ms. Harima recalled the interviews she has conducted with these migrants as compared to migrants who cross legally, who are dubbed the 'Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) migrants.' Most of them choose the informal route because it is too costly and troublesome to travel into the cities to obtain documents, since they are already living at the borders. On the flip side, migrants will only choose legal channels if they are both aware and assured of the benefits and rights granted to them both prior, during and after crossing borders. To legally document these processes of migration, Ms. Harima stresses that any effective border management needs clarity as migration policies tend to be implemented only for a short-term and migrants are deterred by these constant changes.

### ***"Border management must be part of the social contract": Ms. Reiko Harima***

The documentation process needs to be affordable and decentralized, while implementation of these migration policies needs to be subjected to strict oversight to prevent arbitrary enforcement of border control.

### **Reimagining systems of border migration**

Ms. Alma Maquitico of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights dropped a brutally honest statement on the US-Mexico border situation: violence is institutionalized. Migrants crossing the border into US from Mexico are treated as an exception to human constitutional rights. Ms. Alma paints a grim picture of people dying at the border due to heatstroke and exposure to harsh elements, which only became worse during the Trump administration period when migrants were even prosecuted for illegal entry without being given access to a due process of fair trial in addition to undermining the asylum process. The criminalization of migration begins with the securitization

of borders. Even before the Trump era, the US has been strategizing operations to deter people from entering their territories. According to Ms. Alma, solving these issues under Biden administration requires renewed engagement via multilateral dialogue.

***“We need to reimagine a system of borders that is based on regulating poor migrants – a system that corresponds to the current realities... We have to harmonize human rights at the borders starting with certain standards”: Ms. Alma Maquitico***

Ms. Alma is hopeful that better times are ahead, but survival must be disassociated from criminal intent. Together with governments, the establishment of a broad agenda that packages migrants, labour, health and education together needs to be enforced.

### **Recognizing the dignity of people**

Mr. Joe Martinez from CIERTO, an organization that facilitates the migration of workers in the agricultural industry, drives the dialogue with perceptions on how borders function as an economic means of control. Migrants have always been excluded from national discourse and are not considered humans, rather as means to production. To put it simply, Mr. Martinez highlights that we demand products for consumption but don't acknowledge or value the labour behind these very products.

***“We need to recognize human capital and resources, but how to do that with human dignity at the forefront?”: Mr. Joe Martinez***

The globalization of work reinforces the need for effective collaboration between countries of origin and countries of destination. Countries on both sides of the borders need to recognise migrant workforces as agents of development, and empower them to make their own choices in paving their migration journeys. Mr. Martinez also drew criti-

cal attention to the role of the private sector which wields money and leverage, in bridging the gap between economics and human rights. Multinational companies are responsible for having ethical recruitment schemes and fair working conditions to protect their migrant workers, which amounts to creating value not only for their customers but also for those who are working within their company structures. A holistic overview like this will be better not just for humans, but businesses as well.

### **On either side of the border, trust is key**

Representing the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mr. Nelson Goncalves fleshed out the various free movement protocols where it is possible for people to move regularly across borders in a free manner. There are already several programs in place in the African Union region where Mr. Goncalves specializes in, wherein IOM is helping member states to build capacity in managing their borders. An example is the One Stop Border Post (OSBP) programme that employs biometric technology to fast track the mobility of people and goods, thereby facilitating trade between countries. IOM has also set up a task force for documentation to empower states with the capacity to provide legal identities for all migrants by 2030. The establishment of a legal identity system for border enforcement and administration, as Mr. Goncalves points out, is a major building block to create trust between countries who share borders. After all, it is a global responsibility to push for ensuring legal identity for all persons, which governments have as a prerequisite for ensuring the facilitation of migration.

### **No Walls, But Bridges**

Mr. William Gois closed the discussion with a reflection on one of the Emirates Airlines' taglines: 'Tomorrow thinks borders are so yesterday'. It refers to the idea of an infinite future where borders are removed from dividing countries, something we all certainly hope for. The different angles and nuances surrounding Objective 11 were clearly re-



flected in this session, where all the panellists offered valuable recommendations on how to underpin human rights-based standards as a precedent for migration at borders. Among others, we need a reset centered around human value, with private sectors weighing in to promote and advocate for safe migration. In conclusion, systems and mind-

sets need to change before the justification of borders change from being walls, to being bridges.

