

Civil Society Days 2016, 8-9 December, Dhaka, Bangladesh
SPECIAL Session C Report

-SPECIAL Sessions only-	
Name of rapporteur	Anna Crowley, Lariza Dugan-Cuadro
Special session letter + theme	Special session C - Creating welcoming societies – how can we we connect civil society campaigns in order to change policies as well as perceptions?
1. Civil society commitments for the next 6 months (through GFMD in Germany)	
What 2 strategic steps or actions did the group suggest for the next 6 months-- up to and to be reported on at the GFMD in Germany in June 2017, and specifically who committed during this session to working on them?	
First strategic step or action in the next 6 months	A campaign to generate solidarity to be launched by March 21 st , the international day for elimination of racial discrimination. They will circulate information to interested parties from this session. Information will be shared through Jill Belisario, Transnational Migrant Platform and Global Coalition on Migration.
Specifically who in civil society will work on it?	Groups that attended the PGA/ Global Coalition on Migration/ Transnational Migrant Platform
Second strategic step or action in the next 6 months	Participants expressed interest in experience sharing through online platforms, as well as continued conversation in smaller groups organised by region or issue area. This would likely be a continuous process that can start before the GFMD, with the aim of defining some more concrete priorities before the next time we meet.
Specifically who in civil society will work on it?	10 participants in the session expressed interest in being included; Teresa Buczkowska, Immigrant Council of Ireland, expressed willingness to coordinate a Europe sub-group if there is interest.
2. Civil society commitments for the six months June-December 2017	
What 2 strategic steps or actions did the group suggest for the 6 months after GFMD 2017, i.e., through to year-end 2017, and again, specifically who committed during this session to working on them?	
First strategic step or action in the 6 months between June and December 2017	The group agreed that there is a need to work together to develop an overarching narrative that would encapsulate a range of campaigns on policy issues relevant at the national and local level. More time is needed, however, to develop an articulation of problems campaigns would seek to address.
Specifically who in civil society will work on it?	To begin with, a small group of leading organisations already working in this field was suggested. This might be expanded later.

Second strategic step or action in the 6 months between June and December 2017	The group agreed there is need to leverage the UN-led Together Campaign to address structural inequalities that allow xenophobic narratives to take hold.
Specifically who in civil society will work on it?	This will depend on structure of UN campaign.

3. Priority messages to convey to governments by the CSD Chair on 10 December

If your session could choose only **two key messages** to be conveyed by the civil society CSD Chair in his report to states on the 10th of December, which would these be? *(feel free to just refer back to any point written out above)*

- 1) The UN-led Together Campaign must seek to address structural inequalities that either give rise to xenophobic attitudes or allow them to take hold, rather than focusing on perceptions and narratives.
- 2) Government should acknowledge the role that restrictive migration policies and political discourse have in contributing the rise and appeal of xenophobic attitudes and take action to shift the paradigm away from politicised discussion of migration

4. Reflections

Reflections from the session leads:

- Picking up on some points from session 3.1, “creating welcoming societies” as a frame is somewhat limiting, as it most neatly maps to countries of destination, while there is a need to combat xenophobia in countries of origin (social exclusion as a driver of migration) and countries of transit. In transit, however, the long-term goal may not be “social inclusion” as such, but rather security, dignity, and human treatment.
- The relationship between xenophobia and racism and social inclusion is not sufficiently problematised. Xenophobia may or may not be a factor in social exclusion and efforts to promote social inclusion may or may not address the roots of xenophobia. For future GFMD’s it would be helpful to develop a clearer understanding of what xenophobia is, what is driving it, and what it is driving, because causality and correlation are not always clear in the way the topic is treated in the documents nor does it capture how the issue plays out in varied contexts in which participants work.
- Diversity of contexts in which participants work and issues on which they focus, make it difficult to agree on a single problem we are trying to address. In some contexts, for example, political discourse and/or public policies are driving xenophobic attitudes toward migrants and refugees (or citizens that may appear “other”) in others xenophobic attitudes drive exploitation of migrant workers. Campaigns are often described in terms of actions, activities, and tools rather than strategic goals or vision of change we seek.