**Tashryn Mohd Shahrin** is an avid rock climber, who loves the thrill of heights. When she is not climbing, she is gushing over babies and hanging out in book cafes.

**GRFDT & MFA invites you**

## Special Lecture series on Migration and Diaspora Studies

**Every Saturday @ 05:30 pm (Indian Time)**



**24 October 2020**  
**Evolution of Migration**  
Dr. Raj Bardouille  
*Former Senior Officer in UN*



**22 November 2020 (Sunday)**  
**Theories of Migration and Diaspora Studies**  
Dr. Ruchi Singh  
*Prin. L.N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development & Research*



**28 November 2020**  
**Migration, Diaspora and Transnationalism**  
Dr. Sadananda Sahoo  
*Indira Gandhi National Open University*



**05 December 2020**  
**Types and Characteristics of Migration**  
Ms. Paddy Siyanga Knudsen  
*Migration Governance Analyst*



**12 December 2020**  
**Demographic imperatives**  
Prof. R B Bhagat (TBC)



**19 December 2020**  
**Economic Impacts**  
Prof. Binod Khadria  
*Centre for New Initiatives and Research, SGT University, Gurugram*



**26 December 2020**  
**Social Costs of Migration**  
Dr. Rakesh Ranjan  
*Tata Institute of Social Sciences*



**02 January 2021**  
**Gender and Migration**  
Dr. Amba Pande  
*Jawaharlal Nehru University*



**09 January 2021**  
**Migration Governance (International Legal Provisions)**  
Dr. Smita Tiwary  
*Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT)*



**16 January 2021**  
**National Policies and Regional Migration Mechanisms**  
Ms. Paddy Siyanga Knudsen  
*Migration Governance Analyst*



**23 January 2021**  
**Multilateral Stakeholders of Migration (International Migration Mechanisms)**  
Dr. Piyasiri Wikranashekar  
*Formerly senior specialist with the International Labour Organization (ILO)*



**30 January 2021**  
**Health/Crisis, Migration and Diaspora (In the context of COVID 19)**  
Prof. Camelia Tigau  
*National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)*

**Webinar Platform:**



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**ALL ARE WELCOME**

## Proper Institutional Framework to Enable Transparent Migration Procedure

A panel discussion on the Objective 12 of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) which aims to ‘strengthen certainty and predictability in migration procedures for appropriate screening, assessment and referral’ was jointly organized by the Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), Cross Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants (CCRM), Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT) and Civil Society Action Committee (CSAC) on 17th November, 2020. Panelists from across the world put forth their opinions about the Objective which deals with identifying vulnerable migrant population and providing necessary information to them.

### Objective 12: A Difficult Objective to Deal With

Ms. Paddy Siyanga Knudsen, Migration Governance Analyst, GRFDT, initiated the exchange of dialogue by introducing Mr. Stéphane Jaquetmet, Director of Policy, International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), and asking him about their work at ICMC with respect to recognizing and enabling access to proper referral procedures and the kind of challenges that they have faced. According to Mr. Jaquetmet, ICMC is actively engaged in advocating migrant’s rights in situations of mixed migration. Objective 12 is a difficult topic to talk about as he said, **“Probably it is not one of the fanciest ones”**, because some of the elements that constitute the Objective, like access to services, detention, are some of the ineluctable choices that we make. Pointing out the peculiarity with which it was drafted, he stated that the meaning of the Objective which asserts that transparent and predictable procedures of migration should be put in place for all migrants, is unclear as questions relating to successful governmental measures in order to ensure proper registration for each and every migrants remain unaddressed.

**“You need to have procedure in place to**

**do a bit of screening, profiling and identifying people who may have very specific needs.”: Mr. Stéphane Jaquetmet.**

Mr. Jaquetmet also elaborated on the initial GCM or the Zero draft, where Objective 12 was found to have some intrinsic problems by some of the governments. He took the example of UNHCR, which in 2007, had produced a document called 10-Point Strategy in order to show how measures with respect to the vulnerable people had already been undertaken long back. The strategy, which was effective during the situations of mixed migration, had the specific purpose of locating the vulnerable migrants, women who were in crisis, victims of human trafficking, and disabled children, so that sufficient measures could be taken to help them as soon as the process starts. Thus, some of the elements that constitute the Objective have been present much before the Compact was made. Ms. Aletheia Fernandez de la Reguera, Associate Researcher, Institute of Legal Research, National Autonomous University of Mexico, also agreed with Mr. Jaquetmet, stating that many countries already deal with gender and child sensitive procedures along with other aspects of Objective 12.

### Transparency in Mobility for the Migrants

According to Ms. Aletheia Fernandez, while features of mobility are getting new forms, in the transit countries, there are many challenges that the migrants face concerning accountability and transparency.

**“Many migrants in reality are first migrants and I believe that we need to think on global governance of migration in terms of what are the priorities that are needed for the people.”: Ms. Aletheia Fernandez de la Reguera.**

The main problem that the migrants face is their

inability to access the destination countries. Mr. Henry Rojas, Coordinator, Lawyers Beyond Borders Network (LBB), whose main focus was on Philippines, talked about the roles played by the countries of origin and the destination. As a lawyer, he felt that the particularities of the migration laws and the procedures dealing with migration in the destination countries are of importance to the lawyers as well as the 'would be migrant workers.' Transmitting appropriate information on migration to the migrant workers in the countries of origin is essential before they depart for the destination countries. In this light, Mr. Rojas took up the case of Philippines, where pre-employment seminars and pre-departure orientation seminars are being held for the migrants. Mr. Rojas pointed out, ***"these are generic information seminars and not specific to the countries where the migrant workers would actually be working,"*** and said that this is an issue which needs immediate attention. If the government agencies could identify the specific points of intervention within the whole process of migration, there is a chance of providing specific and broad pre-departure information to the soon-to-be migrants. Lastly, he stated that there is a need to strengthen cross border collaboration and ensure migrant's rights.

### **Problems of the Migrant Workers in a Receiving Country: A Malaysian Perspective**

Ms. Florida Sandanasamy, long time CSO activist took up the case of Malaysia in order to elaborate on the challenges faced by the migrants in a receiving country. According to her, the reason behind the country's difficulty in decision making with respect to migrant's rights, is their narrow outlook.

***"If you look at the law itself, it's a bit complex, it's not fully protecting their rights."***  
***Ms. Florida Sandanasamy.***

Asylum seekers and refugees are not given proper benefits. In the workforce, for example, they are not recognised even if they can stay in the country. Thus she questioned how the refugees are going to make their livelihood. It has been noted that the undocumented migrant workers face great-

er challenges than the documented ones because they are unable to defend themselves. Living in the fear of getting arrested, the undocumented migrant workers are victims of unscrupulous attacks in the heightened xenophobic atmosphere during the pandemic. They tend to run away, which invites spike in COVID-19 cases. This prompted Malaysian government to control movement. Ms. Sandanasamy also pointed out the difficulty in enabling transparent social dialogue due to the lack of data on undocumented migrant workers as well as the laxity in approach to deal with the issue on the part of government and the lawmakers.

The bitter reality at present is the criminalisation of the innocent migrant workers. It has been found that less than 4% of the foreigners are guilty of crimes. The reason behind such hatred towards the migrant workers lies in the mentality of the local workers, who feel that the migrants are the cause of their low salary and unemployment as they tend to snatch away their jobs. However, in order to ease down the tension, the Civil Society Organisations, taking up the case of asymptomatic run-away migrant workers during the pandemic, are making efforts to stop the arrest of these workers and halt the spread of the disease, asserting that governments should make efforts at reducing the number of undocumented migrant workers rather than criminalising them.

Ministry of Human Resource, Malaysia is engaged in developing strategies to decrease the number of undocumented migrant workers. Ms. Sandanasamy felt that Malaysia is not a very encouraging place for the migrant workers due to lack of protection, poor wages and gruelling work hours, and stated that, "there must be an alternative to detention."

The migrant workers are an essential part of Malaysian workforce and hence their talent should be recognised. If the rigidity of the government regulations becomes unbearable for the migrant workers, the country should stop employing migrants, and instead, rely on the small number of already residing refugees, Ms. Sandanasamy concluded.



## Plight of the Migrant Women and Children

According to Ms. Aletheia Fernandez, women struggle to access basic facilities like smartphones which are instrumental for them in times of migration. Scared of falling into the hands of agents and military personnel, women tend to migrate through secret routes. They are also victims of sexual abuse, trafficking, lack of proper education and bribery, and are the ones who are more vulnerable to the militarization of borders. Women are under-represented owing to their inability to access proper information and it's an irony that they feel safer staying in hotels rather than shelters deemed for the migrants.

Women are thought to be no more than caregivers to children and so the prerogative of accessing documentation with respect to migration procedures rests with the male migrants. Women always have had a background history of violence, the seeds of which are sown right in their families and it germinates to attain the form of an institutional violence. Thus, the present situation demands proper and safe detention facilities for the women.

In addition to this, there are no sufficient protocols that can identify the age and needs of the migrant children as well. The problems which arise when children are separated from their families in the detention centres are also not addressed. Mr. Henry Rojas took up the case of Filipino diaspora communities and said that the nationality of many cross border children remains unknown, due to which, they are denied access to education and health care. But, in Philippines, if one of the

parents is found to be Filipino, the child becomes a Filipino, no matter where the child is from. Ms. Florida Sandanasamy agreed that the stateless children are not provided basic education and this is an area which should be taken care of.

## Ensuring Justice is Essential

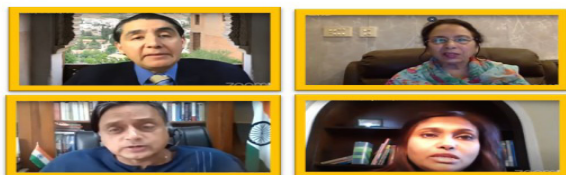
Mr. Stéphane Jaquemet concluded his talk by stating that there is an urgent need to identify vulnerable migrant population and in order to do that sufficient trained personnel, including the female staffs, are necessary. Ms. Aletheia Fernandez stressed on the need for providing information and training not only to the migrants but also to the agents and police officials, because it has been seen that these personnel are better informed about the migration procedures at national levels than at the local levels. Mr. Henry Rojas emphasised on transmission of correct information to the migrants, protection for the children of the undocumented migrant workers and provision for justice both in the countries of origin and destination countries. Lastly, Mr. Florida Sandanasamy emphasised on a positive political will to ensure proper social dialogue and transparency in the migration process.

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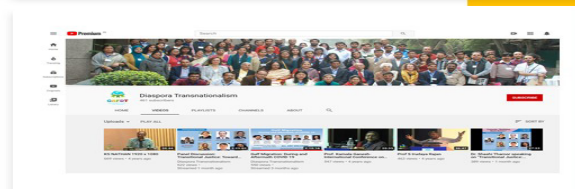
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# New Immigration System without Migration Detention Required

On the 24th of November 2020, the Migrant Forum in Asia, together with the Cross Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants, the Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism, and the Civil Society Action Committee, organized an online webinar on the Global Compact for Migration Objective 13. Various experts on migration discussed on the topic, “Use migration detention only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives”.

## Detention of Children should be Abolished

William Gois, Regional Coordinator of the Migrant Forum in Asia, was the moderator of the webinar. He started the webinar by asking the first speaker, Verena Knaus, the Senior Migrant Advisor at UNICEF, to predict when will countries understand that children should never and under no circumstances be detained. According to Verena Knaus, some states are not willing to stop the detention of children. However, there were other states willing to stop detention of children under certain conditions. Detention of children is also one of the main reasons why many states are not ready to sign the Global Compact for Migration. Knaus stressed the importance of reaching a common settlement. ***“We need a compromise that allows states to sign on and indicates the road we want to travel”*: Verena Knaus**

Even more, Knaus insisted, that detention of children is a violation of human rights. However, many states around the world perceive detention of children as the part and parcel of migration regulations. In order to stop the children’s detention, it is important to do three things. First of all, change the public opinion and delegitimize the detention of children. Secondly, create a new effective form of immigration policies, where detention has no place. Thirdly, countries need to start implementing new immigration policies and change the whole system.

## Time for New Alternative Immigration Regulation Systems

Silvia Gómez, Global Advocacy Coordinator at the International Detention Coalition, was the second speaker of the webinar. She started her speech by describing the immigration system, which is characterized by inherent wrongness. ***“Some human beings are looked upon as less deserving of certain rights”*: Silvia Gómez.**

Gómez admitted that detention and alternative immigration policies are a political issue. The negotiation of Objective 13 was based on negotiations among many actors, such as UN agencies, civil society actors, and governments. Therefore, Objective 13 should be seen as a stepping stone in the process. This objective provides a policy solution on how to actually reduce immigration detention and how to prove that immigration policies do not necessarily need to practice detention.

## Inability of Malaysia to meet the GCM obligations

Objection 13 requires signatory states to review and revise the migration law and practices. However, Malaysia has not done so, according to Dato’ Sri M. Ramachelvam, the Advocate and Solicitor of the High Court of Malaysia. Even more, the Malaysian government executed a crackdown of undocumented migrants during the pandemic. As Ramachelvam mentioned, in Malaysia, detention is not the last resort. ***“Malaysia takes the position of detention as the first resort, although, the Global Compact calls for it to be the last resort”*: Dato’ Sri M. Ramachelvam.**

The government of Malaysia should change its immigration policies in order to fulfill its commitments to the Global Compact. Ramachelvam highlighted that the migrants in Malaysia lack ac-

cess to free legal assistance. The Malaysian system does not provide any alternatives to deportation as well. Therefore, the whole immigration process, according to Ramachelvam, needs to be changed. However, these changes should be proposed by Malaysian policymakers, government, leaders, and society.

### **Immigration System in the USA based on Racial Discrimination**

The immigration policies and detention in the United States of America (USA) were described by Reverend Deborah Lee, the Executive Director for the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity. According to Rev. Lee, the immigrant detention system in the USA represents a small part of problematic migration policies in the USA. Rev. Lee traced the xenophobic practices exhibited by the US immigration system to the history of slavery. ***“Four hundred years of history in our country, that has been used to reinforce white rule, and this idea that the USA should be a country for white people and white control”***: Rev. Deborah Lee.

The migration policies have been used to control who is able to come in, who is legitimate to have full status, and who should be deported.

The second problem related to US immigration policies is, according to Rev. Lee, the militarized approach. In the past years, immigration regulation has come to be seen as a war that needs to be fought with all war tools, such as helicopters, drones, and immigration prisons. She pointed out the increase in number of detained people over the past years, with the majority of detained being placed in privately run detention facilities with the main aim to increase profit.

### **The Clash between Concepts of Alternatives to Detention**

Michael Flynn, the Executive Director of the Global Detention Project in Switzerland was the last speaker at the webinar. According to him, based on different approaches to immigration systems around the world, we face a number of different realities. It is mainly because each country sees

detention differently. Therefore, not all countries trust alternatives to detention. Flynn believes that, today there are two different concepts of alternatives to detention. The first one is around the approach adopted by the UN Network on Migration, the Compact, the International Organization for Migration, which is framing alternatives to detention as anything that can lead to less detention. While on the other hand, there are organizations, such as the European Union, which provides specific information through its guidelines related to the role of alternatives to detention. However, as Flynn pointed out, these two ideas do not meet. He believes that the alternatives to detention should not be pulled from the necessity proportionality calculus. In his address, Flynn criticized many alternatives to detention pilots for being unrealistic. ***“Most of the pilots, at least many that I have evaluated, are basically NGOs doing a very good job identifying people who may be vulnerable to detention, but are not in detention procedures”***: Michael Flynn.

### **Efforts to be Continued**

After all speeches, the webinar moved into discussion, as participants discussed various issues related to the alternatives to detention and shared their opinions related to this topic. All speakers agreed that the immigration processes in most countries have to be changed. Countries should start adopting various alternatives to detention. In order to reach this point, further dialogue between governments and other organizations, is required. While it is vital to bring the states on board, it is also equally important to get the support of the civil society. The process of changing the immigration system and the implementation of alternatives to detention will take time and will require lots of effort. However, as all speakers agreed, it is not only necessary to continue the efforts, but it is also important to persuade more and more countries about the necessity and effectiveness of alternatives to detention.

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## Caged Hopes for Good Life: The Necessity of Alternatives to Migrant Detention

Migrant detention, the practice of holding migrants in custody under immigration control, while they wait for permission to enter or before they are deported from the country, is perhaps one among the most contentious issues in the global migration regime. This is addressed by the Objective 13 of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM)- “Use migration detention only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives.” A panel discussion on the same was jointly organized by Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT), Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), Cross-Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants (CCRM) and Civil Society Action Committee (CSAC), on 24 November 2020. The session was moderated by Mr. William Gois, Regional Coordinator, Migrant Forum in Asia, who initiated the session with a compelling question, “When will we reach that stage when we know that children should never, under any circumstances, be detained?”

### Terminating Child Immigrant Detention

Ms. Verena Knaus, Global Chief, Migration and Displacement, UNICEF, affirmed the question of immigrant detention to be contentious and potentially derailing during the discussions preceding the New York Declaration and during the drafting of the GCM. Finding a meeting ground between states with legally confirmed positions that assert migrant detention to be an effective practice in regulation of migrants, and the stakeholders from international organisations and CSOs who accused migration detention of being an unacceptable and unnecessary practice which violates the rights of migrants, proved to be an arduous task. Detention of children further complicated the issue due to the infringement of children’s rights and its impact on their physical and mental wellbeing and psychosocial development.

Ms. Knaus highlighted three measures that can,

and must be adopted, to persuade the states to accept alternatives to migrant detention and put a stop to detaining of children. The first task at hand shall be to change public perceptions and demands towards migrant detention in a way that **“completely delegitimises child immigrant detention for states that are self-respecting.”** Bringing the public on board shall force the states to accept the dehumanising reality of child migrant detention. The second step shall be to convince the states of the effectiveness of a whole different system of managing migration, that doesn’t involve detentions and protects children. The final step shall be to take up an offensive stance. The alternatives that respect the rights of children and their families throughout the migration procedure has been advocated enough and now is the time to implement them.

***“Pilots are no longer enough... we need to physically and financially crowd out the detention industry... and make it (child immigrant detention) unacceptable and unnecessary for any state going forward”:*** Ms. Verena Knaus

### Government’s Bluff on Implementation of Objective 13

Ms. Silvia Gómez, Global Advocacy Coordinator, International Detention Coalition, highlighted that instead of using migrant detention as the last resort, as prescribed by the GCM Objective 13, most governments continue to use detention of migrants as the first resort.

***“There is inherent wrongness in the fact that some human beings are looked upon as less deserving of certain rights”:*** Ms. Silvia Gómez

Ms. Gómez stated that the disagreements regarding migration detention had emerged as a highly

political issue during the negotiation of the GCM, and the Objective 13 was the best compromise possible at that moment. It served as a stepping stone, encouraging policy solutions based on human rights and people centred approaches as alternatives to immigrant detention, ensuring that primary right to liberty is secured no matter the status of migrants. Ms. Gómez agreed that the primary challenge is to ensure that the states bring these alternatives to life in lieu of false promises.

The recalcitrance exhibited by governments was highlighted by Mr. Dato' Sri M. Ramachelvam, Advocate & Solicitor of the High Court of Malaya, Malaysia, who brought to discussion the perspectives from Malaysia. Mr. Ramachelvam stated the unfortunate fact that despite Objective 13 requiring member states to review and revise legal procedures regarding migrant detention, immigrant detention continues to be the first resort by the Malaysian government. In the wake of pandemic, there was a crackdown of undocumented migrants in Malaysia. The arrested undocumented migrants were kept in jail, denied bail or any kind of legal assistance, and deported back to their home country. The misdemeanour of the state towards migrants have added fuel to the rising xenophobia and racism in the country as well.

***“There needs to be a transformation in thinking of policy makers, government and leaders, and civil society, to push for alternatives to migrant detention”: Mr. Dato' Sri M Ramachelvam***

### **Deplorable Migrant Detention Mechanisms in the United States**

The United States is one of the countries that has not yet adopted the Global Compact for Migration. Rev. Deborah Lee, Executive Director, Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity, shared insights regarding migrant detention practices in the United States. Rev. Lee analysed the manifestation of this issue in two contexts- along racial lines, and militarised framework adopted by the government in addressing social problems.

The present racial inequality and xenophobia can be traced back to 400-year long history of slavery in the United States, which led to a mentality that the United States is a country for the whites alone, which has led to a cultural system that views migrants with hostility. Rev. Lee identified the militaristic solution adopted to all social problems by the US government to be a major part of the problem. After the 9/11 attacks, migration was shifted to come under the prerogative of the Homeland Security, a highly militarised set up which benefits private contractors. There was a spike in the detention of immigrants. In 1995, an average of 5000 migrants were detained in a day/night, but today, the number has skyrocketed to 50,000, with no regard for elderly, disabled or children. 81% of these detained migrants are held in private facilities.

***“There is a huge economic infrastructure that underpins the migration enforcement system in the United States, which I fear is also being exported to other countries”: Rev. Deborah Lee***

As long as there are public investments that provide alternatives to communities that sustain on prison economy alone, a real change is hard to come by, Rev. Lee commented.

### **Quest for Effective Solutions**

Mr. Michael Flynn, Executive Director of the Global Detention Project, Switzerland, asserted the search for effective alternatives to immigrant detention within the framework of the GCM and promoting its implementation to be a daunting challenge. According to Mr. Flynn, there are two different concepts at play regarding ATD (Alternative to Detention) measures for migrants. One is the common framework adopted by UN Network on Migration, the GCM, and organisations like IOM, which frame ATDs around ***“anything that can lead to less detention”***. The other is the concrete legal frameworks, like the European Union guidelines, which detail the roles ATDs are supposed to play, that are manifested in the legislations of both member states as well as the

European Court of Justice, which quotes that, “**An alternative measure to detention can only be envisaged if the reason which justifies the detention of the person remains valid.**”

The measures based on necessity proportionality approach have both pros and cons. Mr. Flynn illustrated this with the example of Spain.

In Spain, there is a very strict constitutional guarantee which states that if one can’t achieve the goal of detention within 60 days, the arrested person has to be released. When COVID-19 struck the country and the borders closed down, the detained migrants were liberated. But the freedom came with a price as they were released not to any formal ATDs, and hence lacked legal assistance.

Thus, it is pertinent to design and implement formalised ATD procedures, while at the same time ensuring that the instrumentalization of ATDs do not occur in a way that can be harmful to the migrants.

**“When alternatives to incarceration were implemented, (it was believed that) they would be promoted with the idea that prison systems would diminish as a result. But what happened was net widening effect-**

**more people under more onerous procedures... and net widening of surveillance powers of state” Mr. Michael Flynn**

Necessity proportionality calculus undermines legitimacy of migrant detention, and this is where we should focus our attention on, Mr. Flynn concluded.

The panel discussion on migrant detention was highly insightful. The panellists agreed that a way to assure the effectiveness of alternatives to immigrant detention is through enabling dialogue between the governments and the stakeholders. Legal adoption of ADT measures and their implementation shall entail a systematic change in the migration governance network, and realising this objective becomes ever more urgent in the new reality brought forth by the pandemic, the panellists concluded.

**Manjima Anjana** is a human rights enthusiast and staunch feminist. She is an undergraduate Political Science Hons. student at Miranda House, University of Delhi. Her areas of interest include Human Rights, Criminology and Justice and Media Studies. To define is to limit. Can be reached on Twitter at @manjima\_a



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## In Conversation with Ismail Einashe

**Paddy Siyanga Knudsen:** How was it sort of having this perspective in terms of connection to home? I mean, knowing what the situation was like at home, what was your connection to home in your upbringing?

**Ismail Einashe:**

Well, that's an interesting question. And I think it's something that I've been trying to explore in my own way, over the years.

And I, you know, when I came to the UK, I mean, I was, and I've written quite a bit about these sorts of experiences. But, you know, I was old enough to remember what happened in Somalia, and I lived through the war. So, you know, I lost siblings and family members, and, you know, we live through a conflict, and how those experiences when you're young, is, you know, pretty scary, and it does leave an imprint. So, then coming to the UK was a complete shock, because nobody prepared us. Because remember, I did speak English. And you know, we've never really been to school, because the conflict is going on. So, the situation was really different. And, and you see, the ways in which people arriving in the country really determines the experience there. And for refugees and asylum seekers, like, from my family, and people from similar backgrounds, if you're arriving in a country like the UK, you know, the UK, I always say, and I've written about this before, you know, Britain, was generous enough to give us space after point, but was quite indifferent to help people join in. So, a lot of refugee communities were forgotten in the 90s, in Britain, I think, and that was a disaster. And we saw the consequences, what happened in the 90s, in the 2000s, effectively, you know, you



were taken from some of our differences in ticket to Britain and sort of forgotten. So that was one issue. Also, in terms of the connection back home,



I think, you know, in my teenage years and into my 20s, I sort of, you know, was trying to make a conscious effort just to get on, and, you know, go to university and study and so on. But it's, been later in my late 20s. And

now my, early 30s, that I am beginning to think about those questions and thinking about what that means. And I do have been in the diaspora, which you mentioned before money, and the Bar-oness was talking about as well.

**Paddy Siyanga Knudsen:** Yeah. interesting to hear and the Diaspora How was that the world coming in and they coming in? Did you feel as though, you know, what was the experience like with the Diaspora that was already in the UK that your family tried to connect to?

**Ismail Einashe:** I mean, I think the, the situation for Somalis is interesting in the UK, because they make some makeup, some of the oldest African migrants in the UK, because in the 19th century, there was someone there. And they would work as much as the men or there were freelancers effectively hired by the British. And they largely came from what's now called, you know, semi land or purchase of my land. And but they came in the 19th century, and they settled in places like Cardiff and lift balls, you know, a dock area, and also the East End of London. So, there was a very old small community. And then, of course, there's the

other diaspora communities that exist from other places, but I think there definitely were, there was a welcome spirit at the beginning and arriving in, in the UK from others of my list, because I think those days in the 90s, people were just trying to get to safety of people were trying to, you know, find family because a lot of people were stranded in various countries and camps, and people were families were broken up, you know, you had, you know, mothers and children been broken up by conflict, and parents dying, and then the children become the responsibility of the extended family, and so on. So, this is what happened, it was a real era of change. But I think now I look back on it. And I'll come into I've got a little presentation, Paddy, so I'll give it in a second. But when I come talk more about the work I do, covering migration, as a journalist in Europe, and in the Middle East, and Africa, you know, nowadays, things have really changed in the sense that it's really difficult for people to get safe, legal, you know, access into Europe, and seek asylum. And the majority of people who are seeking asylum, for example, are coming from conflict regions are in the regions of conflict and not in the UK. And you know, we've had situations in the UK with law dubs and others that have been trying to champion the rights of child migrants and, you know, be really shocking how

things have happened on that space. And, you know, I think there's been a hardening of attitude. But the reality on the ground is very different as a reporter who's gone to Sicily, Italy, Greece, Spain, you know, going to North Africa, East Africa, West Africa, reporting with migrants on the ground, the facts are that this few come and if they do make it, you know, that they're very few. And Europe as a continent is, you know, 500 million people in Europe and a 19 trillion economy. You know, the real crisis when it comes to refugees, and you know, and hosting that is in Lebanon, and it's in Turkey, it's in Ethiopia and Uganda, it's not in Britain, it's not in Germany, it's not, you know, in Italy, necessarily. So I think this is one of those I not contrast my experience that's in the 80s, or the 90s. People could come through family unification people could go to an embassy in Nairobi, or out and make a claim and then be flown out. Now it's impossible. So, people have been forced to go across the Sahara, and take dangerous journeys on boats, or dingiest Europe. You know, there's a reason why this is happening. It's not just come out from nowhere.....

For watching the complete interview, please access GRFDT's [YouTube Channel](#).

# INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY

TIME	Provisional programme
18-19 (GMT+8) 14-15 (CST) 11-12 (CET) 5-6 (ET)	Opening Ceremony
19-20 (GMT+8) 15-16 (CST) 12-13 (CET) 6-7 (ET)	Justice for Wage Theft
20-22 (GMT+8) 16-18 (CST) 13-15 (CET) 7-9 (ET)	2nd Anniversary of the Adoption of the Global Compact for Migration
22-24 (GMT+8) 18-20 (CST) 15-17 (CET) 9-11 (ET)	Civil Society and the Migrants Rights Agenda: Where are We Now and Where are We Going?
24-1.30 (GMT+8) 20-21.30 (CST) 17-18.30 (CET) 11-12.30 (ET)	Reclaiming the Narratives
1.30-3 (GMT+8) 21.30-23 (CST) 18.30-20 (CET) 12.30-14 (ET)	Detention and Returns: Going Beyond Alternatives
3-4.30 (GMT+8) 23.00:30 (CST) 20-21.30 (CET) 14-15.30 (ET)	"We Didn't Cross the Borders, the Borders Crossed Us": Advocating for Pathways for Regular Migration
4.30-6 (GMT+8) 00.30-2 (CST) 21.30-23 (CET) 15.30-17 (ET)	Climate Justice and the Right to Mobility For All
6-7 (GMT+8) 2-3 (CST) 23-24 (CET) 17-18 (ET)	Closing Ceremony

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